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EDITIONS CHANGE... GREYHAWK ENDURES!

THE VERBTH JOURNAL

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Once more, Dean Oyebo illustrates a dramatic cover depicting a Ket cultist of Faelshenda.

Dean is a freelance graphic designer from England and an amazing artist whose backgrounds fully illustrate the entire mood of the piece. His art can be seen as Echo Dragon at DeviantArt.

Featured Artists

Mike Bridges adds a sliver of cultist allure each esoteric symbol of the Secret Societies and Hidden Cabals of Ket. His visions and reverie can be found here.

Adam Koča provides plenty of flavor to each core human race from the devout Baklunish to the surreptitious Suloise.

Tina Slezak, What more can I say? Your art would and should have graced these pages much more. You are sorely missed, forevermore.

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THE OERTH JOURNAL

VOLUME II, ISSUE 27

APRIL 2016



TABLE OF CONTENTS

IN MEMORIAM

TINA SLEZAK

By Rick Miller; Art by Rick Miller and Tina Slezak

Page 3

GAZETTEER OF THE FLANAESS

THE CITY OF GLASS

By Frank Myres; Art by Adam Koča, Rick Miller, and Frank Myres

Page 4

RACES OF OERTH

THE BAKLUNISH

By Dennis Lovatt; Art by Adam Koča and Rick Miller

Page 11

RACES OF OERTH

THE FLANNAE

By Dennis Lovatt; Art by Adam Koča and Rick Miller

Page 15

RACES OF OERTH

THE OERIDIANS

By Dennis Lovatt; Art by Adam Koča and Rick Miller

Page 22

RACES OF OERTH

THE RHENNEE

By Dennis Lovatt; Art by Adam Koča and Rick Miller

Page 27

RACES OF OERTH

THE SULOISE

By Dennis Lovatt; Art by Adam Koča and Rick Miller

Page 31

GAZETTEER OF THE FLANAESS

KET, SECRET SOCIETIES AND HIDDEN CABALS

By Michael Raper; Art by Mike Bridges, Rick Miller, and Dean Oyebo

Page 35



IN MEMORIAM



tina
Slezak

"I first met Tina at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh in 1998. She was in the smoking lounge at the time wearing a black Slayer t-shirt and her leather coat. I cannot say what drew me there, but what blossomed was a long-lasting, deep friendship and love that lasts unto this day. We spent much of that next summer with each other, until I left to earn money for college once more in the late Fall. Over the next decade and more we always kept in contact, occasionally losing touch due to events in our lives, which ironically always paralleled one another. She has been one of the greatest inspirations and closest friends I will ever have. Even when things went sour, we never stopped caring. Her art was an extension of her heart and soul, so in fitting tribute I share her passion with the world as it is. I shall miss you always my friend, though even now you are with me. Blessed journeys my love; my sweetest friend.

-Your forest-eyed friend forever,

-Rick "Duicarthan" Miller"



THE CITY OF GLASS

By Frank Myres

Art by Art by Adam Koča, Rick Miller, & Frank Myres

The mystical City of Glass floats over the capital of Lo Reltarma, the Lendore Isles (formerly Spindrift Isles). This gigantic artificial construct supports a city created solely from magic; a testimony to power of the Suloise and the ability of their ancient Mages of Power.

LO DENIQ, "THE CITY OF GLASS"

Conventional Magocracy, Large City

National Alignment Lawful Neutral/Good

GP Limit 300,000gp; **Assets** unknown

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population unknown

Type mixed (human (suel) 90%, others 10%)

Economy type variable

Resources armaments, slaves, foodstuffs, gems, and spell components.

AUTHORITY FIGURES

Governed by the seven members of the Council of High

Magic (one for each school of magic save divination).

HISTORY

The City of Glass was created by the Archmage Lendore in Cy -425 and he placed it in the air 8,888 feet above the capital of the Lendore Isles, Lo Reltarma.

The entirety of the original structure is believed to be made up of glassteel.

It was originally connected to the capital below it by means of an artifact of Lendore's creation: the Gate of Glass. This artifact is said to have been deactivated (but not destroyed) by the high elven followers of Sehanine when they claimed the Lendore Isles for themselves.

Initially Lendore and his followers used a floating tower as his personal residence and place of power. Once construction on Lo Reltarma was well begun, more and more of Lendore's followers and their families relocated there. Finally only Lendore and eight of his best students remained. He then began a Master Shaping (epic magic) which, when completed,



resulted in a circular disc 10 miles across covered by a clear, nearly invisible dome of hardened glassteel.

CONSTRUCTION AND GEOGRAPHY

The base of the disc is 1/2 mile thick, though it is thought that only the outer foot or so is actually comprised of glassteel. The remainder appears to be stone, assorted minerals, and a top layer comprised of several feet of incredibly fertile topsoil.

An illusory sun followed by night sky travels across the time, keeping track with Liga, Luna and Celene outside.

In the exact center of the disc is the City of Glass proper, and it covers an area two miles in diameter. All of the major structures common to a city appear within it, though over 90% are empty. Each was made in the distinct architectural style of the ancient Suloise. Many, though not all, of the original structures are made from glassteel of varying colors, transparencies, and even textures.

A wall of dark, almost black glassteel a foot thick and fifty feet high surrounds the City of Glass (this cannot be climbed without magical assistance). Eight circular towers are equally spaced around the wall and are largely set within it. Each is 400 feet high and 80 feet in diameter. The base of each tower has a double gate set within it allowing access into and out of the city itself.

Each tower is residence to a wizard of 17th-21st level known as a High Master. This supreme practitioner of a given school of magic (abjuration, conjuration, enchantment, evocation, illusion, necromancy, and transmutation) sits on the Council of High Magic and, through it, governs the city. There is no tower of divination and no High Master of Divination; the tower for divination sits closed and empty and its gates have been sealed for over a thousand years. It is said that the last High Master of Divination was Lendore himself.

Broad avenues over fifty-feet wide extend from the base each tower of magic to the central plaza at the heart of the city. The area between each of these forms the eight districts of the city.

DISTRICTS AND LOCALES

The districts are the Noble District, the Garden District, the Common District, the Trade District, the Foreign District, the Militant District, the Necropolis District, and the Divine District.

NOBLE DISTRICT

The Noble District lies between the Divine District and the Garden District. It is filled with small walled compounds surrounded by park-like pleasancess. The borders between these are colored glassteel walls pierced with gated archways.

GARDEN DISTRICT

This district is mostly well manicured gardens and small ponds and lakes with a few small wooded groves. Some of the latter are wilder and far less manicured.

COMMON DISTRICT

The common district is situated between the Garden and Trade districts. Here are the residences of common Suloise folk. Some are individual multi-storied structures while others

are insulae (see Foreign District below).

TRADE DISTRICT

Situated between the Foreign and Common Districts, all manufacturing, crafting (except for arcane artistry) and marketing is done here. Everything from small artisan shops to vast (mostly subterranean manufactories can be found here.

All public offices are found here, though these are far fewer than would be found in most cities.

FOREIGN DISTRICT

All those not of pure Suloise blood (either noble or common), as well visitors to the city reside here. Many empty private residences as well as taverns, inns exist here. Five to eight story high towers of apartments known as insulae tower above the other private residences. Each insulae features floors with two to eight apartments sharing a common stairwell located at the top of the building; only floors above the 4th may have a small balcony and it will never protrude beyond the walls of the structure).

MILITANT DISTRICT

Between the Necropolis and Foreign districts lies the largely vacant Militant District. Burgeoning with empty parade grounds, barracks and several schools dedicated to the martial arts, the district could very well hold a vast army. However, many insist that such a force would be summoned in.

NECROPOLIS DISTRICT

Lying in the area between the towers of Necromancy and Evocation, the Necropolis district accommodates vast private crypts and large obelisks that are the public ossuaries of the common folk.

DIVINE DISTRICT

A place of calm and serenity, the Divine District accommodates each temple of the Suel pantheon. Within it are temples (major and minor) to each of the deities once worshipped by the Suloise: Beltar, Bralm, Dalt, Fortubo, Jascar, Kord, Lendor, Lydia, Norebo, Osprem, Phaulkon, Phyton, Pyremius, Ranet, Syrul, Vatun, Wastri, Wee Jas, and Xerbo. The two greatest of these is the House of Wee Jas, a massive cathedral whose main spire rises almost 600 feet high, and the Hall of Lendor, an oddly shaped upright twisted ring structure which is larger on the inside than the outside.

CENTRAL PLAZA

At the very center of the City of Glass lies Lendore's tower resting on the serenity of a glassy-like pool where Lendore's tomb resides. Surrounding Lendore's tower, the central plaza illuminates the glory of the enormous gate of glass.

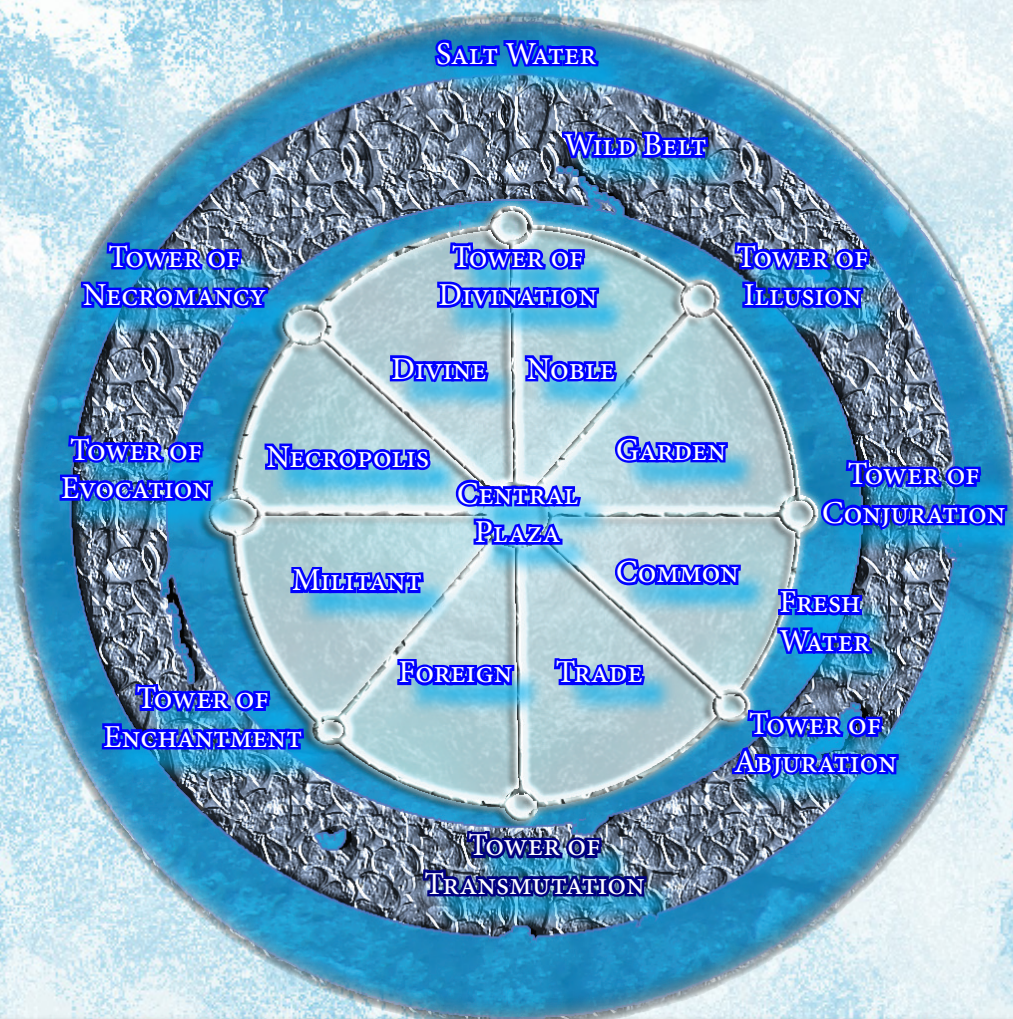
At the center of the plaza's large open pool the gates bar entry to four twenty-foot wide arching bridges of glassteel.

THE GATE OF GLASS

This artifact actually exists in two places at the same time.



THE CITY OF GLASS



Half of it exists below in Lo Reltarma and the other side here in the City of Glass. It resembles nothing more than a 60' wide by 40' tall pane of almost ethereally clear glass floating a couple of feet above the pool below. Etched into its base in glowing runes are the cryptic words "Urbs Deniq."

When both sides are active, looking through one side shows what is on the other. Now that the side in Lo Reltarma has been encased in a massive wall of stone (created by having multiple casters casting simultaneously), the side in the City of Glass seems to flicker every few seconds revealing images of strange doorways, gates and portals from ancient to possibly future times and from worlds other than Oerth.

Anyone casting any form of teleportation magic while touching of the Gate of Glass 'locks' it to the desired location for up to 1 hour, creating a portal (cf. portal spell) with the dimensions of the Gate of Glass. This effect is dismissible and has no component costs. Unlike the portal spell this can be used to create a portal which can access other planes and/or dimensions.

Unknown to anyone presently inhabiting the City of Glass is the fact that the Gate of Glass is the reason no divination magics function there. A side effect of its vast power, the Gate

of Glass blocks all divination effects within a 5 mile radius EXCEPT when the caster is touching the Gate itself. Because of the link between itself and the City of Glass, this blockage extends only to the outer edges of the dome and disc upon which the City of Glass sits. This anti-divination power is so great that, it is (rightfully) believed, not even the gods themselves can locate the City of Glass.

LENDORE'S TOWER

This glassteel lattice tower sits on 4 legs and rises 1,500 feet above the central plaza. Its base is a square area measuring 400 feet per side. It has 3 levels, the lowest of which is 250 feet above the Central Plaza and is 200 feet square per side. 250 feet above this sits another, smaller level (100 feet square per side) and the topmost level (50 feet square per side). This uppermost level is rumored to be heavily warded since it is said to provide access to Lendore's Tomb.

Access to the first level is via magical moving staircases in each of the tower's legs (two ascend, two descend). Each staircase is 20 feet wide and ascends 250 to the first level of the tower. One merely stands at the base, steps upon the first step and it begins to ascend at a pace faster than a man can



walk up stairs normally (the stairs ascend/descend at 50 feet per round).

First Level: The first level of Lendore's Tower is a large open area filled with benches made of glassteel which surround a central rostrum. This space was used by Lendore to lecture and instruct his students and apprentices prior to his 'death.'

Now it is the public assembly hall for the inhabitants of the City of Glass. It is from here that the Council of High Magic governs the city.

Once every 10 days, the High Masters of each tower assemble here for 6 hours. During this time, they dispense justice, inform the citizens of the city of events happening within the city (and outside it as well) and meet with any important newcomers to the City of Glass. Should one be indisposed or otherwise unavailable, his proxy is given over to the High Master of his choice.

Second Level: The second level of Lendore's Tower lies empty now. Once it provided the living spaces, kitchens, pantries, baths and other areas need by the students and apprentices of Lendore. It is connected to the first level via 4 more of the enchanted moving staircases.

In the center of the second level is a small locked chamber with a shaft (10' x 10') leading upward. The base of this circular shaft is actually a platform with a permanent suspension spell affecting it.

Third Level: This heavily warded area was the private sanctum of Lendore and it is here (rather than in his tomb) that all of his greatest treasures are kept.

Lendore's Tomb: Beneath the pool which lies under Lendore's Tower is Lendore's Tomb. This small sepulcher has remained undisturbed for over 1,000 years. It is said to be heavily warded and to be protected by powerful constructs which have not been seen since the height of the Suloise Empire.

GM Note: This area is left for individual GMs to flesh out as they wish (or might be revealed at a later time in the Oerth Journal). However, something to consider is that Lendore himself is not dead! Rather he is in greater temporal stasis which he cast upon himself, awaiting the Final Calamity

INHABITANTS

The inhabitants of the City of Glass are 90% pure Suloise (approx. 9,000, of which about 1,500 are of noble Suloise origin) with the remainder being made up of non-Suloise human races (there are no Bakluni to be found among them) and a few non-humanoid individuals (who number less than 100 and range from at least one vampire to a shape-shifted dragon!).

Those born here are known as 'civii' and many can trace their lineage back to the original followers and students of Lendore.

A strange curse seems to affect the City of Glass in that those born here or anyone who spends more than 8 consecutive days here is unable to leave without suffering a lingering malady. This strange illness manifests itself 8 days after leaving the City of Glass itself (not the outer disc) in the form of a malaise (anyone who is a 'civii' loses 1 hp per day they are outside it;

no form of magical healing stops this loss, only return to the City of Glass).

GM Note: This is actually a minor side effect of the Gate of Glass. Each of the High Masters possesses a small magical trinket which belonged to the 8 apprentices of Lendore who helped him create the City and Gate of Glass which allows the possessor to leave for any length of time.

OUTSIDE THE CITY OF GLASS

The area immediately outside the City of Glass is known as the 'wilds'. Immediately outside the city walls is a freshwater river 1/2 mile across and a 1/4 mile deep at its deepest point (next to the city wall). It is spanned by straight flat bridges of glassteel which radiate outward from each of the towers 50 feet above the river's surface. This body of water is called a river rather than a lake because it moves languidly in a clockwise direction.

A large variety of freshwater plants and aquatic life fills this river. 90% of this life is benign and people can be found daily sitting on the bridge or making use of small boats to fish.

Surrounding the river is a wilderness belt 3 miles wide. The terrain here varies from small glades to several belts of small steep hills. An abundance of game can be found, again with most of it being benign in nature and obviously suited for hunting.

A curious thing about this wilderness belt is that it has 'seasons.' If one extends imaginary lines from the Tower of Necromancy and the Tower of Illusion, the area which lies between is always in winter - with mild winter being found near each edge and extreme winter at its exact center. The area that would lie between the Tower of Illusion to the Tower of Abjuration is always in Spring. Between the Tower of Abjuration and the Tower of Enchantment it is always summer and between the Tower of Enchantment and the Tower of Necromancy it is always autumn.

Every eight days, in a counterclockwise direction, one eighth of the wilds (the area, including both the fresh and saltwater areas, between any two adjacent towers undergoes the effects of a renew the land spell.

The outermost 'shore' of this belt opens onto a saltwater 'sea' which, like its freshwater sister, is 1/2 mile across and a 1/4 mile deep at its deepest point (next to the outer wall of the dome which covers the disc). Beds of kelp and coral can be found next to the shore which has a couple of beautiful beaches as well as several areas of tall cliffs (some of which have obvious sea caves).

The marine life here is abundant being made up of several varieties of game fish as well as several small schools of sharks and even a small pod of orca.

WILDERNESS DENIZENS

The wilderness surrounding the City of Glass has a few inhabitants (less than 1,000 total) who are known as 'hospii.' These are the mixed descendants of the Spindrifft Isles - inhabitants that escaped to the City of Glass when the elves took over the islands. Most of these are nomadic half-elves of high elf/Suloise heritage.



A similar malaise affects the 'hospii' as does the 'civii' though the 'hospii' are not permitted to build permanent encampments. They must move every 8 days or they begin to sicken. Any structure built of wood or stone immediately disappears when the renew the land effect affects the area in which it lies.

BEYOND THE DOME

Since the time of its creation, the City of Glass and the disc upon which it sits have hung in the sky above Lo Reltarma. For over 1,000 years it was used by sailors and travelers as a navigational aid. All of that changed when the elves took over the islands and began their pogrom.

