



player's
guide to

Fighters and Barbarians™



A CORE SOURCEBOOK FOR REVISED 3RD EDITION FANTASY ROLEPLAYING

player's guide to fighters and Barbarians

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DEDICATION

To Haven House, for making my San Diego stay enjoyable. Thanks for being such great hosts, guys.

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Preface

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

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

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

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

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

The **Player's Guide to Fighters and Barbarians** is more than suggestions and rules on how to play a certain type of character. This is a book about determining where your characters, and those like them, have affected the world. To this end, we discuss fighters and their legacies, their wars, their traditions of combat and the rivalries that inevitably spring up among those who follow in their footsteps. We look at barbarian tribes as represented in the Scarred Lands and their legacies of rage, animism and culture.

Within these pages are the most fearsome of combatants and warmongers. It lies within their grasp to bring peace to the world — or to plunge it into war.

So, welcome to a book filled with savagery and steel, a book of wars, barbarian traditions, combat tactics and new surprises for those who wield war in both hands.

Welcome to the **Player's Guide to Fighters and Barbarians**.

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

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

Types of Games

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

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

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

High Fantasy

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

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

The Scarred Lands setting is largely a high fantasy setting, so the majority of information in this book is well suited to use in other high fantasy campaigns. The discussions of fighter and barbarian history probably cannot be used specifically as written outside the Scarred Lands, but they can certainly serve as inspiration for other settings. For example, Chapter One details different types of fighters from many different countries within the Scarred Lands, along with suggestions on their weapons, armor and fighting styles. If your campaign includes an authoritarian monarchy with a devotion to law and order above all, you could easily use the entry on Calastia as a basis for fighters from that region. The same is true of discussions of mercenary companies, war colleges, barbarian tribes and so on. The reality of war is universal, which makes it a relatively simple matter to adapt the background material in this book.

The same is true with the rules material in the appendices. With proper adjustment, prestige classes,

feats and equipment could be added to other campaigns. Many of the variant combat rules could work as well. Don't forget the type of setting or the tone of the campaign, however. Some details — permanent wounds, stapling, weapon speed — are not well suited to all high fantasy campaigns, especially those that emphasize over the top heroism and downplay reality. Still, you can incorporate a great deal of this book's content with a little consideration. Those variant rules can be useful if the GM feels it's important that the players know that achieving great victories does not come without great effort. As with everything, the final decision lies with the GM and the type of campaign he wishes to run.

LOW FANTASY

Low fantasy, as its name suggests, is at the opposite end of the scale when it comes to fantastical elements. Low fantasy games are often described as “gritty” or “realistic” in that they emphasize the dangers of combat and life in a world with medieval era technology and culture. Considerations of disease, malnutrition and pointless death are often important.

While perhaps not truly realistic, low fantasy games aim for verisimilitude wherever possible. Stories in this type of game focus on lower-key goals — survival, making a living, getting from point A to point B, and the like. This is not to say that low fantasy is all dreary and banal. Many low fantasy stories can be quite exciting, but a lot of the excitement comes from overcoming more mundane obstacles than those in high fantasy. In part, that's because low fantasy also possesses far less magic than a high fantasy game. In fact, some low fantasy settings have no magic at all! Without easy access to spells and magic items, epic undertakings are far more difficult and those who do so often succeed only at great cost to themselves and their companions. Perhaps unsurprisingly, low fantasy morality is less strict than that in high fantasy, in part because its characters must do whatever they must to achieve victory, ethical or not.

The background material in this book could work in many low fantasy campaigns, depending on its general tenor and tone. For example, the discussions of war or mercenary companies are equally valid in a low fantasy setting as in a high fantasy one. The same is true of the sections on barbarian tribes and beliefs. Because magic is often less common in low fantasy, you might encounter difficulty in references to magical weapons, styles or practices. As such, the GM may choose not to use them in the campaign, or retain them with the caveat that they represent what people believe rather than what is true. This is especially useful for barbarians, whose view of the world may be limited in some ways. They may believe that the world is alive and full of spirits, but whether that belief is justified depends greatly on the GM and how low the fantasy is in his own campaign.

The new game rules presented in this book should be handled with care in low fantasy campaigns. Some

feats, like Stalwart or Trick Shot, might be overly fantastical in a grim and gritty style of low fantasy. In such cases, it's easier to leave them out than to find ways to rework or explain them away. Most of the variant combat rules would work well in a low fantasy setting. They are more realistic than the standard 3rd Edition combat rules and lend some verisimilitude to battle. Be aware that they might make combat more complex, or even slow it down. This may not be an issue in an all-fighter or all-barbarian campaign, but is less desirable in mixed campaigns. The GM should consider whether the additional flavor gained by using these variants outweighs the complexity and combat focus they will inevitably bring to his game.

GOthic HORROR

In some ways, gothic horror could be considered a subset of low fantasy in that it rarely involves mighty magic or vast storylines. Gothic horror is a specific type of game in which fear, passion, mystery and primitive psychology all contend to create an atmosphere of brooding — even angst-ridden — doom. In such games, characters with detailed concepts and backgrounds are very important, since so many of the plots revolve around their often-frustrated wants and desires.

Gothic horror is not about the slaying of dragons or the exploration of new lands. Instead, it focuses on isolation, impotence and self-examination as the springboards for tales of terror. Magic is still an important part of gothic horror. Many gothic stories involve curses, transformations and other unnatural occurrences. Yet magic stays safely in the background, coming to the fore only at dramatically appropriate moments. So much of horror loses its power if there is an easy means to counteract it. Magic empowers characters in a way that tends to weaken the impact of horrific things. Why be afraid of the dark and shadowy shape in the corner of your bedroom when a simple *light* spell can reveal its nature?

This book's background information should be toned down or reworked for most gothic horror settings. That's in part because gothic horror is much like low fantasy, except more focused on interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, gothic horror doesn't obsess on details of the wider world unless they directly impinge on what the characters are doing and what motivates them to do so. That said, war is horrific and many GMs might find it interesting to set a gothic horror campaign during a terrible and bloody war. The same is true of a barbarian tribe. Isolated and removed from civilization, such a tribe's existence could be quite frightening is portrayed properly. Thus, the information in this book could be used to provide background details to add to the reality of games in which war or barbarism play central roles.

Most of the comments about rules material discussed above in the low fantasy section apply even more strongly to gothic horror. Indeed, the variant combat rules, especially permanent wounds and stapling, are

good additions to such a campaign. Everything in a gothic horror setting can be used to sow fear and anxiety. Combat is certainly one of the more fearsome things any human being can experience. Consequently, a gothic horror GM would be wise to make it so in his game through the judicious use of these variants.

Science Fantasy

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

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

Depending on the nature of the campaign, nearly all of the material in this book could be used in a science fantasy setting. Many of the mercenary groups, war colleges and armies are famed for their use of unusual weapons or fighting styles. In a campaign with magical firearms or mechanical suits of armor, some might well specialize in them instead. Depending on how recent the magical revolution is that created the science fantasy setting, it's possible that some of these groups were responsible for these innovations in the first place.

At first glance, barbarians do not fit in well with science fantasy. The barbarians presented here are outsiders who participate little in the wide culture of their world. That might be doubly true in a science fantasy setting. Still, a GM could use the barbarians' tendency toward isolation as the starting point to a science fantasy campaign, slowly initiating the characters (and players) into the wider — and weirder — world.

The appendices contain plenty of useful new rules for a science fantasy campaign. The feats and equipment work perfectly well, for example. Indeed, many of the new types of armor or materials might be the result of scientific experimentation rather than magic. Perhaps serpentsteel is made through an industrial process that infuses the essence of snakes into a metallic suspension

field. The variant combat rules might be less useful in science fantasy, since its emphasis is on the truly fantastic. On the other hand, the reliability of medical technology in such a setting might make it reasonable to include deadlier rules like permanent wounding (since the PCs can more readily avoid its worst effects).

The Campaign

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

At the same time, there is no reason why a party composed solely of a single class need suffer unduly. Certainly, an all-barbarian campaign would be very different from one composed of many different character classes. Yet, that difference can also be a source of strength, as well as an opportunity to explore playing styles or plotlines that might otherwise be impractical. For example, the GM might want to run a series of adventures — or even a whole campaign — about characters who raise an army to defeat the enemies of their lord. Such adventures might hold little interest for players of rogues or bards, but they'd appeal greatly to players of fighters.

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

A Band of Brothers

An all-fighter campaign is relatively easy both to conceive and to execute. That's because the fighter, unlike nearly every other character class, is not a specialist. The fighter is a specialist in combat, certainly, but "combat" covers such a broad area of activity — from unarmed to armed, melee to ranged, infantry to mounted, individual duels to mass combat, and so on — that specialization does not apply easily. With their wide selection of feats, fighters can quickly master several different styles of fighting, which gives them quite a range in terms of the adventures they can undertake. Moreover, fighters are not exceptionally vulnerable even if they don't have the support of other character classes. They may lack access to healing if a cleric isn't on hand, but they compensate by having vastly more hit points than most other classes. Their primary weaknesses are

their comparatively weak Reflex and Will saves, which make them vulnerable to some magical attacks.

Nevertheless, fighters make an excellent focus for a campaign. Most obviously, military style adventures work well with fighters. Whether as mercenaries or regular soldiers, fighters excel on the battlefield. Guard duty is likewise a natural choice. Fighters also make fine “exterminators” — individuals sent into an area to rid it of an infestation of enemies, humanoid or otherwise. Most classic fantasy tales include one or more fighters in a lead role.

Also, fighters are an obvious example of a character who takes charge and deals with obstacles in a direct way. It’s no wonder then that an all-fighter campaign has an immense number of options available to it.

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

- The characters are the last surviving members of a decimated army, forced to fend for themselves in their now-conquered homeland.
- The characters are rootless mercenaries who fight for whomever pays them, no matter how dangerous or questionable the conflict.
- The characters are the bodyguards of a powerful merchant prince and accompany him as he travels across the world doing business.
- The characters are a band of knights errant, traveling the countryside righting wrongs and defending the oppressed.
- The characters are soldiers sent as military advisors to a beleaguered ally of their homeland and must now contend with both an alien culture and the poor quality of the ally’s own forces (which they must upgrade).

THESE ARE THE THINGS IN LIFE

The all-barbarian campaign is both easier and more difficult than it might appear. On the one hand, it is easy to conceive of entire barbarian tribes on the edge of civilization with their own culture, society and ways of doing things. Yet, those tribes consist of more than just members of the barbarian character class. Rather, such tribes are comprised of many types of individuals who are part of the same “unrefined” culture.

An all-barbarian campaign would consist of members of the character class in the wilds, but could also be set in more civilized lands. Either option has a long fantasy tradition on which to draw, with mighty thewed barbarian warriors being a staple of the literature since the beginning of the genre.

The difficulty comes in seeing how barbarian campaigns differ from those of fighters. Mostly, it’s a matter of tone and perspective. Barbarians are sometimes portrayed as simple-minded rubes while at other times they are depicted as noble savages possessing virtues lost to civilized men. The GM should decide the perspective best suited for his campaign — preferably a happy medium, since neither extreme is satisfying in the long term.

In their own lands, barbarians can defend their tribe, engage in blood feuds, participate in religious rites and live life to the fullest. In civilized lands, barbarians are outsiders. They can be commentators on the whys and wherefores of civilization, as well as overawed newcomers. GMs would be wise to think about both the place from which barbarians came in the game and where they will be adventuring in trying to decide the tone he will use. In many ways, it is tone that is far more important than the content of the adventures themselves.

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

- The characters are special emissaries of a great barbarian king, sent into civilized lands to learn about their decadent ways.
- The characters are the chosen of the Elder Spirits, called to defend their tribe against all enemies and protect its lands from invasion.
- The characters are young barbarian warriors hoping to prove themselves and be admitted into the blood brotherhood of the adult warriors.
- The characters are the children of non-barbarians raised by the tribe who one day discover the truth about their heritage and set off to see in which world they truly belong.
- The characters are warriors in a tribe locked in an ancient struggle with evil humanoids and whose fortunes have been steadily decreasing over the decades.

book one

Fighters



chapter one

A HISTORY OF BATTLE

The bones of the world are its history, and warfare its blood. The oldest legends describe struggles both great and minute. Our histories and day-to-day affairs are likewise filled with everything from highwaymen accosting merchants to vast legions clashing on the battlefields. Everywhere conflict drives life in these Scarred Lands. Peasants grow food for our troops, laborers build roads for our armies, and craftsmen forge arms and armor. And at the heart of every nation are its soldiers.

— Captain Corvith Raess, of the Calastian army,
to a troop of new recruits

While fighters are the elite, most armies are primarily composed of poorly trained conscripts. Many are merely commoners with weapons, but a good number are actual warriors of some kind. These warriors have some skill and experience, but lack the dedication and training of a true fighter. While there are other elite groups with martial skill, what distinguishes a fighter from the others is the focus on maneuvers and prowess — the art of war itself. The distinct philosophies by which fighters approach warfare, organize their forces and react to opposition shape the various martial traditions.

Military traditions influence the outlook of other martial classes in a given region. Warriors will roughly mirror their professional betters, but with cheaper arms and armor and with more straightforward feats like Toughness. Other classes may adopt elements of fighter traditions, either out of a need to work alongside their fighter allies, or in order to defend against a particular regional maneuver. This influence also

can reflect upwards. Barbarians of Albadia, for example, dominate the military culture. As a consequence, the fighters of Albadia have a rather barbarian approach to battle, though with more sophisticated combat skills.

Wars of the Past

The earliest reliable records of military tradition can be traced back to the formation of the Ledean Empire. Though bards might sing of more ancient battles, such as the end of the Ancients and the war against the slarecians, the tales of these conflicts are more supposition and symbolism than hard facts and useful tactics.

The Ledean Empire formed under the rule of three generals who fought against the slarecians. The original Legion of the generals soon expanded and, by the end of the Triumn dynasty, a large number of martial schools were opened in order to

pass on the skills used by the Legions. The relative peacetime gave the Empire time to reflect and build.

As the schools became a larger part of military life, they developed into full war colleges and became the backbone of the Ledeian military. Following the imperial approach, they served to rapidly assimilate new strategies and respond to the changing demands of the Legions.

The troubled periods of Ledeian history brought great changes to the schools. In many cases colleges were disbanded, divided, or amalgamated. Historians commonly believe that the Morian Dynasty in particular saw the end or transformation of all existing war colleges. Some war colleges dispute this analysis.

Several dynasties saw the rise of foreign influence or rule, such as that of the Sam'Marith. Elven influences, particularly in archery, and the whirling sword-dance styles of middle Ghelspad were incorporated into the war colleges early in the empire's history.

The last few dynasties brought new transformations. The order and control needed to maintain the school-to-Legion structure began to break down. In many cases, the growing difficulty of travel led to military units identifying more strongly with local peoples. This became especially apparent as legions began training their own recruits far from the traditional colleges. In a myriad of ways, the Legions became more closely tied to the provinces than to the empire.

The slow end of Lede saw a great evolution of military structure and style. While once Legions fought outsiders, now provinces fought amongst themselves. The phalanxes and foot soldiers of the Legions did not perform as well when turned against one another. The Legion of Steel, the armies of Lageni, and many other regions developed more mobile forces during the chaotic battles of this time. Tight formations were phased out in favor of mobility. Lighter cavalry was used in a support role and mounted archers became highly sought after.

The third great period of warfare was the rise of the Charduni Empire. Many of the changes brought about by the decay of Lede were accelerated during this time period. Faced with overwhelming numbers of enemies in solid formation, highly mobile strike units minimized the danger of over-committing forces. Loose guerilla fighting, once considered the province of uncivilized and lesser foreigners, became the order of the day.

The Titanswar saw both the resumption and destruction of large-scale formation battle. While armies were arrayed in vast force, all saw epic losses. By the end of the war no nation retained enough men to properly field a large army.

After the victory of the Gods, armies grew once again and marched on the battlefield — yet to this day the focus on mobility still influences many traditions in Ghelspad.

FIGHTERS IN THE SCARRED LANDS

Over the centuries, the many regions of the Scarred Lands have developed distinctive military traditions. Wars, migrations, and disasters have shaped each of these approaches. However, regional styles of combat are not necessarily used because they are the best possible technique for a given culture. Styles have evolved, influenced by factors that are sometimes no longer relevant.

ALBADIA

The fighters of Albadian live in the shadow of their prominent barbarian culture. Only those with the spirit of rage may lead, and such spirit is considered vital to the way of the warrior. Wars are rather loose affairs. While simple strategies such as protecting city walls and defending sorcerers are utilized, even urban Albadians lack any strong sense of formation or complex tactics. Despite this, there are subtle cultural undercurrents supporting the way of the skilled fighter.

Albadian fighters make frequent use of tattoo magic, particularly *elder rod*, *huror's paw*, *Madriel's light*, and *muskhorn*. (See **Relics & Rituals** for these tattoos; *huror's paw* is found in **Relics & Rituals 2: Lost Lore**.)

Sorcerers are common support for the Albadian military. They tend toward defensive roles when

USING THE FIGHTING STYLES

These styles can be used to indicate where a character grew up and trained, but it is in no way required that a character gain the feats or use the arms of his home region. An Albadian may wear chainmail and wield a mace, or throw daggers. Still, an Albadian fighter from the cities is more likely than not to wield a warhammer. The same applies to other classes. An Albadian ranger from the hinterlands is likely to use a two-bladed sword, and is apt to be recognized as Albadian because of it.

Styles provide flavor and may shape the reaction of others to a character. They can also be used to quickly generate NPCs that are appropriate to a given area. Whether from the DMG or a module, customizing weapons, armor, and feats can give an appropriate regional flavor to any NPC.

fighting other Albadians, but will not hesitate to use their destructive magics against foreigners.

Favored Armor: Tribal Albadians are fond of hide armor. Those of the cities tend to wear chain mail and carry shields.

Favored Weapons: Tribal Albadians gain swift proficiency in the use of the two-bladed sword, hearkening to the Darklight King Manjolf of the Two Blades. Many wield a battleaxe as well. Urban fighters focus on the use of the battleaxe and warhammer, associated with the god Hedrada and the Hammer King Orjulf.

Favored Feats: Albadian fighters of the tribes often develop the following Feats: Battle Cry, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (two-bladed sword), Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting (Spinning Blow). Albadian fighters of the cities develop the following Feats: Power Attack (Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bulls Rush, Sunder).

AMALTHEA

The guard of Amalthea is trained primarily in other lands, some under the excellent tutelage of the War Colleges. They then serve to organize and train a loose militia, with a distilled tradition appropriate for defense of a mountainous region. While not a formidable standing army, Amalthean troops maintain an impressive defense of their region.

Favored Armor: Amaltheans prefer light armor, particularly chain shirts. Warm and comfortable, they can move easily to cover a long wall or other line of defense.

Favored Weapons: Longspears are common, used in loose formations when attacked or to provide reach when defending a wall. Shortswords provide protection for close-quarter melee.

Favored Feats: Amalthean soldiers typically learn the following feats: Combat Reflexes, Dodge (Mobility), Military Training (Advanced Military Training, Formation Combat), Power Attack (Cleave).

ANKILA

The lot of a professional soldier in Ankila is rather limited, given the area's occupation by Calastia. The discipline of Ankilan military training once stressed formation fighting and proved quite formidable against the cavalry of Calastia and the disorganized melee of most titanspawn. This success began to falter as Calastians switched to more mobile attacks.



Current training has reverted to a maritime style that predates precision infantry. This is suited to the loose patrols and policing that makes up Ankilan duty. The education of Ankilan soldiers is currently carried out under the watchful eye of Calastian officials.

Favored Armor: Ankilan fighters prefer light armor, due partially to a desire for mobility and primarily from distrust on the part of Calastia. Stud-ded leather is the most common armor, with the wealthier or more experienced using chain shirts.

Favored Weapons: The overwhelming worship of Hedrada and the symbolic importance of the Hammer of Ankila combine to make warhammers the weapon of choice.

Favored Feats: Ankilan fighters usually learn the following feats: Combat Expertise (Improved Disarm, Improved Trip), Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack).

BLEAK SAVANNAH

Only a few of the bravest travelers have ventured into this harsh and forbidding land. They bear testimony to the surviving cultures in the Bleak. The Khuun are highly skilled spearmen, and if reports are to be believed, noted for their impressive ability to quickly muster a third of their population. The Maktarque are elves who, while limited in number, possess the grace and skill of members of the monastic orders. Ashnosi warriors are nomads, combining music and warfare with a fierce spirit.

Favored Armor: All of the warriors of the Bleak Savannah favor loose clothing, due to the heat in many areas. The standard outfit, an *avashi*, is suitable for use in cloth dancing.

Favored Weapons: The Khuun are masters of the spear and typically carry shortspears. Javelins are also fairly common. They are one of the few groups in Ghelspad to employ *atl-atls*. The Maktarque excel in personal combat, using elaborate gauntlets made from lacquered wood (functioning as gauntlets). Ashnosi warriors wield a form of falchion that makes a characteristic whistling sound when whirled.

Favored Feats: Khuun soldiers typically learn the following feats: Combat Expertise, Dodge (Cloth Dancing), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*atl-atl*), Point Blank Shot (Far Shot). Maktarque usually learn these feats: Defensive Style, Dodge (Cloth Dancing), Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike (Deflect Arrows), Lightning Reflexes. Ashnosi warriors normally learn the following feats: Battle Cry, Dodge (Cloth Dancing, Mobility), Formation Combat, Power Attack.

BRIDGED CITY

Open to the sky above and chasms below, the Bridged City is vulnerable from every direction. A sizeable military is therefore maintained, account-

ing for a tenth of its population. Service is limited to citizens, though citizenship may be offered to those willing to defend the city. The major elements of the army are a heavy pike infantry and crossbowmen. The infantry performs guard and patrol duty, while the crossbowmen are placed for cover and fire support. Spellcasters are universally trained to function in a military capacity, adding a formidable defensive strength to the city.

Favored Armor: Infantry is typically equipped with splintmail armor and a large wooden shield. Higher ranked officers will wear half or full plate, once they can afford it.

Favored Weapons: Infantry carry longwords and may also wield either glaives or ranseurs.

Favored Feats: Infantry is typically trained in the following feats: Combat Expertise (Improved Disarm), Power Attack (Cleave, Sunder), Quick Draw. Crossbowmen typically learn the following feats: Dodge (Mobility), Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot, Trick Shot).

BUROK TORN

The strong warriors of Burok Torn are well known throughout Ghelspad. Dwarves in general have long been reputed for their abilities in defending fortified holds. Burok Torn, with the Kelder Mountains providing both isolation and natural buttresses, fits dwarven military tradition. The difficulty of its location, however, is a lack of mobility. Burok Torn must battle when invaders come, and there is little ability for the dwarves to pick and choose battles.

Those who fight for Burok Torn each strive toward membership in one of the elite forces. First training to become dwarven defenders, those who truly excel may be selected as Iron Guardsmen or Stone Guardsmen (see **Burok Torn: City Under Siege**, Chapter Five).

Favored Armor: The stalwart infantry of Burok Torn typically favor plate mail and large wooden shields.

Favored Weapons: Dwarves of Burok Torn are known for their warhammers and battleaxes.

Favored Feats: Dwarves of Burok Torn usually learn the following feats: Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Endurance, Power Attack (Cleave), Toughness.

CALASTIA

The Calastian military is highly structured, and owes a great deal to its Ledean origins. Calastia's armies are some of the best trained in Ghelspad. While most militaries are mainly composed of warriors, almost all of Calastia's core units are fighters.

Calastian legions are made up of light and heavy infantry, cavalry, siege equipment and logistical elements. Nobles normally serve as cavalry. Regiments are

often accompanied by one or two Calastian battle-mages, for magical support, mounted on heavy warhorses.

Naval traditions rely more on numbers than elaborate training. Most naval fighters adopt a loose brawling style, often descended from non-Calastian sources.

Favored Armor: Light infantry don chain shirts and carry small steel shields, allowing them speed and maneuverability. Heavy infantry favors banded mail and large steel shields. Both commonly have shield spikes to augment attacks with their shields.

Favored Weapons: Infantry learn the use of the heavy mace or, if particularly faithful, a warscepter. Soldiers make good use of halbspears and longspears, particularly against charges. Cavalry prefer the warscepter or heavy lance.

Favored Feats: Infantry are usually trained in: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (warscepter), Formation Combat, Power Attack (Improved Bull Rush), Two Weapon Fighting. Calastian cavalry often develop: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (warscepter), Mounted Combat (Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge), Power Attack (Improved Bull Rush).

DARAKEENE

The military tradition of Darakeene is intimately associated with the Ledean War Colleges. However, though influenced by the colleges, the military of Darakeene as a whole has a distinct provenance owing a great deal to the legions of old.

Modern Darakeene military philosophy favors armies capable of long marches and mobility, given their many threatened borders. Light infantry and fast cavalry allow deployment with great speed. Naval fighters favor speed and agility for shipboard fighting. Marines, when used, are typically infantry with some naval training, suitable for boarding actions or taking a shore. In all cases, the paranoia of Darakeene leadership keeps them close, hampering training and effective deployment.

Keltai irregulars are occasionally mustered in times of war. While rather poor troops, they function adequately for scouting, harassing lines of supply, or providing a quick press during a larger engagement.

Favored Armor: Darakeene infantry favors studied leather and cavalry typically wear breastplates. Naval fighters and archers usually wear leather. Keltai sometimes wear hide armor, and frequently carry small wooden shields. *Clothborn armor* (see Appendix Three) was invented in Darakeene and is frequently used by those who can afford it.

Favored Weapons: Infantry is trained primarily in the use of longsword and shortspear. Spears may be thrown, and then longswords drawn for close combat. Archers typically use longbows, along with a short sword in case they are charged. Cavalry use sabers, allowing good control of their mounts while

attacking. Naval fighters are trained in saps and cutlasses. A Keltai traditionally carries a halfspear and short sword. Some Keltai excel at nets.

Favored Feats: Infantry in Darakeene typically learn the following feats: Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack), Endurance, Formation Combat, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw. Endurance is especially valued as it allows infantry to march hard, sometimes up to 12 hours a day. Archers typically train in the following feats: Dodge (Mobility), Endurance, Point Blank Shot (Shot on the Run), Run.

Cavalry typically train in the following feats: Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat (Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge), Skill Focus (ride), Weapon Finesse. Naval fighters are usually taught the following feats: Blind-Fight, Combat Expertise, Improved Unarmed Strike (Improved Grapple), Power Attack (Cleave), Quick Draw. Keltai tribesmen are often trained in the following feats: Combat Expertise (Improved Trip), Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (net), Point Blank Shot (Shot on the Run).

DIER DRENDAL

The city of Dier Drendal is ringed by golems, providing an initial, potent line of defense. These creatures, combined with the city's tactics, allow for rapid mobilization. In formation, a wing of the army consists of a line of golems, a pike wall, shield bearers at a distance of 20 paces, archers immediately behind, and finally swordsmen. Support and command follow behind this buffered line.

Though potent, the army of Dier Drendal is focused on civil defense and dealing with the dwarves of Burok Torn. They are not able to project force at a distance, though their interests could shift in the future.

Favored Armor: Shield bearers each wear a breastplate as well as carry a tower shield. The other units all wear chain shirts, favoring speed.

Favored Weapons: Pikemen typically bear a longsword and a glaive or ranseur. Shield bearers carry a shortsword, in case they are overrun. Archers utilize composite longbows and longswords. Swordsmen typically wield twin short swords of a distinctive design.

Favored Feats: Pikemen, shield bearers, and swordsmen receive the same training, learning the following feats: Combat Expertise, Dodge, Formation Combat, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse. Archers gain the following feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot (Precise Shot, Rapid Shot), Weapon Focus (composite longbow).

DUNAHNAE

The soldiers of this powerful nation are amongst the most disciplined of all Ghelspad. The 21,000 soldiers of the military caste are divided into twelve sceptors. These groupings are comprised primarily of

heavy infantry. Light skirmishing is reserved for slave forces and undead. About a third of the military caste is cavalry, chiefly composed of ranking officers. This allows a mobile command and grasp of the battlefield. Heavy cavalry may be used to crush the enemy, or to trample recalcitrant slaves.

Finally, the Adamant Scepter is responsible for the navies of Dunahnae. Military strategies at sea focus on ranged attacks of enemy ships and mobbing to repel boarders.

Favored Armor: Heavy infantry is typically equipped with splint mail and large steel shields fitted with spikes. Most infantry are at medium encumbrance. Mounted officers wear splint or banded mail and a buckler, with scale mail barding for their horses.

Favored Weapons: Heavy infantry is trained primarily in the use of the longsword, warhammer, and warscepter. Cavalry units are taught the heavy lance and warscepter. A sizeable number of cavalry are also trained in firing heavy crossbows from horseback.

Favored Feats: The infantry of the military caste traditionally learn the following feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (warscepter), Formation Combat, Power Attack (Cleave), Two-Weapon Fighting. Cavalry usually develop the following feats: Combat Expertise, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (warscepter), Mounted Combat (Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample). Mounted crossbowmen typically select the following feats: Mounted

Combat (Mounted Archery, Ride-By Attack), Point Blank Shot (Precise Shot), Skill Focus (ride).

DURROVER

The martial tradition of Durrover has always had a component of desperate defense. The region was marked by clan disputes back even to the days of the Ledean Empire. Small squads, often members of an extended family, would assemble to strike at targets and then melt back into the hills when faced with superior force.

The lowland military tradition of Durrover grew out of naval close-fighting tactics. Those skills have now been combined with the use of archers, allowing quick strikes and mop-up actions. The main advantage of this tradition lies in its use of the rough terrain of the area. Given their greater familiarity with the land, this tactic of attack and retreat has proven quite effective.

The highlanders use archers to a limited degree, but are more fond of shock charges. They make good use of the fact that a sudden press can startle and break untrained troops.

Favored Armor: Lowland fighters prefer light armor, such as studded leather, and bucklers. Light armor is easily donned and concealed, and allows the wearer to move quickly. Highlanders are fond of hide and scale mail.

Favored Weapons: Lowland fighters are primarily taught the use of the longsword. A number also train



with shortspears and longbows. Highland fighters traditionally use greatswords, halberds, and guisarmes. Tripping an opponent, dropping one's polearm and closing in with a sword is a common tactic.

Favored Feats: Lowland fighters typically develop the following feats: Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack), Formation Combat, Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Shot on the Run). Fighters of the Highlands usually learn the following feats: Combat Expertise (Improved Disarm, Improved Trip), Power Attack (Improved Bull Rush), Quick Draw.

FANGSFALL PENINSULA

The peninsula is protected by two distinct groups. The first are rough militia. They manage a meager defense of the outlying communities against titanspawn and pirates. Training is haphazard, influenced by street fighting more than any proper technique. In full battle, members of the militia prefer to stand off and protect archers.

Fangsfall itself is protected by a much more organized group, the city guard under Lord Vrail. Their military tradition has its roots in Mithril and old Rahoch. A guardsman is expected to have a broad expertise and be able to function as an archer and form a polearm line, as well as patrol and skirmish.

Favored Armor: Militiamen typically wear scale mail. The Fangsfall guard wears breastplate when on patrol, or half-plate in town, along with a buckler.

Favored Weapons: Militiamen typically use daggers, shortspears, cutlasses, or shortbows. Fangsfall guards characteristically bear longswords, but are trained in the use of the longspear and longbow as well.

Favored Feats: Fangsfall militia is generally trained in the following feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Unarmed Strike (Improved Grapple), Point Blank Shot (Precise Shot, Rapid Shot), Quick Draw. Fangsfall guardsmen usually learn the following feats: Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Rapid Shot), Quick Draw.

THE GLEAMING VALLEY

Though overshadowed by the Hollow Knights, a growing number of fighters have appeared in the Gleaming Valley. Hollow Knights have taught their style of warfare to those willing to learn. Perhaps this is one of the few things they can share with mortals.

Favored Armor: Hollow knights insist that their students use full plate and a large steel shield. However, cost considerations mean many initially train in half-plate. Warhorses are also expected to be equipped with full plate barding as soon as the student can afford such.

Favored Weapons: The longsword and heavy lance are the traditional weapons of hollow knights and those training with them.

Favored Feats: Fighters of the Gleaming Valley usually develop the following feats: Mounted Combat (Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge), Power Attack (Cleave, Sunder).

HEDRAD

The military of Hedrad is divided between a force of 1,500 "justicars" and 2,500 "templars." The first primarily manage civil matters. Templars are the primary city guard, though justicars can be pressed into service. The city's philosophy of combat relies heavily on support from ballistas and other emplacements, with the formation of pikewalls when facing attack from land. Though their training is disciplined, the army is relatively few in number and has little experience in large-scale combat. Templars still study the phalanx and turtle formations.

Favored Armor: Hedradan templars commonly wear leather armor, switching to chainmail when the situation warrants it. Some also carry tower shields. Justicars wear chainmail.

Favored Weapons: Templars are fond of the longsword, bearing glaive or guisarme when mobilizing for battle. A few templars, influenced by the exemplars, train with quarterstaves. Justicars, in their religious role as enforcers of law, carry warhammers.

Favored Feats: Templars typically pick up the following feats: Combat Reflexes, Dodge (Mobility), Formation Combat, Power Attack (Cleave). Justicars are normally taught the following feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Power Attack (Cleave, Sunder), Toughness.

HETERONOMY OF VIRDUK

The military traditions of the Heteronomy are strongly shaped by the halfling majority. The simple games of the halflings provide the basis for their martial training. Thrown weapons are common, and militias are fast on their feet. Patrols can strike quickly against titanspawn, luring them back into ambushes. Halflings fare rather well in formation fighting, to the limited extent militias use them. Humans typically train with longbows, providing fire support for their smaller colleagues.

Half-orc companies have been formed under the aegis of Calastia. While most are poorly trained and those in charge are typically barbarians, there are a significant number of well-trained fighters in charge of these companies.

Favored Armor: Halfling militiamen prefer leather armor, allowing them good mobility. Human archers wear scale mail. Though somewhat cumbersome, they still move as swiftly as their halfling comrades. The half-orc company commanders wear banded mail.

Favored Weapons: Halfling militiamen will usually use daggers and halfspears, though short swords are fairly common. Human archers are skilled in the

composite longbow and heavy mace. A half-orc typically wields a warscepter or heavy mace.

Favored Feats: Many halfling fighters work toward joining the halfling stalkers (see the halfling stalker prestige class, **Calastia: Throne of the Black Dragon**). Halflings and archers usually learn the following feats: Dodge, Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot), Quick Draw, Run. Half-orc commanders often possess the following feats: Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (warscepter), Power Attack (Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Sunder).

HOLLOWFAUST

This strange, charnel place maintains, as one might expect, a mixture of living and unliving soldiers. While many of the defenders of this shadowed realm are sell-swords, the city has existed long enough to develop a cadre of dedicated warriors – the Blackshields, who act as guardians for the city.

Favored Armor: Fighters of Hollowfaust favor full plate, though a breastplate will suffice if finances are limited. Some have coldweave (see **Hollowfaust: City of Necromancers**, Chapter Two, "Coldweave") tailored into the armor, allowing the fighter to avoid the risks of heat exhaustion. Many also carry a large steel shield.

Favored Weapons: The bastard sword is popular among the Blackshields, though longswords and greatswords are also common.

Favored Feats: The professional soldiers of Hollowfaust typically learn the following feats: Blind-Fight, Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Toughness.

KARRIA

Karria boasts the finest navy in all of Ghelspad. While the land armies of Karria are quite limited, contingents of marines are stationed along its coast. Any approaching enemy is met quickly with hooks to push away landing craft. That is, of course, assuming an invading vessel can get past the navy and avoid coastal fortifications.

Favored Armor: Sailors typically wear studded leather, if they wear armor at all. Marines normally wear a chain shirt, donning breastplate when preparing to repel boarders or disembark ship.

Favored Weapons: The cutlass is favored for close-quarter fighting, sometimes wielded in pairs. Sailors often carry daggers, which are frequently thrown by the off hand. Marines typically bear a guisarme and a cutlass, often pairing up so one marine is ready with a cutlass if an opponent moves past the threat of the guisarme.

Favored Feats: Sailors frequently have the following feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Unarmed Strike (Improved Grapple), Power Attack, Quick Draw, Two-Weapon Fighting. Marines are usually trained in the following feats: Combat Expertise (Improved Trip),

Improved Unarmed Strike (Improved Grapple), Power Attack (Cleave), Quick Draw.

Khirdet

The armies of Khirdet are frightening to behold, as they are driven by a fierce madness. Fortified by druidic power and their accompanying animals, their only weakness is the little discipline or organization they show on the battlefield. Still, the use of undead, outsiders, and poisonous serpents is enough to daunt even the most seasoned veteran.

The notable few in the ranks of Khirdet who do employ tactics, do so with vicious efficiency. These fighters are deft at maneuvering opponents, entangling them, then letting animals and warriors savage the helpless victims while they move on.

Favored Armor: A soldier in Khirdet wears breastplate, sometimes with a small wooden shield.

Favored Weapons: Whips, nets, longswords, and short swords are commonly seen amongst the most skilled fighters of Khirdet. Particularly large warriors may use greataxes or greatclubs.

Favored Feats: Soldiers typically pick up the following feats: Combat Expertise (Improved Disarm), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (net, whip). Some learn Two-Weapon Fighting, while others concentrate on Trip or Improved Unarmed Combat (Improved Grapple).

Krakadöm

The military strength of the forsaken dwarves is divided into three main groups. The Stonehammers are an elite unit of heavy infantry, capable of devastating strength. They are accompanied by Black Quarrels, crossbowmen with a variety of exotic missiles. Finally, scouting missions are undertaken by Cliff Crawlers, lightly equipped dwarves who patrol the area around Krakadöm.

Favored Armor: Stonehammers wear plate mail. Black Quarrels wear breastplates. Cliff Crawlers wear chain shirts.

Favored Weapons: Stonehammers, as befits their name, bear warhammers. Black Quarrels use heavy crossbows, though the elite among them wield *thunder crossbows* (see **Relics & Rituals**, Chapter Five "Weapons"). Cliff Crawlers are skilled with throwing axes and short swords.

Favored Feats: Stonehammers typically learn the following feats: Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Endurance, Power Attack (Cleave), Toughness. Black Quarrels normally possess the following feats: Dodge, Endurance, Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Rapid Shot), Toughness. Cliff Crawlers often have the following feats: Dodge, Endurance, Point Blank Shot (Rapid Shot), Quick Draw, Toughness.

Lageni

Lageni is passionate about military tradition. Soldiers comprise 1/10th of its population, easily

CHAPTER ONE: A HISTORY OF BATTLE

four to five times the norm. While the War Colleges of fair Darakeene are significantly more sophisticated in their training regimen, the sheer scale of Lageni military is staggering.

Lageni has long been known for its cavalry, bearing the distinctive Lageni-hilted saber, or karabela. While originally employing swift cavalry chargers, the elite fighters of Lageni now favor heavy, powerful warhorses. Sabers are still common, though the use of bows and crossbows have come to dominate the elite Lageni forces.

Infantry and archers are vital components of the army, though they do not receive the same degree of training as does the cavalry.

Favored Armor: Lageni cavalry typically wear scale mail, though ranking officers may wear banded or full mail. Warhorses are similarly armored.

Favored Weapons: The cavalry of Lageni is trained in the use of the karabela (Lageni-hilted saber) and heavy crossbow.

Favored Feats: Cavalry are normally taught the following feats: Mounted Combat (Mounted Archery, Ride-By Attack, Trample), Point Blank Shot (Far Shot).

MANSK

While the riders of Mansk are overly influenced by their careless, wild abandon, they remain consummate horsemen. Many of the finest cavalry

officers of the Colleges either originated there or studied under Mansk natives.

Favored Armor: Mansk riders usually wear leather armor on all occasions, regarding heavier armor as cowardly.

Favored Weapons: Sabers and bastard swords are common in Mansk. The bastard swords in this region often have a slight curve and resemble oversized sabers.

Favored Feats: The deft riders of Mansk typically learn the following feats: Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Mounted Combat (Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge), Power Attack.

MITHRIL

Warriors of Mithril are trained predominantly under the aegis of paladins, Mithril Knights, and the Behjurian Vigil. Citizens are given weapon's training in order to bolster the militia, but the only other military forces are mercenary companies. The presence of so many paladins, vigilants, and mercenaries has fused into a unique military style common only to Mithril.

Favored Armor: Mithril fighters either wear light armor, particularly studded leather, or chainmail. Those who associate more with paladins may have heavier armor and steel shields, but these items are less common.



Favored Weapons: Fighters in Mithril frequently use longswords and twin short swords.

Favored Feats: Training tends to focus on mobility, even in those who pattern themselves after paladins. Many prospective paladins start as fighters. Cross-training with a level or two as a ranger is also common. Mithrilite fighters tend to learn the following feats: Combat Expertise, Dodge (Mobility), Power Attack (Cleave), Weapon Focus (longsword or short sword).

NEW VENIR

The Legion of Steel remains as a last testament to the former glory of the Venirian martial tradition. Derived from the Dancers of Steel in ancient Ledean times, this Legion excels at the longsword. They were once considered brethren to the War Colleges, until the advent of recent political unpleasantness.

See Chapter Two, "The Legion of Steel," for more information.

SHELZAR

Shelzar shares a number of cultural influences with Zathiske, and this extends to its military tradition. While in the past Zathiske formed large standing armies, its present situation mandates the use of small and independent units. Though Shelzar does not face occupation, the lack of strong discipline and organization, in combination with the same climate, produces a rather similar style of military. Shelzar also relies heavily on hired mercenaries for defense.

Favored Armor: Guardsmen of Shelzar normally wear loose clothing, suitable for the Cloth Dancing feat.

Favored Weapons: Though kukris of various sizes are seen in Shelzar, scimitars are much more common. Spearstaves are also frequently used.

Favored Feats: Shelzari guardsmen typically learn the following feats: Combat Expertise (Riposte), Dodge (Cloth Dancing, Mobility), Whirling Attack. Those focusing on the spearstaff learn the following feats: Combat Expertise, Dodge (Cloth Dancing), Spinning Blow, Two-Weapon Fighting.

SWELTERING PLAINS

The Urkhadi, a strange kind of half-orc who breeds true, have formed a fierce and disciplined military tradition. They are well suited to quick and rather deadly personal combat. Some train as hunters, blending into the surroundings until an opportune moment arises to attack.

Favored Armor: Urkhadi wear loose robes that can be used effectively for Cloth Dancing. A few wear hide armors as well. Though they are inured to the heat, minimal armor is still safest in their deadly climate.

Favored Weapons: Urkhadi warriors favor double weapons such as the spiked chain and their own version of the dwarven urgrosh.

Favored Feats: It is not unusual for Urkhadi to cross-train as rangers or rogues. Urkhadi warriors typically learn the following feats: Combat Expertise, Dodge (Cloth Dancing), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dwarven urgrosh, spiked chain), Two-Weapon Fighting.

TOE ISLANDS

The scourge of civilized waters, the pirates of the Toe Islands occasionally show a remarkable level of skill and tactical knowledge. Mercenaries and far-flung graduates of the Ledean War Colleges form the base of what military training goes on there.

Favored Armor: Pirates of the Toe Islands favor light armor, particularly chain shirts.

Favored Weapons: Pirates typically wield cutlasses, though rapiers, sabers, and scimitars are also common. Nets are a frequent second weapon.

Favored Feats: Toe Island warriors often gain the following feats: Blind-Fight, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (net), Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike (Improved Grapple).

UKRUDAN DESERT

Ukrudans have a fascinating warrior culture with murky origins. The warriors are typically on horseback, and many adopt a barbaric style of fighting reminiscent of the Horsemen of Vangal. The experienced fighters here have a discerning eye and discipline rare to the primitive fringes of Ghelspad.

Favored Armor: Ukrudan warriors sometimes wear loose clothing, adopting cloth dancing as a means of protection. They have also developed a loose wicker armor that serves well in the desert. Leather and studded leather is somewhat common, though it is only donned before a battle.

Favored Weapons: Kukris and scimitars are popular amongst warriors, though some wield the large falchion.

Favored Feats: Ukrudan warriors often focus on the following feats: Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (kukri), Mounted Combat (Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge), Power Attack, Skill Focus (ride).

URIA

The military of Uria is well known for its harrier knights. Coreanic teachings and the Order of Mithril have had a profound impact on Urrian military tradition. These influences have been adapted to aerial cavalry and to the demands of an island nation. Training in Uria is disciplined, matching the prestige of the War Colleges. Many of the core fighters of Uria function as infantry. They train on aerial mounts in the hope of joining the ranks of the Harrier Knights (see the aerial cavalier prestige class, **Scarred Lands Campaign Setting: Ghelspad**, Appendix: Prestige Classes).

Naval fighters focus on ranged attacks, preferring to fend off ships rather than engage in boarding actions.

The core military philosophy of Uria relies on a rather small number of elite soldiers, backed up by clerical and sorcerous magic. This strategy is effective due to Uria's relative isolation.

Favored Armor: Infantry, as soon as they can afford it, wear breastplate. Naval fighters wear studded leather, relying on cover while aboard ship.

Favored Weapons: Infantry and naval fighters are trained early in the use of the longsword, heavy lance, and composite shortbow.

Favored Feats: Infantry and prospective aerial cavaliers typically train in the following feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mounted Combat (Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge). Naval fighters usually learn the following feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Rapid Shot), Weapon Focus (composite longbow).

VERA-TRE

The martial philosophy of Vera-Tre is significantly shaped by the druids and rangers that protect its forest. Soldiers of Vera-Tre are divided into hunters and archers. Hunters are much like rangers, but with a more martial training. Many hunters are also Lodge-warriors, and the traditions are linked. The order of Jordeh is yet another influence on the ways of the hunter. Archers excel at quick strikes, as well as providing courier duties. With strong ties to the True Archers of Termana, it is the archers of Vera-Tre who gave rise to the Liliandeli — a small group of highly skilled archers. Both hunters and archers are likely to cross-train, making members of either group all the more effective.

Favored Armor: Hunters and archers wear little, relying more on concealment and surprise. Magic or druidic support also provides natural armor. Archers found elsewhere may wear elven chain.

Favored Weapons: Hunters use flint sickles, clubs and shortspears. Some are known to favor the quarterstaff or spearstaff. Archers use composite longbows and may carry a flint sickle or club.

Favored Feats: Hunters often gain the following feats: Alertness, Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack), Endurance, Quick Draw. Some adopt Lodge training, seeking to become a Lodge-warrior (see Chapter Two, "Lodge-warriors of Vera-tre"), while others may seek to join the knights of the Oak (see Appendix Two, "Knight of the Oak"). Archers typically gain the following feats: Alertness, Endurance, Point Blank Shot (Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Trick Shot).

Vesh

Vesh is home to a dizzying array of martial styles. Each province has different traditions that have developed in sometimes startling directions. The

influence of ancient Lede and the preponderance of rangers are major factors in military protocol. While the chaos of Veshian training lacks the refinement of proper War Colleges, it does provide a cauldron of experimentation. For their part, the Colleges look to Vesh for new innovations. The rapier and dagger style was first perfected in Vesh, and many believe the bent grip originated in Moor.

Favored Armor: Duelists typically wear masterwork studded leather armor. Infantry is equipped with chain shirts. Members of the cavalry normally wear breastplate. *Clothborn armor* (see Appendix Three), often worn by the Vigilants, occasionally sees use by duelists and infantry.

Favored Weapons: Traditional duelists favor a bent-grip rapier and shielded-grip dagger. Infantry carry longswords and shortbows. Cavalry wield bent-grip sabers.

Favored Feats: Traditional duelists are generally associated with the following feats: Combat Expertise (Riposte), Dodge, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse. Infantry typically learn the following feats: Alertness, Dodge (Mobility), Endurance, Point Blank Shot (Far Shot). Cavalry are usually trained in the following feats: Dodge (Mobility), Mounted Combat (Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample).

Zathiske

The citizenry of Zathiske are dominated, culturally and militarily, by Calastia. Zathiskans are accepted into the Calastian military, trained and indoctrinated. This has the advantage of putting a familiar face on local militia, and encouraging a feeling of belonging. Zathiskan military tradition survives however, with its style suited to dueling and skirmishes with titanspawn. Favoring quick swords and footwork, Zathiskan fighters also possess a fine morale and discipline in combat. Isolated rebel groups also draw on this martial tradition.

Favored Armor: Soldiers of Zathiske occasionally wear studded leather, but typically rely on loose clothing. The sweltering weather makes armor dangerous over long periods of time. Many of Zathiske learn some survival, so as to better function in the extreme heat.

Favored Weapons: The sight of a warrior dressed in light, baggy clothing, with a scimitar tucked into a sash, is common throughout Zathiske. Almost as common is the kukri sword, including a giant version used primarily for religious rituals.

Favored Feats: The elite fighters of Zathiske typically learn the following feats: Battle Cry, Combat Expertise, Dodge (Cloth Dancing), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (kukri sword, giant kukri sword), Whirling Attack.

WAR STYLES OF TERMANA

The military traditions of Termana have developed without the centralization that came with the Ledean Empire. Large nations have repeatedly warred across the land. And the might of the Charduni Empire clashing with the elves has shaped many of the military advances throughout Termana. With the Titanswar however, came the end or decay of many regions. Still, pockets of these traditions remain, some among expatriates in far-off Ghelspad.

CHARDUNI EMPIRE

The military traditions of Dunahnae see their ultimate origin in Termana, in the Charduni Empire. The core military caste of the Charduni functions as heavy infantry, with an accompanying large number of crossbowmen for ranged support. Cavalry are present in small but significant numbers, capable of mobilizing quickly ahead of patrols. War machines are common, and most charduni warriors receive at least some training in their maintenance and use. Military forces are buttressed with low caste charduni, slaves, and undead.

Favored Armor: Half-plate and full plate are common. Infantry usually carry a large spiked steel shield.

Favored Weapons: Infantry and cavalry all bear warscepters. Many also carry longswords. Special units use spiked chains or nets to capture slaves.

Other units utilize repeating crossbows

instead of warscepters, laying down deadly barrages to prepare for a charge.

Favored Feats: Infantry typically learn the following feats: Double Blow, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (warscepter), Formation Combat, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting. Crossbowmen are trained in the following feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (repeating crossbow), Formation Combat, Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot). Slaver units usually learn the following feats: Combat Expertise (Improved Disarm, Improved Trip), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Improved Unarmed Strike (Improved Grapple), Weapon Finesse. Cavalry are typically proficient with the following feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (warscepter), Mounted Combat (Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample), Skill Focus (ride).

KARSIAN

All areas of Karsian society are lead by women, including the military. Karsian armies are skilled in formation fighting, but have adaptable and mobile forces. Soldiers are trained in pike walls that can effectively shatter charduni cavalry charges or block undead. They can also function in small units to penetrate and strike at deep enemy targets. Karsian core forces are diverse, but elite fighters are primarily light infantry or mounted archers. Conventional cavalry and heavy infantry function as support for



these elite groups. Mercenaries also bolster national defense.

Favored Armor: Both infantry and mounted archers typically wear chain shirts. Irregulars are more likely to wear scale mail and use small shields. Some also carry tower shields, for use in tight formations.

Favored Weapons: Infantry, whether elite or conventional, prefer warhammers. They also carry longswords, glaives, or guisarmes when engaged in formation fighting. Mounted archers use composite shortbows.

Favored Feats: Elite infantry typically learn the following feats: Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack), Endurance, Formation Combat, Power Attack. Mounted archers generally train in the following feats: Mounted Combat (Mounted Archery), Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot).

Sylavael

These defenders are the last champions of discipline and military tradition amongst the forsaken elves. The core of Sylavael forces consists of heavy cavalry, with conscripts and militia comprising the heavy infantry. Commanders can form deadly pike walls against charduni attacks.

Favored Armor: The military of Sylavael favors plate, preferably full plate. Some more mobile forces compromise and use breastplate. Heavy infantry will sometimes carry tower shields for turtle formations.

Favored Weapons: Heavy cavalry relies on a heavy lance with a longsword for close-quarter fighting. Heavy infantry carry longswords or glaives, with a short sword for close fighting.

Favored Feats: Heavy cavalry is trained in the following feats: Formation Combat, Mounted Combat (Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample), Skill Focus (profession (commander)). Infantry of Sylavael usually learn the following feats: Dodge (Mobility), Endurance, Formation Combat, Improved Initiative, Quick Draw.

chapter two

The Colleges of War

Regions define military tradition due to a common exposure and culture. A number of martial groups may arise within a region, forming to pursue more specific goals. In the case of Lede and the War Colleges recruits came from all over Ghelspad, and these diverse students were then trained in standardized forms. While Lede is gone, the war colleges and other similar institutions continue — offering both a unifying presence and a place of innovation for the sundry techniques of combat.

— Elvid Rath, Historian of War for the Phylacteric Vault

The Ledean Colleges

The war colleges of the present have roots in the imperial mindset of Lede. People of many races and origins were brought under hegemony, a centralized culture. War colleges then arose as distillations of the diverse military traditions being introduced to Lede, with the intention of refining and improving upon them.

The War Colleges of Darakeene still maintain this outlook, placing themselves now as communicators of tradition. Mercenaries from all over Ghelspad, from many different nations, have a bond of loyalty that transcends these divisions. Graduates of any of the Ledean War Colleges are titled Disciples of War, and consider themselves, with reason, a cut above all others.

Training in the Ledean colleges traditionally takes nine years. PCs who join a war college are typically ready for graduation once they have mastered the feats taught by that school. This does not mean that PCs are

stuck inside until commencement, however. Most colleges accept, or even encourage, adventuring by promising students; and training in the field is a vital part of most curricula. In this way, it is easy for a PC to be schooled at the college between adventures.

Furthermore, new adventures and opportunities may result from the college itself. Missions for the college are often part of the tuition, and schools are paid well for the use of their students. This can work as an ongoing plot-hook for GMs.

Those feats marked with an asterisk (*) can be found in Appendix One; those marked by a cross (†) may not be selected as one of a fighter's bonus feats.

The Major Colleges

The major colleges keep current rolls of graduates. Graduates are considered lifelong members of a school, though the responsibilities vary. For the most part, the bond of loyalty is more of a personal matter. Particularly

BASIC FEATS

There are a number of feats that all of the War Colleges teach. These are often learned early on, depending on the individual student's aptitudes. Universally taught feats are: Battle Cry*, Military Training* (Advanced Military Training*, Formation Combat*), Prone Combat* and Study Combat Style*.

successful alumnae may find lucrative retirement from the field as instructors at their mother college.

CLAYBORN

According to legend, Clayborn was formed from the Legion of Clay, serving under the founders of Lede. Dedicated to Denev, they marked themselves with clay when initiated into the order. For much of Ledean history, Clayborn was the chosen college of nobles seeking command positions in the Legions. Swords and bows were typically seen as the province of nobility, and it is with these weapons that a Clayborn typically excels. While members now come from all levels of society, the traditions and teachings remain.

Clayborn warriors are broadly trained in skirmish fighting. While ideal as heavy infantry, they can also be used as archers. An armored Clayborn unit provides an intimidating force, whether on a battlefield or as city guardsmen. Nobles interested in a military career prefer Clayborn, though only the hardest are accepted.

One of the most prominent Clayborn warriors is Coronel Vana Irodan (*female human, Ari2/Ftr7, LN*), leader of the Legion of Ash's Ninth Cohort. Clayborn are overall well represented in the Legion of Ash, as well as in other military units all over Ghelspad.

Location: Clayborn College is a sprawling encampment, with numerous training fields, barracks, and supply stores. It is located about six miles northwest of Meliad in Darakeene.

Notable Traits: The colors of Clayborn are blue and white. A shaven head and finery are trademarks of the college, though some are allowed to keep a scalplock. Armor is elaborately engraved with interwoven patterns and pictograms of monsters and gods. Symbols of Corean, Hedrada, or Chardun, depending on the affiliation of the member in question, are worked into the pattern. This easily doubles the base cost of most armor, and is accompanied by long fur-trimmed coats. Masterwork weapons are the norm, and typically a Clayborn warrior bears a sword and a longbow. Members of Clayborn show a great love of luxury, but this belies their stern discipline.

Requirements: Though not a strict requirement, Clayborn students are predominantly human — with

a sizeable contingent of half-elves and a few half-orcs also being admitted. Potential students must pass rigorous entrance requirements and initial training. A prospective student must be proficient in all armors, the longbow, and at least one type of sword. Breastplate, half-plate, or full plate must be owned, along with a sword the student is proficient in and a longbow. Before graduation, Clayborn warriors are expected to have engraved masterwork armor, an engraved masterwork sword, and a masterwork composite longbow suitable for their strength.

