

DragonLance

FIFTH AGE
DRAMATIC SUPPLEMENT

HEROES OF HOPE



SAGATM
GAME RULES

THE CROWN OF TIDES

The Crown of Tides is a remarkable artifact believed to have come to the sea elves during the Age of Dreams. Made of brilliant blue coral, of a type found nowhere in Dimernesti, the crown is woven through with dozens of delicate pearls of various sizes. The elves' Speaker of the Sea wears the crown during affairs of state. At all other times, it remains ensconced in the Window to the Deep at the top of the Tower of the Sea in Dimernost, capital of the elves' undersea realm.

The artifact's most frequently used power is its ability to control the flow of water. Concentrating on a target, the wearer can draw upon the Crown of Tides to hurl blasts of force, which can inflict terrible damage upon a target (up to 30 damage points) or instantly blast it back great distances (from melee to artillery range or from near missile or farther range to visual range). Dimernesti lookouts can swim from their posts to the Window to the Deep and command this power to create a powerful riptide, which drives Brine off when he draws too near the Tower.

A swimmer wearing the crown can generate enormous force with each kick, propelling himself tirelessly through the water at least five times faster than he could normally swim. A wearer could create the opposite effect as well, calming forceful tides or slowing a swimmer's progress through the waves.

In addition to these main powers, the crown enhances any spell the wearer casts by offering a +5 bonus to the spell action, providing 5 spell points, and magnifying the spell's effect (spells cast while wearing the crown have twice their normal effect, at the Narrator's discretion). The crown also provides the wearer with automatic access to the school of hydromancy (if he has a Reason code of "B" or better). Even a wearer without sorcerous ability can control the waters through mental commands while touching the Mother of the Sea, a great pearl fixed to the pinnacle of the Tower. There, he can draw upon the pearl's



inherent magic to power the magical commands, using it as a sort of "magic battery" from which he can gain mysticism points.

Anyone wearing the Crown of Tides (at right) can communicate with marine life, including fish, waterborne mammals, and plants. A wearer also can use its magic to enhance the growth of undersea plant life, which is why the coral grove around the Tower of the Sea thrives despite Brine's frequent ravages.

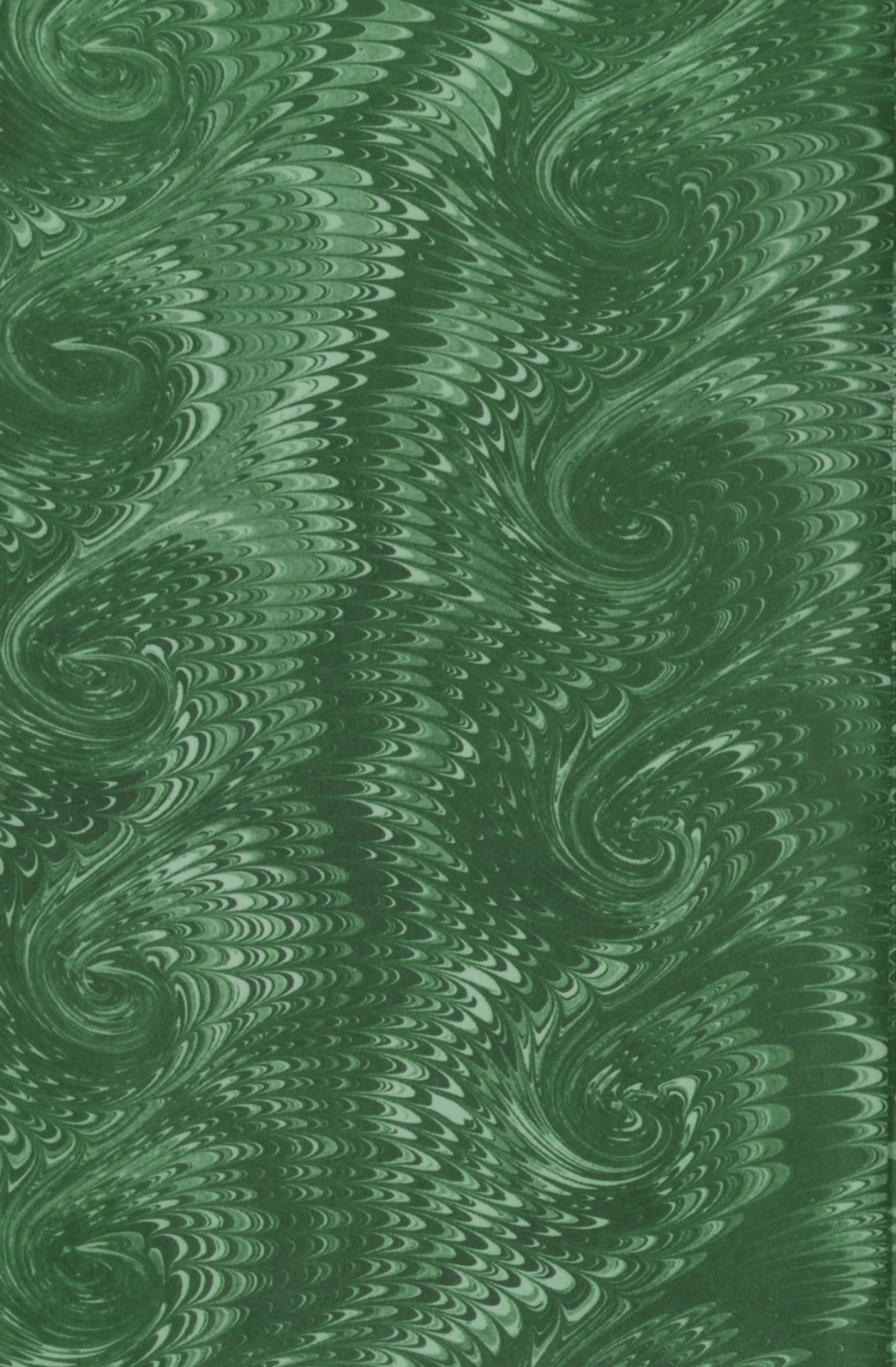
Finally, the crown renders its wearer immune to all types of charm magic, both effects created through High Sorcery and spells originating from modern magic, such as mentalism and undesired effects of meditation.





HEROES OF HOPE

BOOK ONE





THE MAGIC WITHIN

For Ansalon's Mystic Heroes



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Author's Foreword



When Goldmoon first discovered within herself the power of mysticism, she was in the twilight of her life. The Chaos War five years earlier had claimed the lives of many of her friends. Her husband Riverwind and her younger daughter Brightdawn had perished not long after, in an abortive attempt to drive Malistryx the Red from Kendermore. So when Goldmoon undertook what was to be her final trip to the Inn of the Last Home, it was with a heavy heart.

Little did she realize that a new chapter of her life was opening.

When this one woman tapped into the strength of the mortal heart to heal a dying dwarf, she opened the door for the world to explore the power of the spirit. Whether she was actually the first person ever to experience such a power is irrelevant. What matters is that she became the first individual in the new age to explore these powers and teach them to others.

Since that day more than twenty-five years ago, the magic of mysticism has spread across Ansalon. Some mystical knowledge has gotten into the hands of those who would use it for Evil ends, such as the Order of the Skull of the Knights of Takhisis. Others use the power of the spirit for the common good: healing the ill or injured, defending others against harm, and improving the lot of their communities.

Some people believe the Fifth Age will be among the most magical of all the Great Ages of Krynn's history. This speculation arises less from the potential power of sorcery and mysticism—although the limits of modern magic have yet to be tested—and more from the possibility that nearly everyone might one day wield some sort of magic. As knowledge of mysticism and sorcery spreads, more people have access to arcane powers than ever before. In the Fourth Age, mages and priests had to make the study of wizardry or religion their life's work, committing themselves to a lifelong study of their field in order to work their miracles. In the Fifth Age, some claim, an innkeeper can tap into the power of the spirit as easily as the Revered Daughters and Sons of Paladine. Farmers might improve their yields by using animism, warriors their combat skills through channeling, and physicians their healing skills through the assistance of mystic magic.

Most philosophers, however, consider the notion of this "Golden Age" of magic little more than a dream. Reality cannot approach these speculations, they remind their colleagues, while there remains the little matter of surviving the predations of a dangerous world.

Dune C. Maxwell

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PROLOGUE



ou can't do this!" Palin said, dazed, disbelieving. "How can you leave us?"

"We make this sacrifice to save the creation we love, my son," Fizban answered. He

shifted his gaze to the bodies of the knights, to the handkerchief he held in his hand. "Just as they sacrificed to save what they loved."

*—Fizban says goodbye,
Dragons of Summer Flame*

The power of the heart has come to the people of Ansalon at a spiritually confusing time. Much of the world is now under the domination of the Great Dragons, the Knights of Takhis, or some other force of Evil. As if this sad truth were not enough to break the spirit of the people, they also have had to come to terms with the fact that the gods have departed the world again, just as they did more than four hundred years ago after the Cataclysm.

Spiritual Transition

Just over thirty years ago, in that twilight time following the Chaos War, people began to realize the pantheon of Krynn had left them. Priests of the true gods—in other words, those who served the Holy Orders of the Stars—were the first to feel they had lost their direct connection to their deities.

Although their prayers were no longer being answered, most of these

priests and clerics hesitated to admit this to the general public. It did not take any great insight, however, for the common folk to realize that something was amiss. As the Great Dragons unleashed their destructive powers on Ansalon, what had begun as a mere concern grew into the view that indeed the gods had again abandoned Krynn.

Mystic Theories

Not everyone, however, has come to accept this divine absence. Many priests, who received the clearest evidence of the gods' departure, blame the Chaos War for the gods' distance of late.

Holy Orders of the Stars

At the close of the Fourth Age, the world came close to unraveling into the Chaos it was formed of. Although the Chaos god ultimately abandoned his plan to destroy Krynn, the other gods still fear his possible return, proponents of this theory claim. So, while the gods have not actually departed, they must work their will more subtly than before, so as not to reawaken the Chaos god and risk the destruction of their children on Krynn.

No longer could the gods grant their divine favor directly to their worshippers, as they did in ages past. Instead, they presented a tiny spark of their magical strength and divine essence directly to every intelligent creature on Krynn. Thanks to the lingering influence of Chaos, this gift settled imperfectly on the people of the world. Some have a greater affinity for understanding and controlling the divine power of the spirit than do others. Furthermore, the awareness of this power does not come in the same way to everyone—a tradesman from Palanthas is less likely to discover his mystic potential than a more spiritual individual.

PROLOGUE

So, while the gods may never again walk the earth, they have not abandoned their children to the whims of a mad god, explain members of the Holy Orders of the Stars. The argument that mystic magic is the gods' divine gift has led the worship of the true gods to enjoy a slow but steady renaissance of spiritual power, for the people of Ansalon *want* to believe they are not alone.

A Scholarly View

Other arguments, primarily those of scholars, claim that the above view of "divine" magic is only true in part. Indeed, the ability to wield mystical and sorcerous magic may be a gift of the gods, the sages say, but it is an unintentional one, and one that was "granted" ages ago as a by-product of the creation of the world.

According to the *Iconochronos* of Astinus Lorekeeper, the world arose from the High God's desire. Reorx fashioned the world out of Chaos itself, hammering it into shape over the course of millennia. The creatures that followed also resulted from the desires of the gods, and they, too, arose from a combination of the will of the gods and primordial Chaos. Thus did every creature on Krynn bear a tiny mote of divine essence from the Age of Star-birth. It is this divine essence that gives people the power to wield magic, the scholars say—in fact, this essence was the sole source of wizardly spellcasting before the gods of magic taught mortals High Sorcery. A mystical counterpart to this "wild magic" was found among what came to be known as heathen priests and druids.

However, in those early days, mankind never really understood the nature of magic—a failing that created problems with early magical experiments. As humans and other mortals delved ever deeper into this source of limitless power, they came ever closer

to unleashing a power that could rapidly spin out of control, causing great destruction and risking the integrity of the very fabric of reality. Such a tragedy occurred during the Second Dragon War millennia ago, when a group of wild mages caused magical havoc in their attempt to subdue their dragon foes. The three gods of magic then taught these mages the power of High Sorcery as a means of controlling the release of magical power. The Orders of High Sorcery relied more upon the ability to memorize the gods' highly complex arcane formulae than any inherent magical talent. This more controlled approach to magic eventually eclipsed the more "natural" wild magic.

As time went on, even the early priests tapped the powers of the gods more and more, and the magical force of the world less and less. The gods eventually came to grant such supplications for aid to exercise some control over the magic their followers used, although spiritual magic was not normally as dangerous as sorcerous or "elemental" magic.

All Magic is One?

From more radical scholars comes the theory that sorcery and mysticism spring from essentially the same magic. Some people seem predisposed toward understanding one rather than the other but, in essence, the two types of magic are not so different.

This theory has gained some ground with recent discoveries of bridges between the two types of magic. However, most researchers consider these findings exceptions rather than rules. They continue to hold that the two types of magic remain distinctly different from each other, and that any crossover results more from imperfect human categorization than anything else.



CHAPTER ONE



he first heard the cleric, Elistan, when he came to Palanthas at the end of the War of the Lance. His new religion—or perhaps it should have

been called the old religion—was spreading like wildfire through Krynn. . . . Crysanía began the evening finding cause to admire him. She ended on her knees at his feet, weeping in humility and joy, her soul at last having found the anchor it had been missing.

—The Revered Daughter reflects upon finding her true path, Time of the Twins

In the DRAGONLANCE®: FIFTH AGE® game, players have a wealth of options for refining their concept of the hero they want to create. Some of these options are described in the hero roles in this and other FIFTH AGE dramatic supplements. Before choosing a role for their heroes, however, players should make sure they understand how roles work in the game.

Choosing a Role

Roles are not straitjackets and they are not rules. They are the means by which a player defines some key aspect of his hero's motivations and goals, passions and hatreds, desires and ambitions. They are guidelines a

player uses to role-play his hero's personality. And they are as flexible as the player and Narrator need them to be.

Characters in a story are as complex as people in our world are, and heroes in a role-playing game should be every bit as diverse and interesting. Different players, therefore, may adopt the same role for their heroes, but for varying reasons.

For example, one player might decide his mystic hero joins the Legion of Steel to shape the early years of what he hopes will become one of the principal organizations devoted to serving the common good. Another might decide his hero joins the Legion to gain glory for himself, a piece of immortality. He may not be at all concerned with steering the traditions of the Legion, only in being remembered for his great deeds.

A third player might establish that his mystic hero considers the Knights of Solamnia a thing of the past, too steeped in their ancient traditions to be effective in fighting the problems that face Ansalon today. So he attaches his hero to the Legion as the only force with any chance to defeat the dragon overlords and win back Ansalon. Finally, a fourth player might decide that his hero's parents were killed during the Dragon Purge, innocent victims of a battle that did not concern them. A grim, angry young mystic, the hero joins the Legion for revenge against the Great Dragon who so casually destroyed everything he ever loved.

These four players each chose the role of the Legionnaire mystic for their heroes. Though they all wield the power of the heart and belong to the same organization devoted to justice, they have developed very different goals and motivations.

Finding Motivation

Part of choosing a role for your hero involves deciding why the hero pursues the path that the role represents. One way to find this motivation is to view the hero from the inside out. Too many times, when we read a story or watch a movie, we look at the characters through our own eyes, from our individual perspectives. And often these characters fall short of our understanding.

When creating a hero for the FIFTH AGE game, players should try looking at the character from his point of view. What has happened to the hero in the past? Is there a significant event that affects the way he sees the world today? Such an event need not be traumatic; it could be simple in scope, but sublime in the effect that it had on the development of the hero's personality. For instance, say the hero wields a sword from his father:

Before he died, your father, a battered veteran of the Chaos War and the turmoil that followed, gave you his sword. It is not much to look at. He kept it in a worn leather scabbard—he broke off its tip long ago sliding down a mountain slope after he and his companions had ambushed a patrol of goblins.

The blade is spotless, but not especially shiny. Your father kept its edge sharp enough to penetrate the armor of even a wing commander of the Knights of Takhisis. No matter how much he worked the file and sharpening stone along the blade of the sword, he could never seem to get rid of the nick it got from a daemon warrior's blade in a horrible battle of nightmare—one about which he has said almost nothing.

You remember him drawing the sword only once, when some desperate marauders, victims of the aftermath of the Chaos War, attempted to steal some of your farm's livestock. When they saw

the reflection of torchlight play across the bare steel of the blade and glimpsed the iron resolve in your father's eyes, they sought their supper elsewhere.

The time you decided to help some friends get a wagonload of food to a nearby village ravaged by creatures of the night, your father took down the sword from the wall where it hung and suggested that you take it along, "just in case." Since that day, you have borne the weapon with pride, passing up other blades—even magical ones—for what could be more magical than your father's trust in your honor and courage?

In what sort of environment did the hero grow up? Was he pampered by a doting mother in a wealthy family? Or did he grow up in a poor but proud family? Perhaps he was reared in the streets of Sanction, surviving by his wits and his ability to avoid trouble.

The environment in which the hero was reared has as great an impact on the way he sees the world as any single significant event. Players should think about how the hero would see the world growing up in such circumstances. How might he view others? Is he naturally suspicious of their motives, or does he see people as essentially decent? Maybe others are okay individually, but when they organize into groups, they change for the worse.

Asking such questions about the hero helps the character develop a personality all his own. After determining this personality, the player finds that choosing a role to fit the hero's attitudes becomes simpler, a natural extension of the hero's history.

Changing Roles

As a hero pursues his goals, he may find that his motivations and beliefs change. Some of these changes may be reflected in what role the hero chooses to follow.

For example, a hero who grew up in





a poor neighborhood may always have admired the Knights of Solamnia, but lacked any opportunity to pursue his interest in becoming a Knight. An old woodcutter taught him the art of storytelling when he was a boy, and he used that talent to gain training from a local loremaster. The youth begins his career, therefore, as a bard, and the stories he studies the most are those that concern the Solamnic Knights. By good fortune, he joins the adventuring troupe of a young Crown Knight. In time, he earns the Knight's trust and becomes his squire. Years later, after great trials and hardships, the Solamnic Grand Master himself asks the young man to join the Knighthood in the Order of the Crown. His mentor, the Knight for whom he has squired all these years, steps forward proudly to offer his sponsorship before the nightly council.

This simple example shows how the role a hero follows may change from time to time. Our hero starts out as a poor *street urchin*, convinces a teacher to take him on as an *apprentice* and eventually becomes a *bard*. Demonstrating his good nature and trustworthiness to a young Knight, he becomes a *squire*, and after years of dedicated service, he is honored with an invitation to become a *Knight of Solamnia*. In effect, the hero has followed five different roles.

As described in the *Heroes of Steel* dramatic supplement, a hero who changes roles logically gives up the advantages and disadvantages of his previous role. In some cases, however, the Narrator may allow the hero to retain certain advantages of a previous role—the ones gained through training. In our above example, the hero developed a bard's flair for storytelling, a skill he need not lose completely when he becomes a squire; he retains the knowledge, though he may be out of practice.

The hero might also retain certain disadvantages he acquired in a previous role. If the new Knight in the example above ever decides to leave the

Order and take on a new role, he may still have to contend with the outlook he acquired as a Knight. For instance, he was taught it is dishonorable to ambush an opponent in combat. In such a case, the hero might well retain his aversion to surprising foes, even if he adopts another role. This attitude may baffle his new comrades, but it is very much in keeping with the traditions the hero followed before. It also makes that hero distinct among members of his new group of associates.

Narrators will differ as to how they approach role changes. Some may want to make it relatively difficult to switch roles: Just because, on paper, a hero meets all the requirements for a Knight of Solamnia, he cannot join automatically. The Narrator may decide the knightly council requires considerable proof of the dedication, perseverance, and moral fiber of the supplicant hero before extending to him an invitation to join. This proof will require years of dedication on the part of the hero and likely will take the player some time as well. Another Narrator might allow the council to accept word of the hero's past deeds and admit him into the ancient institution. In any case, the Narrator should consider carefully any advantages that may carry over to the new role, counterbalancing any such advantage with an appropriate disadvantage.

The Narrator has final say over any proposed role change. If such a change lies within the scope of a hero's development, the Narrator likely will allow the change. If, instead, it is just a way for the player to gain cool new advantages for the hero, the Narrator should make it more difficult to switch.

Designing Roles

The roles described in this and other FIFTH AGE supplements are by no means the only roles available to players. One of the strengths of the SAGA rules is how easily participants can expand the scope of their own cam-

paigns beyond what has already been published.

For example, the supplements have introduced a variety of roles for members of the Legion of Steel: *Heroes of Steel* offered the Legionnaire warrior, *Heroes of Defiance* included the Legionnaire scout, and *Heroes of Sorcery* detailed the role of Legionnaire sorcerer. Nevertheless, Narrators and players are encouraged to develop other roles for Legionnaire heroes. For instance, a Legion ambassador role might offer heroes with high Presence scores and codes the chance to utilize their talents for the good of the Order. Such a role does not preclude a hero's involvement in harrowing battles and high adventure. Rather, it gives him a special advantage when negotiating his way through a potentially dangerous encounter, so he need not rely on combat alone to overcome challenges.