When the elves began to drive out the non-elven inhabitants a great storm cloud 40 miles across and 5 miles high formed, centered on the dome and disc. Terrible waves of sheet lightning constantly rage while winds of up to 100 mile per hour blow. Even the mightiest of dragons would be buffeted about by the storm's power. There is no rain in this storm, just fury. Below it, the Lendore Isles have been cloaked in mist by the Sehanine's priests and wizards. The storm seems to augment this affect with mists of its own often merging with those below.

CONFLICTS AND INTRIGUES

A human resistance force operates from the City of Glass above Lendore Isle. The High Masters of Magic and their students daily open temporary portals to the lands below. Often these are opened onto locations within the Lendore Isles themselves for purposes that advance the cause of the resistance.

Why haven't the elves invaded the City of Glass? There are probably several reasons for this. Most importantly, the elves are isolationists and religious fanatics. Even the cost of the occasional raids from the resistance is nothing compared to what it would take to storm a city that can only be entered via teleportation magic. Since it cannot be divined by normal means, it comes back to a 'you can't get there unless you have already been there' situation.

Additionally there is the eternal storm raging around the disc at all times. Even dragons could not survive its fury for long. With visibility down to zero, how are you going to find it in an area 5 miles deep and 40 miles across. It would be impossible to fly a normal search grid. This leaves subterfuge - a spy, or spies, if you will. This could lead to some amazing quests.

The Scarlet Brotherhood would love to infiltrate and take over the City of Glass. It is, after all, perhaps the greatest magical achievement of the ancient Suloise. A series of adventures centered on this goal would certainly be possible.

The Society of the Serpent's legendary headquarters could easily be set here. This would afford PC members of the Society an opportunity to visit. Who knows what could happen after that.

THE FINAL CALAMITY

The City of Glass was prepared by Lendore for what he saw in his final visions, what he himself named the Final Calamity.

However, Lendore never revealed what the exact nature of that catastrophe was. Was this omission deliberate? Very likely so. However, some things can be deduced from the nature of his greatest creation: the City of Glass itself. The Final Calamity must be something so devastating as to require a sheltered city of immense size. It seems to require that this city be self-sustaining for an indeterminate amount of time. It would appear that the Final Calamity will rival even the Twin Cataclysms.

So what is it? Here are three possibilities...

1) The destruction of Flanaess itself. In the ruins of what remains, the survivors could leave the City of Glass to repopulate the Flanaess, restoring the Suloise to their former glory.

2) The destruction of Oerth itself. In this scenario, the City of Glass might drift in Greyspace circled by Liga, Oerth's sun. Perhaps its inhabitants could discover some method of moving it to another world.

3) The destruction of the Prime Material Plane. In such a case, the City of Glass becomes an inter-dimensional habitat, wandering through the multiverse.

SPELLS AND ARCANA

It goes without saying that the City of Glass is renown for it's arcane mysteries. Below are a few of these rare arcanum.

GLASSTEEL

School transmutation; **Level** sorcerer/ wizard 6

Casting Time 1 minute/lb. created

Components V, S, M

Range touch

Effect A glassteel object weighing up to 5 lb/level

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** none

Glassteel is a magical substance created from normal, non-magical crystal and glass. Glassteel is as strong and resistant to fire as steel, but retains the transparency (and color if any) of the original material. Spells that affect metal or glass (such as *shatter* and *rusting grasp*) do not function on glassteel. Using this spell with *fabricate* or a glass-related Craft check, the caster can fashion glass or crystal items that function as steel items. Thus, creating glass plate armor and glass swords that are as durable as their normal, steel counterparts are.

Reference: Freeport City of Adventure (Green Ronin), pg. 128

HARDENING

School transmutation; **Level** sorcerer/ wizard 6

Casting Time 1 minute/lb. created

Components V, S, M

Range touch

Target One item of a volume no greater than 10 cu. ft./level; see text

Duration permanent

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** none

This spell increases the hardness of materials. Paper becomes harder to tear, glass becomes harder to break, wood becomes



more resilient, and so on. For every two caster levels, add 1 point of hardness to the material targeted by the spell. This hardness increase improves only the material's resistance to damage. Nothing else is modified by the improvement. For example, a longsword (treat steel as iron, base hardness 10) affected by a hardening spell cast by a 12th-level caster would have hardness 16 for the purpose of ignoring damage caused by someone making a sunder attack. The sword's hit points, attack and damage modifiers, and other factors are not affected. A hardening spell does not in any way affect a substance's resistance to other forms of transformation. Ice still melts, paper and wood still burn, rock still becomes transmutable to mud with the proper spell, and so on.

Reference: Spell Compendium (WotC), pg. 109.

PORTAL

School conjuration (creation); **Level** sorcerer/ wizard 8

Casting Time 3 full rounds

Components V, S, M (small leather loop suspended from a bent wire of gold), XP (500 XP)

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./level)

Effect See text

Duration concentration + 1 round

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** none

Casting portal opens an interdimensional connection between two places on the same plane of existence, allowing travel between the locations in either direction. The portal itself is a circular hoop or disk from 5 to 20 feet in diameter (caster's choice), oriented in the direction you desire when it comes into existence (typically vertical and facing you). It is a two-dimensional window and anyone or anything that moves through is shunted instantly to the other side. The portal has a front and back. Creatures moving through the portal from the front are transported to the other location: creatures moving from the back are not.

The interdimensional connection is forged through the Astral Plane, so anything that blocks astral travel will also block the usage of the portal. Much like the teleportation spell, you must have a clear idea of the location and layout of the destination. You cannot create a portal if you don't know where the terminus will end up. The clearer your mental image, the more likely the portal will form. Areas of strong physical or magical energies may make traversing a portal more hazardous or even impossible. Use the following table to determine the success of the portal's opening.

Destination Familiarity	Successful Portal	Failed Portal
Very familiar	01-97	98-100
Studied carefully	01-94	95-100
Seen casually	01-88	89-100
Viewed once	01-76	77-100
Description	01-60	61-100

Reference: DragonLance Campaign Setting, pg. 108 (This material is taken from the DragonLance Campaign setting where it is called Fistandantilus' Portal.)

RENEW THE LAND

School conjuration (creation); **Level** druid 6

Casting Time 60 minutes

Components V, S, M (any seed pod)

Range touch

Target 1 square mile/level

Effect See text

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** none

Taking the seed pod in one and making the prerequisite gestures in the other, you cause the area affected to experience an immediate renewal of all natural life (animal and plant).

SPECIAL MATERIAL: GLASSTEEL

Glassteel may be created via one of two methods: Through an alchemical process requiring extensive knowledge of both metallurgy and glassblowing or by the 6th-level arcane spell of the same name (cf. glassteel). Glassteel combines strength beyond iron with the transparency of glass. It most commonly finds use as a building material in fantastic castles, but it can also be fashioned into weapons and armor (although plain glassteel armor is much more costly to craft than even the most ornate armor). Glassteel is stronger and lighter than iron and completely transparent, lacking the greenish tint of common glass. Colored or tinted glassteel may be created using slight variations of either method. Glassteel may be textured from rough to smooth.

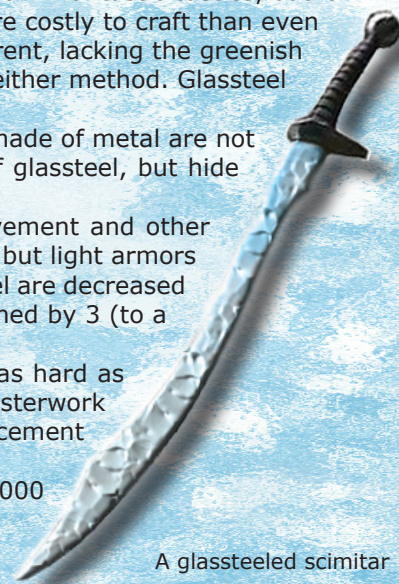
Items made of glassteel weigh only half what they otherwise would. Items not primarily made of metal are not meaningfully affected by being partially made of glassteel. (A breastplate can be made of glassteel, but hide armor cannot.)

Glassteel armor counts as one armor category lighter than normal for purposes of movement and other limitations. Heavy armors are treated as medium, and medium armors are treated as light, but light armors are still treated as light. Arcane spell failure chances for armors and shields made of glassteel are decreased by 10%, maximum Dexterity bonus is increased by 2, and armor check penalties are lessened by 3 (to a minimum of 0).

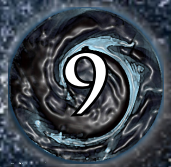
Glassteel has hardness 20 and 40 hit points per inch of thickness. This means that it is as hard as adamantite but much lighter. Weapons and armor fashioned from glassteel are treated as masterwork items with regard to creation times, but the masterwork quality does not affect the enhancement bonus of weapons or the armor check penalty of armor.

Item Cost Modifier: light armor +2,000 gp, medium armor +6,000 gp, heavy armor +12,000 gp, shield +2,000 gp, weapon +500 gp, other items +100 gp/lb.

Reference: Champions of Valor (WotC), pg. 65.



A glasssteeled scimitar



Plants and trees are immediately restored to perfect health and any that bear nuts or fruit are immediately bountifully laden. Any plants or trees that have been cut back or down in the past month are immediately restored to full life. This spell works as well on both fresh and salt water bodies as it does land.

Insects and animals (Int 3 and lower) are returned to full vigorous health with any that have been slain in the past month also being returned to full life.

This spell never causes more life to be renewed than could sustain itself for a month in the environment. It will not bring life to barren deserts (though it would affect an oasis) or to bare lifeless stone.

Any area suffering the effects of any form of magical blight must make an opposed caster level check or have that blight removed and the land renewed.

SUSPENSION

School transmutation; **Level** sorcerer/ wizard 4

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (small leather loop suspended from a bent wire of gold)

Range touch

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

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

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** none

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

This spell can be made permanent with a permanency spell. (HR)

Reference: Shining South (WotC), pg. 51. Additionally as a house rule it has been modified to allow it to be made permanent.

TEMPORAL STASIS, GREATER

School transmutation; **Level** sorcerer/ wizard 9

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (powdered diamond, emerald, ruby, and sapphire dust worth 5,000 gp contained in a platinum coated glassteel hourglass worth at least 2,500gp.)

Range touch

Target creature or object touched

Duration see text

Saving Throw Fortitude negates (object); **Spell Resistance** Yes (object)

Like the spell temporal stasis, you use this spell to place something into suspended animation. But instead of the target being a creature only, it can be anything—living or nonliving. When cast on an object, any magical properties are suspended (but not dispelled). Potions cannot be opened, the text of magical scrolls is too fuzzy to read, magic items do not operate, etc. At your discretion, you can set a condition or time whereby the spell's magic releases the target. This

is done verbally at the end of the spell's casting and must be specific if a condition. For example, you might cast the spell on a king and state, "You are freed when the nations of Forann and Bretin make peace with each other." Or if the target is a magic sword, you might state, "You are freed when the youngest son of the Diranges family enters this chamber." Whether or not you choose to affix a condition to the spell, the magic of greater temporal stasis cannot be otherwise removed (such as by a successful *dispel magic* spell or a *freedom* spell).

Reference: Behind the Spells Compendium (Tricky Owlbear Publishing), pg. 90.

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RACES OF OERTH

The Baklunish

By Dennis Lovatt

Art by Adam Koča & Rick Miller



The modern Bakluni, from Yecha to the southern reaches of Ull, trace their lineage back to the alabaster cities of the fabled Baklunish Empire. With a history measured in centuries, this ancient nation consist of all the lands stretching along the Dramidj Ocean and from the distant Baklhaut Mountains in the mythic west, to the Flanness heartlands in the east. The legendary elemental mages of the empire bound dijinni and elemental alike to the task of creating wondrous things to "prove" that this empire would stand the wrath of time itself. Everything fell before the power of the great empire, until it encountered another empire that was following the same manifest destiny, the Suel Imperium. The stage was set for these two mammoth empires to wage a war on a scale that was, thus far, unseen upon the world of Oerth.

Sixty-three years of war saw brave, new heroes rise to godhood and moldy, old gods crumble into ash. In the end, the two empires unleashed their doomsday weapons upon each other in an event that has become known as the "Twin Cataclysms." When the smoke finally cleared, the Suel Imperium was left an ashen waste and the Baklunish were scattered to the four winds. Today the Baklunish are still haunted by the memory of what was and the loss of an empire that has shaped each nation that has followed, with each seeking some claim to the Enlightened Throne.

APPEARANCE

The Baklunish people fall within the norms of most human races, with their height being anywhere from 5' to 6'6" tall and their weight ranging from 140-225 lbs.

The Bakluni have a skin almost golden in hue, with hair ranging from blue-black to dark brown. Their eyes are most often green, gray-green, gray or hazel, with a rare jade-green being the most prized. Children born with such eyes are seen as a blessing.

Though almost unheard of, golden eyes have cropped up from time to time among the Bakluni and these almost always indicate a child with Djinni bloodlines.

PERSONALITY AND CULTURE

Spread across the eastern expanse of the region known as the Baklunish Basin, the Bakluni cultures are diverse and the varying personalities are shaped by the environments in which they dwell. Despite these differences the Baklunish people do have common threads which link them together as a race. The Bakluni are, in general, a contemplative people, carefully thinking matters through before acting. Even the most brazen chieftain of the Tiger Nomads, or Ullish Warlord, thinks upon any impending action, for to court failure is to stain one's honor.

Following the precepts known as the "Four Feet of the Dragon," people of Baklunish descent follow these maxims: Honor, Family, Generosity and Piety. While the other races of the Flanaess have an understanding of these concepts, the Bakluni people give them a much deeper meaning.

To the Bakluni, honor determines how a man carries out the activities of his day. It entails keeping one's word, not acting cowardly, comporting oneself as due his station in life. These are the acts of an honorable man.

Even a bandit can act honorably and yet still be a bandit. Honor is the first -- and for some -- the most important foot of the dragon and for this very reason. A man might be impious, or a miser and might even treat his family poorly and yet still be seen as a man. But if a man acts without honor, then he is a cur to be beaten and killed, as one would kill any vermin.

An honorable man seeks the deep roots that only family can provide. He honors his parents and grandparents by marrying a woman of mutual standing who has conducted herself honorably, who has a family that is also honorable. Children bring wealth to a man and his wife that is beyond the measure of coin. An Honorable man magnifies his grace and standing by taking care of his family and seeing to their needs. He sees his children get good educations, his daughters married to honorable men from good families, his sons taught the ways of honor and family, so they may stand as men worthy of their father's name. A Bakluni man takes care of his parents,

his brothers and sisters, his aunts and uncles, if they are, by fate's hand or by age, unable to do so themselves. Family can be a broad term which can also mean the employees of a merchant, warriors in a mercenary company, even the followers of a bandit lord. In these cases, the leader will often treat his men in the same fashion he'd treat his children; He'd see they were properly wed, given a nest egg to start out in married life, etc . . .

While wealth does not always find those that spend a lifetime in hard work, generosity is not limited to the coin in one's pouch. An honorable man is generous with his time, helping his neighbors and friends, giving advice to those that seek it, allowing them to profit from the wisdom Istus has shown to him and he does not shirk from giving what food he can to those in need. Hoarding food, or coin, is frowned upon and often is the first step to ruination in the folktales retold by the bards of the region. The generous man, it is said, sees that which he gives returned tenfold when his time of need arises.

Piety, while the last of the dragon's feet, plays an important role in the lives of the Bakluni people. An honorable man pays homage to the gods that stand in judgment of his life: Istus, the Spinner of Fate, Al'Akbar, the Restorer of Righteousness, Xan Yae, the Lady of Perfection, Zuoken, the Lady's Hand, Geshtai the Lady of the Living Waters.

While one god, or goddess, may have a higher standing in the eye of any given person, it is a fool that cuts off his nose to spite of his face. Only the Mullahs of a given deity can focus all of their devotion to a single god. The average Bakluni offers prayers to all of the gods, in order to ensure that no slight, or insult, is given to any and to guard against the fickle hand of fate turning against them. Even during times of both drought and an abundance of water, pious Bakluni make offerings to Sevelkhar, the Waster, so as to keep him at bay. An old Bakluni saying says it all; "Trust in Istus, but tie up your camel."

Culturally turbans and keffiyehs are the common head wear for men, with Hijabs being the choice of women. Loose fitting pants and shirts are the style, with robes (light in deserts/plains regions and thicker in the more northern/mountainous regions) worn over them.

Most Baklunish warriors favor lighter armor than the heavy plate armor of the east. Preferred weaponry consists of spears, lances and composite bows, with personal weaponry being all manner of curved swords, such as Scimitars, Tulwars, Saifs, Shamshirs and Kilij. Even those who are not well trained carry a Jambiya, which is little more than a curved dagger.

RELIGION

Though not a massive pantheon, the gods of the Bakluni are well represented in the daily lives of their people. They pay respect to their deities with a wide variety of offerings and obeisances. With Piety being a trait to which all honorable Bakluni aspire, or at least want to appear to aspire, it is not surprising that the temples and their mullahs discuss passionately the nature of orthodoxy and the truest path by which divine enlightenment can be reached. This religious passion, while a noble thing, can lead some to rationalize deeds from which even the most devout Mullah would recoil.

It is upon these throes of religious passion that fiends of hell and the abyss gain footholds upon Oerth and cults arise as dark reflections of the Bakluni gods. Graz'zt makes a dark mockery of Istus, uttering his own blasphemous commands to the eager ears of cultists who foolishly believe they are doing the Lady of Fate's bidding. It is for this reason that the Baklunish region suffers a larger quantity of cults than do most other regions and it is why the Mullahs are swift to punish these tools of heresy. It is perhaps this very adversarial environment that caused the first Hakima to be blessed with "The Sight."

A word originally in ancient Baklunish meaning wise, or insightful, Hakimas were often women skilled in midwifery. Most temples had Hakimas on staff and even the poorest of villages boasted at least one such woman. Searches in the ancient records of the Empire revealed no precedent, so it is believed that the Sight is a recent development. Hakimas are gifted with the ability to see and hear the truth of matters and even the most skilled liar cringes at the presence of these wise women. In the years since their first appearance, Hakimas have become the "one honest soul" who can speak out with impunity against the edicts of the Mullahs, the deeds of the military, even the laws of the Caliph. For their part, the Hakimas have taken this change in stride and treat the gift of the Sight as an honor and duty and while there are always rumors, no case of a Hakima being stripped of the Sight has ever been confirmed.

PROFESSIONS, SKILLS AND CULTURAL FOIBLES

The Baklunish people have, by dint of centuries of existence and weight of tradition, shaped themselves for their place in this world. This shaping has given them advantages in certain professions and skills. All Baklunish gain a +2 racial bonus to Knowledge (Religion) checks. Those Baklunish born in the sprawling cities are also adept in the fine Baklunish art of haggling and spotting a good deal. Such urban Baklunish gain a +2 racial bonus to Diplomacy (when using the skill for negotiations) and appraisal checks. Conversely, the Baklunish born outside the great cities are less concerned with bargaining and more focused on horseflesh. Rural Baklunish gain a +2 racial bonus to Ride and Handle Animal checks.

Not all of this shaping has been beneficial, as a people the Baklunish are insular and superstitious by nature. Foreigners, while not mistreated, are kept at arm's length and this standoffish nature results in a -2 racial penalty for Baklunish on all diplomacy checks involving foreigners. The threat of demonic and diabolic influences have made the Bakluni wary and mindful of the signs taught to them by their parents and grandparents. Few Bakluni, man or woman, leaves the house in the morning without a token of good luck on their person. Be it an iron nail bent into a ring, a bronze eye worn on a necklace made of woven hair or a lucky copper piece, these tokens are an important security blanket for the superstitious Bakluni. If deprived of this token, a Bakluni grows nervous and somewhat jumpy, resulting in a -2 penalty to all charisma-based skill checks, until the token is reclaimed.