Style: Clayborn's methods are harsh. It is considered the most demanding of the War Colleges, with fierce punishment of the least slip. The combination of this severity with teamwork and luxury creates a bond and strength that is legendary. Training begins with lessons in close-quarter melee, then moves into fighting in formation. Archery practice continues through the entire schedule, gaining focus near the end of the curriculum.

The following feats are usually taught at Clayborn: Improved Critical, Improved Shield Bash, Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot), Power Attack (Cleave, Improved Overrun, Great Cleave, Sunder), Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (longbow, sword; Exact Blow*, Weapon Specialization)

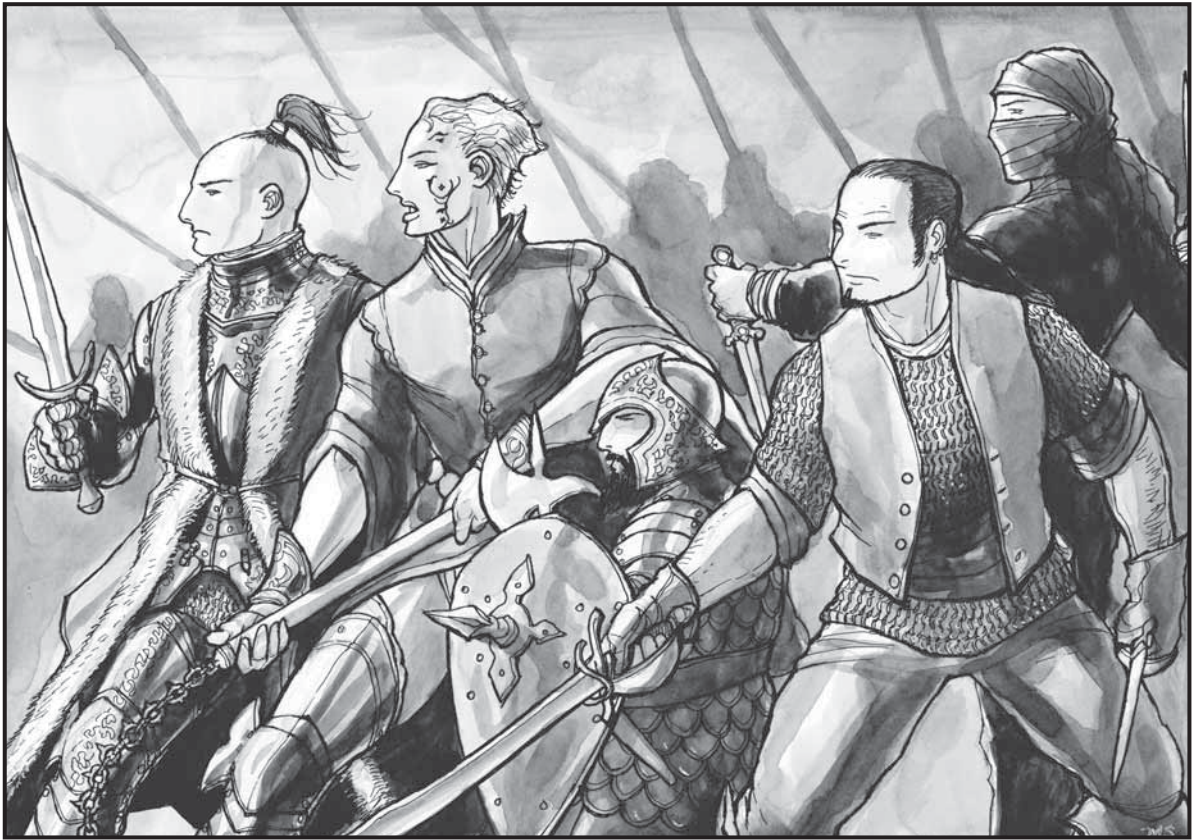
GLAMERHILL

In Ledean times, cross-trained fighters were quite common. Martial sorcerers, in particular, were produced by most of the war colleges. These soldiers could harness arcane power and craft mighty artifacts of war. Some of these colleges were blamed for stealing the power of Mesos, developing secret ways to draw on the power of the world. Glamerhill dates back to the Morian Dynasty and preserves much of that original spirit.

Illusions and other spells have seen military application since before even written records. The ability to distract, confuse, or harass an enemy is vital, whether by misdirection or by magic. Glamerhill graduates therefore find themselves in great demand all across Ghelspad, though many find work at home in Darakeene. One of the most famous Glamerhill fighters was General Connell de Swann (*male human, Ari1/Ftr9/Wiz3, LN*). His observations and memoirs of battle against the charduni are required reading at Glamerhill and all of the other major colleges.

Location: Glamerhill is located four miles northeast of Meliad. It is a small collection of buildings and training yards, with an excellent library. Of course, a large part of the college is devoted to magic. In addition to education, these buildings produce useful magic items for the school. Wizards from other cities are sometimes invited to give guest lectures for students or faculty.

Notable Traits: The school color is crimson, and crimson sashes are often added to whatever uniform a graduate serves in. Loose dagged sleeve cloaks are often



the only “armor” worn, though *clothborn armor* (see Appendix Three) is also a popular choice. The spiked chain is the signature weapon of Glamerhill, and some members also use rapiers. A few even specialize as crossbowmen. Male Glamerhill graduates are clean-shaven, and both sexes keep their hair short. Tattoos on the forehead and cheeks are also a common affectation.

Requirements: Glamerhill sets high requirements for prospective students, who must undergo rigorous testing in ordeals both academic and dexterous. Prior training in arcane arts is useful, but not necessary. Sorcery is officially discouraged, but promising sorcerers have been accepted.

Style: Glamerhill focuses much more on theory than do the other colleges. While arcane arts receive much attention, most outsiders do not realize the depth of military science taught to Glamerhill students. The martial style of the college is suited for close fighting, but the broader training of Glamerhill aims at placing graduates in command or tactical support positions. Early schooling mixes basic martial training with military science and arcane arts. The curriculum then focuses on martial skill. The lessons proceed to advanced military knowledge, such as command, and arcane experience. Students are usually taught wizardry with a specialization in illusions.

The following feats are usually taught at Glamerhill: Bind*, Combat Expertise (Disarm Riposte*, Improved Disarm), Combat Reflexes, Dodge (Cloth Dancing*, Mobility, Whirling Defense*), Exotic Weapon Proficiency

(spiked chain), Improved Critical (rapier, spiked chain), Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier, spiked chain; Exact Blow*, Weapon Specialization).

HAMMERDALE

Legend ascribes the origin of Hammerdale to the Thulkaber College, founded from the Clay Legion. Stories circulate that a show of cowardice by several prominent Clay Legionnaires led to their expulsion, whereupon they formed the rival college Hammerdale.

Hammerdale in its modern incarnation dates back to the end of the Charduni Empire. Several colleges faded into obscurity, the greater part of their membership slain in the wars against the charduni. A number of followers of Hedrada pooled their resources under the banner of Thulkaber. The name was then changed from Thulkaber, meaning loosely “the cupped hand of Thulkas,” to Hammerdale. A long history of smithing, a martial shield tradition, and the influence of Hedrada all combine to shape this college.

Location: Hammerdale is located 10 miles south of Meliad. It is a reclusive walled compound and visitors are restricted to a detached receiving area. Hammerdale is laid out much like the other colleges. Training yards are ringed by supply buildings, offices, and barracks. Less is known about the forges, or the numerous rooms that are supposed to extend deep under Hammerdale. Overall, there is some romantic mystery attributed to the college, at least by the general public.

Notable Traits: The Hammerdale banner color is brown, reflected in their uniforms and the occasional painting of faces with ochre. Hammerdale attracts many followers of Hedrada. The school also boasts the highest dwarven membership amongst the War Colleges. Hedradan imagery features prominently in banners and badges within Hammerdale, particularly the symbol of the two-headed hammer. Scale mail and various types of plate mail are common, as are spiked steel shields. Armor and weapons are distinctive, made with a bluish metal called azurite. The manufacture of azurite is a closely guarded secret of the college.

Requirements: Though faith in Hedrada isn't strictly a requirement, compatibility with Hedradan beliefs is recommended. Proficiency with a warhammer and all armors and shields is, however, mandatory. While not all Hammerdale warriors learn a great deal of smithing, an understanding of the tenor of metalworking and equipment design is regarded as vital. This requirement has practical reasons beyond the obvious, for much of the training of Hammerdale is steeped in smithing metaphor.

Style: This college has a straightforward curriculum. Students are evaluated and tested with great frequency, and classes are organized so that weaknesses can be corrected. The result is a disciplined soldier who understands his own strength and how to function in a group. Study focuses initially on mobility and general fighting, then shifts to mastering the use of the warhammer. Final training stresses proper shield defense in combat.

The following feats are usually taught at Hammerdale: Endurance (Robust*, Stalwart*), Improved Shield Bash, Merciful Strike*, Power Attack (Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun), Two Weapon Fighting (Double Blow*, Improved Two-weapon Fighting, Spinning Blow*), Weapon Focus (hammer; Weapon Specialization).

Plague

Many regard the Plague College with suspicion and dislike. Regardless of public opinion however, graduates of this school of stealthy killers are in high demand. Assassination, poison, espionage, these are the trades of a Plague graduate. They are also well taught in the use of their arts in battle. While it is vital to many wars that the powerful wizards and commanders be incapacitated, Plague students do not focus on death. Missions can vary considerably, and many Plague instructors concentrate on the value of morale, propaganda, and stirring dissent. Slaying the reputation of a great man is often more effective than spilling his blood. That said, when push comes to shove, quick and efficient death is the final weapon of the Plague. The college insists on dues, as

well as adherence to certain rules. These rules generally concern courtesies graduates are to show one another. Some of the greatest graduates of the Plague College are Silverblack, Calcine Wind, and Welcomer Jack.

The history of the Plague College is unclear, obscured by often contradictory tales. This confusion is likely assisted by the actions of the graduates. The earliest known mention of the college comes from Darakeene accounting records from shortly before the Divine War. Scholars generally assume that the Plague College, in some form, dates from the Vhaerith Dynasty of Lede. Some members of the college may know its true history, but most only learn false accounts. Some maintain that the college has ties with the Cult of Ancients, but there is no proof of this.

Location: The Plague College operates a number of compounds around Meliad. The facilities are moved around and reorganized on occasion. The exact layout is unknown to anyone not actively working at the college, including most graduates. Training areas are maintained in Meliad and neighboring cities.

Notable Traits: The colors of the college are green and black. Worship of Belsameth is understandably common, so many wear thin silver circles as homage to her. Light armor is the norm, and more prestigious members make use of *clothborn armor* (Appendix Three). Daggers, crossbows, shuriken, kukri, and saps are commonly used arms. Most graduates are known only by epithets, and one of the duties of the College is overseeing these names. Graduates of the Plague are commonly referred to as "serpents." "The Serpent" is often added to distinguish a Plague graduate, such as "The Serpent General" being used to denote military rank.

Requirements: Plague College is demanding, requiring a sharp mind as well as a strong and agile body. Proficiency in simple arms and light armor is required. Most members are humans or half-elves, but other races are well represented. Half-orc graduates are especially hireable, as they are rarely suspected of stealth.

Style: Training starts with practice in reconnaissance and various other covert arts. There is then a shift to martial training, with a final series of lessons to combine all learned skills. At this point, the student is ready to learn the art of stealthy killing, with a focus on the techniques used to sneak into war-time camps and eliminate sentries and commanders. Alumnae typically gain a mixture of rogue and fighter levels before proceeding in the assassin class (see the DMG).

The following feats are usually taught at Plague: Combat Expertise (Improved Feint), Dodge (Mobility), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (shuriken), Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot (Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run, Trick Shot*), Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (shuriken).

Wake

Wake College considers itself the center of naval tradition in all of Ghelspad. While the defection of much of its navy in 125 AV tarnished this claim, the fact is that no other institution trains sailors as well. Wake College dates back to the military reforms of the Ombael Dynasty of Lede. The school was once much bigger, supporting the Gharra Fifth Legion in its dominance of nearly half the coastline of Ghelspad.

The school produces marines, naval architects, sea captains, and a host of other naval occupations. While a War College, Wake takes a broader approach in its teaching. Currently, the absence of many high ranking Wake graduates and the conservative use of the navies limit the college's efforts. This, and the resultant crack-down on discipline, has drained the normally effusive mood of the college. The most famous living graduates of Wake College are in Karria. In many ways, the truest form of Wake tradition is with them, though it would be treasonous to say so in Darakeene.

Location: The only War College not located in Meliad, Wake College is situated just outside of Cantontown. It shares docks with the city, and members once mingled openly with dockhands.

Notable Traits: The house colors of Wake are blue and green. Wake students were once known as fun-loving, rowdy folk who buckled down when needed. Now they are jumpy, fearing the extremes of discipline but recently imposed. The signature weapon of the school is a shielded grip saber (see Appendix Three). Marines carry guisarmes for taking a beach and initial boarding, some using nets to trap enemies. They normally don breastplate or chain shirts, depending on their mission. Sailors wear loose, baggy clothing. Along with the saber, many carry daggers for cutting line or throwing.

Requirements: Prospective students are expected to have extensive experience with sailing, as well as knowledge of simple weapons. By graduation, Marines must become proficient in light armor and all simple and martial weapons.

Style: Students first receive a basic training, testing their sea-legs and simple martial skills. For the most part, this involves a lot of grunt work on merchant ships, serving to defray the college's expenses. Once a certain level of mettle is shown, the students are sent to other coastal settlements to learn the intricacies of naval combat. Sailors on an officer track are taught command and military science, while others focus on close-quarter fighting. Marines also learn formation tactics. With the current cloud over the house, students are kept closer to Cantontown and training exercises are limited.

The following feats are usually taught at Wake: Combat Expertise (Riposte*), Dodge (Cloth Dancing*, Mobility, Spring Attack, Whirling Defense*, Whirlwind Attack), Endurance†, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike (Improved Grapple), Mili-

tary Training* (Formation Combat*), Weapon Focus (saber; Weapon Specialization).

The Minor Colleges

Though the five major War Colleges are the most visible, there are a large number of other schools. Many have waned in importance due to losses in either the war against the charduni or the Divine War. Others are new or reborn, drawing on the threads of older traditions and attempting to build upon them. Indeed, several of these styles aren't even recognized as being "official" War Colleges any longer, as they have dwindled to insignificance or have been technically absorbed into the larger collegia of Darakeene.

IRON WIND BROTHERHOOD

The Iron Wind Brotherhood is one of the oldest fighting orders, tracing its lineage from the War Colleges of Lede. Its history begins with the tradition, started in the Albriannin Dynasty, of generals using fans to communicate to lesser officers across the battlefield. As this practice grew, it became popular to reinforce these fans so they might serve as a suitable secondary weapon in their own right. It was from this innovation that the iron fan was born. Wearing an iron fan tucked into the belt became a symbol of authority, and such fans became highly ornate and symbolic.

In time, it became commonplace for military commanders to bring their war fans into places where more obvious weapons would be unseemly. Thus the military leaders were never truly unarmed, and many officers became more skilled with using an iron fan than they were at swordplay. It was from this rise in popularity of the iron fan that the Iron Wind Brotherhood came into being.

In modern times the Iron Wind Brotherhood has declined somewhat in numbers. However, the use of the iron fan is still firmly entrenched in the traditional warcraft of Darakeene and Calastia — and when the legions muster, orders are still given in the ancient ways of Lede.

Entrance into the Iron Wind Brotherhood is primarily given to men, and an applicant's breeding is carefully considered. In ancient days the Brotherhood allowed only the finest officers into its exclusive ranks, and this exclusivity keeps its membership small even today. Of the current war colleges, it is only Clayborn that still has a few "eccentric" professors passing on these techniques. For the most part, however, this discipline is taught in small training facilities unaffiliated with any of the war colleges.

Location: The school maintains a number of visible public training facilities in Meliad, Llangwyr, and Catlaigh, though these are little more than training halls owned by masters of the fighting style. It is a poorly held secret that one large meeting hall is in Ard Macha.

Notable Traits: The colors of the Brotherhood are dark gray and white. Loose gray robes have become common outside of the War Colleges, with one or two iron war fans tucked in a sash. Those who learn this art within Clayborn dress as their college-mates do. The crafting of a truly artistic war fan is considered a laudable goal for Brothers, while other personal ornamentation is minimized. The scalp is traditionally shaven, though this is not a requirement.

Requirements: Potential initiates were once required to be male (mainly because leadership in war was a masculine affair in the Ledeian Empire), but this has changed in the years since the Divine War. Humans are still heavily favored, however. Recruits must prove themselves skilled in dance, acrobatics and general grace before being accepted. The new Brother then pledges loyalty to the school. At present, a member's obligations are limited to dues and sending occasional reports of their actions.

Style: Brotherhood members are often hired as bodyguards and assistants, given their focus on personal combat. They also work well as military instructors. Training given to pupils involves dance and direct practice, with relatively little theory or military science. Many Brothers have been known to enter monasteries to also gain skill as monks.

The following feats are usually taught in the Brotherhood of the Iron Wind: Combat Expertise (Disarm Riposte*, Improved Disarm, Riposte*), Dodge (Cloth Dancing*, Spring Attack, Whirling Defense*), Exotic

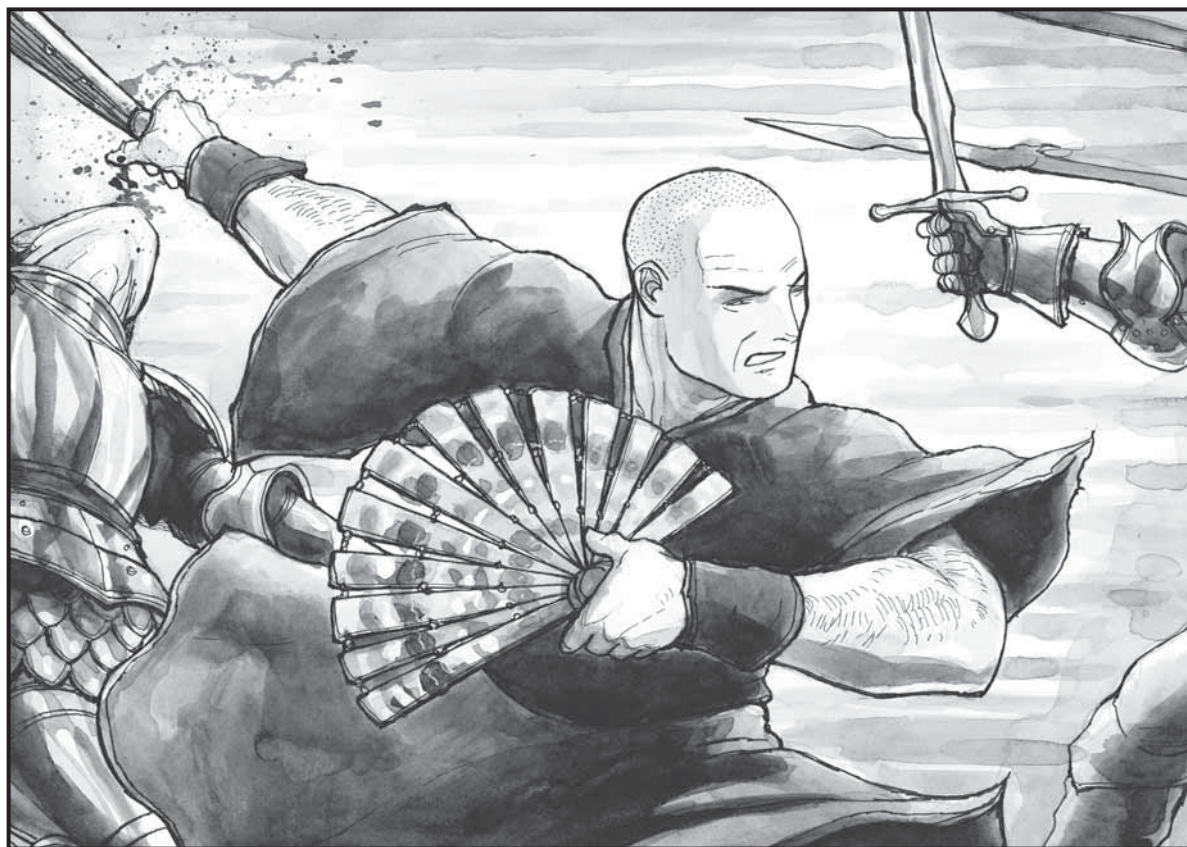
Weapon Proficiency (improvised weapons, iron war fan), Improvised Weapon*, Quick Draw, Two Weapon Fighting (Spinning Blow*), Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (iron war fan; Weapon Specialization).

LEGION OF CHAIN

The Legion of Chain dates back to the very beginning of the Empire of Lede. As the empire sent its war machine to conquer more of Ghelspad, the emperor had more and more captives to deal with. He created the Legion of Chains, led by generals moved from other legions and populated by the vast amount of war prisoners amassed by the empire. The emperor, in an attempt to improve morale in this rag-tag legion, offered full citizenship in the empire to any legionnaire who served for 20 years. The Legion of Chains was often the first to fight in the battlefield, and Chain Legionnaires had an almost fanatical zeal.

Rather quickly, all future slaving operations were turned to those who were the first to meet a new civilization — the Legion of Chains. As ex-slaves, this was often beneficial, as Chain Legionnaires were some of the best propagandists in the empire. A form of ranking developed among the legion, determined by who brought more slaves into the empire, and the most charismatic Chain Legionnaires retired in splendor when their time was served.

The Legion of Chain's influence diminished when the empire had stretched to her maximum extent. With no new nations to conquer, few new slaves were to be



had. As the empire waned, the only new slaves available were criminals conscripted into service; and these miscreants lacked the same enthusiasm for the empire the Legion once had. Thus, Chain Legionnaires became a darker lot in the last days of the empire.

In modern times, the Legion of Chains recruits very few new members and the legion as a whole suffers from lassitude. Chain Legionnaires tend to be charismatic and charming, but often hide a darker, selfish side. Chain legionnaires are known to maintain independent training facilities outside of the War Colleges, but they can most often be found among the ranks of Plague. Those with arcane ability are often found in Glamerhill — indeed, it is due to the influence of Chain legionnaires in the past that Glamerhill's preferred weapon is the spiked chain.

The Legion of Chain is presently at low ebb. Its leader, Colonel Gaf Freelorn (*male human, Ftr12, N*), is a vocal supporter of the Emperor and maintains some good business contacts with the Legion of Ash. He is widely recognized to have a great hatred for the Legion of Crimson's Lord-General Malcom Degarre, though it is not generally known why.

Location: The Legion of Chain has its main council houses in Meliad and Cantontown, with training fields outside of both. While presently more of a war college than a full legion, there are many rented out barracks in Ard Macha should membership increase once more.

Notable Traits: The Legion of Chain's colors are yellow and crimson, with a stylized fist gripping a chain as their standard. Legionnaires usually wear brown scale mail or breastplate and carry the eponymous spiked chain. A design of crimson chains is tattooed around each recruits neck over the period of their training, only complete when they are full members. This represents that they are owned by the Legion, and no other may claim them. All Chain legionnaires carry two pairs of manacles at their belt, as part of their traditional uniform.

Requirements: Recruits can be of any race, and a notable number of half-orcs sign up. Proficiency with simple and martial weapons as well as light and medium armor is required. Candidates must be quite strong.

Style: While discipline is harsh, rules are rather even-handed within the Legion. There are designated "free times," when formalities are relaxed and the lowest initiate may chat, respectfully, with a general. Military science receives some attention, but the majority of the focus is on capturing and subduing opponents. Besides training with the favored spiked chain, saps are also basic issue and some learn the use of the bola as well.

The following feats are usually taught in the Legion of Chain: Bind*, Combat Reflexes, Combat Expertise (Disarm Riposte*, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Improved Unarmed

Strike (Improved Grapple), Merciful Strike*, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (spiked chain; Weapon Specialization).

Legion of Steel

The Dancers of Steel developed in Venir from a special, ritualized retelling of ancient sword battles. Eventually, this stylistic, acrobatic art form evolved into an actual style of combat, incorporating whirling, dance-like blades. When the Venirian province joined the Empire, the group was renamed the Legion of Steel and made the official bodyguards of the Emperor. Though not originating within the war college traditions, the Legion adapted. With the fall of Lede and the efforts of the Empire of Venir to take charge, the Legion became more prominent. Then came the charduni. Long, costly wars with the Charduni Empire drained the strength of Venir. Since then, the Legion survives only as a weak reminder of what it once was.

The Legion of Steel has had long-running disputes with the Brotherhood of the Iron Wind. Accusations of stolen lore or "poaching" recruits have been fired back and forth. Both schools have similar influences, but each sees the other as abusing or misrepresenting core precepts. Currently, the distance between the two groups keeps matters civil. The Legion of Steel maintains both independent training facilities and is also technically part of Clayborn.

Location: The major quarters of the legion are a few miles outside of Femulyae in New Venir. This is where most recruits are trained. Other quarters are maintained in Morian and Qadri.

Notable Traits: Members of the Legion of Steel grow their hair long and tie it back. A hazy pastel blue mark, called a Sky's Kiss, is applied to the cheek or forehead. Female members may also choose to paint their lips with the blue dye. The pigment lasts a few weeks, and the mark is then renewed in a brief ceremony — as a symbol of the recipients continued vigilance in service to the Legion. The tradition may date back to Gulaben worship, as a way of invoking her speed and clarity, though none, of course, remember this. The design of the facial markings varies depending on affiliation within the group. Those favoring Belsameth adopt her symbol, but the most common emblem is a rough oval. Many Legionnaires now wear scalemail and banded mail, but traditionally only robes were worn. Longswords with intricately carved blades are the signature weapons of the Legion of Steel. The carved body of the blade is said to cut through the air particularly well and produce a light but strong sword. In actuality it functions much like any longsword, though in the hands of a Legionnaire the carvings catch the light and the sword appears to dance in the hands of its master.

Requirements: Recruits must be adept at quick movement as well as dance. The Legion once rejected any non-lawful recruits, but that requirement ended after the Divine War. Proficiency with a longsword is necessary.

Style: Becoming a Legionnaire of Steel requires strict discipline and strict diet. Hours of every day are spent dancing with weights. Recruits often collapse in exhaustion many times during the early years of their training. Constant practice and drilling continues even after graduation, to keep the force in top shape.

The following feats are usually taught in the Legion of Steel: Combat Expertise (Riposte*), Dodge (Cloth Dancing*, Mobility, Spring Attack, Whirling Defense*, Whirlwind Attack), Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (longsword; Weapon Specialization).

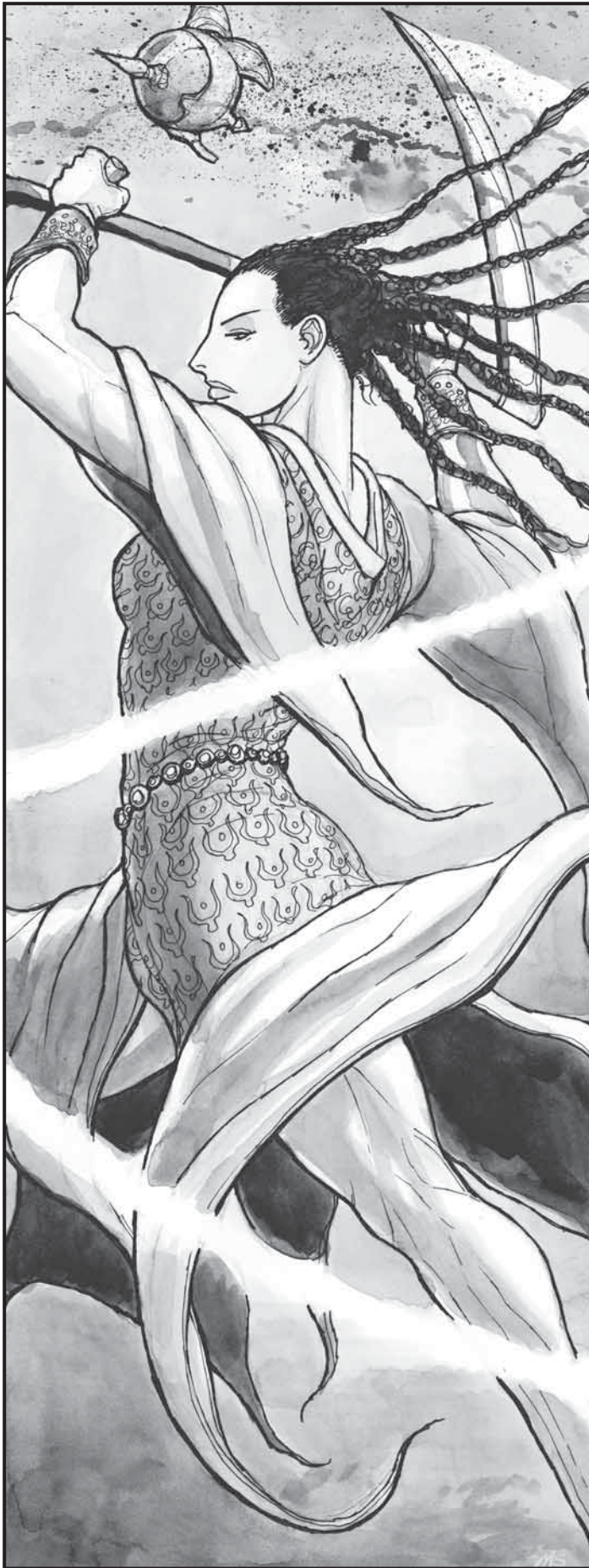
NINE STINGS COLLEGE

Two-weapon styles were common to several groups of elves around the beginnings of the Ledeian Empire. During the Vhaerith Dynasty, one of these factions took a position within human society as weapon masters, and started the Three Stings College. By the Morian Dynasty the group had attained a cult-like status, but political rivalries almost destroyed the college during the time of the First Tarkhuul Dynasty. Renamed the Nine Stings College, the school has been fairly marginal ever since. Currently, the college is more of a specialty school; indeed, its skills are not represented among the true War Colleges at all. Its leaders nurse old feuds with most of the other colleges, particularly Clayborn and Plague. Nine Stings does maintain good relations with the Sisterhood of the Scythe, one of its few allies.

Location: The original Three Stings Haven was in lost Aurimar itself. After the empire fell, Nine Stings College had several significant buildings near Meliad. The Divine War brought heavy losses. Afterward, other colleges bought out these buildings. Now the school is limited to cheap holdings in Ard Macha.

Notable Traits: While once preferring elves and half-elves, the bulk of the members are now human. Graduates are called either brothers or sisters. Black outfits, chain shirts, and twin short swords are standard. Hair is short, and tattoos are common upon the face. Tattoo magic is available to prestigious members, with *Tanil's grace*, *Denev's sending*, and *Madriel's light* being the most common. A high degree of school loyalty is instilled in members, and it is expected that brothers and sisters will lay down their lives for the school.





Currently, the college is not really in a position to demand this loyalty, however.

Requirements: Potential members are first scrutinized carefully. The Nine Stings College demands honorable service, and suspicious characters are not accepted. The current condition of the school, however, has necessitated more flexibility, particularly with well-paying students. Initiates must be proficient in short sword and light armor and must prove themselves able to move quickly and with grace.

Style: Nine Stings instruction involves rigid discipline. Students are kept in isolated compounds for several years, with limited outside contact. The aim is to focus attention and loyalty on the school. Most students learn skills from both the fighter and rogue classes. Wilderness lore and tracking were once a frequent part of training, but are now rarely taught; still, the school does receive more than its fair share of rangers anxious to improve their already prodigious twin weapon skills.

The following feats are usually taught in the Nine Stings College: Combat Expertise (Improved Feint, Riposte*), Improved Initiative, Two Weapon Fighting (Double Blow*, Improved Two Weapon Fighting), Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword; Weapon Specialization).

Sisterhood of the Scythe

In Ledeian times, druidic circles devoted to Denev were fairly common. Their faith was seen as a somewhat less dangerous, more sedate and "safe" worship. This led to its popularity in many urban areas. Throughout the dynasties of Lede, the followers of Denev maintained chapterhouses in various cities. These provided useful gathering places for the faithful and contact points for potential initiates. Quite early, however, followers found a need for bodyguards and protection against the efforts of other druidic orders. Initially, warriors devoted to Denev were employed, and soon began to train at the chapterhouses. Over time, as graduates of the war colleges joined the faith, training methods were shaped and improving upon. By the fall of Lede, the druids had formed an impressive and popular War College.

In the struggles afterward, the chapterhouses were abandoned. The need for dedicated fighters to protect Denev's faithful did not falter, however. The Sisterhood of the Scythe is the largest of the remaining druidic colleges, originally located in the north of what is now the Stricken Forest. The sister-

hood takes contracts for work with little obvious rhyme or reason. Many think the sisters simply take work when a need for funds comes up. The current leader of the school is an elf, Maratah of Bielhe (*female elf, Drd4/Ftr8, NE*), though her last public appearance was in 124 AV. Like the Nine Stings College, the skills of the Sisterhood are not taught in any of the current War Colleges.

Location: As is appropriate to an organization devoted to Denev, the “school” is located in groves and forest dwellings all over Darakeene. There are a few ancient buildings where Sisters congregate on special occasions. They celebrate ancient traditions dating back to before the Empire of Lede, or so the Sisters claim. These buildings have no real worth, and most are nothing more than depressions strewn with ancient stones. Members of the Sisterhood foray into the cities from time to time, to gather useful information and potential recruits.

Notable Traits: The Sisterhood’s colors are brown and green, worked into most of their uniforms and equipment. Naturally, their chosen weapon is the battle scythe. Armor is typically only loose robes, and their whirling style of battle is quite a sight to behold. The Sisters wear their hair long, braided intricately and allowed to whirl and whip about in battle. Sisters will often work with elves from Vera-tre, and occasionally assist Vigils.

Requirements: Potential sisters must be female. Humans and half-elves are the most common, but there have been a few half-orcs and dwarves as well. A prospective member must worship Denev and prove themselves through a series of rites and tests. Finally, in order to be accepted the woman must prove herself skilled in woodlore and the use of the scythe, and possess the required strength and grace.

Style: The Sisterhood of the Scythe trains through example, instructive rituals and stories. Testing becomes increasingly perilous, particularly near graduation. Sisters are not abandoned to these ordeals, but rather work with full members in hunting down titanspawn and performing other dangerous work. Many Sisters also learn the skills of the druids whom they so closely associate with.

The following feats are usually taught in the Sisterhood of the Scythe: Combat Reflexes, Dodge (Cloth Dancing*), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (scythe), Military Training* (Blindside*, Formation Combat*, Phalanx Formation*), Polearm Trip*, Power Attack (Cleave, Great Cleave), Weapon Focus (scythe; Weapon Specialization).

WARRIORS OF WHITE FIRE

The Legion of White Fire was the ultimate force of magician-warriors in ancient Lede. Fed by graduates from Glamerhill and other war colleges, the White Fire Legion combined magic and knowledge with great skill in battle. Units were often tasked to other groups, providing logistic support or assisting in a larger combat mission. Toward the end of the Empire, several large units found themselves isolated in central Ghelspad,

just north of Venir. They settled and formed a large mercenary company, training their people in the traditions of the legion and competing heavily with Glamerhill for recruits. When the opportunity came, the Warriors of White Fire allied quickly with Venir. Along with the Dancers of Steel, they helped fend off the charduni, taking heavy and continuous losses in the process. Though severely weakened, they were prepared to recover — when the Divine War began.

Currently, the efforts of Calastia have weeded out the remaining schools of the Warriors of White Fire. All that exist now are a few-dozen members in eastern Darakeene and, supposedly, secret headquarters along the edges of the Blood Steppes and Haggard Hills. It is possible that the Warriors will reestablish themselves, and at least one notable member, Anastasia Crux (*female half-elf, Ari2/Wiz3/Ftr4, CE*) has some clout in the court of Emperor Klum. Glamerhill, once a bitter rival, spares little thought to the White Fire, considering them merely a fading remnant of the Divine War.

Location: The Warriors maintain a small chapterhouse in Meliad, also the home of Anastasia Crux. Most of the efforts to revive the school are focused there. The original centers of the school were in Aurimar. After the fall of Lede, the Legion set up compounds in what are now the Blood Steppes. These compounds were first overrun by charduni and then obliterated in the Divine War.

Notable Traits: Warriors of the White Fire are a diverse lot. The badge of their school is a silver or white stylized flame, normally worn at the left breast or worked into other symbols. Some members prefer to keep their school affiliation secret. Several other war colleges have low opinions of the Warriors and open membership may mean a loss of promotion or lack of employment opportunities. Warriors of the White Fire prefer ranged weapons, particularly longbows. Those that can afford such wear *clothborn armor* (see Appendix Three), but most wear no armor at all.

Requirements: When the school was formally established north of Venir, entrance requirements were quite low out of necessity. Most members were children of legionnaires, or otherwise willing to throw in with the Legion. Over time the standards have risen. In the present day, a fair amount of scholastic and martial talent is required. Family connections improve the chances of entry. Those lacking prior arcane and military training will have to prove themselves or pay more to enter. While the school officially disapproves of sorcerers, any form of arcane spellcasting is considered acceptable.

Style: Training varies depending on the venue. A traditional curriculum is still used in Meliad, and utilizes a rather scholastic approach. Combining arcane arts with military science, cerebral lessons are interleaved with exercises meant to illuminate specific principles. Whenever possible, instructors send older students on patrols to gain real-world experience. In many cases,

however, training is more akin to apprenticeship. Most Warriors of White Fire are adept at wizardry, and often specialize in evocation.

The following feats are usually taught to the Warriors of White Fire: Blind-fight, Combat Expertise (Improved Trip), Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot), Polearm Trip*, Two Weapon Fighting (Improved Two Weapon Fighting, Spinning Blow*), Weapon Focus (quarterstaff, rays, touch attacks; Weapon Specialization).

The Other Styles

The colleges are not the only, or original, proprietors of distinct military traditions. Some styles are significantly older, and there are numerous groups with specialized forms of combat. Their bond may be through family ties, religious devotion, or ethnic loyalty. There are, thus, thousands of styles throughout the Scarred Lands. What follows is merely a sampling of the largest and most notable.

BLUE HUNTERS

This style developed as a way to combat wizards and clerics. The current tradition in Ghelspad has its roots in hunter legions developed in Lede, under the command of the Conventacle of Ages — seeking to slay those who offended the rule and power of the titans (at least, so they claimed). The legions dissolved shortly after the end of the Empire, but units throughout Scarn adopted their lessons and strategies. Several strategists have written texts on the subject, and current Blue Hunters draw on these and many other sources.

The Hunters are divided into two significant branches. The first trains what are, in effect, wrestlers. They rely on immobilizing the target and, hopefully, removing any chance for spells to be utilized. The second group developed from army tactics; units of anti-mage archers would be formed to attack spellcasters as soon as they made an appearance on the battlefield. Such archer units are matched with spotters who are able to see through possible invisibility or illusionary magics. Even if a target is invisible or disguised, archers can still flood the area with arrows.

Location: Many major armies maintain Blue Hunter groups, as do the larger mercenary companies. While wizards and clerics are not enthusiastic about units specializing in their death, they certainly find good use of such units against their own enemies. Perhaps the only major army to not have such units is the Calastian army; the Calastian battle-mages reserve the privilege, of destroying rival spellcasters, for themselves.

Notable Traits: Members often tie a red silk sash around an arm or weapon. "Blue" is seen as a symbol of unnatural or spectral forces, while red indicates flesh and living, natural matter. *Wraith touch* magic tattoos are common (see **Relics & Rituals**, Chapter Five, "Tattoo

Magic"), as are antimagic charms and protection. Portions of *see invisibility* or *detect magic* are standard gear. Armor varies, but is usually light to allow for quick attacks. Strong hunters will rely on gauntlets to do damage when grappling, possibly spiked ones. Others will use nets, bolas, spiked chains, or other weapons ideal for snaring opponents. Sticky balls of wax or tar are used to seal up the mouths of mages once they are grappled. Archers prefer composite longbows.

Requirements: Blue Hunters are fairly adaptable. Stronger melee recruits are taught to focus on direct grapples, while more agile melee recruits are encouraged to use bolas or nets. Both types must have proficiency in simple and martial weapons, as well as with light armor. Archer recruits are all trained in the same manner, and their requirements are rather straightforward — they must have proficiency in longbow.

Style: Blue Hunters often learn the intricacies of the Spellcraft skill, allowing them some recognition of magical forces. Hunters involved in close combat are taught a wide variety of hunting techniques, as well as skirmishing. Many serve as city guardsmen while in training, gaining experience and real-world practice. Blue Archers are taught in army units, and are trained to fight on large battlefields. They are also less likely to cross-train, and tend to rely on the magical support of others.

Strong melee hunters usually learn the following feats: Blind-Fight, Combat Expertise (Riposte*), Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack), Improved Unarmed Strike (Improved Grapple, Stunning Fist), Iron Will.

Agile hunters usually learn the following feats: Blind-Fight, Dodge (Mobility), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bola or net), Iron Will, Point Blank Shot (Precise Shot, Shot on the Run, Trick Shot*), Weapon Focus (bola or net).

Archers usually learn the following feats: Improved Initiative, Military Training* (Advanced Military Training*, Formation Combat*), Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Trick Shot*), Weapon Focus (bow; Weapon Specialization).

DAWN GUARD

The Dawn Guard originated from a number of secretive organizations that formed in western Ghelspad, during the slow fall of the Ledean Empire. These groups were forced to develop covert methods of fighting under the increasingly paranoid eye of the Empire.

Allied with the Conventacle of Ancients, the Dawn Guard never achieved any real status as a college. It did, however, function as a training center for spies and criminals. At the same time, the Guard maintained a doctrine of honor. They thought of themselves as deceptive by necessity, guarding the world of day from the dangers of night. Portions of the Guard distanced themselves from the Conventacle of Ancients as the Empire broke down. Their doctrine became even more serious

with the fall of the Empire. Members began to see themselves as the secret shapers of civilization.

The spread of the charduni, and the desperation that spread engendered, focused the martial philosophy of the guard. Anything, including tent pegs or sashes, could be a weapon in the hands of a Dawn Guard. This proved quite effective, and the Guard assisted Hedradan exemplars with training commonfolk to use their hands and makeshift weapons to defend themselves against the dark dwarves. These endeavors caused the Dawn Guard to expand, and members soon existed all over Ghelspad. Many were involved with other enterprises, but still found the Dawn Guard useful as a neutral ground to discuss tradecraft and barter for information.

The Divine War crippled and scattered the Dawn Guard. No longer an organization in any meaningful sense, it has become a philosophy with as many interpretations as there are members. Still, the Dawn Guard remains a popular military style for criminals, guards, and mercenaries.

Location: The original headquarters were in Aurimar. After the fall of Lede, the major schools of the Dawn Guard were located in Meliad, Shelzar, and Calas. At their greatest, these schools contained perhaps a dozen members and 20–30 students each. Since the Divine War, members can be found in pretty much any human-dominated region of Ghelspad, though it may take some special effort to track down instructors.

Notable Traits: Dawn Guards make a point of not being recognizable as such. Given the demands of the style, members are necessarily agile and insightful. Graduates have a series of code phrases, though these are somewhat regional and thus unreliable.

Requirements: The greatest requirement of a potential Dawn Guardsman is great agility and a keen perception. Recruits are also expected to be proficient in simple and martial weapons. Dawn Guard training was once limited to male humans, but that restriction is no longer enforceable.

Style: Training consists of rather repetitive drills in various maneuvers. Theory is taught, but is specific to the teacher. Cross training is common, and also dependent on the instructor. Students being taught with burglary in mind will be trained in disguise and how to use elements of each disguise as a weapon. Such students will usually be cross-trained as rogues. Other students may be instructed in a more philosophical approach to combat, with religious overtones and possible cross training as clerics or monks. Overall however, the most common regimens do focus on criminal enterprise.

Students are usually taught the following feats: Blind-fight, Combat Expertise (Improved Feint, Improved Trip, Riposte*), Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack, Whirlwind Attack), Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Combat, Improvised Weapon*.

FELDAR GUARDSMEN

Feldar Joh was a guardsman in Hedrad in 67 AV. Originally from Durrover, he developed a unique flail and morningstar style of combat that has become popular throughout eastern Ghelspad. The training is primarily applicable for armed humanoid opponents engaging in quick skirmishes — ideal for guards or small mercenary groups. A large number of Feldar Guardsmen join the Legion of Crimson.

Location: There is a sizeable training center in Hedrad, but most Guardsmen are taught by graduates directly. Guardsmen can be found in Vesh, Durrover, Hedrad, Mithril, and even Lageni and Calastia.

Notable Traits: Guardsmen wield light flails and morning stars and wear blued scale mail. Symbols of Hedrad or Chardun are common. There are few other distinguishing traits.

Requirements: Feldar Guardsmen must be agile, and individual teachers may have other demands, depending on the circumstance.

Style: Training is rather straightforward. A novice first becomes familiar with the flail and morningstar. Then the student is trained using them together, combined with a great deal of basic combat exercises. Even before graduation, students serve in some practical capacity — as a guard, or as an assistant under their instructor.

Feldar Guardsmen usually learn the following feats: Combat Expertise, Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack, Whirlwind Attack), Improved Initiative, Improved Shield Bash, Military Training*, Two-weapon Fighting (Double Blow*, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting).

HEADSMAN SCHOOL

Zathiske was once home to a wide variety of exotic military traditions. One of the less popular, but still quite powerful, was the Headsman School. The school was charged with the task of training executioners. Those failing to graduate with honors became general executioners, responsible for removing hands, performing torture, or overseeing hangings. The elite were Headsmen, the only official performers of beheading — the execution style favored for merchants and noblemen. It was considered a saving of face to be executed by a notable headsman, while noblemen sent to a hanging stained the honor of their surviving family.

With the disruption of the Divine War and the chaos afterward, the Headsmen grew into an honor guard of sorts. While not really well versed in warfare, they had accrued a great deal of fear and prestige. Crucial mistakes in defense against the Calastians destroyed this honor. The Headsmen managed a few brutal killings of Calastian officers but they had no real impact on the war. It did, however, spell the official end of the Headsman School once the Calastians took charge. Currently, Headsmen still perform executions, but their school has been stripped

of reputation and is overseen by unsympathetic Calastian "observers." The college is slowly being transformed to strengthen its ties to Chardun worship, remaking it into a beacon of Calastian culture.

A branch of the Headsman School has been established in Hollowfaust. The elite headsman of the royal family were left to ply their skills as swordsmen after Zathiske fell. It is known as the School of the Headman's Sword (see **Hollowfaust: City of Necromancers**, Chapter Two, "The Civilian Quarter").

Location: The official buildings of the Headsman School are located in northern Quelsk, though there are important quarters in Pahjam for elder members.

Notable Traits: Headsmen are typically large. Very large. Full graduates wear long beards, worked into two braids that curl outward almost like tusks. The few female members grow their hair long and keep it pulled back into two braids. Faces are always covered with a "sanguine cloth," a bright red silk mask, with eyeholes or patches of thin black cloth that can be seen through. Jewelry is common, as are piercings all over the body. A series of ritual scars and tattoos mark out the lives of everyone the Headsman has executed. The torso is usually left exposed, though women may wear some simple support. Lesser graduates wear a rust-colored hood and loose clothing, with much of the chest exposed. Tattoos of birds in flight, representing spirits of the executed, normally cover the chest, indicating the measure of experience. Headsmen favor a featheraxe, ideal for their line of work. Some, particularly lesser graduates, use more diverse weapons — such as knives, or weight and rope — for other lines of work.

Requirements: Strength is the primary requirement of a Headsman. Loyalty and honor to the school is vital, though instructors expect they can make up for any lack with a healthy dose of beating. A raw recruit needs no martial proficiency, but more seasoned characters must be familiar with martial weapons before the school will consider acceptance. Though the school favors male humans, women and members of other races can work to gain admittance. Dwarves are typically rejected, as they are falsely considered too short to use a featheraxe effectively.

Style: Beating, beating, and more beating. Students are subjected to constant physical punishment to purify their spirits and toughen their bodies. The end result is a group of highly arrogant, nasty, brutal characters who consider all outsiders as worthless. Which is, of course, the point.

The following feats are taught in the Headsman school: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (featheraxe), Improved Critical (featheraxe), Iron Will, Power Attack (Cleave, Finishing Strike*, Sunder), Toughness, Weapon Focus (featheraxe; Weapon Specialization, Exact Blow*).

LODGE-WARRIORS OF VERA-TRE

In the most ancient days, according to the lore of the wood elves, all elves spoke openly with animals and

plants. Though much of this old knowledge is currently known only to those close to Denev's heart, the traditions are still kept alive in the Ganjus by the Chorus of the Ages. The Lodge-warriors are the holders of the first lessons in the art of combat, gifted by the brethren of the elves. The skills of the Lodge-warrior, though distinct, show some kinship to the ways of rangers, the Jordeh, and other defenders of Vera-tre.

Lodge-warriors, in particular, cultivate a fighting style that mimics that of one of the Four Eldest Beasts — the four animals who were the first to be birthed by Denev in the dawn of the world. More than a fighting style, however, the lodges teach a life philosophy in keeping with their patron First Beast.

To observers, there seems to be an interesting parallel between the martial teachings of the Ganjus and those of the Exemplars. There are some clear similarities, and many lodge-warriors cross-train as monks. The elders of the Lodges of Vera-tre consider the Exemplars simply other holders of the true lore that predates both Exemplars and elves.

The Lodges are both a military and social institution. Elves are frequently members of a lodge due to family history, philosophical ties, or other factors. Lodge warriors are often drawn to their path as a way to seek more spiritual fulfillment, while enjoying the purity of purpose of serving the Mother and the Ganjus itself. Banding with druids, bards, and the Jordeh, these defenders of the wild commonly provide military support to more esoteric groups whose objectives match their own.

Leaders in each lodge are known as Keepers, and are inevitably incarnates. The true authority of each of the lodges, however, is the incarnate who is the reincarnation of that First Beast represented by the lodge. Because these druids also serve as the Verdant Seat of Vera-Tre (or one of the Heirs thereof), the elite of the Lodge warriors often serve as their royal guards and hunting companions.

Location: The headquarters of the lodges are all located within a day's journey of Vera-tre. Members visit Vera-tre frequently to participate in rituals and parlay with other groups.

Notable Traits: There are four lodges in Vera-tre, corresponding to the Four Eldest Beasts. Though the "mother lodge" is most significant to a lodge-warrior, movement between lodges and training in the different styles is encouraged. Some warriors outside the Ganjus choose to interpret this tradition differently, refusing to "contaminate" their "purer" teachings. The four lodges are Bear, Hawk, Stag, and Wolf.

Bear lodge-warriors wear their hair somewhat short and unkempt, with temperamental but often quite jovial demeanors. They wield spiked gauntlets made of wood, often with bracers to protect both forearms.

Warriors of the Hawk Lodge wear their hair long, with molted feathers twined into the free flowing strands.



Hawk-warriors blend quiet watchfulness with brutal, sudden action. While hawk-warriors are some of the wisest of the lodge-warriors, the youngest members can be cruel or rash. Hawk warriors wield shortbows and beaked clubs (heavy maces).

Stag lodge-warriors are typically large and tough individuals, with short cropped hair and often wearing finely-made cloaks. They are proud and distant, even for elves, a trait that sometimes verges on impropriety toward Denev. Stags run long distances, while carrying short bows and spears. They are also known for riding massive stags into battle.

Wolf Lodge favors long hair, braided back and kept scrupulously neat. Fetishes and charms are often woven into these braids, recording accomplishments and sometimes transgressions. They are amiable and sometimes playful unless greater focus is needed. Wolf-warriors work well in groups and favor quick attacks as part of a long and patient strategy. Flint knives and bolas are commonly used weapons.

Requirements: Prospective members are overwhelmingly wood elves. Other elves and half-elves may be accepted, but it is unusual. Initiation into one of the Lodges requires some knowledge of animals and the wilderness, as well as speed and strength. Additionally, the would-be Lodge-warrior must either be sponsored by another member of the Lodge, or must be able to prove that an ancestor belonged to the Lodge, something that most modern wood elves can easily do.

Style: Induction into a lodge has heavy religious trappings. Physical exercises are often ritual performances of ancestral stories.

Bear lodge-warriors sometime cross-train as barbarians, and learn the following feats: Endurance (Robust*, Stalwart*), Fur-like-Dusk*†, Great Fortitude, Improved Unarmed Strike (Deflect Arrows, Improved Grapple, Stunning Attack), Merciful Strike*, Power Attack (Cleave, Improved Overrun, Sunder), Toughness.

Hawk lodge-warriors are invariably excellent archers and learn the following feats: Alertness, Battle Cry, Dodge (Mobility), Improved Staple*, Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run, Trick Shot*), Weapon Focus (bows; Weapon Specialization), Wings-of-Fire*†.

Stag lodge-warriors learn the following feats: Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (spear), Lightning Reflexes, Mounted Combat (Mounted Archery, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample), Stag-of-Seven-Tines*†, Weapon Focus (spears; Weapon Specialization).

Wolf lodge-warriors occasionally cross-train as rangers, and learn the following feats: Alertness, Battle Cry, Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack, Whirlwind Attack), Endurance (Stalwart*), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bola), Expertise (Improved Trip), Military Training* (Advanced Military Training*, Formation Combat*), Moon-in-the-Eyes*†.

MULTICLASSING FIGHTERS

Many classes benefit from learning the skills of a fighter; likewise, many fighters seek to expand their effectiveness by learning the abilities that another class has to offer.

- **Barbarian:** The technique and precision of a fighter is a frightening thing to behold, but even more formidable is that skill combined with the ferocity of a barbarian spirit. Throughout Albadia, the Blood Steppes, and the other wild reaches of Ghelspad, skilled barbarians are the source of legends. The War Colleges themselves often study these groups, seeking to improve on and utilize their methods.

- **Bard:** Bards are crucial to the function of most armies. Lifting sagging spirits, their inspiration can turn the tide of battle. In Vesh and Darakeene, a number of fighters have a bardic warrior tradition harkening back to pre-Ledean times. Skilled and knowledgeable, with a smattering of useful magic, these sophisticated fighters prove excellent spies, guards, and leaders.

- **Cleric:** Followers of Corean, Chardun, and Vangal, the gods of war, commonly blend the precision of fighters with the divine power of the cleric. They may also craft magical arms as part of their duties. These militant clerics are common in Mithril and Dunahnae, as well as among the Horsemen of Vangal and the justicars of Hedrad.

- **Druid:** In the Ganjus and amongst the cannibals of Khirdet, druidic warriors blend wild power with deadly technique. The Ganjus hunters and Lilliandeli use the gifts of Denev to walk unseen in the forests, ready to protect with quiet efficiency. The wild Khetans use their magics to confound and snare potential victims, while their vicious attack hounds are both companions and a means to corral foes. In both cases, the combined techniques are rather effective. Fighter-druids are perhaps best known in "civilized" nations as members of the Sisterhood of the Scythe. This path is useful for those lacking the desire needed to devote their lives to service, but who still wish to utilize druidic techniques.

- **Monk:** Masters of personal combat, those who blend the teachings of war colleges with monastic training are highly effective. The fluid grace and iron discipline of a monk combines extremely well with the techniques and tactics of other martial styles. A number of groups, such as the Maktarque of the Bleak Savannah, have integrated both these professions into one unified technique. The origins of many of these cohesive styles date back to the Charduni Empire and the teachings of the Exemplars. The city of Hedrad, in particular, is known for having schools that teach a unique blend of naval fighting and Exemplar lore. One major advantage of this cross-training is that it requires less discipline than pursuing a purely monastic path.

- **Paladin:** Amongst the faithful of Mithril and Hedrad, paladins dominate military tradition. Particularly in Mithril, however, a large number of mercenaries work alongside these noble warriors, assisting in the cities' defense. The proximity of the two groups has led to blended techniques. Fighters with a strong spirit have learned to combine divine-imbued ability with martial prowess. This type of training is more common in eastern Vesh and in a few mercenary companies in eastern Ghelspad. In Mithril proper, breaking off training as a paladin is not well received.

- **Ranger:** Fighters who excel at speed and agility, more than sheer mass and muscle, often gain ranger training. With skills befitting a scout and experience in the field, these fighters are effective in ambushes, patrols, and reconnaissance. Woodland fighters are common in the Ganjus, Vesh, and other isolated regions.

- **Rogue:** Agile fighters are well served by considering lighter combat styles. Combining the skilled techniques of a fighter with the precision of a rogue is quite useful. Light techniques allow a character to have more options in combat, such as feints, while retaining the advanced martial skills of a fighter. A number of war colleges teach these techniques, and they are quite common in Vesh and Shelzar.