What about a role that a player develops for his own hero? Maybe the hero has high Reason score and a good Spirit score and code. Giving the hero the spheres of animism and healing in addition to an extensive scholarly background in animal biology might produce an individual who specializes in caring for woodland creatures. At the beginning of the game, that hero might believe himself the only person in the world who follows this role. When he begins to teach others, however, the role becomes a unique part of that group's world.

Furthermore, players and Narrators should feel free to introduce into their campaigns new organizations that could give rise to new and interesting hero roles. Perhaps in one group's game there arises in Sanction a band of freedom fighters in no way associated with any of the larger groups in Ansalon. It is up to the players and the Narrator to develop roles for the heroes associated with that group. The role descriptions presented in this and other FIFTH AGE dramatic supplements provide a model for designing new roles.

Remember, when creating roles, it is

important to balance any advantages gained in following the role with appropriate disadvantages. As always, the Narrator must be the final arbiter of what roles are allowed in his game.

Meeting Role Requirements

This is a game about stories, both those of the Narrator and those of the players. If a player finds that he likes the idea of his hero adopting a particular role, but the hero does not possess the required minimum scores or codes, the Narrator has several options. First, he should encourage the player to try making the hero an aspirant to that role. In effect, the hero aspires to become accepted as a full member of a particular organization or seeks to live up to the minimal requirements that constitute a given role.

Aspiring to a role can be a great deal of fun, but some players might fear it could take months or years of playing for his hero to qualify for the role. In such cases, the Narrator might make it somewhat easier for the hero to advance in his scores or codes.

For example, say a player really wants a mystic hero but does not draw a proper card during hero creation. However, the hero is ideally suited to become a guard at the Citadel of Light. He might choose to exchange his services for nothing more than his keep and a bit of mystic training.

The rules in Chapter One of the *Book of the Fifth Age* ensure that increasing a hero's ability code is no easy task. In the above case, however, the Narrator might recognize the training the hero sought as worthy of a one-letter increase in Spirit code. If this is sufficient to give him access to a mystic sphere, then the hero can stop pursuing this particular interest. To qualify for code improvement through role-playing, however, the player must attempt to raise his code through the





normal means as well.

Players cannot attempt to raise multiple codes simultaneously. This bonus method, simply a supplement to the normal means of improvement, is not designed to help create a hero who can do everything. If the player really wants to improve his hero's Spirit code so the hero can become a mystic, then he must take every opportunity to do so.

Of course, role requirements are subject to change with the Narrator's approval. To allow a hero to play a preferred role, a Narrator can reduce the role's ability score requirements by a few points or alter the code requirements a grade or two. In the SAGA rules system, the rules should be secondary to the story and the players' enjoyment of the game.

Role Descriptions

The roles presented in this chapter use the standard role format introduced in previous supplements, offering role-playing hints, role requirements, and advantages and disadvantages inherent in the role.

The Barbarian Shaman

The barbarians of Krynn have long understood the way of the spirit, which protects their people through the many trials they face in their wild homelands. Their connection to the land strengthens their understanding of the spirit world, for they believe the spirits of their ancestors and of the land offer wisdom to those who know how to seek it.

Barbarian shamans seek this understanding of the spirit world so they may provide their people with the wisdom of their ancestors. The clan members rely on their chieftain to guide them through difficult times, but it is the shaman who guides the chief to the path that best suits the clan.

Some of Krynn's barbarians are savage, brutal warriors who offer their

enemies no quarter and expect none in return. Their shamans are equally fierce; they prefer those mystic spheres that aid them and their clan's warriors in battle. Channeling and alteration are common among these clans, and some tribes practice even the dark art of necromancy (although such tribes are almost universally reviled by other clans).

Other shamans are less hostile, living in relative harmony with their neighbors. They study the more peaceful of the mystical spheres, such as healing and animism. In her youth, Goldmoon was the shaman and spiritual leader of the Qué-Shu tribe, as was her mother Tearsong before her.

Role-Playing

Shamans have a gift that few others possess: the ability to communicate with spirits. From spirits come both knowledge and power, which these heroes use to defend their people or maneuver themselves into positions of authority in their clans. They are the spiritual heart of their people, their protectors and guides. Their chiefs depend upon their insight to help him defend the tribe or clan against the threats of environment and enemies.

Players who want their hero to be a barbarian shaman should choose the primary terrain type that describes the hero's homeland: desert, forest, ice, plains, mountains, or sea. If these terrain types overlap, the player may choose his hero's home terrain from among all those applicable (with the Narrator's approval).

Requirements

This particular role applies primarily to humans, although other races may also have barbarian cultures. The centaurs of Krynn are certainly organized along tribal lines. Among the dwarves, the Klar and the Aghar are likely to be the only ones considered "barbaric" in technology and social organization. Gnomes and kender societies are

almost certainly too homogeneous for there to be any "barbaric" clans among them. The only elves who can be considered "barbaric" are the Kagonesti, who are dealt with later in this chapter and in Chapter Four.

To become a barbarian shaman, a hero needs a Spirit score of at least 5 and a Spirit code of at least "B." Furthermore, the shaman needs to know at least the mystic sphere of spiritualism. In some of the more aggressive barbarian tribes, the shamans are expected to fight alongside the warriors, so they should have Physical scores of at least 4 in addition to their Spirit requirements. Players should check with their Narrators about this requirement.

It is very unlikely that a barbarian tribe would accept a hero as its shaman if he were not born into the culture. Exceptions may occur, but they are very rare. Therefore, a hero should choose this role only if he was reared by a barbarian tribe or clan.

Advantages

Barbarian shamans rely upon spirits and animals to guide them in their mystical pursuits. During hero creation, a player may choose either the sphere of spiritualism or animism as a special trump sphere for the barbarian shaman hero. Thereafter, any card to cast a spell in the shaman's chosen sphere is considered trump.

If a hero attempts an outdoor action (survival, hunting or fishing, tracking, etc.) in his home terrain, any card the player uses is automatically considered trump.

Disadvantages

In many clans, superstition holds that the shaman's connection with the tribe's patron spirit or animal totem could become tainted by contact with outsiders. As a result, shamans have even less experience with the civilized world than do other members of their clan. These heroes never receive a Presence trump bonus when dealing with

"civilized" peoples.

Furthermore, they are limited in their choice of weapon to those listed below as preferred by tribes of a particular terrain. This, too, helps ensure that shamans are not contaminated by outside influences.

- ♣ **Desert:** Death's tooth kala*, garrote*, horse bow, light lance, scimitar, throwing blades*, weighted sash*.
- ♣ **Forest:** Battle axe, hand axe, knife, long bow, mallet*, quarterstaff, sling, war club*.
- ♣ **Ice:** Cudgel, frostreaver*, ice cross-bow*, ice flask*, ice grenade*, spear, throwing stone*.
- ♣ **Plains:** Bolas*, horse bow, lasso*, light lance, teeth chain*, throwing stick*, war club*.
- ♣ **Mountains:** Any axe, bear claws*, any bow, crook blade*, pellet bow*, spear, war pipe*.
- ♣ **Sea:** Belaying pin*, fang*, hookshaft*, sabre*, trident, harpoon (treat as a spear).

* Indicates a weapon detailed in the *Heroes of Steel* supplement.

Other weapons also may be appropriate to barbarians of individual tribes, with the Narrator's permission.

No hero may adopt this role after he has begun play, as it takes a lifetime of preparation to become a shaman.



The Centaur Shapechanger

The centaurs of Krynn are an adventurous people. The great majority of them, however, prefer the company of their own kind; only rarely will a centaur leave his family or clan to adventure with members of other races. Within the centaur clans, most youngsters with mystical abilities are taught the way of the shaman. A few of them, however, discover on their own a special affinity for alteration magic. Many of these *centaur shapechangers* use their gift to explore the world around them.

Centaur shapechangers who have a natural talent with alteration magic are very rare. They are usually among the youngest and wildest of their clans, for this ability manifests itself at an early age. Many centaurs who discover the special affinity of the shapeshifter leave their clans for a time, wandering the world, experiencing all they can before returning. They remain fiercely loyal to their kin throughout their travels, how-

ever.

Role-Playing

These adventurous young centaurs are nearly always hungry for new experiences. They use their magic to discover things they cannot normally know, such as the exhilaration of flight or a swim through cool waters with a school of porpoises.

Most of these shapechangers can alter their form only to that of another four-legged creature; some, however, can assume the forms of anything they choose, limited only by their imaginations and their magical energies.

Shapechangers tend to be more open to other races than older centaurs are; they particularly like kender, seeing in them kindred spirits.

Requirements

This role is permitted only to centaur heroes, but it could be used as a model for heroes of other races.

In addition to the normal racial



requirements for centaurs presented in the *Book of the Fifth Age*, centaur shapechangers must have at least a "B" code and a 6 score in Spirit to endure the rigors of their magic. In addition, they must master at least the sphere of alteration. Those with a "B" code may change their shapes to that of any four-legged creature, while those with an "A" code may assume any shape.

These centaur heroes tend to be among the youngest and wildest members of their clans. Because of their youth and consequent lack of worldly experience, centaur shapechanger heroes may not begin their careers with more than three prior quests, giving them a maximum starting reputation of Novice.

Advantages

Most centaurs are not very able at magic use—normally, they do not receive a trump bonus for any magical action. Centaur shapechangers are an exception to this rule, but *only* as applied to alteration magic used to change their own shape. If they cast a spell to alter the shape of another, they do not enjoy the trump bonus.

In addition to the above advantage, they have the added bonus of increased mobility. Centaurs who can alter their shape can accomplish tasks their own form normally would not allow. They can negotiate steep mountain terrain, enter narrow cave passages, or cross wide rivers with ease.

Disadvantages

Centaur shapechangers seek contact with other peoples, which their clan elders find odd. Because of these strange notions, as well as their unusual wanderlust, they do not receive the respect shown those who remain with their clans. As such, they do not enjoy a trump bonus for any Presence action with their clan members (except to avoid mysticism). This disadvantage extends to members of other clans who know of their nature.

A centaur with another mystical role, such as barbarian shaman, may not switch to this role during play. However, other heroes who meet the role's requirements may abandon their former roles and choose this one as their first mystic role.

The Citadel Mystic

History may show that Goldmoon's greatest contribution to Krynna was her discovery in 5sc of her inner power to heal and her subsequent decision to teach others this power. Thus was founded on the island of Schallsea the Citadel of Light.

Since then, she and Jasper, the hill dwarf she healed, have expanded the Citadel's teachings. Many people from all over Ansalon have sought out the Citadel to learn and understand the secrets of the heart. Some of them are refugees forced from their homes by the ravages of the dragons, while others come to learn of this strange power that Goldmoon has discovered.

On the isle of Schallsea live mystics of all levels of training, from novices to masters. These folk study nearly every sphere of mysticism, but they are renowned for their healing skills, both mundane and magical. It is Goldmoon's desire that the Citadel's legacy to the world be the art of healing. Many *Citadel mystics* also train in sensitivity and mentalism, both of which supplement their healing skills.

However, Goldmoon and the other masters of the Citadel do not allow their followers to study necromancy, and learning this art from an outside source is grounds for immediate dismissal. The Citadel does teach spiritualism, but only to certain advanced students whom the masters feel have the wisdom to understand the inherent dangers of dealing with spirits. Students who learn this art are forbidden to create any of the intangible, spectral undead—wraiths, ghosts, spectres, and other such creatures.



Role-Playing

Mystics of the Citadel of Light use their powers for the good of those around them, be they poor refugees or proud knights. They have learned from Goldmoon and the other masters the power to heal others of their injuries and illnesses. Their mundane medical skills enable them to help others even when their magical powers are exhausted. Whether they remain at the Citadel and aid those who have sustained terrible injuries in their flight from the devastation of their homes or go out among the free peoples of the world and assist them with their skills, they are valuable friends to those around them.

Though they prefer to resolve differences peacefully, Citadel mystics are more than capable of overcoming a foe in battle if threatened. These heroes tend to use weapons that disarm or disable an opponent rather than injure him, but they are not required to do so.

Jasper Fireforge, a Hero of the Heart, typifies the Citadel mystic.

Requirements

Mystics of the Citadel of Light may be of any race. Goldmoon welcomes anyone of good intentions who comes to the Citadel to learn. She interviews applicants personally, reading their auras (using the sensitivity sphere) to determine whether their spirits are ready for training and whether they have the right sort of moral character to become a Citadel mystic.

To adopt this role, a hero must have a code of "B" or better and a score of at least 4 in Spirit. As mystics of the Citadel are not particularly eager to pursue combat—although they can defend themselves capably—they must have a Dexterity and Strength code of "C" or lower as well as a maximum Agility and Endurance code of "B." If a player's initial card selection during hero creation would result in higher Physical codes than allowed, the player may reduce them voluntarily; however, he may not raise other codes to make up for the reduction.

All Citadel mystics are expected to



learn the sphere of healing. They can study other spheres as well, except for necromancy. Any hero or character who studies necromancy will be dismissed from the Citadel upon discovery: Goldmoon has remained adamant on this point.

Any person wishing to study at the Citadel must follow a high moral standard. Therefore, players may not assign Dragons cards or Hearts cards with a black aura to the nature of a Citadel mystic during hero creation.

Advantages

Citadel mystics are known for their compassion and their support for the rights of the individual. Once they have identified themselves as followers of Goldmoon, they gain a trump bonus to any Presence action involving refugees, prisoners, or downtrodden peasants.

Additionally, since the Citadel enjoys respect among an increasing number of rulers and lords in the free realms of Ansalon, Citadel mystics often can gain aid from local rulers, if they seek them out. To take advantage of this benefit, the mystic's player turns a card from the Fate Deck.

- ♣ If the card's aura is white or red, the lord feels favorably disposed toward the mystic and his party and offers what aid he can.
- ♣ A black aura means the lord is neutrally disposed toward the Citadel and its mystics, but the heroes have an opportunity to convince him of their good intentions. (Role-playing and perhaps another random draw dictates whether the heroes receive the aid they sought.)
- ♣ Drawing a Dragons card reveals that the lord opposes the Citadel. The Narrator's story dictates whether this ruler simply turns the heroes away, dispatches men-of-arms against them, or pretends to be friendly while sending word to their enemies.

Heroes may adopt this role at any time in their career, assuming they have the requisite scores and codes.

Disadvantages

The primary disadvantage for followers of the Citadel of Light is the restriction on what spheres they are allowed to learn. No follower may practice necromancy under any circumstances, and any who wish to study spiritualism must first gain the permission of Goldmoon and the Citadel's mystic masters.

Goldmoon does not forbid those who have studied necromancy under other mystics to join her organization, although she forbids them from ever using that magic while representing the Citadel. (In effect, such mystics retain the understanding of the necromancy sphere but may not use it without risking censure or expulsion.)

The Dwarf Earth Mystic

The dwarves of Ansalon have long been especially attuned to the earth. From their mountain fastnesses they have crafted wondrous artifacts imbued with the magic of Krynn, discovered fertile mountain dells where they grow crops to feed their people, and drawn forth untold riches from the depths of the earth.

These dwarves believe that, when Reorx hammered out the world from Chaos, he imbued into his creation a spark of his own divine essence. That spark made the earth into a great living being—one that moves so slowly as to be imperceptible to all but a few.

When the dwarves arose as a race, they possessed a special affinity for the earth and desired to serve as its guardians. Those who best understood Reorx's child taught their people the ways of this great creature and, as a result, the earth gave freely of its secrets. The dwarves' attempts to teach other races about the living Krynn were not as successful, however. Despite a few notable exceptions from among the other mortal races, only some of the dragons had the patience to learn the secrets of the earth. Certain dwarf scholars suggest that the legendary





Earthen Magic

Dharvi Brokenhammer is a miner from Thorbardin. He was working at the top of a sloping mine shaft one day, a couple years after the Second Cataclysm, when he felt a premonition that the shaft below him was about to collapse. The old Hylar had managed to run down into the mine and start hustling out the workers when the shaft collapsed, trapping Dharvi under mounds of falling rock and earth. His crew thought him dead.

When a rescue team dug him out several days later, Dharvi was still alive. However, he ranted nonstop about how the stone had spoken of the collapse but no one had listened except him. The dwarves of Hybardin thought his ordeal must have driven him crazy, for surely all knew that Reorx and the other gods had again departed the world. Few listened to his claims that the earth had spoken to him and sustained him. In fact, they decided to keep him out of the mines for his own safety.

But Dharvi's grandson, young Evren Firehammer, listened to the old man's ravings. One night, he helped his grandfather sneak back into the mines and was amazed to see the stones come to life before them! The two returned to the mines secretly over the next several nights, until they were discovered by a guard who witnessed the two of them speaking with a great creature of stone.

Shaken by what he had seen, the sentinel brought the two before the Hylar thane and told of their discovery. Glade Hornfel himself returned to the cavern with them and watched as they summoned a creature of elemental earth.

From that day forward, Dharvi and Evren devoted themselves to teaching others their earth magic. Today this new art is spreading among the dwarves of Ansalon. However, as in ages past, other races seem less able to grasp the subtleties of the earth.

Dragon Isles are protected from harm because of a special bond the oldest Good dragons formed with the earth.

In ages past, dwarves understood the earth through their worship of Reorx the Forge. When the gods departed Krynn, however, the dwarves believed themselves bereft of their special connection to the earth. It took a somewhat deranged old Hylar to reawaken the idea of the *dwarf earth mystic*—and with it, the hope that the divine connection indeed still lived (see sidebar).

Role-Playing

Dwarf earth mystics are reliable, stubborn, tough, and as solid as the bedrock of Krynn. They are given to insights that few others understand—even other dwarves. Some dwarves believe the earth mystics are descended from the first dwarves, the Chosen who worked with Reorx himself during the Age of Dreams. (Dwarves refuse to accept the common belief that they were formed from the Graystone's magic.) This heritage gives the earth mystics special status within their communities.

While dwarf earth mystics do not form part of the ruling elite, the thanes themselves often seek out their advice before beginning new projects. The mystics' characteristic gruffness does not sit well with other races (not that most folks can tell the difference between their gruffness and that of any other dwarf), so few outsiders know much of their skills.

Within dwarven society, earth mystics help plan expansions of the dwarves' underground delvings, locate sources of water, find mineral deposits, and mark dangerous areas. Many of today's more productive dwarven mines were discovered by earth mystics. In times of war, they use their magical connection with the earth to protect their communities from harm.

Requirements

A dwarf earth mystic must meet all his normal racial requirements. In addi-

tion, he must have at least a 5 ability score and a "B" code in both Reason and Spirit. He must learn the geomancy school of sorcery and the sensitivity sphere of mysticism. Players whose heroes have an "A" code in Spirit may select two other spheres; many dwarves prefer the mystic spheres of channeling and healing.

Advantages

For any magic involving earth or stone, the dwarf earth mystic receives an automatic trump bonus, regardless of the suit of the card used. This bonus applies to any attempt to manipulate, sense, control, create, or destroy earth or stone. Furthermore, these heroes can combine their mystic ability of sensitivity with geomancy to gain insights into the magic of the earth.

Earth mystics are also held in high regard by their people. In any Presence actions they attempt concerning their expertise in stone—such as warning explorers away from a certain underground path or convincing their thane where to build a new fortress—they receive an automatic trump bonus.

A dwarf is usually born and trained into this role, based on the portents surrounding his birth. Some, however, learn of their connection to the earth much later in life, even if they demonstrated no particular affinity with sorcery or mysticism in their youth. Most dwarves, then, will adopt this role early in their careers, but heroes can become dwarf mystics during play as well.

Disadvantages

Although dwarf earth mystics excel at earth magic, they remain somewhat less adept in other magic. They never receive a trump bonus for any magic other than geomancy or sensitivity (as applied to earth or stone).

These heroes tend to appear even more gruff than normal for dwarves, for the stones need no social amenities in their discourse. In interactions with

other races, therefore, they never gain a trump bonus in any Presence actions, even when such interaction involves their special expertise. (The one exception is a Presence action to resist mysticism.) Narrators may negate this disadvantage in individual cases if the mystic has proven his expertise over a sufficient period of time (determined by the Narrator).

The Independent Mystic

In many of Ansalon's cultures, those with mystical talent are trained to become members of certain groups. Dwarf elders teach talented youngsters the ways of earth magic, barbarian shamans show promising youths how to learn from the spirits, and Solamnic Knights with a talent for mysticism seek knowledge from the Orders of the Sword and the Rose to develop those talents. *Independent mystics*, on the other hand, learn to make use of their natural talents either on their own or from a mentor not associated with any mystical group.