FIGHTING STYLES

The Baklunish warrior is the undeniable master of mounted combat. Be it with a lance, bow, or scimitar and shield, the Baklunish do it best when on horseback. The Bakluni recurved Bow, or horse bow, is the weapon of choice for the mounted archer. The limbs of the bow seem short, but this is an illusion, precipitated by the severe curve the limbs. The lamination process used to construct the bow gives it the strength and thus the distance, to rival the eastern composite bows, yet allows it to serve expertly for horseback archers. The one flaw, of the otherwise masterful design, lies in the strings. These wound strips of catgut work well, but begin to deteriorate in an overly damp environment. It is common for archers, who favor the horse bow, to carry two bows; one strung and one unstrung, plus several replacement strings.

As mentioned above, the Scimitar (and its cousins) is the blade of choice in the Baklunish west and has been so for several centuries. Various fighting styles, involving the sweeping style of the blade, are favored, which maximizes the weapon's powerful slashing ability. While most favor a light shield in partnership with the scimitar, a few nimble warriors take up a second blade, sometimes a Jambiya, or a short thrusting sword and, at other times, another scimitar of equal size and arc. This dual weapon style, called Kasirga -- ancient Baklunish for Whirlwind -- is a powerful and dramatic style,

but requires plenty of room to use properly. A more compact style of dual fighting using the Jambiya, called Yuzlu -- ancient Baklunish for two-fang -- is favored by urban warriors. While it has less power than the wide sweeping strikes used in the Kasirga style, it takes up less room and is more viable in the twisting alleyways of the Baklunish Cities.

RACIAL FEATS

These are racial feats any Baklunish character can take with their bonus human feat.

DUSTBORN [HERITAGE]

You are a child of the desert and know its ways.
Benefit: +2 to survival checks in desert terrain
Special: Can only be taken at 1st level

ELEMENTAL FOCUS [GENERAL]

You have been riding horses since before you could walk.
Benefit: grants a +2 bonus to ride and to handle animal checks when dealing with horses.
Special: Can only be taken at 1st level

GESHTAI'S GRACE [HERITAGE]

The goddess of the living waters has blessed your birth.

Benefit: +2 to swim checks and need consume only half the amount of water than other humans

Special: Can only be taken at 1st level.

INVOCATED SCAR [HERITAGE]

The energies of the Invoked Devastation, which tore apart the great Empire, still linger within you and are manifested in the birthmark scar that you bear.

Benefit: You receive a +2 bonus to Intimidate checks (+4 vs. any Baklunish). You also add a +2 to the DC of Save throws for any spell with the Fear descriptor you cast. You also receive a -2 to all Diplomacy checks made against any Bakluni who see, or know, of your scar.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

JINNBOND [HERITAGE]

You are descended from the genies summoned to Oerth by the ancient Baklunish, in the days of the Suel-Baklunish wars. You might bear some physical, or psychological, mark of your ancestry; such as a fiery disposition, thanks to an Efreeti ancestor, or uniformly blue eyes, from the blood of a Marid.

Benefit: Select one type of genie: Dao (earth), Djinni (air), Efreeti (fire), or Marid (water). The benefits of this feat vary by the type of your genie ancestor.

Dao: You receive a +4 bonus on Saving throws against earth effects and Fortitude saves made to resist petrification. You also add +2 to the DC of saving throws for any spell, with the earth descriptor, that you cast as a sorcerer. This benefit stacks with the Spell Focus and Greater Spell Focus feats if the spell you cast is from your chosen school.

Djinni: You receive a +4 bonus on Saving throws against air effects and the following spells: acid fog, call lightning, cloudkill, stinking cloud, and storm of vengeance. You also add +2 to the DC of Saving throws for any spells, with the Air descriptor, that you cast as a sorcerer. This benefit stacks with the Spell Focus and Greater Spell Focus feats if the spell you cast is from your chosen school.

Efreeti: You receive a +4 bonus on Saving throws against fire effects. You also add +2 to the DC of Saving throws for any spells, with the Fire descriptor, that you cast as a sorcerer. This benefit stacks with the Spell Focus and Greater Spell Focus feats if the spell you cast is from your chosen school.

Marid: You receive a +4 bonus on Saving throws against water effects and the following spells: acid fog, cone of cold, horrid wilting, ice storm, and sleet storm. You receive a +2 bonus on Constitution checks made to resist drowning. You also add +2 to the DC of Saving throws for any spells, with the water descriptor, that you cast as a sorcerer. This benefit stacks with the Spell Focus and Greater Spell Focus feats if the spell you cast is from your chosen school.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

MARKET WISE [GENERAL]

You know your way around business negotiations.

Benefit: You receive a +2 bonus on Appraise Checks, Bluff checks and Diplomacy checks related to business dealings.

SADDLE BORN [HERITAGE]

You have been riding horses since before you could walk.

Benefit: grants a +2 bonus to ride and to handle animal checks when dealing with horses.

Special: Can only be taken at 1st level

SANDSKIN [HERITAGE]

You are a Bakluni who was raised in the deserts of the Dry Steppes. The harsh storms have toughened you.

Benefit: You have a +1 natural armor class bonus.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character

TOUCH OF SIGHT [HERITAGE]

Your mother was a Hakima and you were born with a touch of her sight.

Benefit: You receive a +2 to Initiative rolls and Spot checks.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

THE WASTERS BOND [HERITAGE]

While many Bakluni pay lip service to Sevelkhar, to stave off his wrath, you have been born with a touch of the waster within them.

Benefits: All diseases, poisons and dehydration effects take twice as long to effect you. For effects that are Instantaneous, delay the onset time one hour per constitution bonus. If onset time is 1 minutes, triple the time frame, if hours, make it days and if days, make it weeks. The character suffers penalties slowly and damages are drawn out to make the character suffer longer. This allows the character to be healed when time would otherwise be detrimental. While most people are less in tune with such supernatural afflictions, animals can sense it and you receive a -2 to all handle animal checks.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

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THE BAKLUNISH PANTHEON

Al'Akbar; (LG; god of guardianship, faithfulness, dignity, duty)

Azor'alq; (NG; god of light, purity, courage, strength)

Daoud; (N; god of humility, clarity, immediacy)

Geshtai; (N; goddess of lakes, rivers, and wells)

Istus; (N; goddess of fate and destiny)

Mouqol; (N; god of trade, negotiation, ventures, appraisal, reciprocity)

Xan Yae; (N; goddess of twilight, shadows, stealth, mind over matter, etc.)

Zuoken; (N; god of monks, mental powers, physical and mental mastery)

RACES OF OERTH

The Flannae

By Dennis Lovatt

Art by Adam Koča & Rick Miller



It is widely documented that the Flannae people are natives of the Flannaes. Hence the name given to the lands even by the Oeridian conquerors.

Rumors persist that one time long ago perhaps before the nation of Caerdiralor took shape. That the Olman, and Touv people occupied a stretch of land that occupied much of the southern Flannaes. While no sages can prove the validity of this claim a case can be made that the ancient Flan could of seized these lands from the fleeing Olman and Touv people. After all many a Touv and Olman god mimic aspects of the Flannae own pantheon.

Perhaps a relation to Mok'Slyk and the Serpent of Touv myth Meyanok bare some resemblance though Meyanok was not known as a purveyor of magic. Though he was directly responsible for the birth of three gods Vara, Damaran and Berna. Vara has aspects closely aligned to that of Incabulos especially in the deliverance of nightmares. One could argue that each pantheon has gods or goddess that can be crossed referenced with the gods of other pantheons. However, many can directly see the influence of Flannae myth in every other human culture bordering or occupying the Flannaes. However, were the Flannae inspired by a pantheon of gods from another origin?

Many sages discredit any notion that such a scenario ever existed as no recorded documentation of the presence of Olman or Touv culture has ever been seen in the Flannaes. Proof of Touv and Olman cultures have prevailed in the Amedio Jungle and there are no signs that these people did not originate from these lands.

Many agree that the Old Faith is the bastion of Flannae worship, even to this day. However, some text remain that show demonic like beings where accepted in the old faith and being part of mans primal nature. The Old Faith coexisted with these obyryth, and later tanaric beings. Many paid lip service to appease these ancient brethren. Others worshipped them like gods and made pacts to gain power and influence from these beings. Some appeared to be less diabolical in their treatment of the Flan people.

Mok'slyk the Serpent is thought to have granted the Flan people with the knowledge of arcane magic. Though Flannae religion shows us that Boccob is the god of magic. In ancient texts from the church itself show that Boccob once trapped a demon of unknown origin that was more powerful then Boccob at this time. It is believe he gleaned enough magical power over these thousand years of the demonic creatures capture. This could explain how Mok'slyk stopped influencing the Flan in his teachings on magic. With Boccob now in place as the deity of magic Mok'slyk waned in power. Hoping to recoup what was taken from him in his thousand years of captivity. It would also explain how Boccob would have little need for worshippers as his power was siphoned from another powerful being.

Throughout the history of the peaceful Flannae. There always existed some outside influence over how their nations where formed. Caerdiralor was formed by dark priests and mystics who's primary worship of Tiamat, absconded with the teachings of the Old Faith. Perhaps it was the pantheon of the Old Faith, that was behind the mysterious force which devastated their capital of Mysyrna. Forcing the survivors to cross the Sea of Gearnat.

The six great realms of the grass sea lived in tune with nature. Until the survivors of Caerdiralor reared their ugly heads and influenced Sulm in becoming yet another representation of Ur-Flan power. Perhaps the Old Faith was testing their people the dark priests and mystics of Caerdiralor cemented themselves into seats of power among the Sulmi. The Flan grew in power and once the Old Faith became threatened to obscurity, Shattados would don the Scorpion crown, the Isles of Woe would sink. The rampant lion of the Aerdy would lay claim to the Flannaes, and many of the gods of the Flannae would be incorporated into the pantheon of their conquerors. Coincidence highly unlikely.

Many Flan nation's existed at some point, Exag is one of them, however Exag was greatly influenced by the crafters and little is heard of Flan culture in the city of clay except its influence in Perrenland. The Vast Swamp was or is the home of

Acerak, a cambion demilich who constructed his own labyrinth for which every artisan or worker who aided in its construction was locked away within its clutches. Acerak would soon follow never a true empire in itself. Many adventurers deemed it the Tomb of Horrors for the atrocities committed and experienced by those who entered the wretched place.

The Kings of Burgess were the last of the just and noble nations to fall to Vecna's spider throne. The nations of Fleeth and Almadia where intertwined those with the death of the princess of Fleeth Almadia was on its own to defend itself from the spider throne. Vecna sort his vengeance against the city of Fleeth. Once he slayed all her people save a few nobles who submitted themselves to his mercy Vecna took Almadia and then set his sights on Burgess. The only true threat to his reign at the time of his Occluded Empire.

Nuria was a contemporary of six realms of the grass sea and the Isles of Woe. It traded magical wonders with the citadel of Veralos. ultimately it would be consumed into the Great Kingdom. Believed to have existed in what is now the Kingdom of Nyron. The Flan population would intermingle with their oeridian conquerors and become willing citizens of The Great Kingdom.

Perhaps one of the most troublesome of the lost Flan nations are the /tyrants of Trask. Believed to have existed around the Trask River in modern day North Kingdom. The Tyrants of Trask were responsible for the attacks on the elven city of Summer Stars. Evil and bellicose beyond refute the invading oerids of house Naelax, had little choice but to wipe them from the face of Oerth. Destroying much of their magic and writings.

Last in the line of benevolent Flannae rulers, Ehliisa the Enchantress lived in what is now know as the United Kingdom of Ahliisa some 1,700 years ago, and continued to reign in her prehistoric kingdom for several centuries more. Queen Ehliisa has no issues, she keep song birds as pets. During her reign her people knew peace and none of her subjects knew poverty or hunger. Fair but ruthless, willing to use her artifact, Queen Ehliisa's Marvelous Nightingale to magically bend her subjects to her will. Her reign lasted up until the Great Migrations, during her reign she managed to prevent the force locked away in her Nightingale from escaping. Presumably dead none truly know what happen to Queen Ehliisa or her famed Nightingale. Little to noting remains of Flan culture in this region. Long ago Suel and oerid migrations took their toll on her Kingdom. Becoming part of the Great Kingdom of the Aerdy, and recently The United Kingdom of Ahliisa.

APPEARANCE

The Flannae people are recognizable by their bronze complexions and wavy or curly hair. With strong angular features and heavy brows, most Flan are easily discernible from other human racial types. They tend to be of average to stocky build, sturdy and somewhat hirsute; they are anything but the prototypical human type these days.

Male Flannae average between 5' 3" to 5' 6" tall and weigh between 150-180 lbs. Female Flannae average between 4'8" to 5'2" tall and weigh between 110-130 lbs. Of course, taller

and heavier Flannae are possible.

Their eyes are most commonly dark brown or black, brown and amber appearing less frequently. Their hair color is usually black but also ranges through shades of black-brown, dark brown and brown. Curly and wavy hair is usual, but some Flan have taken to straightening out there hair in recent times.

The original Flan nomads of a millennium ago wore simple, utilitarian clothing including loincloths, capes and leather wrappings on their feet that served as shoes. They also wore brightly colored body paints, primarily vermilion and yellow ochre, in primitive patterns, a practice still common among the surviving Rovers of the Barrens. In civilized regions, Flan clothing tends to follow current fashion, though they still tend to prefer solid, bright primary colors.

PERSONALITY AND CULTURE

Flan are reclusive, independent, secretive, quiet, practical, hard-working and reserved. Flan are natural hunters and gatherers, imbued with survival instincts most learn to live off the land. Flan tend to eat lean even when there is an over abundance of food available. Many Flan prefer water or milk to alcoholic beverages, though some places especially in Geoff and Sterich, mead and ale have become common place. Flannae are known for their enjoyment of nature, wind instruments, hunting, gathering, dancing, storytelling, and family ancestry. All Flan appear to be unemotional or slow to speak, however those that succeed in gaining there trust can find themselves a loyal, passionate, and jovial friend. Of all the human sub-races the Flan are more inclined to work and live among the demi-human races.

Few nations boast a large Flan population these days. Geoff, Sterich, Perrenland, and the Wolf nomads sport Flan people mostly mixed with people of other human ethnicities. Only the Rover's of the Barrens and the people of Tehn sport a significant stock of pure Flan-blooded people these days.

The ancient Flan were able to carve out some of the most successful and impressive nations known to man-kind. Ahliisa, Caerdiralor, The Isles of Woe, The Occluded Empire, Tostenhca, Sulm, and Itar.

The Kingdom of Caerdiralor was the seat of Ur-Flan power. Absconding from the Flan coexistence with nature. The ur-Flan delved deeply into the dark arts and sort to use the destructive force of nature to bend all to their will. Worship of Tiamat being paramount to their society. Many other obscure demonic and or immortal powers influenced them as well. Mok'slyk the Serpent seemed to be influential in gifting the ancient Flan people with the arcane arts. The true nature of Mok'slyk is unknown. Though his influence amongst all the Flan people is well documented throughout history. Caerdiralor meet its end during its genocidal campaign against its gnomish and dwarven neighbors. It was an unknown catastrophe of their capital city of Myrsyrna that ended the genocidal war, and had the surviving elite fleeing across the Sea of Gearnat to the Lands of the Rhugha.

Meanwhile in the lands known as the Bright Desert, tribes of Flan people began to embrace the teachings of Vathris the Maker, the Subtle Teacher. Born a mortal, Vathris raised



himself to the cusp of immortality, through his knowledge, deeds and wisdom. Embracing the ideals of progress and ingenuity. Under Vathris guidance the six great tribes of the grass-sea became six realms.

The six realms at that time were known as Itar, Sulm, Rhugha, Ronhass, Durha, and Truun. Itar was chief among these six realms as they embraced the teachings of Vathris wholeheartedly. Many of the other tribes struggled to shed their past beliefs and the most resistant of those realms were the Rhugha and the Ronhass. Strange that two of the most prominent realms in the great grass sea choose to war against each other on a mere slight that none can recall. If not for the interference of the other four realms the Ronhass would surely have fallen into obscurity. The only way to keep peace among the six realms was to divide a line directly through the lands of the Rhugha and Ronhass. The Truun were gifted this realm to maintain the peace. Gifted horsemen themselves and outnumbering both the Rhugha and Ronhass in size made the Truun the most reasonable choice to police these realms.

Though peace would not last that long. The dark mystics and priests of Caerdiralor found their way into the nobility of Sulm ears. They whispered honeyed words of peace and progress. Instead they used their knowledge of iron-craft and secretive dark magic's to influence Sulm away from the teachings of Vathris. Sulm's nobility enthralled by the advances in magic and technology brought to them by the Caerdiralor's, sought to control the six realms and make them into one mighty nation.

Sulm would rule over the six realms uniting them in bloodshed under one banner. Despite the numerous nations of horsemen that opposed them. Sulm's iron-shod legions proved too much for the other realms. The Itari posed the greatest threat to Sulm's machinations of dominance over the great grass sea. The decades long war ended when Vathris divine spark was ended by a dark wicked barbed longspear. In vengeance for Itar's tenacious defense, Sulm's wicked sorcerer-king ordered the destruction of Itar's capital Sennerae. An earthquake summoned by the dark mystics of Sulm brought the towering cliffs of Sennerae down into the deep blue void of the Sea of Gearnat.

Sulm would fall due to the machinations of their last king Shattados. Five hundred years after Keraptis was named protector over the Flan nation of Tostenhca. Shattados would don the Scorpion crown gifted to him by the lord of entropy himself, Tharizdun. The people were transformed into manscorpions and dune stalkers, while Sulm's grass sea quickly converted into the sands which make up the lands of the Bright Desert today.

Tostenhca was a military protectorate under the leadership of Keraptis, the people saw great strides in production of mineral wealth, hanging gardens of agricultural sciences, and craftsmens ship that could rival those of dwarven and gnomish races. They also saw the height in taxation that was strictly enforced by Keraptis regime. Keraptis made good on his threats to those who failed to follow his strict tyrannical orders. Though the city saw its greatest success under Keraptis rule. His over taxation and cruelty were ultimately his

downfall. The people revoked and under the leadership of the High priest Gethrun Shoiraine destroyed the wizard hierarchy and laid siege to Keraptis keep. Defeated Keraptis fled to the south with his gnomish minions.

Three hundred years later, Keraptis would enact his revenge using the power from the Null Enigma found under White Plume Mountain, Keraptis cursed Tostenhca. Which led to the death of Tostenhca's inhabitants. Tostenhca was lost and forgotten save for the rumors of its gold laden rooftops and unsurpassed wealth. Many an adventurer has met their end searching for the lost wealth of Tostenhca. Where once a proud and striving Flan nation stood only a cursed and kobold infested place remain. Now referred to in the cold tongue as Skrellingshald "the cursed Flan hold".

Veralos the Lost Citadel of the Flan, was a fortress built upon the edge of the Rift Canyon in ancient times and paid fealty to the wizards priests of the Isles of Woe. Elite scholars, artisans and mystics from all walks of life were sent here to develop their craft for the betterment of all Flan-kind. Though the wizard priests of the isles of Woe were well entrenched into Veralos social structure. Little discovered behind its fortified walls escaped their attention. Well after The Isles of Woe plunged beneath its watery depths into oblivion. Veralos continued on, though fearful of the rampant lion, nearing closer to its hallowed walls. Veralos would unknowingly release a sleeping power from within the Rift that would crumble the hidden citadel and its people for all time. Even with the successful foray initiated by the company of seven. Many scholars believe Veralos to be just another myth surrounded by an uninhabitable region of the Flannaes.