- **Sorcerer:** Poorly regarded in most quarters, those with the talent for sorcery may find combining it with martial training quite necessary. A variety of schools of martial sorcery were once common, particularly in the Ledean Empire and, later, in the days of the Sorcerer-Kings of Aurimar. Glamerhill, one of the Darakeene War Colleges, originated from these martial-sorcerous schools. In the present however, such links are brushed over and Glamerhill focuses exclusively on martial wizardry. Martial sorcery favors archers and agile fighters, though strong fighters can do well with judicious protective magic.

- **Wizard:** Agile fighters, with a head for more scholarly pursuits, are well suited to study the arcane arts. With appropriate magics or items, they can combine spells with martial prowess for deadly results. The old Ledean colleges particularly encouraged this kind of cross training in their archers and scouts. In modern times, the Calastian battle-mages and the Glamerhill College of Darakeene are the most well known inheritors of this tradition.

Lumbardi Style

Vesh considers itself home to military traditions just as fine, if not finer, than those of Darakeene. In the past 80 years, a number of refined techniques and schools — particularly those dealing with dueling — have formed in Vesh. Maestro Lumbardi of Rika established one such school in 132 AV, and it has become rather popular despite fierce competition. Currently, stylish guardsmen and noblemen practice Rikan Dueling throughout Vesh.

Location: Maestro Lumbardi of Rika has schools in all the major cities of Vesh. A small school was started up in Ard Macha, in Darakeene, but burnt down in a mysterious fire.

Notable Traits: Lumbardists wield a single rapier, and wear a chain shirt, studded leather, or no armor at all. A proper Lumbardi rapier is a Rikan blade with a shielded grip. Graduates often have a squared circle tattooed on the inside of their right forearm, a symbol representing some of the stances of the style.

Requirements: Prospective members need to pay well (1,000 gp for a complete course) and be proficient with a rapier. They must also prove to be fast in hand, foot and eye.

Style: Lessons vary depending on the teacher. The approach is intellectual, with a great deal of reading before students are even allowed to wield a weapon. Speed drills and fencing practice then polish skills further. Contests with other schools and styles are common, particularly in Rika.

Students are taught the following feats: Dodge (Cloth Dancing*, Mobility, Spring Attack, Whirling Defense*, Whirlwind Attack), Expertise (Disarm Riposte*, Improved Disarm, Riposte*), Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

True Archers

The high elves of Termana had long ago become the center of the most advanced skills of archery. Among their accomplishments was the *Kyalhia Erianna*, or “Arcane Archers.” Though the brotherhood so named perished in the Titanswar, their lore remains in Uria and Vera-tre. There was a good deal of influence between Ghelspad and Termana, and some of the skills of the Liliandeli and others in Ghelspad have a kinship to the arts of Termana. In the present day, the forsaken practitioners of true archery are scattered throughout Termana and Ghelspad. A few serve on in Sylavael.

Location: The original schools of the True Archers lay in northern Termana, now sunk beneath the waters. Currently, there is a center of formal training in the city of Utel in Sylavael.

Notable Traits: True Archers are often deceptively agile, even by the standards of elves. They are characters of few words, communicating mainly through gestures and nods whenever possible. Dedication and discipline shines in the eyes of a true archer, even if that light was dimmed by the Divine War. Tattoos commonly mark personal achievements. A simple band around the arm denotes entrance as a true archer, with a second band placed when arcane archery is learned. These bands are further ornamented to record other important events in the life of the archer. The oldest true archers have arms and chests covered with tattoos, invariably one band after another. Magical tattoos are also frequently used, particularly *Tanil's grace* and *Madriel's light*. Archers wear little armor and usually wield a longbow, though some prefer shortbows or composite bows.

Requirements: Traditionally only full elves were allowed to join the True Archers. In modern times, pragmatism has overturned tradition in many cases, and half-elves are inducted as well. Great agility is imperative for a potential archer. Proficiency with a longbow or shortbow is required, as is demonstrating at least some ability at arcane magics. Previous experience with sorcery or as a bard is considered adequate qualification for arcane skill.

Style: Discipline is required. Those unwilling or unable to follow lessons are summarily dismissed. In modern times, pressure from the military leaders of Sylavael has encouraged readmittance, but each dismissal earns a student a lasting stain on their reputation. Training usually starts with fundamental archery skills. At an appropriate point, students lacking arcane training study wizardry. True archers are guided toward gaining skill in the arcane archer prestige class (see the DMG), but some leave before doing so. Whether outcasts or due to isolation from teachers, these archers may focus on developing martial skill, or cross training in other ways.

True archers usually learn the following feats: Dodge (Mobility), Improved Initiative, Improved Staple*, Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run, Trick Shot*), Weapon Focus (bow; Weapon Specialization).

chapter three — MERCENARY — COMPANIES

Don't sneer at me, pikesman. I'm here to save your miserable hides. Yeah, I'm getting paid plenty of gold to do it, but why else would I be here? Understand this — the loss of some of your precious gold ensures that this damned place will still be around in the future when those orcs come boiling up out of the hills. Wars are always fought with mercenaries, and we're as faithful as your gold is good. My blood will run just as surely as yours on this battlefield. Now, do you want to show me a good place for my men to set up camp, or shall I just choose a spot?

— Lieutenant Alishia Brazenpinion, Mercenary of the Hawk

Mercenary groups are often disdained by other militaries, particularly national armies. This owes more to patriotic fervor than a genuine analysis of the facts. Armies are maintained depending on the demands of a given nation. The citizens themselves primarily defend small or sparsely populated countries, being roused in times of war to protect their own land. More organized governments structure paid service as a term of months per year, or a specific time period a citizen serves the military before retirement. The largest nations however embrace the professional soldier, paid from tax monies so that the citizens need not fight. The difference between a paid professional soldiery and mercenaries is, thus, largely an emotional distinction.

In modern times mercenaries provide an especially vital function in Ghelspad. Since the Titanswar, few nations have been able to field sizeable armies. Further-

more, the need to defend borders often leaves internal regions vulnerable to titanspawn attacks. Mercenary companies can recruit and train in more prosperous areas, then make themselves available to others. Weaker nations can thus focus on strengthening their economy, paying for military assistance rather than trying to set up their own defensive infrastructure. This saves the time and resources needed for instructors and training. In addition, the wide variety of companies in Ghelspad allows nations to shop around and find a group suited to their situation. Mercenary companies can even provide instruction for established armies or untrained citizenry. In several cases, retiring mercenaries have become the foundation of national militaries.

Critics before the Titanswar often complained that mercenaries preyed on the weak. Mercenary bands were painted as more interested in looting and pillaging than

protecting a nation. History, however, shows that whatever unprofessional behavior mercenaries might have engaged in, they were far from alone — as many national militaries were just as culpable of being destructive. After the Titanswar, criticism waned. Mercenaries disbanded to bolster local defense, providing an essential seeding of military skill across Ghelspad. Mercenaries are used today in nearly every region. While the vast ranks of Ledean legionnaires remain in the popular imagination, it is upon the backs of mercenaries that Ghelspad regains its vitality.

The origins of mercenaries are as diverse as the companies themselves. Many groups were originally national armies. The most common of these are the Ledean Legions. The Legion of Ash formed from legions around Darakeene, remaining tied to the War Colleges and continuing on as a mercenary company. The Legion of Chain dwindled, becoming a mercenary company even before the complete end of Lede. A number of other legions became regional armies, but many have either been absorbed or destroyed in the wars since. The Legion of Steel remains as the strongest survivor of this process.

WAR IS MONEY: LIFE AS A MERCENARY

Mercenaries are paid to protect. Simple? Not really. We aren't paid to kill, we aren't paid to die. We are paid to make others feel safe. Sometimes this means we get cut to ribbons under the sword, sometimes it means we put on a parade and wave to the children. It's because they don't have the time or money for their own military, at least nobody good. So they hire us.

Do the job. No more, no less. If you want to be a great and noble hero, saving the hides of villagers from bandits, do it on your own time. Or make sure to be paid in gold. Life is too short, and it's easy enough to make enemies without looking for a new dance partner. Contrariwise, what you do reflects on all of us. Abandon a post, and you are sure to find your head abandoning you — by my own hand, if I have the say of it. There are plenty of other fools ready to make a good living, if you don't have the stones for it.

Business is business. Yes, you were slaying people left and right last week. And today, their family comes looking for you. If you aren't paid, it isn't business. Lose them, if you can. Or buy them a drink, you never know who might hire you next. But if they don't understand business, get your comrades and we'll teach them. On the other side of the coin, you lose a friend in a raid, that's business too. Reprisals are not business... unless you get paid. In which case, enjoy it.

— Captain Galius Jokar, Crow Company at Mithril

The life of a mercenary is a good one. Or, more accurately, less bad than the lot of most in the Scarred Lands. With a job in high demand, many employment

opportunities, and reliable pay, mercenaries often have safer, healthier lives than everyone around them. They are armed and trained to meet the struggles civilians are helpless against. Titanspawn and raiders, after all, seek the vulnerable, not armed opponents.

MERCENARY STRUCTURE

Many mercenary companies encourage a high degree of discipline and self-control, seeing their task as not simple profit but a vital and honorable service. Unsurprisingly, in almost all cases the reality is far from this ideal. Corruption in all its forms is part of the history and make up of the mercenary profession, and this was particularly evident in the chaos immediately following the Divine War. Since then, the stronger nations have kicked out, incarcerated, or in some cases executed, the worst offenders. Mithril and Hedrad have strict rules, particularly for breaking agreements. Calastia harshly punishes mercenaries who fail in their duties, though bribes for desirable agreements are fairly common.

Most mercenary groups consist primarily of warriors and other fairly untrained personnel. The elite, particularly the Legion of Ash, draw their membership from the Ledean colleges. Between these two extremes are many companies that maintain professional soldiers, the largest being the Legion of Crimson.

The experience of a mercenary depends primarily on the structure of his company. Small mercenary companies are much like any band, with the most experienced or charismatic in command. The commander may simply have the social skills vital to landing good jobs. Small companies typically specialize as guards, city defenders, scouts, or patrols — as each of these services requires a different composition of skills. Larger companies may be more structured, with experienced men being placed in groups by competency. The largest organizations may move groups around to form larger forces, similar to the operation of many national armies. A horseman may be used as a scout for a caravan, protected by archers and light infantry from his same company. Later, the same horseman may be tapped as a courier.

In loosely organized groups, training is rather rough. Mercenaries pick up whatever they can, and rely on a casual camaraderie. A strong and persuasive, or intimidating, leader can keep disagreements from erupting. Bonds can be tight, as each mercenary relies on the others for survival.

Larger groups can be more impersonal, demanding an attachment and loyalty to the organization as a whole. Even in these companies, bands of mercenaries will associate, forming personal bonds. Large groups may have extensive training programs for their soldiers, providing valuable military skills. For fighters interested in training, mercenary companies thus offer a major alternative to War Colleges and national militaries.

MERCENARY PAY

Mercenaries vary considerably in ability. Most mercenary duties consist of patrols, guard posts, or escort of caravans. These jobs are continuous and pay modest weekly amounts. More dangerous assignments do not have a set pay structure.

Mission pay is typically about 1/10th the treasure value of the encounters the employer expects. Treasure gathered along the way is usually fair game as per looting rights. When treasure is unlikely or off limits, normal pay should be higher to compensate — possibly even being the entirety of the treasure value of the encounters. Payment for missions may be given up front, 50/50, or after successful completion. There may be a kill fee, a guaranteed wage if the mission becomes impossible. The details of a contract depend on the availability of work, the bargaining position of the mercenary commanders, and many other factors.

Regular mercenaries are of the warrior NPC class (DMG, Chapter 4, "NPC Classes"). The vast bulk of mercenaries are comprised of 1st-level warriors, each paid 2 sp a day. Warriors with useful or unusual talents are paid 3–4 sp a day. Cavalry, for example, are paid 4 sp a day, and some mounted archers are paid 5 sp daily.

Mercenary officers are usually 2nd-level warriors or better. Core classes of 1st level fighters, rangers and other martial classes are also typically officers. Warriors are paid 6 sp per day at 2nd level, plus another 3 per extra level of experience. PC classes receive 6 sp per day at 1st level.

PC classed characters above 1st level are the mercenary elite. Warriors with unusual skills may qualify, but they are rare. Elite are not typically posted on a continuous basis. When they are, they

easily make 5 sp per day per level. However, these posts are typically quite dangerous to warrant such skilled protection. Elite are more likely to do mission work than extended assignments.

Mercenary groups may have nonmilitary personnel for a variety of purposes. Cooks, craftsmen, porters, and others are often on the company payroll, providing dedicated work. These assistants are paid much like other hirelings (see DMG, Chapter 4, "Hirelings"). Small companies simply hire workmen as they are needed. The largest groups are much like armies, needing to place workers in company compounds and forts.

Normal duties might be occasionally dangerous, but for the most part a mercenary rarely encounters violence. Some posts are particularly hazardous, however, such as scouting in a known hotbed of titanspawn activity. Pay may be increased by half or even doubled in such situations.

Regular mercenaries usually surrender 1 sp per day of their wages to their ranking officer. This officer, in turn, passes at least 50% of this amount up to higher ranked leaders, and this continues all the way to the top. In many units this tithe is rolled back into the group, paying for barracks or other goods.

Mercenary units can be evaluated to determine their overall cost per day. Characters interested in hiring units often have to pay a certain amount up front. A respectable mercenary company might require a month's salary before starting work for an employer they do not know well. Leaders of a company are typically responsible for punishing internal infractions, allocating pay, and maintaining the unit. They also take the orders from the employer and command the unit accordingly.

Their regimen often fuses regional traditions and lessons taken from schooled military.

Mercenaries are always on the look out for jobs. Two types of employment are attractive to a mercenary. Lengthy, stable, and relatively safe appointments, such as serving as a town guard, guarantee that a mercenary won't starve. Deadly, quick jobs, such as rescuing a noble from titanspawn, offer great rewards. Mercenaries prefer safety, but the dangerous job offers may pay well enough for retirement or at least provide needed gear. Most groups alternate, maintaining relatively modest positions for much of the time while coasting on the money from the occasional risky venture.

The reaction of civilians to mercenaries is generally positive, assuming the mercenaries are there to protect

them. After all, these warriors have significantly and visibly helped save the lives of the innocent repeatedly throughout Ghelspad — albeit for a fee. Some patriots disdain mercenaries as malcontents, inferior to a proper army, but even they still regard mercenaries as a necessary convenience.

MERCENARY COMPANIES

Below is a selection of mercenary companies, great and small, from around the Scarred Lands.

THE BARBERS OF DARDALE

The Barbers have had a strange history. Originally they were nothing but what their name suggests; bar-



bers. A fraternity of groomers established in the lowlands of Durrover, the Barber Guild served royalty, well-to-do merchants, and bridal parties.

Durrover has never been known for excessive fineries, however, and the Barbers often had to resort to other work. In time, the Barbers became a front for assassins and thieves, serving their lord in Dardale. The group waned with the coming of the charduni, and was almost gone by the end of the Divine War.

Soon after the War, a mercenary captain named Dreorn formed a company in Dardale. He drew on his family's connections with the old Barbers to create a fierce image. With badges depicting razors, and elegantly groomed beards, the Barbers of Dardale earned a reputation for truly deadly service.

Under the leadership of Ayar Dreornson (*male human, Ftr14, NE*), the 300-odd Barbers are currently devoted to the defense of Durrover. Barbers are skilled in the Finishing Strike, used with lethal effect to quickly and efficiently dispatch adversaries. When combined with war wizards, the Barbers can cut through an enemy force at frightening speed.

The Cerulean Company

Formed in 144 AV, this group has its origins in the eclectic style of its founder, Weela Sherm (*female half-elf, Rog3/Ftr7, NG*). A native of southern Darakeene, she honed her skills at battle from the air — relying on potions and magical comrades for *flight*. Though her

skills were not unique, the fact that she trained her entire company to do likewise was. By the time her mercenary group was established, she had acquired a reputation for combining magic and martial skills in unusual ways.

The Ceruleans number over 200, and each is trained in combat while flying, invisible, or under a host of other magical conditions. However, the overwhelming majority of their time is spent like any other mercenary company. Guard duties and escorting caravans are the most common assignments. Members are predominantly first or second level warriors, though there is an elite cadre of about 30 fighters. This group each has at least one *potion of flight* ready for important battles, but the cost requires this to be a last resort. One particularly effective stunt of the Ceruleans uses cover, such as a wall. An archer with the feat Shot on the Run flies up, fires, and then dives back down before the enemy can react (assuming none have held actions).

Weela herself has a *ring of flight* and often stages elaborate stunts with her lieutenants. Her showmanship and political efforts are needed, given the dominance of the War Colleges. Because of the need to keep a presence in the eye of potential employers, her headquarters are in Meliad. The group has accepted postings all over Darakeene, and is looking to expand.

Weela has set the rates of the Cerulean Company at three-quarters normal cost, but members do not have

to divide their wages with those above them. Instead, she draws on her dwindling inheritance to cover the extra expenses. Whether her bid for prominence survives the competition of the Legions, and other respectable groups, remains to be seen.

The Company of the Hawk

It is thought that this mercenary company had its origins amongst the nobility of Vesh, back in the day of the Golden Kingdoms. There, the noble sport of hawking had been refined to a near-arcanic skill. With the stripping of titles brought on by the union of Vesh, many nobles had to seek out an occupation. Many became elite mercenaries. Those with a mastery of hawking found their talents quite useful in a military capacity, and the Company of the Hawk was born.

With approximately 400 members, Hawks are not suited for direct field engagements. They are consummate hunters however, excel at reconnaissance, and are capable of harassing enemy forces with brief engagements. Durrover has commissioned most of the company for the past 10 years. The traditional headquarters are in the cities Rika and Carmon, both in Vesh. With the present mission against Calastia, most active administration is done in Lave — with grounds in Rika serving as a repository and recruitment center.

A typical Hawk wields a longsword and dresses in studded leather. Members wear a badge depicting a hawk in flight, though this may be hidden when stealth is needed. Speed and mobility is vital to the company. While hawking is the passion of the company, other animals are trained and cared for as well. Many members are adept on horseback, able to charge into a skirmish and then ride away quickly to draw enemies into an ambush.

Hawks are elite, and they know it. Like the raptors they bond with, these mercenaries are apart from the world around them. Most are members of nobility, though the bloodlines may be rather thin. A number of nationalities are represented, with a good portion hailing from Darakeene and a few from Durrover. Pride, grooming, and dedication are required of every member. Most Hawks train and work toward joining the elite ranks, as the prestige class mercenary of the Hawk (see Appendix Two), though a small fraction focus on other duties.

Even the lowest experienced members are 3rd-level fighters; and at least a quarter of them are members of the mercenary of the Hawk prestige class. Lead by Baron Agien of Aethis (*male human, Rng5/Moh10, N*), an austere blond fellow from the northwest corner of Vesh, the company is well known to allies and foe alike.

The Company of the Peacock

The Peacock Company is one of the more elite mercenary groups in Mullis Town. Composed of Madriel worshippers, they are lead by the Veshian knight Lady

Kamali Ocheas (*female human, Ftr9, NG*). Wearing breastplate and wielding longswords, they provide both law enforcement and aid the city in military defense.

The Peacock Company is an example of mercenaries used as highly visible law enforcement. They are paid on a continuous basis, based on normal pay for their experience. In exchange, they enforce the peace, patrol, and act in defense of the city alongside the established military. As they are paid reliably, the Peacocks maintain their equipment in good working order. The elegant central cadre performs as an honor guard at festivals of Madriel. Many onlookers do not even realize how formidable a fighting force they represent.

Recruits obviously must show a reverence for Madriel and all she stands for. The company inspires a great passion for their work. Nearly all members are fighters, averaging 2nd level, and there are also a number of Madrielite paladins. The company will pay for elite instructors to further the skills and development of its mercenaries. Many of these instructors come from the Legion of Crimson and the Vigil. Some 60% of the members are women, and the company provides one of the more encouraging opportunities for female warriors.

The Crows

This company is primarily found in and around Mithril. A dour group of black-clad mercenaries, the Crows specialize in combating undead. With connections to the underclass and enjoying official patronage, the 100 or so Crows have a dependable income.

Crows are professionals, averaging 3rd level, lead by a grim one-eyed mercenary captain Galius Jokar (*male human, Ftr8/Rog6, CG*). Many are fighters, but a good number of rogues, rangers, or multi-classed characters are common. They wear characteristic black tunics with a silhouette of a flying crow on the shoulders, stitched in silver thread. Armor is typically leather or a chain shirt. Crows prefer knives, rapiers, or short swords, though nets and other restraints are sometimes employed. Their goal is to immobilize undead and other supernatural threats, or at least slow them down. Three wizards and a number of clerics of Hedrada and Tanil provide vital magical support within the company.

While a bit specialized, the Crows are well known in Mithril. Paid 12 gp a month each, enough for a poor standard of living, the Crows guard the catacomb entrances and ruins of the Penumbra Pentagon. In addition, Crows often investigate strange apparitions or deaths that fall below the attention or interest of other groups. Their primary interest is in those suspicious events that occur near the catacomb entrances or in other unwholesome corners of the Harbor City. Crows typically charge about 7 sp per day to investigate and handle such incidents. This is about half the going rate, or about one-quarter of hazardous pay.

So long as a report seems credible, Crows will pursue the investigation even if no one is able to pay.

Any actual discovery and destruction of a danger to Mithril earns the Crows 20% of the treasure value of the threat. This is paid by city officials, though the cost of divination to check on the validity of the mission is deducted. If the Crows find items or other treasure with a recognizable source, those goods must be returned to the proper owners.

The Golden Company

Located mostly in the Termanan kingdom of Azale, the name of these mercenaries is somewhat ironic. Azale itself is poor and unremarkable. Cheap mercenaries are in demand to protect isolated villages and the occasional caravan.

The Golden Company is a band of both mercenaries and bandits. With fake gold chains decorating their leather armor and the hilts of their short swords, they have created a reputation for working hard for little pay. The 50 Golden Mercenaries are almost all warriors, averaging second level, with four fighters and Captain Nirus the Gray (*male human, Ftr3/Rog3, CN*) at their head. They accept half the normal wage, and do not ask for hazard pay. While others in Azale may work as cheaply, few have the Golden reputation.

The Golden Company does, in fact, work harder than most other mercenary groups in the area. However, with every fourth or fifth mission they accept, comes their own prepared trap. Another Golden Company team is ready to attack at a predetermined location,

hooded to protect their identity. The ambush is staged so that in the chaos, equipment and wagons are left behind. While the mercenaries take care not to kill one another, the battle is quite real and injuries occur. These enhance the verisimilitude of the encounter. Occasional deaths, either accidental or due to unexpected aid from merchants, are accepted as the cost of this business.

The staged encounters actually encourage more use of the Golden Mercenaries, as a confirmation of how dangerous travel must be. Since other mercenary groups encounter trouble only somewhat less often than the Golden Company, no suspicion has yet been aroused.

The Green Tiger Company

The Green Tigers are a mercenary company in northwestern Termana, particularly in the Padrinola area. This company has a scattered history dating back to the end of charduni control of the area. The lack of stability and central authority since that time has fostered large numbers of mercenary companies.

The Green Tigers include a good number of rangers, excellent at mounting patrols around cities or caravans. While the 200 or so members are dedicated to their job, local passions, politics, and disputes are common. They have long-running disagreements, some going back generations, with several other companies in the area. Several of these feuds have nearly destroyed the group in the past. Led by Harrow Ereth (*male*



human, Ftr5/Rng2, CN), the group is composed half of warriors averaging 2nd level, with the remainder consisting of rangers and fighters of about 4th level. The company almost exclusively works jobs entailing hazard pay, and their pay scale is normal. The reputation of the group is mixed, but allies and family connections provide access to choice assignments. A typical member wears leather and wields a scimitar. Many also use javelins with atl-atls.

The Inland Guard

A small outfit operating out of Hedrad and Lave, the Guard mainly serves as escort protection to caravans heading through the Lake Repose region. A lot of merchant traffic travels by sea and the Hornswythe River, located between Lave and Hedrad. However, this route has problems typical of the Blood Sea, particularly Piscean and Foamer raids; and the Mourning Marshes offer no safe landfalls. The passage north leads through Lake Repose and then overland to bypass the Sheer Falls. This northerly path is safer, though long and inconvenient.

Still, no route is completely without peril. Raids from half-orcs, bandits, and titanspawn attacks are a constant threat though only an occasional reality. The Inland Guard, made up of 60 mercenaries, does not ask for hazard pay even in the event of one of these attacks. The guard will also facilitate customs and other legal matters in Hedrad for those unfamiliar with its ways. Occasionally guardsmen are hired not just for military support, but as guides through the region.

The Inland Guard is a disciplined but surprisingly amiable company. Most of its members are actually natives of the communities around Lake Repose, and lack the dour nature characteristic of Hedradans. While on duty or within Hedrada however, they make a point of observing rules and etiquette precisely. Most are warriors, except for a few 2nd and 3rd level fighters and the leader, Captain Rohna of Tarbridge (*female human, Ftr5, LN*).

Legion of Ash

The Legion of Ash is the most well-respected mercenary company in all of Ghelspad. Formed from remnant legions in and around Darakeene when the Ledean Empire fell, it maintains a connection with the past while adapting to the issues of the day. The legion draws exclusively from graduates of the Ledean War Colleges, providing experienced and effective military strength at all levels. It currently numbers about 3,000 skilled soldiers.

The Ashen Legion is headquartered in a sprawling encampment just east of the city of Arboth, in Darakeene. From here, leaders oversee operations all over Ghelspad, coordinating missions, pay, and recruitment efforts. Talented youths may have their schooling at the War Colleges paid for by the legion, in exchange for service

afterward. This is beneficial for all concerned. The War Colleges, in turn, recommend the Ashen Legion to their most promising graduates.

The Legion of Ash commands excellent rates. A cohort of the legion, around 500 men, is hired as a whole. This is suited to the military campaigns and large contracts the legion prefers. Most contracts pay 21 sp per soldier per day, adding up to about 1,050 gp per day for a full cohort.

Legionnaires of Ash are almost entirely fighters of 3rd level or higher, with some representation of the other PC classes. Graduates of war colleges, found even in the lowest ranks of the legion, would be in top positions in almost any other military force. Individuals in the Legion of Ash make 1–2 sp per day more than usual for their experience. While hiring a cohort is a somewhat expensive proposition, the price is well worth it.

Recruits are tested to ensure loyalty and ability, then sent back into training. Students learn the codes of the legion and train in various large-scale exercises. Education includes classes in military science, command, and other areas, expanding on the scholastic approach of the War Colleges. After two years of further study the recruit graduates, marked across the cheeks and brow with a paste made from the ashes of Ashen Legionnaires who have died in battle.

Lead by Dame Greta Botar (*female human, Ftr9/Rog2, LN*), Ashen Legionnaires command respect. Their devotion to the arts of war and avoidance of nationalism affords them a certain idealized neutrality. They also provide the ultimate expression of the Ledean War Colleges, a visible reminder of the Ledean traditions the colleges hold dear.

See **Secrets & Societies**, "Legion of Ash," for more information.

Legion of Crimson

Founded in 74 AV by washouts from the War Colleges, the Legion of Crimson is the largest mercenary group in Ghelspad at 30,000 strong. Acceptance into the legion is significantly easier than are the requirements of the Legion of Ash. Those unable or unwilling to go through the War Colleges can find an opportunity with the Crimson Legion.

While the quality of troops is lower than those of the Ashen Legion, Crimson Legionnaires are available in smaller groups for a wide variety of tasks. They are also cheaper. Units are, on average, 3rd-level warriors. And their pay of 9 sp per mercenary is much more affordable, particularly since employers need not hire an entire cohort.

Headquarters of the legion is an ancient manse in central Darakeene. Crimson Legionnaires are mainly concentrated in the west, though units find posts throughout Ghelspad. Mithril even stations 200 Crim-



son Legionnaires, as support to the defenses there. Wherever they are posted the Legion of Crimson welcomes new recruits, sending them to Darakeene to be trained. New soldiers are, after a probationary period, placed under a mentor. The mentor offers guidance and education... in exchange for a portion of the recruit's pay.

The Crimson Legion is grounded in the ways of ancient Lede, though it has developed its own customs. In one of its most notable traditions, legionnaires pick a single weapon and suit of armor for their entire career. This equipment is then blessed with blood, and becomes a source of superstitious devotion to the legionnaire.

Militarily the legion focuses on light infantry, though a wide variation of styles and training makes organization difficult. Not suited to large-scale formation combat, Crimson Legionnaires perform adequately in guard duty or garrison posts. Even in the most chaotic battlefields however, members are dedicated and comport themselves with honor. The stewardship of Lord-General Malcom Degarre (*male human, Ari3/Ftr10, LN*) has seen prosperity and great difficulties for the Legion, including the loss of several critical battles. This leader has since withdrawn from the public eye, causing morale to wane further.

See *Secrets & Societies*, "Legion of Crimson," for more information.

LEGION OF SABLE

Evan Delisse (*male human, Ari1/Ftr4, NG*) formed this group in 150 AV. Evan is a graduate of Clayborn, though he nearly washed out a few times. When faced with the prospect of entering the Legion of Ash and yet again climbing his way up from the bottom, he decided to form his own legion. The 90 or so members who joined him are primarily Clayborn students, and most are 1st-level fighters.

Based out of Meliad, the group protects caravans and small communities in southern Darakeene. Competition with the Legion of Ash and more reputable groups forces Sables to take minor jobs and postings from untrustworthy clients. Still, to the untrained eye, the elegant sable-trimmed coats and expensive weapons can seem rather impressive.

Despite the limited assignments and frequent turnover of members, Evan has big dreams for his fledgling legion. He is sure that some day all of Ghelspad will know the Sable Legion, and he will have respect as a mighty commander. Until that day, he carefully tends the organization and hides his disappointment at the apathy of members and employers alike.

THE STERLING COMPANY

After the Titanswar, it took quite some time before merchants would dare travel the paths and broken roads of Ghelspad. Bands of adventurers rose to the challenge, defending small caravans and wagons as they shuttled

vital goods between struggling communities. Titanspawn were not the only dangers, as desperation made bandits of nearly everyone.

The Sterling Company began in the hands of Rodrigo of Urlisian — a fast-talking bandit who is either a saint or a demon, depending on the stories. He had an open practice of hiring bandits as mercenaries on the spot, regardless of past transgressions, so long as they comported themselves honorably under his command. Those who could not handle the discipline were summarily executed.

Many claim that he fleeced villagers all throughout central Ghelspad. The fact of the matter is that in the first 20 years of the Sterling Company, his mercenaries were directly responsible for saving thousands of lives. Medicines, healers, seed, and many other services would never have reached many regions without their aid. They were by no means the only group doing so, but his company was often willing to take risks and marginal jobs others turned down.

The Sterling Company's name describes their purity of purpose. Agreements are to be honored, and in every action and deed members of the company are to reflect well on their command. Observers often miss this, as standards of discipline and grooming have never been particularly rigorous. Among the poorer cities and communities, however, the Sterling Company maintains a reputation for straight dealings and doing right by their clients.

In the present day, the company numbers 450. Bands of five to 15 members hire out to various merchant caravans traveling central Ghelspad. Between escort jobs many find work as city guards. The Sterling Company's headquarters have always been located in Urlisian, and their work is primarily in New Venir and northern Lageni — although they are occasionally hired to guard intrepid caravans traveling north to Ontenazu.

Looked down upon by other soldiers and military in the region, the company often attracts troublemakers and other malcontents. So long as they honor official agreements, the leadership allows members their pet grievances. This distance from official military often affords the company unique opportunities, as many villagers or merchants would prefer to avoid official scrutiny of their activities.

The Sterling Company has, in the last 20 years, come under the control of the Kilharman League. The League has maintained the honor and reputation, such as it is, of the Company. While occasionally used to protect Kilharman operations, the group is primarily used for recruiting personnel and basic information gathering. It is presently headed by Nikas Kardo (*male human, Ari3/Kle5/Ftr3, CE*).

(See **Calastia: Throne of the Black Dragon** for Kilharman League envoy prestige class)

RAINDOGS

Originating long before the Titanswar, the Raindogs were originally a single privateer crew serving Calastia. Under Captain Grinning Cres, the Raindogs soon dominated a few other ships and became a loose confederacy of privateers. Like the original crew, these new sailors were marked by tattoos of a urinating dog. Upon his retirement, Cres Majold (*male human, Rog5/Ftr7, CE*) decided to make something of his former connections. With an official commission, he began arranging contracts with various merchants for experienced sailors and ships.

After his death, any central control was lost. However, the former crews and hirelings of Grinning Cres continued a kind of brotherhood, marked by the "raining dog."

In the present day the tattoo has become so stylized that it is unrecognizable, except to someone familiar with the marks. Their numbers have grown considerably, and now one in 20 sailors in eastern and southern Ghelspad is a Raindog.

Generally, Raindogs use their common bond much like a club membership, and it is often linked to family lines. Raindog crews hire other Raindogs. Retired ship-captains who have become merchants hire out Raindog ships exclusively, and members will help each other out in times of trouble.

Membership as a Raindog is not solely signified by the tattoo, which can certainly be duplicated. Raindogs entering a new area often need to be vouched for by a local, someone who knows the visitor or their family. There are also rituals and handsigns that help identify a proper member.

Raindog mercenary bands of sailors and marines dot the coast, passing on news and prospective employment. Like many military-oriented sailors, Raindogs are a rough, argumentative, and cutthroat bunch. To those they consider friends, however, they are fiercely loyal.

THE WARDOGS

This company is a good example of the sort of informal law that many cities utilize. A tough band of fighters and rogues — they work the docks of Mithril, keeping the peace in covert groups of two or three. While their justice generally involves breaking up trouble and shaking down criminals, the city benefits from not risking any valued members of the military.

Enforcement groups are watched over by city officials. Some nations will encourage oppression of undesirables, while others carefully limit the power of mercenary watchmen. Many of these bands, including the Wardogs, are only a degree or two away from being criminals themselves. Such groups must establish good relations with those in power, either through bribes or by maintaining a favorable reputation.

Establishing a Mercenary Company

The easiest way to establish a mercenary company is to hire mercenaries yourself. Such hirelings are not loyal of course, unless they are paid reliably. Each week they are not paid, NPC attitude drops by one. Past Hostile, hirelings vacate. In hazardous conditions, the drop is one step per 3 days. To improve morale, a NPC attitude check can be attempted after any drop. This improvement can only correct for the drop, however (see *PHB*, Chapter 4, "Influencing NPC Attitudes"). It is possible to have several groups of hirelings with different attitudes, depending on which have been paid. Once pay resumes, hirelings will never improve in morale until they receive back pay — though this is the province of the GM. Possible problems include selling information to enemies or poor performance in the field.

A more reliable way to form a mercenary group is through Leadership and followers (see *DMG*, Chapter 4, "Leadership"). Followers and cohorts will remain loyal even when unpaid. A leader who pockets the money and does not pay his men, however, will at the least lose any reputation for fairness or generosity. Continued lack of payment may earn a -1 or -2 penalty on the Leadership

score for failure and cruelty. Followers lost due to a drop of leadership points may be retained as hirelings. They will have lost faith in the character, however, and will only fight so long as they are paid.

Followers need at least 5 sp a week to maintain their basic self-sufficiency. Any less than this means equipment and armor will be in disrepair. It may be hard to find employers interested in hiring such unsavory-looking mercenaries. Normal mercenary pay, on the other hand, will ensure that equipment remains functional. Cohorts, unlike followers, are more likely to support themselves with treasure gained with the party.

Followers may be experts. This is particularly useful in the case of logistics experts, merchants, craftsmen, porters, and other occupations the company may find useful, particularly as it expands in size.

Companies intending to work with an adventuring party are best filled with experts and relegated to limited support roles. Companies can also be set up to handle simple tasks, either as an information network or to serve in a traditional mercenary post. Putting a company to work can generate a small income for a leader as well.

The Wardogs, and similar groups, will sometimes take payments to ensure certain buildings or areas are watched. This relies on a degree of trust. Some companies simply won't watch high profile areas without being paid. Less savory groups may make it known that they are not watching certain areas at certain times, thus facilitating and possibly benefiting from criminal enterprises.

Lead by commander Davius the Mastiff (*male human*, *Ftr13*, *CN*), the Wardogs consists of CG and CN characters, averaging 5th level. Friends and associates of current members may be inducted into the group, with the member providing assurances to the recruit's reliability. Any training is rather informal, though the Wardogs are all expected to hone their abilities.

Zahuishele

The unpleasant capture of humans to maintain the Termanan elven population has developed its own industry. A large number of mercenary groups, some consisting of half-elves or even humans, serve in this capacity. One of the more successful is the Zahuishele, or "Reviving Wind."

Numbering in the thousands, the majority of its members are elves. They serve as regular mercenaries for whatever neighboring human nations will have them. In exchange, they ask for slaves. In many cases, down and out human villages and regions are more than happy to give away some of

their own. It means one less mouth to feed, and the Zahuishele aren't always that picky. Faced with the choice of titanspawn rampaging unchecked by disinterested local authorities, or sending away their children to grow up amongst the mysterious elves, it is an easy decision for many.

The Zahuishele are cautious with their missions, never risking their lives if at all possible. Yet they still provide a valuable service, as there are many risks to commoners that are little trouble to highly trained fighters.

Besides their paid mercenary work, Zahuishele serve to organize and protect the transport of humans to elven lands. Unfortunately, they are also used to transport kidnapped humans in addition to their legally owned slaves. Because of this, the group often has to travel covertly to potential jobs. Though they make a point of never kidnapping victims themselves, this distinction is irrelevant to most humans. In many kingdoms, the elves are watched carefully. Any suspected Zahuishele are detained, whenever possible, to scrutinize their papers and verify the identity of their slaves.

Zahuishele have diverse styles of combat, depending on their origins. Archers and knights are common, hailing from Sylavael. Service is sometimes seen as basic training for the more important battles against the charduni. Under the leadership of Aeowun (*female forsaken elf*, *Ftr13*, *NE*), the company has endured attacks and the shifting tides of elven politics.

book two

BARBARIANS



chapter four

A SHAMAN'S

Tale

Disavow yourself of the idea that those tribesmen are savages and primitives. Do you think they are merely unaware of the advances of civilization in this world? Nay, they have chosen the life they live. There is more to their creed than bloodshed and rapine, I can assure you. Their fury is simply all they would share with outsiders.

— from the public address of General Aubericus, before the clash of the Ledean Legions with the gathered might of the Albadian tribesmen

The View From the Northwest

These are the words of Thuron, son of Walsin the Wise, the Seer Outside the Court, who travels the Albadian wilderness to teach those appointed to lead.

You must always be aware of what you know and why you know it. What you have seen yourself is not the same as what your sword brethren tell you, nor what the spirits confide to you when you command them, nor what ghosts and titanspawn tell you for their own reasons. Remember that every story has a price, and consider what you are paying by the nature of your response to each storyteller.

This is the true history of the world, which I tell to you — those who will be its true kings. Emperors and princes believe that their thrones

and crowns testify to real kingship, but in this they are mistaken. The only test of kingship is power itself: when you wish a man dead, he dies, and when you wish a thing done, it is done. This is the power which the thousand great spirits give to you, and which I will teach you how to use. When the time is right, you will ride forth and pull down the pretenders, showing them how useful the throne and crown are in the face of the great sword and the pure wrath of one who knows himself and everything around him for what they are. You are the appointed ones, the ones to lead the rest toward what you see that they cannot.

You may wonder who I am to speak to you of seeing. You look at my face and see the holes where my eyes once were. Yes, you, Ventriss — with that tilt of your head to get a new angle on an unfamiliar scene. Seeing does not begin with the eye. Seeing begins with everything

that is, and with a soul that is prepared to accept the truth. Unlike you, I cannot close my eyes to hide from unpleasantness. My duties do not permit me the comfort of self-deceit or ignorance.

When we are through, you too will be prepared to live honestly — that is, if you survive.

The First Things

You must know that everything ends. This is the first of the truths that the emperors and princes seek to deny, thinking that they can build a wall as protection from the enemies without or enact a law to prevent the revolt of those enemies within. They are fools. They build a wall or a law and say to each other, "Look! It has stood a year! A century! A millennium!"

The mountains have stood for many thousands of thousands of years, and they still perish in erosion and earthquakes. The seas have stormed for thousands of thousands of years, and they are destroyed when new lands rise from beneath them. Whole species of plants and animals wither away, their very spirits passing into death to be seen no more. What, then, is the work of our hands worth? What permanence or pride should our creations bring us? Yes; your silence is a fitting answer.

The second truth, that our would-be rivals deny, is that everything ends *in battle*. There is nothing in the world that does not yearn to be more than it is now and have more than it does now. And there is nothing that will not take everything it can. Grasses kill streams and lakes, turning them into meadows; trees grow up to shadow and kill meadows; water comes again and kills forests, flooding them into swamps and rivers. Everything fights until its last breath and then dies, and its bones go into the ground. The bones of the ground itself go up in smoke and down into the sea.

This is where everything begins: in the midst of the bones of old enemies.

Thurus, you are about to ask, "But where did the first thing come from, before there were any bones? And what about the things furthest from the heart of the world on which we sit, where there have not yet been any bones?" I know it, because I held myself just that way when I was about to ask my teacher the same question. And I tell you what he told me: There is no start of the sort you imagine, because each cycle of the world leaves behind its bones, and the cycles are eternal. The same is true about the edges of the world. The earth rises up to meet you wherever you go and the

sky reaches down to cover you. Wherever you have been, the sky and earth have waited for you; and wherever there is substance of any sort, there are the bones waiting patiently for you to join them.

So it makes no sense to ask what came before anything else. I can tell by your fidgeting that you are all disappointed. But I didn't say I was finished. There is another question to ask. "What are the first things we can know about?" The answer to that is simple: We can know about the titans. These great beings shaped our world and shaped us. A series of epochs passed, in which one or another of the titans was most active and led the rest. Civilized people tie themselves up in knots about the order of the epochs, but in truth it scarcely matters. Each of them had their turn, and things happened in each epoch.

The Titans and Their Legacies

Pampered courtiers, who peer at us from a distance and scribble down their guesses to send to each other, like to accuse us of worshipping the titans. This only shows how little they know. We do not worship the titans because — yes, Ventriss, that is correct. We do not worship the titans because they *lost*. We depose chieftains and warlords who lead us into defeat, and we are no more foolhardy with our worship.

Unlike the courtiers, however, we remember our debts. Each of the titans gave something to us and to the rest of the world, and we acknowledge these legacies in our rites.

Without Kadum's mighty work, there would be no land for us to ride across, nor would we have his rage that lends us strength in battle. Without Gormoth's manifold labors, there would be no animals for us to eat or plants on which our herds could graze. Without Golthain's experiments, there would be no titanspawn to test our strengths. Without Golthagga's invention, we would not have the metals that furnish us with both strong blades and ornaments to commemorate our victories. Without Chern's trials, there would be no diseases to purge the weak and strengthen the survivors. Without Gaurak's all-consuming hunger, we would not have empty spaces where the inhabitants have all perished, to claim for our own. Without Mormo's sustaining love for her serpentine children, we would not have the venoms which coat our weapons and poison our foes. Without Lethene's power, there would be no storms to make our weak enemies cower and to cover our approach. Without

Gulaben's command of ice and snow, softening temperate lands would cover the earth and civilization would dominate all. Without Thulkas's fires within the earth, there would be no mighty forges and no mines filled with riches to be brought up from deep beneath the ground. Without Hrinruuk's lore, we would not have the arts of hunting and stalking. Without Mesos and his gifts of cunning insight, we would not have the magic that sustains us and allows us to commune with the spirits and our ancestors. And without Denev's example, we would not truly understand the creative power of treachery nor the martial advantages of deceit.

All these things we honor, even as we know the titans for what they are — not worthy of our submission.

As a young man, I traveled far and wide, even as you will, and in the distant city of Lokil I spoke long with a librarian who wished to know what I tell you now. Of course I did not reveal our secrets to him, or at least did so only in part, and in the end he told me more than I told him. He said that with the ascendance of the gods, the endless cycle of existence had been fatally broken and that nothing could come but doom unless the gods were overthrown. I laughed at him. What a fool he was, to dream that the gods had never been part of the cycle before. It takes more than gods to change the nature of things, as he claimed. No, the cycle is alive and well, and in time the gods' bones will mingle with those of the titans to nourish lives we cannot even envision.

EMPIRES THAT FELL BEFORE THE TITANS

As each of you travels outside our homeland, you will inevitably hear jealous and fearful city-dwellers describe us as a parasite or disease. You must of course chastise them for their lack of respect, but there is some truth to what they say. I told you before that it is the fate of all things to die in battle, whether they realize the sort of conflict that destroys them or not. Whenever a civilization grows too great, we grow great in response, until we can pull it down. By "we" I do not, of course, mean that throughout history there have been the Tribes of the High Snows to punish the unwarranted pride of others. I mean peoples like us, nomads and warriors, free of the weaknesses of civilization and able to move against it.

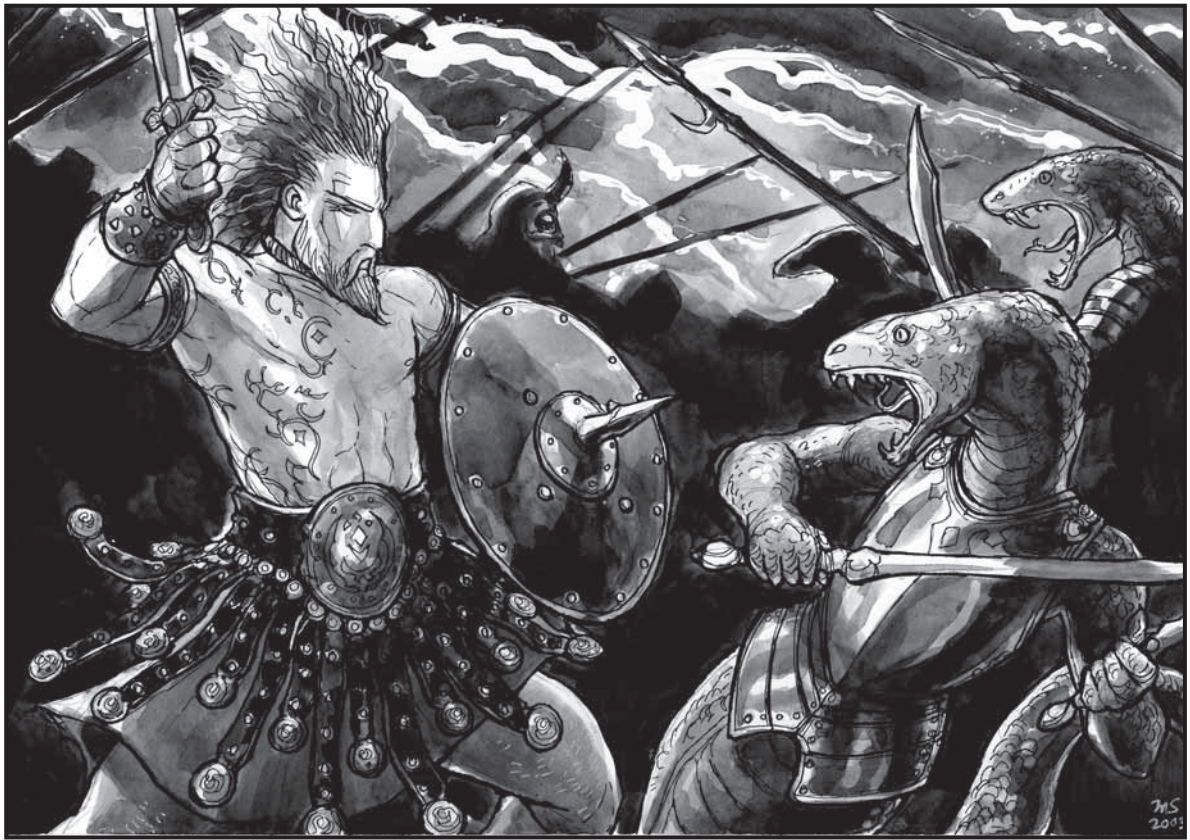
Once again, you must know what you know and why. Each of you has felt the stirrings of

the ancestors within, whispering that you are appointed to conquer, that your foes will all fall to your blade. Your ancestors speak truth there. But don't they also tell boastful stories — just like you do. How can you tell whether their claims regarding the past are all entirely truthful and without distortion? Do you know a single living soul who consistently refrains from self-glorification? And do you think the dead are any freer of passion and ambition? You must always listen with respect to what your ancestors tell you, but you should also remember to test their words as you would the claims of anyone else.

With that in mind, let us speak of the fall of kingdoms and empires. The greatest glories of the tribes always begin in response to the greatest of the civilized kingdoms. The richer, more numerous, better armed and more competently commanded our adversaries, the sweeter the taste of our victories. It's just not possible to achieve glory against base, unworthy opponents. Fortunately, history has provided our ancestors with many opportunities to face suitable foes.

It is terribly convenient that the greatest feats of heroism told in our stories are the ones most distant in the past: hardest to confirm, most subject to distortion. You may thus believe as much or as little as you like of what tradition and our ancestors say about the Dragon Kingdoms. Give the tellers of these tales the respect you would to your revered grandfather when he wishes to reminisce about past glories, and take the stories to show at least the sort of courage and intelligence we honor — whether or not the facts are true. The serpent people have their own account of these times. If your curiosity for the truth so propels you, take up the matter with them. Likewise with the Dwarven Imperium, the short folk love to spin tales about the Empire of the Ancients. But I will tell you what you really need to hear, regarding this part of our history: what you cannot know about, ought not occupy your attention much.

We can say more about the Asaatth Empire, the kingdom of the serpentfolk. They once had a great civilization indeed, whose ruins we still find scattered hither and yon across the continent. As you know, snakes like their weather warm and wet, and yet they flourished in places that no snake would choose now. Asaatthi are nothing if not clever, and they built shelters for themselves to keep the temperature and moisture to their liking. Of course this made them vulnerable. Some sages



say that the asaatthi rose to power with the beginning of the Epoch of Mormo, and fell when it was Lethene's turn to rule the world for an age. If that were true, it would account for some of our own glories. Lethene unleashed the northern storms, and of course we are the human embodiment of those forces: resilient and deadly, capable of striking like the lightning and causing our enemies to tremble with the thunder of our approach. Certainly the Asaatth Empire collapsed first in the north, where we are now, and only gradually unraveled in the south, where we prefer not to go.

There were more of us then, of course, though even at our most numerous we did not field huge armies. We strike, as I said, like lightning rather than like a landslide. Because we do not travel in orderly clumps — easily noticed and attacked — but in loose, fast-moving groups, our enemies gain no clear idea of our true numbers. They guess too few or too many, and react accordingly. We do nothing to relieve them of their misunderstandings, for truth itself is a potent weapon in war. They may underestimate our numbers, only to fall in surprise as we strike from all directions. They may overestimate our number and expend their own forces far and wide, only to fall as we slip in and strike at the heart of their leadership. Our glorious ancestors surely used similar tac-

tics against the serpentfolk. For, given how easy it is to fool people of our own race, it must have been that much easier for our forebears to fool the snakes.

Not that we did or could have destroyed the Asaatth Empire alone. Just as the lead hunter sets the example and inspires others to join in when it's time to kill a great beast, so it was when we went to war against the kingdoms. Others who lacked our courage saw us fight, and they saw that it was possible to win. It was then that even the timid southerners picked up the spear and blade, and joined in the battle. In the south, where asaatthi clung longest to their empire, it's possible that our ancestors provided leaders and advisors, while others filled the ranks of the armies which swarmed into the doomed cities. Since it would not have happened without us, we quite properly take the credit for it.

The slarecians... now that's a complicated matter. You will learn as you travel that *every-one* present at the time claims a crucial role in the overthrow of that ancient subterranean race. Ask one of the keepers in the houses of books, if you care to, and you can read that the titans destroyed the slarecians. Or that the gods were responsible. Or the remaining asaatthi (generally at the cost of their own destruction, depending on whose tale it is). Or

the titanspawn. Or former servitors of the slarecians, the practitioners of cryptic magical arts. Or each and every petty little tribe that ever was. I've even heard that they were destroyed by monsters, or still stranger things: that god-obsessed librarian in Lokil solemnly assured me that every last slarecian was destroyed by a single artifact of their own making, a floating mechanical eye surrounded by floating crystal shards.

All of which is to say that we don't know who mattered when it came time for the bones of the slarecians to take their place in the earth. There is a gap in the lore of our people during the centuries of slarecian tyranny. No ancestor of our tribes speaks of it to us, and we do not appear in the chronicles of others. I think it most likely that we were enslaved by the slarecian powers of the mind and liberated in the course of a revolt initiated by others. None of us knows what really happened, and that is the only truth you will find on the matter.

The tale of our encounters with the Empire of Lede and the dwarvish charduni is simpler in the telling, and much more enjoyable. These self-styled "emperors" never conquered our lands. We flourished throughout the lives of their empires, raiding, looting and having our way with the subjects they'd so conveniently cowed for us. There is nothing in the world quite so delightful as an enemy who presents a useful challenge while remaining determinedly inferior to you. The Ledeans and charduni always underestimated us, or at least their supreme commanders did. So they never committed quite the forces necessary to actually win meaningful victories against us. We, on the other hand, could take very nearly anything we wanted from their northern marches and be gone back to our beloved homes before the armies even knew anything was wrong.

Students, I tell you truly that the greatest happiness is a rich empire with its capital far from you.

I could speak at much greater lengths about those glorious times, but much of what I would say is properly the domain of battlefield strategy and tactics rather than history. All in due season. For now, I will speak to you of the fall of these empires. The matter is complex in each case, and we must share the credit somewhat with others. You will, as you travel, hear scholars sincerely teach that internal corruption and decadence toppled the Ledeans and that the Titanswar felled the charduni. Do not let them rob your ancestors of their rightful

glory. Yes, the Ledeans came under the rule of a whole series of incompetent emperors and worse generals. But who do you think it was who slaughtered the fit leaders on the field of battle? Likewise, the scholars greatly overstate the stability of the Charduni Empire in the final years before the Titanswar. We won battles that no one except we ourselves and the ghosts of the fallen charduni now recall.

THE TITANSWAR

What I told you about the fall of the empires, about it being a complicated matter, is even more true regarding the fall of the titans. Who can truly say, "I sat in the councils of the titans and the gods, and know what they decided, when and why?" Yes, we tell each other stories: Denev said such a thing one autumn day, Mesos said another while balancing on a mountaintop. I know that none of my ancestors were numbered among the deities, and to the best of my knowledge none of yours were, either. And we are here concerned with what we may actually know, rather than what we may guess at or hope for or wish. Leave the fables for your enemies, that they may distract themselves while you approach to slit their throats.

Above all, what you must know is that we died in tremendous numbers in the titanswar. Your ancestors do drift away with time, unless something very strong binds them here, but that is not the only reason you are surrounded by so many spirits from the relatively recent past. Terrible things, such as we have never seen before or since, fell upon us. The sky opened to pelt down rocks, and strange fumes with minds of their own rose out of the earth. The water burned and the fire flowed like water. As the elements betrayed themselves, so did the rest of the world. The seasons did not follow in proper order or pace, so that our herds became confused and then starved when the grasses could not grow. Little consolation it was to any of us that our enemies suffered just as greatly. What good did it do to know that others were perishing when we couldn't ride to pillage their tombs and crypts?

Several of you wondered why it was that my guards slew your comrade, Jaryn, who spoke of riding to challenge the gods on their thrones. I tell you now: It is a terrible thing to rouse the gods. We propitiate them with our rites — not because we love them, but because we wish them to be satisfied and stay far away. Their thrones are not like those of the fops and courtiers of Calastia or Vesh. They are beyond

us and always will be. None of our ancestors ever rose to become a god. You won't, either. Appease them and get on with your life, and keep your eyes on the horizon rather than the heavens.

Recent Times

These are challenging times for us. While of course the folk of the Albadian cities cannot compare in strength or glory (or competence, for that matter) to the great empires we have challenged successfully in the past, they have two advantages. They are *here* rather than thousands of miles away. And, as our cousins, they know the land nearly as well as we do, despite the blindness that city life always causes. In addition, while civilization takes a terrible toll on the soul, it surely excels at creating the conditions needed to produce a plethora of offspring. As free travelers of the land, we simply can't support the sort of population that they can. It will therefore be necessary for us to kill and subjugate them before they can do the same to us.