Often, an independent mystic discovers his skills through some significant event in his life or through some minor trait that becomes apparent only as he grows older. Of course, some people never choose to explore these strange traits, but those who do often discover they are capable of much more than they knew. For instance:

- ♣ The hero always seems to sense danger right before some ill befalls him or those around him, but he may never have realized he had an affinity for the sphere of sensitivity until a group of goblin marauders attacked his village.
- ♣ Another hero—a natural animist—might find that a certain bad-tempered war horse, which already bit three hostlers, always becomes docile around him.
- ♣ Or perhaps a hero decided to experiment with the art of healing after seeing that he recovered from injury faster than others around him.



Ansalon's organized mystic groups (see Chapter Two) fear what a lack of training may bring out in these independents, so they often try to persuade them to refine their talents with some sort of instruction. However, independent mystics often believe that only through individual study can they fully explore their own magical abilities.

Role-Playing

By circumstance or design, the independent mystic has remained unattached to any mystical group. As a result, he possesses a greater freedom of action than do mystics of the Citadel, the Order of the Skull, or other organizations. They follow only their own interests and passions, although they are not necessarily self-centered. Many find their motivation in selfless pursuits, while others act out of petty cruelty. If there is one underlying similarity among these mystics, it is their individualism.

Many of them wear their "me against the world" outlook as a badge of honor.

Of course, some independent mystics may decide later to join a mystic organization. Others may once have belonged to such a group but, for some reason, chose to distance themselves from their former comrades: A recluse who once served in the Knights of the Skull is as likely to be an independent mystic as a tavern owner who years ago arrived at the Citadel as a refugee and, while there, studied mysticism under its masters.

Requirements

Heroes of any race may play this role, as long as they have a score of at least 3 and a code of at least "B" in Spirit. There are no particular sphere requirements for independent mystics, but they should not belong to any mystic organization.



Advantages

An independent mystic with a Spirit code of "A" enjoys an automatic trump bonus for magical actions that involve his "specialty" sphere—the first mystic sphere the hero ever learned. Those independents with a "B" code cannot gain a specialty until they first improve their knowledge of mysticism.

Independent mystics are not restricted in their magical education by the constraints of any group. Their lack of sphere requirements or prohibitions gives them an excellent chance to discover new combinations of magical effects or new aspects of the magic of the Fifth Age. Furthermore, independent mystics are free to learn sorcery also and use any type of weapon or combat tactic they choose. This role is best suited, therefore, to those who prefer as few constraints on their education as possible.

Heroes can adopt this role during play, whether they previously played a mystic role or have only now awakened to their latent powers.

Disadvantages

Many people feel naturally suspicious of spellcasters but, in the case of mystics associated with organizations like the Knights of Solamnia or the Citadel of Light, the group's reputation affords them at least a little trust. Because independent mystics have no such affiliations, though, people seem more wary of them.

When an independent mystic attempts a Presence action involving someone who does not know him, he receives a -3 action penalty (assuming the stranger knows he possesses magical powers). Of course, an unscrupulous mystic might claim affiliation with a mystic organization, but if the lie is ever discovered, the action penalty doubles (to -6). Individuals may reduce or negate either penalty through role-playing. The penalty does not apply to Presence actions to resist mystic magic.

The Kagonesti Shaman

The Kagonesti consider themselves the only elves who have remained true to their traditions and, in fact, refer to the other elves of Ansalon as "fallen ones." The Kagonesti, or Wilder elves, harbor a great grudge for the Silvanesti after their enforced servitude to these cousins during the War of the Lance, and they regard the Qualinesti as only slightly better. The way of life the other two elven subraces label "barbarism," the Kagonesti consider the traditional lifestyle of the elven heritage.

Shamanism—a nature faith—has been a part of Wilder elf society since the birth of the race. Even prior to the beginning of the Fifth Age, *Kagonesti shamans* did not worship the gods directly; rather, they paid homage to nature itself. The Blue Phoenix (Habakuk), god of all living creatures; Chislev, nature incarnate; the Tree of Life (Zivilyn), Chislev's companion; and Zeboim, goddess of tempests, granted these elves their powers as long as they accepted the existence of the gods.

The Kagonesti have changed little as a result of the Chaos War and more recent events. They have lost some of their land to the depredations of Gelidus the White, but for the most part, they live much as they did during the Fourth Age. Kagonesti shamans, exemplified by Feril in *The Dawning of a New Age*, continue to follow the traditional ways of their people. (Suggestions for playing Kagonesti heroes appear in Chapter Four.)

Role-Playing

Kagonesti shamans link their magic to one of the four basic elements: air, water, earth, and fire. In addition to their mystical abilities, they learn one school of sorcery from among the following: aeromancy, hydromancy, geomancy, or pyromancy.

A Kagonesti studying the ways of



the shaman demonstrates a particular affinity for one element. He may have discovered this aptitude through a series of tests or challenges, or others may have noticed it reflected in his personality. Those with a talent for aeromancy, for example, often seem by nature flighty and capricious, while those with an affinity for hydromancy are often patient and relentless.

Regardless of elemental affinity, all Kagonesti shamans revere and protect nature. And, like the barbarian shamans discussed earlier, they are also responsible for safeguarding and guiding their people.

Requirements

Naturally, this role is open only to Kagonesti elves. Heroes of other elven subraces must adopt a different role.

A hero who follows the Kagonesti shaman's path must first possess all the requirements of his race (see Chapter Four). Furthermore, he needs a minimum score of 5 and a minimum gain of "B" in both Spirit and Reason.

Unlike barbarian shamans, whose principal area of mystical practice lies in spiritualism, the Kagonesti gain their mystic skills from the natural

world. As a result, they must learn at least the mystical sphere of animism. If a shaman starts with or achieves a code of "A" in Spirit, he may choose his two other areas of mystical knowledge from any sphere except necromancy and spiritualism (see "Disadvantages").

Furthermore, these heroes must choose one school of sorcery from among the four basic elemental schools: aeromancy, geomancy, hydromancy, or pyromancy. However, as Kagonesti shamans are not especially skilled sorcerers, no hero with this role may ever have a Reason code of "A."

Advantages

Kagonesti shamans are especially attuned to the natural world. If a hero with this role attempts any magical action involving the sphere of animism, he gains an automatic trump bonus. Furthermore, he gains a +3 bonus to any Presence action to influence animals.

Disadvantages

The rugged Kagonesti do not get along well with other, more "civilized" elves. Therefore, any Presence action involving Silvanesti elves suffers a -6 action penalty, and any such action involving the slightly more open-minded Qualinesti suffers a -3 penalty.

In addition, Kagonesti elves may not practice necromantic or spectramantic magic, as they consider the undead unnatural, a mockery of the blessings of the natural world. Creating such creatures or interacting with them is the height of blasphemy.

As with the barbarian shaman role, heroes must spend their lives training to gain a shaman's skills. Therefore, no hero may adopt this role during play.



The Kender Nightstalker

Kender are a naturally curious folk. Even afflicted kender, given to a caution never before exhibited by members of this race, are at heart a people easily fascinated by a mystery. As with all new things, kender took to the marvelous world of mystic magic with delight. In typical kender fashion, they made it their own in short order.

Kender nightstalkers have taken to one aspect of mysticism in particular: exploring the world of ghosts, ban-shees, and other spirits. Always fascinated with stories about history, these heroes track down spirits to ask them questions about the world that was. The compassionate kender sometimes even help put these spirits to rest, giving them the peace they desire.

True kender approach this role out of wide-eyed curiosity, but afflicted kender have more complex reasons for pursuing it. Perhaps they seek to overcome their fears by confronting them in dangerous encounters with such creatures as spirits. Or, maybe the ravages afflicted kender endured at the claws of the Red Dragon makes them want to seek out and eliminate threats, so they can no longer plague members of their race.

Role-Playing

Instead of simply telling readers how to play the role of kender nightstalker, perhaps it would be easier to *show* them:

Kender nightstalkers seek out ghosts and other spirits—at least, until something more interesting comes along. Which happens every five minutes or so. Like why was that mean-looking knight talking to those two Legionnaires, or who was that riding in the carriage of a Lord Knight as it sped out of Sanction late last night, or where does that stairway behind the concealed door in Castle Eastwatch lead, or . . .

Ahem, yes, back to the matter at hand, which was . . . which was . . . ghosts! Yes, that's it! Ghosts! Wow! They have such interesting stories to tell. Why,

some of them have been around for hundreds of years! Can you imagine, though, having to live in the same place for hundreds of years? Especially with no one coming to visit? Hmmm. Must get pretty boring, maybe even a little lonely.

Anyway, some kender can sense when ghosts and other creatures like them are around. We get along with them pretty well—ghosts are good people, really. We can sometimes even affect ghosts with our magic. Why, just the other day, my cousin put to rest the spirit of an elf woman. She wasn't much for talking. In fact, she was so sad, she couldn't stop wailing in anguish. My other cousin, she's from Kendermore, fell to her knees weeping when she heard and didn't stop for hours. I wish I could do something to help her. Who knows? Maybe someday I'll figure out how to put her spirit to rest.

Requirements

Both true kender and afflicted kender can play this role. In addition to their racial requirements, kender nightstalker heroes must have a Spirit score of at least 4, a Spirit code of "B," and access to either the sensitivity sphere or the spiritualism sphere. Sensitivity is far more common among nightstalkers than is spiritualism—it comes more naturally to kender. Because kender may not have an "A" code in any ability except Perception, they can familiarize themselves with only one sphere.

Advantages

Regardless of whether they possess the sphere of sensitivity or that of spiritualism, kender nightstalkers can sense when a spirit is nearby (with a successful Perception or Spirit action, whichever seems more appropriate). Kender can detect only intangible or spectral undead in this fashion—not corporeal undead like zombies.

To encourage the fun that can arise from having kender heroes in the game, the Narrator might allow nightstalkers to detect spirits even when none are present. As both true and



afflicted kender remain a deeply curious people, the nightstalker hero likely will veer off his group's chosen course to pursue the hunch, which can lead the heroes to explore an avenue they otherwise might not.

Another advantage to playing a kender nightstalker is that most spirits, except for the most Evil and depraved ones, seem unwilling to attack this cheerful race with their terrifying powers. Since kender love to chat and, in truth, many spirits haven't had a chance to tell their stories to anyone (what with all the scary things any decent spirit has to do), quite often they will talk to any kender they encounter. Only when the nightstalker's player picks a card with a black aura on a random draw does the spirit attack. After all, finding a sympathetic ear is nice every once in a while.

Once a kender hero learns of his affinity for spirits and takes the time to develop the necessary mystic skills, he can adopt this role during play.

Disadvantages

The principal disadvantage to being a kender nightstalker is that no one of a different race among his traveling companions seems the least bit interested in meeting all these spirits. In fact, they often insist that nightstalkers not open the lid of every ancient sarcophagus they find. Admittedly, this behavior is beyond the hero's comprehension. Even the afflicted kender in some groups fail to see the nightstalker's logic in waking the ghosts in a catacomb to ask them the answer to a riddle written on the wall (even if the answer *will* stop the ceiling from continuing to lower . . .).

The Knight of the Skull

Knights of the Skull are those Knights of Takhisis who have developed their talent with mystical magic. No longer strictly an order of priestly dark paladins, the Order of the Skull dedicates itself to combining skill at arms with dark mysticism to achieve its aims. Members consider themselves the pinnacle of Dark Knight



achievement and seek to expand both the Knights' control over Ansalon and their order's control of the Knighthood.

The three groups within the Knights of Takhisis—the Orders of the Lily, Thorn, and Skull—all carry equal rank. All Dark Knights must first learn the profession of arms in the Order of the Lily, but they can later switch to the order that better suits their aptitudes. In some rare cases, an individual chooses to become a Knight of the Skull after having served as both a Lily Knight and as a Thorn Knight, but usually once one order has claimed a hero, he sticks with it throughout his career.

Role-Playing

Knights of the Skull use their magic to further the aims of both their order and themselves. Many such heroes tend to prefer a subtle approach to overcoming problems as opposed to an active or violent one. This attitude is by no means a requirement. Rather, Skull Knights consider it a point of fraternal pride that they can accomplish their objectives without necessarily destroying their opponents—they rely on their ability to seduce and suborn others into aiding them. This preference has gained the Knights of the Skull some powerful allies and earned them a measure of respect from their enemies.

Governor-General Mirielle Abrena uses Skull Knights as ambassadors or advisers to foreign powers, taking advantage of the greater influence their mystical abilities afford them. In Khur, for example, the principal advisers to the Khan are a talon of Knights of the Skull led by Saraele Mellivaene, a half-elf of Silvanesti stock and a former wing commander of the Governor-General's own compgroup.

Requirements

Only humans (and half-elves of Silvanesti or Qualinesti stock) may become Knights of Takhisis. Heroes of other races might become allies of the Knights (although such individuals are

nearly always outcasts from their people), but they may not become full members of the Knighthood.

A Skull Knight must possess the Physical scores and codes of a Knight of the Lily: a score of 6 and a code of "A" in both Strength and Endurance. Furthermore, these heroes are strong of character, requiring a Spirit score of at least 5 and a code of at least "B." Finally, because they often seek to manipulate others, they need a minimum Presence score of 5 and a minimum code of "C."

The order does not require Knights of the Skull to learn a particular mystical sphere. As a general practice, however, they prefer more subtle magic, such as meditation, mentalism, and sensitivity. The Knights of the Skull who learn necromancy use it more to magically wound an enemy than to summon up hosts of corporeal undead. Takhisis never concerned herself with reanimating the dead, preferring intelligent followers to mindless ones. The Knights of Takhisis in the Fifth Age consider such uses of necromancy beneath their dignity. The sphere of spiritualism is more commonly accepted, for with it Knights can summon intelligent undead.

Like the Knights of the Lily, members of the Order of the Skull must demonstrate certain personality traits in order to join the Knighthood in the first place. The player must choose a card with a value of 5 or lower to represent his hero's demeanor and one with a value of 4 or higher to represent his nature. Reaching Skull Knight level requires a hero to have completed at least five quests.

Advantages

As Knights of the Skull once served in the Order of the Lily, they share the combat advantages of that order. When these heroes close with an enemy, any card they play to do so automatically becomes trump. They also receive a trump bonus for any melee attack made while riding a mount. Finally, they share their fellow Knights' hatred





for members of the Legion of Steel, gaining them a trump bonus for mystic spell attacks against a Legionnaire.

Knights of the Skull also gain a +3 bonus to any Presence action involving diplomacy or negotiation. This assumes the Knight has not done anything deliberately to offend those with whom he is negotiating. (In such a case, the Narrator applies an appropriate penalty to his action score.)

The magical training these heroes undergo gives them such an insight into mystical matters, they gain a trump bonus to Presence actions to resist the effects of mystic magic. The Knights of the Skull are the only Dark Knights with this power.

Disadvantages

A Knight of Takhisis, echoing the Oath of the Solamnic Knights, really does believe his honor is his life: literally. To switch to a different order within the Knighthood, a Skull Knight must stand before an honor council of his superiors called a Test of Takhisis. Failing the Test—an *average Presence* (*Presence*) action opposed by the highest-ranking Knight present—means the Knight is put to death. Few Knights attempt such Tests unless they are sure of their honor, or at least that they can convince the convened council they have acted honorably. Likewise, a Knight also faces execution if found guilty of a violation of the Code. (See the *Heroes of Steel* dramatic supplement for more on these facets of the Knighthood.)

In addition, Skull Knights must fulfill standard requirements for military service: forty to sixty days of service to the Knighthood each year. This is in addition to any other requirements levied on members of the order by the Lord Knight of the Skull.

A hero can enter the Order of the Skull only from one of the Knighthood's other orders (Lily or Thorn). At the Narrator's discretion, beginning heroes can be assumed to have fulfilled this requirement. Such heroes must

begin play with at least five prior quests—four to be considered a Knight of the Lily, plus one additional quest needed before applying for acceptance into the Order of the Skull. An experienced hero may adopt the Knight of the Skull role later in his career (assuming he has the required scores and codes) only if he is switching from a Knight of the Lily or a Knight of the Thorn role.

The Knight of the Sword and Knight of the Rose

For over two millennia, the Knights of Solamnia have been the guardians of the free peoples of Ansalon. Such heroes as Huma Dragonbane and Sturm Brightblade were among the greatest of the Knights. Their sacrifices helped free the world from the machinations of the Dragon Queen, Takhisis.

Other, less famous Knights do every day on a smaller scale what Huma and Sturm did on a grand scale. They protect villages from the depredations of local bandits, provide for families that have lost their only means of support, and defend men unjustly accused of a crime. All Knights maintain a code of personal behavior that puts the good of others before their own. They seek ever to be loyal, courageous, and above all else, honorable.

The Knight of Solamnia role in *Heroes of Steel* offers a quick overview of all three orders within the Knighthood. Those who choose to live as *Knights of the Sword* or *Knights of the Rose* devote their lives to the spiritual side of the role even more than do Crown Knights.

Role-Playing

The Solamnic Oath sums up everything that matters to a Knight of Solamnia: *Est Sularus oth Mithas*, "my honor is my life." While Knights of the Crown pledge to follow the Oath through loyalty and obedience above all else, the other two orders express their reverence for the concept of honor in other ways.

A Sword Knight follows the ideals of

courage and honor, renewing his commitment through his strength of spirit. He remains courageous in the face of adversity, even if that courage may cost him his life. His spiritual strength, gained from prayer to Kiri-Jolith, noble god of war, gives the Sword Knight the courage for self-sacrifice in the name of Good. To better enable Sword Knights to pursue these ideals, the High Clerist urges them to study one sphere of mysticism. Many learn the art of healing to better minister to the oppressed. Others prefer the sphere of sensitivity, which can grant them limited foresight or powers of prophecy. Sir Darin Waydols-son, a minotaur-raised human from the novel *The Wayward Knights*, is a notable Sword Knight from pre-Cataclysm times.

Once, only heroes of royal blood could reach the height of Solamnic spiritual strength and purity by becoming Rose Knights. However, the High Council relaxed this restriction when the Order's numbers dwindled following the first Cataclysm. Today, any Knight can earn the honor of acceptance into the Order of the Rose, regardless of lineage. These heroes vow to support wisdom and justice in service to the Oath. Under the leadership of the High Justice, they fight most enemies who embrace injustice or restrict man's pursuit of knowledge. These Knights, who revere Paladine above all other gods, can wield the magic of three mystic spheres; in particular, the spheres of meditation and mentalism help them in their pursuit of wisdom and in dispensing justice. Rose Knights also teach the mystic arts to the rest of the Order. Linsha Majere is a Knight of the Rose, as was Lord Gunthar uth Wistan.

Requirements

The Knighthood grew from a predomi-

nantly human foundation; the Order was formed in the provinces of Solamnia, recently freed from the overwhelmingly human Ergothian Empire. Of late, the Knights have relaxed the racial requirements somewhat, allowing half-elves to join the Order as full Knights. Therefore, only humans and half-elves of Qualinesti or Silvanesti stock may become Solamnic Knights. This restriction does not preclude heroes of other races from associating with the Knights; in the past, many persons of other races have distinguished themselves as auxiliary members of the Knighthood.



The Knights have strict requirements for entry into the Order of the Crown. As Knights of the Sword and of the Rose must first have belonged to this order, they must meet similar requirements, as set forth

in *Heroes of Steel*. They need an ability score of at least 6 and a code of "A" in both Strength and Endurance to handle the long and rigorous training in arms. Furthermore, a Knight must be both strong of spirit and capable of leading others. Therefore, heroes must have at least a score of 6 in both Spirit and Presence.

A Sword Knight may have up to a "B" code in Spirit, and a Rose Knight may have a code of "A." Rose Knights have the additional requirement of at least a "B" code in Presence, for they are some of the Knighthood's strongest leaders. Knights of the Sword or the Rose have no particular sphere requirements, although the sphere of necromancy is forbidden them, and spiritualism strongly frowned upon.

Members of both the Order of the Sword and the Rose disdain the use of sorcery. No Knight of either order, therefore, may possess a code higher than "C" in Reason. A few individuals have chosen to leave the Knighthood to pursue an interest in sorcery; while



they usually maintain a good relationship with their former comrades, they are no longer considered Knights.

Like all Knights of Solamnia, Rose and Sword Knights must walk a narrow moral path. Players may not use a card with a value higher than 5 for their hero's nature, nor a card with a value higher than 4 for his demeanor. Furthermore, the Knighthood offers its members at least minimal support, giving heroes a wealth score of 3 or better.

Advantages

All Knights of Solamnia have certain advantages in common, gained in training during the hero's time in the Order of the Crown. They receive a trump bonus for any attempt to close with an enemy and for any mounted combat. Furthermore, they receive a trump bonus for any personal or melee attack against Knights of Takhisis or members of the Legion of Steel.

Each time the hero increases a category in reputation, he may petition the Knighthood for advancement: either into the next order (from Sword Knight to Rose Knight, for instance) or for a free attempt to increase his Presence score according to the rules at the end of Chapter One of the *Book of the Fifth Age*. To earn either type of advancement, the hero appears before a knightly council for a Knight's Trial, where he must succeed in an *average Presence* (*Presence*) action opposed by the senior Knight. (*Heroes of Steel* offers more details on the Knight's Trial.)