The "survivalist instinct" is forever present within the minds and hearts of the Flannae peoples and they find ways to co-exist in their lands regardless of their circumstances. Few nations of pure Flan decent survive these days save the Rovers of the Barren and Tenha. The Wolf nomads, The Sheldomar Valley, Perrenland, and the Theocracy of the Pale are proof that the survivalist instinct can prevail. While these nations are not of pure Flan descent they have intermingled with other human cultures cementing part of their religious and cultural influences amongst them all.

A great many Flannae grow-up to become farmers, herders, druids, bards, rangers, and mages of renown. Being instilled from early childhood with a profound respect for nature in all its forms. Flannae have studied the aspects of nature and their place in it at one time or another. Most Flannae have at least a rudimentary understanding of farming, herding, animal husbandry, agriculture, geography, and weather patterns. Many Flannae plant a tree in front of their homes or in a garden where they have easy access to. As long as the tree remains alive and well the place is considered safe. If the tree should be damaged or die it is considered a sign of bad luck and one should pick up and leave the place behind them.

The skill of manufacturing leather and wooden crafts is also highly respected among the Flannae peoples. Many a Flan has crafted a flute from a branch that had fell during a storm. Tanning was and still is a common practice of many Flannae people. The hides are highly prized for use as clothing and

armor. A naturally peaceful people, skills such as dancing and singing are often manifested in Flannae from all walks of life.

RELIGION

The Flannae peoples seem to have a particular fondness for gods representing nature. The Flannae Pantheon mostly consists of gods from the Old Faith. With Beory and Obad-Hai being the gods most commonly associated with the old faith. Over the years different cultures have altered the original gods associated with the Old Faith, save Beory and Obad-Hai who are always present among their number. The original gods where the center of it all Mother Beory, Father of Summer Obad-Hai, The Lord of Spring Pelor, The Autumn Lord Incabulos (in some Flan cultures he is replaced by the goddess Berei), and The Lord of Winter Nerull. Originally all were neutral aspects though Incabulos became associated with plagues and suffering, making many followers of the old faith wish for the Lord of Winter to end their suffering. As such every winter Obad -Hai is slain by the lord of winter. It is the lord of spring that releases Obad-Hai from the summer tree. He has Berei assist him with the burial of Obad-Hai. Where he is buried Mother Beory's tears revive him and a young sapling grows, which drops the fruit that hatches a young Obad-Hai once again in the spring. By the summer he is fully grown and strong, the Stag King, leading the wild hunt against those that would defile nature. During autumn he grows into a weathered old man, waiting for the winter lord to slay him once again. There is a belief amongst the Old Faith, that should Pelor fail to bury Obad-Hai after seven days. He will be gone forever, and Oerth will forever be plunged into an eternal winter.

The Flannae Pantheon consists of Allitur, Beory, Berei, Boccob, Celene, Earth Dragon Ehlonna, Grummush (amongst the early Flan he was thought a chief rival of Obad-Hai, in the old faith he was once known as the autumn lord, and was replaced by Incabulous after he established himself as the chief patron of the orcish pantheon), Obad-Hai, Pelor, Incabulous, Iuz, Krovis, Kyuss, Luna, Myhriss, Olidamarra, Rao, Red Fox, St. Cuthbert, The Serpent, Vathris, Vecna, and Zodal.

Beory, Boccob, Obad-Hai, St. Cuthbert, Pelor, and Rao are the primary recipients of Flannae worship in the Flannaess, though all the gods of the pantheon receive varying amounts of veneration, token though they may be. Many others have lost a direct association with the Flan pantheon and are not mentioned here. Though in truth about 90% of the Flan pantheon is considered part of the common pantheon of gods. As the oeridians stopped worshipping Sol and have fully adopted Pelor into their pantheon of gods. Beory is considered the mother of the gods, and only in the baklunish west is she known as Mother Geshtai foe of Sevelkar the waster, the baklunish name for Incabulos. the Flan may be the most diminished of the human races currently bordering or occupying the Flannaes. However, they have cemented their customs and traditions into every human species they have ever come across. Most notable of them all are the Oeridians, and to a lesser extent the Suloise people.

PROFESSIONS AND SKILLS

The Flannae have developed many and various skills over the centuries and in that time those professions and skills have changed little regardless of their location upon the Oerth -- as such all Flannae characters gain a + 2 racial bonus to two of the following skills: Knowledge (nature), Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (the planes), Survival, Handle Animal, Profession (tanner), Profession (animal breeder), Profession (grain farmer), Dancing, Singing, or Ride. These skills are considered Class Skills for all Flannae characters.

Flannae characters are so attuned to nature that many have learned languages common amongst the fey races. As such Flannae characters may take the Sylvan tongue as secondary language.

The ancient Flannae also dwelled and worshipped demons like they do gods these days. Many have learned the Abyssal tongue of demons and a few have learned the infernal languages of devils as a secondary language. Note: DM's may require one of the following feats to be taken (Taint of Tiamat, Mark of the Sibillant Beast, Mok'slyks Tongue) in order to explain where the character has developed their knowledge of these languages.

Flannae characters hailing from nations within the Sheldomar Valley may also take the Joten tongue -- or some other giant tongue -- as a secondary language. Many of these Flannae are exposed -- or have been exposed -- to atrocities dealt to them by giants, or other creatures driven from their homes by an invasion of giants.

FIGHTING STYLES

The ancient Flannae peoples where associated with primitive fighting styles, few of which see use today. Many Flannae where accomplished horsemen. Most preferred to ride into their opponents armed with spears, and axes. Some carried sickles to sacrifice their enemies to the old gods. Archery from horseback saw some usage mostly among the Itari and later by Sulmi. Now the modern day Rovers of the Barren seem to have continued this tradition which serves them well in maintaining their lands.

In Geoff and Sterich many of the Flan in these nations have adopted the sword as their main weapon. While it seems this tradition was inspired by the oerids of these lands, the Flan embody the spirit of their ancient brethren by running headlong into battle naked armed only with their swords. Two handed weapons have also become common place as they tend to be more useful in damaging the giants which hold these lands. Long-bowmen have just begun to see more usage as they allow one to keep a long distance from their enemy, short-bow use is more common especially when riding horseback.

The Wolf nomads favor the spear, throwing axe, and sling their ancestors used in battle. Some carry a spiked leather gauntlets, or the punching dagger and curved blades of their baklunish ancestors, alongside their wolf companions.

In Perrenland polearms see much use, especially amongst the mercenary companies. Mercenaries from Perrenland are highly valued in the armies they serve. Their ability especially

in defense measurements are highly sort after. Shortswords, axes, spears, shields, and hunting knives are also common place, with crossbows seeing little use in this region. The most skilled pikemen and halberdiers are often from Perrenland. Having pushed back many a marauding army. Most military men in Perrenland learned their craft as mercenaries. Fighting on the opposite sides of warring parties. However, it is the rare mercenary who fell's one of his kin. This has served them well when being hired to route fellow countrymen from the opposing army ranks. Only to find them bolstering the ranks of the mercenary army sent to dispose of them.

One thing that remains common amongst all Flan people is the use of light, or no armor. Most Flan despise the extra burden of heavy armor, and few would don any armor that weighs more than forty pounds.

Naval combat is something most Flan nations these days know little about. Many of their nations do not border large bodies of water capable of supporting naval units. In ancient times, the Isles of Woe and Caerdiralor supported naval units. Ahlissa presumably had the largest naval unit of all Flan nations. Though, they also saw little usage as naval combat was not as advanced as it is now in present day Oerth. Instead most naval units merely supported the transportation of troops. Perhaps naval units were more commonplace when the Pomarj was a heavily populated Flan nation. Though as far as historians can tell this area was populated by primitive isolationists who later were absorb into the migrating Suel population. Eventually only traces of Flan culture exist. With altars and shrines, devoting worship to the earth dragon paramount among these findings.

The Flan present in the Theocracy of the Pale have been absorbed into the Oeridian way of life. In truth little of their ways exist in the Pale these days. Many of their fighting formations and weapon usage mimics those of their Oeridian brethren.

RACIAL FEATS

The following is a list of racial and heritage feats that an Flannae character may take as his/her bonus feat.

BLOODLINE, CAERDIRALOR [HERITAGE]

While, some Flan from all walks of life are imbued with the blood line of Caerdiralor. You have a stronger connection traced back to a mixture of the Sulmi bloodline with the survivors who fled the doomed nation when they crossed the Sea of Gearnat.

Benefit: A Caerdiralor Flan receives a +2 to saves against spells from the necromantic school of magic. If they have the ability to cast spells they may add 1 to the DC rating of spells cast from the necromantic school of magic.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

BLOODLINE, ITARI [HERITAGE]

You are a descendant of the ancient Itari Flan whose forward-thinking permitted them access to the ways of Vathris the

maker.

Benefit: An Itari Flan receives +2 skill bonuses to both the Knowledge (nature) and Diplomacy skills. The character can easily sway someone's reaction by two categories for each successful Diplomacy roll.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. The characters Diplomacy score must be equal to, or greater than the characters level he is trying to persuade. Otherwise the characters Diplomacy can only improve reactions rolls by one category.

BLOODLINE, DURHA [HERITAGE]

You are a descendant of the Durha Flan, some of the most backward thinking and barbaric of the Flan people

Benefit: The Durha were some of the most determined warriors. However, determination and skill are two different things. As such these characters gain 1 extra hit point per character level.

Those with this bloodline may remain active at less than zero hit points with a successful Willpower save with a base DC of 12 plus the amount of damage suffered below zero. Example: Fleg was struck by a club bringing his hit point total to - 3 hit points. Fleg wills himself to maintain fighting on and rolls a 16 for his Will save to overcome his wounds. Since Fleg is at -3 hit points he needed a 15 to remain active. Fleg remains active and is not struck again in combat. However, he now requires a successful Willpower save DC 16 to continue fighting as he cannot become stable while remaining active in combat.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

BLOODLINE, RHUGHHA/ RONHASS [HERITAGE]

You are a descendant of the Rhughha/Ronhass Flan. While, the Rhughha and the Ronhass were both intimately related to each other by blood and tradition; the two were continuously at odds with each other. Many jest that the Rhughha and Ronhass were skilled horseman only because they were as stubborn as the mules they trained and lived with.

Benefit: A Rhughha/Ronhass Flan receives a +2 competence bonus to their Ride skill (horses) and Handle Animal skill (horses). They also receive a +2 to saves against spells or abilities to charm or enthrall them. Spells that control emotions can affect them if it induces anger.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. Diplomacy is never a class skill for a character with this bloodline. Diplomacy is treated as a non-class skill and receives all the limitations of a non-class skill for those with this bloodline regardless of which class they belong too.

BLOODLINE, SULMI [HERITAGE]

You are a descendant of the Sulmi Flan. The ancient Sulmi were always very ambitious; determined to complete a task no matter the cost. This endearing trait led them to incorporating the teachings of Caerdiralor into their society. However, some

pure strains of this bloodline exist.

Benefit: A Sulmi Flan receives a +4 insight bonus to any skill roll, once per day. This does not guarantee success but shows their determination in completing a task.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. The DM should penalize characters with this feat who give up a task too often or too easily.

BLOODLINE, TRUUN [HERITAGE]

You are a descendant of the Truun Flan. Much like the Rhugha/Ronhass, the ancient Truun were skilled horsemen that attacked in large groups. However, the Truun did not share the stubbornness their Rhugha and Ronhass brethren were famous for.

Benefit: A Truun Flan receives a +2 competence bonus to their Ride skill (horses) and Handle Animal skill (horses). A Truun that makes a successful Ride skill check in combat also receives a +1 competence bonus to attack rolls while on horseback.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

MARK OF THE SIBILANT BEAST [HERITAGE]

You bear the mark of Demogorgon, prince of all demons.

Benefit: A character with this feat can telepathically communicate with a creature in close range (25ft) much like a *detect thoughts* spell. A target's successful Willpower save prevents you from reading its thoughts; the save DC = character level + 2 + highest non-physical attribute bonus [Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma].

However, you also receive telepathic signals from all demon-kind. The latter is never at ease. You struggle to control the telepathic communication from demons, a successful Willpower save (DC demon's hit dice + charisma bonus) is required whenever the character wants to actively block out this telepathic communication. A failed Willpower save means the character cannot concentrate and becomes shaken (a -2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks), until a successful Willpower save is made. Because the character has a volatile nature he gains a +2 insight bonus to all Intimidate skill checks and his telepathic link with demon-kind grants him a +2 insight bonus to his Knowledge (the planes) skill checks. Because the character is telepathic he gains a +1 insight bonus to all initiative rolls.

However, the character always exudes a faint evil aura due to the mark, regardless of the characters actual alignment.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

MOK'SLYKS TONGUE [HERITAGE]

You were born with a slightly forked tongue, granting greater aptitude with magic.

Benefit: A character with Mok'slyk's Tongue gains +2 competence bonus to either his Knowledge (arcana) or Spellcraft skills. The character also gains a +1 to their caster level when overcoming resistance for spells cast with a verbal

component.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

OCCLUDED ANCESTRY [HERITAGE]

You share some ancestry with those that lent their magical might to the defense and expansion of Vecna's Occluded Empire.

Benefit: Vecna's Occluded Empire was well known for its use of dark and secretive magical might. As a descendant of this region you receive a +2 competence bonus to their Knowledge (arcana) and Knowledge (the planes) skills.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

OLD FAITH [HERITAGE]

While many modern day Flan follow many faiths, you follow the ancients ways of your people.

Benefit: A character with this feat receives a +2 competence bonus to their Knowledge (religion) and Knowledge (nature) skills.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character, must follow Old Faith.

TAINT OF TIAMAT [HERITAGE]

You bear the taint of Tiamat's followers.

Benefit: A character with this feat has slightly scaly skin that is noticeable by touch only and gains a +1 natural armor bonus. They also gain a +4 resistance bonus to one of the following energy types acid, electricity, fire, or frost.

Further, the character also receives a +2 insight bonus to all Sense Motive checks to detect malicious intents or auras, such as an evil spell or power register.

However, the character always exudes a faint evil aura due to the taint, regardless of the characters actual alignment.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

TOSTENCHA TOUCH [HERITAGE]

You bear the artifice and skill the the Tostencha people were famous for.

Benefit: This character may add +2 to one Craft skill of their choice. The character also gains a +2 to their Appraise skill checks.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

VATHRIS TEACHINGS [HERITAGE]

You have continued the original teachings of Vathris the Maker.

Benefit: A character with this feat may choose any two Knowledge skills and add a +2 competence bonus to those skills, or they make take one non-class knowledge skill and use it as a class skill without any penalty for skill improvement cost.

Then there are those who follow the teachings of Vathris as the god of lost causes and revenge. These latter characters

receive a +2 to saves against poison or magic that would bring them death or below zero hit points. They also stand a 20% chance of becoming stable when brought below zero hit points, instead of the normal 10% chance of most people.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

VERALOS SCHOLARLY INSTINCT [HERITAGE]

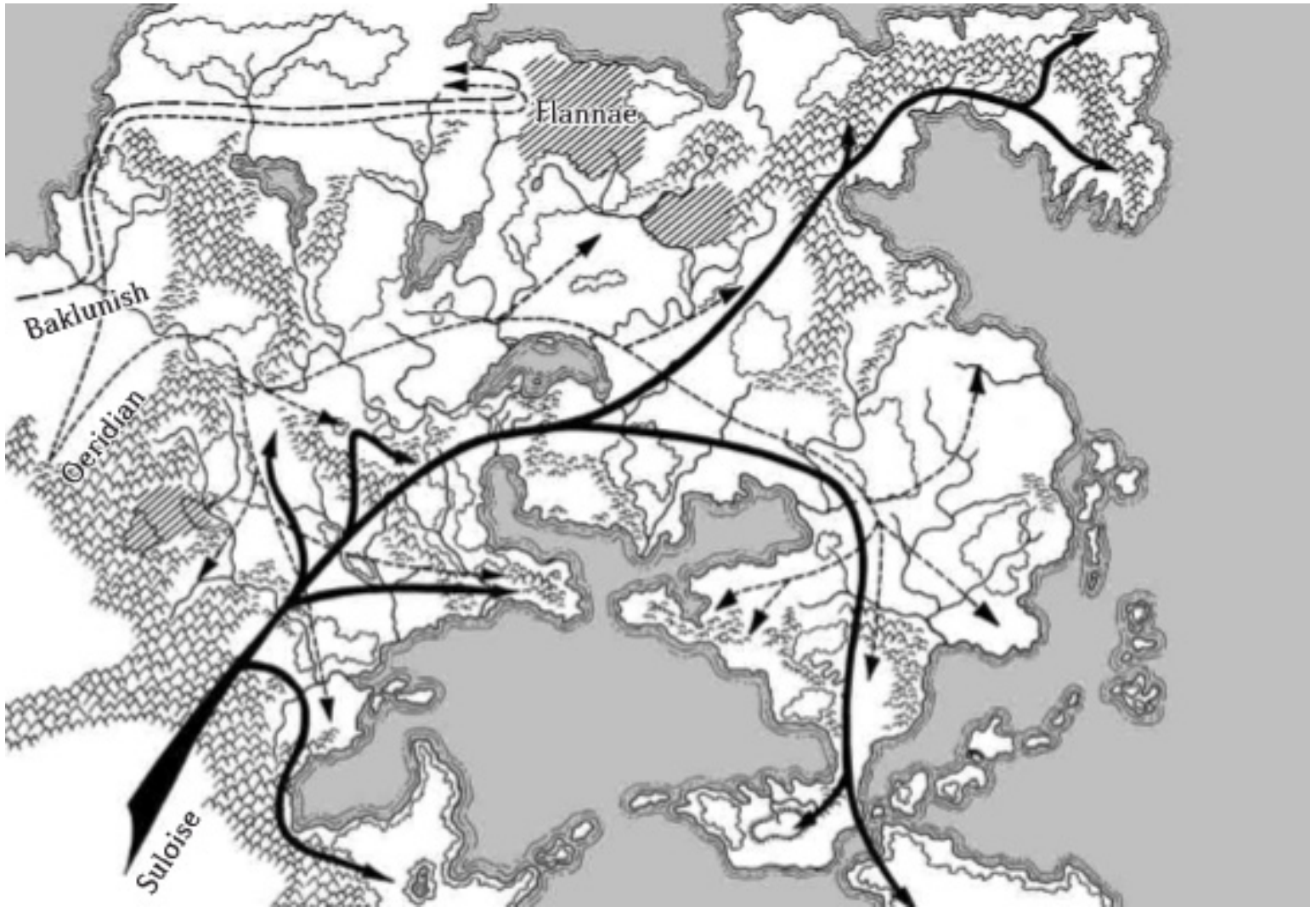
You are exceptionally skilled and versed in the workings of the world.

Benefit: A character with this feat gains 4 extra skill points at first level. He may distribute them as he sees fit into any Knowledge skills he has available to him based on his class. Also Knowledge skills can be increased by one more point than usually allowed per character level. A first level character with this feat may have a Knowledge skill with up to five ranks at first level.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

*

The modern Flanness is defined by the great migrations of the Oeridian, Baklunish, and Suloise races of humanity. As defined in Living Greyhawk Gazetteer pg. 4



THE FLAN PANTHEON

Allitur; (LG/LN; god of ethics and propriety)

Beory; (N; goddess of Oerth, nature, rain)

Berei; (NG; goddess of home, family, and agriculture)

Earth Dragon; (LE; god of earth, weather, hidden treasures)

Krovis; (N; god of halting the domination of the Flanaess)

Kyuss; (NE; god of creation and mastery of the undead)

Myhriss; (NG; goddess of love and beauty)

Nerull "The Reaper"; (NE; god of death, darkness, and the Underworld)

Obad-hai (N; god of nature, wildlands, freedom, and hunting)

Pelor; (NG; god of the sun, strength, light, and healing)

Rao; (LG; god of peace, reason, and serenity)

Red Fox; (CG; god of crafts, thievery)

The Serpent; (?; god of arcane magic)

Vathris; (LN; god of anguish, lost causes, revenge)

Vecna; (NE; god of destructive and evil secrets, magic, hidden knowledge, intrigue)

Zodal; (NG; god of mercy, hope, and benevolence)

RACES OF OERTH

The Oeridians

By Dennis Lovatt

Art by Adam Koča & Rick Miller



Some sages believe that the Oeridian peoples originated in a land once known as Orcreich lying far to the west, beyond the borders of the former Baklunish Empire. It is thought that the Oeridians were forced from these lands by an invasion of Orcs and Goblins.