The city dwellers believe that we have already chosen a replacement for treacherous, unworthy King Thalos. You must do nothing to disabuse them of this view. In truth, it will be one of you who is confirmed as king at the Great Council, when you have grown in stature and proven your worth in battle. That is some years away yet. In the meantime, you will test yourselves and each other with challenges of ever-greater difficulty and complexity, so that when it is time, it will be clear whom the spirits have appointed.

The View From the Southwest

These are the words of Nataiel the Scarred, the limping teacher.

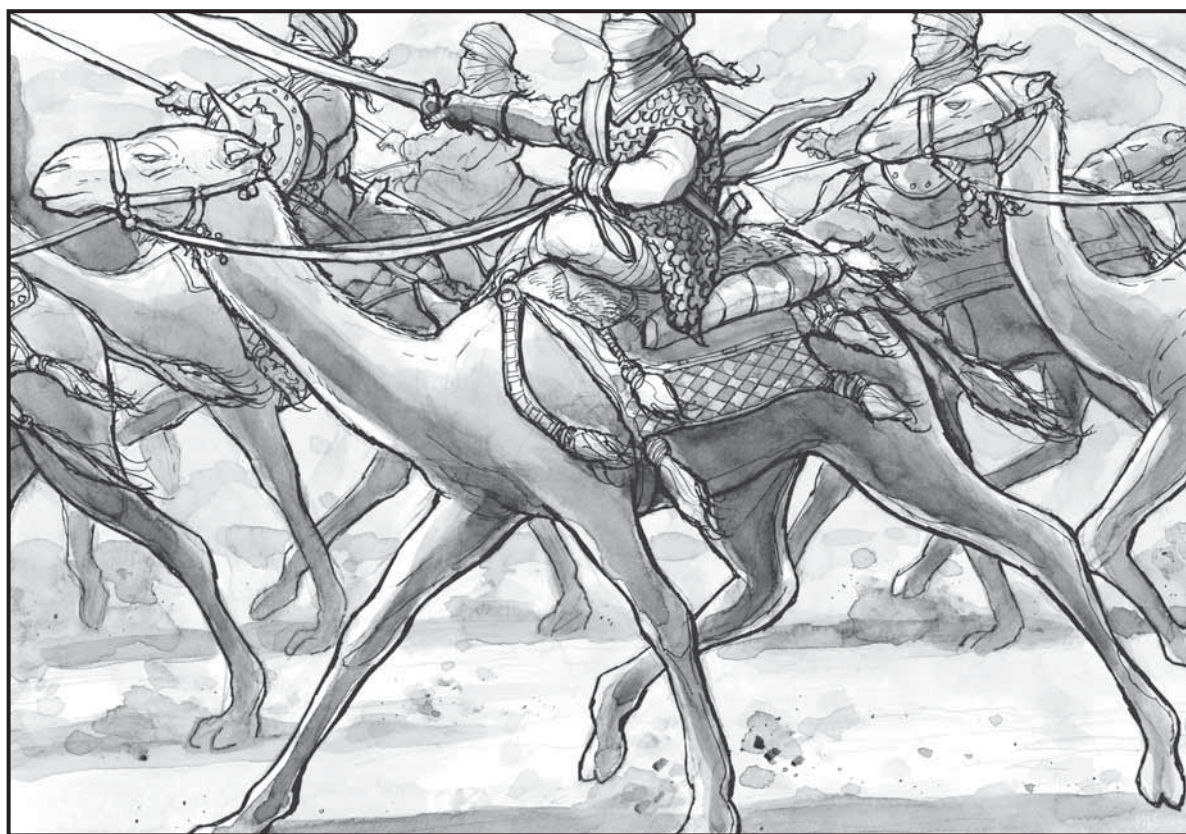
Everything worth having, or being, is hidden away from us. The finding of those hidden things is what I shall teach to you. You already know not to trust your eyes, which are deceived by the sun's glare and the night's darkness alike. When we are done with your lessons, you will know the time to trust each of your senses and the time to doubt, the time to listen to your heart and the time to reject its feelings. You have been put on this land to search out the veiled truths, and lift the shroud. These things you will do, and they will bring honor to your family and glory to your tribe.

The Wellsprings of the Past

We have never lived in a friendly land. Our very identity, reflected in the original meaning of our name, is "those who leave the water." The path that is ours to walk does not lead to a land of plenty, with cooling rains falling on lush crops. But do not regret the course that our people travel, for it has shown us much. It is our distinctive gift to see the promise in what others dismiss, and we ultimately turn their carelessness against them. Centuries ago, the Ukrudan Desert was smaller than it is today, and less blighted. It was nonetheless a formidable obstacle that few willingly crossed. Your first ancestors were people of the eastern lands who heard the desert calling, promising them strength if they would serve it. So they left their comfortable existence behind, and their old names, and became the "people who are not seen." For many generations they honed their skills against the harshness of the Ukrudan, and with time the hot sands wore away that which covered the warrior within. Thus, the promise of the desert was fulfilled.

Without those many lives' worth of practice, we would undoubtedly have perished in the depths of the titanswar — when the monster Thulkas fled from his enemies to the east. Like a spoiled child shouting for want of some toy, he unleashed his power and cursed all the lands around the old desert for failing to hide him from the consequences of accruing so many enemies. The desert screamed, but sand and scrub are no match for a petulant tyrant of fire, and countless groves died to soothe his passion that day. In time he went on about his way, and passed out of the story of this land, into the story of the world beyond. What mattered to us is that we found ourselves trapped in a suddenly ravished landscape, and many of us did not survive. This is why there are so many ghosts from that time, because the titan chose to take out his frustrations on us and our homes. Never forget this and never forgive it.

Some of us *did* survive, of course, and grew tougher; just as the plants and animals learned to adapt, so did we. The first cactus grew then, with the thicker hide needed to flourish in a drier place. The broad-footed lizard, which can skim across the dunes so fast you think it flies, came into being then. And we the people of the Ukrudan desert were born then as well. We gave up the horses, which had served us well in the past, in favor of the camel — that sullen, powerful, intelligent, demanding beast which shows us the virtue of stamina. Our



skins darkened. We learned to weave more tightly, to make the first of the great cloaks and robes such as you wear today. We improved in thriftiness and foresight. Thus did Thulkas bring forth his own nemesis.

We now carry only two legacies of the time before the coming of Thulkas. The time before we were forced to become what we are now. Along with the many new songs we sing to each other, as we ride to battle and on all the other occasions for song, we continue to sing some of the ballads of old. You already know the marching song that our founders made up as they crossed the Broadreach River, and the refrain:

We turn to the west

We turn to the desert

We turn away from what has been.

That is the oldest song of our people. In time, you will learn others, which speak of the world as it was before the titanswar. These songs are our past, learn them well. The other legacy of your ancestors is the white scarf, which you will receive when your fathers are satisfied that I have taught you what you must know. You see mine, its fineness and strength when compared to the ones you've used as growing children. This art originated in the oasis that is now Second White Rock. But although the settlement perished, the lore re-

mains, and you see how I arrange it to protect myself from even the harshest storm. These gifts of the past are to be valued, for they are ours alone.

THE GREATER DESERT

We almost perished as soon as we had been born as the tribes we are today. It was, of course, the fault of the sorcerers. The mothers of our people say that arcane powers keep a man from maturing properly, locking him into the outlook of a greedy child who does not yet realize he must respect the persons and claims of others. I think they have the truth of it. Just as a child *may* be wise and courteous, so too may a wizard or a sorcerer be prudent and useful in the service of his tribe — but in neither case would you really want to stake any significant wager on it.

No, I do not refer to the Speakers of Fire, littling. Imagine if you will a foolish sorcerer who, rather than seeking communion with the Flames of Land and Sky, instead tries to master dark secrets that properly belong in the pits of the earth, where only dwarves go. No, I speak of the Black Sorcerers.

There are no survivors of the Black Sorcerers, and few of their spirits linger except as tormented things bound into suitably humiliating fetishes. Nor do the dwarves, who marched to slaughter them, tell us their sto-

ries. So here I must speak of likelihoods rather than certainties. The damned fools somehow stole some of the dwarves' carving magic, I know not how or (for that matter) why. Would any of you wake up one morning and think, "I want to steal the magic of dwarves?"

You have more sense already.

Alas for us all, the Black Sorcerers did not heed that little voice of self-scrutiny. Not only did they take the dwarves' magic, but they used it against the dwarves' own allies and even the dwarves themselves. Of *course* the dwarves noticed. They mustered their armies, withdrawing from the field of battle against the titanspawn, to make war against us. They did their job very well, too. Though they lacked the concentrated power of Thulkas in his rage, they slaughtered our people in almost the same numbers as the titan had himself. Even the desert suffered, as vast numbers of dwarven soldiers marched back and forth, draining dry oases and stripping all plant life in their path as fodder.

Only the strongest and luckiest of us survived that second tragedy, sheltering in small bands around hidden oases, in caves, in the sharp rocky outcroppings deep among the dunes. When the survivors encountered any of the sorcerers, our people slaughtered them ourselves and left the corpses for the dwarves to find. Eventually they were convinced that their revenge was complete, and they marched off to whatever else it is that they wished to do with their armies. We were then able to get on with the work of living in our new desert.

The Desert in This Day

So here we are today. We can never compete with the city-dwellers for sheer numbers. So we must take full advantage of the strengths that we, as people of the tribes, have over our adversaries. Foremost among these is our cunning: the ability to see the truth oneself and to hide it from others. Truth is a precious coin, one that should never be thrown away when lesser words may serve. Our existence is full of difficulties and complications, of which we do not speak to outsiders. That knowledge would profit them and not us. It is always best for others to regard us as the masters of our desert, so that they fear us whenever they are near. The truth is, regrettably, more complicated than that.

The deepest recesses of the desert should be ours, for therein lay the best sanctuaries and most private oases. But they remain out of reach as yet. Long before our founders rode out

of the east, the serpentfolk claimed that land, and one city of theirs still stands in the desert plains. Legends claim it is one of their greatest, though they call it the "lost city." I do not know the name of the place in their whispering tongue; we call it simply the asaath city. Its name matters not — it is the city itself you should know of. The asaath city is a strange and terrible place, which we regard much the same as we wish others to regard us: a thing full of dangers, which one chooses not to approach. The damned snakes shouldn't be alive there at all, not in this titan-born dryness. The asaath are known for their many magics, and it is certain they relied upon them to endure past hardships and even to the present. As nearly as we can tell, they came through the entire titanswar without any damage at all. And brave as we are, I do not think we can inflict harm where the creators of the world did not.

Nor are the snakes our only enemies. Ratmen, and half-human abominations Thulkas created in his pique, also roam the interior. These we can fight, but it's unrewarding. They are damnably tough and persistent, and they have little to offer us when we do kill them. Instead, we skirmish against them if they get to close, but leave them territory all their own.

The rest of the desert, now, that does belong to us. We maintain a handful of trading centers, like Akrud and Dunael, to take advantage of those who wish our wares or wish us to want theirs. Across the rest of the width and breadth of the Ukdrudan, we roam freely — giving the appropriate service to the gods and spirits, but paying tribute to no others.

The View From the East

These are the words of Gereshan the Younger, Tribe-mother to the Rusting Blade People.

Only one thing happens to all living beings: they die. The entire history of the world may be seen as a struggle between those who would deny this reality, hiding it behind plush surroundings and polite conversation, and those who insist on facing truth. We stand with those who recognize that death is our destiny, and we spend our lives understanding and responding to this one certainty.

The land here is tough. Death is ever-present: from a fall into a crevasse, from a geyser or earthquake, from a predator smarter or faster than you. Elsewhere, soft people go

days on end without seeing a corpse lying rotting or desiccated beneath the sun, without finding the mound of half-gnawed bones left behind where their friend was devoured, without discovering another ancestor's grave looted of all its protective charms. How unfortunate are these people! They are doomed to a painful awakening, for none can escape the one truth, and it will be all the worse for them because they are unprepared. So, while our souls will pass into a new land and dominate as they choose, those others are condemned to an afterlife of misery and subjugation.

But of course, we are not a people who sit around thinking useless thoughts and waiting for the afterlife. There is too much to occupy us. Nobody ever rules the Blood Steppes for very long. As long as there has been history, there have been fierce conflicts for mastery of this land. Sometimes the giants hold the upper hand, sometimes the spider creatures in the vast caves, sometimes the bat-devils and other monsters, sometimes humanity. Most often nobody rules more than their own tribe. At any given time there are half a dozen overbearing fools all claiming to be High Queen or King of Kings or whatever title came to them in a dream, but the rest of us get on with the business of death. How much history is there here, you ask. How much time do you have? I can

recite the chronicles of four hundred distinct dynasties, most of which consisted of a single ruler, and I am by no means the most experienced lore-speaker of our people.

Not, of course, that I would tell you all I know. You think you are prepared to hear the tale of the first thing to scream from the depths of the Cleft of Madness, and when and why it first began to scream? You have not killed an enemy and lain with his corpse for three nights, so you do not yet deserve nor are you prepared to know. So it is with a great many other stories you would hear. Truth comes at a great price, for you must hack away all capacity for deception within yourself as you would infected flesh. You will not hear the tale of why the bat-devils nest in the Blood Fang until you have buried both your parents, and you will not hear the story of the last time they gathered there until one of your brothers has also gone into the ground. Only a mother who has killed one of her daughters outside the heat of passion may know where and why the slitheren rat folk are strongest in this land. It is pain that prepares the heart.

But here you are now, your arms and thighs still wet with the blood from your first self-scarring, and you have earned some stories. Those, I will tell to you.



COMING TO BLOOD

The first people to come to the Blood Steppes were not as tough as their successors. Some were human, some slitheren, but all were exiles from the Asaatth Empire that then dominated most of the continent. The kingly snakes did not care for this harsh land and did not pursue dissenters and rogues who came this way. In their foolishness, the asaath commanders thought that the land would do all the killing for them.

It did not. Instead, it merely culled the herds of ex-slaves, leaving behind the strongest and most dedicated. Generation after generation this continued, until your predecessors struck the blow that hamstringed the empire and led to its final collapse. Others like to claim that they started it all, and we generally let them, knowing that we will have all of eternity to make their ghosts confront the truth.

Our ancestors had realized their strength, and that realization came power. Against the Ledean dynasties, they held their own and then some — engaging in a continual cycle of attack and retreat. Our people were never quite as fortunate as they had been with the asaathi, as the Ledean kings had the unfortunate habit of collapsing before we could go kill them ourselves. But we did our part to make their lives as unpleasant as possible. In the final dynasties, “patrolling the Blood Steppe borders” was nearly synonymous with “dying in fear and pain far from home,” an achievement we remain proud of to this day.

Our lowest moment was the reign of the Charduni Empire. The damnable dwarves were as tough as we, in their own way, yet were more numerous and better equipped. For a dozen generations they held all this land in an iron fist, and we were once again serfs. Where can you flee, when the place you flee to is so terrible that it too becomes a prison? We suffered, and endured, and hoped beyond hope, that something would happen to change it all.

And, of course, since nothing endures but death, something did come along.

THE TITANSWAR

The epic struggle of the gods and titans set us free. The charduni saw the fearsome battles raging here and began to retreat. A trickle at first, then a full flood of them swept on out of the steppes into lands where others were only too glad to slaughter them. For our part, we reveled in the unprecedented death. Not one

but two titans perished here, and we honor them, their killers, and the legacy of death.

The first to perish was Thulkas. He had hidden in the depths here, but Corean pulled him out of the earth, forged him into the form of an arrow, and shot him into the sun. Thulkas's lower torso and legs remained in the ground, and his blood, which is metal of all kinds, poured out. Ever since then we have not lacked for weapons — and not just good ones, but the very finest. We glory in taking the blood of the dead titan into battle with us, for surely it is fitting that his blood draws forth the fresh blood of our enemies.

The second titan to die here was Gormoth, pinioned and carved into pieces by Vangal and Chardun and then spread so far apart that not even he could reform. The intelligence and viciousness of the act are directly responsible for the popularity of Vangal in particular in these parts. It's true that he's a god and therefore new to the world when compared to the titans, and we give special honor to what endures. But he is after all the eldest of the gods, created by a union among titans of a sort they never engaged in again; and who can help but admire his zealousness in the pursuit of death? Others fear him and try to keep him at bay. We welcome him into our midst and seek to emulate his example. Indeed, some of you may see him as he goes about his work — which is our work, too — in the best of times.

Our lives have been relatively quiet since the glories of those days. We do not lack for worthy opponents, certainly. New strangers have come among us, of all races, and there's always the challenge of slaughtering them. Careless travelers perpetually come along, for us to raid and loot. But we lack a grand cause. Perhaps it will be your fortune to find one.

THE VIEW FROM THE NORTHEAST

These are the words of Vikrikil, Keeper of the Eyes.

The pain will pass. I could give you the healing herbs now, but then you wouldn't learn half the lesson. You can endure the loss of one of your eyes and remain an effective and useful member of our tribe. Medicine in the midst of a holy ceremony is for the soft races; as an orc, you must be strong.

After all, you are not the first to have made this sacrifice. You see that each of these glass balls holds an eye much like yours. Mine

is among them, and so is my mentor's, and his mentor's, and back for eight generations. Yours will take its place when it has been properly treated. Yes, you will learn the ancient process by treating it yourself, and if the task fails, well, you still have another eye. You would not be the first seer to have to pay that price. It would just mean that you'd have to work that much harder if you wished to survive afterwards. I suggest you pay close attention and not make any mistakes.

We are new to this land. Until the terrible tragedy of the titanswar, we lived in the mountains, in the gaps of civilization and outside the web of the god lackeys' patrols. But the battles that raged across the Plains of Lede made them uncongenial to the soft fools who had favored them, and now they have left the land for us. Only the druids and their minions linger on, and they merely survive in isolated areas that we shall clear out in due season. Oh, and there are the pathetic fortresses in the north. It is because of our plans for attacking them that you have undergone this trial now: we need more than one seer for the campaign.

Though new to Lede, we have done well. Our ancestors made good use of the fresh ruins available, and there is no question that the experience of being assaulted by weapons made out of one's own family home and graveyard helped demoralize the stragglers who didn't want to give up the plains to us. We have also excelled — and continue to excel — in the battles against our rivals, like the hags and the proud. Individually, many of them are tougher than we are, but it is the orcs who are faster

and more numerous, more willing to sacrifice some of our number for the sake of tactical advantage. If they try to match us in these tactics, they get wiped out, because they are fewer in the first place and breed more slowly. Right where we are standing now was once a den of the leonine proud, built on the ruins of a temple to some god or another. The god and the proud are both gone, and we are here. Learn from this.

The great advantage of nomads like us is that we cannot be held hostage by "home" the way that city-dwellers and farmers can. What you did with your eye, we can do collectively with all our possessions, with any oasis, with any encampment. You took part in the march across the snow two winters ago, and know what it is like to shed every belonging beyond your clothes and a flask. See now, through your remaining eye, and observe the comfort of this chamber and the fineness of the jewelry you took from the bodies of your enemies. The soft races say that it takes grasses to feed the horses in order to live like this. You see that horses are not necessary, nor even particularly desirable except for food. What need have we of grasses, when we have the flesh of our foes? And now we have the same luxuries as they — until we choose to leave it all behind. So it is that we can live in places that those weaklings of the steppes think unfit.

Now come, we have battles to plan. And perhaps I will get you some of the herbs after all. You have listened and learned. You have proven yourself strong.

chapter five

TRIBES of the -SCARRED LANDS

We are a people without fear, without remorse, without regret. We do what must be done to survive, to prosper. You somehow think that your right to dwell here, to use the richness of this land is guaranteed by your ancestors' having made buildings here? No — they are just one more richness that we will take from you. Hear me, city-men. My brothers come.

— Khujol the Raider, on the execution block

A GATHERING OF TRIBES

This section presents detailed descriptions of several tribes from different parts of the Scarred Lands. Some prosper, others don't; some draw on a rich tradition of heroic effort, others on the efficiency of villainy. Each represents one or more of the forces described at work in the preceding chapter, and demonstrates how to translate generalizations about regional culture into specific, playable details. Each of these tribes can be inserted into any fantasy campaign with a minimum of adjustment.

THE GRAY DUNE TRIBE

Origin: Ukrudan nomads

Territory: The western Ukrudan desert, south of Dunael, including the western end of the Splintered River.

Leaders: Jann Silverhand (*male human, Bbn11, CN*) is the nominal chief, but he does not enjoy

widespread respect. His reputation has suffered in the wake of several unsuccessful campaigns against raiders from the Wall of Bones; and a persistent disease, which makes him weak as well as giving his hands the distinctive grayish tint that is the origin of his nickname, causes many to doubt his ability to lead. The council of elders does not often directly contradict him, but the warlords Nasr the Vulture (*male human, Bbn13, CN*), Qada the Judge (*male human, Bbn10, CG*), shaman Wazwas the Cunning (*male human, Bbn3/Drd8, CE*) and priestess Haiwa the All-Seeing (*female human, Adp8, CN*) make most of the real decisions. Tribe members seeking firm guidance generally come straight to the council unless particular ceremonial obligations require consulting the chief as well. Jann knows that he doesn't have the elders' respect, but thinks of them as plotting against him and his many loyal followers; he lacks any sense of just how unpopular he has become in the tribe at large.

Soon enough, the council of elders will decree outright that Jann is unfit for his position and invite a competition for his replacement. Any male at least 16 years old and who has killed at least three enemies of the tribe may take part in this traditional contest. Challengers fight in trios, each armed with a single knife and tied together with six-foot-long ropes connected to an iron hub. The last member of the trio still standing and conscious wins; the challenge goes through as many rounds as necessary to establish a single victor, who then becomes chief.

Population: 500.

Lifestyle: The Gray Dune people live like a great many tribes of the Ukrudan desert. Its members divide their time between diurnal and nocturnal activity, and between raiding outsiders — in this case, the outposts of Dunahnae — and hunting slitheren and asaathi and other enemies within the desert. The tribe is small enough to not really need any permanent settlements. Mothers with small children stay at temporary encampments at favored oases and passages of the Splintered River, guarded by men needing rest and recuperation time. Everyone else rides together.

One of the few things that most tribe members do respect Jann for, is his zealous prosecution of the tribe's multi-generation battle with the Dunahnae and their lackeys. The Gray Dune raiders don't take slaves: they lack the resources to support them and in any event aren't interested. As far as the Ukrudans are concerned, anyone who becomes enslaved and stays that way deserves it. Raiders aim to kill as many charduni slaves as possible and to inflict what damage they can on the Wall of Bones. In practice it's much easier to do the former than the latter, and Jann is at least a very efficient slaughterer of hapless slaves within range of the tribe's camel charges.

The Gray Dune people live with a very rigid separation of gender roles. Women build, men break down and destroy. This is not the same thing as "women occupy passive roles, men active ones," since building includes making fortifications and weaponsmithing along with more typically "female" crafting. Destroying includes the removal of garbage, and other domestic chores, in addition to riding forth to slay. The basic tribal role is that if a labor ends with more pieces than it began, it's a man's job.

The rate of live births is low in the tribe, and many of the children who do come to term die in their first few years. The desert is not kind to children who lack a permanent shelter in which they can grow up. The Gray Dune people therefore supplement their own numbers with raids on other tribes, with successfully abducted children among the most precious prizes any raiders can bring back to their chief. The Gray Dune warriors are very good at this,

From Jann Silverhand, Chief of the Gray Dune Tribe, Lord of all the Desert and the World, to Aarixthic, Lord High Priest and First Minister of Chardun:

This is a decree sent to the priest and minister that he may know and pay heed. You have taken counsel with your advisors and instructed us to surrender our tribe and become your vassals. But we say to you that if you were a true king of your people, you would recognize the folly of your actions and submit to us and learn from us the true wisdom of the world.

You have written, "You have attacked my loyal subjects and diligent slaves as they go about their work, which is right and proper for them to do and not a matter for warfare or other criticism. I am astonished, and must know what is their crime?" We cannot understand these words. Surely it is obvious to all that the gods have spoken to us first and foremost, so that there can be no question of any reward but death being appropriate for those who refuse to acknowledge our authority. It is not merely a matter of our honest word against your deceitful one, but of the gods' favor against lies and madness — so you see that none of us have a choice as to this outcome. How could we make such slaughter of your subjects and slaves, if the gods did not strengthen our hands?

You claim that the gods, and in particular Chardun, speak to you. But since we know that the gods speak to us, your words can be nothing but boastful pride, and it would be best if you would cease such foolish utterances immediately.

All lands have been given to us from sunrise to sunset. How could anyone act other than in accordance with the commands of the gods? Now your own heart must tell you, "We will be subject to the Ukrudans and will place our powers at their disposal." You must come in person with your ministers and sages and kneel to receive your proper punishment and instruction.

That is what we have to tell you. If you fail to act in accordance therewith, how can we foresee what will happen to you? The gods alone know.

making a net gain of a few children every year — so while most tribes remain roughly constant in population over time, the Gray Dune ranks are growing slightly but consistently. A powerful tribal taboo prohibits anyone from informing abducted children of their true origins, unless the chief or priestess specifically commands it; a formal rite of adoption purges the child's old name and identity and allows

the chosen adoptive parents to bind a new name into their child's soul.

Tradition says that the first dream a newly chosen chief has is prophetic. In the wake of Jann's numerous failures, there's growing suspicion that this chief's dream was so much self-indulgence passed off as prophecy; few tribe members, however, are sure enough of that to actually refuse to follow the vision. Jann's dream was of the desert wrapped in a black fire that forced the tribe to live underground, and he's commanded unprecedented exploration of the caves through which the Splintered River flows. He believes (and will argue with elaborate logic if anyone asks) that somewhere in the river's course there are nearly closed canyons that receive enough light and air to permit surface-like existence without being at risk when the black flame burns. So far nothing like that has turned up, nor do tortured slitheren prisoners know of anything like it. Jann takes the latter as confirmation that the canyons are very well concealed indeed and presses on with the search.

This underground aspect of tribal life brings unfamiliar skills into play. Tribal lore relates the current exploration with some of the journeys made by the Ukrudan ancestors as they passed through the eastern reaches of the Splintered River. Occasionally searchers find relics of early Ukrudan nomads, which suggests that the slitheren did not always block off the river as they do now. For their part, the slitheren treat the nomads as trespassers on holy ground, and the violence of their response has forced a constant flow of tribal innovations in tactics and weaponry suited to the cave environment.

Customs: As with many Ukrudan tribes, religion among the Gray Dune people is more a matter of being against the titans than for the gods. Thulkas ruined the land, or at least made it inhospitable to life, and left a monstrous legacy. Anyone who worships him may safely be assumed to share the titan's demented goals and must therefore die. Since the gods seldom actively intervene to help their followers, most tribe members treat the gods somewhat like very powerful but very distant relatives. The gods get sacrifice and elaborate hymns honoring the glories of the Titanswar, and otherwise seldom feature prominently in any Gray Dune member's decision-making.

On the other hand, the Gray Dune people pay tremendous attention to omens that might confirm or refute Jann's prophetic dream — particularly in light of the growing skepticism, but not yet general outright disbelief, of the tribe's people. The discovery of unexpected roots and herbs around a new oasis, for instance, may be confirmation of Jann's vision, since they represent prosperity coming from below; while old graves exposed by a windstorm are warnings against tampering with what the earth has hidden. Currently, one popular way for rivals to get their opponents in trouble is to bring

charges of necromancy and other illicit manipulation of the earth and darkness.

The Gray Dunes dress like most other Ukrudan nomads, with multiple layers of cloaks and robes to keep out sand and wind. Most of their garments are woven or dyed in somber colors, suitable for camouflage against the desert. The one note of color is the white scarf honored in Ukrudan tradition. The designs woven into the fabric allow a knowledgeable viewer to trace the wearer's lineage and allegiance without any trouble. (Wearing another Ukrudan's scarf, unless it's been given in inheritance, is punishable by death among all the tribes.)

Outside stereotype describes the Ukrudans as filthy, sweaty creatures, but that perception is incorrect. The desert nomads do sweat, and their garments do trap the moisture, so they smell quite rank — but that process also helps keep the nomads insulated a bit from extremes of heat and cold. They also keep very clean, scouring themselves with a highly acidic soap mixed with water and extremely fine sand. This isn't at all comfortable, but dirt and grime support bacteria, and untreated infections can quickly become life threatening. Thus, the nomads are actually more hygienic than many of the city-dwellers they encounter.

The tribe holds one major religious ceremony each month. In the first half of the year, from winter solstice to summer solstice, it runs from sunset to sunrise on the night of the waning half-moon. In the second half of the year, the rite is observed during the night of the waxing half-moon. This is the time, the Gray Dunes say, when the dangers of day and night most fully cancel each other out. At all other times, there's too much of something: too much heat or cold, too much light or dark, and always there are monsters to exploit the imbalances. Slitheren emerge from the tunnels of the Splintered River at night; the tyrants of Dunahnae patrol when the sun shines brightly. Twilight is the desert people's time: they know how to use the shadows and the light alike for their advantage. The monthly ceremony includes invocations of all the local spirits of the daytime and nighttime sands, favored animal and plant totems, and the spirits of the waters. There is a feast at midnight, followed by competitions to perform old and new tribal songs most impressively.

The Gray Dune people also celebrate an additional festival, the one that gives them their name. The lesser moon, the so-called Gray Moon, is full on the same night as Belsameth's moon only very rarely. The vast majority of Ghelspad's inhabitants regard this as an ill-fated night, when disaster seeps forth and strange things stir. For the Gray Dune people it's a unique opportunity to show their courage. Braving the gray light of that night, they ride forth into territory controlled by rival tribes or nearby enemies

and slay as many monstrous targets as they can find — concentrating on the creatures that both they and those who claim the land oppose. As daylight approaches, all the tribe members who could take part (including many of those who don't normally fight) return with their various spoils of battle. A huge feast follows, making use of anything edible gathered that night along with special dishes planned months or even years in advance. Then, in the morning hours, the shamans lead the people in songs of thanks to all the spirits that helped them in this hunt.

The Gray Dunes' neighbors find this infuriating; and when they send angry messages to complain, they then suffer the outrage of being calmly told, "If you were out in the field as well that night, instead of hiding away, you could stop us. Or try to."

Allies and Enemies: The Gray Dune tribe regards all other Ukrudan tribes as rivals — ranging from occasional allies to be regarded with great suspicion, to worthy competitors to be humiliated for the greater glory of the Gray Dunes, to menaces who ought to be crushed if the opportunity ever presents itself. However, all Ukrudans are potential allies in the face of shared dangers like the slitheren and Dunahnae.

Skills and Feats: The desert environment makes Swim a less-than-useful skill, though the Splintered River does provide some opportunity for that skill. The combination of Handle Animal, Ride and Survival is absolutely essential for survival in the Ukrudan desert. Nearly all adults have four or more ranks in these. Travelers stranded on foot almost always die, since the nearest oasis may lie within range of a hard camel ride but farther than a forced march can take a person before running out of water. Intimidate is, of course, a very popular skill among the Gray Dunes; and they're good enough at it to still exist, despite all the provocation they've given to more numerous, better armed and more powerful opponents.

The Gray Dune propensity for intruding into others' territory makes Endurance and Run useful feats. "But they couldn't have gotten here from there" is a very common lament among nearby rivals.

The Oaken Furies

Origin: Kelder Steppes horsemen

Territory: The tribe claims all of the Kelder Steppes that used to be forested. In practice, they exert primary, though not altogether exclusive, authority in the wilderness south and west of the Blood Sea.

Leaders: Alwis the Tall (*male human, Bbn8/Drd4, CN*) is the chief of the Furies. The twins Dovalus (*male human, Bbn3/Drd9, CN*) and Erida



(female human, *Bbn4/Drd7*, CN) provide the spiritual leadership for the tribe.

Ever since the death of the forest, the Oaken Furies have chosen their chiefs by a combination of ordeal and vision quest. Those who feel called upon to lead as chief or shaman must walk through a bonfire three times. (Each pass requires a Reflex save, as per the DMG, Chapter 8, "Heat Dangers," *Catching on Fire*.)

Those who are still standing, and wish to continue, may then drink a potion made with the ashes of titan-destroyed trees. Perspective leaders then become unconscious, spending an entire day in a shared dream of hunting through the forests as they once were. The participants then engage in opposed Will checks, starting with the first two to enter the dream-hunt. The winner continues to dream, while the loser wakes suddenly and painfully. The victor of each contest goes on to oppose the next candidate, until there is only one remaining. When all candidates have awakened, it is clear who has been chosen as the new chief or shaman.

Population: 1,900 (250 half-elves, 75 halflings).

Lifestyle: There were steppes east of the Kelder Mountains long before the Titanswar, and the Riders lived on them, herding and migrating in traditional nomadic fashion. But the ancestors of what is now the Oaken Furies tribe lived more sedentary lives in the lush ancient forest. They tended fruit trees and raised vine-growing vegetables — which were twined around the largest and oldest trees, or even entirely removed from the ground and rooted instead in the molds and detritus of branch clefts far overhead. Then the titans lashed out against the land for reasons still unknown, and in a single year the entire forest went up in smoke. The titans smashed, burned, uprooted and altogether ruined everything that the forest peoples had counted on, and then departed.

Most of the survivors fled west, and built a new life for themselves in Bridged City. But some individuals looked around at the devastation and thought a single thought: Revenge. If possible, they would have had the titans pay directly. But since that could not be, the titan's minions had to serve. Justice required that titanspawn not be allowed to profit from the calamity, no matter how much effort it might take to stop them. Orc tribes were already flooding in from the north, when six chiefs and ten shamans bound themselves together into a new tribe and took the name Oaken Furies. Six generations later, their descendants continue the battle, and adopt in new refugees and the occasional soul who feels called to join them.

The tribe's ritual of adulthood includes a milder version of the chief/shaman test. The man- or woman-to-be drinks a potion made from forest ash and the

water of the Blood Sea, which induces 12 hours of unconsciousness. Newly awakened to adulthood, he or she rises with the knowledge of whether or not to stay with the tribe. The shamans and tradition agree that all members of the tribe choose their destiny of virtually certain and violent death, and releases those not called to this service with prayers and blessings.

Tribal practice favors a unified, single-minded focus on major tasks. When it's time to make fresh clothes, tents, saddles and the like, every single tribe member physically capable of contributing any labor at all works under the supervision of the skilled crafters. When it's time to hunt titanspawn, everyone takes part, as scouts or corpse scavengers if they're not prepared to actually fight. There are specialists and masters at each important task, but since everyone gets some practice under the watchful scrutiny of experts, the next master-to-be might be anyone in the tribe. The shamans point out that the great trees are alike in strength and grandeur despite their sex, differing only in the presence of cones, flowers and the like, and urge the people of the tribe to similarly share their greatness.

Customs: The Oaken Furies maintain an absolute taboo on the use of metal. Everything the tribe uses, wears and eats must come from plants, from stone, or from the bodies of their slain enemies. Thus, the tribe demonstrates that the gifts the titans sought to destroy remain of value, and that revenge need not require the tribe to take up the weapons of its enemies or their minions. Tribal lore does not confront the extent to which the tribe *has* decayed; the consumption of other humanoids and tanning the hides of slain enemies for clothes and shelter were not part of life in the Kelder Forest.

Funerals for fallen tribe members call for the most elaborate ceremonies. The bodies of the fallen are ideally buried in the still-lifeless husks of once-sacred groves, or at the very least are burned and the remains scattered so that no enemy can exploit them. Seldom spoken of, but always present at these occasions, is the thought that the tribe is doomed: a single tribe cannot defeat the armies of titanspawn or undo the damage inflicted by the titans, and the gods apparently don't care to help. The last Oaken Fury can expect to fall unmourned and unblessed. Unsurprisingly, passions run high during and after each funeral.

Oaken Fury tradition says that the destruction of the Kelder Forest began on the first day of the month of Chardot, right at the beginning of summer. That day is the great holy day of the tribe, commemorated with laments that are sung on no other occasion and with curses directed at whatever survives of the titans. Some shamans like to include at least token sacrifices to the gods as well, but most

tribe members feel that the gods can be damned right alongside their titan parents. They had a responsibility to heal the land, and they didn't, and the tribe doesn't honor those who leave their responsibilities unmet.

The Oaken Furies disdain ostentation in dress and manner. They give the highest accolades to what is most *useful*. The tribe member who designs a better waterproofing for outer coats wins more honor than the finest tailor might. Luxuries are seen as temptations to forsake the path of revenge and become attached to the blasted world the titans and gods have made. The only acceptable ornaments are those very few trinkets and decorations that survived the Kelder Forest's destruction and that were not given into others' care for safekeeping at Bridged City.

At least, this austerity is the standard that all tribe members learn to profess. In reality, like all people, they do like both some comforts and some tokens to distinguish themselves from their peers and neighbors. As long as this doesn't impair the tribe's general readiness for battle, the chief and shamans let it pass; when they do feel that it's interfering, they embark on a purge of all inappropriate luxury items and arrange for new challenges to let the practical artisans show the superiority of their work.

Allies and Enemies: Every titanspawn is the inevitable enemy of the Oaken Furies. Nothing the titanspawn could do now might possibly atone for the wrongs of their kind or their vanquished masters. Their one acceptable act is to die, as quickly as possible. The Oaken Furies see themselves as having no real alliances in the world; they make common cause with the Riders and others for specific purposes, but as soon as the common goal is accomplished they consider the association over.

Individuals often fare better in the Oaken Furies' esteem than do groups. A single person, or a small band of allies, can demonstrate the sort of courage and dedication the Furies honor; and if these outsiders inflict noteworthy damage on titanspawn, then they must in some degree carry the spirit that animates the tribe — regardless whether or not they ever recognize that spirit within themselves. At the moment there are about two dozen "Brothers and Sisters of the Oaken Furies," who are welcome to join the tribe at any time and to take part in all the tribe's affairs except the yearly rite of mourning.

Skills and Feats: Until the Kelder Forest was destroyed, the peoples who now comprise the Oaken Furies were relatively peaceful, their ranks dominated by bards, druids and rangers. Those traditions remain, but all have been adapted to the grand mission of revenge. Many tribe members multi-class, as the chief and shamans have done, to incorporate

skills and feats not available to barbarians. The Oaken Furies' tradition of whole-tribe effort means that most tribe members end up with a fairly even distribution of levels across the skills available to them, with perhaps one or two personal favorites.

Combat feats of all sorts take precedence over nearly everything else. The tribe has no collective preference for any particular style: whatever kills titanspawn serves the mission. The chief often encourages diversification of tactics, both to keep the tribe's enemies off-guard and to keep ready for unexpected complications. There's often some fresh horror stirring somewhere on the steppes, from the legacy of the first Blood Monsoon to recent encounters with unknown shadow creatures. In addition, the presence of so many fighting styles leads many opponents to assume that the tribe's numbers must be much greater than they are.

The Peregrine Tribe

Origin: Albadian nomads

Territory: The Peregrine tribe migrates on the western edges of Albadia, from the Amber Wood right up to the slopes of the Titanshome Mountains, deliberately courting danger for the sake of glory and the opportunity to claim resources others dare not pursue.

Leaders: Invkist (*female human, Bbn9/Sor5, CG*) has been the chief of the Peregrines for the last 15 years. The Peregrines practice a multi-generational succession: a mature male chief takes a young wife and trains her so that when he dies, she can assume power. Once she is established and has proven her worth, she takes a young husband and trains him to be her own successor. If a leader dies prior to choosing a spouse, or the chosen heir is killed before assuming power, the tribal elders choose a replacement from the younger brothers or sisters and nieces or nephews of the last chief. Other tribal authorities, currently the Hellian Erenthi, (*female human, Sor7/Hel4, CG*) and the master crafters (Vikund, *male human, Bbn2/Exp8, CN*, and Thorvaldei, *female human, Bbn1/Exp7, CN*), are often but not always of the same sex as the current chief.

Though a chief normally chooses his or her own successor, challenges to a leader's authority are allowed at the midsummer festivals. These fights are always to the death, which keeps the number of challenges low or nonexistent most of the time, as long as the chief does an even moderately acceptable job.

Population: The total population under Invkist's command is about 3,800. This includes about 200 hostages at any given time: the Peregrines routinely hold potentially lucrative prisoners for ransom, to give themselves more coin with which to make needed purchases from urban traders. Nothing in



tribal tradition prohibits slavery, but Invkist discourages it as likely to promote social discord at an awkward moment. Her late husband, the previous chief, had the same policy, so the 50 or so remaining slaves are almost all quite old and not likely to be replaced when they die.

Invkist also accepts temporary oaths of allegiance from Amber Wood elves, many of which are quite interested in native efforts to harass the titanspawn to the west of their home. They take oaths committing themselves to the Peregrines for one, five, or 15 years; at the moment, just under 200 elves travel as part of the tribe in this way.

Finally, Invkist makes no secret of her absolute contempt for the growing urban population of Albadia, and she takes great pleasure in offering sanctuary to any accused criminal from the cities willing to seek her out. Not many of them accept the offer, because she expects them to function alongside the rest of the tribe, taking all the same risks. At the moment, about forty fugitives do travel with the tribe, all male, accused of crimes ranging from theft to murder. Naturally, they all insist they're innocent.

Lifestyle: Like most northern nomads, the Peregrines maintain a small permanent settlement in their favored wintering grounds, while most of the tribe roams widely during the summer. Mothers of new children, warriors recovering from major wounds,

and others unfit for the wandering life tend the hearths and forges all year round.

The Peregrines think of their assaults on the Titanshome range as long-term military campaigns. In the first year, they scout, dividing into small bands to probe throughout a chosen area: up a series of canyons, along a stream channel, over hills known to have many cave openings, and so on. For the next two to 10 years, depending on the difficulty of resistance, the Peregrines systematically make their way across the scouted territory — slaughtering all opposition they can. Small garrisons set up semi-permanent camps in cleared areas, both to guard against enemies' returns and to maintain caches of food and essential supplies.

Peregrine lore gives much attention to the glorious successes and downplays just how many of these assaults end in bitter defeat. No single tribe, no matter how brave, can make much of a dent on the horrors entrenched in the Titanshome Mountains. When the tribal warriors withdraw, new evils creep in to fill the gaps just cleared. The permanent gains resulted from the assaults are regrettably few and far between; and while the Peregrine tribe tries to ignore this reality, a handful of melancholy ballads do sing of the sorrows warriors feel as they clear out a den of monsters — only to find the bones of their own would-be conquering ancestors beneath it all.

The division of power between the sexes, reflected in the Peregrine approach to rulership, appears throughout the tribe's social life. The shamans say that everyone's soul has a gender of its own, which may or may not correspond to the physical appearance of the body. Thus, the Peregrine tribe shares in the prevailing Albadian wisdom about men's work and women's work, they just base that division on the aptitudes that must be reflecting from the person's soul. Inkvist remains physically female even as she fulfills the male role of military leadership, and Vikund is unquestionably male despite his aptitude for sewing and weaving. Outsiders find this all very strange, and Peregrines in turn are bewildered by the wastefulness of available talent that they see in so many other tribes — resulting, they believe, from assigning tasks based on the outward body rather than the aptitudes of each person's soul.

Customs: Peregrines share the general Albadian love of jewelry, and use it to mark the passage of a child into adulthood. At the age of thirteen, each Peregrine child receives a set of five piercings, two in each ear and one through the nostril or septum. Each piercing accommodates a small gold ring with a bone inset. The bone comes from one of the child's relatives who fell in battle against titanspawn (or, on occasion, other particularly worthy enemies). From each foe the child kills, a small piece of bone is extracted and used to replace one of the ancestral bones. The child is considered a full adult when all five rings carry the bones of enemies. Children who train in women's work and are unlikely to kill enemies themselves may receive bones from warriors who feel that the child's work contributed in some way, whether it was with a well-crafted blade, comfortable clothes, an insulating tent, or some other important assistance to those who do the slaying.

A strong taboo governs the reuse of names. All the names of those who died in campaigns that ended successfully, as proclaimed by the chief and shaman with appropriate rites, are "retired" and must not be reused. Those names, and the souls which once carried them, are now bound to the land they've helped purify, and any future use of similar names must differ by at least one syllable. If a name is repeated, the Peregrines believe, angry ghosts will sabotage the tribe's efforts as long as the name's bearer remains alive. The recurring presence of the names of those who died on other campaigns is a tacit admission that sometimes the tribe's plans end in failure.

Weeklong ceremonies mark the beginning and end of each campaign. The chief and shaman take turns speaking the names of all participants; if the campaign ended successfully, this will be the last time any Peregrine will utter a number of those names. At the start of the campaign, sacrifices go to

all the gods likely to provide aid in battle: Corean, Tanil, Enkil, Vangal and Drendari. Tanil enjoys the highest position of honor when the chief is female, and Enkili and Corean share the highest honors when the chief is male. And the end of the campaign, sacrifices go to the deities concerned with healing and purity — Madriel, Denev and Syhana. At least one significant piece of or artifact from each fallen Peregrine warrior rests in the memorial mound constructed at the end of the campaign, with a small shrine erected on top of the mound once it's covered with new grass.

Three-day ceremonies open and close each year's summer. At the start of the season, the chief and shaman add the names of newly matured warriors to the roster of those fighting the titanspawn and again invoke the gods of war. A daylong dance then weaves a ritual spell around all the warriors — muffling their tracks so that no enemy may find the winter encampment and those who must stay there during the warm months, when it is only lightly guarded. The autumn ceremony centers on the unweaving of this spell, and it's during winter that traders and other strangers may visit the encampments.

One of the reasons barbarian hordes often intimidate their more civilized victims is the barbarian knack for assimilating new knowledge into their existing way of life. If the defenders of one city use tactics that the barbarians can adapt for their own purposes, the next people to attack the tribe will encounter new resistance; barbarians will also draw on their experience with one culture to exploit weaknesses in the defense of their next enemy. The view that the tribe's gods (or titans, depending on the tribe) have given them dominion over everything they can conquer encourages an attitude of alert experimentation, as long as that evolution does not threaten the tribe's maintenance of traditions and taboos. The Peregrines specialize in adopting techniques from the titanspawn they fight, and will then take that knowledge and exchange it for new methods and ideas at the grand gatherings of the Albadian tribes.

Allies and Enemies: The Peregrine tribe is remarkably close to the elves of Amber Wood. Together, they see themselves as the insufficiently appreciated champions of the gods' ongoing battle to cleanse the earth. Most Peregrines regard urban Albadians as posing almost as serious a threat as the titanspawn, and have been known to mount small-scale raids on the cities in wintertime.

The list of Peregrine enemies is very long indeed, encompassing every surviving target of a Peregrine campaign in the west and the authorities of the eastern cities of Albadia who'd like their fugitives back. The other nomadic tribes have few major grudges against the Peregrines, or vice versa,

but the others regard the Peregrines as unreliable thanks to their obsession with grand displays.

Skills and Feats: The highly varied nature of the terrain, in and around the Titanshome range, makes all the skills available for wilderness travel useful at some point. The Peregrines regard aptitude at climbing, swimming and the like as a sort of craft all its own, and there are families just as famous for their athletes as there are lineages of great jewelers and weaponsmiths. The children of these more athletic families often apply Skill Focus (or the Athletic feat) one or more times to their physical skills.

Peregrine tradition calls for warriors to develop all-around competence. In the course of a summer's battles, nearly every warrior will likely need to ride and shoot and stalk and fight at close range with various weapons, and the Albadian practice of dispersing for individual and small-group hunting prevents the formation of specialized units. Thus, feats with extensive chains of prerequisites generally belong only to the oldest and most successful warriors. This puts the tribe at a disadvantage against any single group of more specialized opponents, but in the long run gives them better odds at survival. Like most Albadians, however, the Peregrines hold the two-bladed sword in high esteem.

The Rusting Blade People

Origin: Blood Steppes horsemen

Territory: North and east of Thulkas's Ghost and the surrounding geyser field.

Leaders: Lonkar of the Red and White Axes (*male human, Bbn8, NE*) is currently the tribal chief, while Tribe-Mother Gereshan the Younger (*female human, Drd7, CE*) is in effect the tribe's shaman. When the old chief dies or voluntarily resigns, all males over the age of 16 may take part in a duel-to-first-blood tournament. The males over 23 years old vote on the chief from among the top three duelists. The tribe-mother is responsible for all magical activity and education, and has the authority to punish or even execute any practitioner of arcane or divine arts. When the old tribe-mother dies or resigns, the arcane and divine magic-workers of the tribe choose possible replacements by acclaim. They may then set up whatever challenges they consider appropriate, except that at least one contender must remain alive at the end of them. The losers are eaten in ritual feasts.

Population: 2800 full tribe members (including 600 children), 700 of which have one or more levels in PC classes. The population of slaves varies wildly, since most slaves last only a few months or years; the average is about 500 except after major wars, when it



may rise as high as 2,000–3,000. All members of the tribe are human.

Lifestyle: Like most tribes of the Blood Steppes, the Rusting Blade People scorn cultivation and other such activities — they are unworthy of devotees of death. The tribe doesn't actually practice large-scale cannibalism, so most of their meat comes from hunting and what they can scavenge or steal from other tribes. The Rusting Blade tribe follows a more or less consistent two- to three-year cycle throughout its territory, staying at any particular oasis or stream channel for a few weeks and then moving on to the next. They stay away from each haven long enough to let its resources replenish themselves.

The broken terrain of the Blood Steppes prohibits many of the “typical” barbarian actions. Nobody can gallop across the landscape for days on end; they'd fall into a crevasse or volcano. Instead the tribe moves in short marches, generally at twilight, when the creatures of day are winding down and those of night not yet out, or at dawn when the reverse is true. When large bands of enemies are active in the vicinity the tribe separates and each family moves independently, reforming at the next safe spot.

The Rusting Blades pay very little attention to the division of labor based on gender. Mothers must bear children, and a man must be chief and a woman must be tribe-mother. Apart from that, all work goes to those best able to perform it. However, talented individuals and their students are often given more desirable work, and those currently being punished will receive far less desirable assignments.

Customs: Among the Rusting Blade people, elaborate clothing — apart from ceremonial occasions — is a mark of shame. It signifies that the wearer isn't considered reliable for any activity requiring protective garb, armor or any useful tools and gear. Thus, the Rusting Blades tend to regard formally costumed diplomats, priests and other outsiders in official capacities as something like clowns, all but shouting out, “I'm useless! Ignore me!” Very few outsiders ever think to ask why their first contacts go so badly, however, and the secret remains the tribe's own.

The major ceremonial holiday in the tribe's life is the Safe Return, celebrated one week after the tribe gathers at Thulkas's Ghost and the caves nearby. Since the tribe takes a somewhat different route through its territory each cycle, there's no fixed schedule for the Safe Return festivities. “We celebrate when it's time to celebrate,” the tribe-mother teaches the children. The Safe Return is an occasion for untrammelled orgiastic mating, or at least as untrammelled as a people so obsessed with death can get about sex. The tribe accords honor to those who manage the most impressive mating of one sort or

another: during particularly bad weather, on the slopes of Thulkas's Ghost while an eruption is building, in the face of approaching enemies, and so on. The celebration lasts for one week.

A much smaller, single-day Rite of Haven takes place on the first day the tribe assembles at a new point of sanctuary where they plan to stay for at least a month. The rite includes a smaller orgy and a cooking competition to determine who can make the most interesting and enjoyable use of the meats and edible goods in that area.

The religious beliefs of the tribe are very simple. In every age there is a greatest champion of death. Ideally, this would be a member of the tribe; but if there's someone better at it, then that individual deserves the tribe's respect and service. In the current age, the god Vangal excels beyond all others in the merciless pursuit of death, and so the tribe follows his example. Chiefs and tribe-mothers tell particularly successful warriors that they may hope to win apotheosis and do to Vangal what he did to Gormoth and so many others. Less effective mass murderers among the gods and titans also receive token sacrifices during the Safe Haven, and any who seem to aid the tribe receive additional sacrifices at each Rite of Haven for the next cycle.

The Rusting Blades distinguish themselves from rival tribes partly by the absence of behavioral taboos and distinctive decorations. They say that such things are for those afraid of the ultimate truth. Since the Rusting Blades welcome and revere death, they have no need to try to appease it (and no hope that such appeasement would work if they did try). So Rusting Blades present a much more motley and uncoordinated appearance than the other inhabitants of the Blood Steppes.

Allies and Enemies: The Rusting Blades have no lasting alliances and regard everyone else on the steppes as their enemies. Their primary antagonists are usually whoever is closest, with old conflicts renewed with each passage through the tribe's cycle of migration. From time to time would-be challengers to Lonkar's authority mount raids on Ontenazu's southwestern provinces, but so far they haven't won any notable victories.

Skills and Feats: The Blood Steppes provide few opportunities for swimming, and very few Rusty Blades develop more than rudimentary competence in Swim. According to the tribe, the waters of the steppes are for drinking — when they're pure — and for concealing tracks and the like, not thrashing about in. Nor do many Rusty Blades get very good at Climb, because the heights of their terrain mostly belong to the bat devils and other aerial monsters.

Nearly all adult members of the tribe do have 4 or more ranks of Survival. Since the terrain shifts constantly, it's terribly easy to get lost in the Blood

Steppes, even in areas travelers know well. Tribe members who cannot care for themselves, and find known rendezvous points, don't last. Likewise, most tribe members know at least a few levels of Craft skills like leatherworking and weaponsmithing so that they can repair equipment damaged during migrations. Common Professions include brewer, cook, herbalist, tanner and woodcutter. Large equipment, like kilns, stays locked up in underground chambers when the tribe moves on from a haven; while on the trail, handwork must cover as many needs as possible.

Spellcasters among the Rusting Blades favor any metamagic feat that lets them cast spells with a minimum of display (such as Hide Spell, from **Relics & Rituals**). Magicians of any sort are very rare on the steppes, and the tribe tries to guard its handful of them well. Concealing the spellcasters among tight bands of riders or marchers allows for ambush tactics with ranged spells, which are then hard to track back to the individuals who cast them.

BARBARIANS OF NOTE

The following are noted barbarians of the Scarred Lands, whether vicious reavers or noble savages. With appropriate adjustments, they may work well as notable figures in any fantasy campaign.

INDROLD KCHILD

It is a bad time for the people of the Durroverian highlands. Their whole existence was traditionally an isolated one. Each clan minded its own affairs, except for the occasional grand game or small war against rivals and the even more occasional skirmish against lowlanders bent on ruling the area. Then came the successful union of the lowlands and highlands under a single king, and the ongoing viability of that dynasty. Unfortunately, soon after that came the Calastian invasion, and for 30 years the highlanders have had to fight as best they can to protect themselves against the sundry threats. And despite their bravado, most have felt that at best they can merely hold back the inevitable.

Indrold Kchild (*male human, Bbn3/Nec3, CE*) aims to change that. He knows what it's like to lose, since his whole family was massacred when he was just eight years old. He alone survived, and two years later he began to hear voices instructing him in the proper use of lost secrets — voices that he gradually realized must be the Durroverian dead seeking vengeance. Now 21 years of age, he has delved deeply into the secrets of necromancy and is growing in practical ability all the time. So far he's managed to conceal the depths of his evil, while rallying his fellow highlanders with the message that the dead will march alongside the living to free their mutually

beloved hills and valleys. In less desperate times he'd never get a hearing, but then in less desperate times he wouldn't be on this path.

Rumors have only recently reached the lowland government about this intense young man given to detailed visions of past tragedies and with the growing ability to command the dead. The king's ministers do not yet see any concrete reason to worry about him, since all his anger is directed for the moment against Calastia. However, plans are in motion to dispatch a handful of spies to monitor the charismatic barbarian and his activities.

KAROLIV

Karoliv (*male human, Bbn12, CG*) grew up in the Icefang tribe, one of the smaller tribes to make their way through Albadia's High Snows region. He distinguished himself early on for his innovations in small-group tactics, teaching his brothers and cousins to unleash their rage in sequence — so as to form a sweeping wave across the ice. He was one of the youngest chiefs of his generation, and while the Icefang's ranks remained small their influence grew rapidly. It was at this time that he conceived of the desire to become king of all the Albadians, though he spoke of it to no one.

Then came Thalos's accession to the High Kingship and his offensive ties to the city-folk. Karoliv did not thrust himself forward as a successor, but quietly manipulated others into advancing him — while he professed a suitable modesty about his ability to lead the whole land. In the end, of course, it came to nothing. The Great Council, which convened to choose an opponent to Thalos in 136, picked an unworthy rival of Karoliv's, who promptly went forth and got himself killed. Another Great Council convened in 142 and decided that the time was not yet ripe to mount another such challenge. Karoliv raged within himself.