In addition, heroes can draw on the Solamnic treasury instead of their personal wealth for their own needs or to advance the Knighthood's goals. To tap the Order's treasury, a Sword Knight hero must attempt a wealth action using one-half his Presence score instead of his actual wealth score. A Rose Knight may access the treasury using his full Presence as the action ability.

Finally, in areas controlled by the Knights of Solamnia, members of the Order of the Rose gain an automatic

trump bonus for Presence actions directed at locals.

Disadvantages

Not only do all Knights share certain benefits, they also have a number of drawbacks in common. These honorable warriors never gain a trump bonus for an attempt to surprise an enemy in combat. In addition, a Knight's Presence score falls 1 point if he fails at a Knight's Trial.

Knights owe their Order between forty and sixty days' service each year. Furthermore, they must donate personal wealth to support the Knighthood: With each increase in reputation category, the hero loses 1 point of his personal wealth score (to a minimum of 2). Thus his ability to draw from the Solamnic treasury (see "Advantages") becomes more and more important as he advances.

Although Rose Knights represent the height of Solamnic spiritual achievement, they are not without their flaws. Players should select for their Rose Knight heroes one character flaw or personal weakness the hero must constantly battle. For instance, perhaps he is overly indulgent of a child or squire, subject to fits of pride, or the bearer of an unrealistic grudge against a particular enemy. This weakness, whatever it is, should influence the hero's actions in some way at least once in every adventure. Narrators can even develop dilemmas for the hero based on this weakness or otherwise work it into play.

A hero can become a Sword Knight during play only after first playing the generic Knight of Solamnia role as a Crown Knight, then successfully petitioning for advancement. Likewise, heroes wanting to become Rose Knights later in their adventuring careers must first have played the role of Sword Knight and succeed at a Knight's Trial action to advance.

The Legionnaire Mystic

Like Ansalon's other chivalrous groups, the Legion of Steel also utilizes the power of mysticism. A group of practical-minded individuals, the *Legionnaire mystics* place few restrictions against any particular spheres of mysticism. Thus, mystics with a wide variety of talents and backgrounds find themselves drawn to this justice-serving Order.

Role-Playing

Like the Legionnaire warriors, scouts, and sorcerers described in previous supplements, Legionnaire mystics use their special talents to help those injured by enemies of the free realms and to combat those who oppose freedom in Ansalon. A Legionnaire mystic is no different from other Legion members in this regard—all of them do what is necessary to protect those who cannot defend themselves. Like other Legionnaires, they use the simple tenets of the Legacy to guide their actions.

Some mystic groups condemn the spheres of necromancy and spiritualism. The Legion, however, condemns only those who use such magic for Evil ends. Some former Knights of Takhisis brought with them to the Legion an understanding of these dark lores and, as long as they engage in no Evil practices, the Legion does not hold this knowledge against them. In fact, Legion elders even call upon these former Skull Knights to provide information concerning undead enemies. One such mystic has put his spiritualism talent to good use by seeking out and banishing spectral undead and creatures of chaos.

Requirements

Unlike mystical members of other Orders of chivalry, Legionnaire mystics need not first prove themselves as warriors. Many of them are indeed highly

skilled in arms, but the Legion does not levy any requirements concerning weapon skills. This organization cares more about a person's talents than his deficiencies, for one can overcome shortcomings with training and perseverance.

Therefore, the only ability requirement placed upon a prospective Legionnaire mystic is a score of at least 4 and a code of at least "B" in Spirit.

As with any Legionnaire, the mystic also must possess the right moral character, so the player of a Legionnaire mystic may not assign a card with a value higher than 6 to his nature and demeanor, nor may the Legionnaire possess a wealth score greater than 5.

The role of Legionnaire mystic is open to any race. In fact, it is not uncommon to find a group comprising several races working to achieve a common goal.

Advantages

Due to the longstanding animosity between members of the Legion and the Knights of Takhisis, Legionnaire mystics enjoy a trump bonus for any attempt to use mysticism against one of these dark paladins. They also receive a trump bonus to mystical defensive spells in battle with Solamnic rivals.

Another benefit provided by the Legion is training. One of its principal roles involves teaching others to defend themselves—and not just militarily. Defense stems not only from weapon skills, Legion mentors teach. Rather, it is a state of mind, a decision about when to fight and when to withdraw.

Legionnaire mystics adhere to this belief as actively as any other member of the Order, seeking out those with mystic talent to tutor or send to some-





one more suitable for training. In this way, the Legion has discovered many promising pupils, some of whom have been trained within the Legion while others have been sent to the Citadel of Light.

This teaching philosophy gives Legionnaire mystics an advantage as they attempt to excel in their art. As explained at the end of Chapter One in the *Book of the Fifth Age*, the only way to improve a hero's Spirit code is to pick the Nine of Hearts in a random draw when the hero's reputation increases one category. Legionnaire mystics can improve their ability codes more easily: When the hero advances to a new reputation category, the player may improve his hero's Spirit code by drawing the Eight or Nine of Hearts. (The hero's ability score still improves only if the value of the card drawn exceeds the current score.) This benefit assumes that the hero has the opportunity to discuss his findings with other mystics during or after each quest.

In addition, any full Legionnaire, regardless of role, must train an apprentice: a character of Unknown reputation with scores and codes each 1 point or rating below the hero's own. This character—essentially a second hero for the player—assists the mystic in his Legion missions as part of his training until he becomes a Novice.

Heroes who join the Legion after beginning their adventuring careers or who discover mystic talent later in life can switch to this role during play.

Disadvantages

The Knights of Takhisis bear an intense hatred for the Legion of Steel, and the Legion's mystics are not exempt from that antipathy. Because the Skull Knights assume that Legionnaire mystics harbor many important secrets, any captured Legionnaire who is discovered to be a mystic can expect extra brutal treatment by the Skull Knights before his execution (exceptions to be determined by the Narrator).

Having an apprentice has its drawbacks as well as its good points. The hero must support the apprentice out of his own wealth and is responsible for turning him into a fully trained Legionnaire. While he might not want to take the apprentice with him on his most dangerous missions, he mustn't neglect him, either. When the Narrator deems the hero's overprotection is hindering his apprentice's training, the player must attempt an *average Presence (Presence)* action, opposed by the apprentice character, to prevent the youngster from quitting the Legion. Failure at the action means the mystic's player must immediately turn over the top card of the Fate Deck and reduce his hero's Presence score by one-third the value of the card (rounded up), to represent his loss of face in the organization. Drawing a Dragons card means the hero loses a category of reputation as well. The Legionnaire mystic faces the same random draw if he lets his apprentice die in the line of duty.

The Monk

The *monk* is a rare calling in Ansalon, for few possess a mind given to the pursuit of self-enlightenment. Even during the Fourth Age, this difficult path was limited to individuals who followed Majere, god of meditation, faith, and dreams. Because the worship of Majere constituted more a philosophy than a religion, his teachings survived the departure of the gods with little change.

Followers of Majere have been ever a patient lot. They do not assume the gods' departure is permanent—after all, the same gods have left before, only to return. They remain content, knowing that Majere gave them a way of life at once simple and rewarding. They continue to see his presence in the world, despite the scholars' claims that he has gone.

Role-Playing

Those who follow the monk role in the Fifth Age differ little from many followers of Majere in previous ages. They prefer peace, for only in peace can the spirit find enlightenment. They do not concern themselves with the trappings of the material world, for these trappings serve only to draw the mind and spirit away from the path to enlightenment.

Monks use their magical studies to discover more of their world: They achieve new insights through meditation magic or learn what a hawk sees by altering their form and flying. They offer this insight to those who ask, but keep their own counsel otherwise.

Requirements

It is rare for those of a race other than human to follow a monk's difficult path. Narrators may allow half-elves reared in human society to choose this role, but such exceptions should be uncommon.

To practice a monk's traditional meditative and martial arts, a hero

must have at least a 6 in both Agility and Endurance. He also must possess at least a 5 in Reason and a 6 in Perception, for a monk has a keen mind and sharp senses. His solitary studies require of him a Spirit score of at least 7 and a code of at least "B." Finally, a monk must be able to resist mystical spells wielded against him, calling for at least a score of 6 in Presence. The monk must choose his knowledge of mysticism from among the following spheres: animism, alteration, channeling, healing, meditation, mentalism, and sensitivity.

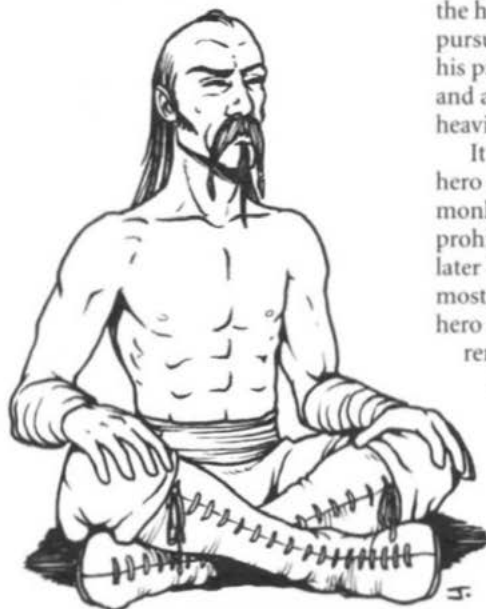
Advantages

Monks, as students of the martial arts, receive a trump bonus to any unarmed combat action or one involving any *very light* melee or thrown weapon.

Disadvantages

A monk's extensive training in unarmed combat and with *very light* weapons prevents him from using anything beyond *light* weapons, regardless of ability code. His training also limits his armor and shield to the *very light* category: padded silk and buckler. If the hero became a monk after having pursued another profession, he retains his previous knowledge of weapons and armor but may not use anything heavier than that listed above.

It is rare, but not unheard of, for a hero to begin pursuing the way of the monk at an advanced age. There is no prohibition against adopting this role later in life, but the switch represents a most profound change in the way the hero views the world. Only those who remain committed to this difficult path can attain the combat advantages and, if a hero adopts another role after having spent time as a monk, those advantages disappear—without continual practice, monks lose their edge.





The Mystic-Sorcerer

Some rare individuals possess a talent for both mysticism and sorcery. Most such *mystic-sorcerers* learn their skills through formal training, usually associated with institutions like the Citadel of Light and the Academy of Sorcery. The Legion of Steel, ever interested in expanding the capabilities of its members, has begun to seek out former Academy students to teach Legionnaires the secrets of their magic. The Knights of Takhisis also use both sorcery and mysticism to further their dark schemes. Organizations like these are keenly interested in developing the talents of their followers who possess skill in both types of magic.

A mystic-sorcerer might also have developed independently of any organization. Perhaps he took his lifelong affinity for the sea and, through great effort, managed to hone his inherent skills in sensitivity and hydromancy. Individuals capable of such a feat would be rare indeed. On the other hand, a latent mystic-sorcerer might have learned his magic from other individuals, such as former members of organizations that teach magic or even a magical being of some sort—a scion, one of the huldrefolk, or even a dragon!

Role-Playing

Although the learned folk of Ansalon divide magic into two categories—that which affects the living and that which affects the nonliving—many mystic-sorcerers disdain such a notion. The distinctions between the two groups remain purely artificial, they say, created by people whose minds cannot grasp the idea that all magic is one: Sorcery is mysticism, and mysticism is sorcery. Not all mystic-sorcerers subscribe to these extreme beliefs, but most recognize at least a tenuous connection between the two types of magic.

When prodded, mystic-sorcerers may admit that they can't prove their unified theory of magic yet, but they

point to hints of this truth in the grand pattern of creation. Renegade mages in ages past explored the boundaries of their magical knowledge, they say, and embraced the power of life and of the elements as one grand force of creation. The often haughty masters of both mysticism and sorcery urge those they meet to throw away their misconceptions and expand their perception of magic to the limits of the imagination—for only after doing so can one become a *true* master of magic.

Requirements

A hero of any race capable of learning both sorcery and mysticism can adopt this role, although elves, half-elves, gnomes, and humans are the most likely races to master both magics.

Becoming a mystic-sorcerer is not easy. The required insight into magical theory calls for a combination of intuition and intellect. To adopt this role, therefore, a hero must possess at least a score of 6 and a code of "B" in both Reason and Spirit.

The hero's preferred schools of sorcery and spheres of mysticism are often dictated by the source of his education. If, for example, he learned his mystic skills from the Citadel of Light, he might excel in the healing sphere. Self-taught mystic-sorcerers, or those educated by an individual tutor, have no sphere or school requirements.

Advantages

Beyond the obvious benefit of understanding both sorcery and mysticism, this role gives the hero the opportunity to pioneer combinations of the two types of magic. This requires him to have developed his knowledge of both fields to the greatest extent possible—in other words, he must have an "A" code in Reason and Spirit. (Rules for combining sorcerous and mystic magic appear in Chapter Four.)

A hero may adopt this role at any time during his career, assuming he meets the minimum requirements.

Disadvantages

Gaining an understanding of both sources of modern magic requires a great deal of time—some people devote their entire lives to exploring the subtleties of just sorcery or mysticism. As a result, other fields of knowledge suffer somewhat. During hero generation, if a player decides to create a mystic-sorcerer, he may not assign a code of higher than “C” to any of the hero’s Physical abilities. He may voluntarily reduce any code to “C” but may not increase another code as a result. This reduction option only allows the hero to fit within the restrictions of the mystic-sorcerer role.

If the hero chooses to pursue this role later in his adventuring career, the change requires such an intense period of study that his skills with weapons and armor atrophy to the point where he no longer possesses any code greater than a “C” in any Physical ability. The road to becoming a mystic-sorcerer is difficult, and the time needed for study does not allow a hero to maintain skills at arms.

The Rogue

Rogue mystics combine an understanding of mystical magic with a natural gift for certain unsavory skills, which makes these heroes formidable thieves. Such a combination is rare, however, for seldom do the mystic abilities of a natural-born rogue come to the attention of someone who can train him properly.

Role-Playing

Roguish mystics tend to vary widely in their outlook on the world. Some are callous brutes who use their magic to dominate people, while others seem more light-hearted sorts who greet every new day as a gift.

If there is a similarity among such people, it lies in their disdain for what society calls a “normal” life. Not for them the working of the fields or the cleaning of an inn! Some rogues consider preying on others the way to easy money. (Suggestions for running a con appear in the *Heroes of Defiance* dra-





matic supplement). A few even become artists at their trade, choosing only the most difficult of roguish challenges—be it picking the pocket of a particularly careful guard sergeant or stealing a rare artifact from a stronghold of the Knights of Takhisis.

Many rogue mystics are loners, trusting only in themselves. Such heroes have a hard time obtaining additional training, either in their mystic skills or their thief abilities. Rogues who associate with others of their kind, such as members of thieves' guilds or the Legion of Steel, find training easier to come by, but must, in exchange, give up some or all of their cherished independence.

Requirements

The number of folk displaced in the Dragon Purge makes for ample populations of refugees, some of whom—unable to find honest employment—turn to illegal activities as a source of income. They can come from nearly any ethnic background, from kender to minotaurs. Therefore, members of any hero race may become rogue mystics.

These rogues must have at least a 5 in both Agility and Dexterity. They need a minimum Spirit score of 4 and code of "B." Finally, these canny types, always on the run from their latest mark, should possess at least a 5 in Perception, with a code no lower than "C."

Advantages

Rogues remain more aware than other mystics of the dangers and secrets of urban life, giving them an automatic trump bonus to any Presence action dealing with the criminal element of a city, except to resist the effects of mystic magic. The Narrator can suspend this advantage, which covers information-gathering and intimidation actions, in individual cases—generally those in which the rogue has offended powerful local crime figures.

Rogue mystics, who often rely upon magic to enhance their abilities, can become quite adept at the spheres of channeling and meditation. This role gives a hero a trump bonus for spells he casts to increase his Coordination scores (Agility and Dexterity). The hero would not enjoy a bonus to alter his other Physical scores, nor to alter someone else's Coordination scores. Likewise, with the sphere of meditation, the hero may play any card as trump when attempting to alter his own Intellect scores (Reason and Perception). Normal trump rules apply whenever a rogue attempts to alter a score in an ability not listed above or when he tries to alter the scores of another hero or character.

The hero may use this trump bonus for either channeling or meditation but not both. If he learns both spheres, he must decide which one will gain the trump bonus and may not change his selection.

Heroes may become rogues at any time during their careers. Circumstances of their lives may cause them to adopt the role, or they may simply find themselves drawn to the excitement of pitting themselves against authority figures in cities such as Palanthas or Sanction.

Disadvantages

Most roguish types, even those with mystic abilities, are not well liked by local authorities. Thus, rogue mystics never gain a trump bonus to any Presence action involving such individuals (except to avoid mysticism). This disadvantage affects the rogue regardless of his social status.

Regardless of their training, rogues tend not to carry large weapons, which often prove difficult to hide and draw unwanted attention from the authorities. Therefore, these heroes may not carry or use any weapon of the *very heavy* category.

The True Believer

Some of the mystics of the Fifth Age remain devout followers of Krynn's pantheon, even though most people believe that the gods have departed the world. True, many priests lost contact with their gods after the Chaos War, as demonstrated by their inability to invoke divine miracles.

But the god-given power of magic has returned—albeit not the same magic men once knew—and the *true believers* would never dream of questioning how their god grants them their powers. Perhaps the gods' fight with Chaos changed forever the practice of spiritual magic.

No matter. Goldmoon still carries the blessings of her gentle goddess Mishakal. Many other priests and clerics of the Holy Orders of the Stars also wield mystic magic in the names of their gods. Their ministrations are more needed than ever in this age of widespread doubt and oppression.

Role-Playing

True believers know that the gods have not departed Krynn. Many people of the modern age have lost their faith, they agree. But these priests also point out that it is hard for faith to endure titanic events that plague the world.

The events surrounding the Chaos War and its aftermath have led true believers to study the history of the first Cataclysm more than four hundred years ago. Then, when the gods punished the world for the hubris of the Kingpriest of Istar, the faithless took the wrong message, true believers teach today. But, instead of reexamining their faith and realizing they were as much to blame as was the Kingpriest and his followers, the people turned their backs on the gods. The word spread that the gods had forsaken Krynn. Furious mobs pulled down temples, killed priests, and blamed the Knights of Solamnia for the woes of the world. And the world was plunged into centuries of darkness.



The True Gods

Most folk of Krynn know the gods by their common names listed below, under "Krynn's Pantheon." However, some races have special names for certain deities. These racial names appear on the pages that follow.

Krynn's Pantheon

The name in **boldface type** is the god's most common appellation in Ansalon. Other recognized names, if any, appear at the end of the entry.

- ✧ **Artha**: Evil goddess of lust and greed; daughter of Takhisis and Hiddukel.
- ✧ **Branchala**: Good god of music; highest god of kender and elves; born of the laughter that arose at the birth of Habbakuk. Also called the Song of Life.
- ✧ **Chaos**: Self-proclaimed Father of All and of Nothing.
- ✧ **Chemosh**: Evil god of the undead and false redemption. Also called the Lord of Death.
- ✧ **Chislev**: Neutral goddess of nature incarnate whose moods are reflected in the seasons; worshiped by all wild creatures; mate of Zivilyn. Also called the Beast, the Wilds.
- ✧ **Gilean**: Neutral god of knowledge who guards the Tobril (the book containing the High God's plan); once a scribe, now heads the Neutral pantheon and works to maintain the cosmic Balance. Also called the Book, Gray Voyager, Void, Gate of Souls.
- ✧ **Habbakuk**: Good god of all creatures and nature; son of Paladine and Mishakal, twin of Kiri-Jolith. Also called the Fisher King.
- ✧ **Hiddukel**: Evil god of trickery, greed, ill-gotten wealth, and dirty deals. Also called the Prince of Lies.
- ✧ **High God**: Came out of the Chaos and called Paladine and Takhisis from the Beyond and Gilean from out of Time.
- ✧ **Kiri-Jolith**: Good god of glory, honor, obedience, justice, and righteous warfare; son of Paladine and Mishakal, twin brother of Habbakuk. Also called the Sword of Justice, Qu'an the Warrior.
- ✧ **Lunitari**: Neutral goddess of illusion magic; daughter of Gilean. Also called the Veiled Maiden.
- ✧ **Majere**: Good god of faith, dreams, meditation, control, industry, organization, martial arts, and insects. Also called the Master of Mind.
- ✧ **Mishakal**: Good goddess of healing; wife of Paladine. Also called the Healing Hand, the Bearer, Light Bringer.
- ✧ **Morgion**: Evil, solitary god of disease and decay; resembles a rotting corpse with a goat head. Also called the Black Wind.
- ✧ **Nuitari**: Evil god of black, destructive magic; son of Takhisis and Sargonnas. Also called the Darkness, the Devouring Dark.
- ✧ **Paladine**: Good patriarch of the gods and husband of Mishakal. Also called the Dragon's Lord.
- ✧ **Reorx**: Neutral god of manufacture, technology, and metallurgy; formed the world; patron of dwarves and gnomes. Also called the Forge, the Anvil.
- ✧ **Sargonnas**: Evil, brooding god of revenge, rage, deserts, volcanoes, and the destructive passion of fire; consort of Takhisis. Also called Dark Vengeance.
- ✧ **Shinare**: Neutral, practical goddess of wealth, industry, and trade; Sirrion's companion. Also called Winged Victory.
- ✧ **Sirrion**: Neutral god of creative flame and useful natural power; temperamental and artistic companion of Shinare. Also called Flowing Flame, Firemaster, the Alchemist.
- ✧ **Solinari**: Good god of protective and helpful magic; third son of Mishakal and Paladine. Also called Mighty Hand.
- ✧ **Takhisis**: Evil goddess of domination, cruelty, and destruction; takes the form of a five-headed dragon; consort of Sargonnas. Also called the Dark Queen, Queen of Darkness.
- ✧ **Zeboim**: Evil, temperamental goddess of the sea, storms, and weather; child of Takhisis and Sargonnas and mother of Ariakan. Also called the Sea Queen, Darkling Sea.
- ✧ **Zivilyn**: Neutral god of wisdom; partner of Gilean and companion of Chislev. Also called Tree of Life, World Tree.

continued on page 36

We must guard against repeating the same mistake, true believers warn the confused folk of Ansalon. They point to the mystic miracles of faith they perform daily in the name of the "departed" deities and chastise those who seek to defame the gods.