Sages have found some support for this theory among the legends of the Orcs of the Pomarj. It is said among the Orcs there that after the conquest of Orcreich, by the Orc and Goblin hordes, the new rulers renamed the land Hurzak-Gur. It is also said that a particularly powerful Orog named Kiraly Ungash rules this humanoid nation at present.

But no one alive today can know the absolute truth of this matter, given the great distance involved, the hazards of traveling through these now broken lands and the fact that, if true, it occurred over one thousand years ago.

What history does record is that the Oeridians first appeared in the Baklunish Basin in the lands now called Ull, south of the Plains of the Paynims. After the Rain of Colorless Fire and the Invoked Devastation, the Oeridian peoples were set upon by both the Baklunish people and the Suloise -- along with their Orc servants -- and forced from these pastoral lands into the central and eastern Flannaess.

This Suloise use of Orcish allies, combined with the memory of their lost homeland -- if the legend is true -- could explain the ferocity with which Oeridians and Suloise have fought each other ever since their peoples first came into contact.

Warriors by nature, the Oeridian peoples quickly recovered from this combined assault and spread throughout the Flannaess, carving out nations for themselves and incorporating the native peoples into their societies.

The Great Kingdom became the greatest of these new nations. If not for the existence of the Oerid/Suel Kingdom of Keoland, the Great Kingdom might very well have come to encompass all of the Flannaess. This vast Empire has left its indelible impression upon the modern Flannaess as well. Nations such as Furyondy still boast predominantly Oeridian armies, which instill fear on the battle field. Oeridian

domination in war-craft is quite often proven.

Whatever the truth of their origins, the Oeridians are a resolute people and history has proven that they are at their best when the odds are stacked against them. It is interesting to note that, in spite of the fact that nations abundant with magical ability have often contested with the Oeridian peoples in the past, they are still the least likely race to pursue the arcane arts.

But there are some few Oeridians that hold the opposite view and are known to study magic, specializing in offensive spells in the same way most Oeridians study the more mundane combat skills.

APPEARANCE

The Oeridian people are tan to olive skinned humans and are difficult to differentiate from other human racial types. They tend to be well built, flexible and sturdy; the prototypical human.

Male Oeridians average between 5' 8" to 5' 10" tall and weigh between 160-190 lbs. Female Oeridians average between 5' 5" to 5' 7" tall and weigh between 110-130 lbs. Of course, taller and heavier Oeridians are possible.

Their eyes span the color spectrum, although auburn eyes are the most common. Oeridian hair color is predominantly brown and auburn, but both blonde and black hair are possible. Curly hair is usual, but straight, wavy and cropped hair are also seen among the race.

As already mentioned, it is difficult to distinguish most Oeridians from the other human races, except for the Suloise. The single most distinguishing characteristics of the Oeridians are in fact not racial, but rather it is their dress and garb which distinguishes them from the other races. Oeridians boast some of the flashiest attire in all of the Flannaess, preferring plaids and checks in varying patterns; diamonds and lozenges being the most common design. Oeridian clothing usually consists of short tunics, snug trousers, cloaks and caps.

PERSONALITY AND CULTURE

Oeridians are aggressive, determined, impulsive, rugged, straightforward and pragmatic. Oeridians are taught from the earliest age to respect authority and those who bear arms. Their interests lay in exploration, hunting, fighting and empire building. The history of their people give them right to boast.

Oeridians are prone to take charge in difficult situations and yet they respect their superiors and sacrifice for the good of whatever cause or group they believe in. Oeridians are known for their enjoyment of songs, celebration, physical games and battle. All Oeridians are short tempered, however those that succeed in controlling these emotions are often highly regarded by other races.

There are three prominent Oeridian tribes: The Aerdi, best known for establishing The Great Kingdom. The Nyronal of the Kingdom of Nyron and the Vollar of the Prelacy of Veluna are the other two prominent tribes of Oeridians. Other tribes do exist -- or have existed -- but they have become intermingled with other cultures.

The Kingdom of Furyondy has a significant Vollar presence on its border with the Prelacy of Veluna, however the Vollar on both sides of the border have intermingled extensively with the other peoples of these nations.

The greatest example of Oeridian dominion was the Great Kingdom. The Great Kingdom once covered nearly a third of the Flannaess, but is now but a shadow of what it once was, having splintered into two separate and distinct kingdoms: North Kingdom and The United Kingdom of Ahlissa. Neither of these current kingdoms is in control of the former capital of Rauxes. Decades of infighting, magical atrocities and the tramping of undead armies across the land have devastated the area around the former capital.

Most Oeridians now living in these lands tend to be less than straightforward compared to their brothers in other lands, being much more conniving and preferring to avoid direct conflict. They seek instead to manipulate their adversaries, such as their Suloise neighbors. They are much more adept at subterfuge and political intrigue than they are at fighting. This attitude has served to lessen both the military presence and influence of the Church of Hextor.

The Kingdoms of Furyondy and Nyron, as well as the former Shield Lands, are able to boast Oeridians of purest blood. Though the Shield Lands have been overrun by the forces of Iuz, the Oeridians still living there show real determination and the fierce spirit of the race. The Oeridians in these lands continue the struggle against the occupying forces of Iuz, the only exception being the Oeridians of Nyron.

The Oeridians of Nyron mirror the condition of the Kingdom itself, they are poverty stricken. This situation leaves them in a very poor position to wage an offensive war against the "Old One." However, the Oeridians of Nyron remain ever vigilant of the Old One's designs on their territories and are prepared, though their stance must be defensive in nature.

The "warrior code" is forever present within the minds and hearts of the Oeridian peoples and they find ways to defend their lands regardless of their circumstances. Defensively, Furyondy is currently in the best shape of all the Oeridian

nations, due to their being aided in securing their borders by their Velunese neighbors. In addition, the Church of Heironious has an ever growing influence amongst the Oeridian peoples in these two nations and the Priests and Paladins of His church are highly regarded by the peoples of these two kingdoms. The Oeridian peoples have learned to work well with other human races and nowhere is this truth more evident than in the Sheldomar valley and the Kingdom of Keoland. In Keoland a minority of Oeridian and Suloise nobles enjoy a peaceful rule over a Flannae majority.

In the Prelacy of Veluna, a considerable population of intermingled Oeridian and Flannae peoples also live together peacefully. Rao serves as this nation's chief deity, but the church of Heironious is also well represented on the nation's Theocratic Council. The Oeridian peoples of Keoland and Veluna are much more in control of their emotions than are their brethren in other nations and are therefore less likely to fall prone to the more traditional overreaction of Oeridians.

A great many Oeridians grow-up to become warriors. Being instilled from early childhood with a profound respect for men and women of martial prowess most Oeridians have studied at least one melee weapon by the time they reach adulthood.

The skill of manufacturing weapons and armor is also highly respected among the Oeridian peoples. Even dwarves have been known to admire the Oeridians' skill in this area. A naturally nimble people, acrobatic skills such as dancing and tumbling are often manifested in Oeridians from all walks of life.

RELIGION

The Oeridian peoples seem to have a particular fondness for martial gods. The Oeridian Pantheon boasts no less than three Gods of War and Battle; Heironious, Hextor, and Stratis, who is believed to be dead.

All three war gods were mothered by Stern Alia, Goddess of Motherhood, Culture, and Law, three precepts which are important to the Oeridian peoples.

It is said among Oeridian sages that the worship of Stratis was dominant in their ancient homeland, which they believe was in western Oerik. Some Oeridians still worship this fallen deity and repeat a legend associated with His death. It is whispered that at His death, Stratis' blood burned its way through the Oerth down into the Underdark and exposed the passageway to the drow settlement of Kalan-G'eld. Stratis' blood then turned into mists and still floats around the Underdark in clouds. It is said that anyone touched by these clouds is gifted with a portion of Stratis' divine spark.

The Oeridian Pantheon also consists of Bleredd, Celestian, Cyndor, Daern, Delleb, Erthynul, Fharlanghn, Johydee, Kurell, Merikka, Pholtus, Procan, Rudd, Sol -- an ancient Oeridian name for Pelor -- Stern Alia, Zilchus and The Velaeri -- a collective name for the Oeridian agricultural gods; Velnius, Telchur, Atroa, Sotillion, and Wenta.

Heironious, Hextor, Fharlanghn, Pholtus, Pelor, and Zilchus are the primary recipients of Oeridian worship in the Flannaess, though all the gods of the pantheon receive varying amounts of veneration, token though they may be.

PROFESSIONS AND SKILLS

The Oeridians have developed many and various skills over the centuries and though some professions and skills might change slightly -- depending on that person's location upon the Oerth -- one thing is common throughout; all Oeridian characters gain a + 2 racial bonus to two of the following skills: Weapon smith, armor smith, dancing, jump, or tumble. These skills are considered Class Skills for all Oeridian characters.

In addition, one unique trait common to all Oeridians is the inborn talent for war-craft. With the bonus feat received at character creation, an Oeridian character -- from any class -- can choose any martial feat for which they meet the requirements. This ability is a representation of the "inner warrior" found in all of the Oeridian peoples.

In Ahlissa and North Kingdom, the Oeridian people have developed subterfuge as an art form. For this reason, Oeridian characters hailing from these lands may choose to add a +2 bonus to; Bluff, Disguise, Forgery, or Sense Motive. These skills replace the racial skills offered above. However, only two such skills can be selected to receive these bonuses.

In Furyondy, Nyronde, and the Shield Lands the Oeridian people have developed a hardened warrior spirit. For this reason, Oeridian characters hailing from these lands may receive a +2 bonus to their Intimidate skill, but they sacrifice a +2 bonus to one of the Oeridian racial skills listed above. The Intimidate Skill reflects their years spent fighting with their aggressive neighbors, as well as fell beasts.

In Veluna and Keoland the Oeridian people have learned to coexist with both natives and non-natives dwelling in their land. As such, peaceful actions are considered the norm, especially in Veluna. For this reason Oeridian characters hailing from Veluna may add Diplomacy as one of their skills. But the choice of the Diplomacy Skill replaces one of the Oeridian racial skills mentioned above. Oeridian characters hailing from Veluna can also sacrifice another one of their racial skills to receive a +2 bonus to all reaction rolls against opponents from neighboring nations, except Ket and the Lands of Iuz. It is the peaceful and serene sense one gets from these Oeridian people which seems to make dealing with them ease one's emotions.

While characters from Keoland can boast the same Diplomacy Skill benefits as those from Veluna, they are still too warlike to receive the reaction roll benefits. However, much like Oeridian characters from Furyondy, Oeridian characters from Keoland can still be quite intimidating and so they can also choose to replace one Oeridian racial skill with a +2 bonus to their Intimidate Skill.

Oeridian characters hailing from nations neighboring Keoland may also take the Joten tongue -- or some other giant tongue -- as a secondary language. Many of these Oeridians are exposed -- or have been exposed -- to atrocities dealt to them by giants, or other creatures driven from their homes by an invasion of giants.

FIGHTING STYLES

The ancient Oeridian peoples created many of the fighting styles used today. Oeridians from central and western Oerik

brought with them a very deadly battle formation based upon the use of shield and spear, supported by a short slashing sword.

How the Oeridians actually arrived in the Baklunish Basin is open to much speculation, as has already been discussed, but it wasn't long after that they were forced to migrate elsewhere. The Baklunish, Sulioise and other human and nonhuman races decided to prey upon these Oeridian peoples. Because of this warfare, the fighting styles of the Oeridians influenced almost all the other fighting styles of the Flannaess. If the Oeridians did not create a specific fighting style, they definitely improved upon it, or studied it so as to make it less effective against their own style.

In both Furyondy and Nyronde, mounted combat is a highly valued fighting formation. As such, the cavalry and mounted archer units of both nations are considered some of the best -- if not the best -- in all the Flannaess. But Furyondy has not suffered the economic setbacks that have plagued Nyronde, as such Furyondy has the better and most abundant of such units.

Although, Nyronde is renowned for its swordsmen, these troops are best used in single combat, rather than in a pitched battle. And while they have limited use in combat scenarios, these swordsmen should not be underrated. It should be known that one Nyrondean swordsmen is trained to fight multiple targets simultaneously, making them quite useful in skirmishes and in quelling any upheavals that might occur.

In Keoland and the Sheldomar Valley, swordsmen are rarer, but are both bold and deadly in battle. Often forgoing their own armor -- and clothing of various types -- these swordsmen tend to send shivers down an enemy's spine. Surprisingly most swordsmen tend to escape battle without as much as a scratch on their hides.

Other fighting styles prominent in this region are single handed axes and spears. Two handed spears and axes, as well as the occasional claymore, or maul are used too. Shields tend to be used in conjunction with single handed weapons, though light armor or even no armor is preferred as it gives greater flexibility on the field of battle.

In some parts of this region slings, bows and other types of projectile weapons are utilized as well. Naval combat serves Keoland well, their preference being to ram an enemy ship and board it with marine units, but ranged combat is not unknown in these naval engagements. Keoland's naval vessels have been able to hold their own against superior Sulioise vessels.

The Oeridians of the former Great Kingdom had the best archers -- both mounted and foot -- of all the Oeridian nations. That the Kingdom of Keoland was able to hold them off is surprising to many historians. However modern day Ahlissa and North Kingdom have reverted to infantry shield formations, as mounted troops are far more costly and their archers have little effect on the undead armies which infect their lands.

In practice, however, most of the Noble Houses still use mounted formations and their cavalry and mounted archer units are still the mainstays of their private armies, though to a lesser degree. Naval combat in North Kingdom and Ahlissa

is another matter entirely. If not for the considerable size of their fleets these nations would be in serious trouble, given that this is the one area in which the Suloise have bested them.

The Oeridians of the former Great Kingdom prefer to ram an enemy's vessel and board them with marine units, since their hand to hand tactics are superior to that of their opponents. However, their naval tactics prove a contradiction in this regard as Oeridian ships are built for strength rather than speed and ranged combat seems to be the most effective method against the Suloise vessels.

The Peace loving Oeridians of Veluna have ample amounts of military units; cavalry, infantry and archers. However, these Oeridians prefer bludgeoning weapons. Veluna is also known to have the only man-catcher unit in existence. While no one has yet seen it used on the field of battle, it is rumored that these units were responsible for quelling the upheavals in the disputed lands of Bissel. The man-catcher unit serves mainly as an honor guard, but gives frequent demonstrations of its great proficiency in the non-lethal use of their weapon. Although swordsmanship is practiced in Veluna it is viewed primarily as a sport, rather than an instrument of war.

RACIAL FEATS

The following is a list of racial feats that an Oeridian character may take as his/her bonus feat.

BLOODLINE, AERDI [HERITAGE]

You have studied many different Aerdi styles of warfare; granting you a mastery of the battlefield.

Benefit: A character with the Aerdi Bloodline feat gains a +2 competence bonus to Alertness checks and a +1 competence bonus to hit with spear, or short sword.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

BLOODLINE, NYRONDAL [HERITAGE]

You have exceptional skill on mounts and with Nyronidal ranged combat tactics.

Benefit: A character with the Nyronidal Bloodline feat gains a +2 competence bonus to Ride skill checks and a +1 competence bonus to hit with a rapier, or bow.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

BLOODLINE, VOLLAR [HERITAGE]

You are known for your scouting skills and defensive fighting tactics.

Benefit: A character with the Vollar Bloodline feat gains a +2 competence bonus to all Spot or Survival skill checks and a +1 dodge bonus to their AC.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. A character must choose either Spot or Survival skill bonus at 1st-level.

COMBAT SENSE [GENERAL]

You are skilled in battle and can sense when combat is about to ensue.

Benefit: Before combat begins, a character with this feat can make a wisdom check (DC 10+ ½ opponents hit dice) and if successful, the character gains a +2 insight bonus to their saving throws or Armor Class, either which can apply.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. Non-Oeridian characters need to meet a prerequisite to attain this feat; a wisdom score of 13 or higher.

DEFENSIVE REFLEXES [HERITAGE]

You are nimble in battle and many of them study how to avoid blows.

Benefit: A character with this feat gains a +2 dodge bonus when not using armor, or shields of any kind. The character must have a weapon in his hand for the feat to work.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. Non-Oeridian characters can take this feat, but the prerequisite is a Dexterity score of 13 or more.

HARDENED [GENERAL/BONUS]

You have toughened your body to the point where they seem able to turn blades aside during battle.

Benefit: A character with this feat gains a damage resistance of 2.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character; must take either Endurance, or Toughness as a prerequisite to this feat.

OERIDIAN RAGE [HERITAGE]

You are blessed/ cursed with a short-temper.

Benefit: 1/day for every five levels the character attains, they may rage like a barbarian of equal level. The character receives all bonuses and penalties associated with raging as noted on page 25 of the 3.5 edition of the PHB. The character receives all bonuses and penalties associated with raging, as noted on page 25 of the 3.5 edition of the PHB.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. Oeridians from Veluna cannot take this feat.

OERIDIAN PRESENCE [HERITAGE]

You can be quite intimidating, when you have to be.

Benefit: A character with this feat gains +2 competence bonus to Intimidate checks. Further, they may try to intimidate someone a second time, even after an initial intimidation check has failed; but without the +2 bonus on the second attempt.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.



OERIDIAN GRACE [HERITAGE]

You have a greater aptitude towards grace and maneuverability.

Benefit: A character with this feat gains a +2 competence bonus to all Balance and Tumbling skill checks.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

OERIDIAN STAND [HERITAGE]

Your fighting spirit shows your resolve when the end is nigh.

Benefit: A character with this feat gains a +2 competence to hit and damage, but only when reduced to less than 20% of his hit point total.

Special: Oeridians who are members of the following classes may choose this feat: Barbarians, Rangers, Paladins, Warriors and Fighters. Fighters can gain this feat at first level. A character may gain this feat after choosing the Endurance and Die-hard feats.

SUB-DUAL FOCUS [GENERAL]

You are well versed in many fighting styles. However, you prefer a less lethal approach.

Benefit: A character with this feat can use any blunt object, or bludgeoning weapon, to cause non-lethal damage to his opponent. Weapons used in this way do half damage. All damage inflicted in this manner is non-lethal.

SUB-DUAL FOCUS, GREATER [GENERAL]

You have mastered the art of non-lethal damage.

Benefit: As Sub-dual Focus above, only the weapon does full damage, all of it being sub-dual.

Special: Oeridians from Veluna taking Sub-dual Focus get Greater Sub-dual Focus for free. Other characters are required to spend a second feat for Greater Sub-dual Focus.

SUBTERFUGE [HERITAGE]

You have honed your skills in the subtle arts, eschewing any warrior instincts for a more deceptive approach.

Benefit: A character with this feat receives a +2 competence bonus to both the Bluff and Sense Motive skills. The character is equally adept at lying and discerning a lie.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. Only those characters from Ahlissa and North Kingdom may take this feat.