When he learned of how Thalos's daughter, Sirida, traveled as a diplomat outside Albadian borders to gain allies for her father, he realized that he too had unsuspected opportunities. He turned the chieftom of the Icefangs over to his ambitious younger brother, who is nearly as good a warlord as Karoliv, and set out as a sort of self-appointed ambassador from the nomadic peoples of Albadia. For the last six years he has traveled with a few trusted companions across the length and breadth of Ghelspad, speaking with other nomadic peoples threatened by urban expansion and other dangers. Since he cannot be High King of Albadia at this time, he has begun to dream of being Great Warlord of All Lands, leader of a multi-racial league that could take on the civilized forces confronting them all. Once again, he does not speak of his own ambition but manipulates others into doing his work for him.

Karoliv certainly is a near-raving megalomaniac, but he genuinely does care about the future of nomadic life on Ghelspad and understands that leaders must earn the respect of their followers. So he promotes the exchange of lore, battle plans and other useful information, and on several occasions has been instrumental in brokering trade of precious artifacts to help tribes needing particular magical aid. If he can avoid exposing the depths of his ambition and getting killed in the course of routine battle, one of his dreams might yet come true.

KIMER THE SHATTERER

Kimer (*male human*, *Bbn16*, CG) is another Albadian who travels throughout and outside his homeland, but for wildly different reasons than Karoliv. Kimer was raised by the dwarven Skaolker tribe, which adopts and raises all foundlings without regard for their heritage. He and a dwarvish friend grew up with an insatiable curiosity about the world, and began serving as mercenaries and adventurers. His friend died when they assaulted a frost giant stronghold; in revenge, Kimer slew them and came away bearing the magical sword Ertmodl, one of the most powerful weapons on the continent. In honor of his friend's memory, he continues to travel more or less at random, accompanied only by his dog, looking for people in need of aid and protection.

See **The Wise and the Wicked**, "Kimer the Shatterer," for more information.

LEORIS THE VENGEFUL

The race of the proud has been in decline for many generations, overwhelmed by the challenges of life on the Plains of Lede and turning to internal decadence and stagnation. Whether sinister forces are manipulating the proud (see **Penumbra Pentagon**) or their decline is a purely self-driven collapse, the fact is that the once-great warriors have become petty bickerers.

But not all proud accept that the current situation spells certain doom. Leoris (*male proud*, *Ftr6*, NE) is one of those out to reclaim past glories. He is above all a careful observer of the world around him and is known for turning his insights into immediately useful action. He respects the power and determination of the humans who infest the Plains of Lede, and knows that he cannot count on great victories anytime soon. He and his band of like-minded warriors constantly train themselves between excursions into actual battle; and while their human targets do not yet know their names, word is spreading throughout the human districts of Lede that the proud are more dangerous now than they've been in many years. For Leoris it is not enough, but it is a start.

See **The Wise and the Wicked**, "Leoris," for more information.



chapter six

A LAND OF SPIRITS

Listen well, little one — listen closely, for your ancestors listen closely. Watch carefully, for the spirits around you watch carefully. Understand the ways of our people, my children, for in the spirits around us you have allies undreamt of by the fools who rot within their city walls.

— Ciliaja of the Frostfang, Helliann teacher

WHAT BARBARIANS BELIEVE

Nearly all barbarian cultures share a few key ideas about how the world works, and what is required of them within the grand scheme of things. Different cultures, and even individual tribes within each culture, have their own ideas about what's most important — but very few would deny any of these tenets. Civilized peoples disagree, barbarians say, because they've turned their backs on one or more of these truths or were so poorly taught that they never learned them in the first place. But that is the weakness of the cities, and the barbarian people hardly see it as their role to educate their adversaries.

- **The World Is One.** There is one creation. It has many parts, but they are all parts of one thing. It might be harder to ride from the Kelder Steppes to the thrones of the gods than to ride from the Kelders to Albadia, but

both are possible. It makes sense to speak of the individual parts of creation separately, just as it does to identify each part of a bow or a saddle. But just as you put the pieces back together to actually use the bow and the saddle, so with creation: in practice, it all ties together.

- **Nature Makes No Mistakes.** Every creature with the power of choice does err from time to time, and some have trapped themselves so thoroughly in ignorance and delusion that they err all the time. Nothing else in creation is like that. Even the most unpleasant realities belong in the world, and thus, our world needs them. You may not like death and pain and despair, but they belong there just as much as you do. Depending on what brought you together with dying, suffering and losing hope, they may belong a lot more than you do — if it's your own foolish decisions that now threaten to overwhelm you. Never for a moment think that the world is “nice” or that it likes you and cares about your wellbeing. If you die, there are plenty more people

where you came from. No matter how much you thrive, in the end you die, and the worms grow fat on you until they die in turn. And all of this is precisely how the world is supposed to work.

- **Everything Talks.** Just as everything has a body, everything has a spirit. Spirits talk to themselves and each other, all the time, whether you can understand or even perceive it or not. Some people are born with the ability to hear these conversations when they choose to, while others are born with the affliction of hearing them all the time. All people — at least those of the free tribes — hear the voices of the spirits occasionally, often at moments of great ceremony or personal achievement. Just remember that what is heard is never all there is, and because the world is one, none of it is totally removed from you. It's all there, all around you, waiting for the right opportunity to speak.

- **Everything Has Its Place.** Nothing in the world exists by itself. When you walk, you disturb the grass and the air. Bugs try to feed on your exposed skin. Larger predators may notice your scent and turn to stalk you. Even if there are no other people anywhere nearby, you're not alone. And for each thing you encounter, you are either the superior or the inferior. To the hungry mountain cat, you're the inferior. She will feed on you, and give your meat to her young, if you're not able to hide or run from her attack. To the grasses in the meadow you're the superior, who can crush them for the convenience of your passage. So it is with the spirits as well: the smaller ones take orders from the greater ones, and for each sort of spirit there's a suitable predator — just as there is for each sort of plant and animal. You belong to your family, and your hunting band, and your tribe; but you also belong to the tribe of the entire world, both flesh and spirit. You must learn which of your inhuman tribe-mates to submit to, which you may command, which are yours to prey on, and from which you must flee.

- **You Are Doomed; What You Do About it is Up To You.** Everything begins. Everything ends. And the fate that governs all things governs you, too. Your end is written in the moment of your birth, for those who have the gift of seeing it. Nothing you can do or think or say can change it. But you have complete freedom to decide what to do with the life that's given you. Will you exert such strength as you have for heroic ends, or will you cower? Will you speak truth or lies? Will you face your enemies with courage and resolve or flee before them? You decide what your fate *means*, and the rest of your people will honor or scorn you accordingly.

- **All Authority Must Be Earned.** If you want power, claim it. Call yourself lord of the world, if you want to. But be prepared for challenges from those who doubt your ability to make your claim stick. Every tribe has its own way of testing the mettle of prospective chiefs and other leaders. Less formal challenges govern

every claim of leadership, in the family, the war band, the craft workshop, and so on. The spirits, the animals, and all living things, follow the same process. The great trees prove their worth by denying sunlight to their rivals. Only one wolf leads the pack. The titans contested with each other to gain supremacy, and then the gods showed themselves superior by crushing the titans. The world has no interest in theoretical or speculative merit. Thus, we too follow only those who've proven their right to rule.

BARBARIAN RELIGION

The principles described above rule out much of what civilized peoples mean by "worship." Barbarians think that most urban and rural churches are full of rank nonsense and occasionally dangerous ignorance.

Barbarians seldom engage in intercessory prayer. What's the point in begging a spirit or god for help if they aren't already helping? While there are a few charitable powers in the world, they tend to be busy — and even if they could be reached, the idea of receiving a favor without incurring a debt is looked at with suspicion. Most barbarian prayer is a matter of reminding the spirits of services they owe because of previous favors those in prayer have done: the right sacrifices, actions that expand a spirit's sphere of influence, and the like. Those accustomed to humbly petitioning acts of prayer find this all very disconcerting, as it is much more like haggling in the marketplace than devout surrender.

Barbarians seldom yearn for the direct presence of the spirits they venerate. Indeed, a great deal of barbarian worship focuses on appeasing the nastier spirits to keep them at bay. Most tribes have tales illustrating the foolishness and danger of spending too much time in the company of great spirits. The spirits can too easily lose track of things, like how easily flesh can be damaged and how hard it is to heal. Malicious spirits, on the other hand, seem all too good at remembering and delighting in those mortal weaknesses. Thus, while the spirits are seen as an integral part of the tribe, they are members who have a very separate role. The finest leatherworker in a tribe may be elderly or injured and unable to perform well in combat, but leatherworking doesn't happen in the midst of battle anyway; the leatherworker prepares good cords and bindings, and then warriors use them later, somewhere else. Likewise, scouts can only do their work by being apart from the rest of the tribe, looking out ahead. So it is with the spirits. When properly honored with rites and sacrifices, they do their part to assist the tribe and leave the mortals alone to do their own tasks.

Finally, barbarians often wonder why civilized peoples ignore so much of the spirit world. Those people not of the tribes seem to focus obsessively on the gods and titans, and perhaps a handful of the deities'

particularly powerful progeny. Barbarian tribes honor some of the titans or gods, to be sure, but their rites neither begin nor end there. The spirits of the herd animals the tribe tends to, the prey the tribe hunts, the crops the tribe harvests — all of these need attention, too, and matter more often than a titan or god does. Every single action a barbarian performs has a ritual as well as a mundane significance. Since it's not feasible to perform a rite every time any tribe member does anything at all, barbarians gather at appointed occasions to honor all the spirits of a particular type: At the turning of the season, for instance, or the new or full moon, or the solstices and equinoxes. But sensible barbarians never forget that individual actions always count.

Totems

Barbarian culture draws heavily on the power of totemic animals (and occasionally plants). These spirits embody the essence of their respective lineages, and oversee the life of tribes that serve them.

For instance, Bear totem encompasses every distinctive feature of the various kinds of bear: great strength, massive bulk and thick fur, nurturing care for their young, mighty claws and jaws, confident domination over their lands. Every bear carries the spark of Bear within itself, a gift given at birth and withdrawn at death, and peoples who accept Bear as their totem (and whom Bear accepts in return) become kin to the bears. A tribe that follows Bear gains renown as one of the Bear People, and is likely to flourish in the sorts of mountains and forests where bears live most successfully.

Sharing a totem doesn't mean that everything goes smoothly between the Bear People and the bears. Totems seldom bother to tell their animal kin about any special treatment due to their peoples, and the animals will hunt their kin just as vigorously as they might hunt any others of the humanoid races. Nor does the Bear People's respect keep them from using bear hides, claws, sinews or any other part of the animals they hunt themselves. Kinship does lead to respect, but this is very often the respect given to worthy opponents rather than the sort given to one's own family and allies.

Some tribes honor just one or a very few totems, particularly in lands where only a few animals reign supreme. Albadian tribes each bear the name of their greatest totem: the Peregrine, the Snow Wolf, and the like. Other tribes honor several totems more or less equally,



and their tribe names generally refer to places or other significant associations.

ANCESTORS

All barbarians live with the knowledge that a person's spirit endures past the death of the body, and that the spirits of their ancestors take a continuing interest in the tribe's affairs. For most tribes, in fact, ancestor spirits are among those who most frequently interact with the tribe's living members.

Ancestor spirits are not undead if they've been properly buried. The details of proper burial vary widely from one tribe to the next, however. The mandate to protect an ancestor's body from harm, for instance, leads one tribe to cremate their dead, another to bury the bodies very carefully, and another to flay the corpses and leave them where only worthy predators may feast.

A deceased ancestor can be quite useful to a tribe. The spirit can provide those with the proper rites decisive knowledge about what has occurred in the past, and fairly good appraisals of what's currently happening. The future is difficult to see however, and an ancestor necessarily perceives it wrapped in his own hopes and fears. Any information the ancestors carry about the future may turn out to be wrong, or only symbolically true, and is often as much a matter of exhorting the living to do right as it is to tell them for certain what will happen.

During the tribe's most important festivals, members take turns reciting the most significant events since the last such occasion. These public narrations establish the shared history of the tribe, and the ancestors listen and remember along with the living.

BARBARIAN MAGIC

The vast majority of barbarian tribes regard magic of all kinds with a cautious, unfriendly skepticism. Controlling the world directly by force of will or by directing spiritual forces is... well, it's not the way humans, elves, dwarves and the other humanoid races do things. People use their bodies and tools — real, tangible tools. Magic is at best a form of cheating, a very grave sin in societies where personal achievement and honor count for so much, and at worst it's a power that must inevitably rot the soul of anyone who tries to wield it.

Of course, it's easier to despise a whole category of anything when it's far away. All the various divine and arcane magic styles, practiced in the cities, blur together for a small tribe in the midst of a winter storm or summer drought — while the small but useful magic practiced by the tribe's own shaman seems very different. The magic of one's neighbor, kin or fellow initiate is usually accepted as a useful tool, while the powers of outsiders are seen in a more nefarious light.

Some tribes enthusiastically embrace one or more approaches to magic — most notably the sorceresses of Albadia. However, quite often a tribe who turns to magic is one that has suffered a whole series of devastating defeats; this accounts for the reputation of magic, among barbarians, as being the tool of victims and losers. When weapons and cunning and stealth all fail, the desperate hope that magic may serve. It seldom does, of course. A tribe badly enough beaten to feel that none of its usual weapons work is almost always a tribe facing imminent extinction. The few tribes that make extensive use of magic, *and* enjoy any general measure of success, strike all the others as very strange and most likely pawns of the dark forces that try to deceive and consume all life. In principle there could be some honor in serving the greatest of destroyers, given the role of inevitability and fate, but in practice most tribes prefer to remain their own masters and avoid the temptations of subservience. Other tribes reject some magic, or all magic, as necessarily dependent on powers to whom barbarians ought not bow. In-between lies the common practice of general skepticism and individual acceptance.

ARCANE MAGIC

Wizards are the least common of barbarian spellcasters. The elaborate props wizardry requires remind too many barbarians of sedentary societies and the vices that flourish there, and the lore wizards master necessarily draws them away from the rest of the tribe into strange, solitary pursuits. Only tribes that maintain permanent settlements can afford wizards at all, and as these are usually the tribes closest to civilized life, they're the ones most concerned with maintaining clear distinctions between their ways and those of the cities. Wizards are therefore least welcome precisely where they're most viable. The few tribes that do accept and train wizards usually have a tribal history that includes a civilized past now lost to them, of which wizardry is one legacy still useful for the nomadic present.

Sorcerers flourish in many tribes, though they're always subject to some scrutiny because of the moral risks all magic can pose. But they can travel with no more complications than a crafter with bulky tools, and most barbarian sorcerers maintain at least a few levels of combat-related classes so that they can take part in the struggles that define the tribe. Depending on the tribe and the particular traditions in which a sorcerer has been trained, sorcery may or may not seem to the sorcerer to be what civilized people think of as arcane magic. Many sorcerers practice their art as a form of shamanism. Their verbal components are chants and invocations of suitable spirits, their somatic components are dances and gestures that echo the movements of tribal totems, and their material components are charms made from their totem animals' carcasses.



Bards are as common as sorcerers, or even more so. Societies without widespread literacy depend on the keepers of lore to remember their shared history, and their aptitude for hunting knowledge and rendering it into usable chunks makes them valuable for scouting, diplomacy, and the like. It's unusual but not extremely rare for war-band leaders to gain a few levels in bard so as to be better prepared for the demands of social interaction with strangers. As with sorcerers, not all bards think of their abilities as magical — singing is singing, after all, and it's just a matter of the right technique to produce the particularly potent effects of bardic music.

DIVINE MAGIC

Most tribes have a single individual or family lineage to attend to religious matters. The gods, titans, or other great spirits the tribe serves, need their special attention, in addition to the many smaller spirits whom the druids address. In many tribes, clerical duties are something that widows past childbirth or warriors wounded too gravely can take up, so that the priests may be mostly older individuals with a lengthy history of some other sort behind them.

Only the most fanatically anti-magic tribes lack one or more druids. Clerics are important because the

gods can squash a tribe like so many bugs if they choose to. But they usually don't pay enough attention to bother, leaving the tribes to their own devices. The countless spirits, on the other hand, are constantly active in the midst of tribal life. Where the scholarly pursuits of wizards may seem effete and lazy, druids of the tribes are often quite visibly overworked. To be a tribal druid is to be in constant conversation with the minor unseen powers of the world, beings who are always demanding favors and trying to drive the best bargains for their own services. The powers of knowledge available to druids are in constant demand as well, and it's generally the case that a druid could be usefully occupied in half a dozen places at once, every waking moment.

In some tribes the spirits begin speaking to gifted children, and characters of this background would have druid as their first class. The spirits become quieter as the child ages, and a character could then multi-class over to barbarian or something else upon leaving the age of greatest awareness. In other tribes the spirits begin speaking most clearly to those who've come to the brink of death, or who have in fact died and returned, so that characters do not become druids until sustaining massive injury or coming back from death

thanks to the magic of others. In still other cases, druidic mastery develops in parallel with a secondary field of prowess, the spirits choosing to talk only to those of growing competence; druids of this sort gain a level of druid, then a level of something else, alternating back and forth. Finally, some druids develop their powers in middle and old age, after giving up other pursuits. Almost all tribes have a preferred and common pattern of development, but variations on each timetable do occur. The only true imperative on the matter is that individuals vary as fate requires them to.

Adepts flourish, among nearly all tribes that have any individuals with the talent, for the same reasons that sorcerers are so welcome. Even though they're less powerful than clerics or druids, the ease with which adepts can travel — many even practicing their daily hour of prayer while in a trance-like state on horseback — lets them aid the tribe without slowing it down significantly. For reasons little known and often argued over, adepts occur much more frequently among barbarian tribes than in civilized cities. Barbarians thus take the adepts' presence as one more sign of the innate superiority of their way of life.

BARBARIAN FAITHS

The beliefs of the various tribes are as distinctive as the tribes themselves. Some see themselves as the inheritors of the legacy of the fallen titans; others consider their people the harbingers of Vangal's will and thus the bringers of rage and devastation. But one thing is certain — the faith of a tribe is inseparable from its identity.

CHILDREN OF THE TITANS

For most barbarians of the Scarred Lands — both on Ghelspad and on Termana — the world has one true set of rulers: the titans. They thoroughly obliterated all traces of whatever came before them, so much so that ignorant city-clinging peoples think the titans actually made the world. To be sure, in the last few generations the gods have beaten the titans, but tribal histories tell of countless wars in which the side that wins early battles is defeated in the end. The titans endure; and until they cease to exist, the tribal people know that the gods do not truly stand victorious.

Titan-worshipping tribal people are what most civilized societies have in mind when they say the epitaph "barbarians," referring to the tribes devoted to lives of intense passion unclouded by the moral concerns that occupy the gods and their worshippers. As barbarians see it, of course, they're the ones with a true and meaningful morality, concerned with honor and excellence in the face of an uncaring world, their vision undimmed by rules that let the weak and cunning shackle the strong and brave.

How the TITANS' CHILDREN Worship

The worship of the titans is a bloody matter.

The most common practice assigns the first day of each month as holy to one of the titans, working through the list in alphabetical order. Since there are 16 months in the standard calendar and only thirteen titans, the occasion for each titan shifts by one full season each year. Barbarians who worship the titans say that the 13-month year their cycle suggests is the true Scarn year, and that when the titans finally crush the gods, the extra four months created to give all the gods something to call their own will disappear. A handful of zealots claim that the 16-month year is an illusion; they devote themselves to dressing and behaving in accordance with what they think the season really is. Most titan worshippers settle for simply hoping for the return of the true year.

On a titan's holy day, the barbarian worshippers offer up a sacrifice of titanspawn who also worship that titan. If no titanspawn are available, other humanoid tribesmen will serve. In the absence of tribal rivals to sacrifice, the offerings must come from within the tribe. Some choose their victims at random by lot or games of chance, some select the weakest and most ineffectual members, and some offer up one of their greatest champions. Each approach draws on a particular understanding of the titans' interest in the tribe. Random methods allow the titan to make a selection without explanation to the tribe, testing their sustained devotion as well as selecting the individuals most pleasing to that titan. Purging the weak serves the tribe just as culling serves every sort of herd, strengthening the tribe for continued service to the titan. Sacrificing one of the best forces the tribe acknowledges the mortals' weakness in the face of the titan, while granting the victim immediate access to the titan's presence in the spirit world.

A few tribes, particularly in the Blood Steppes, make effigies of their chosen victims and burn those instead. Many outside of these tribes look upon this practice with scorn — wood and straw are all very well, but they are not flesh and blood, and most titan-worshipping barbarians firmly believe it's just a matter of time until the effigies give rise to a bloody harvest of titanic revenge.

Whatever the means, most tribes choose one sacrifice per month for every 200–500 members.

Who They Worship

Nearly all titan-worshipping barbarians acknowledge all the titans as worthy of praise, while singling out one in particular as a tribal favorite. Myths and tales explain how the tribe has enjoyed that titan's blessings at crucial times. Usually significant is how the tribe

made it through the Titanswar, despite all the many dangerous of the era.

The favored titan is usually one appropriate to the circumstances of the tribe: Golthain for tribes often working in darkness, Gulaben for tribes in stormy areas, Thulkas for tribes in parched lands, and so on. Honoring the titan who bears responsibility for the current conditions is seen as a sensible thing to do, and helps protect the tribe from the curses that befall those who insist on trying to change the world rather than adapting to what fate gives them. Tribes with long histories sometimes continue to give primacy of place to the titan who ruled the realm they've had to leave behind.

Worship of the titans often goes hand-in-hand with worship of the panoply of spirits that are part of the lives of most barbarians. Some tribes trace entire genealogies of spirits, and believe that each lineage traces back to one titan or another; others insist that the various races of spirits are in fact pieces of the titans themselves, knocked loose in the epic struggles of ages past or more recently created by the turmoil of the Titanswar.

Ancestor worship is almost universal among barbarians, even while they give their primary reverence to the titans. Ancestors form the unseen mass of the tribe; lending strength to the visible, much like a buried rock or iceberg supports what little is perceived. Together, the living and the dead add up to a collective power that can command respect even from the titans — at least so the tribes believe. Regardless, ancestors are vital components of any tribe; for they remind the tribe of what has come before, protecting their descendants from the lies foisted on them by enemies and fools in the modern world.

Who They Don't Worship

No tribe honors both gods and titans. Those who grant supremacy to the titans cannot regard the gods as anything but usurpers; though titan-worshipping tribes differ as to how long they believe it will be before the gods fall, and there is some debate as to whether the titans will be able to return to their old glories once the gods are destroyed. The gods appear in the lore of these tribes as alien things, who do not belong to the wholeness of the world in the way that everything native to Scarn, good and bad, does.

About one tribe in five also rejects the worship of the spirits. They perform rites to appease particular spirits when necessary, but feel that nothing less powerful than the titans deserves regular honor or sacrifice. The spirits, even the very powerful ones, are themselves only servants of the titans — and just as the bodyguard owes no fealty to his lord's tailor, so humanoids and titanspawn ought not worship the spirits.

The Magic of the Titans' Children

Titan worshippers' magic is almost always brutal and direct, lacking in subtlety or nuance. The titans aren't stupid, and neither are their followers; they're simply uninterested in indirect means.

- **Bards:** Bards are welcome in virtually all titan-worshipping tribes. The music of these bards draws on the ancient rhythms of the world, with a great deal of percussion and very little in the way of sophisticated melody or harmony. To outsiders, some of these compositions are not even perceived to be music, as they consist entirely of imitated natural sounds in suitable rhythms: the fall of rocks, the cascade of water, the crack of flames, and so on.

- **Druids:** Druids flourish among all titan worshippers, except for those who reject worship of the spirits. In these tribes, druids face exile or death. Elsewhere they are honored members of the community, useful on a daily basis for all the duties that arise between the monthly sacrifices.

- **Sorcerers:** Sorcerers likewise flourish, even or perhaps especially among the spirit-rejecting tribes. Everyone in the Scarred Lands needs magic to improve their chances of survival, and sorcerers can combine their arts with warrior prowess quite readily. Sorcerers almost never become tribal chieftains, since magic is seen as distracting one from good rulership. They do, however, often serve as advisors and aides to the chief.

- **Wizards:** There are no wizards at all among most titan-worshipping tribes. Wizardry is a thing of the gods, the weapon of Enkili and the theft of Mesos' rightful gift to sorcerers. Would-be wizards must practice in secret as best they can.

- **Adepts:** Adepts are universally welcome, and often serve as adjunct or assistant priests and lore-keepers. Barbarians need to do much with few resources, and this makes the adept's flexibility — despite their limitations — very appealing. Adepts often serve the titan pantheon as a whole.

Children of the Gods

The two great pillars of strength for tribal societies are tradition and success. However, with the Titanswar, barbarians have had to choose between these two forces. Titan worshippers favor tradition even when it's not currently rewarded by success. Tribes who worship the gods have chosen success even though it requires leaving ancient traditions behind.

Of course, by now the eldest gods are as thoroughly rooted in the life of the Scarred Lands as anyone else, with their reigns going back many generations. In particular, the tribes that honor Vangal the Reaver point out with justification that in serving him, they honor success *and* tradition. But where the two conflict, the gods' worshippers say, the only sensible choice

is in favor of present victory. The members of a tribe challenge and depose unworthy chiefs, and ought to engage in the same practice with those they worship.

Worshipping the gods creates a distinct cultural problem for people of the tribes. The gods are necessarily associated with the new civilized societies of the world, those that rose to their present influence because of the turmoil during and after the Titanswar. Barbarians, who also worship the gods, concede that in this case the civilized people have a good idea; indeed, they often express surprise at the fact that these otherwise dimwitted societies actually recognized it was the victors who should be worshipped. But at the same time, the barbarians must make sure that no one confuses them with the peoples of the city. The smaller the differences between tribal and urban life, the more the remaining distinctions matter — at least to the tribe. Thus, it's the tribes closest to sedentary existence who most passionately hate what the cities stand for and who most actively war against it. They can't simply dismiss the threat of urbanization the way more fully nomadic tribes do, for they see it in their own homes and the faces of their well-fed children.

How the Gods' Children Worship

The barbarians who worship the gods seek to emphasize the aspects of their deities that civilized peoples cannot or will not address. Above, this means mobility and violence, since cities cannot move and sedentary society always transfers the legitimate use of violence from individuals to central authorities — to the barbarian, no man may exact justice for another, for it is the ability to exact one's own justice that makes one free.

Some tribes maintain their altars and temples as permanent installations, hidden away from strangers and well removed from their usual routes. Because of this secrecy, the great rites of these tribes happen rarely and require special journeys on the part of the entire tribal community. Others have no permanent artifacts larger than what the tribe can carry on its regular rides and marches, and set up temporary altars that are destroyed as soon as a rite is finished. In the last few generations, a very old and almost forgotten practice has come back into widespread use. The priests mark out, in dirt or grass, the names and symbols of the gods being honored. This "writing" can cover spaces of 50 to 500 feet wide, with lines one to three feet across. The members of the tribe then walk along the lines, single file. Doing this, they believe, brings the inscriptions to life, writing them on the world for the spirits far away to see. Some tribes then destroy the lines, while others leave them in place for future use.

The god-worshipping tribes don't indulge in *sacrifice* with anything like the titan-worshippers' enthusiasm (save perhaps those who revere Vangal). They engage in religious violence up to the point of major bloodshed

and injury, rather than to death. Ritual scarring and tattooing are ubiquitous among the god-worshipping tribes, with the blood shed in the act caught and used as incense in major ceremonies. Most gatherings also feature ceremonial duels, but participants aim to wound each other as much as possible without inflicting lethal damage. (Any duelist who does kill his foe will himself be sacrificed along with the body of his opponent.) These acts reaffirm that all the members of the tribe can engage in bloody deeds and that they are each prepared to deal with the consequences.

Most god-worshipping tribes hold a single great ceremony at the start of the year. Which solstice or equinox a tribe favors for this purpose varies wildly, though there's a slight plurality in favor of the start of summer as the beginning of the tribe's period of "new growth" and greatest activity. Smaller holidays mark the changes of season and sometimes the transitions between each month.

Who They Worship

Like their titan-worshipping rivals, the god-worshipping tribes usually honor one or a few gods more than the rest — even as they acknowledge the essentially supreme nature of all the gods. Two extremes prevail among tribes who often deal with civilized societies: either the tribe favors the same gods but emphasizes all their barbaric qualities, or the tribe favors the gods most opposed to those worshipped in the nearby cities.

All god-worshipping barbarians also acknowledge a great many spirits as deserving of veneration at the appropriate times. There's an instructional element in much of this worship however, as spirits are reminded that the gods really are in charge and that as the gods' representatives in the world, the tribe deserves special respect back from the spirits. These tribes recognize the changes in authority that have been created by the Titanswar, and they take what action they can to establish themselves favorably in the newly forming chain of command.

Who They Don't Worship

As far as the tribes that worship the gods are concerned, the titans have altogether forfeited their rights of kingship. They retain great personal power even today, but they have given up all claims of authority. In time, it is assumed they will weaken, turn in on themselves, and become just that many more particularly obsessed demons. It's happened before; at least some of the demons that now infest the world were once unsuccessful rivals of the titans. It will happen again, as inevitably as minds weaken in old age and bodies crumble in death.

The god-worshippers have no desire to give up the general barbarian practice of ancestor worship. Unfortunately, circumstance forces most of them to do just

that — ancestors of more than a few generations back almost always worshipped the titans and passionately hate their descendants for giving up that practice. Defensive necromancy necessarily flourishes among these tribes, simply to keep angry ghosts in submission. As time passes and god-worshipping elders pass on, the struggle eases slowly, with the recently dead fighting back the others. But it will be many generations yet before all the passionate titan-worshipping ancestors have faded away, been destroyed or suffered permanent captivity of some sort. In extreme cases, tribes who take up the worship of the gods must abandon their traditional grounds to leave tombs and other relics behind.

The Magic of the Gods' Children

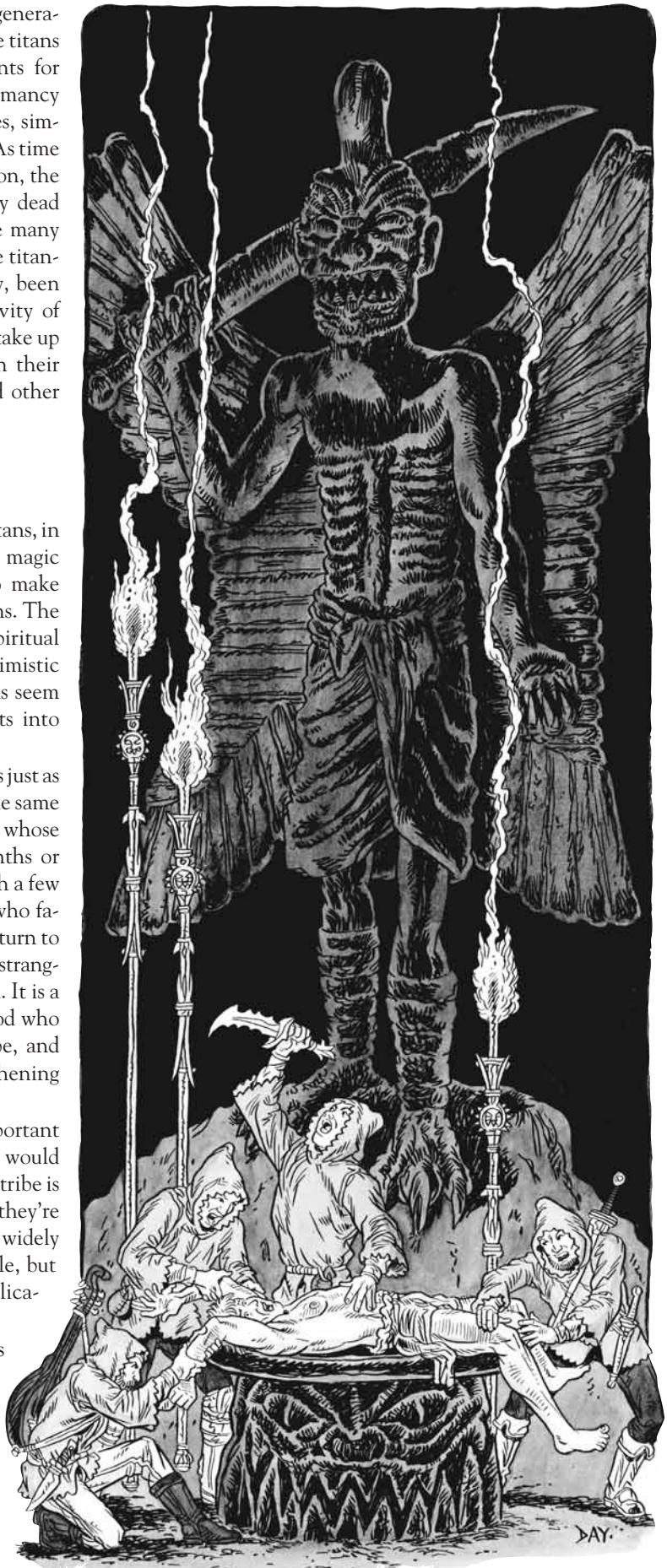
Regardless if a tribe favors gods or titans, in practical terms its needs and wants in magic differ little. The gods' worshippers do make more use of arcane magic, for two reasons. The above-mentioned unsettled nature of spiritual hierarchy makes druidic and other animistic practice somewhat risky, while the gods seem to grant their worshippers new insights into practical applications of arcane magic.

- **Bards:** Bards matter to these tribes just as much as they do to the others, and for the same reasons. It's not uncommon for a bard, whose tribe worships the gods, to spend months or years at a time traveling — alone or with a few companions — among other societies who favor the same gods. The bard can then return to the tribe with important insights that the strangers may not have even realized they had. It is a strange thing in some ways to have a god who is younger than the history of the tribe, and bards are crucial to creating and strengthening the tribe's shared ideology.

- **Clerics:** Clerics are rare but important among these tribes, and most tribe-folk would like to have more than they do. When a tribe is fortunate enough to have several clerics, they're encouraged to spread their domain lore as widely as possible. A little overlap is acceptable, but there's so much to know and do that duplication is too costly a luxury.

- **Sorcerers:** The god worshippers use sorcerers and value them just as their titan-worshipping rivals do.

- **Wizards:** There are more wizards among the god-worshipping tribes, despite the difficulties in maintaining them, for two related reasons. First, it's slightly easier to trade arcane lore with



civilized peoples when there's a shared religious outlook. Second, many tribes regard tribal wizards as a special sort of weapon in the general arms race: not particularly welcome in themselves, but necessary as long as the enemy has some. Wizards in tribes with this latter philosophy almost always ply their craft in secret, and if the tribe has any permanent settlements the wizard usually lives and works there.

- **Adepts:** Adepts are as useful to the god-worshipping tribes as to all others, and serve in similar roles.

CHILDREN OF THE SPIRITS AND ANCESTORS

About one tribe in ten rejects the gods and titans alike, just as they reject emperors and other potentates. The gods and titans did nothing for the tribes except ruin the world, and even when the tribe gains in some measure — as the nomads of northeastern Ghelspad did when the forests became steppes — it's seen as just the accidental blessing of a despicable act. It would be one thing if the Titanswar had mostly damaged those who wished to take part in it. But while every war band knows that there are always some unintended deaths in the heat of battle, there's a difference between honorable combatants fighting for their cause and willful acts of mass destruction. The gods and titans deserve nothing but scorn.

The degree to which tribes reject even the lesser powers of the world varies widely. Some choose to honor no spirits at all, except their own ancestors. Others acknowledge a few kinds of spirits, particularly those of the local land and prey, and still others give sacrifice and honor to a great many kinds of spirits. When the rejecting tribes meet, they argue intensely about the scope of proper worship even while agreeing on the vileness and depravity of their shared enemies in the heavens.

How the Others' Children Worship

Instead of a few big ceremonies, the rejecting tribes usually favor a nearly constant flow of small rituals. Make a significant action, give a small gesture of respect to the spirits who helped make it possible. Plan an upcoming event, briefly petition for the favor of the spirits who will be affected by it. Suffer an embarrassment or defeat, make a sacrifice to the offended ancestors. For the rejecters, the ritual is part of the action itself, no more dispensable than cord is when one wishes to string a bow.

For those who've turned their backs on the would-be kings of the world, everything counts. Yes, the turning of the seasons matters, but so does the turning of the day and of each hour. Indeed, the world is so full of significant things that it requires some tribe members to devote themselves exclusively to the lore of

ramifications. The others in the tribe come to consult these sages, who have the authority to interpose themselves if they foresee trouble arising out of ignorance about necessary rites. Without spirit kings to rely on for relief from the consequences of their mistakes, the rejecting tribes must proceed very carefully indeed.

The Magic of the Others' Children

While the rejecting tribes necessarily lack the classes devoted to worshipping the gods and titans, they do strengthen the roles of other professions. These tribes are almost always fully nomadic, without permanent settlements of any kind, and this further limits their options for certain spellcaster classes.

- **Bards:** Bards are just as important to the rejecting tribes as to the others, and often more so. They do most of the lore keeping for the tribe: where the tribe has gone, what happened, and what spirits reacted in which ways to their actions. Thus, bardic knowledge is often the key to unraveling the mysteries behind an upset spirit, which can spare a tribe a prolonged period of haunting or other torment.

- **Druids:** Druids discern the rhythms of the tribe's life and determine which passages need commemoration. Burial, birth, the start or completion of a particularly difficult hunt — these are all events requiring a druid to properly consecrate. When the tribe wishes to perform a sacrifice, particularly of captured clerics from other tribes or civilized societies, druids also perform the deed.

- **Sorcerers:** Sorcerers hold a place of great honor in most rejecting societies. They generally regard themselves not as possessing an innate power, but of drawing the spirits' power through themselves. Thus, spells of fire begin with the sorcerer calling up a spirit of fire and directing it, while spells of healing expel the spirits of disease and injury from a body. The mechanics of spellcasting work the same as ever, but the experience of this type of sorcery is quite unlike that of other communities. Sorcerers and druids, therefore, often work in partnership to understand a situation and apply all the magical responses deemed appropriate.

- **Wizards:** Very few rejecting societies have any wizards, and most regard them with great suspicion as the dupes (witting or otherwise) of the tyrant gods.

- **Adepts:** Adepts occur with more frequency among the rejecting tribes than in other barbarian societies. Sages of the rejecting tribes say that this is because the spiritual tyrants fear the adepts' flexibility and independence, qualities that come in very handy for the rejecters. A few tribes go so far as to steal young adepts from their rivals and then train up the children as their own — so as to encourage an infusion of the adept's gift into the tribe's lineage.

APPENDIX ONE

The ways of BATTLE

It is the nature of warfare to constantly develop new innovations. Fighting styles, tricks, tactics — all of these things, when properly employed, may win the day. From new fighting maneuvers to the barbarian's mystical connection with animal spirits, this appendix details new feats and fighting options that you can use in any campaign.

VARIANT RULES

What follows are a series of variant rules that the GM may choose to use in order to further customize a game.

VARIANT Rule: Detecting Style

The style a fighter has learned, whether regional or schooled, has an impact on the way that person fights. Once per encounter, you can make a Sense Motive check (DC 10) to determine what styles a given fighter is trained in. The base DC may be modified as indicated.

On a successful check, you identify an opponent's fighting style well enough to know his key strengths and

Circumstance	DC Modifier
Observer is familiar with style	+0
Observer has only seen style once or twice	+5
Observer has only heard of the style	+10
Opponent uses Feat associated with style (prior to attempted identification)	–5 per feat (–15 max)
Opponent tries to disguise style	Opponent's Bluff check

weaknesses in terms of combat ability. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Bluff checks when performing a feint against that opponent, as well as a +2 circumstance bonus to Sense Motive checks to avoid feints from that foe. Additionally, for every two points by which you exceed the DC, the GM may confirm one specific combat feat that your foe has.

VARIANT Rule: Permanent Wounds

When falling below –10 hit points, the character does not automatically die. Instead, he is granted a

APPENDIX ONE: THE WAYS OF BATTLE

Fortitude saving throw (DC 15 + amount of damage suffered in excess of -10 hit points). Failure on this roll indicates that the character has died, as per the normal rules.

Success, however, means that the character is considered to have stabilized, but has taken a grievous injury. The character suffers 1d4 points of ability drain from an ability rolled on the following table. A *coup de grace* will still kill the character, as normal. This ability drain may be healed through the use of *restoration* and similar magics, though the character will always have some kind of scar or other physical indication of the near-fatal injury.

d% Roll	Ability	Wounds and Symptoms
01–25	Strength	The wounds have damaged muscle tissue, making it harder to exert muscle power.
26–50	Dexterity	Tendons and even nerves have been damaged, causing the character to have tremors and unsteady hands. This makes it especially difficult to balance and perform delicate tasks.
51–70	Constitution	The wound simply does not heal well, constantly infecting and causing the character fevers and a weak immune system.
71–80	Intelligence	The wound is likely head trauma of some kind, making it difficult for the character to think clearly and remember things.
81–90	Wisdom	The character suffers from lessened perception, sometimes due to damaged sensory organs. The character is also likely to be frustrated and short-tempered from pain.
91–00	Charisma	The wound leaves ugly scarring or stinking seepage, which draws negative reactions from others.

Note that the use of this option can make a campaign simultaneously more *and* less gritty. That is, using this rule, characters are less likely to die in battle. However, they are also more likely to carry around ugly scars, seeping wounds and other grim indications of battle. The GM should take this into consideration when implementing this rule.

VARIANT Rule: PRONE MOVEMENT

You normally crawl only 5 feet, regardless of your speed while standing (PHB, Chapter 8, "Move Actions"). With this variant rule, you crawl at one-quarter your normal speed (round down to the next 5-foot increment to a minimum of 5 feet). You may take a double move action while prone, but cannot run. So, an elf fighter (speed of 30 ft.) crawls 5 feet in a prone move action, but a human barbarian (speed of 40 ft.) crawls 10 feet.

VARIANT Rule: SIGNATURE STRIKE

Many warriors like to prove their skill — and their contempt for an opponent — with a clever strike, such as carving a mark or initials into an enemy, or “counting coup” with a strike that proves that they could have harmed their adversary had they chosen to.

To perform a signature strike, make a melee touch attack at a -2 penalty. Success inflicts no damage (although there may be slight bleeding in the case of marking an opponent — cosmetic damage that does not affect the target’s hit points), but grants you a +2 to your next Bluff or Intimidate roll against that enemy.

VARIANT Rule: STAPLING

You can use a piercing weapon to puncture an opponent’s foot or other extremity, driving the blade through your foe’s body and into the ground or other appropriate surface. If successful, this pins an opponent in place.

To attempt to staple an opponent, roll to hit at a -5 penalty. This provokes an attack of opportunity. Your opponent must suffer damage from the attack, and that damage amount must be sufficient to pierce the hardness of the surface to which your foe would be pinned. If so, your opponent is considered stapled, losing his Dexterity bonus to AC, as well as any dodge bonuses. In addition, he may take no movement without first freeing himself.

Pulling free quickly from the stapling is a free action that requires a Strength check (DC 5 + the hardness of the material to which the opponent is stapled). Doing so quickly inflicts the weapon’s base damage, however. The stapling may instead be removed with a standard action, which inflicts no additional damage.

VARIANT Rule: WEAPON SPEED FACTOR

Some weapons are faster to use than others. A dagger may not do as much damage as a greatsword, but it can be brought to bear much faster. GMs who wish to reflect this fact in their campaigns may wish to apply weapon speed rules.

TABLE A1-1: WEAPON SPEED FACTORS

QUICK WEAPONS: SPEED FACTOR

Simple Weapons, Melee: dagger, gauntlet, halfspear, punching dagger, sickle, spiked gauntlet, unarmed strike

Simple Weapons, Ranged: dart

Martial Weapons, Melee: cutlass*, rapier, saber*, sap, scimitar

Martial Weapons, Ranged: shortbow

Exotic Weapons, Melee: kama, nunchaku, sai, siangham, whip

Exotic Weapons, Ranged: shuriken

STANDARD WEAPONS: SPEED FACTOR

Simple Weapons, Melee: club, heavy mace, light mace, longspear, quarterstaff, spear

Simple Weapons, Ranged: javelin

Martial Weapons, Melee: battleaxe, falchion, flail, guisarme, handaxe, heavy flail, kukri, kukri sword*, light hammer, light pick, longsword, spearstaff*, short sword, throwing axe, warhammer

Martial Weapons, Ranged: composite shortbow, longbow

Exotic Weapons, Melee: bastard sword, chain and weight*, dwarven waraxe, gnome hooked hammer, hookspike*, iron war fan*, rope and weight*, spiked chain, warscepter*

Exotic Weapons, Ranged: repeating light crossbow

SLOW WEAPONS: SPEED FACTOR

Simple Weapons, Melee: morningstar

Simple Weapons, Ranged: sling

Martial Weapons, Melee: featheraxe*, glaive, greataxe, greatclub, greatsword, great kukri*, halberd, heavy pick, lance, light lance, ranseur, scythe, trident

Martial Weapons, Ranged: composite longbow

Exotic Weapons, Melee: bladed chain*, dire flail, dwarven urgrosh, orc double axe, two-bladed sword

Exotic Weapons, Ranged: blowgun*, bola*, net, repeating heavy crossbow

*See Appendix Three for weapon description.

The standard rules automatically apply a factor of 5 to all iterative attacks — that is, the rules subtract 5 from your base attack bonus to determine how many attacks you may take each combat round. So, a 9th level fighter has two attacks each round, one at +9 to his base attack bonus and another at +4 to his base attack bonus.

With weapon speed, you ignore this standard iterative of 5 to your base attack bonus. Instead, each weapon has a speed factor that subtracts from your total base attack bonus to determine your number of attacks per round (and the base attack bonus for each). You are limited to a total of five attacks per round. So, using weapon speeds, the 9th-level fighter with a +9 base attack bonus fighting with a dagger receives three attacks at +9/+5/+1, rather than the standard two at +9/+4.

Using weapon speed factor encourages character concepts like knife-fighters. After all, the increased number of attacks helps balance the reduced damage quick weapons inflict against the greater damage that larger, but slower, weapons can deal out.

Weapons and their speed factors are listed on Table A1-1: Weapon Speed Factors.

New Feats

What follows is a selection of new feats that any character may take. Those feats available to fighters as part of their bonus feats (*PHB*, Chapter 3, "Fighter," *Class Features*) are noted as relevant.

ADVANCED MILITARY TRAINING [GENERAL]

With military training comes the ability to aid one's troopmates. This feat allows the character to harass opponents in order to grant teammates the best advantage.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +3, Military Training.

Benefit: When using the aid another action (*PHB*, Chapter 8, "Special Attacks") to help an ally who also has the Military Training feat, you grant the ally either a +4 circumstance bonus to attack a specific opponent, or a +4 circumstance bonus to the ally's AC against that opponent. Alternately, when performing aid another, you may simultaneously grant an ally a +2 circumstance bonus to attack an opponent as well as a +2 circumstance bonus to AC against that same opponent.

Normal: The aid another special attack normally grants only a +2 bonus, which may only be applied to defense or offense.

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

BATTLE CRY [GENERAL]

The call to battle can be a powerful tool or weapon in its own right. Various regional fighting styles often identify themselves with particular battle calls, while barbarians habitually use terrifying ululations or exultations to their ancestors in combat. In any event, these cries can serve to demoralize and frighten opponents. The battle cry can also bolster the spirits of the warrior's allies, though the strong-willed among allies and enemy alike are often unaffected.

Prerequisite: Cha 13.

Benefit: With a free action, you make a battle cry of some kind. Any enemy within 30 ft. must make a Will save (DC 10 + your Charisma bonus); any resistances to fear effects apply to this save. Those who make the save are unaffected. Those who fail it suffer a –1 morale penalty on attack rolls, damage rolls and Will saving throws. Conscripts and others not committed to the fight at hand will break and flee, if possible.

Your allies within 30 ft. must also make the Will save. Those who succeed are unaffected; those who fail receive a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls and Will saving throws. Those who are unable to hear, or who are immune to fear effects or mind-affecting effects are immune to the Battle Cry.

The effects of the Battle Cry last for 3 rounds + your Charisma bonus. You may use this feat a number of times per day equal to 1 + your Charisma modifier (minimum of 1/day), although multiple uses do not stack.

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

BIND [GENERAL]

One of the primary benefits of flexible weapons is their ability to entrap and enwrap opponents. With this feat, you can attack in such a way that your opponent is entangled in the length of the weapon.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +1, proficiency in a flexible weapon (spiked chain, whip, etc.).

Benefits: On a successful melee touch attack, your opponent becomes *entangled* (–2 to attack rolls, –4 to effective Dexterity, move at half speed). An entangled foe may take a move action to try and free himself. You and the defender make opposed Strength or Dexterity checks (whichever is greater for each). If you beat the defender, he remains entangled. If the defender wins, he breaks free. Your opponent may instead take a full-round action to get out of the entanglement. He succeeds automatically, but provokes an attack of opportunity in the process.

You may release the entangling weapon as a free action, but may not otherwise use the weapon while it is binding the opponent.

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

BLINDSIDE [GENERAL]

You are especially skilled with a reach weapon. This feat is often used in shield-wall/polearm formations, where one combatant wielding a polearm stands behind another who bears a tower shield.

Prerequisites: Formation Combat, Military Training.

Benefits: If you threaten an opponent who doesn't threaten you in return, you may take an attack of

opportunity when the opponent makes any attack. This feat does not grant any additional attacks of opportunity in a round, although you may apply those gained from Combat Reflexes or through other means, as appropriate.

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

CLOTH DANCING [GENERAL]

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

Prerequisite: Dodge.

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

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

DISARM RIPOSTE [GENERAL]

Some styles of combat teach warriors to take advantage of momentary weaknesses, by disarming opponents who make a clumsy attack. Most of those who use this technique wield light, quick weapons.

Prerequisites: Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm.

Benefit: Any time you use Combat Expertise to improve your Armor Class in combat and an opponent fails to hit you, you may immediately make a disarm attempt. The disarm functions as normal (*PHB*, Chapter 8, "Special Attacks"). The attempt counts as an attack of opportunity, so you may not use Disarm Riposte if you have already used your available attacks of opportunity for that round.

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

DOUBLE BLOW [GENERAL]

By mastering this technique, you have learned to make a single devastating strike on an opponent using two separate weapons. Members of the Beltanian and Pelpernoi Vigils are renowned for their use of this tactic.

Prerequisite: Two-Weapon Fighting.

Benefit: When wielding two weapons, make a single attack roll. This attack is applied to both weapons and is made at the normal penalty for two-weapon



fighting (–4 penalty, or –2 penalty if one of the weapons is light). Apply the roll separately against each weapon's critical threat range, but take only a single roll (as with the initial attack) to confirm any potential critical. This feat may not be used with double weapons.

If your base attack bonus allows more than one attack each round, you may attempt multiple Double Blows. Doing so is extraordinarily difficult, however: multiply the two-weapon fighting penalty by the number of attacks being made. Thus, a character attacking with a light weapon using Double Blow three times applies a –6 penalty to each of the attacks.

You do not receive additional attacks with your off-hand weapon when using this feat. Further, Double Blow is considered a single attack for the purpose of effects such as *true strike*.

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

EXACT BLOW [GENERAL]

Through the use of advanced techniques and mastery of a weapon, you can deliver quick and precise blows using this feat. This requires not only anticipating evasive movements of a target, but also knowing the vital areas of an enemy in order to inflict the most damage.

Prerequisites: Dex 15, Improved Critical, Weapon Focus, Weapon Specialization.

Benefit: Using Exact Blow applies a –10 penalty to hit, but denies the target any Dexterity bonus to AC. Additionally, your weapon's critical threat range is tripled (this includes the effect of Improved Critical). You must be within 30 feet of a target to use this feat with ranged weapons. The prerequisite feats of Improved Critical, Weapon Focus, and Weapon Specialization must apply to the weapon used.

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

FINISHING STRIKE [GENERAL]

The art of finishing off a helpless foe with ease requires more skill than one would think, but those who know the proper finishing strike techniques make it look easy. This feat is most common to the Headsman School of Zathiske and the School of the Headsman's Sword in Hollowfaust.

Prerequisites: Cleave, base attack bonus +3.

Benefit: You may take a coup de grace (PHB, Chapter 8, "Combat Modifiers," *Helpless Defenders*) as a standard action.

Normal: Performing a coup de grace is a full-round action.

FORMATION COMBAT [GENERAL]

Moving and fighting in formation is more difficult than fighting alone. Many organized armies train their troops extensively in order to achieve a smoothly function-

Table A1-2: Improvised Weapons

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

*See Appendix Three for weapon description.

ing formation. Those with this feat have learned to make their own maneuvers compliment those of their comrades.

Prerequisites: Military Training.

Benefit: You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to all attack rolls if an ally is within 5 feet. If at least one ally within 5 feet also has Formation Combat, you gain a +1 dodge bonus to AC.

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

Improved Staple [GENERAL]

Some combatants take pleasure in limiting the movement of their opponents, giving not only damage but humiliation to their foes. Many knife and spear fighters master this technique.

Benefit: You do not provoke an attack of opportunity when attempting to perform the staple action. See “Variant Rule: Stapling,” above.

Normal: Attempting stapling provokes an attack of opportunity.

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

Improvised Weapon [GENERAL]

Most fighters and barbarians are only fierce when they have their favored weapon in hand. Those with this feat are never caught unprepared for violence, as they can turn just about anything in their reach into a deadly weapon.

Prerequisites: Dex 15, Wis 13.

Benefit: With this feat, common items that you wield are treated as weapons. You can improvise and fight with all manner of things — chairs, manacles, belts, bottles, plates, or just about anything that can inflict damage.

Items that resemble normal weapons are treated as that similar weapon. Common examples include: broken table legs (club); ale steins, rocks (gauntlet); belts, ropes, harnesses (whip); bed

sheet, drapery (net). If you lack proficiency in the weapon the item resembles, this feat reduces the attack roll penalty to –2 (rather than the normal –4). Additionally, you may elect to take Exotic Weapon Proficiency (improvised weapons) to eliminate the penalty from using any ad hoc items.

As noted on Table A1-2: Improvised Weapons, some makeshift weapons have special bonuses and effects. Lighter items do a degree less of damage, while heavy items might do more. A chair may be lightly built, doing no more than 1d4 damage, but is +2 to disarm and trip. Criticals are usually poor, even for items that resemble weapons with a broad critical threat range and critical multipliers. The DM determines specifics.

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

Initiate of the Spirit Ways [GENERAL]

Some individuals have a natural affinity with the spirit world. Oftentimes they become shamans and oracles, mediating disputes between the worldly and the spiritual. These people stand out from their fellow mortals as something special, something more — at least in the eyes of spirits.

Prerequisite: Cha 13.

Benefits: You receive a +2 circumstance bonus for all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidation, and Sense Motive skill checks when those skills are used in dealings with spirits. In addition, there is no limit to the number of totem feats you can have (see “Totem Feats,” below).

Normal: A character can normally only have one totem feat.

Special: Though you can have any number of totem feats, you must abide by the standard time limits and times per day that you can channel a

totem. For instance, a character with 15 Charisma can channel a totem spirit 3 times per day. If he has Initiate of the Spirit Ways and three other totem feats, each of the different totems can be used 1/day, or any one totem can be called upon 3/day, or any combination thereof as long as the total number of times totems are channeled does not exceed 3/day.

MERCIFUL STRIKE [GENERAL]

The ability to subdue an opponent, rather than slay, is something that many combatants cultivate. Members of law enforcement in places such as Vesh and Mithril are known to possess this feat.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefits: When using a weapon that deals lethal damage to deal nonlethal damage instead, you may ignore the normal -4 penalty on your attack roll (*PHB*, Chapter 8, "Injury and Death," *Nonlethal Damage*).

Normal: Using a weapon that deals lethal damage to deal nonlethal damage instead imposes a -4 penalty to the attack roll.

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

MILITARY TRAINING [GENERAL]

Learning to work closely with other soldiers is an important skill for those who would make war their livelihood. This feat reflects the training needed to fight side-by-side with other soldiers, assisting allied fighters in the most efficient way.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You may perform aid another (*PHB*, Chapter 8, "Special Attacks") as a move action, as long as the ally also has the Military Training feat.

Normal: Aid another is normally a standard action.

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

PHALANX FORMATION [GENERAL]

The phalanx is a deadly military formation that originated in the Empire of Lede. A typical phalanx is a unit of men several rows deep with the first row erecting a shield wall and the rows behind holding longswords at varying lengths to present a deadly wall of blades.

Prerequisites: Blindside, Formation Combat, Military Training.

Benefit: You are comfortable fighting in close formation and are skilled at using a reach weapon in close combat. As a free action, you may change

your grip on the reach weapon to attack an opponent 5 feet away.