Some clerics of the Good gods proclaim the arrival of the Great Dragons as Takhisis's revenge for her defeat, manifestations of Evil that yet cling to the world. Only by embracing the true gods can mortals fight the Evil that clings to the spirit. Only by embracing the miracle of the magic the gods have given their people can they pick up the gauntlet thrown down by the Dark Queen.

Requirements

The true believer role encompasses both the priests of the true gods and the faithful worshipers. Priests with this role must have a Spirit score of at least 4 and code of at least "B," while their followers who adopt this role need a minimum Spirit code of "D."

Players can select their hero's deity from "The True Gods" sidebar on these pages. True believers may be of any race, as long as they worship a god suitable for members of that race. (For instance, elves rarely worship Chemosh, god of death and decay.)

Advantages

The principal advantage of the true believer is his faith, which gives him strength in trying times. In game terms, the true believer can gain an automatic trump bonus to any one action he attempts. However, he may draw upon this bonus only once per quest (as determined by the Narrator).

In addition, the true believer, if openly displaying his religious beliefs, gains a +3 bonus to any Presence action (except those intended to resist the effects of mystic magic) when meeting those of similar beliefs. This does not have to mean they worship the same god: A true believer priest of

a Neutral god would likely be accepted by any community of those who follow another god of Neutrality or a god of Good.

A hero may become a true believer at any time during his career. If he does not begin the game with this role, however, he should have a good reason for adopting it later. Perhaps he suffered a crisis of conscience and, in overcoming it, feels he redeemed himself in the eyes of his god. Or maybe he discovered in himself the ability to practice mystical magic and believes it to be a manifestation of divine favor.

Disadvantages

It is good that true believers have such faith in themselves and their gods because, in an era in which most people have abandoned their old beliefs in the gods, few consider these believers anything but fools.

If a true believer hero openly displays his religious affiliation and encounters a person who believes the gods have abandoned Krynn, he receives a variable penalty to any Presence action he attempts. An action penalty of -1 might arise when the hero meets mild cynicism for his beliefs, while an individual who harbors a fanatical hatred of the gods and their representatives might impose a -6 action penalty. In any case, the Narrator determines this penalty based on how he believes the character(s) in question will act toward the hero.



Dragon Names

Platinum Dragon (Paladine)
Platinum Father (Paladine)

Dwarf Names

Bardilun (Branchala)
Bhezomix (Zeboim)
Hiltax the Flaw (Hiddukel)
Khemax (Chemosh)
Kijo the Blade (Kiri-Jolith)
Mesalax (Mishakal)
Morgax the Rustlord (Morgion)
Night Candle (Lunitari)
Sargonax the Bender (Sargonnas)
Silver Master (Shinare)
Tamex the False Metal (Takhisis)
Thak the Hammer (Paladine)
Ungod (Nuitari)

Elf Names

Although the Kagonesti elves do not worship the gods (instead revering their works in nature), they refer to the deities using the Silvanesti names.

Qualinesti

Astra (Branchala)
the Blue Phoenix (Habbakuk)
Kinis (Sargonnas)
Mantis of the Rose (Majere)
Quen Illumini (Mishakal)
Tree of Life (Zivilyn)
Winged One (Shinare)

Silvanesti

Astarin (Branchala)
the Blue Phoenix (Habbakuk)
Dragon Queen (Takhisis)
E'li (Paladine)
Kinthalas (Sargonnas)
Matheri (Majere)
Quenesti Pah (Mishakal)
Tree of Life (Zivilyn)
Winged One (Shinare)

Gnomish Names

Reorx the Master (Reorx)

Hobgoblin Names

Anthrax Goatlord (Morgion)
Mwarg (Takhisis)
Orkrust (Chemosh)
Usk-Do (Hiddukel)

Human Names

The men of various lands in Ansalon have different names for many of the gods. Nonhuman races living in these human-dominated areas often use the human god-names, too.

Balifor

Black Hand (Nuitari)
Blue Lady (Mishakal)
Skylord (Habbakuk)
White-Eye (Solinari)

Ergoth

Aeeth (Chemosh)
Argon (Sargonnas)
Corij (Kiri-Jolith)
the Blue Phoenix (Habbakuk)
Bran (Branchala)
Draco Paladin (Paladine)
Dragon Queen (Takhisis)
H'rar (Morgion)
Luin (Lunitari)
Manthus (Majere)
Mishas (Mishakal)
Rann (Zeboim)
Solin (Solinari)
Walking Liberty (Shinare)

Icewall Glacier

Chemos Joton (Chemosh)
Gonnas the Willful (Sargonnas)
Meshal (Mishakal)
Morgi (Morgion)
Nilat the Corrupter (Takhisis)
Zebyr Jotun (Zeboim)

Istar (Pre-Cataclysm)

Argon (Sargonnas)
Bah'Mut (Paladine)
H'rar (Morgion)
M'Fistos (Hiddukel)
Tii'Mhut (Takhisis)

Kharolis

Dron of the Deep (Chemosh)
Gormion (Morgion)
Jolith (Kiri-Jolith)
Ka-Mel-Sha, "Healer in the Home"
(Mishakal)
Mai-Tat (Takhisis)
Misal-Lasim (Sargonnas)
Zyr (Zeboim)

Khur

Elir-sana, "Daughter" (Mishakal)
Great God (High God/Chislev)
Kargath (Kiri-Jolith)
Rakiris (Habbakuk/Chislev)
Sky-Father (High God/Chislev)
Torgnan (Sargonnas)

Saifhum

The sea barbarians of the Blood Sea
refer to the gods using many of the
same names as their neighbors, the
minotaurs (at right).

Solamnna

Bearer of Light (Mishakal)
the Great Dragon (Paladine)
Light Bringer (Mishakal)

Tarsis

Dron of the Deep (Chemosh)
Gormion (Morgion)
Jolith (Kiri-Jolith)
Ka-Mel-Sha, "Healer in the Home"
(Mishakal)
Mai-Tat (Takhisis)
Misal-Lasim (Sargonnas)
Zyr (Zeboim)

Kender Names

Black Hand* (Nuitari)
Bran† (Branchala)
the Firebringer* (Sargonnas)
the Blue Lady* (Mishakal)
Ivory Disk* (Solinari)
Red-Eye* (Lunitari)
Reorx the Craftsman (Reorx)
She of the Many Faces† (Takhisis)
Skyblade* (Paladine)
Skylord* (Habbakuk)
Skymistress* (Mishakal)

Songmaster* (Branchala)
White-eye* (Solinari)

* Term used by afflicted kender only.

† Term used by true kender of Hylo.

Minotaur Names

Balance (Shinare)
Beacon (Solinari)
Betrayor (Hiddukel)
Dragonlord (Paladine)
Emperor (Kiri-Jolith)
Empress (Mishakal)
Gardener (Branchala)
Lady Chaos (Takhisis)
Lifebane (Chemosh)
Maelstrom (Zeboim)
Maid of Illusion (Lunitari)
Nadir the Dreamsender (Majere)
Nightreaver (Nuitari)
Pestilence (Morgion)
Sargas the Destroyer (Sargonnas)
the Scales (Shinare)
Sea Lord (Habbakuk)
the Weaponmaster (Reorx)
Wild One (Chislev)
Wise One (Zivilyn)
the Wizard (Sirrion)

Ogre Names

Darklady (Takhisis)



CHAPTER TWO



nly one man was above this. Only one man here among you lived the Code every day of his life. And for most of those days, he was not a knight. Or rather, he was

a knight where it meant the most—in spirit, in heart, not in some official list.”

—Laurana on Sturm Brightblade,
Dragons of Winter Night

Although the mystic arts are relatively young, knighthoods, priesthoods and other spiritual orders are as old as the world itself. In 5sc Goldmoon became the first person recorded to have discovered mystic talent when she healed the young dwarf Jasper of his terrible wounds at the Inn of the Last Home. Since that day, these arts have spread throughout Ansalon.

Unfortunately, what Goldmoon and her mystic mentor, the Sage, feared has come to pass: Agents of Evil have perverted these arts to their cruel ends. Disguised Knights of Takhisis infiltrated the Citadel of Light in its early days, gaining for the dark forces of Krynn the mystic power to subvert and dominate Good people everywhere.

On the other hand, the Citadel willingly shares its mystic knowledge with the Knights of Solamnía, the priests of the Good and Neutral pantheons, and, to a lesser extent, the Legion of Steel. Goldmoon believes the power of the heart, in the hands of these groups, will prove the dragon overlords' undoing.

The Knights of Solamnía

The oldest known institution on Krynn, the Knights of Solamnía is a powerful military and spiritual Order devoted to protecting the free peoples of Ansalon from the forces of Evil and oppression.

Since its inception more than two thousand years ago, the Knighthood has followed the teachings of three gods:

- ✦ Paladine, patron of the Order of the Rose;
- ✦ Kiri-Jolith, patron of the Order of the Sword; and
- ✦ Habbakuk, patron of the Order of the Crown.

Priests of these gods taught members of the orders the moral code that eventually became the Solamníc Measure.

The *Heroes of Steel* dramatic supplement describes the structure of the Knighthood, explains how to join and advance in the ranks, outlines its goals, and details its code of honor. Rather than repeating this information, this section discusses the Knighthood's spiritual nature and activities.

Role of the Rose Knights

In the Knighthood's early years, the Order of the Crown comprised the backbone of the group: its holy warriors. The Order of the Sword became renowned for its spiritualism and pursuit of the ideals of the three patron gods. The Order of the Rose was reserved for those Knights who could best lead the organization—at times, only the most ambitious members could become Rose Knights. The moral foundation they learned in the Order of the Sword was to guide their actions as leaders of the Knighthood.

The revised Measure introduced in the Fifth Age has changed the nature of the Rose Knights somewhat. When

MYSTIC GROUPS

Grand Master Gunthar uth Wistan began updating this document after the War of the Lance, he saw a need to revitalize the spiritual nature of the Knighthood. Too often after the first Cataclysm did Knights of the Rose succumb to the temptations of power, setting aside the traditions of the Order for the lure of personal wealth. But before Gunthar could complete the work that would reinvigorate the Order of the Rose, the Knights found themselves in the midst of a large-scale invasion by the forces of Evil.

The Summer of Chaos and battles that followed decimated the Knights—more than ninety percent of them fell in the wars. The Knights of the Rose, smaller than the other orders to begin with, felt these losses more keenly than the Crown and Rose Knights.

However, by the time of Lord Gunthar's death in 9sc, the Knights had begun to rebuild. The new Solamnic Grand Master, Sir Liam Ehrling, revealed Lord Gunthar's revised Measure, which recaptured the spirit of the Solamnic Oath and the intent of the original Measure. In the revision, the former Grand Master established the Order of the Rose as the spiritual heart of the Knighthood.

As the new Grand Master began his tenure, he sent a delegation of Rose and Sword Knights to Schallsea, where they undertook mystical training at the Citadel of Light. These Knights became the first Solamnics in the new age to learn the magic of the spirit. Ultimately, they all were inducted into the Order of the Rose and charged with teaching Sword and Rose Knights the spiritual gift of mysticism—the gods' bequest to their faithful followers.

The Knights Today

The Knights of Solamnia have renewed their dedication to defend the free peoples of Ansalon. Their decline after

the first Cataclysm and their near destruction after the Second Cataclysm has renewed their commitment to their ideals, for they have endured some of the worst trials the world has offered—and they have survived, becoming stronger individually and as an order.

The Knights are deeply insulted by the widespread perception of them as an anachronistic organization on its last legs. Yet they do little to help change this attitude, as they do not care to make public the changes that have rejuvenated the Order. The Knights' rivalry with the Legion of Steel may derive, at least in part, from the popular belief that the Knights are a thing of the past and need to be replaced by a more vigorous organization.

Mystic Training

Nowhere are their changes more pronounced than in their discovery of the power of the spirit. After the initial training they received from Goldmoon and the Sage, the Rose Knights sent other Knights to Schallsea to learn from the Citadel of Light. Their profound respect for Goldmoon aside, they saw the knowledge they could gain at the Citadel as the key to strengthening the moral and ethical code of the Knights, giving them the spiritual heart they needed as they continued to rebuild. Now, even though the Knights are skilled enough in mysticism to train most of their members themselves, they maintain close ties with the Citadel of Light.

In nearly every Solamnic circle (listed in the appendix to the *Heroes of Steel* sourcebook), Knights of the Rose teach aspirants the way of the heart. This training also includes education about how the magic of mysticism fits into the Knights' history, beliefs, and traditions. Grand Master Ehrling believes that only by combining an understanding of the past with the spiritual training of the heart can the



Knighthood's revitalization continue. In some circles, like the one in Schallsea, this training is supplemented by the knowledge of mystics outside the Order.

Castle Uth Wistan

On Sancrist Isle, members of the Grand Circle practice their magical skills or teach for at least one hour every day. Sometimes this amounts to nothing more than reflecting on their studies or helping an inexperienced student through a particularly difficult concept.

The Grand Master himself participates in the daily training almost without exception. The Knights consider it a bad omen when he misses a session—usually it means a tragedy has befallen a Knight or the Order elsewhere in Ansalon.

Gwynned

In the capital of the Empire of Ergoth, the Knights of Solamnia take the wishes of the Grand Master a step further. In addition to recounting the traditions of the past, the Knights there actively seek out remnants of the Order's past. They

visit ruins to learn something of their roots, for the first Cataclysm buried much of the Knights' history. Somewhat to the dismay of the senior Knights (but not yet forbidden by them), these Knights make sparing use of the mystic sphere of spiritualism to piece together what they can of the Order in the days of Vinas Solamnus.

Recently, a courier came from Gwynned to Castle Uth Wistan with a message that caused a great stir among the senior members of the Order. No one has yet spoken of the Northern Ergoth discovery, however.

Solanthus

The Knights' circle in Solamnia's capital is the principal location on the mainland for the Knights' mystic training. Though not as large as the Citadel of Light, the training site in Solanthus nevertheless draws many young Knights seeking to explore the power of the heart. Not all of them succeed, of course, but the senior members of the Order believe they have enriched themselves



just by trying. Whatever the outcome of their training, these young Knights, by looking into their own hearts, have glimpsed the heart of the Order.

The Knights of the Skull

One of the Solamnic Knighthood's principal foes remains the Dark Knights of Takhisis. The Rose and Sword Knights in particular hate the Order of the Skull, the dark mystics.

Some seventeen years ago, a patrol of Sword and Rose Knights attempted to track down and kill the three Dark Knights who duped Goldmoon into teaching them the secrets of her new magic. Unfortunately, the dark paladins managed to evade their trap and elude them. Now the Knights of the Skull take every opportunity to taunt their Solamnic "brethren" about their failure.

The Knights of Takhisis

More than three decades ago, the Dark Knights endured a fate similar to that of the Knights of Solamnia: The Chaos Wars nearly destroyed them. When Mirielle Abrena, a subcommander of a wing of Skull Knights, attended the Council of the Last Heroes in 15c, she slowed her Order's decline into oblivion by demanding land for surviving Knights in recognition for their role in the defeat of Chaos.

After spending several years gathering the scattered wings, Abrena named herself Governor-General of the Order's new homeland, the area around Neraka. A patient and cunning politician, she embarked on a program to bring about the resurgence the Knights of Takhisis and the eventual hegemony of Neraka over the continent of Ansalon.

And her work proceeds unabated. The following discussion of the Dark Knights' recent history and plans expands upon the basic information on the Knighthood in *Heroes of Steel*, focusing on this dark Order's use of mysticism.

Birth of Dark Mysticism

One of Abrena's most fortuitous decisions in the years following the Second Cataclysm was to send three of her most capable Knights, all of them former Skull Knights of her old wing, to Schallsea to learn what they could of this "new magic" the barbarian priestess Goldmoon purportedly possessed.

These three, posing as members of the Legion of Steel, convinced the fledgling mystic leader to teach them the secrets of her magic. Goldmoon's mentor, the Sage, returned from months of travels to find her distraught over the trick—but it was too late. The three had made their escape, evading pursuing Legionnaires and Knights of Solamnia and eventually returning to Neraka. The Governor-General immediately ordered them to teach her and the rest of her wing the magic they had learned at the Citadel. Within the space of a few years, the Order of the Skull was reborn, its dark mystics perverting the Citadel's knowledge for Evil ends.

The Vision Returns

As evidence of their special relationship with Takhisis, each Dark Knight traditionally enjoyed a glimpse of his personal role in the Queen's plan, a dreamlike communication straight from the goddess. This Vision ceased at the time of the Chaos War, however, with the goddess's departure. But in 15sc, the Vision came back to the Knights and told them Takhisis would return.

Various theories have arisen to explain the return of the Vision and its disturbing message. As the departure of Takhisis from the world caused the Vision to lapse, many believe, its return must signal her imminent return as well. However, some seventeen years have passed since the renewal of the Vision, and still the folk of Ansalon have seen no evidence that the Dark Queen is ready to fulfill the prophecy.





In truth, Mirielle Abrena ordered the Skull Knights to use their skills to convince the Knights that Takhisis was still with them. Her loyal mystics use mentalism to give each Knight a personal Vision of the goddess's will during the Test of Takhisis, just before a squire's formal induction into the Knighthood. Only Skull Knights from the Cabal of the True Heart (see next page) can perpetuate the Vision. Their presence at a Test of Takhisis keeps the applicant Knight nervous and unsure, making the mental contact simpler. The Cabal can send a Vision message to a Knight on other rare occasions as well.

The initial experience is so traumatic that, if the applicant survives the Test, he is more susceptible to the power of mysticism in the future (most Dark Knight heroes never enjoy a trump bonus to resist mystic magic). Only when inducted into the Order of the Skull does the Knight gain any extra resistance to mystical magic; those who join the Order of the Skull learn to rebuild their defenses to mysticism as part of their training.

The Order of the Skull

The Order of the Skull is led by a Lord Knight, Morham Targonne (*human adult male, gregarious demeanor, Master*), who carries the title of Lord Adjudicator. However, several smaller mystical groups exist within the order. These societies arose out of the fragmentation of the Dark Knights after the Summer of Chaos. As the Governor-General brought scattered bands back into the Order during its rebuilding years, these groups remained close-knit.

When Abrena granted their petitions to be admitted into mystical training, these Skull Knights formed mystic-warrior societies based around a particular sphere of magic. Some are exclusive and secretive, others more open. Without exception, membership in these warrior societies comes by invitation only, after an aspirant Skull

Knight has proven his worth to the society's leadership.

Cabal of the True Heart

The first and most powerful of these societies, the Cabal of the True Heart is the rather innocuous name given to the secret inquisitors of the Knights of Takhisis. Nearly every one of these dark mystics comes from Abrena's own wing. Its leader is Galen Nemedi (*human elder male, authoritative demeanor, Master*), a cruel tyrant.

Members of this cabal are masters of mentalism and sensitivity magic, which they use to read the auras and minds of their brethren. They have the responsibilities of seeking out traitors within the Order and serving as Adjudicators of the Code (see *Heroes of Steel*). Due to an increased number of defections in the past several years, Abrena recently granted this cabal greater authority in rooting out treason within the Knighthood—a development which makes life as a Dark Knight even more tense than normal.

The Spiritborne

The Spiritborne summon and enslave the spirits of the dead and use them to terrify the Order's enemies. They take a perverse pride in attaining dominance over the most dangerous of undead. They also disdain necromancers, seeing them as nothing more than dabblers in the realm of the afterlife. Intelligent spirits are ever more dangerous than stupid animated corpses, they aver.