*



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CONFUSED ABOUT WHO IS WHO AND WHAT IS
WHERE IN GREYHAWK?
TRY THE GREYWIKI!**

THE OERIDIAN PANTHEON

Atroa; (NG; goddess of spring, east wind)
Bleredd; (N; god of metal, mines, smiths)
Celestian; (N/NG; god of the stars, space, wanderers)
Cyndor; (LN; god of time, infinity, continuity)
Daern; (LN; goddess of defenses, fortifications)
Delleb; (LG; god of reason and intellect)
Erythnul; (CE/ CN; god of hate, envy, malice, panic)
Fharlanghn; (N/NG; god of horizons, distance, travel)
Heironeous; (LG; god of chivalry, honor, justice, valor)
Hextor; (LE; god of war, discord, massacre)
Johydee; (NG; goddess of deception, espionage, protection)
Kurell; (CN; god of jealousy, revenge, thievery)
Kuroth; (CN; god of theft, treasure-finding)
Lirr; (CG; goddess of prose, poetry, art)
Merikka; (LG; goddess of farming, agriculture, home)
Myhriss; (NG; goddess of love, beauty)
Olidammara; (CN; god of music, revelry, rousery, wine)
Pholtus; (LG/LN; god of light, resolution, law)
Procan; (CN; god of the oceans, seas, salt)
Rudd; (CN/CG; goddess of chance, good luck, skill)
Sotillion; (CG/CN; goddess of summer, the South wind, ease, and comfort)
Stern Alia; (LN; goddess of Oeridian culture, law, motherhood)
Stratis; (N/CN; god of war -deceased)
Telchur; (CN; god of winter, the north wind, cold)
Velnius; (N/NG; god of the sky, weather)
Wenta; (CG; goddess of autumn, the west wind, harvest)
Zilchus; (LN; god of power, prestige, influence, money, business)



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RACES OF OERTH

The Rhennee

By Dennis Lovatt

Art by Adam Koča, Rick Miller & Tina Slezak



The Rhennee firmly believe they are from another world known as "Rhop." In truth, Rhop was a large island continent, far removed from the Flanaess. The distance is so great that it could easily lead anyone to believe that Rhop was another world.

Natural talents possessed by the Rhennee strongly suggest to scholars that the Rhennee have lived on, or near, large bodies of water for the race's entire existence. Some sages believe that Rhop was – in reality – some type of "Elder Being" possessed of supernatural powers and quite possibly resembled some type of turtle-like creature. Such a Being would, of necessity, have been quite large, possibly measuring some five miles in radius. Sages believed that either some external "force" removed the Rhennee from their living island paradise, or else this "Island Being," itself, sent them away.

While there is some debate upon the subject, most sages agree that the Rhennee are native to Oerth. Sages also agree that after leaving their island home, the Rhennee traveled to the Flanaess and settled in and around the Adri Forest. But centuries ago they were driven out of this area as well -- by the invading Oeridians.

On the whole, the Rhennee are still a young race. Having finally found their own niche within the societies of the Flanaess seems to have caused their civilization to flourish; especially upon the Selitan river and the Nyr Dyv. What happens to the race next remains to be seen.

The Rhennee themselves have taken a generally neutral approach to their neighbors, refusing to involve themselves, or take sides, in any wars. Many of the nations surrounding the Nyr Dyv – especially the less respectable powers – have used them for a variety of transportation services, including the delivery legal and illegal goods.

Whether or not the legend of Rhop being some other world is true or not, one thing is certain, the Rhennee people are not leaving the Flanaess anytime soon.

APPEARANCE

The Rhennee are often tan or olive skinned humans. They tend to be shorter than other human races and often stockier, displaying wide features.

Male Rhennee average between 5' to 5' 6" tall and weigh between 140-175 lbs., while female Rhennee average between 4' 8" to 5' tall and weigh between 100-140 lbs. Their eye colors are most often blue, gray, or hazel, although green eyes are not unknown. Their hair color is often black or dark brown. Curly hair is most common, but wavy hair is not unknown.

PERSONALITY AND CULTURE

Aggressive, embittered, haughty, proud, opinionated, and secretive most Rhennee have little regard for the other human races.

Having been ostracized by the majority of human races, Rhennee have disdain for those not of Rhennee decent. Gajos – as they refer to non-Rhennee – are treated with suspicion and it is very rare to find one amongst the Rhennee for any great length of time. To the Rhennee nothing is more important than family and regardless of personal differences; it is taboo to go against the family and side with a Gajo.

The Rhennee live almost exclusively upon the waterways of the Flanaess, making their homes on large barges. A small sect of Rhennee – known as the Attloi – travel in caravans in the area of the Adri Forest, where many believe the Rhennee made their first appearance in the Flanaess. The majority of Rhennee reside in the central Flanaess, remaining close to the Nyr Dyv which serves as a central focus for these people.

Most other races of the Flanaess often consider the entire race of Rhennee as criminals and thieves. While it is true that many Rhennee excel in the roguish arts, relatively few are out right criminals. The conflict lies in the fact that, to the Rhennee, things which are considered the property of Gajos are actually considered "public property" by the Rhennee.

The Rhennee believe that, if you cannot carry the item upon your person, then it is open to public use. To be fair, even amidst

themselves the Rhennee practice this belief. The exception to this is items placed into a roped circle. This practice dictates that the items should not be touched or removed. The number and sequence of knots tied into the rope will show any and all just who it is that claims the roped property as their own.

The Rhennee culture is very chauvinistic. Males are the leaders and may carry on their barge just as many wives as they can afford. It should be noted however, that each barge or caravan supports a "wise woman" – a "Verda." The Verda acts as an advisor and a councilor to the leader in all of the family's affairs. The Verda also serves as the tribe's healer and herbalist. She predicts the weather and sells fortunes to the Gajos. While male nobles rule the tribe, none of them will contradict the Verda of their tribe.

Interestingly, Rhennee women must remain virgin until their marriage, while males are encouraged to take many lovers. But if a woman is found to have had sex before marriage, she is then forbidden to ever marry and must become a prostitute, or "Aunta," to the tribe. Such a woman is often given a small vessel, separate from the barges and is only welcome aboard a barge when she is servicing the Rhennee males on it.

This custom seems strange to others, given that most Rhennee males will quickly start a fight if they believe that a Gajo male is looking at a Rhennee female – even an Aunta – with desire. All such non-Rhennee males must pay for the privilege of a night with one of these women. For these reasons and others, an Aunta is much more likely to leave the barge-folk and seek a new life amongst the Gajos.

All Rhennee are known to fear sickness, child birth and death. Since, all three conditions are considered taboo. If a Rhennee person is sick, they are left with the wise women of the tribe – the Verda – and no one will even visit with the sick individual until the Verda deem it safe to do so. If the sick cannot be cured, or if there is the fear of infection, then the sick are sometimes simply cast out. This rejection of the sick in order to protect the tribe is considered even to out way any family ties.

Women who give birth must remain in seclusion with the Verda for 40 days and 40 nights. During this time no male may see her, she cannot even return to her husband until this period is over. The newly born child may be brought before the father by the wise women, but it is common place that the child is usually not seen until the wife returns to her husband's side.

Women who give birth to an exceptional number of male children have considerable authority within the tribe. Age and experience also play an important role in Rhennee society. For example, older females possess considerably more power and influence than do younger woman within the tribe.

Some Verda – and other "older women" of the tribe – become "Vetha," sorceresses who are endowed with the powers of "Rhop." Women who attain this standing – but are not actually Verda – are now treated as though they were, while actual Verda who develop the Vetha abilities are considered nearly "divine" in nature and are given a great range of freedoms in regards to tribal affairs.

Death, by any cause, is something that all Rhennee fear.

For the barge-folk, the decease' body must be filled with dirt or sand and then wrapped in linen and cast into a large body of water. The Attloi, on the other hand, bury their dead and very often mark the grave as the site of a great evil. Priests of Death Gods and Goddesses are greatly feared and considered repulsive to the Rhennee peoples, as are Necromancers.

Though predominantly rogues, all Rhennee males become adept with weapons and the most accomplished of these become known as "Darkhagard," a Rhennee tribe's most feared warriors and enforcers. Both elder males and the Darkhagard are second only to the chieftain of the tribe.

Rhennee earn most of what little income they have primarily through the transportation of goods and passengers, although hunting, fishing, trading and craft-work also play a role. A few Rhennee are excellent Tinkerers, though their reputations for such work may vary widely. Sadly some Rhennee do prefer to steal from the Gajos in order to make a living and this reflects poorly on the race as a whole, though Rhennee will not steal from each other.

The Rhennee practice no known religion, or at the least, no Gajo is aware of any formal Rhennee religion. Water is respected and honored by all the Rhennee, so much so that the barge-folk have been known to clean dirty waterways and to take care to preserve the waters they reside upon. Even the land based Attloi have a reverence for water and no Rhennee will willingly pollute a water source.

Rhennee males like to wear tight-legged pantaloons, loose fitting shirts and leather jerkins. Females wear long, flowing, sleeveless dresses with low-cut tops, so as to entice their males. Rhennee women also like to wear charms made from mollusk shells and precious stones that are found near, or in the water. The more colorful these garments and adornments are, the more they are liked by the Rhennee, though blues and greens are easily the most popular colors.

RELIGION

Some believe that as an "Elder Being" Rhop was not only the original homeland of the Rhennee, but also their God and the basis of their religious beliefs. This thinking is reinforced by the practice among the Rhennee of "Vetha," where some of their women are endowed with the sorcerous powers of the "Rhop."

In the last few centuries some of the Rhennee have begun worshiping the elemental forces of water. Still others participate in the sacrificial rites of demonic and devilish cults. Some of the Rhennee have even taken up the worship of some Deities of the air, though such Rhennee are few.

Among the land dwelling Attloi some have taken up the service of Gods more commonly worshiped in the Flanaess, these include Fharlanghn, Olidamarra, and Istus. Still rarer are those few who worship Celestian and Pelor.

PROFESSIONS AND SKILLS

The Rhennee excel at living and traveling on the water and ply these skills as their trade. Rhennee are taught from birth to swim and some are even conceived in the water.

All Rhennee characters gain a +2 racial bonus to the skills of

of their profession (Boater) and swimming. These are considered class skills for all Rhennee characters. Rhennee characters also have an innate ability for sleight of hand and receive a +2 bonus to this skill as well. But they suffer a -2 to all Diplomacy checks when dealing with other human races. Crafting, hunting and fishing are very common among the Rhennee people. They are also adept at preparing some of the finest seafood dishes in all the Oerth.

The land based Attloi keep horses and pack animals and use them to pull their wagons and haul their goods. The Attloi are skilled performers, excelling at dance, wind instruments and singing. For this reason Attloi characters receive a +2 bonus to animal handling and a +2 performance bonus in one of the skills listed above.

Like their waterborne brethren, Attloi characters also excel at sleight of hand and receive a +2 bonus to this skill. But they also receive a -2 penalty to Diplomacy checks whenever dealing with the other humans races. The Attloi are skilled craftsman and leather workers and make some of the finest leather armor and goods to be found in the Flanaess.

FIGHTING STYLES

The Rhennee maintain no standing armies, the closest thing they have to an army are the Darkhagard warriors who guard their barges.

Most Rhennee focus on martial skills which favor thrown weapons, single weapons, dual weapons or a two handed weapon style. Wrestling and fisticuffs matches commonly take place among the Rhennee people.

Some Rhennee have developed a rope fighting style which is used to trip, bound or to escape an opponent. This fighting style is defensive in nature and is often used by older males and a few of the females among the barge-folk, though it is a much less common fighting style among the land based Attloi.

The Rhennee have also developed a special racial weapon called the "Darkha." This special weapon will only be found in the possession of a tribal chief, or his Darkhagards.

RACIAL FEATS

The following is a list of racial feats that a Rhennee character may take as his/her bonus feat.

DOWSER [HERITAGE]

You have developed a sense for locating and spotting water in any quantity.

Benefit: You receive a +2 competence bonus to Survival and Knowledge (geography) skill checks. Further, you can obtain up to two gallons of fresh water with a successful Survival skill check and up to two more gallons of water can be obtained for every three points the Survival check succeeds by.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. Surprisingly, more Attloi obtain this feat than Rhennee maybe ones presence around bodies of water limits a knack for this ability.

FISH OUT OF WATER [HERITAGE]

You spend a great deal of time in the water and have impressive swimming skills.

Benefit: You are able to hold their breath under water for a number of rounds equal to three times your Constitution Score before suffering any ill effects. You receive a +2 competence bonus to all swim skill checks.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. Attloi cannot take this feat.

KING FISHER [HERITAGE]

You have a knack for catching large amounts of fish and other aquatic game.

Benefit: You receive a +4 competence bonus to Survival checks when fishing/ hunting aquatic game or gathering aquatic plants.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. Some Attloi can obtain this feat, but it should be noted that these cases are rare.

RHOP BLESSING [HERITAGE]

You can communicate with all fresh water aquatic creatures.

Benefit: So long as you do no harm to them or their environment. You can communicate with any fresh water aquatic creatures including (crustaceans, frogs, and turtles). Even if charmed, both you and these creatures are given a save in order to avoid the suggestion.

You will not consume, or harm, any crustaceans or turtle like creatures, nor will the character allow these creatures to come to harm.

If you are a Rhennee spell caster able to summon water elemental creatures, you may do so for twice the normal duration, with zero chance of the elemental successfully rebelling against you. Any water elemental summoned to oppose you is twice as likely to rebel against its summoner and the duration of the spell's effect is halved.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. Some Attloi can obtain this feat, but instances are less common.

SECOND SIGHT [HERITAGE]

You can see things beyond the limits of most mortals and have a strong sense of your surroundings.

Benefit: You receive a +2 competence bonus to all Initiative rolls and Spot checks. On a successful Spot check (DC 30), you can sense where invisible creatures or objects are located; but you cannot actually see them. (Example: A mage casts invisibility on himself, prior to combat. Without knowing he is there you make a successful Spot check. You get a sense of where the invisible mage is, but you cannot actually see the invisible mage.)

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

While, much more prominent in females, this feat is not limited to them alone.

TRAVELERS TRADE [HERITAGE]

You are ever on the move, for the roads are your home.

Benefit: You receive a +2 competence bonus to all Handle Animal and Ride skill checks when dealing with any animal or vehicle used in a caravan. While traveling, you also receive a +2 competence bonus to all Survival skill checks.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. Rhennee cannot take this feat.

Water Walker [Heritage]

You have a knack for operating barges and traversing your vessel through perilous waters.

Benefit: You receive a +2 competence bonus to their Profession (boater) skill and a +2 circumstance bonus to detect weather and weather's effects on water conditions while piloting their vessels.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. Attloi cannot take this feat.

WATER WALKER [HERITAGE]

Contact with water rejuvenates and sustains you.

Benefit: If you stand at least in knee deep water, you fatigue at only half the normal rate. In addition, if you engage in no strenuous activity while in a body of water, you recover hit points equal to your Constitution bonus +1 for every three hours in the water. You may also hold your breath for a number of rounds equal to twice your Constitution Score. You must submerge yourself in water for at least one hour each week, or he will begin to suffer fatigue at twice the normal rate.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. Attloi cannot take this feat.

WEATHER WISE [HERITAGE]

You are more sensitive to the forces of nature, often feeling minor changes in the weather and environment which are sometimes undetectable to animals.

Benefit: You receive a +2 competence bonus to Survival and Knowledge (nature) skill checks. You may predict weather changes up to six hours in advance, including changes in temperature. Further, with a successful Survival skill check you can predict the weather and up to two more hours more for every three points the Survival check succeeds by.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. While, much more prominent in females, this feat is not limited to them alone.

*

IN SEARCH OF HOME

"We are the children with no land".

"Forced to live in the unknown".

"We sail this worlds waterways".

"In search of yesterdays embrace".

"What these Gajos do not know".

"Where in search of our true home".

"Show us your unfurling face".

"We are use to your disgrace". "

You will one day atone".

"When we children return home".

-Made famous by Artoli Medni,
Rhennee bard



RACES OF OERTH

The Suloise

By Dennis Lovatt

Art by Adam Koča, Mike Lowe & Rick Miller



The Suloise peoples had their origins outside of the Flanaess; South of the Crystallist Mountains and west of the Hellfurnaces.

Many Suloise fled to the Flanaess to escape the constant Suel/Baklunish wars, which eventually lead to the magical devastation of their homeland. These Suloise migrations helped to displace many of the Flannae from their homelands, resulting in the Flannae being scattered far and wide.

The ancient Suloise have passed on many of their traits to their descendants, for good or bad. Centuries ago the Suloise boasted one of the greatest empires ever known to mankind. They learned the arts of sorcery and civilization from the Olven-folk, but in time, the Suloise peoples surpassed even their Elven teachers in the manipulation of magic and used this knowledge to forge the greatest empire of their time – the Suel Imperium. But they rejected the Elven peoples' warnings about dabbling in fell magic's and so the Suloise soon found themselves at odds with their former allies.

The ancient Suloise were totalitarian in demeanor and enslaved many peoples and races. All peoples fell to the will of the Suloise Imperium, except for the ancient Baklunish Empire. The Suloise Imperium relied heavily upon magic and it helped forged their empire. Their magical experimentation lead to the creation and engineering of altered races, races created for the sole purpose of serving the empire.

One of the most well known of these created races is the Derro. Many dwarves claim that the Derro existed long before the Suel experimented on their kin and it is rumored that the Derro are actually a blending of dwarves and humans. Whatever the truth in this particular matter, one thing is absolutely certain, many magical breeding experiments were conducted before the Suel Imperium fell.

The Suel Imperium fought the Baklunish Empire to a stand still for control of eastern Oerik. To break the stalemate, the Suloise brought about the Invoked Devastation. This apparent victory over their enemies was short lived however, as one of the long forgotten Gods of the Baklunish chose to intervene.

Gathering together the most powerful mages, from among his people, within the stone circle of Tovag Baragu, this God channeled much of His own power through these magicians, supporting their retribution against the Imperium.

This is the origin of the Rain of Colorless Fire, which covered all of the Suel Imperium in its inferno. Were it not for the great seer Slerotin, the Suloise peoples may well have been destroyed, but, receiving premonitions of the impending doom, Slerotin gathered what noble families he could and led them through a magical tunnel – of his own creation – which passed completely through the Hellfurnaces.

All but one of the families – the Lerara – traveling with Slerotin arrived in the area of the Flanaess now known as the Yeomanry. From there the Suloise peoples spread throughout the Flanaess, founding nations for themselves, often formed from the colonies of the Suel Imperium. The noble family of Lerara is the exception; becoming separated from the other Suloise families during the migration, they never left Slerotin's tunnel and reside there today.

The most infamous and secretive society of the Suloise is indisputably the Scarlet Brotherhood, headquartered on the Tilvanot Peninsula. This Suloise organization has bases spread out across the Flanaess and beyond. So embroiled have they become in the affairs of the Flanaess' nations, this so-called secretive society is no longer as secretive as it once was. While the Scarlet Brotherhood is prominent in Shar, they do not actually have control of the government there, though they do exercise major influence over all the Peninsula's affairs.

There is another Suloise organization, called "Those Who must Not Speak," – also known as "the Silent Ones" – and they reside within the "Silent Tower," headquartered in the Kingdom of Keoland. Not much is known of the Silent Ones, though it is rumored that they seek to obtain forbidden magics and ancient Suloise artifacts. What their main goals are no one knows for certain, however, those few who happen come upon the Silent Tower, and try to gain entrance, are very often not heard from again. Whatever their main goal one thing is

absolutely certain, you will only know what the Silent Ones want you to know, and then, only when they want you to know it.