In addition, if two shield-bearing characters with this feat stand within 5 feet of one another, they are both treated as having cover (+4 to AC). If these characters stand between an opponent and another ally, the ally they are protecting is treated as having improved cover (+8 to AC). If three or more characters with this feat stand in a straight line, they and all those behind them are treated as having improved cover. See *PHB*, Chapter 8, "Combat Modifiers," *Cover* for details on cover.

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

POLEARM TRIP [GENERAL]

This feat indicates that you are skilled enough with any long-hafted weapon that you can trip an opponent with it.

Benefits: You may perform a trip attack with any long-hafted weapon, from all polearms to spears or quarterstaves. The hafted weapon must be one a two-handed melee weapon. Further, you are considered one size category larger than normal for the purposes of the trip attack. Tripping with a weapon is otherwise resolved normally (*PHB*, Chapter 8, "Special Attacks").

Normal: You may attempt a trip attack only with a spiked chain, flail, guisarme, halberd, or whip.

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

PRONE COMBAT [GENERAL]

Any falling in the course of combat is an advantage for the opponent. With this feat, you have learned to minimize the weakness of being prone in battle. Indeed, it's not unknown to turn this typically vulnerable condition to one's advantage.

Benefit: Your penalty to attack rolls and AC when fighting in melee while prone is reduced to -2. While prone, your attacks bypass any targets' shield bonus. You are immune to trip attacks, and gain +2 when making trip attempts against opponents.

Normal: A prone character has a -4 penalty on melee attack rolls and cannot use a ranged weapon (except for a crossbow). He gains a +4 bonus to Armor Class against ranged attacks, but takes a -4 penalty to AC against melee attacks.

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

RIPOSTE [GENERAL]

Through the use of quick counters and lightning fast weapon-work, you can take advantage of

APPENDIX ONE: THE WAYS OF BATTLE

a momentary weaknesses in an opponent's defense when he commits to an attack.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +4, Combat Expertise.

Benefit: Any time you use Combat Expertise to improve your Armor Class in combat and an opponent fails to hit you, you may immediately make an attack of opportunity (*PHB*, Chapter 8, "Initiative," *Attacks of Opportunity*). You may not use Riposte if you have already used your available attacks of opportunity for that round.

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

ROBUST [GENERAL]

This feat confers the ability to take great amounts of damage without dying.

Prerequisite: Endurance.

Benefit: You do not die until falling to -12 hit points (see *PHB*, Chapter 8, "Injury and Death"). If you have an ability that allows you to continue functioning at lower than 0 hit points (such as the Diehard feat), you may continue taking actions until you reach -12 hit points.

Normal: Characters normally die at -10 hit points or lower.

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

SPINNING BLOW [GENERAL]

Legends tell of powerfully muscled berserkers cutting a swathe through their opponents, their two-bladed swords spinning in deadly arcs.

Prerequisite: Two-Weapon Fighting.

Benefit: When wielding a double weapon, make a single attack roll. This attack is applied to both ends of the weapon and is made at the normal -2 penalty for using two-weapon fighting with a double weapon. Apply the roll separately against the critical threat range of each end of the weapon, but take only a single roll (as with the initial attack) to confirm any potential critical.

If your base attack bonus allows more than one attack each round, you may attempt multiple Spinning Blows. Doing so is extraordinarily difficult, however: multiply the two-weapon fighting penalty by the number of attacks being made. Thus, a character using Spinning Blow three times applies a -6 penalty to each of the attacks.

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

STALWART [GENERAL]

You possess great recuperative strength thanks to this feat. You can recover from grievous wounds

by lapsing into unconsciousness... instead of succumbing to death.

Prerequisite: Endurance.

Benefit: Your chance of stabilizing when dying increases to 20%. You are otherwise subject to the normal rules for dying (*PHB*, Chapter 8, "Injury and Death").

Normal: The chance of stabilizing is normally 10%.

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

STUDY COMBAT STYLE [GENERAL]

You are adept at studying your opponents to perceive the nuances of their footwork and defensive strategies — and consequently know just how to bypass them.

Prerequisite: Wis 13.

Benefit: You gain +4 to the Sense Motive check to determine an opponent's fighting style (see "Variant Rule: Detecting Style," above).

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

TRICK SHOT [GENERAL]

You are adept at making difficult shots.

Prerequisites: Precise Shot, Weapon Focus.

Benefit: You a +2 competency bonus to ranged attacks. This bonus may only negate penalties due to cover, target size, or other non-range conditions. Firing during a severe windstorm, for example, is a -2 penalty rather than a -4 penalty. The prerequisite feat Weapon Focus must apply to the weapon used. Spellcasters may use this feat with "rays" or other magical attacks, provided they have an appropriate Weapon Focus.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times. Its effects stack. Each time you take the feat, you gain an additional +2 competency bonus to ranged attacks for negating the penalties noted above.

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

WHIRLING DEFENSE [GENERAL]

You have learned to use a series of whirling movements to distract and confuse your foes.

Prerequisites: Cloth Dancing, Combat Expertise

Benefit: When you use the attack action or the full attack action in melee, you can take a penalty of as much as -5 on your attack roll. For each -1 penalty you take, add +2 as a dodge bonus to your Armor Class. This feat replaces the effect of Combat Expertise and may exceed your base attack bonus. The changes to attack rolls and AC last until your next action.

This feat must be used in combination with Cloth Dancing. While you may add the +1 dodge bonus from that feat, you must meet the other requirements described therein.

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

TOTEM FEATS

These feats represent those individuals who have been adopted by a particular spirit totem. An initiate usually undergoes some sort of ritual or ordeal where she attracts the attention of her potential totem. The exact nature of this ritual varies depending on tribal customs, but is officiated by one of the spiritual elders of the tribe. Usually a person has only one totem that she is beholden to. These feats are only available to characters who hail from barbarian cultures that revere the Beastlords, but it is possible for one of the totem spirits to appear to those who did not know of them before.

Totem feats represent the ability to channel the essence of the totem into the user. The wielder of the feat must use a standard action to channel her totem. Being imbued with a spirit is physically taxing and a character can only maintain this state for a number of rounds equal to 3 + the character's Constitution modifier. The character may end the channeling earlier if she so desires.

A character can only channel her totem a number of times per day equal to 1 + the character's Charisma modifier. Additionally, a totem feat gives a skill bonus to a skill relevant to that totem. This bonus applies at all times, whether the character is channeling her totem or not.

Totem feats also have a taboo — something that, if done, offends the patron spirit. If a character has a totem feat and breaks the taboo, the character loses access to the benefits of the totem feat until she undergoes some rite of contrition. These rites usually take the form of some quest undertaken to regain the favor of the totem. The difficulty of the quest is usually determined by the circumstances around the infraction.

BOAR [Totem]

Boar is a spirit of strength and perseverance. Boar chooses for his children tenacity and determination. Children of Boar are dogged opponents who will struggle-on, well past most other sane warriors. Fierce and forthright, those touched by Boar are loyal allies and implacable foes.

Benefit: While channeling Boar, you are treated as though you have the Improved Bull Rush feat. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus on all Intimidate skill checks.

Who Gets Totem Feats

Totem feats are intended for those characters who originate from cultures that believe in the power of totemic patrons. Some "civilized" folk, such as the inhabitants of Vera-tre in Ghelspad or North Crilos in Termana, hold these beliefs. Otherwise these beliefs are found only among tribal folk.

"Tribal origin" is not included as a Prerequisite because of the roleplaying potential involved in having a more civilized character who "goes native." It is entirely possible that a city-bred rogue may hear the call of Miser Jackal after spending some time among the tribes of the Blood Steppes, or that a dwarf from Burok Torn may find an affinity with Boar after his time among the elves of the Ganjus. For the most part, however, these feats are best suited to rural and tribal folk, especially barbarians, druids and rangers.

Taboo: Fleeing a dangerous situation. Boar does not tolerate shows of cowardice; children of Boar must not leave a hazardous situation any faster than a cautious walk.

DEER [Totem]

Deer is a totem of wisdom and patience. She glides through the forest, ever alert to the dangers of this world. Children of Deer tend to be agile and fleet of foot. Cautious and sometimes skittish, Deer's children are also known for being caring and wise. Those who are touched by Deer are quite adept at getting where they need to be and being able to remove themselves when the risk gets to high.

Benefit: While channeling Deer, your speed is increased by +10. This bonus stacks with a barbarian's fast movement class ability. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus on all Jump skill checks.

Taboo: Confinement. Children of Deer are uncomfortable in close quarters and must do everything possible to escape imprisonment.

DESERT FALCON [Totem]

The desert is a harsh place, and the children of Desert Falcon are survivors. Keen-eyed and hardy, Desert Falcon's children often serve as guides in the sandy wastes. The Ukrudan and Ubuntu tribesman hold those touched by Desert Falcon in especially high esteem, and value their guidance and wisdom.

APPENDIX ONE: THE WAYS OF BATTLE

Benefit: While channeling Desert Falcon, you cast no revealing shadow. This allows a great advantage in stealth, as your prey must look directly at you, or hear you coming, in order to successfully spot your presence. In effect, this gives you a +5 circumstance bonus to all Hide skill checks. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus on all Survival skill checks.

Taboo: Refusing to guide others. Children of Desert Falcon are advisors and guides in the harsh wilderness of the desert, and one who refuses to fulfill this purpose will find that Desert Falcon has abandoned him.

Eagle [Totem]

Eagle soars high above the land, from afar he watches the goings-on of the world below. Eagle's children tend to be similarly perceptive — yet aloof. Like Eagle, they hunt their prey in solitude, striking fast and hard.

Benefit: While channeling Eagle, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus to attack while using ranged weapons. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Spot skill checks.

Taboo: Stealing prey. Children of Eagle must not aid another in battle unless the other person requests assistance.

Fur-Like-Dusk [Totem]

The First Bear birthed by Denev in the Ganjus, Fur-like-Dusk is a dark-furred nurturer and serves as the Healer of the Mother — bringing succor to those who have been wounded in her service.

Prerequisites: Wood elf, or half-elf of wood elf lineage.

Benefit: While channeling Fur-like-Dusk, you gain the ability to *lay on hands*, healing a number of hit points per day equal to your Wisdom bonus x character level. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Climb skill checks.

Taboo: Children of Fur-like-Dusk never work against the wood elven nation of Vera-tre, and always protect and obey the reincarnation of their totem.

Hookwing [Totem]

Hookwing is a curious and inquisitive spirit. Always prying into places where he should not be, when danger is close he springs out of harms way. Hookwing's children are also quick — both in mind and body. In addition, they tend to be busybodies who are easily fascinated by anything new.

Benefit: While channeling Hookwing and as long as you are not in heavy armor, you are treated as though you had the Spring Attack feat. In

addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Search skill checks.

Taboo: Hoarding knowledge. Children of Hookwing are curious about secrets and tend to quickly spread any new piece of information they have.

Huror [Totem]

Huror is a wise and patient spirit. Caring and loyal to those she is fond of, she is a ruthless and powerful opponent to those who arouse her ire. Children of Huror tend to be protective of their communities and villages, and are the first and strongest line of defense for their kin.

Benefit: Huror's children fight best unarmed. While channeling Huror, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus to all unarmed attacks. Huror also lends some of her might; you are considered one size category larger than normal when making grapple checks. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus on all Heal skill checks.

Taboo: Abandoning allies or kin. Children of Huror are expected to be faithful to their communities, regardless of the personal cost.

Miser Jackal [Totem]

Miser Jackal is a quick and cunning spirit. Always enamored with something new, he will slip in, grab his latest desire, and slip out before anyone is the wiser. Miser Jackal's children are quick thinking and quick witted as well, and are adept at getting in and out of dangerous situations.

Benefit: Miser Jackal encourages his children to use their wits when striking an enemy. While channeling Miser Jackal, you gain a +1d6 sneak attack; this stacks with any other sneak attack you may have. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus on all Sleight of Hand skill checks and can use Sleight of Hand untrained.

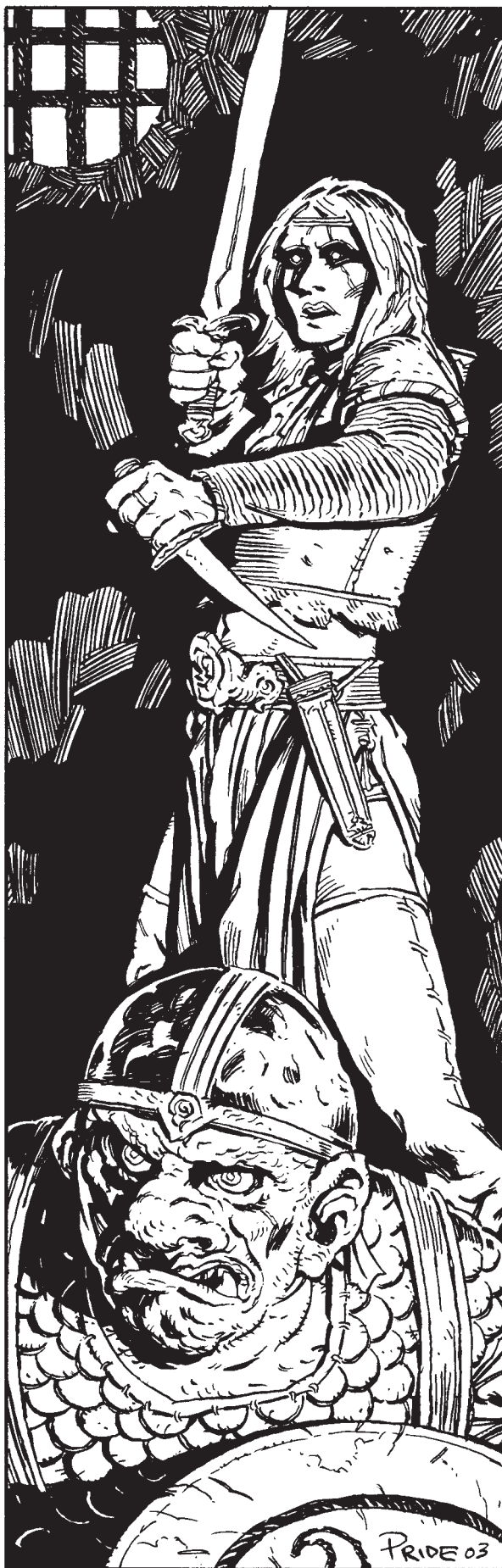
Taboo: Resisting curiosity. Miser Jackal's children are consummate thieves and explorers, and are drawn to items or situations that are new or unusual.

Moon-in-the-Eyes [Totem]

The First Wolf birthed by Denev in the Ganjus, Moon-in-the-Eyes is a mighty hunter and serves as the Fangs of the Mother — protecting her other children and teaching them to hunt and defend what is sacred.

Prerequisites: Wood elf, or half-elf of wood elf lineage.

Benefit: While channeling Moon-in-the-Eyes, you become a fierce defender of the Ganjus, gaining a +1 to all attack and damage rolls while within the forest's



borders. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus on all Survival skill checks.

Taboo: The children of Moon-in-the-Eyes never work against the wood elven nation of Vera-tre, and always protect and obey the reincarnation of their totem.

Night [Totem]

Old Hag Night is a wise and cautious spirit. Representative of the cool quiet and serenity of the end of life, Grandmother Night is patient and deliberate in her actions. Night also represents the primal fears of man, the time when those things that hunt men prowl in the dark. Children of Night tend to be prophets, especially those who foresee ill fortune. Generally, Night's children are a dark and brooding lot, who are afforded a cautious respect by their communities. Many with this totem are known to revere Belsameth, and some shamans claim that it was Grandmother Night who midwived at Belsameth's birth — leaving her mark on the young goddess.

Benefit: You can fight even in complete darkness — while channeling Night, you are considered to have the Blind-fight feat and receive only half the normal penalty to movement because of darkness or poor visibility. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Hide skill checks.

Taboo: Revealing secrets. Children of Night learn many things and must husband that knowledge carefully.

River [Totem]

Strong, swift, and ever flowing, River brings life and trade to the inhabitants of the wild. River's children, too, are static though flexible figures of their communities. Often tradesmen or diplomats, River's children serve to cement the ties that benefit neighboring peoples.

Benefit: River's children flow through combat, getting to those places they are most needed. While channeling River, you are considered to have the Mobility feat. In addition, you gain a +2 on all Swim skill checks.

Taboo: Ignoring foreign customs. River's children serve as diplomats and are required to learn and honor the customs of their neighbors.

Stag-of-Seven-Tines [Totem]

The First Stag birthed by Denev in the Ganjus, Stag-of-Seven-Tines is a guardian of the elven people and serves as the Spear of the Mother — protecting the elven folk who are her favored children.

Prerequisites: Wood elf, or half-elf of wood elf lineage.

Benefit: While channeling Stag-of-Seven-Tines, you gain +1 damage to all charge attacks; this increases to a +2 if the charge attack is made using a piercing weapon. In

CREATING NEW Totem Feats

Totem feats represent a bond that has formed between a character and one of the many spirits who exist in the Scarred Lands. From a campaign perspective, these connections are created to give both the character and the spirit an ally in the often-dangerous world. This partnership often begins by the character finding one who knows the proper rituals and offerings to bring forth the spirit in question. The ritual usually requires some sort of altered state of consciousness, whether with the help of psychedelics or through the rigors of an ordeal. Unlike most other feats, the effort needed to gain a totem feat can, and should, be roleplayed through.

From a rules perspective, each totem feat grants two distinct abilities: a *skill bonus* and a *channeled bonus*.

Skill Bonus: A character should gain a +2 totem bonus on all skill checks involving one specific skill associated with the totem. This bonus applies at all times, whether the character is channeling her totem or not.

Channeled Bonus: This bonus lasts only a short period of time, while the character actively channels the totem spirit. Because this is only temporary, the effect is usually combat-related, though a bonus for any stressful situation could apply. Often, this benefit can mirror another feat, though it is only granted temporarily. The channeled bonus's power level should be on par for a low-level feat, a rudimentary class ability, or up to a +6 bonus on any skill used in stressful circumstances.

Once the totem's benefits are granted, a suitable taboo should also be determined. This must reflect the totem's aims and personality.

Also, a physical form should be chosen to represent the totem, be it animal, elemental, or symbolic.

These should all bear a reasonable relation to the totem. Qualities that represent the totem, including an attack, a form of movement, and some other special ability should also be decided upon. Examples are given along with the totem warrior prestige class (see Appendix Two).

addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Intimidate skill checks.

Taboo: The children of Stag-of-Seven-Tines never work against the wood elfen nation of Vera-tre, and always protect and obey the reincarnation of their totem.

WIND [Totem]

Mysterious and elusive, Wind is a wise and perceptive spirit. It is Wind who first brings word of danger, and she encourages her children to do likewise. Children of Wind often serve their community as forward scouts and messengers; thus, they are the first to find trouble, and the first to bring warning back to their kin.

Benefit: While channeling Wind, the range increment of your ranged attacks is doubled. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Tumble skill checks and can use the Tumble skill untrained.

Taboo: Sedentary behavior. Children of Wind are a nomadic lot and are driven to see what is beyond the next rise.

WINGS-OF-FIRE [Totem]

The First Hawk birthed by Denev in the Ganjus, Wings-of-Fire is a vigilant guardian and serves as the Eyes of the Mother — watching for approaching enemies that others might miss.

Prerequisites: Wood elf, or half-elf of wood elf lineage.

Benefit: While channeling Wings-of-Fire, you can defy the pull of the earth to some degree, gaining a +5 bonus to all Jump rolls and doubling your maximum jumping distance. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus on all Spot skill checks.

Taboo: The children of Wings-of-Fire never work against the wood elfen nation of Vera-tre, and always protect and obey the reincarnation of their totem.

WOLF [Totem]

Wolf is a spirit of unity and order. When the village's hunters go out to find prey, they use the tricks they learned from Wolf. Wolf's children understand that teamwork and cooperation is needed in order to bring health to their kin and clan. Man is not a solitary predator, and neither is Wolf.

Benefit: While channeling Wolf, you gain an increased ability to help your allies. When you make a successful aid another action (PHB, Chapter 8, "Special Attacks"), your ally gains either a +4 bonus on his next attack roll against a specific opponent or a +4 bonus to AC from that opponent's next attack (your choice). In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Survival skill checks.

Taboo: Abandoning allies. Wolf is a pack creature and so are his children.

APPENDIX TWO

The Masters

of Battle

Battle and war are, at their most basic measure, uncomplicated things. All that is necessary is the presence of two folk willing to kill one another and the weapons with which to do so. Those who practice war as a vocation, however, have the potential to turn this simple process into a veritable art-form (albeit a bloody one).

Proficiency in the art of war can take a hundred forms, and many of these stem from the mind more than the muscular might behind a blow. The ability to think calmly and clearly in battle is a huge advantage, for ordered thoughts can often grant victory in the middle of chaos; The ability to harness rage, burning away all extraneous thoughts, can easily make the difference between victory and defeat. These skills, along with and the use of weapons and martial maneuvers, have been practiced and perfected for centuries in the Scarred Lands — indeed, some of them go back millennia.

Those feats and equipment marked with an asterisk (*) may be found in Appendices One and Three, respectively.

Core Prestige Classes

It might not be readily apparent where the basic prestige classes from the *DMG* fit into the Scarred Lands. The following section describes how certain prestige classes are appropriate for use in the Scarred Lands. Those listed focus on combat; prestige classes that emphasize spellcasting or stealth are covered in other Player's Guides. Also, these are simply suggestions for the GM, who has the final word on such things.

Duelist

The southern settlements of Ghelspad — Fangsfall, Shelzar, Rahoch — many of these places experience stifling heat and other weather that simply make the wearing of armor impractical. Additionally, many of these places have courtly

environments that frown upon the wearing of heavy armor, large weapons and other such accoutrements of war. In this environment has developed the duelist.

The arts of this prestige class have spread beyond the southern realms, however — indeed, there are many who practically equate this class with the gentility of Vesh, already known for its graceful, basket-hilted weaponry (see Appendix Three for more on such weapons).

Dwarven Defender

It is said that the only reason the Dwarven Imperium lasted as long as it did in spite of the pleasure the titans gained from sending their spawn to assault it was the Brotherhood of Shields. The elite defenders of the Dwarven Imperium were often sent at the forefront of armies to help safeguard those settlements of humans and other non-dwarves who allied themselves with the Imperium as client-states in return for protection from the predators created by the titans.

Thousands of years have passed since that time. The Brotherhood of Shields is no more, though the techniques they taught for standing fast in the face of assault are still remembered. It is said that the defenders are among the reasons why Burok Torn yet stands; it is also said that charduni defenders remained in Dunahnae to defend the Wall of Bone when the Charduni Empire sent its troops to conquer the heart of Ghelspad.

Eldritch Knight

Representing yet another example of combining the ways of war with the ways of magic, the eldritch knight can be found all over the Scarred Lands, from the occasional Calastian battle-mage to graduates of Glamerhill to the warrior-magi of the forsaken elf kingdoms in Termana.

Archer of the Steppes

Requirements

To qualify to become an archer of the steppes, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria:

Ability: Barbarian Rage

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (any bow).

Skills: Craft (bowmaking) 5 ranks, Handle Animal 8 ranks, Ride 8 ranks.

Class Skills

The archer of the steppes' class skills are Balance (Dex), Handle Animal (Cha), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at each level: 2 + Int modifier.

Among the wild and untamed steppes, an elite band of horse archer rains terror on their foes. These archers of the steppes can be found among the Riders of the Kelder Steppes as well as among the human tribesmen of the Iron Steppes and the Bonewind Hills. There are also a few archers of the steppes among the Horsemen of Vangal. The archers come from those tribal civilizations that live in lands of such vast emptiness that the speed and companionship of mounted travel is the only thing keeping a traveler from madness. Archers are devoted to their mounts, which need not be a horse. An archer's mount is almost always hand raised and is more than a steed — it is a life-long companion.

An archer's life is one of constant travel, riding long into the day and sleeping while mounted. Because of this, an archer's life is a lonely one. Few find allies or traveling companions that are able to serve them better than their mounts. Nevertheless, an archer of the steppes still has tribal obligations. Archers therefore tend to serve their people as advance scouts and messengers, and are highly valued by their tribal communities.

Use in Other Campaigns: The archer of the steppes is such a fantasy archetype that it fits nicely into almost any campaign with relative ease. The primary difficulty in integrating it is whether the campaign setting possesses a culture of mounted barbarians famed for their archery. If not, the class could be retooled as a secret society or brotherhood among a barbarian tribe. Alternately, a single race, perhaps elves or orcs, might have a similar class as elite warriors in their bands. In any case, the archer of the steppes should present few difficulties to most GMs in other campaigns.

Hit Die: d10.



TABLE A2-1: Archer of the Steppes (Aos)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Archer's rage 1/day, arrow jab
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Bonded mount
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Archer's rage 2/day, bonus feat
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Improved mounted archery (reduced penalty)
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Archer's rage 3/day, flurry of arrows (reduced penalty)
6th	+6	+5	+5	+2	Bonus feat
7th	+7	+5	+5	+2	Archer's rage 4/day, share frenzy
8th	+8	+6	+6	+2	Improved mounted archery (no penalty)
9th	+9	+6	+6	+3	Archer's rage 5/day, bonus feat
10t	+10	+7	+7	+3	Flurry of arrows (additional arrow)

CLASS FEATURES:

All of the following are class features of the archer of the steppes prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Archers of the steppes are proficient in all simple and martial weapons, with light and medium armor, and with shields.

Archer's Rage: This ability functions as the barbarian's rage ability (*PHB*, Chapter 3), save that the character gains a +2 to Strength and Constitution and a +4 bonus to Dexterity. All other penalties and rules for barbarian rage likewise apply to Archer's Rage, including the Will save and AC penalty.

At 9th level, the bonuses associated with Archer's Rage increase to +4 to Strength and Constitution and +6 to Dexterity, and the Will save increases to a 3.

Arrow Jab: When necessary, archers of the steppes are even adept at using their arrows in melee combat. An archer of the steppes can use an arrow as a melee weapon without having to take the non-proficiency penalty (*PHB*, Chapter 7, "Weapons, Arrows").

Bonded Mount (Ex): At 2nd level, an archer of the steppes has formed such a close link with her mount that the two nearly act in unison. This bond gives the archer of the steppes a +5 circumstance bonus to all Ride skill checks made while using her bonded mount. In addition, Ride checks never need to be made to keep such a bonded mount from fleeing combat. The mount will only abandon the archer of the steppes if influenced by magic. If a bonded mount were to die and a new mount is found, six months of care and attention are needed before the new animal is considered bonded with the archer. An archer of the steppes may only be bonded to one mount at a time.

Bonus Feat: At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, an archer of the steppes may choose a bonus feat from the following list; Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Ride-by-Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (any bow), Weapon Specialization (any bow). The standard requirements for these feats must still be met, except for the Fighter level requirement for Weapon Specialization. At 3rd level, an archer of the steppes may take Weapon Specialization for any weapon — as long as that weapon also has the Weapon Focus feat applied to it.

Improved Mounted Archery (Ex): Starting at 4th level, the archer of the steppes becomes accustomed to using a ranged weapon while mounted. This increased proficiency helps to eliminate the penalties of mounted archery. At 4th level, there is no penalty while using a range weapon while mounted if the character's mount only takes a double move, and a -2 penalty if the mount is running (quadruple movement). At 8th level, there is no penalty for using a ranged weapon while mounted even if the mount is running.

Flurry of Arrows (Ex): At 5th level, an archer of the steppes may eliminate the penalty associated with using the Rapid Shot feat. Additionally, the archer may use the Rapid Shot feat (with normal attendant penalties) with a normal attack action, essentially firing two arrows at a -2 penalty to hit. This ability is only usable if the archer of the steppes is in an Archer's Rage.

At 10th level, the archer of the steppes may fire two additional arrows, rather than the normal one.

Share Frenzy (Ex): At 7th level, any time the archer of the steppes enters either a barbarian rage or an Archer's Rage, her bonded mount also gains the bonuses and penalties associated with that rage.

CHAIN LEGIONNAIRE

Unlike the prestige classes associated with many other of the Ledeian War Colleges, the chain legionnaire class doesn't represent the elite among the adherents of the Legion of Chain. It isn't a mark of mastery to have achieved the skills in this class — in the Legion of Chain, it is a mark of competence. Those who have learned the war-arts of the Legion of Chain, who have not taken at least a level in this class, are usually looked upon with derision.

Once, the Legion of Chain made up the Imperial slavers, often assigned to war-units to act as irregular support and to claim slaves taken on the battlefield in the Emperor's name. The days of such organization have passed, and those who still know the arts of the chain legionnaire now tend to work as freelance slavers and bounty hunters, putting their skills in the employ of those who can afford the coin. In Calastia and Dunahnae in particular, those with these arts are highly sought after and often found in the employ of the state. There are even rumors that chain legionnaires have shown up in the monasteries of the monks of the Sacred Chain.

Use in Other Campaigns: The chain legionnaire is an unusual prestige class both in its origin and in its conception. Many campaigns will find it difficult to integrate if they do not possess a tradition of either organized slaving or use of the spiked chain as a weapon of war. Consequently, many GMs might wish to introduce the Chain Legionnaire as a class associated with an evil group or religion. That is certainly a valid approach, if limited. Another possibility is to rework the Ledeian Legion of Chain as a newly opened military school that trains its adepts in this unusual fighting style. That way the GM can freely use the

prestige class without making the claim that it is ancient in origin or even deeply tied to history.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a chain legionnaire, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Bind*, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Weapon Finesse (spiked chain), Weapon Focus (spiked chain), Weapon Specialization (spiked chain).

Special: The character needs to find an appropriate school or a mentor who teaches this fighting style.

CLASS SKILLS

The chain legionnaire's class skills are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), Swim (Str), Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the chain legionnaire prestige class.

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

Superior Disarm/Trip (Ex): The chain legionnaire gains a +2 to all disarm and trip rolls involving the spiked chain. This bonus does stack with those gained from the weapon itself.

Bonus Feats: Starting at 2nd level, and every other level thereafter, the chain legionnaire may



TABLE A2-2: CHAIN LEGIONNAIRE (CHL)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Superior disarm/trip
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Bonus feat
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Sweeping arc
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Bonus feat
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Signature weapon
6th	+6	+5	+5	+2	Bonus feat
7th	+7	+5	+5	+2	Binding chain (<i>suggestion</i>)
8th	+8	+6	+6	+2	Bonus feat
9th	+9	+6	+6	+3	Iron grasp technique
10th	+10	+7	+7	+3	Binding chain (<i>dominate person</i>), bonus feat

choose an additional feat from those commonly taught in the Legion of Chain. These are Combat Expertise (Disarm Riposte*, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip), Improved Grab, and Merciful Strike*. All normal prerequisites must be fulfilled in order to choose a feat from this list. If a character already knows all of the feats listed above, she is free to choose from the list given for Fighters for her bonus feat.

Sweeping Arc (Ex): At 3rd level, the chain legionnaire may explode into a low, whirling attack pattern aimed at the knees and feet of those around her. As a full round action, the chain legionnaire may make a trip attack against everyone within 10 feet. The chain legionnaire makes her rolls for the trip action as normal, but the results of this single check are compared against all opponents potentially subject to the strike. Because of the wild nature of this attack, allies within range are also subject to it. This may not be used in conjunction with the Improved Trip feat.

Signature Weapon (Su): At 5th level, the chain legionnaire has achieved true mastery of her spiked chain. This gives her a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls, which stack with any magical bonus the item has or feat the character possesses. In addition, the weapon is considered to be a +5 weapon for the purpose of overcoming damage resistance only. This applies to any spiked chain she may wield.

In addition, the wielder of the weapon may choose one of the following damage reduction types: chaos, evil, good, law or magical (+3). Any spiked chain he wields is considered to be a weapon of this type for the purpose of overcoming damage resistance.

If the chain legionnaire is ever disarmed while using her spiked chain, she may make a Reflex save (DC equal to the opponent's disarm roll) to ignore the effects of the disarm as she releases the weapon and then re-

catches it. If the weapon is ever damaged, the chain legionnaire may make a Fortitude Save (DC 10 + damage done to the weapon) to ignore the effects of the attack.

Finally, if the spiked chain is used to disarm an opponent, the chain legionnaire may use her chain to snare the weapon and pull it towards herself. This is a free action and requires an attack roll against an AC of 15 + the Dexterity modifier of the opponent who just lost the weapon. Success in this roll indicates that the chain legionnaire has snatched up her opponent's weapon.

Binding Chain (Sp): Chain legionnaires are known for their ability to manipulate the minds of others. At 7th level, a chain legionnaire may take a full round action and spin her spiked chain in a hypnotic pattern. Any single target within 30 feet of the chain legionnaire must make a Will save (DC 10 + levels in chain legionnaire + Charisma bonus) or be subject to a *suggestion* spell. This does provoke an attack of opportunity. The chain legionnaire may use this ability a number of times per day equal to 1 + her Charisma bonus.

At 10th level, this effect is heightened so that it acts as a *dominate person* ability, making spoken commands unnecessary.

Iron Grasp Technique (Sp): At 9th level, a chain legionnaire gains the ability to hold her adversaries with supernatural stillness. If the chain legionnaire uses the Bind* feat on an opponent, she may then activate this effect — which functions as a hold monster spell — as a free action. Opponents may attempt to resist with a Will save (DC 10 + levels in chain legionnaire + Charisma bonus). This technique may be used by the chain legionnaire a number of times per day equal to 1 + her Charisma bonus.

DANCER OF STEEL

The Legion of Steel actually originated in Venir, before it became a province of the Ledean Empire. Composed of warriors who eschewed bulky armor in favor of freedom of movement, the Dancers of Steel, as the order was originally called, served as quick and quiet elite forces for the king of Venir. When Venir became a province of Lede, these swordsmen continued their tradition but were renamed the Legion of Steel. The legion served Lede well, especially in the troublesome Calas Province close to the main chapterhouse of the legion.

With the fall of the empire, and the rise of the charduni, the legion fell into disarray. In modern times the legion has effectively split. The original chapterhouse in Femulyae still produces new members of the fighting order, which has taken back its original name. In

Darakeene, a few dancers of steel are still trained by personal mentors within the other colleges—especially the colleges of Plague and Wake.

Use in Other Campaigns: The dancer of steel is a simple addition to most fantasy campaigns. The class provides a path of development for warriors preferring to rely on quick movement than on heavy armor. Depending on the circumstances of the campaign, the dancer of steel can be either an ancient profession or a more recent one. It is even possible in some campaigns that the class wouldn't exist at all, especially if there is no tradition of lightly armored warriors. In most cases, though, adding it requires no major overhaul in the class or its prerequisites.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a dancer of steel, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Cloth Dancing*, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Skills: Perform (dance) 5 ranks, Tumble 4 ranks.

Special: The character needs to find a mentor or school that teaches this fighting style.

CLASS SKILLS

The dancer of steel's class skills are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Dex), Ride (Dex), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the dancer of steel prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency:

Dancers of steel are proficient with simple and martial weapons, and all types of armor—but not with shields.

Longsword Finesse (Ex):

When wielding a longsword, the dancer of steel is treated as though he has the Weapon Finesse feat with that weapon (even though the longsword is not normally eligible for that feat).

Bonus Feats: Starting at 2nd level, and every other level thereafter, the dancer of steel may choose an additional feat from those commonly taught to their fighting order.

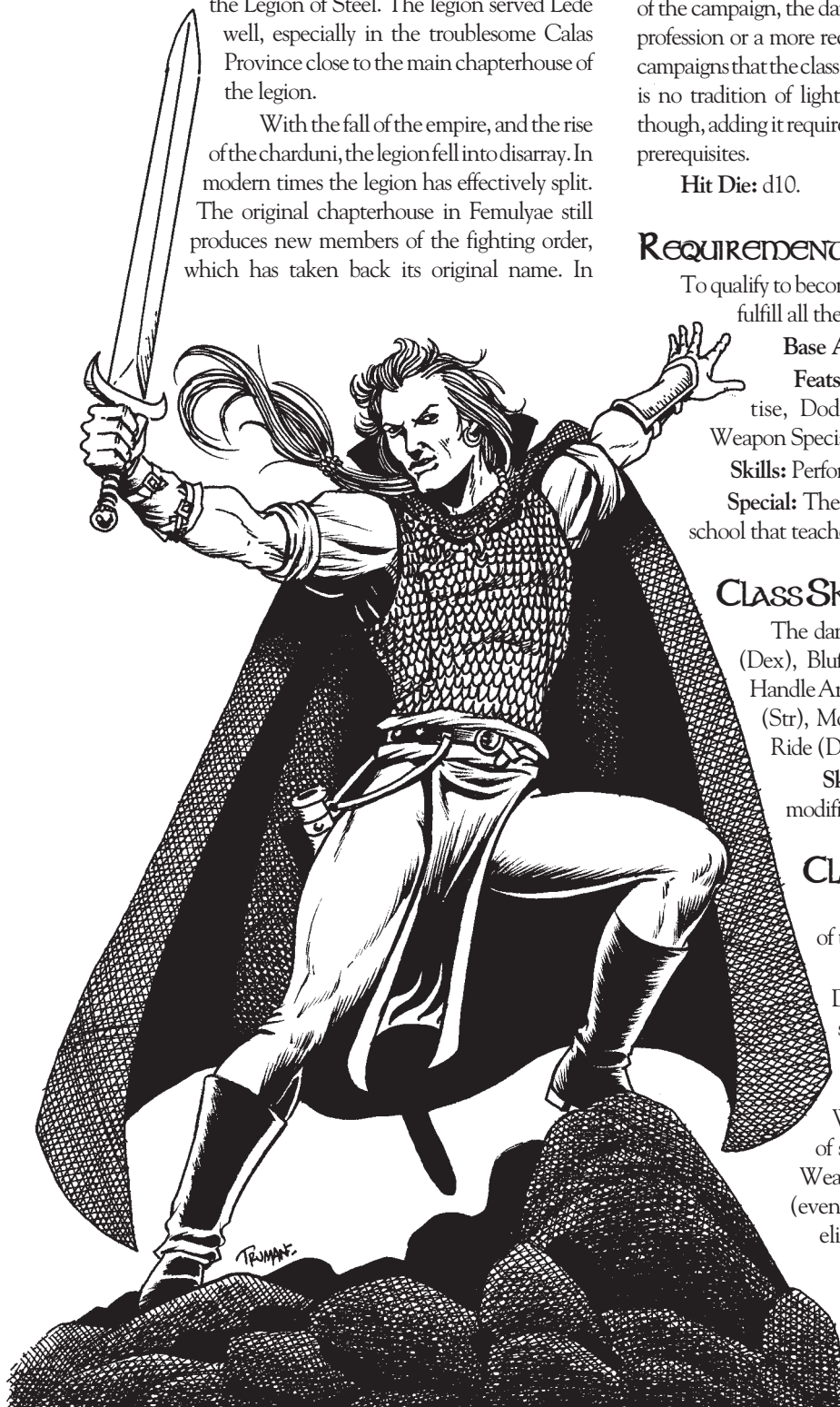


TABLE A2-3: DANCER OF STEEL (DOS)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Longsword finesse
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Bonus feat
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Evasion
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Uncanny dodge (Dex to AC), bonus feat
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Signature weapon
6th	+6	+5	+5	+2	Bonus feat
7th	+7	+5	+5	+2	Hypnotic dance
8th	+8	+6	+6	+2	Uncanny dodge (can't be flanked), bonus feat
9th	+9	+6	+6	+3	Tumbling strike
10th	+10	+7	+7	+3	Bonus feat

These are Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Mobility, Riposte*, Spring Attack, Whirling Defense*, and Whirlwind Attack. All normal prerequisites must be fulfilled in order to choose a feat from this list. If a character already knows all of the feats listed above, he is free to choose from the list given for fighters for his bonus feat.

Evasion (Ex): At 3rd level, the dancer of steel gains evasion. If exposed to any effect that normally allows a character to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage (such as a fireball), he takes no damage with a successful saving throw. Evasion can only be used if the dancer of steel is wearing light armor or no armor.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Starting at 4th level, the dancer of steel gains the extraordinary ability to react to danger before his senses would normally allow him to even be aware of it. At 4th level and above, he retains his Dexterity bonus (if any) to AC regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. If immobilized, he still loses any Dexterity bonus to AC.

At 8th level, the dancer of steel 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 denies opponents the ability to use flank attacks to sneak attack the dancer of steel. The exception to this defense is that an opponent at least 4 levels higher than the dancer of steel can flank him (and thus perform a sneak attack, if possessing that ability).

If a dancer of steel has Uncanny Dodge from another class, his dancer of steel levels add to the levels of the other class for determining his effective level with respect to the Uncanny Dodge ability.

Signature Weapon (Su): At 5th level, the dancer of steel has achieved true mastery with his longsword. This gives him a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls, which stack with any magical bonus the item has or feat the character possesses. In addition, the weapon is considered to be a +5 weapon for the purpose of overcoming damage resistance only. This applies to any longsword he may wield.

In addition, the wielder of the weapon may choose one of the following damage reduction types: chaos, evil, good, law or magical (+3). Any longsword he wields is considered to be a weapon of this type for the purpose of overcoming damage resistance.

If the dancer of steel is ever disarmed while using his longsword, he may make a Reflex save (DC equal to the opponent's disarm roll) to ignore the effects of the disarm — as he rapidly releases and then re-catches the weapon. If the weapon is ever damaged, the dancer of steel may make a Fortitude Save (DC 10 + damage done to the weapon) to ignore the effects of the attack.

Hypnotic Dance (Su): At 7th level the dancer of steel's graceful movements can entrance an opponent into inaction. As a move-equivalent action, a dancer of steel can perform a dance that distracts his opponent. Anyone watching the dancer must make a Will save (DC 10 + dancer of steel class level + Cha bonus) or be stunned for one full round. The dancer of steel can only use this action if he is not burdened by a shield larger than a buckler. This ability is a supernatural ability.

Tumbling Strike (Ex): At 9th level, the dancer of steel learns to use a tumbling strike. In order to use this ability, the dancer of steel must possess both the Spring Attack and Whirlwind Attack feats. The dancer of steel must make a Tumble check (DC 25), and be tumbling through a 20 ft. area. The character may then make a single attack against every opponent, within reach of his tumble area, at his full base attack bonus — in essence, the character uses Whirlwind Attack while tumbling through the area. This requires a full round action.

If the character does not already have both the Spring Attack and Whirlwind Attack feats, he cannot perform the above attack. However, Tumbling Strike would then allow him to mimic the effects of either Spring Attack or Whirlwind Attack; they would each work as described in the PHB, without the extra advantages described here. When used in this fashion, Tumbling Strike may only mimic one of the above feats per round.

KNIGHT OF THE COVENTACLE

In the days of the now fallen Ledean Empire, an order of knights served the will of the Coventacle of Ancients, the religious body of the Empire that oversaw the worship of the titans. The Knights of the Coventacle acted as the strong arm of the titanic theocrats, enforcing their interpretation of the titans' will. These knights were taught the secrets of beseeching the titans themselves, so that they might gain the strength necessary to serve their patrons properly. Each knight of the Coventacle typically became blessed by several of the titans — indeed, status in the knighthood was given by the number of titans who had deigned to grant a knight their favor.

Even with the fall of the Ledean Empire, the Knights of the Coventacle continued to do the will of the titans, albeit without the authority of a great empire behind them. When the gods rose to commit patricide

against the titans, the Knights of the Coventacle were at the forefront of the fighting — clashing against paladins of Corean and the Horsemen of Vangal alike. Since the defeat of the titans however, the Knights of the Coventacle have been forced into hiding.

Currently, what little remains of the Knights of the Coventacle are hunted by the few followers of the gods who know of them. They have managed to keep their order together despite being forced underground, continuing to recruit worthy warriors who fight for the return of the titans. The offer of power outside of the strictures of the ways of the godspawn appeals to many, even those born to wealth and nobility.

Indeed, nearly every major order of knights, save the orders of Corean, has at least one knight of the Coventacle hidden among their ranks.

Use in Other Campaigns:

The knight of the Coventacle requires a bit of reworking to be usable in other campaigns. As the strong arm of a secret society, the knight's niche is not always present in every cam-

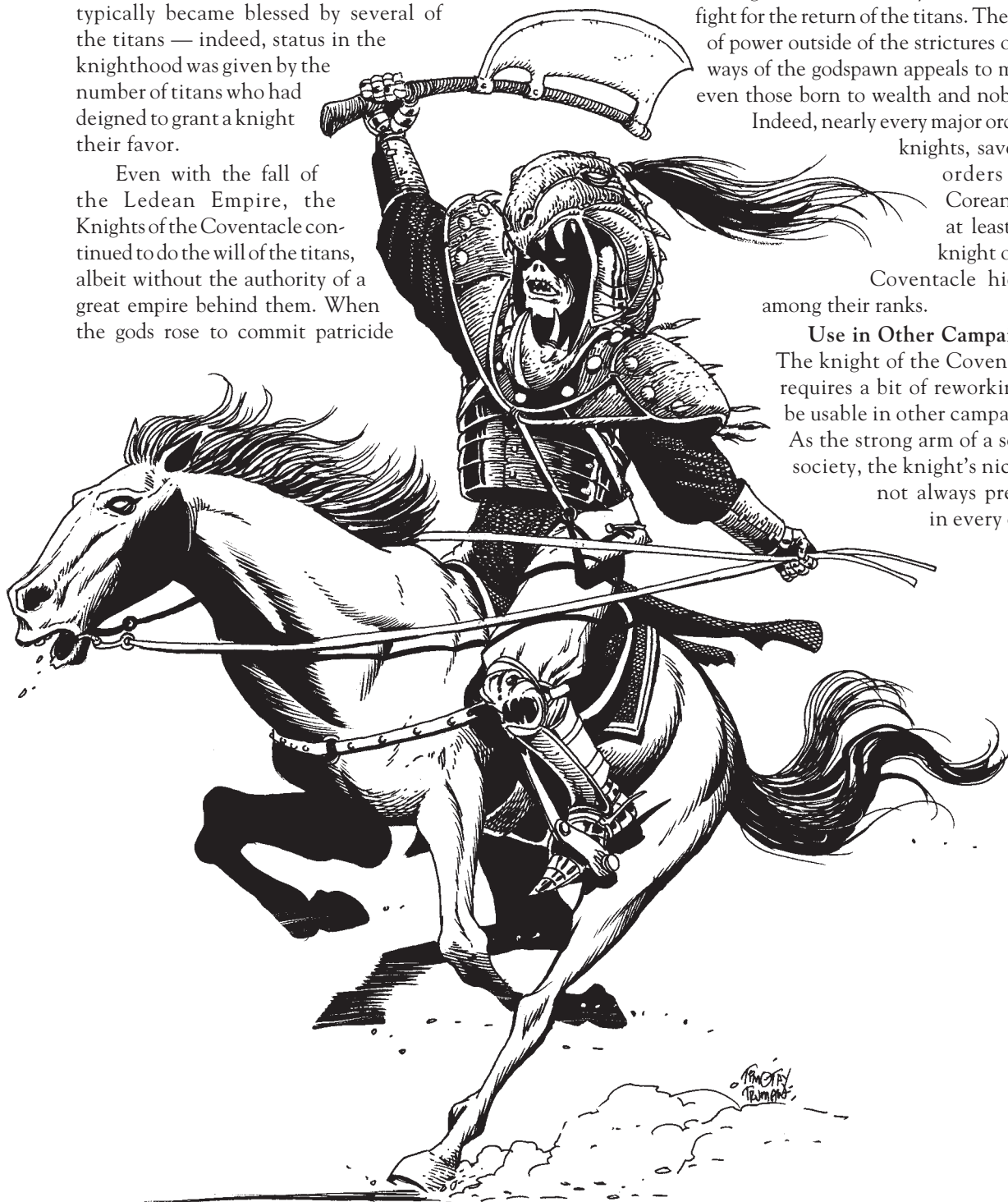


TABLE A2-4: KNIGHT OF THE COVENTACLE (KOC)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Titans' blessing, loyalty of ages
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Skilled rider
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Titans' blessing
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Bonus feat
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Titans' blessing
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Mounted warrior
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Titans' blessing
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Bonus feat
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Titans' blessing
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Superior charge

paign. Moreover, the Coventacle of the Ancients isn't just any conspiracy. It is composed of servants of the defeated titans who seek to advance their patrons' goals to the detriment of the gods. In other campaigns, the knight might serve a conspiracy of a forgotten god or fiends or some other evil (or at least non-good) power. This is important, because several of the class's abilities stem from a blessing by his patron.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a knight of the Coventacle, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +7

Faith: Must worship the titans.

Feats: Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample.

Skill: Ride 10 ranks, Handle Animal 5 ranks.

Special: Must have been initiated into the Knights by another, senior knight.

CLASS SKILLS

The knight of the Coventacle's class skills are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the knight of the Coventacle prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Knights of the Coventacle are proficient with simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields.

Titans' Blessing: At every other level beginning at 1st, the knight of the Coventacle may choose

one of the following abilities. His knight of the Coventacle level + his Wisdom bonus determines the blessing he can choose — he may not choose a blessing of a number higher than the sum of his class level and Wisdom bonus. No blessing can be taken more than once. Note that only the character's base Wisdom bonus is used for determining blessings; bonuses gained from magic items and the like do not count towards this ability. The character is considered to be of a caster level equal to his levels in the knight of the Coventacle prestige class, for the purpose of spell-like abilities.

Loyalty of Ages (Ex): At 1st level the knight of the Coventacle gains a +2 resistance bonus to saving throws against all mind-affecting and compulsion effects. Additionally, knights of the Coventacle may no longer receive invocation benefits from the gods.

Skilled Rider (Ex): At 2nd level, the Knight of the Coventacle gains a +4 competence bonus to Ride checks.

Bonus Feat: At 4th and 8th level, the knight of the Coventacle may select a feat from the fighters' feat list.

Mounted Warrior (Ex): At 6th level, the knight of the Coventacle becomes especially adept at fighting from horseback. While on horseback, he gains a +2 bonus to hit creatures on the ground. This does not stack with the normal +1 to hit bonus for being mounted.

Superior Charge (Ex): When the knight of the Coventacle reaches 10th level, he gains the Superior Charge ability. When mounted and using the charge action, the knight of the Coventacle does triple damage with a melee weapon (or quadruple damage with a lance). This ability replaces the Spirited Charge feat.

TITANS' BLESSINGS

Level + Wis modifier	Blessing
1	Lethene's Dance
2	Hrinruuk's Sight
3	Fangs of Mormo
4	Gulaben's Chill
5	Feast of Gaurak
6	The Shaper's Blessing
7	Endurance of Thulkas
8	Strike of Chern
9	Protection of Mesos
10	Gormoth's Agony
11	Mountainshaker's Strength

Lethene's Dance (Ex): The knight of the Coventacle gains a +1 dodge bonus to AC.

Hrinruuk's Sight (Ex): The knight of the Coventacle gains Track as a bonus feat.

Fangs of Mormo (Ex): The knight of the Coventacle gains the ability to use poison safely and never risks accidentally poisoning himself when applying poison to a blade.

Gulaben's Chill (Sp): The knight of the Coventacle gains the ability to sheathe his weapon in chilling cold. This functions as the frost effect of the spell *flame/frost weapon* (Relics & Rituals, Chapter Two). The ability may be used once per day.

Feast of Gaurak (Sp): The knight of the Coventacle gains the ability to cast *death knell* once per day.

The Shaper's Blessing (Sp): The knight of the Coventacle gains the ability to cast *greater magic weapon* once per day.

Endurance of Thulkas (Su): The knight of the Coventacle gains fire resistance 10.

Strike of Chern (Su): The knight of the Coventacle gains the ability to designate a single melee attack as a wounding attack. Such strikes are treated as though they were made with a weapon possessing the *wounding* weapon enhancement (see DMG). This may be done once per day per level in the knight of the Coventacle prestige class and must be declared before the attack roll is made. If the attack roll misses, that use of the ability is wasted.

Protection of Mesos (Sp): The knight of the Coventacle gains the ability to cast *minor globe of invulnerability* once per day, affecting only arcane spells.

Gormoth's Agony (Su): The knight of the Coventacle gains the ability to designate a single melee attack as an agonizing attack. Those struck by this attack must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + knight of the Coventacle class level + Wis bonus). Failure in this roll indicates the target is wracked with agony, suffering a -4 morale penalty on attack rolls, skill checks and ability checks. Those who succeed in the roll still suffer a -1 morale penalty to the above rolls. These effects last for one round per level in the knight of the Coventacle prestige class. This may be done once per day per level in the knight of the Coventacle prestige class and must be declared before the attack roll is made. If the attack roll misses, that use of the ability is wasted.

Mountainshaker's Strength (Ex): The knight of the Coventacle becomes infused with Kadum's strength when he takes this blessing. He immediately gains a permanent +1 inherent bonus to Strength. In addition, once per day the knight of the Coventacle may perform a feat of strength; this supernatural ability gives an enhancement bonus to strength equal to the knight of the Coventacle level. Activating the power is a free action and the power lasts one round.

Knight of the Oak

The Knights of the Oak are the elite guardians of the elven nation of Vera-tre. Sworn to the Verdant Seat, they are charged with the ultimate defense of Vera-tre and the protection of the person of the Verdant



Seat and the three heirs. The Knights of the Oak are taught by the Jordeh how to use the great trees of the Ganjus forest to their best advantage. In battle, they are often seen running across the thinnest of branches to reach foes trapped on the forest floor.

Those defenders who seek to join the Knights of the Oak must first be accepted as a knight-aspirant. Those who are chosen are then strenuously tested at the Oaken Citadel, the military complex within the great Heart-tree of Vera-tre. There they are pushed by both the experienced Knights of the Oak and the Jordeh, who seek to expose any weakness of body or soul. Once they have been found worthy, the knight-aspirant is brought before the Verdant Seat — where they are fitted with the living armor of their order and take their oaths to serve Denev and Vera-tre as a whole.

Most of the Knights of the Oak guard the Verdant Court and the Grove of the Mother, seeking to fulfill their duty in defending the two greatest seats of Denev's power. The rest of the knights can be found leading forces of other protectors of the Ganjus or keeping peace within Vera-tre. It is exceedingly rare for Knights of the Oak to leave the Ganjus, and they will only do so in the greatest need or at the request of the Verdant seat.

Use in Other Campaigns: The knight of the Oak adheres to a solid fantasy archetype, namely the sylvan warrior. Most fantasy campaigns include forest-dwelling elves of one stripe or another. The knight of the Oak would therefore serve as their elite fighters, defending the elves' homes against invaders who would despoil its verdant beauty. In some campaigns, the knights might have a broader racial base or be centered on another race, like gnomes or halflings.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a knight of the Oak, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Alignment: Any neutral.

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Feats: Military Training*, Weapon Focus (spear), Weapon Specialization (spear).

Race: Wood elf or half-elf (of wood elf blood).

Skill: Balance 4 ranks, Climb 8 ranks, Jump 4 ranks.

Special: The character must have already been accepted as a knight-aspirant of the Knights of the Oak. In addition they must have sworn an oath of loyalty and service to the Verdant Seat.

CLASS SKILLS

The knight of the Oak's class skills are: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide(Dex), Jump (Str), Move Silently (Dex) Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the knight of the Oak prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Knights of the Oak are proficient with all simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields.

Forest Friend (Ex): The knight of the Oak gains a +5 competence bonus to all Balance, Climb, Hide and Move Silently checks made while in trees or on wooden surfaces.

Living Armor: Every knight of the Oak is gifted with a suit of full plate armor, crafted by the Jordeh of still-living wood.. This armor bonds to the knight without straps or buckles and draws power from the very life of the wearer — to anyone but a knight of the Oak it is simply a collection of weird oaken plates with no discernable means of being worn as armor. As a knight of the Oak increases in skill, the armor gains greater abilities and becomes less burdensome. The statistics for this armor are listed in the "Oaken Armor" sidebar.

Seizing the High Ground: At 2nd level, the knight of the Oak gains a +2 to his attack rolls whenever he holds higher ground than his target.

This replaces the normal bonus associated with attacking from higher ground.

Tree-leap (Ex): At 3rd level, the knight of the Oak gains the ability to easily jump down from a height. When intentionally leaping from a height he takes less damage from the drop. If he succeeds at a Jump check (DC 15), he takes damage as if he had fallen 20 feet less than he actually did.

At 7th level, with a successful Jump check (DC 15), the knight of the Oak takes damage as if he had fallen 30 feet less than he actually did. This ability does not apply to actual involuntary falls.