The risk inherent in this profession means this society has relatively few members. Those who manage to survive the dangers of controlling intelligent spirits are formidable foes indeed. In fact, these masters of the restless spirit are feared even by their brother Knights. The group has become so powerful that rumors suggest Mirielle Abrena considers them a potential threat to her control of the Knights of Takhisis. The Cabal of the True Heart has been ordered to discover the identi-



ties of the Spiritborne members and carefully monitor their activities.

The Heart of the Dragon

The Heart of the Dragon is a militant group whose members use mysticism to improve their abilities in physical combat. These arrogant warriors demand of their followers physical excellence above all else and use their channeling skills to improve their already staggering abilities. Normally, they use their magic just on themselves but, on occasion, they will aid a brother Knight.

Other Groups

The Governor-General also uses certain Knights of the Skull as ambassadors, part of the delegations she sends to other nations. Rarely do they identify themselves as Skull Knights, wearing instead the armor and heraldry of Knights of the Lily or of the Thorn (in the case of those few individuals trained in sorcery as well).

These mystics use their magic to influence government leaders or gain foreign intelligence that may concern their superiors. They report their findings to the Governor-General and her Lord Knights through couriers or magical means.

Other Skull Knights keep the faith of Takhisis alive, restoring her temples throughout Neraka and in other realms friendly to them. These Knights oversee the priests of Takhisis as they lead the faithful in worship and help them prepare for her return. Citizens of Neraka are politely requested to attend services.

Finally, other, smaller groups also exist within the Order of the Skull. The Lord Knight of the Skull generally does not oppose them, for these groups bring about welcome competition among the Knights, to help them keep their edge. In addition, the Cabal of the True Heart reports directly to the Governor-General and the Lord Knight of the Skull if any secret society shows evidence of treason.



Dark Tactics

Although Mirielle Abrena now governs the entire Knighthood, her background as a Skull Knight leads her to watch the activities of that order with keen interest. With her blessing, the Knights of the Skull have made significant discoveries in spheres of mysticism that others shun: necromancy and spiritualism.

Necromancy

Dark Knights have discovered many uses for the necromantic arts. Although they have little desire to create animated undead, they have learned to destroy such creatures through necromancy, severing the magical strings that bind and control these unnatural puppets.

They also find necromancy very useful as a means of extracting information from others. Even these Evil servants know that information obtained through the use of pain is nearly always unreliable, however, for the victim always tells questioners what he thinks they want to hear. Instead, Knights of the Skull use necromancy to so exhaust their subjects that they can no longer focus their wills against the interrogation. With the subject's energy or health thus depleted, a mentalist can extract the desired information, or the Knights can question the prisoner normally.

Some dark mystics use necromancy as a weapon—especially older mystics, whose powers of the mind exceed those of the body. Galen Nemedi, the senior mystic of the Cabal of the True Heart, has demonstrated more than once his terrifying skill with necromantic magic. This grim, aged master has proven that the mind is sharper than any razor.

Spiritualism

The Knights of the Skull seek to master spiritualism as well as necromancy. Although powerful spectral undead

have buckled to their merest command, dangers remain for even the most skilled practitioners of the dark art of spirit summoning. Many Knights have been slain or driven mad by contact with creatures better left at rest. The Spiritborne mystical society delves into the secrets of mastering the intelligent undead and free spirits.

In addition, the Knights believe the strange spiritlike shadow-wights, frost-wights, and other creatures of chaos left after the Chaos War can prove valuable allies—to spiritualists with the will to control them. Members of the order continue to work to bring these creatures under their sway.

The Legion of Steel

The Legion's roots are grounded in practicality. A young organization, it lacks the traditions of the Knights of Solamnia. To hear Legionnaires tell it, they lack the Knighthood's baggage as well. (Details on the Legion's philosophy, structure, admission policies, and goals appear in *Heroes of Steel*.)

Like the Citadel of Light, the Legion is an organization born in the Fifth Age and dedicated to combating the Evils that abound in Ansalon: dragon overlords, foul Knights of Takhisis, as well as bandits, brigands, beasts, and Chaos spawn. To overcome such foes of freedom, Legionnaires make use of every weapon they can get their hands on.

Mysticism is no exception.

The Legion and the Power

Like members of other mystic groups discussed in this chapter, Legionnaires learned to use the power of the heart at the Citadel of Light. However, the Legion quickly steered a course that did not strictly follow the cautious approach and focus Goldmoon taught. No one yet fully understands what the spirit can do, the First Master stressed in her teachings, so mystics must tread with care as they explore its limits.

Legionnaire Elders concede that experimenting with mystical magic involves some risk. They also point out that it is one thing to make decisions about the study of mysticism in an academic environment and quite another to depend on those skills in the field. Legion mystics often find themselves forced to use their skills to defend themselves, fellow Legionnaires, or even innocents from the depredations of the world. They do what they must to fulfill their mission and defend those they have come to protect.

Some of the more successful Legion mystics also suggest that their spontaneous use of mystic magic has resulted in effects previously thought impossible. For example, it was a Legion sorcerer named Dagon Hereward who, while running for his life in dragon territory, discovered he could combine a school of sorcery with a mystical sphere in a single spell.

While being chased by Dark Knights after an incident in Khellendros's realm, Dagon managed to trans-

port several horses from their corral using summoning to create the path and animism to convince the beasts to help. The chase lasted only moments, as Dagon and his companions quickly had mounted all the Knights' horses, and the Knights discovered that running in plate armor is a great deal more difficult than fighting in it. Dagon (*human male adult, inventive demeanor, Adventurer*) continues to serve the Legion in an unknown location, and his magical findings remain the source of much fascination for sorcerers and mystics alike.

Mystic Training

The Legion's clandestine cell structure might make systematic training of its mystics difficult if not for its mentor system. Each mystic or mystic-in-training is assigned a mentor, who takes him under his wing. Apprentices work with mentors skilled in mysticism, while full Legionnaires train with their mentors on a more casual basis—they





do not have to go through the Legion's strict apprentice period again!

The apprentice system has a few drawbacks, however. For instance, decentralized training makes it difficult to enforce any standards. The Legion is not about to compromise the security of its secret cells by withdrawing prospective mystics to a central location for schooling, however, so the problem remains.

This method of training also tends to limit the spheres that inexperienced mystics might learn. While the Legion's elder mystics are familiar with some very useful spheres, they pay too little attention to other possibly valuable areas of mystical training—spiritualism remains relatively rare among Legion mystics, as does sensitivity and meditation. In addition, no one openly practices necromancy, as it is (erroneously) associated too closely with the Knights of the Skull.

To address these problems, the Legion accepts Goldmoon's invitation to train promising students whenever possible. However, the Order's far-flung membership and focus on covert missions make for slow progress.

Mystic Activity

Legionnaires work nearly everywhere in Ansalon, and its mystics operate in some of the remotest parts of the continent as well. While these mystics have achieved some amazing successes, many inexperienced members—unschooled in the dangers of their new power and the nature of guerrilla warfare—are spotted and killed by the Order's foes.

Therefore, most of the Legion's mystics, while in enemy territory, try to blend into the populace of large communities. They find it easier to hide within the urban population of Palanthis, for example, than somewhere in the Blue Wastes of Khellendros.

In Malys's barren realm, they have considerably more trouble hiding while they pursue their mission of reaching

the Red's lair. Despite eleven separate attempts, they have not yet succeeded, but they have learned to confine most of their activities to the harbor towns of Flotsam and Port Balifor.

Because Beryl depends upon trade with the outside world, the Legion has not yet had a great deal of trouble infiltrating her realm. Its elf mystics work as caravan scouts in her forests, while human mystics confine themselves to Tarsis and other such towns, where they can blend in more readily with the population.

Sable's realm is easy to infiltrate as well, but Legion mystics have had little success gathering any information in that vast morass. Few settlements exist, and those mystics who use their magic to poke around in the bogs and fens have occasionally gone missing—the victims of who-knows-what kind of creature from the Black Dragon's zoo.

The Legion has not involved itself much in the realm of Gellidus, as the Knights of Solamnia actively pursue interests in Southern Ergoth—mainly protecting the folk of Qualimori and Silvamori and watching over Dragon Mountain and the Tomb of Huma, sites of great import to the Knighthood. Despite the rivalry between the two Orders, Legionnaire Elders realize that both groups seek the same goals and prefer, rather than provoking the Knights in Frost's realm, to concentrate on efforts elsewhere.

In the free realms, some Legion mystics take care of the daily needs of the common folk, while others protect them from the dragons and Dark Knights. This role remains every bit as dangerous as working covertly in the Dragon Realms, for sometimes foes run "sting" operations just to flush out and destroy Legion cells and circles. It is a tense game of cat-and-mouse—and some even have forgotten the prize for winning.

The Citadel of Light

Despite the wishes of enemies like the Great Dragons, the Citadel of Light has flourished. Since its creation in 8sc, it has attracted hundreds of people wanting to learn mysticism, many of whom were left stranded by the devastation of the Chaos War and the Dragon Purge.

After the Citadel's founding, many other refugees came to Schallsea seeking assistance from Goldmoon and her followers. Some came for her reputed healing powers, others for help in finding a place to settle, and still others for simple compassion and relief from the trauma they had endured.

Since the Citadel was founded, it has grown from a rude shelter near the Silver Stair to the multidomed structure it is today. The expanding complex not only houses Citadel mystics but also includes temporary housing for refugees making their way to the port of Schallsea. Any refugees who show an aptitude for mystical studies have the opportunity to train at the Citadel.

Admission to the Citadel

Not everyone wanting to learn mysticism at the Citadel is accepted into the community. Since discovering the duplicity of the three Dark Knights who sought out the mystic center a few years after its founding, the First Master and her senior mystics have become more careful when deciding whom to teach.

Her powers fully developed now, Goldmoon conducts a personal interview with prospective students to ensure that they will not pass the Citadel's mystic knowledge on to those who would abuse it or use it purely for personal gain. She always makes a point of asking why they seek to study the mystic arts, and what led them to the Citadel.

During the interview, Goldmoon uses sensitivity magic to read the candidate's aura. If she judges him to be of the proper moral character to learn the mystical arts, she grants him the right to remain at the Citadel and begin

study. If the applicant's aura gives her reason to doubt, however, she either turns him away or requires of him a period of mundane service to prove his worth and character.

> Citadel Interview

Difficulty:	Varies
Action ability:	Spirit
Opposition ability:	Spirit

Comments: To convince Goldmoon his spirit is well suited to pursue the mystical arts, an applicant must pass an interview. The Narrator should portray the First Master's resistance to the action as an effort to challenge the candidate, not force him through an ordeal. The action's difficulty varies based on the hero's nature:

- ✦ *Average (8):* The hero's nature is drawn from a card with a white aura.
- ✦ *Challenging (12):* The hero has a nature drawn from a red-aura card.
- ✦ *Daunting (16):* The hero's nature comes from a card with a black aura.

In addition, the hero gains a bonus to his action score if he brings recommendations to the interview. Every Citadel mystic or other friend of the Citadel who vouches for the hero (a Solamnic Knight, a priest of Good, a representative of Palin Majere's Academy of Sorcery, or a personal friend of Goldmoon), either in person or in writing, adds a +3 bonus to the hero's action score. Other advocates, such as priests of Neutral gods or members of the Legion of Steel, offer a +1 action bonus.

Those who succeed gain acceptance into the Citadel. Should Goldmoon have initial qualms about the hero's background or morality (in other words, the hero fails at the action), Narrators should give him a chance to offer a defense, explaining any past behavior that has created the negative impression. Narrators can then modify the result of this action based on the hero's sincerity and the believability of his story.

Mishap: Goldmoon reacts to the hero in a highly negative fashion. She senses





a darkness about the hero so foreboding that she asks him to leave Schallsea at once. The source of the darkness is up to the Narrator, who might devise a special quest for a hero interested in understanding the truth about this spiritual blight.

A Citadel Mystic's Life

Few mystics, once they have completed their training, remain at the Citadel very long. They always have a refuge on Schallsea, should they ever need it, but Goldmoon and the other master mystics prefer to send their graduates out into the world that needs them so desperately. Even master mystics return to the field from time to time; from among the senior students, Goldmoon chooses those who show an aptitude for teaching to fill the roles of the departing teachers for a while. A few others remain to aid the refugees who come to Schallsea.

Citadel mystics journey to all parts of Ansalon. Most of them remain in the free realms, acting as advisers, healers, and

defenders to the citizens of those lands. Some work the fringes of the hostile lands, aiding those who seek to escape.

A few take their training deep into the lands claimed by the dragon lords or other Evil powers, where they work as resistance fighters and healers for those who cannot escape or choose not to leave their homes. Although this role is far more common among such groups as the Legion of Steel and the Knights of Solamnia, some of the more fearless Citadel mystics work right alongside these groups.

Masters in enemy territory also teach promising students who cannot make the trip to Schallsea. While their work spreads the Citadel's philosophy, these mystics risk teaching those who would pervert mystic power for Evil or selfish ends. Too often have students learned what they can from these beleaguered masters, only to turn their education into a way of taking from others.

Goldmoon exhorts her mystics to bring prospective students to Schallsea whenever possible. Yet the masters work-

ing in hostile lands, for all their devotion to the First Master, believe her request ignores the dangers of transporting potential students to the Citadel—often halfway across the continent!

The Citadel's Activities

Today, the Citadel of Light cultivates relations with other groups and governments to further the overthrow of the Great Dragons and support the use of the power of the heart for Good purposes.

The Academy of Sorcery

Goldmoon works to strengthen her alliance with the Academy of Sorcery, believing that Ansalon's two greatest magical institutions could combine efforts in realms dominated by Evil to achieve great success. Recently, she sent one of her master mystics, Jasper Fireforge, on a mission in cooperation with her longtime friend Palin Majere—a quest that led to the discovery of the foul dragonspawn.

In addition, she encourages Palin to send Academy students for periods of study at the Citadel and urges her students with sorcerous predilections to nurture their skills at the Academy.

The Knights of Solamnia

The Citadel of Light routinely sends master mystics to Solamnia, especially Thelgaard and Solanthus, to coordinate actions with the Knights of Solamnia against the Dark Knights and the Blue Dragon Khellendros. In addition, they study the Order's traditions to help teach Sword and Rose Knights the ways of the spirit. In fact, more than one Citadel mystic, caught up in the romance and nobility of the ancient Solamnic ways, has taken knightly vows.

Several Citadel mystics have gone to the nation of Gunthar on Sancrist Isle, where they act as Citadel ambassadors to the leadership of the Knighthood. These masters, such as Lady Crysanian, Revered Daughter of Paladine, are usually older and more polished—they

leave the Citadel's more strenuous activities to the younger masters.

The Great Dragons

The Citadel also sends numerous mystics to Abanasinia and Duntollik to help the barbarians and centaurs hold onto their independence from the dragon lords. With the great Green Dragon Beryl in Qualinesti and the aggressive Thunder in the southern Plains of Dust, the people of the northern Plains and Abanasinia live a tenuous existence. Fortunately, for now, Beryl seem relatively quiescent, and the brass Splendor appears more than able to confound the volatile Thunder in the Plains.

Citadel mystics have infiltrated every Dragon Realm in Ansalon. Despite the Dark Knights' usual hostility toward them, they find relative peace in Khellendros's realm. They have a great deal of difficulty getting into Beryl's realm, however, for she has stationed troops along the border to prevent outsiders from interfering in her plans.

A few Citadel mystics have attached themselves to the small garrison at Castle Eastwatch in Southern Ergoth, where Knights of Solamnia survey the realm of Gellidus the White. Of all the Dragon Realms, Sable's is the easiest to enter—but the most difficult to leave alive. The dragon exerts little of her own energy to keep her realm free of outsiders, for the denizens of her fetid swamp do it for her. Nevertheless, at least one Citadel mystic and her husband, a Legionnaire, have infiltrated Trueheart Mines in the southeast corner of Sable's lands and work to help slaves there escape.

However, no mystic has gotten beyond the fringes of Malys's realm—and even there, they have little protection from her wrath and the cruelty of her minions. A young woman named Mira who led an unsuccessful rescue mission into the northernmost portion of Malys's realm recently was found staked to a tree on the coast of the Blood Sea—a warning to all who might attempt a similar escapade.





The Holy Orders of the Stars

Although the gods' constellations have gone from the skies of Fifth Age Krynn, many people remain faithful to the true gods, including many priests, acolytes, and holy warriors of these departed gods. They are organized into the Holy Orders of the Stars, according to Krynn's three traditional pantheons (see sidebars on the next pages):

- ❖ The Order of Good, led by the Chosen Prophet, the senior Revered Son (or Daughter) of Paladine;
- ❖ The Order of Neutrality, led by the Starmaster, the senior priest of Gilean; and
- ❖ The Order of Evil, led by the Lord Knight of the Skull, the senior priest of Takhisis.

These Orders only rarely cooperate with one another, for their individual ethos prohibits it. The Order of Good wars openly with that of Evil, and the Order of Neutrality cannot aid either without violating its own ethos and risking an irreparable shift in the balance of power between the two.

A Divine Dilemma

Despite their differences, however, the three Orders each want to understand what happened after the Chaos War to the gods and the powers they granted their followers. Did the gods truly disappear, as the faithless suggest? Did Chaos affect how they communicate their favor to their followers? Have the gods taken a more aloof position regarding the world, agreeing to remove themselves from the affairs of mortal men?

Priests and other devout folk believe the gods have not departed Krynn, but that the Chaos god hampered their ability to intervene directly in the affairs of mortals when he sought to destroy the world three decades ago. Individually, the gods cannot directly challenge the power of Chaos, so they must work their will

on the world in more subtle ways.

Since they cannot grant spells directly to their priests as they did at the end of the Fourth Age and in previous ages, the gods gave mortals the key to calling upon the divine spark in themselves. Magic has ever been the gods' greatest gift to mortals—now mortals can find it within themselves. Since this magic is the gods' bequest, shall mortals not use it in the name of their gods? The Order of Good considers Goldmoon no less a priestess of Mishakal just because she gains her sacred powers in a different fashion than in the past. The greatest mages of history could never use their magic to heal the simplest injury; such a gift has always come from the divine grace of the gods. It is no less so today.

The Orders Today

While not every god in the entire pantheon is worshiped in every single realm in Ansalon, each realm does harbor members of all the three Holy Orders, working to spread their faith in these uncertain times.

The Order of Good

Of the three Holy Orders of the Stars, the Order of Good remains most prevalent in the Fifth Age. Perhaps because of their association with the Citadel of Light and the Knights of Solamnia, the priests and followers of Paladine and his pantheon have survived well the turmoil of recent decades. The Chosen Prophet—Revered Daughter Crysanias (*female elder human, calm demeanor, Hero, 1 ♥*) in Sancrist—has taught her followers to try to accept that they cannot know their gods' motives and to rejoice that the gods have granted them a new way of continuing their works in the name of Good.

Assisting Lady Crysanias are several prominent prophets, including Goldmoon, representing Mishakal, and Lord Dylan di Kyre (*human elder male, cantankerous demeanor, Master*), Lord Knight of the Sword, representing Kiri-

Jolith. (Lord Dylan is the brother of the famed Morgan, whose story appears in a sidebar in Chapter Three).

The Order of Evil

The followers of the Evil gods have not done as well as their Good counterparts. At present, only the dragons, the Dark Knights, and many priests of Takhisis understand mystic magic (the last of these thanks to enlightenment by the Skull Knights). None of these groups appears terribly forthcoming with that knowledge, instead hoarding it to suit their own purposes. A handful of former priests of other dark gods have puzzled out for themselves some of the secrets of the new magic, but none of them have achieved mastery.

The Lord Knight of the Skull, Morham Targonne (*human adult male, gregarious demeanor, Master*), currently serves as the Lord Adjudicator. In addition to overseeing the worship of Takhisis among her Dark Knights, he administers the other churches of Evil gods throughout Ansalon—and decides how much knowledge and power to allow them.

The Order of Neutrality

Never a group to draw the faithful in great numbers, the Order of Neutrality nevertheless has survived the effects of the Chaos War and the loss of belief that followed. Perhaps because they have taken the long view for centuries, followers of the Neutral gods argue that the gift of the “new” magic left by the gods before they withdrew from direct intervention in the affairs of the world has been a part of the world since the beginning of time. Most people simply never realized it.

The “new” magic, they contend, is in fact the same magic heathen priests, scions, and wild mages practiced before Solinari, Lunitari, and Nuitari granted Krynne the knowledge of High Sorcery. This was a magic born of the divine spark inside every aspect of creation (as discussed in “A Scholarly View” in the

Order of Good

Although priests of Good share a common morality, each priesthood is quite distinct nevertheless.

Paladine, the Dragon's Lord

Leads the pantheon of Good.

Followers of Paladine carry out Good works with the confidence that Evil will turn on itself in the end.

Branchala, Song of Life

Followers of Branchala praise their god through song and poetry and spend much of their lives creating a masterpiece to honor him.

Habbakuk, Fisher King

Priests of Habbakuk live to protect nature from those who would neglect or destroy it. They also spend time wandering the land in communion with the wonders of creation.