APPEARANCE

The Suloise are a fair skinned human race, some being almost albino. They tend to be slightly taller than the other human races and range between tall and lean, to tall and sturdy.

Suloise males average between 6' to 6' 3" tall and weigh between 160-225 lbs. Suloise females average between 5' 10" to 6' tall and weigh between 110-165 lbs. Their eye colors range from pale blue to violet, with deep blue and gray possible. Suloise hair color is most often blonde to strawberry, though yellow and platinum are possible. Straight, wavy and kinky hairs are all common.

PERSONALITY AND CULTURE

The Suloise are a proud, commanding, determined, opinionated and overbearing people. Most Suloise have little regard for other races and are quite often at odds with their own race.

A person's ancestral ties, and family allegiances, always weigh heavily upon how Suloise are viewed within their own society, because of this, Suloise from different countries often dispute each other's claims regarding ancestry and nowhere is this practice more evident than in the Tilvanot Peninsula.

Suloise from the Tilvanot Peninsula are the most organized and totalitarian of all the Suloise peoples. Records of every citizen's ancestry are kept on file, as are all facets of a citizen's life, which can be quickly laid before them. Only Suloise known to be of pure blood are considered true citizens in the Tilvanot, any racial admixture – however slight – bar one from full citizenship. For this reason, those who are of Suloise ancestry, but not born on the Peninsula, can never receive full citizenship. In spite of this fact, it is extremely rare to find anyone of Suloise ancestry performing any kind of menial tasks in the Tilvanot, the Peninsula has more than its share of half-breeds and humanoids to perform all such tasks, which are considered to be beneath a pureblooded Suloise' station in life.

Oddly enough, and to the chagrin of the Scarlet Brotherhood, the Suloise of purest blood are found in the Thillonrian Peninsula, among the Frost, Ice and Snow Barbarians. Interestingly, these Suloise peoples are the least like their ancestors. The Suloise of the Thillonrian Peninsula have adopted a barbaric lifestyle and live by raiding each other, or neighboring civilizations.

These northern barbarians excel as warriors, trappers, hunters, seaman and fishermen. Their continued survival, in one of the most unforgiving climates on Oerth, clearly demonstrates just how adaptable they truly are, but unlike the Suloise of the Tilvanot Peninsula, the Suloise of the Thillonrian Peninsula are not above allying themselves with their racially diverse neighbors in times of need. These northern barbarians are ferocious warriors on any field of battle.

The Suloise of the Duchy of Urnst and the eastern portions of the Flanaess find themselves in a leadership position, in spite of the fact that they are not in the majority. Manipulation

and self determination are common traits among these Suloise, much like their ancestors, but they tend to be the most cooperative of the Suloise peoples.

As a whole, the Suloise peoples are quick to dismiss the opinions of others, relying more upon their own personal judgments rather than upon a consensual determination.

Suloise like to wear wide-legged pantaloons and loose fitting blouses. In the far north of the Flanaess, Suloise garments are often made from fur, or felted wool, and worn with capes, furred boots and mittens. In the southern Flanaess, the Suloise tend to wear loose vest over lightweight fabrics. Solid colors are universally preferred, with most Suloise having only one, or two, colors in their wardrobe.

RELIGION

The Suloise people are as respectful of their Gods as they are of their ancestors.

On the Thillonrian Peninsula the Suloise wind gods – especially the imprisoned Vatun – receive considerable worship, though Kord, Llerg, Norebo and Xerbo are also worshiped.

In the Amedio Jungle and the continent of Hepmonaland, the Suloise residents worship Llerg, Beltar, Bralm, Phaulkon, Pyremius, Wastri, and Xerbo, with a small number of them worshipping Wee Jas.

On the Tilvanot Peninsula the entire Suloise Pantheon receives dutiful worship, although Lendor, Bralm, Pyremius, Lydia, Osprem, Syrul, and Wee Jas can lay claim to the largest followings.

It has been rumored that the Scarlet Brotherhood worships dark gods, such as Tharizdun, though this is doubtful. However, a group of Suloise worshipers of Tharizdun known as the Black Brotherhood does exist. It is thought that the Scarlet Brotherhood does not trust this group, but is on cordial terms with them.

In all other Suloise lands Kord, Norebo, and Wee Jas tend to be very popular, but Suloise cults to Tharizdun do exist and are spread throughout the Flanaess.

PROFESSIONS AND SKILLS

The Suloise have developed many skills over the years and dependent upon their location upon the Oerth, some professions and skills might change.

One thing is common throughout; all Suloise characters gain a +2 racial bonus to the racial skills of Seafaring and Swimming. Sailing and fishing are prominent professions among all the Suloise peoples, so these skills are considered to be class skills for all Suloise characters.

In the Thillonrian Peninsula raiding, exploring, farming and fishing are the prominent professions. The Suloise people of these lands tend to be short-tempered and it is common to see berserkers among the warriors of this land. The Suloise of the Thillonrian have a strong urge for exploration and are therefore much more likely to go adventuring. Suloise barbarians may therefore swap out Swimming or Sailing bonuses in favor of an added bonus to their Survival skill. The barbarians of the Thillonrian are the least likely of all the Suloise to be interested in spell casting, except for their warrior bards.



Island-dwelling Suloise tend to excel in the same common skills of all Suloise, but they are expert traders as well. Sailors and merchants are common among these island dwellers, because of this, skills like Bluff and Appraise can replace the bonus skills of Seafaring and Swimming. Rogues, Bards and Priests are dominant amongst the island people, although Wizards are not unknown here.

In the central Flanaess the Suloise have blended in well with other cultures, as such they may swap one of their bonuses in Seafaring or Swimming for another skill common in their area.

Many professions are available to Suloise characters living in the central Flanaess, as such all classes are well represented. However, Wizards from this area are much more likely to have received training at one of the formal Universities commonly found in these nations.

In the Amedio Jungle and Hepmonaland many of the Suloise became tanned and freckled and more animalistic in their outlook than their ancestors were. Acts of barbarism, animal sacrifice and cannibalism are common place among these Suloise. The Suloise of these areas retain their Swimming skill, but they have lost their Seafaring ability. This is replaced with a Survival bonus given the nature of their land. Many of the inhabitants of these lands are little more than slaves trained in the arts of war and fighters are the major class represented here, but rangers and shamans – witch doctors – are not unknown.

The organization known as the Scarlet Brotherhood is based on the Tilvanot Peninsula, but has a great many spies and informants throughout the Flanaess. This is unquestionably a racist organization which uses any means necessary to obtain its goal; Suloise domination of the Flanaess.

There are many Suloise factions devoted to their cause, but the most feared members of the Scarlet Brotherhood are undoubtedly their monks. Masters of sabotage and subversion, all character classes have their place in the brotherhood, except for wizards. Magic-users associated with the Scarlet Brotherhood are governed very closely, in an effort to prevent the terrible past from repeating itself.

The Scarlet Sign – as the Brotherhood is often called – believes that the Suloise' past reliance on magic actually made them weak and is the reason that the Suloise Imperium crumbled. They believe that, to be true masters of their order one must be adaptable. Because of this, members of the Scarlet Brotherhood can add a +2 bonus to any two skills; Bluff and Disguise are most common.

FIGHTING STYLES

The Ancient Suloise were well-versed in various forms of combat, whether it be single weapon and weapon-shield styles of fighting or though fisticuffs.

The slave armies the Suloise Imperium used were all trained in weapon-shield techniques, with little or no armor. These slaves relied more upon speed and quickness, rather than armor, as the Suloise cared little for any casualties suffered by their slave forces. Magic was used quite heavily and siege weapons infused with spells hurled fire or lightning and were manned only by Suloise forces. Archery was practiced by the

nobility, but it was very rare to see the nobility on the field of battle.

The Suloise people living in the Flanaess today are well versed in sea warfare. Those living in Hepmonaland and the Amedio Jungle seem deficient in these areas.

On the Thillonrian Peninsula the two handed weapon style of fighting seem to be preferred, though fisticuffs and wrestling are common past times. Naval warfare tactics revolve around the ramming and boarding of a vessel.

The Suloise of Hepmonaland and the Amedio Jungle are well versed in both single weapon and two handed weapon styles. These Suloise have also developed a unique martial skill based upon the movements of simians; grasping, choking and kicking are common moves. This style also uses throws and tosses and are some of this style's more powerful moves.

The Suloise of the Tilvanot Peninsula are excellent sailors, as such naval warfare is their strength. Archery is the preferred method of battle and the longbow the preferred weapon, but dual weapons and single weapon styles are practiced and many soldiers benefit from weapon-shield techniques.

Perhaps the most dangerous fighting style is that of the monks of the Scarlet Brotherhood. Called the "Silent Sash" this style is both feared and renowned on the Tilvanot Peninsula. It is rare for anyone to escape a monk trained in this style, unless it is the monk's intention to let the character live.

The Suloise people of the island nations where displaced years ago and have become proficient in the fighting styles of the nations to which they fled. While these Suloise use the fighting styles of other nations, using the ancient ways of weapon and shield, they also use the "closed fist open foot" pugilistic skills of the monks. If a Suloise monk uses the "open hand," it is to stun and humiliate his opponent.

Siege weapons which strike from a distance are common place among the more civilized Suloise nations. And the Suloise have been known to adapt many of the Oeridian fighting styles practiced among other nations.

RACIAL FEATS

The following is a list of racial feats that a Suloise character may take as his/her bonus feat.

ANCIENT SULOISE [HERITAGE]

You practice the magical arts have been blessed by your ancestry and thus can channel potent magical energies.

Benefit: A character with this feat gains a +2 DC bonus to all spells they cast, making it more difficult for their opponents to overcome, or save against, spells cast by a character with this feat.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

BERSERKER RAGE [HERITAGE]

You are from the Thillonrian Peninsula are known for your short temper. You are one of a few have even been blessed or cursed with a special raging ability.

Benefit: 1/day for every five levels the Suloise character



may rage like a barbarian of equal level. The character receives all bonuses and penalties associated with raging as noted on pg 25 of the 3.5 edition of the PHB.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

CANNIBALIZE [RACIAL]

You are from the Amedio Jungle/Hepmonaland and are prone to cannibalism, thus you have gained unique abilities whenever they consume human flesh.

Benefit: When a Suloise character with this ability consumes at least ten pounds of humanoid flesh, they gain +5 hit points and a +2 to saves versus poison and disease for that day.

However, if this character goes more than one week without consuming humanoid flesh, they receive a -2 to saves versus poisons and disease, until they consume human flesh again.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

LINGUISTIC [HERITAGE]

Like many of the Suloise people, you are fluent in many languages.

Benefit: With this feat a character gains two languages for every bonus they get from their Intelligence score.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. Suloise characters from the Thillonrian Peninsula, Amedio Jungle or Hepmonaland cannot use this feat.

NORTHERN RESISTANCE [HERITAGE]

You are from the Thillonrian Peninsula and are constantly exposed too harsh elements, as such many have developed resistance to their environment.

Benefit: A Suloise character with this feat has a +4 resistance to all Cold effects and Cold based attacks. Even upon a failed save, this character will experience only half the duration and half the damage that is normal for said effect.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

SEA BREATHER [HERITAGE]

You are a capable swimmer and are very comfortable at sea.

Benefit: A Suloise character with ranks in swimming who takes this feat can hold their breath underwater for twice the duration dictated by their Constitution score. They also receive a +2 bonus to save against all water based attacks.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

SLEROTIN'S EYE [HERITAGE]

Though Slerotin's final fate remains a mystery, it is speculated that a female from each of the families saved by Slerotin bore him a child with the hope of imbuing their blood line with the power of this seer.

Benefit: A Suloise character with this feat receives premonitions and glimpses of the future. This Suloise character gains a +2 bonus to all Initiative rolls.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. The DM may also use this premonition ability as a red herring for adventures.

SUBTERFUGE [HERITAGE]

The Suloise of the Scarlet Brotherhood and followers of Syrul are well versed in the arts of Disguise and Lies.

Benefit: Suloise characters who take this feat receive a +2 skill bonus to both the Disguise and Bluff skills. This character may also use a Rush Diplomacy if he has 5 or more ranks in Bluff. This character receives a -2 to their Bluff rolls, but may use their Bluff skill to influence people like a Diplomacy check.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character.

WELL-VERSED [HERITAGE]

You like many of the Suloise people, hail from civilized lands pursue many fields of study.

Benefit: A Suloise character with this feat can choose a number of non-class skills equal to their Intelligence bonus. These skills are treated as class skills for this Suloise character.

Special: You may only take this feat as a 1st-level character. Suloise characters from the Thillonrian Peninsula, Amedio Jungle and Hepmonaland cannot take this feat.

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THE SULOISE PANTHEON

Beltar; (CE/CN; malice, caves, pits)
Dalt; (CG; portals, door, enclosures, locks, keys)
Fortubo; (LG/LN; stone, metals, mountains, guardianship)
Jascar; (LG; hills, mountains)
Kord; (CG; athletics, sports, brawling, strength, courage)
Lendor; (LN; time, tedium, patience, study)
Llery; (CN; beasts, strength)
Lydia; (NG; music, knowledge, daylight)
Norebo; (CN; luck, gambling, risks)
Osprey; (LN; sea voyages, ships, sailors)
Phaulkon; (CG; air, wind, clouds, birds, archery)
Phyton; (CG; nature, beauty, farming)
Pyremius; (NE; assassins, fire, poison, murder)
Ranet; (?; fire -deceased)
Syrul; (NE; lies, deceit, treachery, false promises)
Vatun; (CN; northern barbarians, cold, winter, arctic beasts)
Wee Jas; (LN; death, magic, vanity (love), law)
Xerbo; (N; the sea, sailing, money, business)

Ket, Secret Societies AND HIDDEN CABALS

By Michael Raper
Art by Mike Bridges, Rick Miller & Dean Oyebo

The nation of Ket sets at the crossroads of the Baklunish West, Flanness and the Sheldomar Valley and as such the mix of cultures has left an indelible mark on this nation. The hustle and bustle of trade which is the nation's lifeblood often masks its ancient roots with a veneer of new brought in by each caravan. The past is lost to the onslaught of the new and forgotten by those that most needed to learn the lessons therein. Ancient cabals from the times before the cataclysms linger rebelling against the very decay that saw to the end of empire. Lost gods reach out from oblivion's maw towards the last glimmering embers of their faithful in hope to rise anew. Men and women of fell intent gather in the ossuaries of this ancient land and whisper of ways to take the wealth of its noble families. Ket is a hotbed for many such groups each with their own agendas yet each has the same need for secrecy. To be discovered means the blade of the Mullahs will fall with swift and righteous fury but like all things secret in Ket, deep roots are not so easily excised from such fertile ground.

THE PALL OF DRATHI

'Drathi take you.' Is curse often heard in the marketplaces of Lopolla and Thornward used by Ketite merchants in the midst of haggling with others. Most who use it have no real knowledge of its origins other than to have heard their fathers and their grandfathers utter it. Even scholars and sages of ancient lore would be hard pressed to put an actual definition to what or who 'Drathi' might be and where they might 'take you'. If any did know they would never let it pass their lips again for to invoke such darkness would surely damn their

soul to the same fate.

Long ago before the great Baklunish Empire sprawled across the land, the wandering folk who would build that empire had gods like any other people, gods of fertility, of duty, of fate but they also had darker gods, the blackest of which was Drathi, the mother of murder. It is unknown if she was a former name for the god Nerull or if she had any connection to the Reaper at all but in those early days to speak of her drew her murderous eye and the curse 'Drathi take you' was the most reviled curse ever spoken.

While the Priestesses of Drathi were feared even these daughters were miniscule compared to her murderous monks, known as the Pall of Drathi. These assassins came from the shadows were relentless and without mercy. Once set loose nothing could stay their hand save the word of the Mother of Murder herself. For an age Drathi and her followers ruled the tribes of the Bakluni with fear alone. Emirs, Pashas and Caliphs sent tribute trains of gold and jewels through the steppes to her hidden city in hopes of keeping her gaze from them and their people.

The price became too high for the Grand Caliph on the day Som Al'Aswad grandmaster of the Pall of Drathi stood in his grand court and demanded the Caliph's ten daughters whose beauty was unrivaled. The Caliph rejected the demand and would have been slain there had Istus not set the strands of destiny in motion. Four knights of legendary skill were at court that day on separate matters and they leapt to defend the Caliph.

Ancient songs speak of the battle lasting days but in the

end the grandmaster lay dead at the foot of the throne and the knights swore an oath to all the gods of the Bakluni that Drathi's temple would fall. The identity of the four knights has been lost in time but it is believed this was the final quest of the mortal man who became Al'Akbar.

Thousands rallied to the knights and war began. Slowly the black roots of Drathi were burned from the lands of the Bakluni with each temple being burnt and the ruins scattered. No follower of the mother of murder escaped the blades of the knights. In the end the Pall fell to the knights on the steps of Drathi's hidden city. Rather than letting their armies sack the city the knights ordered everything burned, leaving the treasure behind rather than risk any of Drathi's tainted 'blood gold' getting out. As they left the mountain redoubt the knights ordered their armies to dismantle bridges and destroy the roads leading to the place, doing their best to erase the location off the face of Oerth.

The Faith of the Mother of Murder ended at the edge of the knights' swords. Had they carried their fight into the outer planes and destroyed the goddess herself none knew but this act ended her stranglehold. The purge of all things Drathi continued for years, books burned, mosaics destroyed even the very warding tokens made by the terrified Bakluni fell into disfavor. What could not be excised however was that fear. It lingered in the hearts and minds of the Baklunish people and though it became nameless that dread remained. Where there is fear however nameless there is memory and in this collective memory the last seed of Drathi lurked in the form of Ruhl Al'Thaan.

Some say he was Drathi's first born male child, others say he was the first to call her name in the act of murder, some even whispered he predated the Mother herself but to the priestesses and monks of Drathi he was a legend. He was the warden of her prison where the shackled souls of those killed in her name remained eternally tortured and stripped of all vestiges of humanity until they could be forged into the blades of her faithful. The knights slew all but him for he was beyond even their reach sequestered deep in the heart of the negative material plane in a penitentiary built of black iron. Where all had forgotten the Mother of Murder he remembered. He sustained the fear in the hearts of the Baklunish. He was the boogey man that frightened their children. He was there at the end of their days to remind their spirits how lucky they'd been to die by another's hand. He was the dread of death, the gloom that oblivion could not wipe away.

Long after Drathi had become nothing more than a merchant's curse Ruhl left his prison and entered the world of the living once more. On the day of the Colorless Fire he walked the killing fields wrought by the Twin Cataclysms and

culled from the dying seven cowards who begged any who would answer for a way to escape the coming death. Into the souls of these seven Ruhl whispered one of Drathi's Glooms, the precepts of her ideology and commanded them to pen this down in secret. Each died upon completion of this task. Ruhl collected these seven tomes and saw they reached the hands of men and women of proper nature who would learn the ways of Drathi once more, thus the Pall of Drathi was reborn.

Through these seven books the ways of the Mother of Murder live on and while the Pall has been destroyed to a man many times the books manage to slip away to be found again allowing the deadly hand of Drathi to add to the inmates of the final prison.



Symbol of the Drahi

Adventure Hooks

The Seven Books of Gloom float and flit through the market places moving from hand to hand until the right set finds it.

Six of the seven books are in the hands of the current incarnation of the Pall; the seventh book is rumored to be in the Crypts of House Sammal. Agents are on the move to hire adventurers to 'liberate' the book from the Crypts.