Oakspear (Su): At 4th level, the knight of the Oak gains the supernatural ability, once per day, to conjure a magical spear out of a small piece of oak. In addition to any bonuses to damage granted by strength and feats, this spear gains a damage bonus equal to half the knight of the Oak's levels in this prestige class. The oakspear ignores all metal armor for the purposes of striking. This spear lasts for one minute per level of the knight of the Oak prestige class. The weapon also gains a +2 primal bonus to strike undead; additionally, the level-based damage bonus is doubled against such creatures.

At 8th level, a knight of the Oak may conjure the oakspear twice per day.

Leaping Strike (Ex): At 5th level, a knight of the Oak may perform a leaping strike with his spear. This is treated as a charge attack (including gaining the bonus to hit) — though rather than charging 10 feet in a straight line, the knight of the Oak must leap at least 5 feet down onto his opponent. If the attack is successful, the damage inflicted by the spear is doubled.

At 10th level, the knight of the Oak does triple damage when using a leaping strike.

TABLE A2-5: KNIGHT OF THE OAK (KOO)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Forest friend, living armor
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Seizing the high ground
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Tree-leap (20 ft.)
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Oakspear (1/day)
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Leaping strike (x2)
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Treewalker
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Tree-leap (30 ft.)
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Oakspear (2/day)
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Improved critical
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Leaping strike (x3)

OAKEN ARMOR

Level	Maximum Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Special
1-2	+1	-6	+1 enhancement
3-4	+2	-5	Camouflage
5-6	+2	-4	+2 enhancement
7-8	+3	-3	Silence
9-10	+3	-2	+3 enhancement, invulnerability

Level: The number of levels in the knight of the Oak prestige class possessed by the character.

Maximum Dex Bonus: The maximum Dexterity bonus that the knight of the Oak may apply while wearing the armor of his order.

Armor Check Penalty: The penalty incurred while the knight of the Oak is wearing the living armor.

+1 Enhancement: Living armor, worn by a 1st level knight of the Oak, receives a +1 enhancement bonus.

Camouflage: The living armor worn by a 3rd level knight of the Oak receives the *shadow* armor enhancement (see DMG).

+2 Enhancement: Living armor, worn by a 5th level knight of the Oak, receives a +2 enhancement bonus. This replaces the +1 enhancement bonus gained earlier.

Silence: The living armor worn by a 7th level knight of the Oak receives the *silent moves* armor enhancement (see DMG).

+3 Enhancement: Living armor, worn by a 9th level knight of the Oak, receives a +3 enhancement bonus. This replaces the +2 enhancement bonus gained earlier.

Invulnerability: The living armor worn by a 9th level knight of the Oak receives the *invulnerability* armor enhancement (see DMG).

Treewalker (Ex): At 6th level, a knight of the Oak may always take 10 on any Balance or Climb checks made while in trees. He may take 10 even if stress and distractions would normally prevent him from doing so.

Improved Critical: At 9th level the knight of the Oak gains Improved Critical (spear) as a bonus feat, bringing the critical range of the knight's spear to 19-20/x3. If the knight of the Oak already possesses the Improved Critical (spear) feat, upon gaining this ability, his spear critical range improves to 18-20/x3.

LODGE-WARRIOR

The Four Lodges of Vera-tre are sworn to defend the elven people of the Ganjus. Each is dedicated to one of the Four Eldest Beasts; the Four Lodges teach the mysteries of the totems to their initiates, instructing them in the unique and deadly fighting arts that emulate those of the First Bear, the First Hawk, the First Stag or the First Wolf. Because the Eldest Beasts are reincarnated as the Verdant Seat and the Heirs, the Lodges act as emissaries and defenders of these four individuals. Indeed, when an Heir is unfound, the lodge-warriors of that Lodge often accompany the Jordeh when they venture out to seek that Heir.

There are greater mysteries than mere fighting techniques to be learned in the Four Lodges, however. Some of those who delve into the secrets of their Totems come away with more than the ability to channel the favor of that Totem. These lodge-warriors learn the secrets of the so-called Beast Mind, a battle trance that makes them stronger, faster or tougher in battle. They also gain some powers of movement similar to the abilities of their Totem, and with time and experience may even be capable of bodily taking on the animal form of their lodge.

The lodge-warriors who attain the secrets of this prestige class often become distant, even from other woodelves, for they spend a great deal of time in meditation — contemplating the feral natures of their totemic patrons. Indeed, the highest masters of these arts often remove themselves from the company of other elves and humanoids altogether, instead dwelling in the wild. It is not unusual to find a feral elf dwelling with a family of bears, a pack of wolves, a herd of deer or among the high nests of the hawks.

Use in Other Campaigns: The lodge-warrior is an unusual prestige class. Not every campaign can easily use it and even those that can do so might require a certain amount of alteration to make it fit properly. As written, the lodge-warrior is made up of elves and half-elves devoted to a totem animal, through whose intercession they gain their powers to defend their homelands. In some campaigns, totem animals might be the purview of human or half-orc barbarians rather than elves. In others, there might not be animal totems at all. In this case, the GM might replace the Four Eldest Animals with appropriate gods or elemental spirits. The basic premise of the class is certainly workable in many settings, but the specific details might have to change to suit changing circumstances.

Hit Die: d12.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a lodge-warrior a character must fulfill all the following criteria, depending on which lodge he belongs to:

The Lodge of the First Bear

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Fur-like-Dusk*, Improved Grab, Merciful Strike*, Toughness.

Race: Wood elf, or half-elf (of wood elf lineage).

Skill: Climb 8 ranks, Handle Animal 4 ranks.

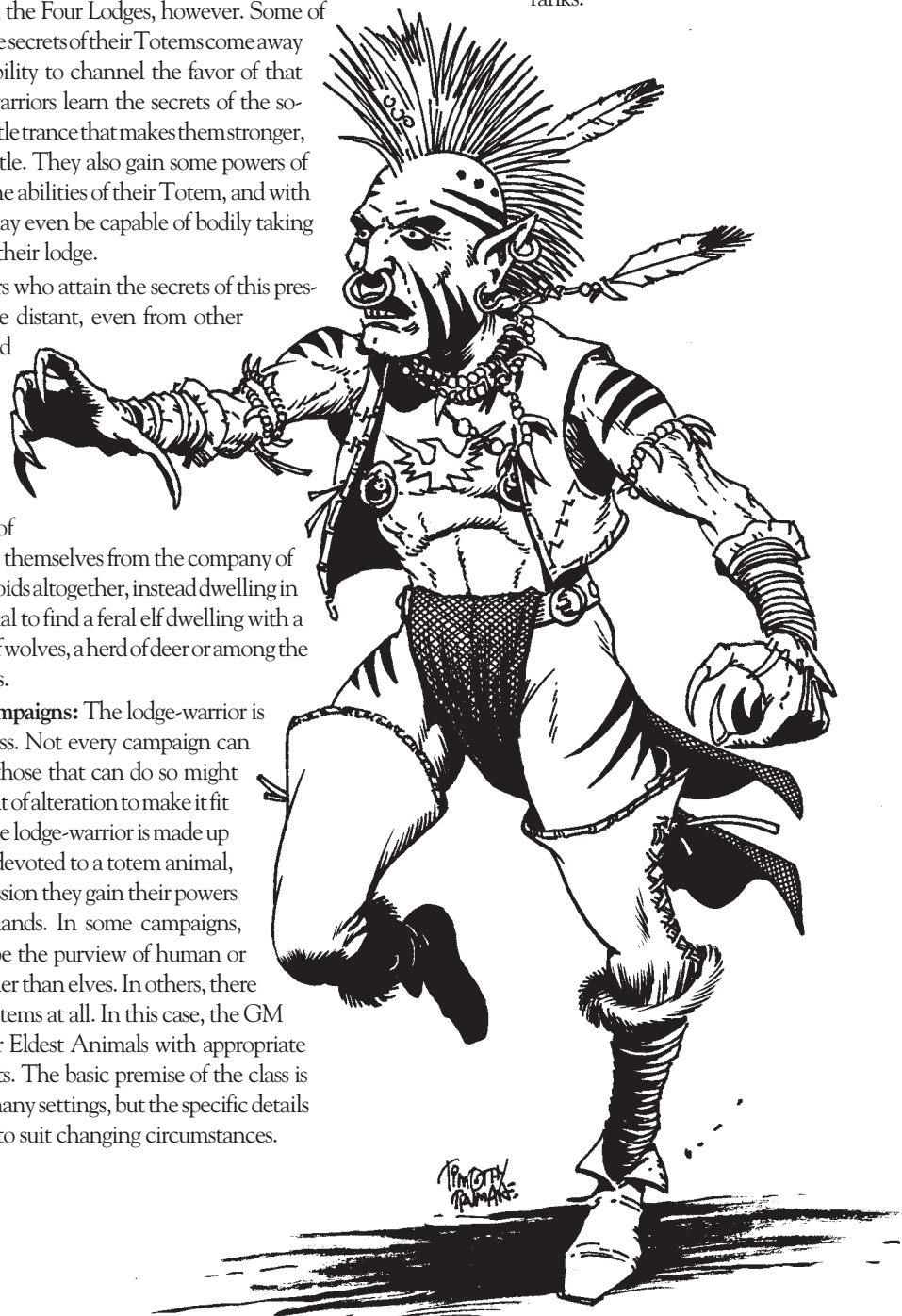


TABLE A2-6: LODGE-WARRIOR (LOW)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Beast mind
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Bonus feat, enhanced channeling
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Animal companion, beast-lore
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Bonus feat
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Beast form (1/day)
6th	+6	+5	+5	+2	Bonus feat, enhanced channeling
7th	+7	+5	+5	+2	Movement of the beast
8th	+8	+6	+6	+2	Bonus feat
9th	+9	+6	+6	+3	Beast form (2/day)
10th	+10	+7	+7	+3	Bonus feat

The Lodge of the First Hawk

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Alertness, Point-blank Shot, Weapon Focus (bow), Wings-of-Fire*.

Race: Wood elf, or half-elf (of wood elf lineage).

Skill: Handle Animal 4 ranks, Jump 8 ranks.

The Lodge of the First Stag

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Improved Bull Rush, Mounted Combat, Stag-of-Seven-Tines*, Weapon Focus (spear).

Race: Wood elf, or half-elf (of wood elf lineage).

Skill: Handle Animal 4 ranks, Ride 8 ranks.

The Lodge of the First Wolf

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Battle Cry, Dodge, Military Training*, Moon-in-the-Eyes*.

Race: Wood elf, or half-elf (of wood elf lineage).

Skill: Handle Animal 4 ranks, Jump 8 ranks.

Class Skills

The lodge-warrior's class skills are: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the lodge-warrior prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Lodge-warriors are proficient with all simple and martial weapons and with light armor.

Beast Mind (Ex): This ability allows the lodge-warrior to focus his thoughts and actions, granting him extraordinary physical prowess when he channels his totem (as per the totem feat rules; see Appendix One). While the lodge-warrior channels the totem associated

with his lodge, he gains a +2 primal bonus to a single physical ability; this ability varies by the lodge (see the "Lodges of Vera-tre" sidebar for precise details).

Bonus Feats: Starting at 2nd level, and every other level thereafter, the lodge-warrior may choose an additional feat from those commonly taught at their lodge (see the "Lodges of Vera-tre" sidebar for the lists of feats that lodge-warriors may choose). All normal prerequisites must be fulfilled in order to choose a feat from this list. If a character already knows all of the feats listed there, he is free to choose from the list given for Fighters for their bonus feat.

Enhanced Channeling (Ex): At 2nd level, the lodge-warrior can channel the totem of his lodge a number of times per day equal to 2 + his Charisma modifier. This increases to 3 + his Charisma modifier at 6th level.

Animal Companion (Su): At 3rd level, the lodge-warrior gains an animal companion. After a full night's vigil under the full moon, an animal comes to the lodge-warrior just as the sun rises. This animal is a friend and boon companion, a representative sent by the totem of the lodge-warrior to aid him in his goals (see the "Lodges of Vera-tre" sidebar for details on exactly what animals are gained by the members of each lodge). This animal

✱✱✱BRANT-HIN-YF-HBIP11Y-✱✱✱BRANT-HIN-YF

Stag

CR 1; SZ Large Animal; HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +2; Spd 60 ft.; AC 14 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural); Atk 1 gore +4 melee (1d8+2) or 2 hooves +4 melee (1d4+1); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 10 ft/5 ft; SQ Scent; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +2*, Listen +7, Move Silently +6*, Spot +5.

Feats: Run.

Special Qualities: Scent, Skills (+4 to Hide and Move Silently; *in forested areas, Hide bonus increases to +6).

✱✱✱BRANT-HIN-YF-HBIP11Y-✱✱✱BRANT-HIN-YF

The Lodges of Vera-tre

Though the secrets of the Lodges of Vera-tre have much in common with each other, their expressions vary according to the Lodge in question. Below are the details for each of the four lodges.

The Lodge of the First Bear

Beast Mind: Bear lodge-warriors increase their Strength when using Beast Mind.

Bonus Feats: The bonus feats gained by Bear lodge-warriors are: Cleave, Deflect Arrows, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack, Robust*, Stalwart*, Stunning Attack, Sunder.

Animal Companion: Bear lodge-warriors gain a black bear (see MM, "Animals") as an animal companion.

Beast Lore: The Bear Lodge teaches the skills Climb and Handle Animal as its beast-lore.

Beast Form: The beast form of the Bear Lodge is that of a black bear (see MM, "Animals").

Movement of the Beast: Bear lodge-warriors gain the ability to climb at a speed of 15 ft. They also gain the normal +8 racial bonus to Climb checks associated with creatures who have a Climb speed.

The Lodge of the First Hawk

Beast Mind: Hawk lodge-warriors increase their Dexterity when using Beast Mind.

Bonus Feats: The bonus feats gained by Hawk lodge-warriors are: Battle Cry, Dodge, Far Shot, Improved Staple*, Mobility, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run, Trick Shot*, Weapon Specialization (bow).

Animal Companion: Hawk lodge-warriors gain a hawk (see MM, "Animals") as an animal companion.

Beast Lore: The Hawk Lodge teaches the skills Handle Animal and Jump as its beast-lore.

Beast Form: The beast form of the Hawk Lodge is that of a great hawk (use the stats of an eagle, see MM, "Animals").

Movement of the Beast: Hawk lodge-warriors gain the ability to leap prodigious distances. Their maximum jumping distance is no longer limited by their height in any way.

The Lodge of the First Stag

Beast Mind: Stag lodge-warriors increase their Constitution when using Beast Mind.

Bonus Feats: The bonus feats gained by Stag lodge-warriors are: Dodge, Improved Critical (spear), Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Spring Attack, Trample, Weapon Specialization (spear).

Animal Companion: Stag lodge-warriors gain a stag (see the sidebar "Stag") as an animal companion.

Beast Lore: The Stag Lodge teaches the skills Handle Animal and Jump as its beast-lore.

Beast Form: The beast form of the Stag Lodge is that of a stag (see the sidebar "Stag").

Movement of the Beast: Stag lodge-warriors increase their base movement by 10 ft.

The Lodge of the First Wolf

Beast Mind: Wolf lodge-warriors increase their Dexterity when using Beast Mind.

Bonus Feats: The bonus feats gained by Wolf lodge-warriors are: Advanced Military Training*, Alertness, Combat Expertise, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bola), Formation Combat*, Improved Trip, Mobility, Spring Attack, Stalwart*, Whirlwind Attack.

Animal Companion: Wolf lodge-warriors gain a wolf (see MM, "Animals") as an animal companion.

Beast Lore: The Stag Lodge teaches the skills Handle Animal and Jump as its beast-lore.

Beast Form: The beast form of the Wolf Lodge is that of a wolf (see MM, "Animals").

Movement of the Beast: Wolf lodge-warriors increase their base movement by 10 ft.

is treated as though it were gained by use of the *charm animal* spell, save that there is no limit to the duration.

Beast-lore (Ex): Drawing upon the intimate knowledge he has of his totem, the 3rd-level lodge-warrior acquires increased proficiency with two skills—gaining a +2 primal bonus to all rolls made with those skills. The precise skills vary depending on the lodge (see the "Lodges of Vera-tre" sidebar for precise details).

Beast Form (Su): At 5th level, the lodge-warrior gains the ability to transform his shape into that of his

totem animal. This acts as a *polymorph* spell, save that the character may only take the form of his totem animal (see the "Lodges of Vera-tre" sidebar for details on what animal form the lodge-warrior is able to assume). He may use this power once per day. At 9th level, he may use this power twice per day.

Movement of the Beast (Su): At 7th level, the lodge-warrior gains a special movement power, based on his totem. The precise nature of this power varies by lodge (see the "Lodges of Vera-tre" sidebar for details).

MASTER OF THE IRON WIND

Among the Iron Wind Brotherhood there are a few who have achieved such levels of skill, with the fans favored by the order, that their martial skills seem somehow supernatural. And perhaps they are.

Those who pursue the arts of the Iron Wind Brotherhood to their fullest often take levels in this prestige class, becoming whirlwinds of devastation

with their innocuous arms.

A true master of the Iron Wind

seeks to do more than wield his iron fan skillfully; rather, he seeks to become like his fan — resilient, sleek and deadly. A rare few of these elite learn to tap into something called the Iron Wind, a martial philosophy and spiritual discipline that grants them speed, strength and the ability to even generate winds.

These days, masters of the Iron Wind are often found wandering Ghelspad, traveling from place to place. Some masters seek to actively train others in the secrets of their war-art, while others simply consider their knowledge to be just another tool, albeit a potent one. Few of those who have levels in this prestige class actually teach at the tiny schools found in Darakeene.

Recently, rumors have begun to spread among the practitioners of this art that a small cabal made up of masters of the Iron Wind have taken up the worship of some titan of the winds. Many masters of this art have turned up dead, obviously killed by another who wields the Iron Wind. It is too horrible to contemplate, that this cabal may be approaching the other masters of this style and trying to force them to join their heresy — killing those who refuse to do so.

Use in Other Campaigns: The master of the Iron Wind is an example of an esoteric fighting class that uses a weapon — the iron fan — uncommon in most Western fantasy settings. Whether that is a good thing or a bad thing is for each GM to decide. Provide a GM's campaign either acknowledges the existence of the iron fan or has no problem assimilating it; the class can be used more or less as written. Its origin would, of course, have to be altered to suit the campaign, but that is a relatively minor change. On the other hand, if the iron fan is not easily assimilated, the GM can choose either to omit the class or to provide a suitable explanation for its existence. Perhaps the weapon is associated with a strange mystical doctrine or is an importation from a faraway land. Whatever he decides, the GM must provide an explanation for the weapon's presence since it is so integral to the prestige class.

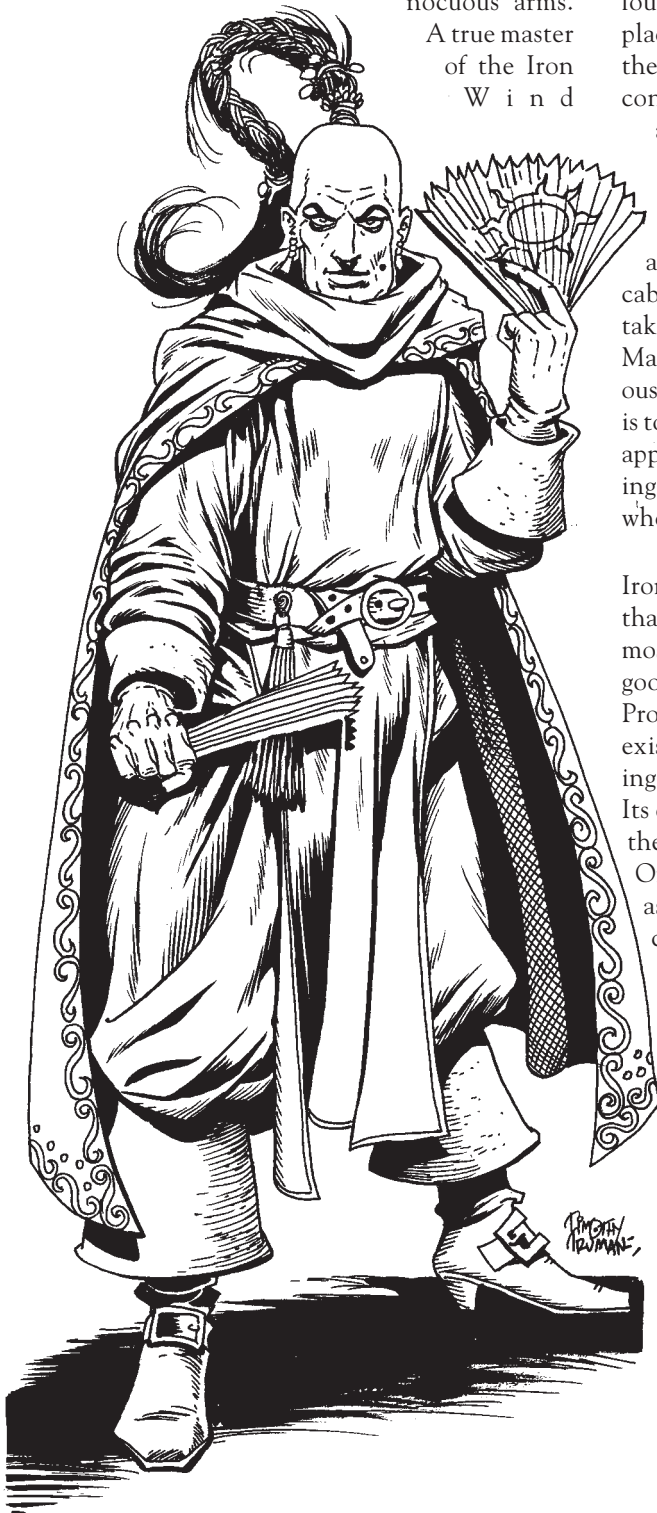
Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a master of the Iron Wind, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Cloth Dancing*, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (iron war fan), Weapon



Finesse (iron war fan), Weapon Focus (iron war fan), Weapon Specialization (iron war fan).

Special: The character needs to find a mentor or school that teaches this fighting style.

CLASS SKILLS

The master of the Iron Wind's class skills are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the master of the Iron Wind prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Masters of the Iron Wind are proficient with simple and martial weapons, and with all types of armor and shields. The preferred weapon of a master of the Iron Wind is the iron fan.

Increased Attacks (Ex): The primary weapon of a master of the Iron Wind is the iron war fan. At 1st level, a master of the Iron Wind using an iron fan can greatly increase his number of attacks. When taking his full attack action, he can make iterative attacks at a factor of 3, rather than the normal factor of 5. He is still limited to a total of five attacks.

For instance, a master of the Iron Wind has a base attack bonus of +13. With any weapon he may take a full attack action and make three attacks at +13/+8/+3. If he is using an iron fan, he may take a full attack action to make five attacks at +13/+10/+7/+4/+1.

Bonus Feats: Starting at 2nd level, and every other level thereafter, the master of the Iron Wind may choose an additional feat from those commonly taught to the Iron Wind Brotherhood. These are Combat Expertise (Disarm Riposte*, Improved Disarm, Riposte*), Spring Attack, Two Weapon Fighting (Spinning Blow*), Whirling Defense*. All normal prerequisites must be fulfilled in order to choose a feat from this list. If a character already knows all of the feats listed above, they are free to choose from the list given for fighters for their bonus feat (DMG, Chapter 3).

Signal (Ex): The iron fans, owned by masters of the Iron Wind, are often decorated with ornate drawings and engravings. Because of this, they may be used to communicate silently and efficiently across the battlefield. At 3rd level, a master of the Iron Wind may communicate and coordinate attacks with those familiar with him. When successfully using the Aid Another action, a master of the Iron Wind gives a bonus of +4 to an ally's attack roll or AC.

Zephyr of Iron (Ex): At 5th level, a true master begins to unlock the mystical abilities of the Iron Wind. Using the Zephyr of Iron ability, the master of the Iron Wind may move through a battlefield swiftly, spinning and blocking with his weapon. He may take a double move and is considered to be using total defense (PHB, Chapter 8, "Standard Actions").

Moreover, at the beginning of his use of Zephyr of Iron, the master of the Iron Wind may make a single attack roll, using the bonus for his iron war fan. If the result of this roll is higher than his AC while using Total Defense, his AC is considered to be that result until his next turn.

At 10th level, the master of the Iron Wind gains the ability to move and still perform a full attack action. He may move up to double his normal movement speed and still perform a full attack action. He may not substitute an attack roll for his AC as above, however.

Signature Weapon (Su): At 7th level, the master of the Iron Wind has achieved a unity with the iron war fan. This gives him a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls, which stacks with any magical bonus the item has or feat the character possesses. In addition, the weapon is considered to be a +5 weapon for the purpose of overcoming damage resistance only. These bonuses apply to any iron war fan he may wield.

In addition, the wielder of the weapon may choose one of the following damage reduction types: chaos, evil, good, law or magical (+3). Any iron war fan he wields is considered to be a weapon of this type for the purpose of overcoming damage resistance.

If the master is ever disarmed while using his iron war fan, he may make a Reflex save (DC equal to the opponent's disarm roll) to ignore the effects of the disarm — as he releases the weapon, which then seems to return to his hand of its own accord. If the weapon is ever damaged, the master of the Iron Wind may make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage done to the weapon) to ignore the effects of the attack.

Additionally, any iron war fan wielded by a master of the Iron Wind may be thrown as a ranged weapon with a range increment of 20 ft. At 9th level, any iron war fan so thrown is treated as though it had the *returning* weapon enhancement.

Iron Wind Mastery (Su): At 9th level, the master of the Iron Wind has further cultivated his expertise with the Iron Wind. He may use this in two ways:

Storm of Fury: As a standard action, the master of the Iron Wind may crack his opened fan in a circle about himself. He then makes a check using his normal attack bonus for his fan. Everyone within 5

TABLE A2-7: MASTER OF THE IRON WIND (MIW)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Increased attacks
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Bonus feat
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Signal
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Bonus feat
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Zephyr of iron (defensive)
6th	+6	+5	+5	+2	Bonus feat
7th	+7	+5	+5	+2	Signature weapon
8th	+8	+6	+6	+2	Bonus feat
9th	+9	+6	+6	+3	Iron Wind mastery, signature weapon (<i>returning</i>)
10th	+10	+7	+7	+3	Bonus feat, zephyr of iron (offensive)

feet of the master of the Iron Wind (including allies) must then make a Reflex save (DC equal to the result of his check, above). Those who fail the save are knocked back 5 feet and land prone.

Sailing the Winds: A master of the Iron Wind may call upon the very winds to propel him upward.

When using this ability, he gains a bonus to his Jump checks equal to his base attack bonus.

The Iron Wind Mastery technique may only be used a number of times per day equal to 3 + the Dexterity bonus of the master of the Iron Wind. This number indicates total uses of both the Storm of Fury and Sailing the Winds abilities.

MERCENARY OF THE HAWK

The Company of the Hawk is an elite group of mercenaries who use specially trained birds of prey to gather information on their enemies. With their superior knowledge, the Company of the Hawk has repeatedly defeated forces many times their size by striking where their opponents are weakest and retreating before the enemy can bring more soldiers to bear.

Chief among the Company of the Hawk are those who train and work with these great raptors. The mercenaries of the Hawk each form a close bond with a specific bird. Through their bond they eventually gain the ability to see through the eyes of their raptor, lending them an almost supernatural awareness of all that happens on the battlefield.

Currently the Company of the Hawk is in the employ of Durrover, lending their extraordinary reconnaissance skills against Calastia. They have used their intelligence gathering capabilities to help units of the Durrover militia slip out of Calastian traps more than once. A number of former mercenaries of the Hawk have retired among the northern nations, and recently there have been rumors that one of them has started a small school for the training of hawkers in eastern Darakeene.

Use in Other Campaigns: The mercenary of the Hawk can be added with relative ease. The primary feature of the class is its relationship with birds of prey. Most fantasy campaigns acknowledge the existence of such birds, therefore presenting no impediment to including it outside the Scarred Lands. The details will need to be changed, however. For example, the GM must decide whether the class's abilities are unique to one group or widely known. If the former, who possess such abilities and what is their origin? These questions are the sort the GM must answer before he

can include the mercenary of the Hawk in his own campaign.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a mercenary of the Hawk, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Improved Initiative, Military Training*, Skill Focus (Handle Animal).

Skill: Handle Animal 8 ranks.

Special: A mercenary of the Hawk must have trained a raptor herself and taught it a minimum of three tricks.

CLASS SKILLS

The mercenary of the Hawk's class skills are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Jump (Str), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the mercenary of the Hawk prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Mercenaries of the Hawk are proficient with all simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields.

Bond the Raptor (Ex): A mercenary of the Hawk gains the ability to bond with a raptor of her choice. In order to consider the bond complete she must have taught her bird a minimum of three tricks. The

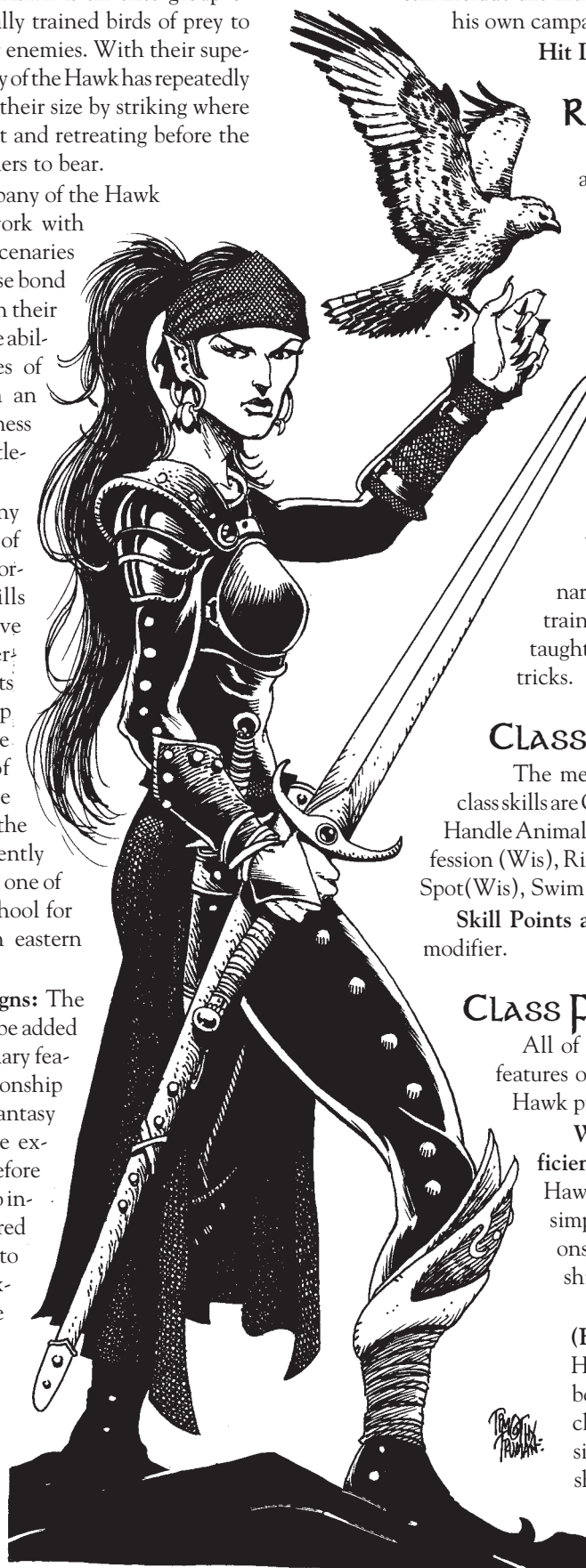


TABLE A2-8: MERCENARY OF THE HAWK (MOH)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Bond the raptor
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Empathy
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Alertness, harry +1d6
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Telepathy
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Shared sight
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC), harry +2d6
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Shared sight
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Friend in the sky
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Two eyes, harry +3d6
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Uncanny dodge (can't be flanked)

raptor may be an eagle, hawk or any other bird as approved by the GM. The mercenary of the Hawk gains a +5 insight bonus to all Handle Animal checks with this particular raptor. Should her raptor ever die, the mercenary of the Hawk loses all benefits of the prestige class until she trains a new raptor to bond (which simply takes as long as it takes to train the creature three tricks using Handle Animal). The raptor becomes a magical beast.

Empathy (Su): At 2nd level, the mercenary of the Hawk begins to develop an empathic connection to her raptor. They share a basic empathic link, as long as they are within a distance of one another equal to 1 mile per level in the mercenary of the Hawk class. The mercenary of the Hawk always knows what her bonded raptor is feeling and can communicate simple concepts back and forth.

Alertness (Ex): At 3rd level, the mercenary of the Hawk gains Alertness as a bonus feat.

Harry (Ex): At 3rd level, the mercenary of the Hawk gains the ability to call down her bonded raptor to harry an enemy, allowing both of them to strike while the opponent is distracted. On the mercenary of the Hawk's initiative, her bonded raptor may swoop down and strike at her opponent (which does not provoke an attack of opportunity), who is denied his Dexterity bonus against the raptor. If either the raptor or the mercenary hit the opponent, they inflict damage as normal. If both of them hit, the combined attacks inflict an additional +1d6 damage. Note that the opponent is flanked by the raptor as well, granting the mercenary of the Hawk any other sneak attack bonus dice she may have.

This bonus damage increases to +2d6 at 6th level, and +3d6 at 9th level.

Telepathy (Su): At 4th level, the mercenary of the Hawk gains the ability to communicate telepathically with her bonded raptor, as long as the bird is within 1 mile per level of its handler's mercenary of the Hawk

class. This communication is limited by the intelligence of the bonded raptor.

Shared Sight (Su): At 5th level, a mercenary of the Hawk gains the ability to see through the eyes of the bonded raptor at will. While looking through the eyes of the raptor, the mercenary can guide its actions through the use of her Handle Animal skill. While using this ability the mercenary of the Hawk is restricted to move actions.

At 7th level, the mercenary of the Hawk may move and act freely while sharing sight with the bonded raptor, and is no longer restricted to move actions. Any time that a Spot check is made by either the mercenary of the Hawk or her raptor, both are aware of the results.

Uncanny Dodge: Starting at 6th level, the mercenary of the Hawk can use her bonded raptor's vision to anticipate attacks that she would not normally notice; in effect, she retains her Dexterity bonus to AC regardless of being caught flatfooted. At 10th level, the mercenary of the Hawk can no longer be flanked; she can react to opponents on opposite sides of her as easily as she can react to a single attacker. This ability is only in operation while the bonded raptor flies over the mercenary, remaining within a mile of her. Other classes that grant Uncanny Dodge stack with levels of mercenary of the Hawk for the purpose of determining this ability.

Friend in the Sky (Ex): At 8th level, the mercenary of the Hawk gains a +2 bonus to initiative and a +2 dodge bonus to AC so long as her raptor is flying overhead, within 1 mile of the mercenary.

Two Eyes (Su): At 9th level, the mercenary of the Hawk and her bonded raptor gain the ability to use the other's eyes when attacking. Any time an opponent is concealed, both the mercenary and the raptor use the lowest concealment applicable to them. Thus, if the mercenary is battling an opponent in a thick fog bank (50% concealment), but her hawk can see the opponent from a tree-branch nearby (20% concealment), the mercenary is only penalized for the lesser concealment.

BONDED RAPTOR SPECIAL ABILITIES

Class Level	Bonus HD	Natural Armor	Int	Special
1-2	+1	+1	3	Improved evasion
3-4	+1	+2	4	Speak with birds
5-6	+2	+3	5	Raptor strike
7-8	+2	+4	6	Share feats
9-10	+3	+5	—	Awaken

Class Level: The level of the bonded raptor's master, in the mercenary of the Hawk prestige class.

Bonus HD: These are extra Hit Dice for the animal type, each of which gains a Constitution modifier, as normal. Remember that extra Hit Dice improve the raptor's base attack and base save bonuses.

Natural Armor: The number listed here is an improvement to the bonded raptor's AC.

Int: The bonded raptor's Intelligence score.

Improved Evasion: If the raptor is subjected to an attack that normally allows a Reflex saving throw for half damage, the raptor takes no damage

if it makes a successful saving throw and half damage even if the saving throw fails. Improved evasion is an extraordinary ability.

Speak with Birds: The raptor gains the ability to communicate with other birds. This communication is limited by the intelligence of the communicating creatures.

Raptor Strike: The bonded raptor gains both the Flyby Attack and Mobility feats (regardless of whether or not it meets the prerequisites for doing so).

Share Feats: As long as they are within one mile of each other, the bonded raptor may use any of the feats belonging to the mercenary of the Hawk.

Awaken: When the mercenary of the Hawk reaches 7th level, the bonded raptor is affected as if by an *awaken* spell with several key differences. When rolling for Intelligence the Awakened raptor gains +2d6 Intelligence, and no bonus Hit Dice. In addition, the raptor and the mercenary of the Hawk retain all bonds and benefits that they have gained from the mercenary of the Hawk's progression in this prestige class.

NINE-STINGS MASTER

CLASS SKILLS

The Nine-Stings master's class skills are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Nine-Stings master prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Nine-Stings masters are proficient with simple and martial weapons, and all types of armor — but not with shields.

The preferred weapon of a Nine-Stings master is the short sword.

Increased Attacks

(Ex): The primary weapons of the Nine-Stings master are paired short swords. At 1st level, a Nine-Stings master using a short sword can greatly increase his number of attacks. When taking his full attack action, he can make iterative attacks at a factor of 3, rather than the normal 5. He is still limited to a total of five attacks.

For instance, a Nine-Stings master has a base attack bonus of +13. With any weapon he may take a full attack action and make three attacks at +13/+8/+3. If he is using a short sword he may take a full attack action to make five attacks at +13/+10/+7/+4/+1.

Bonus Feats: Starting at 2nd level, and at every other level thereaf-

The Nine-Stings College was the war college where the collected wisdom and techniques of several smaller schools were taught. The masters of the Nine-Stings War College gathered to themselves a large number of short sword styles and dual-wielding techniques, fusing them into a single body of practice as swift as it was deadly.

As students of this style master their art, they are given whorled tattoos that depict the patterns of swordsmanship they have mastered — an initiate of the secrets of the Nine-Stings War College can usually tell what techniques other initiates favor simply by examining their facial tattoos.

A rare few of these initiates learn the secrets of this prestige class; these men and women master the complicated state of mind necessary to allow the hands to not only work in complete coordination, but seemingly independently. These initiates also learn the secrets of causing opponents to defend against one weapon, while leaving themselves open for the other.

Use in Other Campaigns: The Nine-Stings master is another example of an esoteric fighting school. However, its style of fighting is one that easily fits into most fantasy settings. The dual wielding of weapons is a popular one and it has many mythological and literary resonances. Consequently, most campaigns can easily accommodate the prestige class. Nevertheless, the GM should consider limiting the class to a particular region, culture or even race. The style is unusual enough to be noteworthy. Unless the GM wishes it to be commonplace, some type of restriction on its potential membership is probably in order.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Nine-Stings master, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse (short sword), Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Specialization (short sword).

Special: The character needs to find a mentor or school that teaches this fighting style.

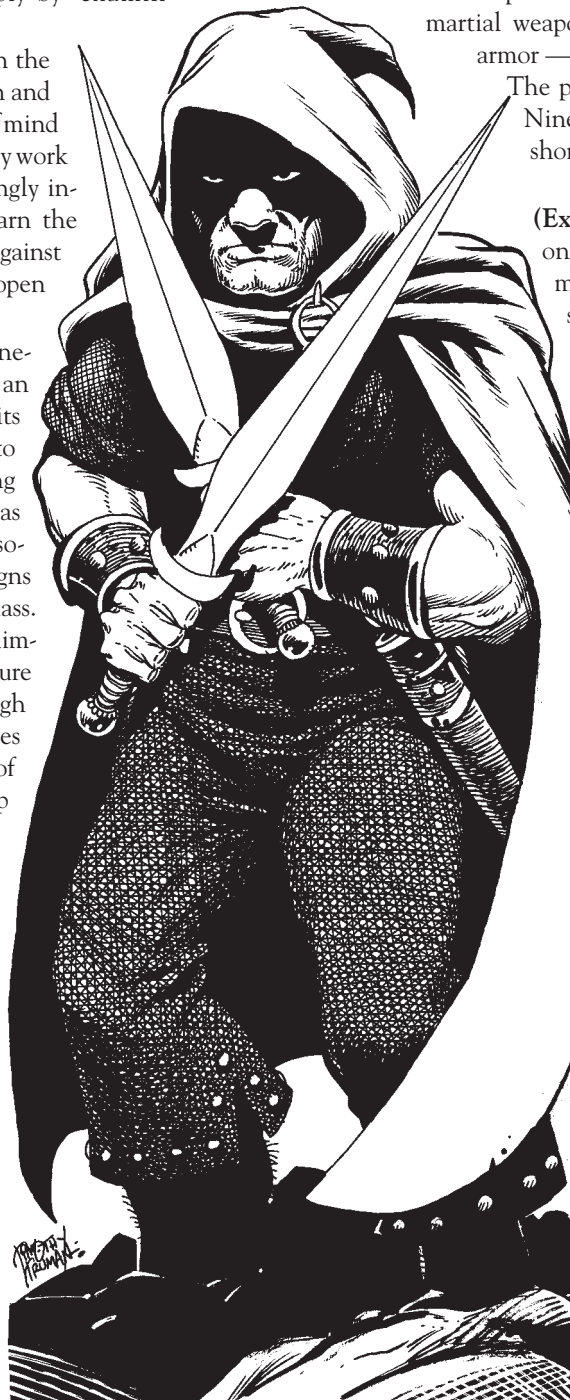


Table A2-9: Nine-Stings Master (Nsm)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Increased attacks
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Bonus feat
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Defensive block
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Bonus feat
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Signature weapon
6th	+6	+5	+5	+2	Bonus feat
7th	+7	+5	+5	+2	Split perceptions (–1/–2)
8th	+8	+6	+6	+2	Defensive block, bonus feat
9th	+9	+6	+6	+3	Double strike +1d6
10th	+10	+7	+7	+3	Split perceptions (0/–1), bonus feat

ter, the master of the Iron Wind may choose an additional feat from those commonly taught to the Iron Wind Brotherhood. These are Combat Expertise (Riposte*), Double Blow*, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting. All normal prerequisites must be fulfilled in order to choose a feat from this list. If a character already knows all of the feats listed above, he is free to choose from the list given for fighters for his bonus feat.

Defensive Block (Ex): At 3rd level, the Nine-Stings master may choose to forego his extra attacks from his off-hand weapon in order to use it defensively. This grants him a +2 shield bonus to his AC. At 7th level this bonus becomes +4.

Signature Weapon (Su): At 5th level, the Nine-Stings master has achieved a unity with the short sword. This gives him a +1 bonus, to attack and damage rolls, that stacks with any magical bonus the item has or feat the character possesses. In addition, the weapon is considered to be a +5 weapon for the purpose of overcoming damage resistance only. These bonuses apply to any short sword he may wield.

In addition, the wielder of the weapon may choose one of the following damage reduction types: chaos, evil, good, law or magical (+3). Any short sword he wields is considered to be a weapon of this type for the purpose of overcoming damage resistance.

If the master is ever disarmed while using his short sword, he may make a Reflex save (DC equal to the opponent's disarm roll) to ignore the effects of the disarm — as he rapidly releases and then re-catches the

weapon in his other hand, while shifting his still-held weapon to the hand that was just disarmed. If the weapon is ever damaged, the Nine-Stings master may make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage done to the weapon) to ignore the effects of the attack.

Split Perceptions (Ex): At 7th level the Nine-Stings master has fought so long with two weapons that the hands can act nearly independent of one another. This gives a +2 circumstance bonus to skills requiring coordination such as Climb, Disable Device, Open Lock, Perform, Pick Pocket and Use Rope. In addition, the Nine-Stings master reduces the penalty for fighting with a short sword in each hand (his penalty becomes –1 with his primary weapon, and –2 for the off-hand weapon).

At 10th level the penalties for fighting with two short swords is reduced again (no penalty with his primary weapon, and –1 for the off-hand weapon).

Double Strike (Ex): At 9th level, the Nine-Stings master gains the ability to coordinate his attacks to an astonishing degree; opponents are forced to try and defend against one strike, leaving themselves open for the second weapon. If both swords successfully hit in a round, the Nine-Stings master inflicts +1d6 damage with the second attack. This damage is considered sneak attack damage. If the Nine-Stings master already has the sneak attack damage special ability, those dice are added to the extra damage inflicted by this ability. Thus, if a Nine-Stings master has three ranks in the Rogue class, he will inflict +3d6 with a successful Double Strike.

Ragewitch

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the ragewitch prestige class:

Powerful, angry magic runs through the blood of some tribal people. With time, patience, and advice from the spirits, these sorcerers eventually learn to channel this fury into their spellcasting. Fueled by rage, their magic becomes terrible indeed. Because their tribe often fears the hell-storms of magic that result when they are angered, ragewitches tend to live on the outskirts of their communities — though the tribe makes sure that the ragewitch is fed, clothed and generally has her wishes met. After all, when danger threatens the tribe, a ragewitch nearby is a vital and potent ally; in tribal communities, a spellcaster who will defend the tribe heedless of their own danger is a well-respected thing.

Use in Other Campaigns: The ragewitch is an unusual prestige class in that it combines arcane spell abilities with the barbarian class. In some campaigns, barbarians hate and fear magic, in which case such a class might be inappropriate. Of course, there are always individuals who defy cultural conventions and ragewitches may well be such individuals. Even if ragewitches are not exceptional in that regard, they might belong to a group or secret society that teaches its abilities only to a select few. Alternately, ragewitches may simply develop their abilities due to some unknown agency, which might explain the awe in which many hold them.

Hit Die: d6.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a ragewitch, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria:

Ability: Barbarian rage

Feats: Combat Casting, Empower Spell.

Skills: Concentration 8 ranks, Knowledge (arcana) 5 ranks, Survival 5 ranks.

Spellcasting: Must be able to spontaneously cast 2nd level arcane spells, including at least two spells of the Evocation school.

CLASS SKILLS

The Ragewitch's class skills are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Listen (Wis), Search (Int), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at each level: 2 + Int modifier



Table A2-10: Ragewitch (Rwt)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per day
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Rage casting (0-lvl, 1st)	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	Witch's fury (+2)	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Rage casting (2nd)	+1 level of existing class
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Unshakable will	+1 level of existing class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Rage casting (3rd), witch's fury (+3)	+1 level of existing class
6th	+4	+5	+2	+5	Channel spell	+1 level of existing class
7th	+5	+5	+2	+5	Rage casting (4th)	+1 level of existing class
8th	+6	+6	+2	+6	Witch's fury (+4)	+1 level of existing class
9th	+6	+6	+3	+6	Rage casting (5th)	+1 level of existing class
10th	+7	+7	+3	+7	Combat sorcery	+1 level of existing class

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Ragewitches are proficient with simple weapons and light armor. Armor of any type interferes with the ragewitch's arcane gestures, which can cause her spells to fail (if those spells have somatic components).

Spells per Day: A ragewitch continues to advance in spellcasting ability. When a new ragewitch level is gained, the character gains new spells per day as if she had also gained a level in an arcane spellcasting class she belonged to before she added the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of controlling or rebuking undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). This essentially means that she adds the level of ragewitch to the level of some other spellcasting class the character has, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly.

If a character had more than one arcane spellcasting class before she became a ragewitch, she must decide to which class she adds each level of ragewitch for purposes of determining spells per day when she adds the new level. Levels in this class stack for the purposes of familiar advancement.

Rage Casting (Ex): At 1st level the ragewitch has achieved such familiarity with channeling magic, and enough control over her own rage, that she may even cast basic arcane spells and use metamagic feats while in the heat of rage. Thus, she may cast 0-level and 1st level spells while in a barbarian rage.

Her proficiency with such spellcasting continues to advance as she gains levels in this class — every other level after the first, she may cast one higher level of spells while in a rage. Thus, she may cast 2nd level spells at 3rd level, 3rd level spells at 5th level, 4th level spells at 7th level and 5th level spells at 9th level.

A ragewitch in a barbarian rage may not cast spells of higher level than those indicated by this power; however, she may cast spells of these levels that are technically higher level due to metamagic feats. For instance, a 5th level ragewitch may cast an empowered *fireball*, even though such a spell is normally considered a 5th level spell. As long as the level of

the spell, unaugmented by metamagic feats, is met by this power, the spell may be cast.

Witch's Fury (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, the ragewitch can channel her fury into her spells to make them more potent. While she is in a barbarian rage, the spell save DC on any damaging spells is increased by +2. This increase becomes a +3 at 5th level, and a +4 at 8th level.

Unshakable Will (Ex): At 4th level, the ragewitch truly becomes an implacable foe. While in barbarian rage, even the stoutest blows don't distract her from her target. The ragewitch is assumed to succeed in all Concentration checks necessary to prevent her spell from being disrupted by damage, distraction or jostling.

Channel Spell (Su): At 6th level, the ragewitch in a barbarian rage can siphon some of her magical energy into a physical blow. This is considered a move-equivalent action, and the ragewitch expends one of her spell slots for the day (she is limited to using a spell slot of a level that she can cast due to the rage casting ability). That spell is considered cast. The energy that would normally be used to cast the spell empowers the ragewitch's weapon (or fist). For a number of rounds equal to her level in the ragewitch prestige class, the weapon has an enhancement bonus to attack and damage equal to the level of the spell slot expended. This weapon's bonus is used to determine levels of damage reduction to be overcome, as well.

For instance, a 7th level ragewitch channels a third level spell slot into her greataxe. For the next seven rounds, the weapon has a +3 enhancement bonus to attack and damage and is considered a +3 weapon for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Combat Sorcery (Ex): At 10th level, the ragewitch develops an almost primal aptitude with her sorcery — she learns to wield magic as she would any other weapon. While in barbarian rage she can weave a spell and wield a weapon at the same time. When taking a full attack action, the ragewitch may sacrifice her highest bonus attack in order to cast a spell with a casting time of no longer than one action.

TOTEM WARRIOR

Most tribal warriors are adopted by one totem or another, and try to follow their spirit patron's tenets while still managing to survive in their harsh environment. Some rare few have the charm and wisdom to succor several of the elder spirits. Balancing the dictates of numerous totems can be demanding, but for those who have the guile, the rewards are high. Totem warriors have made suitable offerings to the spirits to be considered particularly blessed. Totem spirits are faithful to all their children, but the totem warriors are especially cherished.

Totem warriors tend to be considered heroes, albeit strange and distant ones, by their tribe. They frequently go on quests for their patrons, and are accorded honors when they return. Totem warriors are often made chieftains and shamans of their tribes, and many legends tell of men and women so touched by the spirits that they even freely assumed the form of their patrons. Totem warriors can be found among nearly any of the tribes who revere the totems, from the orcs of Lede to the tribes of Termana's Gamulganjus. In nearly every instance they are fierce defenders of their people, and powerful opponents to their enemies.

Use in Other Campaigns: The totem warrior requires both the existence of primitive societies and animal spirits adopted as quasi-divine patrons. The former is a staple of most fantasy settings, while the latter is much less common. If a GM's setting does not include totem animals, he could replace them with gods, elemental spirits or some other powerful entities. What matters is that they be some sort of

patron whom the totem warrior can emulate and thereby gain powers from. Naturally, if the GM chooses to follow this path, he will need to create his own Greater Totem Channeling abilities, using the ones here as a guideline.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a totem warrior, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria:

Skills: Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks, Survival 8 ranks.

Feats: Initiate of the Spirit Ways, any one totem feat.

CLASS SKILLS

The totem warrior's class skills are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at each level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the totem warrior prestige class:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Totem warriors are proficient with simple and martial weapons, light and medium armor, and with shields.

Extra Channeling (Su): Starting at 1st level, the totem warrior learns to propitiate the spirits and curry favor with his totem(s). This increased favor allows



Table A2-11: Totem Warrior (Tmw)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Extra channeling
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Totem feat
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Totem form 1/day
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Totem feat, extra channeling
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Greater channeling
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Totem feat, totem form 2/day
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Extra channeling
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Totem feat, enhanced duration
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Totem form 3/day
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Totem feat, composite form

the totem warrior to channel his totem spirits more often. At 1st level, the totem warrior can channel a totem spirit one additional time per day. At 4th level, he gets another channeling, raising the total bonus to +2 times per day. Fi-

nally, at 7th level, they gain another channeling, raising the total bonus to +3 times per day.

Totem Feat: Starting at 2nd level, and at every other level thereafter, the totem warrior forms a bond with another totem spirit. The to-

GREATER TOTEM CHANNELING

Basic affiliation with a totem grants a limited boon for a short period of time. Greater attunement to a totem comes from increasing devotion to one's totems, represented by gaining levels in the totem warrior prestige class. The benefits of this greater totemic bond include limited duration bonuses to ability scores, and, ultimately, special qualities added to a composite form. Listed below are the totems given in this book, along with the relevant ability scores, and their inherent qualities. GMs are encouraged to come up with additional totems and their appropriate abilities and qualities as needed.

It should be noted that the four Eldest Beast Totems of the Ganjus are not included on this list, as they do not sponsor totem warriors — their favored champions are the lodge-warriors of Vera-tre.

Boar (Constitution): Tusk Gore (1d8 + Str Bonus), Improved Bull Rush, Ferocity (can fight without penalty while disabled or dying).

Deer (Dexterity): Fleetfooted (Speed 60), Camouflage (+6 to Hide checks), Evasion special ability.

Desert Falcon (Constitution): Talons (1d6 + Str Bonus), Flight (Speed 80ft, poor), Shadowless (leaves no shadow).

Eagle (Dexterity): Talons (1d6 + Str Bonus), Flight (Speed 60 ft, average), Improved Sight (+6 to Spot checks in daylight).

Hookwing (Intelligence): Scaly Skin (+4 natural armor bonus), Flight (Speed 60ft average), Spring Attack feat.

Huror (Strength): Great Size (increase size by one category, increase natural attack by one die category), Pelt of the Ice Bear (+8 natural armor bonus), Bear Claws (1d10 + Str Bonus).

Miser Jackal (Intelligence): Evasion special ability, Improved Speed (+20 to Speed), Fingers of the Magpie (+6 to Sleight of Hand).

Moon (Wisdom): Limited Incorporeality (affected only by +1 or better weapons or magic, attacks go through mundane, not magical, armor), Shed Light 30' radius, Flight (30 ft, perfect).

Night (Wisdom): Limited Incorporeality (affected only by +1 or better weapons or magic, attacks go through mundane, not magical, armor), Blindfighting feat, Flight (30ft, perfect).

River (Dexterity): Cold subtype, Mobility feat, Fluid Form (half damage from bludgeoning attacks).

Wind (Dexterity): Limited Incorporeality (affected only by +1 or better weapons or magic, attacks go through mundane, not magical, armor), Flight (40 ft, perfect), Evasion special ability.

Wolf (Intelligence): Bite (1d8 + Str Bonus), Improved Speed (+20 to Speed), Scent special ability.

tem warrior can also choose an extra totem feat at each of these levels.

Totem Form (Su): Similar to the druid ability, starting at 3rd level the totem warrior can assume the shape of one of his totems. Generally, when the totem spirit is an animal, this ability is as per the *polymorph* spell. If the totem spirit is some other object or plant, the character assumes the shape of that plant or object. If the totem is something insubstantial such as Night or Moon, the effect is similar to the *gaseous form* spell. If the totem is elemental in nature, the effect is as per the *polymorph* spell — into the appropriate medium sized elemental.

Greater Channeling (Ex): At 5th level, the totem warrior's attunement to his totem becomes so great that, when channeling, he gains some of the core traits of his totem. This translates to a +2 totem bonus to one of his ability scores appropriate to the totem (see sidebar). This bonus only applies while he is actively channeling his totem.

Enhanced Duration (Ex): At 7th level, the totem warrior becomes more at ease with allowing the essence of a totem into his body. The act of channeling becomes less taxing, and the totem

warrior can channel a totem for much longer. Anytime the totem warrior channels a totem, he may now do so for a number of rounds equal to 6 + his Constitution bonus.

Composite Form (Su): The pinnacle of a totem warrior's attunement with his spirit patrons, the totem warrior may assume a form blending different aspects of his totems. Different totems offer different options (see the sidebar, "Greater Totem Channeling"), and when the totem warrior reaches 10th level, he may adopt a composite form once per day. For each totem, the totem warrior may choose one quality to add to this form. Each quality must be chosen so there is no conflict, and the GM is advised to ban any unworkable forms. The total number of qualities, of the composite form, may be equal to the number of totems the totem warrior has — but less may be chosen if desired. However, the totem warrior is limited to a maximum of one quality per totem, though these are not static — that is, he may choose the qualities each time he takes on the composite form. The totem warrior may stay in his composite form for as long as he desires.