Kiri-Jolith, Sword of Justice

Lawful and honorable combat of Evil remains foremost in the mind of priests and paladins of Kiri-Jolith.

Majere, Master of Mind

Majere's followers live simple lives of contemplation and meditation. Many pursue artistic endeavors, physical training, or activities that promote faith, loyalty, and mercy.

Mishakal, Healing Hand

Priests of Mishakal actively seek out those in need of healing and aid them. They rarely charge for their services, and never more than one can afford.

Solinari, Mighty Hand

In past ages, only Wizards of the White Robes could be priests of Solinari. Today, most of his servants practice sorcery along with mystic magic to quietly accomplish constructive ends

For more details on any of the gods named here, see “The True Gods” sidebar in Chapter One.





Order of Neutrality

The pantheon of Neutrality encourages its priests and followers in creative and scholarly pursuits, as well as in maintaining the cosmic Balance.

Gilean, the Void

Leads the pantheon of Neutrality.

Priests of Gilean usually serve a temple, library, or university. In addition to performing public services as judges, counselors, and teachers, they also devote their lives to research and thesis work.

Chislev the Beast

Worshippers of Chislev live in the wild as druids and seek to repair damage to the Balance of nature, such as that caused by draconic shaping of the land.

Lunitari, Veiled Maiden

Although priests of Lunitari no longer need belong to the wizardly Order of the Red Robes, they are encouraged to practice sorcery as well as mystic magic—especially the magic of illusion and reshaping.

Reorx, Forge

Priests of Reorx follow in the footsteps of their god by crafting useful artifacts that possess an inner beauty.

Shinare, Winged Victory

The industrious priests of Shinare seek wealth and prestige, which they use to further the good of the community.

Sirriion, Flowing Flame

Creatively using fire in artistic pursuits and containing dangerous fires is the life's work of Sirriion's followers.

Zivilyn, Tree of Life

The pursuit and spread of life's wisdom is the guiding factor behind the thoughts and deeds of Zivilyn's priests.

For more details on any of the gods named here, see "The True Gods" sidebar in Chapter One.

Prologue). Followers of Gilean and the other Neutral gods believe that mysticism, as well as sorcery, is actually the same magic wielded since the dawn of time by those who did not allow themselves to be restricted by the rules, rituals, and formulae of magic in past ages.

Starmaster Mikelis (*human middle-aged male, insightful demeanor, Adventurer*) currently oversees the worship of the pantheon of Neutrality from his position as rector at the University of Solanthus in the free realm of Solamnia. Other places of learning, such as the Great Library of the Ages and the University of Palanthas, also play important roles in the Neutral faith.

Joining a Holy Order

A hero interested in becoming a priest, cleric, or other follower of one of the true gods must first find a priest of the appropriate god (or Order) and win his approval. Most large cities house at least one priest of each Order. Heroes having difficulty locating a patron can petition the head of the Order directly.

The patron priest then becomes responsible for the hero's religious instruction. Once satisfied that the hero has learned the precepts of his faith and will live by them, the patron arranges a test of faith, as described below.

➤ Test of Faith

Difficulty:	Varies
Action ability:	Spirit
Opposition ability:	Perception

Comments: The Narrator should invent an appropriate role-playing experience to accompany this action—a test might take the form of a service appropriate to the faith (solving a conundrum for a follower of Gilean, for instance) or a challenge of mystic magic (such as an act of healing for an aspirant of Mishakal). The hero's patron priest provides the opposition value for the actual test action (though not necessarily for other actions related to the circumstances of the test). The

difficulty depends on the hero's nature:

- ✿ **Average (8):** The hero's nature is drawn from a card whose aura reflects the proper pantheon (such as a white aura for the Order of Good).
- ✿ **Challenging (12):** The hero has a nature drawn from a card whose aura is one color removed from that which would describe the pantheon (a red aura for the Order of Good, for instance).
- ✿ **Daunting (16):** The hero's nature comes from a card with an aura diametrically opposed to the color that represents the pantheon (for example, a black aura for the Order of Good).

As in the Citadel interview, an aspirant gains a bonus to his action score if respected individuals will vouch for him. Every member of his own Order or an allied group (Solamnic Knights and Citadel mystics, for instance, are allies of the Order of Good) adds a +3 bonus to the hero's action score with his personal or written recommendation. More distant advocates, such as members of the Legion of Steel, offer a +1 action bonus. (Endorsement from the head of the Order ensures success.)

Should the hero fail in this action, his patron sends him on a quest to strengthen his faith. After completing one quest, the hero may return for another test.

Mishap: The hero has unwittingly demonstrated his unsuitability to serve the Order. Not only does he fail the test, he may never again attempt to enter this particular Order.

Heroes who pass this test become official servants of their god and receive a medallion emblazoned with the symbol of the deity, which marks him as such. He then becomes subject to the wishes of his superiors (priests of his Order with a higher reputation score) and may be called upon to answer to them for actions construed as unbecoming a priest of his faith.

Order of Evil

The faiths of Evil, more divisive than the other two Orders, seldom work together unless strictly commanded by the Lord Knight of the Skull.

Takhisis, Queen of Darkness

Leads the pantheon of Evil.

Every priest of Takhisis swears an oath of utter obedience to carry out her will: thwarting the plans of her foes and conquering the world in her name.

Chemosh, Lord of Death

White skull masks and black robes mark the priests of Chemosh, skilled at creating undead and quick to promise immortality to gain recruits to the faith.

Hiddukel, Prince of Lies

Hiddukel's followers use trickery to gain wealth, which they display openly with their fine clothing and jewelry.

Morgion, Black Wind

The secretive priests of Morgion historically have revealed little of their goals, beyond countering the healing power of Mishakal at work in the world.

Nuitari, Devouring Dark

No longer must priests of Nuitari also become Black Robed Wizards. However, they do use sorcery in conjunction with mysticism to work their commanding and destructive magic.

Sargonnas, Dark Vengeance

Followers of Sargonnas devote their lives to carrying out revenge against those that have wronged the god in particular, and the Order of Evil in general.

Zeboim, Darkling Sea

The small priesthood of Zeboim petitions for fair weather by throwing offerings into the sea and striking out at marine followers of her rival, Habbakuk.

For more details on any of the gods named here, see "The True Gods" sidebar in Chapter One.



CHAPTER THREE



he people of Port Balifor—mostly humans—felt extremely sorry for themselves. They had no knowledge of what was going on in the outside world, of course, or

they would have counted their blessings. No dragons came to burn their town. . . .

*—The calm before the storm,
Dragons of Winter Night*

Each realm harbors secrets—some mystic, some mundane. This chapter explores the secrets of three locales—the fierce land of Khur, forlorn Dimer-nessi, and rough-and-tumble Port Balifor—expanding upon the information offered in Chapter Two of *Dusk or Dawn* in the FIFTH AGE boxed set. Heroes can visit each of these sites in the adventure that accompanies this sourcebook. The maps in this chapter use the key shown on the poster map.

Khur

Despite their fierce, violent reputation, little has actually been recorded about the people of Khur by outside scholars. Nominally a part of the territory of Malistryx, Khur is not just one nation. Rather it comprises numerous competing tribes, survivors of two great wars who eke out an existence and compete for resources in the bleak terrain. A proud people, they remain unbroken by the adversities they have faced in the past. However, their diminishing numbers may force them to move to other lands or disappear from Ansalon.

History

The people of Khur have changed little over the centuries. They have always been a nomadic folk, moving from water source to water source and relying on hunting for the food they need.

The events of Ansalon's past always have had little impact upon this insular land. Before the first Cataclysm, the plains of Khur were separated from the rest of Istar by a band of dry lands, from western Ansalon by the Khalkist Mountains, and from southern Ansalon by the Silvanesti Forest. As a result, the affairs that embroiled other peoples passed them by with hardly any effect. Thus were they taken completely by surprise by the first Cataclysm, which the Khur refer to as the Drowning, for many tribes were lost to the great floods that swallowed most of the lands of Khur and Balifor to the south and east.

Following the Cataclysm, a great leader named Keja rose up from among the Khur tribe to unify the entire region into one Khanate. The generation after his death, however, the Khanate broke into seven distinct tribes, each ruled by one of Keja's sons. Although some tribes continued to pay fealty to the khan, never again would the tribes achieve such unity.

It was no accident that, in the Fourth Age, Dragon Highlord Ariakas sought to bring these ferocious tribes into an alliance. He was only marginally successful in gaining an alliance with this independent people. But some tribes, including the Khur, saw an advantage in siding with the dragon-army occupying their land and neighboring Balifor—such an alliance could help them destroy rival tribes.

As is often the case in history, however, these tribes merely traded one enemy for another. No sooner had the dragonarmy commanders begun to smash some of the tribes' opponents

than they began to levy harsh requirements of their barbaric allies. The Khur realized too late that they had a dragon by the tail. First, they had to give to their new “allies” a tribute of some of their best horses. Then the Green Highlord began to seize control of water sources critical to the survival of the green dragons—the heavy weaponry of the Green Army. Their Khur allies soon began to hold these northerners in contempt, viewing them as soft and foolish, for they based their war tactics more upon the terror inspired by the dragons than any individual battle skill.

Those who chose to remain independent of the Green Dragonarmy and its overlords in Sanction and Neraka fared little better, for they became the targets of strikes by green dragons as well as rival tribes. The Green Highlord was a skilled enough strategist (or operating under orders from someone who was) to use his dragons to separate certain tribes of Khur to prevent any alliances from forming between past enemies. Some of the independent tribes were destroyed by the dragons, their sources of water poisoned by the vicious green wyrms and their swift mounts killed by the score. In some areas of Khur, travelers will spy small cairns of stone—all that marks the territory of tribes annihilated by the dragonarmy.

Only after a young Solamnic Knight, Morgan di Kyre, arrived in the region in 351AC did the tribes manage to throw off the yoke of the Green Dragonarmy (see sidebar on next page). It was a long and hard-fought battle, but in the end the Khur were stronger for the fight. And they would need all the strength they could muster to face the challenges awaiting them in the Fifth Age.

Important Holdings

The capital of Khuri-Khan, the settlements of Ak-Khurman, Delphon,

Alek-Khan, Kortal, and Pashin, plus many nomadic camps and ruins.

Main Populace

Actually, the members of only one tribe of human barbarians, ruled by Khan Hali-no, call themselves “the Khur.” Outsiders may continue to lump all seven tribes together under this name, but the other six have their own distinct names and traditions.

- ✧ **Fin-maskar:** An independent tribe and foe of the Khur, the Fin-maskar are named for Keja’s seventh son. These skilled hunters and woodworkers take the stag as their animal totem.
- ✧ **Hachakee:** These fierce warriors, named for the fourth son of Keja, are as proud of their battle scars as they are of their horsemanship and skill at swordplay. This independent tribe, a foe to the Khur, takes the desert fox as its animal totem.
- ✧ **Khur:** The allies of Neraka descend from the first son of Keja, Garmac. Many members of this tribe dwell in cities, for which the folk of other tribes scorn them. This corrupt clan chooses as its totem the dragon.
- ✧ **Mayakhur:** The Khur’s only ally, the Mayakhur took their name from the third son of Keja. They are known for their unfair dealings in trade and battle. Their totem is the tiger.
- ✧ **Mikku:** A neutral tribe named for the fifth son of Keja, the Mikku enjoy music and dancing and are clever thieves as well. The totem of this bawdy tribe is the bear.
- ✧ **Tondoos:** The Tondoos, named for Keja’s sixth son, are skilled traders but otherwise keep to themselves. This neutral tribe practices ritual scarring and takes the bull as its totem.
- ✧ **Weya-lu:** Named for the second son of Keja, this honorable independent tribe has long been a foe of the Khur. Its totem is the hawk.





Morgan di Kyre

Sir Morgan di Kyre came to Khur quite by accident in 351AC while on his way to Neraka to find and kill Emperor Ariakas. In order to expiate a terrible dishonor he had done himself and his fellow Knights of Solamnna, he sought to challenge Ariakas to a personal duel. If he died in the attempt, at least he would have restored his honor.

A Knight's Shame

Morgan was an idealistic young Knight who had just won his spurs in the Order of the Sword on a mission in Abanasinia to escort refugees north to relative safety. He and his small force were attacked by one of Dragon Highlord Verminaard's patrolling red dragons. In the ensuing fight, Morgan ran, a victim of dragon fear. When he managed to regain his senses and return to the scene of the battle, everyone but his squire had been slain by the great beast. His squire begged Morgan to kill him and end his pain. Morgan refused, instead trying to help the young man, but his cries of agony were too much for the Knight to bear. He took off all his armor and piled it neatly on the ground near his squire. He removed his sword and lance and planted them there as well. Finally, he drew his dagger, walked over to where the squire lay, and began to talk to him of their home, in a town south of Solanthus. As the mortally wounded youth listened to Morgan's words, the Knight hugged him close and drove his dagger into his heart.

The next weeks were a blur to Morgan, filled only with tears and shame. When he arrived in Khur, he was a broken man who shied away from any but the simplest human contact. His only desire was to remove the terrible stain on his honor by slaying the foul Ariakas, so he could die without passing on to his mother and brothers the weight of his dishonor. He wandered the western wastes of Khur for more than a week, delirious from the intense heat. Morgan was almost completely unaware of what was happening to him when hunters of

the Weya-lu tribe captured him and brought him to their encampment. The tribe's eldest seer saw the fate of her people tied up with this man and forbade the warriors to harm him.

A Knight's Redemption

Members of the tribe treated Morgan with respect, and the seer and her daughters tended to him until he was better. The old woman even bestowed upon him the name Kebral, which means "the wandering star." When he thanked her and told her he must leave them to fulfill a promise, she simply smiled and said that he would fulfill his promise to himself here, in this simple nomadic village.

The next morning, as he was preparing to leave, a patrol of Green Dragon-army troops showed up to exact a tribute of horses. The commander of the detachment chose the horse of a young warrior named Turgris, but when the young man refused to give the animal up, the commander ran a spear through him. Something in Morgan snapped. Snatching up a sword, he beheaded the man in a stroke.

After overcoming their initial shock, the rest of the patrol attacked the Knight. Warriors of the Weya-lu leaped into the fray and, in moments, slew every one of the dragonarmy patrol. Morgan himself had accounted for six of the score of dead soldiers. So ferocious was his attack, the Weya-lu looked upon him as an avenging spirit, sent by the gods to help them throw off the shackles of the foreigners. After the battle, Morgan realized the Green Dragonarmy would soon send a detachment to discover what had become of the patrol. He also realized he could not abandon these people, for to do so would be to repeat the errors of his past.

So he stayed with the Weya-lu. In time, other independent tribes began to follow "the Deliverer," as they called him, the messenger of their war god, Kargath. Although they never fought a single pitched battle against the Green Dragonarmy, their guerrilla campaigns

continued on page 58

Regardless of affiliation, each tribe contains two hundred to two thousand members, the larger tribes living near natural springs or oases. The folk of all tribes wear loose robes over their armor and cover their heads with cloth of similar material if they are forced to travel during the day through their sunbaked, arid land. In more temperate climes, however, they rarely wear these robes.

While these clans technically remain a khanate (a descendant of Keja still rules in Khuri-Khan), most tribes no longer pay allegiance to the Khur, in light of their alliance with Neraka.

Personalities

Khan Hali-no (*barbarian human male adult, wild demeanor, Adventurer*); Matarc, the befuddled former Khan (*barbarian human male elder, eccentric demeanor, Master*); Dregash Khan, Weya-lu chieftain (*barbarian human male adult, commanding demeanor, Hero*); Kasimir di Kyre, grandson of Morgan (*barbarian human male young adult, charismatic demeanor, Adventurer*).

Religious Beliefs

The people of Khur remain relatively unfamiliar with the deities most Ansalonians worship. Instead, they believe in a High God or Great God (sometimes referred to as the Sky-Father) who is the father of them all. Scholars believe this deity combines some of the attributes of both the High God and Chislev from Krynn's traditional pantheon.

The tribes also worship a warrior's deity named Kargath (considered a neutral version of Kiri-Jolith), a hunter's god named Rakiris (perhaps Habbakuk or another manifestation of Chislev), an avenger named Torghan (probably Sargonnas), and a healer named Elir-sana, or "Daughter" (likely Mishakal), worshiped only by women.

While under the the Green Dragon-army's boot during the War of the Lance, the tribes learned of the war between Paladine and Takhisis, but to them, these were the gods of foreigners—lesser gods for lesser people. Attempts to convert the

nomads to the worship of Takhisis met largely with indifference among the tribes allied with the dragonarmy and with outright hostility among those who followed traditional tribal ways.

This passionate adherence to their gods in the face of almost certain persecution by the fanatical priests of Takhisis illustrates just how spiritual these people are, and their devotion has not changed in the Fifth Age. Unlike the other folk of Ansalon, the tribes find the idea that the gods have departed the world completely foreign. Neither do they believe the gods withdrew from the world after the Drowning.

As part of the practice of their traditional beliefs, the folk of this land develop seers from among the young of their tribes. As in the past, these seers vary in aptitude. Many of them receive no formal training. For instance, some followers of Rakiris, the hunter's god, just seem to have an uncanny skill in tracking down game or scouting out an enemy. Some of the most skilled warriors among the tribes, capable of athletic or military feats other warriors simply cannot achieve, are said to bear the blood of Kargath.

The priestesses of Elir-sana remain as skilled today as they were sixty years ago in healing the injuries and ailments of their tribes. To be sure, the skills of these seers surged in the Fourth Age during the time the rest of the world knew the gods had returned. But to this folk, the ebb and flow of the gods' favor is not something one questions.

The magic of sorcery never fit into the world-view of these tribes in the Fourth Age, and it continues to remain outside their sphere of experience. This unfamiliarity with elemental and related magic makes these tribal folk quite skittish around works of sorcery.

Description

Before the first Cataclysm, the terrain around what is now Khur and Balifor was open grassland. Not especially fertile, it was home to nomadic tribes even then.





so effectively tied up the forces that, for all practical purposes, the Green Dragonarmy never became a factor outside of Khur during the latter portion of the War of the Lance. Under Morgan's direction, the Weya-lu and their allies ambushed patrols, raided supply stations, kidnapped commanders and envoys from Neraka, and even managed to kill a dragon or two.

Morgan lived among the Khur for nearly five years. In that time, he came to be revered by the independent tribes and feared and hated by the tribes allied with the dragonarmy. The Highlord placed an enormous bounty on his head, but no one ever managed to collect it. This Sword Knight's defiance brought the tribes together for the first time since the days of Keja-Khan, who united the clans of the Khur wastelands after "the Drowning," as the first Cataclysm is known. Morgan came to embrace this fierce, passionate desert people who had rescued him from physical death on the plains and from spiritual death by allowing him to redeem his honor. He married a daughter of the Weya-lu, and his son and grandson bear his surname as a mark of distinction, although neither knew the man who gave it to them.

A Knight's Farewell

Morgan left in 356AC, when his son Turgis was but a year old, promising his wife and his allies that he would return with aid to finish off the Green Army and free the tribes of Khur once and for all. Morgan headed west to seek the Knights of Solamnia in the land of his birth. He hoped to coordinate a series of attacks, with the tribes striking from the east and the Solamnics from the west.

But he never reached home. His horse slipped on scree as they were crossing the southern Khalkist Mountains, and Morgan was thrown down the side of a steep slope. By the time he reached the bottom, he was dead.

The independent tribes of Khur await the return of "the wandering star" still.

But the changes wrought by the Drowning had a profound effect on Khur. The sea rushed in to flood the southern grasslands, and what dry land remained in the north turned into wasteland. The great river that had run from the northern Khalkist Mountains dried up, leaving only scattered oases fed by underground springs. Most plant life survived only near these sources of water. The coastlands became nothing more than salt flats, left barren by the recession of the sea.