A hidden war transpires in the alleys and on the rooftops of Thornward. The long entrenched thieves' guild of which the assassin's circle has long been a part battles against a strong cyst of the Pall. Despite having greater numbers the guild is losing ground. They look for allies to help stand against this blast from the past.

THE ELOSATI

It is said that those who watch bring change to the outcome of what they observe.

In the case of the Elosati this could not be truer.

Far to the west of the Dramidj Ocean there lies nations that are all but myths to the people of the Flanness. In one of these nations known as Mur a cabal of diviners foresaw the prison of an entity known to them as the Essence of Dark Hunger would be breached and its darkness would consume the world. These Diviners had a strict set of ethics that forbade them from giving warning or taking any action. One young acolyte of this cabal could not stay true to his vows. Known as Adesh this acolyte spoke with impassioned words pleading with his masters to act, to take a hand to prevent this from happening. Although they to a man ignored this plea his words moved many of his fellow acolytes. Under the cover of night this group of acolytes gathered to them what they could; writings, divining tools and books that held the teachings of divination, and fled their homeland.

In ships meant for shallow coastal sailing and with nothing more than a simple direction the acolytes sailed eastward. They encountered many things both wondrous and horrific.

The weather itself tore at them with terrible fury destroying many of their vessels forcing them to stop for repairs often. By the time they reached the shore of what is now Ekbir only one ship remained and only nine former acolytes survived. Adesh was one of them, though missing an eye from his travels he led his eight brothers inland following the Tuflik river eastward.

Many days later the band came to a headland that protruded above the otherwise low plains near the river. At first they meant to only stay the night but that very night all nine of the acolytes had powerful visions of this being, this Essence of Dark Hunger. They learned in this vision many of its names but the one loudest of all was Tharizdun. Their journey was over and their task now began.

Their collection of tents became wooden huts and their skills as diviners made them valuable to the wandering tribes of Baklunish. With the help of these tribes the nine constructed a series of first wooden but later stone circles to aid in their divining, some measured the year in this new land, others when the seasons would change. Slowly they integrated all of these different calendars into one massive stone circle that allowed them to accurately predict several things. Around this headland the wandering tribes started to settle, having accurate calendars made it possible for them to grow things rather than hunt. The diviners also brought with them the knowledge of their homeland's techniques of irrigation improving the yields of these first farms. They named this place 'Sef-an'Mur' or 'Our Eastern Home'.

Time passed and the visions of the release came less and less, soon it came only to Adesh. Though his eight companions had faith in his visions they felt the yearning that all men feel and took wives of local stock. Their children grew and the weight of years bent the backs of these nine men. Adesh feared that the truth of his visions would be beyond the scope of his life. In his nineties Adesh decided he needed to ensure that their watch would continue. A wizard of great skill beyond being a Diviner, Adesh bent his art to the task of altering one of the few remaining relics of the ancient Murian Cabal, The Eye of Amur. He augmented this ruby's seeing abilities but also wove into it the ability to record his visions, his knowledge, all the dedication it took to carry himself to this place so far from his homeland. The Eye of the East was born. Adesh died the morning after its completion gripped by the most powerful of his visions. His eight companions wrote down his dying words. These words and the Eye were his last gifts that he gave with his last breath to his successor, Tarun, the eldest son of one of his eight followers.

Thus the traditions of the Elosati came to pass. Each leader, known as the Arch-Seer would receive the Eye of the East and the Adesh'mal, the scrolls carrying the dying words of the previous Arch-Seer, upon the former Arch-Seer's death. The

drive, the relentless need of Adesh empowered the Eye and thus the successive line of Arch-Seers to remain faithful to the task. The time of the release was coming and the Seers of Sef-an'Mur (Later corrupted to simply 'Sefmur') would be ready.

Time marched on and the Baklunish Empire grew absorbing the city and the Seers of Sefmur quietly continued their charge unnoticed by the powerful elemental mages of the Empire. Arch-Seers came and went, the Eye ever gleaming in their turbans and the Adesh'mal growing from scrolls to a full-fledged tome.

When war with the Suel started the Seers of the Elosati

offered what help they could to their adopted homeland.

Generals however demand precise information so visions of the future were less valuable to seeing what the enemy was doing in the present so the Elosati were less and less used. The Twin Cataclysms caused much upheaval throughout the world of Oerth but no more so than with the Elosati.

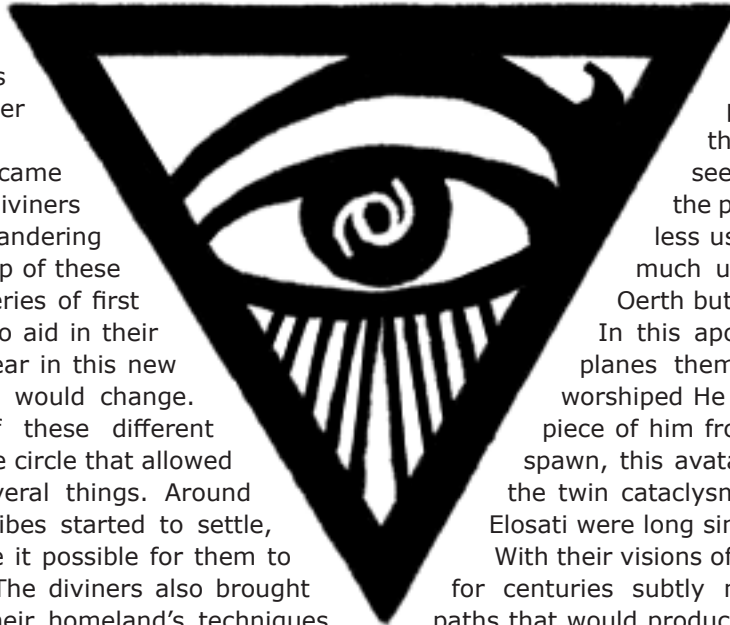
In this apocalyptic moment that shook the planes themselves those twisted souls who worshiped He of Darkness Eternal summoned a piece of him from his prison into the world. This spawn, this avatar sought to use the confusion of the twin cataclysms to free its dark father but the Elosati were long since prepared.

With their visions of the future the Elosati had worked for centuries subtly maneuvering individuals towards paths that would produce houses of honor and virtue that would have scions perfectly placed to handle this very event. Heroes rose to face this avatar of darkness, tracking it across the land, fighting it at every turn until it fell into a chasm with landslides pouring in after it. The feared release was averted.

This event also sparked the schism in the Elosati. There were those in the order that saw this as the success of their ancient goal while others were not so hopeful. This discussion grew until the past repeated itself with a splinter of the Elosati leaving. This time however it was the Arch-Seer and his ardent supporters who left. The Diviners of Sefmur turned their backs on this chapter of their lives while the Arch-Seer took his people into what is now Ket. Settling in the mining town of Molvar what remains of the Elosati began anew, manipulating events to give rise to champions when the world has need of them most.

Adventure Hooks

The Diviners of Sefmur have long sought the return of what they see as their relics, the Eye of the East and the Adesh'mal. Though always stopping short of actual bloodshed the Diviners have come to the conclusion that more clandestine methods must be taken. A'nigne, a young diviner is in Shaderis quietly seeking aid to help her obtain the relics one way or another. The fiery young woman has not drawn the attention of the Seers yet but if she does not find help soon that will change.



Ever-manipulating the lives of those around them the Seers of Adesh (As they publicly call themselves) are attempting to arrange the marriage between two minor Ketite noble houses but a long-standing feud is frustrating them. The advent of some adventurers into the mix might well serve to breach this stalemate.

THE FAELSHENDA

Fate can be cruel or so it seems at the time. Where some see the cruel hand of Istus and rail at the lack of fairness others see opportunities. Such can be said for Duskinvorastrixithael, Known as Dusk, a dragon born with brilliance, guile and avarice befitting a wyrm of legend but in the body of a tiny pseudo-dragon.

First to hatch of her clutch-mates, her parent's nest was too close to an aperture to the plane of shadows. All would have been born with a touch of shadow in them had Dusk not acted and destroyed the rest of her nest-mates before they hatched. In scant years she outstripped her parents and found that being a big fish in a small pond did not translate well to large ponds. Had Fate not had a hand in the small dragon's destiny once more she would have ended up a very smart meal for some goblin or orc.

The pseudo-dragon felt a faint calling which lead her into the Southern Yatil Mountains to the hidden bastion of the Black Agate, an infamous Ketite necromancer. At first Dusk thought the mighty Black Agate had issued the call but reality dashed her hopes when she found the originator of the call, a lowly apprentice named Dakshina.

The woman was bright but not particularly wise or personable and it was the former that led her to try summoning a pseudo-dragon for her familiar. She'd completely fouled up the ritual that only called Dusk and did not bind her in any way. She considered killing the human woman in her sleep and stealing what she could but a thought struck her. Here as a familiar if in name only she could learn from one of the greatest wizards of Oerth. Dakshina could not match the dragon's

guile or brilliance and believed that she'd performed the ritual properly. Thus began the Education of Dusk.

The pseudo-dragon learned wizardry at a staggering pace easily outstripping her supposed 'master' Dakshina. The avarice that burned in her heart soon got the better of her and used her influence over the woman to organize an attack on the Black Agate himself intent on taking his stronghold as her own. Dusk found out on that day that brilliance no matter how great could never match genius. Despite the surprise attack and the furious power the pseudo-dragon and her dupes unleashed on the Necromancer he proved too strong and destroyed their assault, killing the majority of her allies and leaving Dakshina a burned out husk. Dusk, commanding the few corpses that were still whole, fled with whatever they could grab on the running battle to escape the Black Agate's stronghold.

Once within the Bramblewood Dusk went to ground and looked over what she had. Most of it expendable items such as wands and potions. The corpse of Dakshina held in a deathgrip the spellbook that was Dusk's more than it was Dakshina's. She also clutched to her bosom a second book, an earlier work by the Black Agate himself a precursor to his Skinplate Codex titled The Secrets of Skin. Within the tome Dusk found the formula for several magic items including a suit of armor that would allow the wearer to assume the likeness of any humanoid that the armor had skin from. With this discovery the Faelshenda was born.

Dusk spent time crafting armor, using her spells to take command of a clan of ogres she using them to waylay travelers along the roads to garner material for her armor. She also used this time to perfect a ritual that would let her bind a human to her as her familiar. She'd grown fond of the beautiful Dakshina and forces her familiars to assume that form. Through 'her' Dusk started gathering thieves with the proper skill and provided them with the Skinwrought Armor. Thus far there are nine 'shadowed masters' who each manage cadres of minions. Those that show promise are given



Symbol of the Faelshenda

devices crafted by Dusk. Even the shadowed masters have no clue that the beautiful Dakshina is a mouthpiece for the devious pseudo-dragon.

Now with wealth worthy of a dragon, Dusk continues to build her organization in hopes to someday defeat the Black Agate and write her name in the annals of Draconic Lore.

Adventure Hooks

When a 'Dakshina' is killed Dusk suffers, as would any wizard losing her familiar but the pseudo-dragon knows she has to acquire another one quickly to keep her minions in line. While she prefers Rogues or Bards she has taken a Sorcerer more than once. This 'survival' of Dakshina only increases the mystique of the group and their seemingly invincible leader. Dakshina and the Faelshenda can plague the player characters over and over again each time they think they've killed her and she returns.

The Black Agate has finally decided to reclaim his lost property and has sent one (Or more) of his infamous Dark Hunters on the trail of Dusk. The terrified Pseudo-dragon (Through her familiar) tricks the PCs into protecting her from the relentless minions.

ASIM'AL-EJDEHA

Throughout the lands of Man and Elf there are knightly orders galore. Paladins though far less common flock to these orders as the height of the virtues embodied by their patron gods. Ket is no different. Paladins pledge their oaths to Al'Akbar just as they pledge them to other gods of law and goodness in other lands and they stand as shining examples to all. The devoted of Asim'al-Ejdeha are unique among the pious knights of Ket in that they move in secret through the land fighting and dying against those forces that would undermine and destroy the four virtues that all good and honest ketites uphold, Honor, Family Generosity and Piety. They are the protectors of the Dragon.

Founded long ago in the annals of Baklunish history the Protectors of the Dragon owe their birth to of all people, the Pall of Drathi. It was the fear born by these murderers that threatened to rend the society of Bakluni asunder and Al'Asim, one of the four knights who stood against them had wisdom or insight to realize if it could be done once it can be done again. He gathered his most trusted and loyal of knights and to them entrusted the safety of their people for all time.

This core of loyal knights gathered and discussed how best to manage this task placed before them. They like their leader had wisdom enough to see that a standard knightly order would never do. Knights by nature live a life apart from

the people focusing instead on martial practice and knightly traditions. They were also wise enough to know that it is common for knights to fall under the onus of evil and are targeted to weaken their resolve. To protect the people they had to live as them.

Thusly the Asim'al-Ejdeha are through much of their day shopkeepers, merchants and farmers. They live by the four precepts, exemplifying them in their daily lives. They raise families, they help their neighbors, they give generously to church and those in need, they advise those who rule and when the need arises they don their armor, take up their signature shields and stand the line against the evils that would rot the roots of Ketite society.

When those sympathetic to Iuz took Ket into alliance with the Cambion King the Protectors took hand in the underground movement to fight both Iuz and those Ketites loyal to him. They were the spark that started the fires of rebellion, their blades struck down the vile in the dead of night and when the forces of evil teetered the Silver Shields of the order gleamed as a beacon for all to rise up and throw off the corrupted leaders. Once their task was done however the Protectors faded back into the population. They are faceless protectors for as their founder said 'A True Man craves neither notoriety nor adoration from his brothers but basks in the knowledge of the safety he has wrought.'

Cells of Protectors meet once a week when possible and the entire order gathers only once a year. Events of region is sent along through complex ciphers and coded messages usually delivered by carrier bird. While the Knights are as varied as Ket itself there are two traits common to all members of the Asim'al-Ejdeha; they all maintain and tend personal aviaries and all are avid students of Dragonchess. Often the coded are messages carry terminology of the game.

Adventure Hooks

Two Cells have gone missing in the Thornward region with only one cryptic message sent to the Order leaders in Lopolla. Unable to send their own members the heads of the order are looking to hire adventurers to find out what has happened.

The death of a Protector is not an unusual occurrence but when possible

the body is interred in the Hidden Hypogea, a collection of underground tombs in the Tusman Hills north of Lopolla. The rise of Gnollish activity in that region has made it difficult for the Knights to keep the location safe. Options are being discussed.



Symbol of the Asim'al-Ejdeha

Fire will not claim the Faithful
Ice will not freeze a heart that's true
Night will not blind the ever watchful
Evil will not gain its false due

We the strong will guard the Innocent
We will shield those that fall
We the Wise will counsel the penitent
We will ever give our all

We will stand against the darkness
With our shields forged of light
We bring hope unto the hopeless
We bring the Dawn to the Endless Night

(From the Eosacra 'Litany of Dawn')

THE CULT OF IGGWILV

Beings of great power regardless of alignment draw to them those that are for whatever personal reason willing to do their bidding. Commanders call them armies, Kings call them citizens, and Deities call them worshipers. Whatever the title they come. Iggwilv is no different. Over the many years she has plagued the Oerth she has called armies of minions to her but while most are burned up shielding her from those that would stop her there are always more. Where she has been, followers gather and while most go to where she is some remain behind and become cults. These cults come and go, often swelling around charismatic leaders who call to Iggwilv seeking power, aid, enlightenment; even romance. Ket despite all it's righteous devout people plays host to cults of Iggwilv more often than most regions due to the fact she lived here for some time. These cults inevitably fall apart on their own or are broken by the Mullahs most fo the time rarely managing to draw the attention of Iggwilv. Time passes and another cult rises from the ashes to keep the name Iggwilv whispered in the shadows of Ket.

Abbas Sammal the fourth son of an old noble house founded the current Cult of Iggwilv some forty years ago. A student of both history and magic Abbas became enamored with the stories of the Witch Queen. Though only a minor skill in magic he used the wealth of his family to fund the cult in the capital city of Lopolla. Most of the members were young nobles also well outside the lines of succession and were destined for sycophant-hood. Many of the rituals were little more than elaborate minor summonings of lesser demons coupled with drugs and wine that ended in debaucheries. Abbas, so convinced his rituals would draw Iggwilv's attention did not care how dangerous he made things. His obsession grew to manic levels.

One night as Abbas conducted one of his 'great convocations' he actually managed to open a portal to the Abyss. What came through was not Iggwilv but something that could easily take advantage of his obsession, Irkaeli a powerful Abyssal Hag. She sensed his obsession and the depraved souls of his cult and slipped into the world of men. As she stepped out of the smoke and haze she masked her hideous form with the beautiful features of Iggwilv herself, a deceit that amused the hag greatly.

She fed the ego of Abbas even as she fed on the souls of his cultists afflicting their dreams. Even as she whispered arcane secrets to him the cult of wastrels destined to a short and painful demise suddenly became much darker and even more twisted. Under her tutelage Abbas' grasp of magic grew, as did his cult.

The ersatz Iggwilv gave him truenames of demons while strong enough to be of use were not so strong as to challenge her. The drugs and debauchery of his first pitiful attempts at rituals gave way to true darkness and those of the cult who were too weak to follow him were the first to be sacrificed. Irkaeli had found a hunting ground ripe with tainted souls.

Years passed and Abbas became a force in the dark places of Ket and Irkaeli bound him to her will with each lust-filled night he spent in her Iggwilv-sheathed arms. She gave birth to his daughter, a cunning greenhag named Zohrah and soon mother and daughter alike twisted and deceived Abbas, using him as a puppet to expand their cult and more importantly draw in the dark souls that Irkaeli culled as larva for the markets of Pazunia. Calling other daughters, Irkaeli brought Vukol, a powerful Annis-werewolf and Amelaki A Sea hag druidess into the cult setting the three of them to manage Abbas. As time passed the Cult of Iggwilv became a dark vine choking Lopolla.

This all changed when Sym'ar came onto the scene. At first she thought the cult actually had her mother's patronage given the power of its leadership but that hope turned to rage when she discovered the Hag's deception. Weaving spells as only one of Iggwilvian blood could Sym'ar destroyed Abbas and his circle of devotees. The battle raged deep into the bowels of the old temple they'd claimed as their base costing Amelaki her life. When the remaining two hags called for their mother she came with all the allies and powers she could gather but it was not enough. Sym'ar shattered her onslaught either dismissing or destroying her allies and binding the powerful Abyssal hag. Zohrah and Vukol bowed in surrender to the powerful scion much to their mother's dismay.

Sym'ar took the remained of the cult and culled from it any who were too weak to be of use. Working in secret she expanded the reach of the cult but this time rather than the dark and tainted souls destined to be culled by the hags it reached into the noble houses and temples of Ket. Drawing the heart of the cult away from the capital Sym'ar took the ancient giant fortress of Demonroot as hers and from its fog-shrouded gates sent forth her minions to gather the secrets of a nation. Zohrah and Vukol serve the daughter of Iggwilv loyally but she does not trust them knowing that if they could betray their own mother she would be next were she to let down her guard.

While the nation breathes easier thinking the cult has been destroyed its learned and wise are only now beginning to realize that something dark still tempts the souls of men and they dread what it may be.

Adventure Hooks

Rumors of another daughter of Iggwilv has reached Sym'ar's ears. She has sent groups of the cult into the Yatils without much success. For the woman of many faces it would be child's play to trick a group of adventurers to do the task but she isn't interested in seeing this daughter killed. Finding the right group is proving difficult.

The looting of the Vault of Daoud was the final straw that saw Iggwilv chased out of Ket those many years ago, now Sym'ar is considering using that Vault as a means to weed any powerful adventurers out of the good graces of the Mullahs and people.



Symbol of the Cult of Iggwilv