WARRIOR OF WHITE FIRE

In days of old, the Legion of White Fire was the first attempt to integrate the arcane arts with the ways of battle. In this regard the legion was quite successful. The legion had always been small, as there were few who had the talent for magic and fewer still who wanted to then risk their lives on the battlefield. However, membership in the Legion of White Fire was a prestigious thing and legionnaires were often distributed among the other forces. Those with the skills of a wizard often served as tacticians and advisors, while the few sorcerers in the legion made well-renowned generals. In addition, those with the inclination were prolific in their creation of items of power.

This dispersal of the legion also served as its downfall. With the collapse of the Ledean empire and the coming of the Charduni, the legions fell and their generals and tacticians fell with them. In the wake of the Divine War, few warriors of White Fire remained. But those who did, mainly craftsmen and a few tacticians, kept the traditions alive. The warriors of White Fire are now seeing a resurgence with the relative prosperity of Darakeene, and most find their way into Clayborn, Hammerdale, or Glamerhill. A few are also found in Lageni and New Venir, though those in the Calastian Hegemony have little or no contact with those in Darakeene.

Use in Other Campaigns: The warrior of the White Fire is a classic warrior/spellcaster prestige class, combining the best of both vocations to deadly effect. Most campaigns could easily assimilate it with a minimum of difficulty. The primary question for the GM is whether the abilities of the class are difficult to acquire or not. If difficult, the GM might wish to create a group or brotherhood that holds the secrets of the class and which PCs must join to gain access to them.

Hit Die: d8.

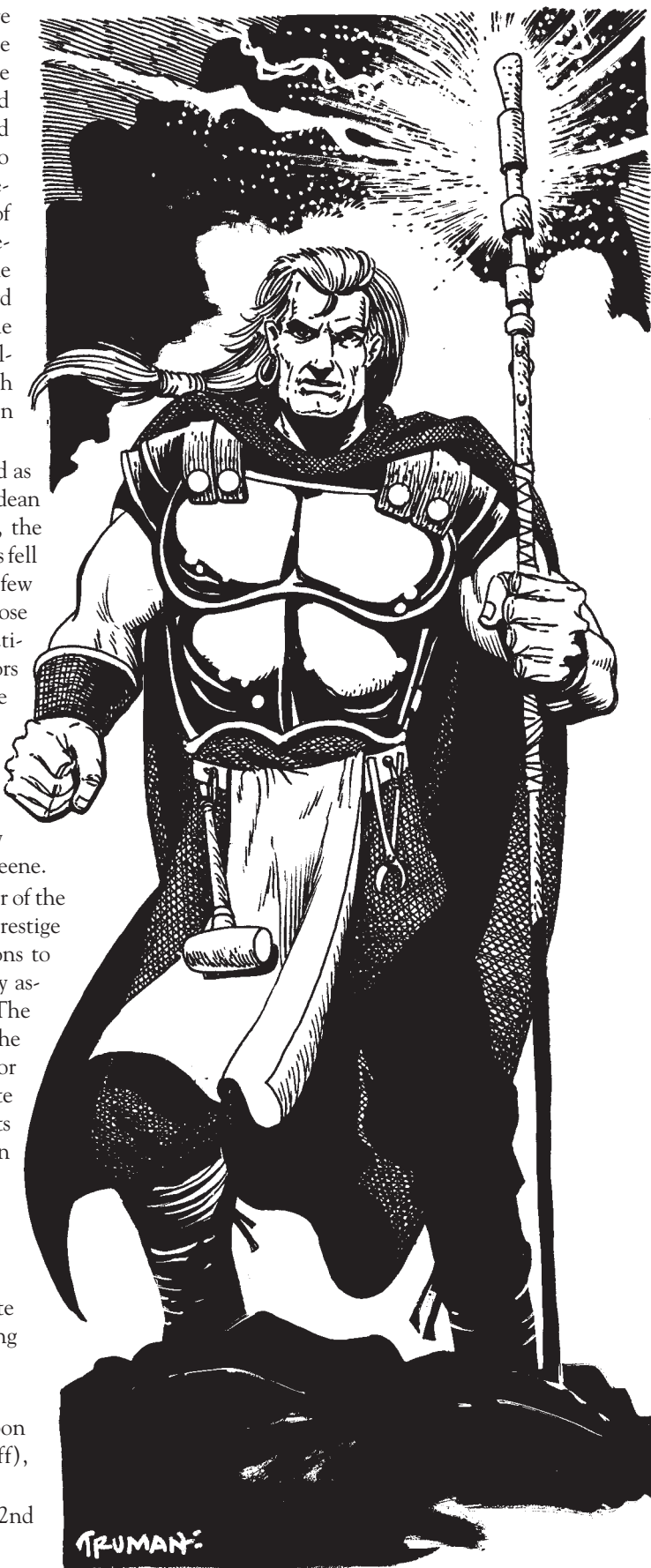
REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a warrior of White Fire, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +3

Feats: Combat Expertise, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff), Weapon Specialization (quarterstaff).

Spellcasting: Must be able to cast 2nd level arcane spells.



Special: The character needs to find a mentor or school that teaches this fighting style.

CLASS SKILLS

The warrior of White Fire's class skills are Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Ride (Dex), Spellcraft (Int), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the warrior of White Fire prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Warriors of White Fire are proficient with simple and martial weapons, all types of armor but not with shields. Armor of any type interferes with the warrior of White Fire's arcane gestures, which can cause his spells to fail (if those spells have somatic components).

Spells per Day: When a new warrior of White Fire level is gained, the character gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in an arcane spellcasting class he belonged to before he added the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of controlling or rebuking undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). This essentially means that he adds the level of warrior of White Fire to the level of some other spellcasting class the character has, then determines spell per day and caster level accordingly.

If a character had more than one arcane spellcasting class before he became a warrior of White Fire, he must decide to which class he adds each level of warrior of White Fire for purposes of determining spells per day when he adds the new level. Levels in this class stack do not for the purposes of familiar advancement.

Increased Attacks (Ex): The primary weapon of the warrior of White Fire is the quarterstaff. At 1st level, a warrior of White Fire using a quarterstaff can greatly increase his number of attacks. When taking the full

attack action, he can make iterative attacks at a factor of 3, rather than the normal 5. He is still limited to a total of five attacks.

For instance, a warrior of White fire has a base attack bonus of +13. With any weapon he may take a full attack action and make three attacks at +13/+8/+3. If he is using a quarterstaff he may take a full attack action to make five attacks at +13/+10/+7/+4/+1.

Bonus Feats: Starting at 2nd level, and at every other level thereafter, the warrior of White Fire may choose an additional feat from those commonly taught to warriors of White Fire. These are Blind-fight, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Improved Two Weapon Fighting, Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot), Polearm Trip*, Spinning Blow*, Weapon Focus (rays, touch attacks). All normal prerequisites must be fulfilled in order to choose a feat from this list. If a character already knows all of the feats listed above, he is free to choose from the list given for Fighters for their bonus feat.

Focus Weapon (Ex): At 3rd level, the warrior of White Fire has become so attuned to his quarterstaff that he may use the weapon to deliver touch spells. When he casts a touch spell, he may choose to hold it in his weapon instead of in his hand or through a familiar. It should be noted that unlike normal touch spells, the caster may not cast his spell into his weapon and then attack with it on the same round.

The warrior of White Fire has two options on how to deliver the spell. He may use his quarterstaff to deliver a melee touch attack or to deliver a normal attack. If he delivers a melee touch attack, the spell discharges as usual. If he delivers a normal attack successfully, not only does the spell discharge into the opponent, but the weapon inflicts normal damage as well.

Warriors of White Fire may use their iterative attacks gained through a high base attack bonus to deliver either melee touch attacks or normal attacks; they may not deliver both. As usual, if the warrior of White Fire tries to cast another spell, while holding the touch spell, the first spell dissipates harmlessly.

TABLE A2-12: WARRIOR OF WHITE FIRE (Wwf)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per day
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Increased attacks	+1 to level of existing class
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	Bonus feat	+1 to level of existing class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Focus weapon	+1 to level of existing class
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Bonus feat	+1 to level of existing class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Armor sympathy (10%), signature weapon	+1 to level of existing class
6th	+4	+5	+2	+5	Bonus feat	+1 to level of existing class
7th	+5	+5	+2	+5	Martial spellcasting	+1 to level of existing class
8th	+6	+6	+2	+6	Bonus feat	+1 to level of existing class
9th	+6	+6	+3	+6	Armor sympathy (15%)	+1 to level of existing class
10th	+7	+7	+3	+7	Still spell, bonus feat	+1 to level of existing class

Armor Sympathy: At 5th level, the warrior of White Fire becomes more accustomed to casting spells while wearing light armor. He may therefore reduce by 10% the arcane spell failure of light armor he is wearing. This reduction in the armor check penalty applies only if he is wearing light armor and not using a shield. This bonus increases to a 15% reduction at 9th level.

Signature Weapon (Su): At 5th level, the warrior of White Fire has achieved true proficiency with the quarterstaff. This gives him a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls that stacks with any magical bonus the item has or feat the character possesses. In addition, the weapon is considered to be a +5 weapon for the purpose of overcoming damage resistance only. These bonuses apply to any quarterstaff he may wield.

In addition, the wielder of the weapon may choose one of the following damage reduction types: chaos, evil, good, law or magical (+3). Any quarterstaff he wields is considered to be a weapon of this type for the purpose of overcoming damage resistance.

If the warrior of White Fire is ever disarmed while using his quarterstaff, he may make a Reflex save (DC equal to the opponent's disarm roll) to ignore the effects of the disarm — as he rapidly releases and then recatches the weapon in his other hand. If the weapon is ever damaged, the warrior of White Fire may make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage done to the weapon) to ignore the effects of the attack.

Martial Spellcasting (Ex): A 7th level warrior of White Fire has gained the aptitude for casting spells

even in the heat of battle. The warrior of White Fire steels himself from distraction to such an extent that he can weave a spell and wield a weapon at nearly the same time. While using his full attack option, the warrior of White Fire can sacrifice his highest bonus attack in order to cast a spell that has a casting time of no longer than one action. Casting while in combat is distracting and requires a Concentration check (DC 10 + spell level) or the spell is wasted. Also, casting spells provoke attacks of opportunity as normal unless the warrior of White Fire wishes to cast defensively.

For instance, a warrior of White Fire with a base attack bonus of +12 and Martial Spellcasting takes a full attack action. Normally, this would allow him three attacks, at +12, +7, and +2 respectively. Instead, he may opt to cast a spell and then make two attacks at +7 and +2 respectively. If the spell in question is a 3rd level spell, the warrior of White Fire would need to succeed in a Concentration check (DC 13) to cast the spell and an additional Concentration check (DC 18) to cast defensively so as to not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Still Spell (Su): At 10th level, the warrior of White Fire becomes so adept at casting lesser spells while wearing armor that he eschews the need for somatic components at all. All spells, of third level or lower, cast by a warrior of White Fire are treated as if they were cast with the Still Spell metamagic feat. This is done with no level modifier and takes no extra time to cast.

Whitefur



In the frozen wastelands of northern Albadia roams the mighty huror. The barbarians of Albadia greatly respect these powerful beasts — indeed, some tribes seek to emulate their strength. The greatest of these Albadian berserkers have learned to tap into the rage of the huror and call upon the elemental forces of the High Ice. Capable of turning the weather itself against their foes, these whitefurs roam the frigid wastelands seeking to protect the tribes of Albadia.

Those who seek to become a whitefur must travel to live alone among the hurors for a period of several winter months. This serves as both a learning process and a trial for the potential whitefur. Those who survive, find that the wind and cold no longer sap their strength — instead these forces now grant them even greater abilities.

Use in Other Campaigns: The whitefur is a barbarian warrior who emulates the abilities of an arctic creature and thereby gains power. This works well in most campaigns, but the specific creature emulated — the huror — is specific to the Scarred Lands. To use it in other campaigns, the GM must decide whether to simply adopt the huror into his own game or to substitute another appropriate creature, such as a polar bear. Naturally, the class also assumes the existence of tundra-dwelling barbarians. If none exist, the whitefur is largely unusable as a prestige class.

Hit Die: d12

Requirements

To qualify to become whitefur, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Ability: Barbarian Rage

Alignment: Any non-Lawful

Base Attack Bonus: +7

Feats: Great Fortitude.

Skill: Survival 10 ranks.

Special: The character must have the *huror's paw* magical tattoo on their body (see **Relics & Rituals 2: Lost Lore**, Chapter Five, "Tattoo Magic").

Class Skills

The whitefur's class skills are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier

TABLE A2-13: WHITEFUR (WHF)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Strength of the huror
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Wind friend, huror's stride
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Child of the north 10
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Huror's clench
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Child of the north 15
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Pelt of frost 1/day
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Child of the north 20
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Eye of the storm 1/day
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Child of the north 25, pelt of frost 2/day
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Eye of the storm 2/day

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the whitefur prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Whitefurs are proficient with all simple and martial weapons and with light armor.

Strength of the Huror: At 1st level, the whitefur gains a +2 bonus to Strength while raging. This bonus stacks with any other benefits the character would normally get while raging. So a 7th level barbarian/ 1st level whitefur, for example, will have a total of +6 to strength while raging.

Wind Friend (Su): At 2nd level the whitefur is no longer affected by the wind. Any magical or non-magical wind will not touch the whitefur.

Huror's Stride (Ex): At 2nd level, the whitefur gains the ability to pass freely over snow and ice. They never take a movement penalty for crossing either substance. In addition, any Balance checks that would be caused by navigating either terrain are assumed to automatically succeed.

Child of the North (Ex): At 3rd level, the whitefur enhances the magic of his *huror's paw* tattoo so that when it is activated he is granted a damage resistance of 10 to cold. This resistance is increased to 15 at 5th level, 20 at 7th level and 25 at 9th level.

Huror's Clench (Ex): At 4th level, the whitefur gains a +4 competence bonus to grapple checks.

Pelt of Frost (Su): At 6th level, the whitefur gains the supernatural ability to summon icy cold. This ability may be used once per day and lasts for a number of rounds equal to his whitefur level + Constitution bonus. Any creature who attacks the whitefur with a natural or unarmed attack takes 1d6 points of cold damage. If the whitefur strikes an opponent with an unarmed strike he deals an additional 1d6 points of cold damage. At 9th level, the whitefur may call upon this ability twice per day.

Eye of the Storm (Su): At 7th level, the whitefur may cause the Northern winds to whip around him. Once per day, the whitefur may summon the winds to whip around him with the severity of a windstorm. These winds affect anyone within a number of feet equal to 10 times the character's level in the whitefur prestige class; this lasts for a number of rounds equal to the whitefur's Constitution bonus.

All ranged weapon attacks are impossible within the area of the winds, and Listen checks are at a –8 penalty. Any small or smaller creature in the area must make a Fortitude save (DC 18) or be knocked prone and rolled 1d4x10 feet, sustaining 1d4 points of subdual damage per 10 feet rolled. Medium sized creatures must make a Fortitude save (DC 18) or be knocked prone. Large or Huge sized creatures must make a fortitude save (DC 18) or be unable to move towards the whitefur.

At 10th level, the whitefur may call upon the eye of the storm 2/day. In addition, all of those within the storm take 1d6 points of cold damage per round.

APPENDIX THREE

The tools

of Battle

It should come as little surprise that war is won with weapons. From the smallest of blades secreted about the person, ready to be put to use at any time, to mighty engines of war — since the discovery that a stick might be put to better use in the cause of violence than the bare fist — warriors have used weaponry. What follows is a collection of new weapons, from the miniscule darts of the blowgun to the mighty featheraxe. Additionally, this appendix includes a number of materials from around the Scarred Lands, used to craft coveted weapons and armor by those with the skill to do so.

New Equipment

Weapons

Atl-atl: A small device that helps improve the range of thrown javelins or spears, the atl-atl consists of a small board with a hook or thong cradling the end. Using an atl-atl is tricky, and the throw requires a great deal of practice. Setting a weapon into an atl-atl is a move-equivalent action. Proficiency requires both Martial Weap-

ons Proficiency in the atl-atl and whichever weapon is being used (halfspear, spear or javelin). An atl-atl increases a weapon's range increment by 50%. When combined with the far-shot feat, the increase is 100%. Use of the atl-atl with an appropriate weapon grants a +1 damage bonus to that weapon.

Bent Grip: A bent grip allows great control over a weapon, though at some cost of power. This grip has a number of flanges and a significant curve, allowing it to fit easily in the hand. Bent grips function properly on any light sword and on one-handed piercing swords. It may not be fitted to other weapons. Weapons with a bent grip grant a +1 enhancement bonus to a weapon's threat range (meaning that it does not stack with enchantments that also improve the threat range). The bent grip is known as a Lageni, Moorish, or Veshian grip, depending on one's location, and is most commonly used in Lageni and Vesh.

Bladed Chain: Also called a razor chain, the bladed chain is a weapon designed in Dunanhae and based on the spiked chain. It is thought to

APPENDIX THREE: THE TOOLS OF BATTLE

TABLE A3-1: MARTIAL WEAPONS

Weapon	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range	Weight	Type
<i>Miscellaneous</i>							
Atl-atl	5 sp	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bent grip	+5 gp	—	—	—	—	—	—
Shielded grip	+15 gp	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>One-Handed Melee Weapons</i>							
Cutlass	15 gp	1d4	1d6	x2	—	3 lb.	Slashing
Saber	10 gp	1d4	1d6	19-20/x2	—	3 lb.	Slashing
<i>Two-Handed Melee Weapons</i>							
Spearstaff	15 gp	1d6/1d4	1d8/1d6	x3/x2	10 ft.	7 lb.	Piercing/Bludgeoning

have originated with the charduni. It consists of a chain, ten feet in length, with an anchor weight on one end and a large scythe blade on the other. Half of the chain, from the bladed end to the middle, is also covered with wickedly sharp blades projecting out at all angles.

A bladed chain has reach, and may be used to strike opponents 10 feet away. In addition, unlike other weapons with reach, it can be used against an adjacent foe. Like the spiked chain, the bladed chain grants a +2 bonus to trip and disarm checks,

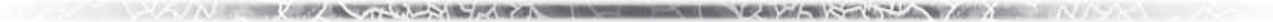
and may simply be dropped in lieu of being counter-tripped.

Because of its weight and heft, the bladed chain may not be used with the Weapon Finesse feat.

Blowgun: The blowgun is a simple tribal weapon used primarily for hunting small game. For larger prey, it is best used when poison is applied to its needles. The blowgun can be used as a simple weapon, but the user runs the standard risk of applying poison (DMG, Chapter 3, "Poi-

TABLE A3-2: EXOTIC WEAPONS

Weapon	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range	Weight	Type
<i>Light Melee Weapons</i>							
Broadreach double sickle	36 gp	1d4	1d6	18-20/x2	10 ft.	6 lbs.	Slashing
Broadreach roundknife	24 gp	1d3	1d4	x2	—	2 lbs.	Slashing
Kukri sword	40 gp	1d4	1d6	18-20/x2	—	6 lbs.	Slashing
Gladiator's gauntlets	100 gp (pair)	1d4	1d6	19-20/X2	—	8 lb pair	Piercing
Iron war fan	20 gp	1d4	1d6	x2	—	3 lb.	Bludgeoning, Slashing
Slitheren tail-knife	30 gp	1d3	1d4	x2	—	2 lb.	Slashing
Slitheren tail-mace	30 gp	1d3	1d4	x2	—	3 lb.	Bludgeoning
<i>One-Handed Melee Weapons</i>							
Broadreach roundsword	90 gp	1d8	1d10	x2	—	13 lbs.	Slashing
Great kukri	60 gp	1d6	1d8	18-20/x2	—	8 lb.	Slashing
Chain and weight	10 gp	1d6/1d8	—	x2	10 ft.	3 lb.	Bludgeoning
Rope and weight	2 gp	1d6/1d8	—	x2	10 ft.	2 lb.	Bludgeoning
<i>Whipsword</i>							
<i>Two-Handed Melee Weapons</i>							
Bladed chain	40gp	1d8	1d10	x3	—	—	Slashing
Broadreach double scythe	200 gp	1d6/1d6	2d4/2d4	x4	—	—	Piercing or Slashing
Broadreach razor bow (melee)	210 gp	1d3/1d3	1d4/1d4	x2	—	4 lbs.	Slashing
Featheraxe	90 gp	1d10	2d6	19-20/x3	—	20 lb.	Slashing
Hookspear	20gp	1d6/1d3	1d8/1d4	x2/x2	10 ft.	—	Piercing
Slitheren hookstaff	25 gp	1d6/1d6	1d8/1d8	x3/x3	—	12 lb.	Piercing
Warscepter	30 gp	1d8	1d10	x3	—	15 lb.	Bludgeoning
<i>Ranged Weapons</i>							
Blowgun	1gp	1	1	x2	10 ft.	1 lb.	Piercing
Blowgun needle	1sp	—	—	—	—	0 lb.	—
Broadreach razor bow (ranged)	210 gp	1d4	1d6	x3	60 ft.	3 lbs.	Piercing
Broadreach throwing disk (5)	3 gp	1	1d2	x2	10 ft.	1/2 lb.	Slashing



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the razor bow is actually more common than the short bow.

Using the razor bow as a normal bow merely requires Martial Weapons Proficiency. Using it as a melee weapon effectively requires an Exotic Weapon Proficiency, however (characters who do so may also use the razor bow's ranged attacks proficiently).

Broadreach roundknife: The roundknife of the Broadreach elves is a small, curved slashing weapon that is held in a similar manner to the punching dagger. Yet instead of the direct, piercing motion employed with the punching dagger, the roundknife's disk-blade is handled with graceful slashing arcs. The Broadreach elves prefer roundknives to ordinary daggers and hunting knives because the sturdiness of the grip makes it difficult to disarm a roundknife wielder (+4 bonus in an opposed attack roll when attempting to defend from a disarm strike; no bonus if using a roundknife to attempt to disarm another).

Broadreach roundsword: A roundsword is something like a larger roundknife. It has a similar but even better protected grip, allowing for a +5 bonus in an opposed attack roll when defending from an attempt to disarm (again, no bonus applies if using the roundsword to disarm another). Because of the blade's shape, anyone attempting to wield a roundsword without being proficient in its use has a certain chance in every attack of accidentally striking herself instead of her opponent. If a non-proficient roundsword wielder rolls a natural 1 to hit, then she must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or take normal damage from the roundsword. This danger is negated once a character becomes proficient with the weapon.

Broadreach throwing disk: The throwing disk is a tiny, perfectly round, razor-edged disk that the Broadreach elves often use as a ranged weapon. Though one must be fairly close to one's target due to the throwing disk's short range, this weapon is still prized for its total silence while flying through the air. Silence can often make a life or death difference in the dangerous Hornsaw. Though somewhat larger and more effective than shuriken, throwing disks are still small enough to be thrown three at a time in the course of a single attack action, so long as all three are already held in the thrower's hand, and so long as all three are directed simultaneously at the same target.

Chain and weight: A length of strong but light chain connected to a pointed, fist-sized lead weight. The winding and spinning effect of the chain gives this weight a deadly force. At normal melee range the chain is still somewhat effective,

but treated like a flail, and damage is reduced accordingly.

A chain and weight has reach, and may be used to strike opponents 10 feet away. In addition, unlike other weapons with reach, it can be used against an adjacent foe, though it only does damage like a light flail when used thusly. Like the spiked chain, the chain and weight grants a +2 bonus to trip and disarm checks and may simply be dropped in lieu of being counter-tripped.

The chain and weight may be used with the Weapon Finesse feat. Proficiency in the chain and weight also grants proficiency in the rope and weight.

Cutlass: A short sword with an elaborate basket hilt that can be used as a gauntlet. That is, unarmed attacks may be made as actual damage. This can be useful while grappling. Like the rapier, the cutlass may be used with the Weapon Finesse feat.

Featheraxe: A deceptively named weapon, the featheraxe resembles a short glaive with a 30-degree bend where the blade and shaft meet. The blade itself is rather heavy and is traditionally engraved with the outline of a feather. The weapon is top heavy and too unbalanced to be used effectively in combat without special training. Characters with the appropriate proficiency to use this weapon but with a Strength score of less than 13 receive a -2 penalty when fighting with this weapon.

Gladiator gauntlets: Heavy gauntlets with iron flanges that spread outward from the main length of the gauntlets, gladiator gauntlets boast a short, thick stabbing blade that extends out over the fist, similar to that of a punching dagger (though larger). These weapons, which are often paired, may be used as shields or weapons. It requires a shield proficiency to use them defensively and a martial weapons proficiency to use them offensively. On a round where a given gauntlet is used offensively, the wielder loses the shield bonus for that weapon. However, if the wielder has the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (gladiator gauntlets), he may use both the weapons offensively while retaining the shield bonus. These are known as "sleeve shields" among the slitheren.

Iron war fan: Iron war fans use thick iron pieces as the ribs of the fan, with the outside panels being not only beautifully decorated but heavily weighted as well. While closed the fan counts as a simple club, and requires only Simple Weapon Proficiency. Once opened, use of the fan requires a Martial Weapons Proficiency, and opening or closing it requires a move-equivalent action.

Should the character take iron war fan as an Exotic Weapon Proficiency, closing and opening is the fan becomes a free action. Additionally, it grants a +1 bonus to AC as a shield, even if used to attack with during that round.

Iron war fans may be enchanted as either a weapon or shield, and the enchantments are kept track of separately — that is, an iron war fan with a +2 enhancement bonus to attacks, and a +2 enhancement bonus to AC costs 12,320 gp (320 gp for the masterwork iron war fan, plus 8000 gp for the attack bonus, plus 4000 gp for the AC bonus).

Rope and weight: A length of strong rope connected to a pointed, fist-sized lead weight. The winding and spinning effect of the rope gives this weight a deadly force. At normal melee range the rope is still somewhat effective, but treated like a flail, and damage is reduced accordingly.

A rope and weight has reach, and may be used to strike opponents 10 feet away. In addition, unlike other weapons with reach, it can be used against an adjacent foe, though it only does damage like a light flail when used thusly. Like the spiked chain, the rope and weight grants a +2 bonus to trip and disarm checks and may simply be dropped in lieu of being counter-tripped.

The rope and weight may be used with the Weapon Finesse feat. Proficiency in the rope and weight also grants proficiency in the chain and weight.

Saber: The traditional weapon of cavalry units. It is a light slashing weapon with a slight curve to the blade. Like the rapier, the saber may be used with the Weapon Finesse feat.

Shielded grip: One of a number of protected grips, such as shell or basket hilts, the shielded grip is used in a variety of bladed weapons — including daggers, rapiers, and longwords. If a weapon with a shielded grip is employed in battle, and the wielder is using Combat Expertise, the AC bonus gained through the use of that feat is increased by +1. This bonus increases to a +2 if the Combat Expertise proficient character is using two shielded grip weap-

ons, but only if they also possess the Two-Weapon Fighting feat. Additionally, shielded grips grant a +1 circumstance bonus for the purpose of resisting disarm attempts.

Slitheren hookstaff: A hookstaff is a double weapon with a semi-circular sickle-like blade at each end; one blade is edged on the inside of the curvature, while the other is edged along the outside. The hookstaff evolved from early implements among the slitheren ratmen used to gather horserat dung. When using a hookstaff, the wielder may make trip attacks with it. Should he be tripped in such an attempt, he may simply drop the weapon to avoid being tripped.

Slitheren tail-knife: A custom-fitted weapon that is strapped to the prehensile tail of slitheren ratmen, the tail-knife permits the slitheren to make attacks with its tail. It is still subject to normal multiattack rules (see MM).

Slitheren tail-mace: As the tail-knife, the tail-mace is fitted with a bludgeoning end.

Spearstaff: A spearstaff is similar to a shortspear, but with a thicker shaft. It is also balanced so that it may be used as a double weapon, similar to a quarterstaff. While it can be thrown, this weapon's weight and balance limits its range.

Sword, kukri: Kukri swords are bent forward, with a sharp edge on the inside of the curve. The swing is strange, compared to that of other weapons, and it takes some practice to wield this blade effectively.

Sword, great kukri: A larger version of the kukri sword, great kukri swords are similar to axes in several respects. The sharp edge is on the inside of a curved blade.

Warscepter: Usually wielded by followers of Chardun, these weapons are essentially large maces. The head is shaped like a screaming face, or simply enwrapped with iron barbs in a pattern reminiscent of a thorny crown.

ARMOR

Gladiator gauntlets: see above.

TABLE A3-3: ARMOR

Armor	Cost	Armor Bonus	Maximum Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Arcane Spell Failure	Weight
<i>Light</i>						
Wicker	10 gp	+1	+6	0	5%	5 lb.
<i>Shields</i>						
Gladiator gauntlets	100 gp pair+	2 (+1 ea.)	—	-2 (-1 ea.)	10% (5% ea.)	8 lb.

APPENDIX THREE: THE TOOLS OF BATTLE

Wicker: Armor crafted of lacquered wicker provides limited protection, but is certainly better than no armor in hot weather. Wicker armor reduces the penalty associated with wearing armor in hot weather from a -4 to a -2 (DMG, Chapter 8, "The Environment," *Heat Dangers*).

MAGICAL ARMS AND ARMOR IN THE SCARRED LANDS

Magic and warfare have always been close companions. Strength in only one can often carry the day, and mastery in both is the goal of most aspiring nations. To neglect either is to spell disaster. As with many cultural traditions of Ghelspad, the close marriage between magic and warfare originated in the early days of Lede, where an entire legion was dedicated to the blending of the two. From this legion, skilled craftsmen churned out enchanted artifacts to strengthen the Ledean war machine. This tradition has been handed down to the inheritor nations of Lede, especially Calastia, Darakeene, and Lageni.

Table A3-4: ARMOR SPECIAL ABILITIES

Special Ability	Market Price Modifier
Enspelled	+1 bonus
Spellwoven (5)	+2,500 gp
Blessed Defense	+10,000 gp
Spellwoven (10)	+10,000 gp
Spellwoven (20)	+40,000 gp

Table A3-5: SHIELD SPECIAL ABILITIES

Special Ability	Market Price Modifier
Spellwoven (5)	+2,500 gp
Blessed Defense	+10,000 gp
Spellwoven (10)	+10,000 gp

Table A3-6: MELEE WEAPON SPECIAL ABILITIES

Special Ability	Market Price Modifier
Slumber	+1 bonus
Doom	+2 bonus
Paralysis	+2 bonus
Unerring Strike	+2 bonus
Envenomed	+3 bonus
Petrification	+4 bonus

Table A3-7: RANGED WEAPON SPECIAL ABILITIES

Special Ability	Market Price Modifier
Madriel's Mercy (Light)	+1 bonus
Slumber	+1 bonus
Madriel's Mercy (Moderate)	+2 bonus
Multiplicity	+2 bonus
Paralysis	+2 bonus
Unerring Strike	+2 bonus
Envenomed	+3 bonus
Madriel's Mercy (Serious)	+3 bonus
Petrification	+4 bonus
Madriel's Mercy (Critical)	+4 bonus

CLOTHBORN ARMOR

Description: This lightweight enchanted suit of armor is a delight to wayfarers, rangers, the followers of Enkili and to members of the Veshian Vigils. It was originally developed for and is best known by its use among the Observers of Darakeene. The wizard Nerith of Darakeene perfected the magical process early in her career that creates this armor, in an effort to help the Observers remain mobile yet be well-protected as they watched battles among the other nations of Ghelspad.

Powers: *Clothborn armor* is typical masterwork armor, except for enchantments that render it as soft and supple as heavy cloth. Any type of masterwork armor, even chainmail and full plate, may be *clothborn armor*. Whatever the armor type, it retains its standard armor bonus but is treated as padded armor for the purposes of determining maximum Dex bonus, armor check penalty, arcane spell failure, speed, weight and time needed to don and remove. (See PHB, Chapter 7, Table 7-6: Armor and Shields and Table 7-7: Donning Armor.)

Example: Half-plate *clothborn armor* has a +7 armor bonus, offers +8 maximum Dex bonus, a 5% arcane spell failure chance and no armor check penalty. Speed while wearing it is 30 feet for Medium creatures or 20 feet for Small. It weighs 10 pounds and takes 1 minute to don and remove (5 rounds to don hastily).

Clothborn armor rarely has enhancement bonuses beyond the armor's inherent armor bonus. Attempting to make existing magical armor into *clothborn armor* undoes its original inherent magical benefits.

Moderate transmutation; CL 11th; Create Magic Arms and Armor, *stone to flesh*; Price 21,500 gp.

ARMOR AND SHIELD Special Abilities

The following are special abilities that shields and armor may be enchanted with.

Blessed Defense

Description: Developed by the divine armies because of a need to move around battlefields teeming with the enemy, anyone wearing armor with this special ability can only be attacked with concerted effort as long as they remain outside of combat.

Powers: As long as the wearer of this armor does nothing to attack an opponent, anyone wishing to attack him must make a successful Will save (DC 14) in order to follow through on the attack. If attackers do not succeed on this will save, they lose that action. If the wearer makes any sort of attack, he loses the benefits of blessed defense for the duration of the combat.

Moderate abjuration; CL 5th; Create Magic Arms and Armor, *sanctuary*; Market Price: +10,000 gp.

Enspelled

Description: Developed by the warrior mage Quevian of the Argent Flame, a legendary craftsman of the Ledean Legion of White Fire, armor enchanted with this special quality can store spells that discharge when the wearer of the armor is wounded in combat.

Powers: A spellcaster may cast any targeted spell up to 3rd level (as long as it has a casting time of 1 action) into the armor, instead of casting it normally. When so enchanted, the armor glows with a white nimbus. The next time the wearer of the armor is wounded, the spell that has been stored in the armor discharges upon the attacker. The armor can only hold one spell at a time, but there is no limit to how long a spell may be stored in the armor. Once the spell discharges, the armor is empty of spells and a spellcaster may again store another spell in the armor.

Moderate transmutation; CL 12th; Create Magic Arms and Armor, creator must be a caster of at least 12th level; Price +1 bonus.

Spellwoven

Description: Another invention of Quevian of the Argent Flame, armor with the spellwoven special ability does not inhibit its wearer's spellcasting as much as regular armor.

Powers: Spellwoven armor has a reduced arcane spell failure. The amount of reduction is given by the level; -5% has a market price bonus of +1, -10% has a market price bonus of +3, and

-20% has a market price bonus of -20%. This ability stacks with any class abilities that reduce arcane spell failure, but does not stack with other armor qualities or materials that alter arcane spell failure.

Moderate to strong transmutation; CL 12th; Create Magic Arms and Armor, caster must be at least 12th level; Price +2,500 gp (5%), +10,000 gp (10%), +40,000 gp (20%).

Weapon Special Abilities

The following are special abilities that weapons may be enchanted with.

Doom

Description: This ability is commonly found on weapons enchanted by priests of Chardun. The bearers of such weapons, which are often engraved with gruesome scenes of death and bloodshed, are frightening individuals. With these weapons in hand, these savage warriors can make even the most stalwart knight quake in fear.

Powers: When an opponent enters an area threatened by the wielder of a weapon of doom, that opponent must make a Will save (DC 13) or become so overcome with fear of the wielder that he is at -2 to all attack and damage rolls, and all ability checks — while he is so threatened by the wielder.

Moderate necromancy; CL 3rd; Create Magic Arms and Armor, *doom*; Price +2 bonus.

Envenomed

Description: The druids of Khirdet are said to have originated this foul ability, though the Cult of Ancients is perhaps the most well known wielders of envenomed weapons. Envenomed weapons do poison damage along with the their normal effects.

Powers: As a free action, the wielder of an envenomed weapon may choose to activate this ability. The choice to activate this power must be made before the attack roll is made. If the strike is successful, the victim must make a Fortitude save (DC 14) or take 1d6 temporary Constitution damage. After 1 minute, the victim must make another Fortitude save (DC 14) or take an additional 1d6 temporary Constitution damage. This ability may only be placed on slashing or piercing weapons. Bows, crossbows, and slings confer this ability on their ammunition. This may be used 2 times per day.

Moderate necromancy; CL 9th; Create Magic Arms and Armor, *poison*; Price +3 bonus.

MADRIEL'S MERCY

Description: Another invention of the Divine War, these weapons, if they can be called such, were created to extend the range of Madriel's healers on the battlefield.

Powers: This ability is typically placed on ammunition — arrows, bolts, or sling bullets. In order to "attack" with a weapon imbued with Madriel's mercy, the player rolls a ranged touch attack — the target may forgo his Dex bonus if he so desires. If the strike is successful, the ammunition disappears in a blaze of brilliant white energy that heals the target. The level of the ability determines the amount of healing, as indicated below.

Level	Hit points healed
Light	1d8+1
Moderate	2d8+3
Serious	3d8+5
Critical	4d8+7

The weapon or ammunition is destroyed on a successful attack. Bows, crossbows, and slings cannot have this special ability, as it is only the ammunition that is imbued.

Light: Moderate conjuration; CL 1st; Create Magic Arms and Armor, *cure light wounds*; Price +1 bonus.

Moderate: Moderate conjuration; CL 3rd; Create Magic Arms and Armor, *cure moderate wounds* spell; Price +2 bonus.

Serious: Strong conjuration; CL 5th; Create Magic Arms and Armor, *cure serious wounds* spell; Price +3 bonus.

Critical: Strong conjuration; CL 7th; Create Magic Arms and Armor, *cure critical wounds* spell; Price +4 bonus.

MULTIPLICITY

Description: This ability is much feared among the enemies of the elves of Vera-tre. Arrows, or other range weapons, imbued with this ability multiply into three before they strike.

Powers: When an attack is made, the ranged weapon multiplies into three such weapons — in mid-flight. The wielder of the weapon can make three separate attack rolls at the normal attack bonus. When the attack is resolved, whether the ranged weapon hits or misses, all three weapons disappear. Bows, crossbows and slings cannot have this special ability, as it is only the ammunition that is imbued.

Moderate conjuration; CL 3rd; Create Magic Arms and Armor, *Liliandel's flurry**; Price +2 bonus.

PARALYSIS

Description: This ability is reputedly the design of Fredelgar, "the Sandman," a powerful sorcerer and one of the emperors of the Empire of the Wheel. He is well known for his repertoire of non-lethal magic, and sponsored the war college of Glamerhill. He specialized in creating arms that incapacitate rather than kill, and city guard captains typically carried such weapons during his reign.

Powers: A weapon with the paralysis special ability can paralyze with but a touch. On a successful attack, the opponent must make a Will save (DC 15) or be *held* as per *hold person* for 5 rounds. If the weapon is used in melee, the wielder may instead make a melee touch attack; if successful, the opponent must make a save as above, but suffers no damage from the weapon. Bows, crossbows, and slings confer this ability on their ammunition.

Moderate enchantment; CL 5th; Create Magic Arms and Armor, *hold person*; Price +2 bonus.

PETRIFICATION

Description: A more potent version of the paralysis ability, petrification turns the target to stone on a successful hit. There also exists a version of this used by certain high-ranking Hedradan clergy that turns an opponent to gold instead of stone.

Powers: On a successful attack, the victim of a weapon with the petrification ability must make a Fortitude save (DC 17) or be *petrified* as per the *flesh to stone* spell. If the weapon is used in melee, the wielder may instead make a melee touch attack; if she succeeds, her opponent must make a save as above, but suffers no damage from the weapon. Bows, crossbows, and slings confer this ability on their ammunition. The rare version of this ability that is used by Hedradan clergy causes the victim to suffer the effects of *judgement of gold* (see **The Divine & the Defeated**).

Strong transmutation; CL 13th; Create Magic Arms and Armor, *flesh to stone* (or *judgement of gold*); Price +4 bonus.

SLUMBER

Description: Another creation of the Sandman, slumber weapons cause opponents to fall into a sound sleep on a successful attack.

Powers: With but a touch, a weapon with the slumber special ability can cause opponents to sleep. On a successful attack, the opponent must make a Will save (DC 13) or fall asleep as per the *sleep* spell for 1 minute. Anyone unaffected by a *sleep* spell is likewise unaffected by a weapon with this special ability. If the weapon is used in melee,

the wielder may instead make a melee touch attack; if he succeeds, his opponent must make a save as above, but suffers no damage from the weapon. Bows, crossbows, and slings confer this ability on their ammunition.

Moderate enchantment; CL 3rd; Create Magic Arms and Armor, *sleep*; Price +1 bonus.

UNERRING STRIKE

Description: Often used by the faithful of Enkili, weapons with unerring strike are able to hit even the most improbable of targets.

Powers: Weapons with unerring strike may, once per day, grant a +20 circumstance bonus to any attack roll made with the weapon. This bonus stacks with any other modifier the weapon may have. Once used, the unerring strike ability may not be used for a full 24 hours. Bows, crossbows, and slings confer this special ability on their ammunition. This may not be used to enchant ammunition.

Moderate divination; CL 5th; Create Magic Arms and Armor, *true strike*; Price +2 bonus.

EXOTIC MATERIALS OF THE SCARRED LANDS

The Divine War caused great changes to the face of Scarn, leaving little untouched by the mighty powers — and spilled blood of both titans and gods — that were unleashed. While most tools of war are crafted from wood, iron and stone, there are those arcanists and craftsmen who search out mysterious materials that have been touched by the essence of great power or primal forces. The existence and properties of these materials are often found in the depths of hidden libraries, or handed down master smith to apprentice as a closely guarded trade secret. Oftentimes these materials are imbued with powerful magic, and using them to create magic items can reduce the XP cost of doing so. Some of these exotic materials, and details regarding their use, are listed below.

Adamantine: This dull, dark gray metal was created by Golphagga the Shaper and hidden deep within the earth. Goran, the patron of the dwarves, discovered this rare substance and showed his children where to find the valuable ore. The dwarves continue to burrow deeper and deeper in search of the precious veins of this nearly unbreakable metal.

For more information on adamantite, see DMG, Chapter 7, "Creating Magic Items," *Special Materials*.

Azurite: This alloy of silver and iron is created by a magical ritual, discovered by Ledean craftsmen among the Legion of White Fire. Since the fall of the Ledean Empire, the method of

A NOTE ON DEFINITIONS

In the descriptions of the exotic materials, you will find some of the following classifications of objects. For clarity, they are described here.

Wholly Metal: An object made entirely of metal. Weapons that are wholly metal include swords, maces and the spiked chain. Armor that is wholly metal includes field and half plate, chain mail, and chain shirt.

Mostly Metal: An object mostly of metal. Weapons that are mostly metal include axes, flails, and hammers. Armor that is mostly metal includes breastplate, banded mail, scale mail, and splint mail.

Mostly Wood: An object made mostly of wood. Weapons that are mostly wood include spears and polearms, scythes, and arrows and bolts. There is no armor that is mostly wood.

Wholly Wood: An object made entirely of wood. Weapons that are wholly wood include clubs, the quarterstaff, and bows and crossbows. There is no armor that is wholly wood.

Organic: An object that is made of once living material. Organic items include items that are mostly or wholly wood, and leather items including slings and leather armor.

creating this light metal has been a closely kept secret of the Hammerdale war college. Azurite is a light, durable metal that is very bright and reflective. Weapons made of azurite weigh half of what the same weapon of iron would weigh. Most armor made of azurite is one category lighter than normal for purposes of movement and other limitations. Heavy armor is treated as medium, while medium and light armor are treated as light.

Armor and shields made of azurite increase their maximum dexterity modifier by 1, reduce their armor check penalty by 1, and reduce their arcane spell failure by 5%. Items made of azurite are considered masterwork for purposes of construction time but the masterwork quality does not affect the armor check penalty. Note that only items made wholly or mostly of this metal qualify as an azurite item.

Azurite has a hardness of 10 and 30 hit points per inch of thickness.

APPENDIX THREE: THE TOOLS OF BATTLE

Azurite has an affinity to light magic. If an item made of azurite is enchanted with light producing spells, such enchantments have an XP cost that is 10% less than normal.

Item	Market Price Modifier
Light Armor	+750 gp
Medium Armor	+3,000 gp
Heavy Armor	+7,000 gp
Shield	+750 gp
Other Items	+400 gp per pound

Blood Lacquer: In the sheltered coves of the Blood Sea and the blood-tainted marshes of the Soporatra Swamp and the Blood Bayou, there exists a crimson sludge that deposits where the water is relatively still. A mixture of sea foam, sediment, and the blood of the Mountainshaker, this blood lacquer has been found to have unique properties. The titanspawn who live in such areas have found that this composite can be applied to organic (but inanimate) objects to toughen them. For example, leather or wicker armor to which blood lacquer is applied gains a +1 enhancement bonus to its AC.

Items that have been coated with blood lacquer have a hardness of 8 and 15 hit points per inch of thickness.

Item	Market Price Modifier
Any Armor or Shield	+1,000 gp
Other items	+200 gp per pound

Darkwood: Though this wood was once common, it is now very rare in the Scarred Lands. The only grove known to exist on Ghelspad is in the Darkwood Grove, west of the city of Fangsfall. There are also writings of the Ganjulael elves that speak of the existence of a large grove in the forests east of Eldura-tre, in the region now known as the Blood Bayou. Little is known of what has befallen this grove. Lone darkwood trees also exist in minute numbers, scattered among the forests of the Scarred Lands. Rumors indicate the Hornsaw is an especially likely place to locate this valuable wood.

For more information on darkwood, see DMG, Chapter 7, "Creating Magic Items," *Special Materials*.

Dragonhide: Dragonhide is nearly unknown in the Scarred Lands, though occasionally the barrows of pre-Divine War heroes may be found to contain a suit of armor made of the rare substance. It is said by some scholars that the strange warriors of the Dragon Lands are known to wear such armors, the patterning and color of which declares their clan allegiance.

For more information on dragonhide, see DMG, Chapter 7, "Creating Magic Items," *Special Materials*.

Fangsfall Ore: The city of Fangsfall is noted for its proximity to a large mountain that is thought to be one of the teeth of the titan Gaurak. In the mines that crisscross this mountain, the people of Fangsfall found a strange rock that is called Fangsfall ore. No known forge or smelter can melt this stone, though sufficient heat can render it soft enough to shape and hammer an edge to. Items made of this gray porous substance do +1 damage, as the weapon "bites deeply" — even in areas where magic does not work. As soon as a weapon made of Fangsfall ore damages an opponent, it starts to slowly turn brown, then crimson.

Armor made of Fangsfall ore doesn't seem to have any unusual properties, however it also changes color as its wearer is damaged. If an item made of Fangsfall ore is damaged once it has started changing color, the item begins to bleed until either it is repaired or is thoroughly destroyed in a pool of blood and stone. Items made of Fangsfall ore are considered masterwork with respect to construction time, but the masterwork quality does not affect the enhancement bonus of weapons or the armor check penalty of armor. Note that only items made wholly or mostly of Fangsfall ore have these properties.

Fangsfall ore has a hardness of 10 and 25 hit points per inch of thickness.

Fangsfall ore has an affinity to certain necromantic magic. If an item made of Fangsfall ore is enchanted with life draining or wounding magic, such enchantments have an XP cost that is 10% less than normal.

Iron, Cold: Though they once protected the knowledge of creating this material from the world, the clergy of Syhana has now made it common knowledge, for the Titanswar warped and horribly corrupted many of the fey creatures of the world. Likewise, the Order of Iron bears the knowledge of how to create this material, though they rarely use it.

For more information on cold iron, see DMG, Chapter 7, "Creating Magic Items," *Special Materials*.

Mithril: Mithril is a very hard, silvery metal that is considered sacred by the followers of Corean. Created by the Forger, the metal was gifted to his most faithful followers. Mithril can be found in veins running near the surface, and requires little mining. It is considered the purest metal by most smiths, and items made of mithril are amazingly light. Weapons made of mithril weigh half of what an iron weapon of the same type would weigh, and most armor made of mithril

is one category lighter than normal for purposes of movement and other limitations.

For more information on mithril, see *DMG*, Chapter 7, "Creating Magic Items," *Special Materials*.

Nightwood: A strange crossbreed of ironwood and darkwood trees, nightwood was originally created by the Broadreach elves and raised in groves meant to be harvested. With the destruction of the elves, nightwood has spread naturally into the wild, and stands of this deep black wood can be found scattered randomly. Any wooden or mostly wooden item made from nightwood is considered a masterwork item and weighs only half as much as normal. Armor check penalties for shields or wood armor made from nightwood are reduced by 2. To determine the price of nightwood items, use the original weight but add 15 gp per pound to the price of a masterwork version of the item.

Nightwood has a hardness of 8 and 15 hit points per inch of thickness.

Nightwood has an affinity to darkness magic. If an item made of nightwood is enchanted with magic with the darkness descriptor, such enchantments have an XP cost that is 10% less than normal.

Silver, Alchemical: The genesis of this metal's crafting is laid at the feet of Madriel and Corean, who sought to create a material that mortal men might use to fight the beastly children of Belsameth and those outer planar creatures that sought to harm or corrupt humanity. The use of alchemical silver is common in many areas, and many adventurers are known to carry at least one alchemical silver weapon, just in case they encounter those things whose flesh burns at its touch.

For more information on alchemical silver, see *DMG*, Chapter 7, "Creating Magic Items," *Special Materials*.

Serpentsteel: This metallic green, oily-sheened metal is best known as the substance used to craft asaath blades. The alchemical process of making this metal involves combining copper, iron, and several types of snake venom, and is closely guarded by the serpentfolk. A creature wounded by serpent steel must make a Fortitude save (DC see below) or lose a point of Constitution for 1d4 hours.

Additionally, serpentsteel absorbs venom quickly, reducing the chance of poisoning oneself when applying venom to a serpentsteel weapon to 3%. Poisons delivered topically unfortunately have their Fortitude save DC reduced by 2, as the poison is dispersed throughout the blade. A single dose, however, can be used for multiple strikes depending on the size of the weapon. Items made of serpentsteel are considered masterwork for pur-

poses of construction time but the masterwork quality does not affect the armor check penalty of armor. Note that only items made wholly or mostly of this metal qualify as a serpentsteel weapon.

Serpentsteel has a hardness of 15 and 30 hit points per inch of thickness.

Serpentsteel has an affinity to venomous enhancements. If an item made of serpentsteel is enchanted with poison magic or magic with the acid descriptor, such enchantments have an XP cost that is 10 % less than normal. Note that items with poison, either magical or mundane, have two poison effects, one from the serpentsteel and one from the applied poison. Two saving throws are required, one for each effect.

Item	Poison DC	Strikes	Market Price Modifier
Weapon (1d4 damage)	8	2/dose	+750 gp
Weapon (1d6 damage)	10	3/dose	+1,500 gp
Weapon (1d8 damage)	12	4/dose	+3,000 gp
Weapon (1d10, 1d12 damage)	14	5/dose	+6,000 gp

Sorcerer's Steel: The destruction of Mesos sent magical energy to the four corners of the Scarred Lands. In places, this energy pooled and created magical disruptions in the area — altering creatures and items and imbuing them with the essence of the titan of magic. In these locations simple iron was changed into sorcerer's steel. Sorcerer's steel looks like normal iron, but when magic is channeled nearby, the metal hums and glows faintly. Sorcerer's steel is very receptive to magical energy.

Armor and shields made from this metal can assist the wearer in casting magical spells, helping to offset the arcane spell failure of the armor. Weapons made of sorcerer's steel can hold touch-based spells for the wielder. If an attack made by such a weapon hits normally, the weapon does damage and the spell is released. If the attack roll is lower than the opponents normal AC but greater than the opponents touch attack AC, the spell discharges but the weapon does no damage. Items made of sorcerer's steel are considered masterwork for purposes of construction time, but the masterwork quality does not affect the armor check penalty of armor made of this metal. Note that only items made wholly or mostly of this metal qualify as a sorcerer's steel item.

Sorcerer's steel has a hardness of 10 and 30 hit points per inch of thickness

APPENDIX THREE: THE TOOLS OF BATTLE

Sorcerer's steel has an affinity to all magical enchantments. Any enchantments laid upon an item made of sorcerer's steel have an XP cost 10% less than normal.

Item	Arcane Spell Failure	Market Price Modifier
Light Armor	-10%	+6,000 gp
Medium Armor	-15%	+12,000 gp
Heavy Armor	-20%	+20,000 gp
Shield	-5%	+2,000 gp
Other Items		+1,000 gp per pound

Starsteel: From time to time balls of fire and iron rain down from the heavens to cause death and destruction for the inhabitants of the Scarred Lands. Legend holds that these fiery missiles come from Thulkas, the Iron Lord, in his solar prison. Angered by the treachery of the gods, and his confinement, he rains pieces of his element down upon the people who betrayed him. Histories in the Library of Lokil, which describe similar celestial events dating before the Divine War, lend some doubt to this theory. In any event, the iron that remains from these stellar objects is incredibly pure and durable. Items made of starsteel are considered masterwork for purposes of construction time but the masterwork quality does not affect the armor check penalty of armor. Note that only items made wholly or mostly of this metal qualify as a starsteel item.

Starsteel has a hardness of 12 and 35 hit points per inch of thickness.

Starsteel has an affinity to fire magic. If an item made of starsteel is enchanted with magic with the fire descriptor, such enchantments have an XP cost that is 10 % less than normal.

Item	Market Price Modifier
Light Armor	+500 gp
Medium Armor	+2,000 gp
Heavy Armor	+5,000 gp
Shield	+300 gp
Other Items	+300 gp per pound

Thogalh'na: This metal was originally created by the titan Golthagga and was a gift to those smiths he favored. Legend states that when the world was new, Golthagga spent years trying to fashion a metal that would be harder

than all others. He succeeded — and fashioned adamantine. But for some reason his accomplishment didn't please him, so he hid the metal deep in the earth. Some sages speculate that he saw in the metal something with the strength to bring down a titan. But whatever his reason, he then went about creating a new metal, one that lacked the ability to empower mortal men to such a level. What resulted was a substance, nearly as strong as adamantine, that he gifted to the men and dwarves who were his most loyal smiths. Thogalh'na, which means "stone-metal" in Titanspeech, is a strong, heavy, jet-black metal.

Weapons and armor made of thogalh'na weigh 150% that of normal iron items and receive enhancement bonuses as if they were magical, though these bonus are not nullified in areas where magic does not function. Weapons receive a +1 to attack and damage rolls. Armor and shields receive a +1 enhancement bonus to their AC, though they receive a -1 to their maximum Dexterity bonus, a +1 armor check penalty and a +5% arcane spell failure. These bonuses do not stack with any magical bonuses the item might have. Items made of thogalh'na are considered masterwork with respect to construction time, but the masterwork quality does not affect the enhancement bonus of weapons or the armor check penalty of armor. Note that only items made wholly or mostly of this metal qualify as a thogalh'na item.

Thogalh'na has a 20 hardness and 35 hit points per inch of thickness.

Thogalh'na becomes receptive to enchantments if the creator invokes certain rituals to Golthagga. Any enchantments laid on an item made of thogalh'na while the creator works the correct rituals have an XP cost 10% less than normal.

Item	Market Price Modifier
Light Armor	+1,000 gp
Medium Armor	+2,000 gp
Heavy Armor	+5,000 gp
Shield	+500 gp
Weapon damage 1d4 or 1d6	+1,000 gp
Weapon damage 1d8, 1d10, or 1d12	+2,000 gp

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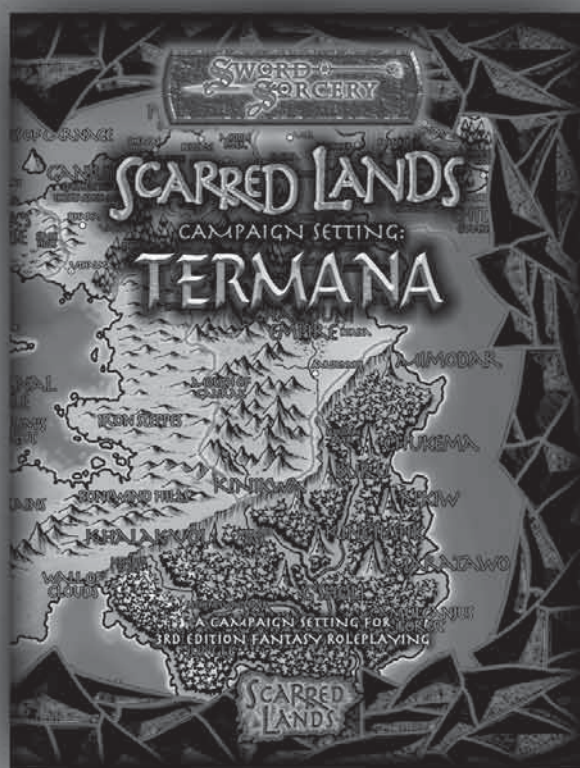


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