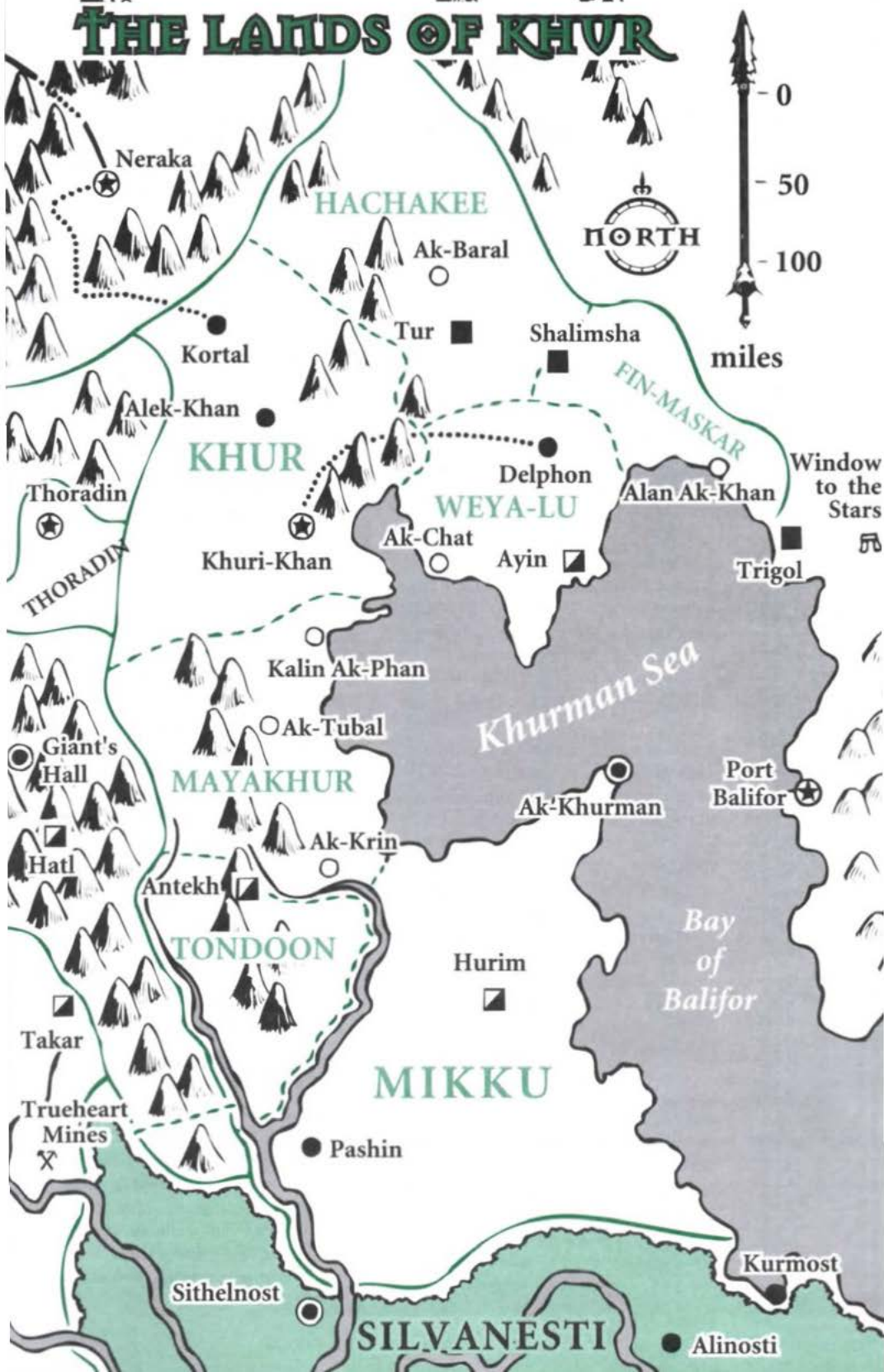
Malys did not target these arid lands when she transformed the Goodlund Peninsula into the Desolation. Nevertheless, her ravaging of that eastern land threw Khur's fragile ecosystem utterly awry. The tribes have lost some of their treasured water sources, as the changes that swept Goodlund caused the underground terrain to shift. The few fishing villages on the shores of the Khurman Sea north of the Bay of Balifor have become ghost towns, for even the shallows now harbor only meager life.

What little contact the tribes had with the outside world before the arrival of the Great Dragons has dried up almost completely. The only merchants that regularly visit Khur any more are the Nerakese, and few tribes care to do business with them—they prefer not to pay their hidden prices. In addition, a few ships visit from a southern port in Iyesta's realm, but these foreigners also seem to want more than just trade with the tribes. Calling themselves Legionnaires, they claim they can help the tribes throw off the domination of those who ally with Neraka, but the independent tribes just laugh and suggest that they'd rather learn how to kill dragons the size of mountains.

Climate

Khur is possibly the hottest place in Ansalon. Despite its location in the southernmost half of a southern continent, the prevailing weather patterns and the shielding Khalkist Mountains allow for very little rainfall. What rain that comes does so in a brief "monsoon

THE LANDS OF KHUR





season" that lasts no more than two weeks a year. Many find Khur at its most beautiful after these brief rains, with its desert plants blooming in brilliant colors before they again must hide their beauty from the harsh sun.

The tribesfolk are perhaps the only people who know this terrain well enough to survive through the summer. Even children know the location of every source of fresh water within their tribe's territory. Only foreigners and sun-baked fools venture out into the desert during the height of the day; most of them do not survive until nightfall.

Because clouds seldom form over Khur, the air cannot retain the heat of the day, making the nights cold enough to fog the breath.

Trade

As mentioned earlier, few merchants journey to the Khur region. Even the tribes' wonderful horses and aromatic spices are not worth a run-in with the Red Marauder or her minions.

The tribes' principal trade items are their superb, fleet horses. People from all across Ansalon seek these mounts, for they make exceptional war horses. They generally are not strong enough to carry a man in full armor, however, so the Knights of Solamnia and Knights of Takhisis have little use for such beasts. Others, especially scouts and light horsemen, find these steeds to be worth their weight in steel.

In addition to their horses, the folk of Khur sell elaborately tooled, silver-studded leather tack and harness. This equipage represents probably the tribes' only artistic endeavor that the rest of the world ever sees.

The spices of Khur also lead a few foreign traders to risk capture by Malys and her lieutenants, for these exotic herbs fetch a high price in the cities of western Ansalon. Used primarily in perfumes and as seasonings, the spices once represented a substantial portion of Khur's trade package, but Malys's uncertain temper has greatly reduced demand from western merchants.

The tribes' main imports are weapons and, for the first time in their history, food. The constant patrols of the lesser red dragons and their troops make it difficult for hunters to find enough game to sustain their tribes.

Current Happenings

In the Fifth Age, the tribes again face the terror of dragons in their lands. This time, however, the dragons destroy by fire, and they follow a wyrm so large that fully three of the biggest green dragons the tribes faced sixty years ago could lie end to end and still not equal her size. Fortunately for these folk, they don't possess anything Malys wants, so she has contented herself merely with periodic patrols to remind them of her devastating power.

Against this backdrop, the people of Khur continue as they always have. Tribe fights tribe, but not over water or land rights. Instead, those who have given up their traditional ways in an alliance with the northerners find themselves constantly set upon by those who remain at heart a proud, nomadic warrior people. Unfortunately, the independent tribes are capable of very little in the way of organized efforts against the Khur and their allies—attacks from Malys remain a larger concern.

Adventurers still brave the wrath of the Great Red to seek out the ruined cities of Istar that lie in Khur's wastes. While the Khur and their allies may serve as guides to such fortune-seekers, other tribes discourage such ventures, preferring that no one disturb the spirits in these dead cities.

Dimernesti

The havens of the Dimernesti below the southern Courrain Ocean form a realm at once beautiful and dangerous for the land-bound. In this environment, threats can come from any direction; those used to thinking in two dimensions often find it difficult to extend their perceptions both above

and below. Such visitors can become disoriented—or dinner for sharks.

Despite this danger, the world of the Dimernesti elves is breathtakingly beautiful. Its coral towers reflect the sunshine that filters through the clear blue water, fishes of every hue glide through its currents, and underwater plants in a riot of colors dot the ocean floor.

History

The sea elves lived in relative peace in their idyllic home for millennia. Of course, they had to contend with predators from time to time, but for the most part, the world left them undisturbed. The wars that shook the surface peoples hardly touched them.

Then came Brine.

Brynseldimer, or Brine for short, is a particularly aggressive, foul-tempered, malevolent old sea dragon. He came to Dimernesti five years ago, and since then has nearly destroyed it. Most of the coral towers of Dimernost, its capital, have been battered to rubble by Brine's mighty tail on his trips through the underwater

city for a light snack. The kelp farms yield almost no produce, fewer fish venture anywhere near the realm, and the events of the surface world have cut off what trade existed between the land-bound races and the sea elves.

Important Holdings

The capital of Dimernost, towns of Santhost and Markost, ruins of Faerkel and Rabinai, the Roost (an ancient Kyrie site), the Endless Hall portal, and the sea caves and tiny islands dotting the surface of the southern Courrain.

Main Populace

Blue-skinned, silver-haired Dimernesti elves and half-elves breathe water as easily as air. Also known as shoal elves, these shallows-dwellers have a guild-based society. Today only several thousand elves live in Dimernost itself, with several hundred to a thousand residing in each town. Few visitors find welcome in this realm, for the Dimernesti are notoriously wary of outsiders.





Personalities

Speaker of the Sea Nuqala (*Dimernesti female adult, vigilant demeanor, Master*); Veylona (*Dimernesti half-elf female young adult, inquisitive demeanor, Unknown*).

Religious Beliefs

Like many Ansalonians, the Dimernesti feel the gods have abandoned them in their time of greatest need. Day-to-day survival requires such effort that few take the time to pray to their traditional gods, Paladine, Branchala, and Chislev. A handful of priests of the Order of Good continue to work miracles in their gods' names, instinctively using minor forms of animism and other mystic magic. (In addition, all Dimernesti can use alteration magic to take the form of otters.)

Description

The ruined cities of Dimernesti, once sights to behold, are still unusual enough to make land-dwellers gape in awe. Dimernesti settlements share a few common traits beyond the standard markets and residences: a concentric layout, extensive kelp farms and fisheries, lookout towers (with great gongs to warn locals of Brine's approach), and "swimmer" yards (vehicles made of air-filled bladders). A map of Dimernost appears on the back cover of this book.

However, few Dimernesti live in their ancient cities anymore. Most have escaped to deep tunnels in the underwater mountain formations that run between the capital, Dimernost, and the smaller town of Santhost. Although these tunnels lie near the dread Brine's lair, the deep caves lie out of reach of his steaming dragon breath.

Many of these caves have barely been explored, and occasionally the Dimernesti encounter strange creatures best left undisturbed. Still, the relative safety the tunnels provide outweighs the risks of encountering hostile marine life. The tunnel system also opens up onto the volcanic islands that dot the surface above Dimernesti. From here, lookouts keep watch for ships from Ansalon, hop-

ing for trade opportunities. They've even swallowed their pride enough to seek aid from their Silvanesti kin. But few ships ever come, and the Speaker has received no word from her kinsman, whom she sent to make contact with their land-dwelling cousins some time ago.

Climate

Despite its proximity to Krynn's southern polar region, Dimernesti has traditionally enjoyed a mild temperature, thanks to warm equatorial currents. When Malys, at her whim, caused volcanoes beneath the Bay of Balifor to erupt, Dimernesti's temperature increased slightly but the water lost some of its former clarity.

Trade

Trade never used to be the Dimernesti's principal concern—sea elves had little use for money. Before Brine's coming, they enjoyed a brisk barter with human and Silvanesti merchant-sailors, trading marine foods and riches for items such as metal weapons and tools that can withstand the corrosive salt water.

Recently, however, trade with the surface has almost completely ceased, for few merchants dare to venture into the hostile seas off Malys's realm into the heart of Brine's territory. The sea elves have had to spend more time and effort searching for the trade items they need now more than ever to fight their draconic foe and build new homes.

Current Happenings

Speaker of the Sea Nuqala, whose father, the previous Speaker, died in Brine's first attacks on Dimernesti, works tirelessly to provide for her people. These days, she directs most of her efforts toward exploring the caves of the Tin-Arian Peaks (which land-dwellers call the Sunken Mountains). She does not hesitate to undertake such explorations herself, wanting to lead by example rather than by decree. Even though several elves have been killed by minions of Brine called lacedons (or sea ghouls) lairing in

these caves, she continues to press her search for a refuge large enough to protect all her people. Nuqala also seeks the lair of Brine in the Sunken Mountains. Her advisers hope she does not find it, fearing she might embark upon a suicide mission against the dragon lord. However, Nuqala believes the Crown of Tides, an ancient Dimernesti artifact, will be powerful enough to help drive Brine off or even kill him. Her advisers are not so sure. (More details on the Crown appear on the box flap.)

Not long ago, Nuqala's bodyguard, Kellishion (*Qualinesti elf male adult, fierce demeanor, Hero*), left to try to determine what had become of the messenger the Speaker sent months ago to contact the Silvanesti. This scarred, quiet weapons master came to Dimernesti years ago seeking refuge from the interminable surface wars. He found a home, and perhaps love as well (he is rumored to be Nuqala's consort), but his peace did not last long. He undertook the mission to Silvanesti with a heavy heart, for the land reminded him of the loss he experienced in the Chaos War. He was spared the opening of old wounds, however, for the Silvanesti had sealed their borders with a magical shield. Kellishion had to return home with no news of the Speaker's kinsman.

Nuqala has also dispatched an expedition to the Blood Sea to seek the Dargonesti. Her people have always considered their deep-sea cousins a weak and primitive race, but the murderous Brine has made this rivalry seem minor. The Speaker hopes to open a link with the Dargonesti realm using the Crown of Tides to power an under-sea portal called the Endless Hall, thus allowing her people to escape. She has not yet managed to make the portal work, but divinations have led her to believe she can find answers in an ancient Kyrie site called the Roost. Unfortunately, these ruins lie perilously close to the rumored location of Brine's lair. Nuqala has had to proceed with caution, lest she send her scouts to their deaths.

Port Balifor

From the Fourth Age to the Fifth, the city of Port Balifor—perhaps Ansalon's foremost criminal haven and den of inequity—has gone from bad to worse.

History

Following the destruction brought by the first Cataclysm, the once-thriving Port Balifor became little more than a home of thieves, gamblers, cutthroats, and other ne'er-do-wells. Its merchants were thieves themselves, trading as they did in all manner of illegal goods from around Ansalon. Merchants sold to anyone who would pay, and residents treated with respect only those with enough muscle to warrant it. In general, this meant that only the dragonarmies and their allies were treated fairly—for the denizens of Port Balifor knew only too well the consequences of cheating the Nerakans.

However, in the Fifth Age, Port Balifor has suffered just the kind of attacks its residents so desperately sought to avoid in the War of the Lance. When Malys arrived on the Goodlund Peninsula, she desired to display her power to the lesser creatures there. Her transformation of the once fertile and forested plain into the volcanic Desolation was felt as far away as Port Balifor. Malys also chose to visit her power on this settlement more personally, and the resulting attacks left only a quarter of the town habitable. Survivors discovered early on that rebuilding only invited another attack, so they gave up after a few attempts.

Many survivors fled, taking ships to anywhere or risking an overland crossing through the hostile wastes of Khur and Kern. Few of these refugees ever reached their destinations. Those who remained in Port Balifor eked out a meager existence. But, after suffering setback upon setback as the malicious Red Dragon destroyed their rebuilding efforts, something changed among these locals. Subtle at first, it grew with every demonstration of hated Malys's violent nature.



The people began to resist. Not overtly and not immediately, but they began to look for ways to spite Malys's efforts to destroy their spirits. Instead of pinning their hopes on rebuilding Port Balifor, they began to look for other avenues for survival. It didn't take long for these scoundrels and thieves to go underground—literally.

The epic changes to the Goodlund Peninsula had not much damaged the sea caves that lined Port Balifor's shore. Upon exploring, locals found that these caves were much more extensive than once they thought. They found freshwater springs and underground rivers, dry caverns large enough to live in, and routes to the surface. These caves were limited to the coastal area; scouts exploring inland found only cave-ins, dead ends, and other barriers—more ruin from Malys's monumental earth magic.

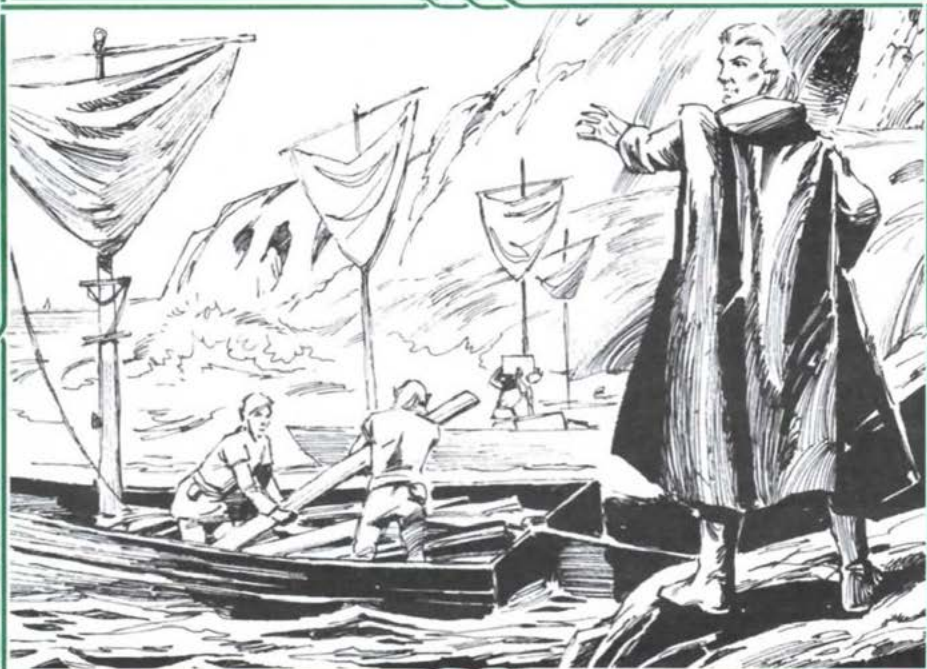
Since then, the people of Port Balifor have survived despite the efforts of Malys and her lieutenants, and without the help of outsiders. They continue to rebuild what they can aboveground,

using salvage from the ruins, so that Malys does not suspect their activities underground. The destruction of their homes and their livelihood, which should have driven them to despair, instead has inspired these former thieves, swindlers, and cheats. They have managed to rebuild their pride and humanity along with their town.

Nevertheless, they have not changed so much that they fail to take a perverse pride in bringing about the biggest con of all: hoodwinking Malys.

Important Holdings

Little of old Port Balifor yet stands—roughly one building in four remains intact. People still live aboveground, but most have escape tunnels to the caverns below. The docks have been nearly destroyed by the waters of the Bay of Balifor, which Malys enjoys heating to boiling. Locals have done little to repair their harbor, for they fear that encouraging outsiders to visit would only call attention to themselves.



Main Populace

Humans and a few kender and half-elves form a population of about a thousand people.

Personalities

Renshar Morgenes, Prefect of Port Balifor (*human male elder, circumspect demeanor, Master*); Harlowe Barstool, Chief Administrator of the Port and High Sheriff of the Watch (*afflicted kender male adult, crafty demeanor, Champion*); Myra, a former Knight of the Lily (*human female adult, sensible demeanor, Adventurer*).

Religious Beliefs

The folk of Port Balifor have always been more practical than religious. Today more than ever they rely not on the gods to make their lives easier, but on their own hands and wits. Some residents still pay at least lip service to Shinare, goddess of wealth and industry, and Hiddukel, trickster god of dirty deals. In addition, mystics are valuable local resources. Those practiced in alteration scout out new caves in animal forms. Sensitivity gives others hints of approaching danger, and healers always have work in these troubled times.

Description

Port Balifor today is almost completely wrecked. Only very few buildings bear no scars of Malys's attacks, and the town's infrequent visitors often take up residence there. Few visitors ever learn of the sea caves beneath Port Balifor, for it is the locals' one refuge from the dragon attacks. They will not trust its secret to outsiders, even well-meaning ones.

Climate

Its location does not exactly make Port Balifor a vacation spot. In addition to the bleak high mountains surrounding the city, volcanoes from deeper inland occasionally spew forth ash which settles

over the town if the winds are right. The heat of the Bay of Balifor, though tolerable near the shores, nevertheless causes the waters to steam, frequently shrouding Port Balifor in a warm fog.

Trade

Because the people of Port Balifor do not want Malys to notice their activities, they keep their trade to a minimum. They have little to offer, anyway—mainly pearls and such from the caverns below. Occasionally, locals will send out an expedition to nearby Khur or the Blood Sea coast in hopes of finding artifacts of the world prior to the first Cataclysm to use in trade.

Port Balifor's tough residents desire from the outside world primarily food and healing supplies. Interestingly, weapons have little value in trade here, for locals care nothing for the idea of fighting Malys—only deceiving her. Merchants today seem far more inclined to trade fairly, since their communal efforts to pull the long con of Malys have given them a measure of respectability.

Current Happenings

In the ten or so years the people of Port Balifor have been exploring and building underground, they have managed to create quite a holding. Caverns are lit by natural light filtering in from fissures in the rock overhead and enhanced by reflective rock formations. Prefect Renshar has seen to it that everyone has a means of escaping another assault by Malys or one of her underlings by using tunnels that run into an old sewer project abandoned in the Fourth Age.

All the locals stand behind Renshar and his plan to dupe Malys into thinking them beaten for as long as possible. They realize that someday she will discover their deception and wreak her revenge, but until then, they plan to enjoy the con. And when they die, at least they will know they managed for a time to pull the wool over the eyes of the self-proclaimed queen of the world!



CHAPTER FOUR

he gull," she said. The Kagonesti held the clay image in the palm of her right hand and closed her eyes. She began humming, a melody that the bird over-

head echoed with its cries. The distance between her and the bird evaporated, as her mind soared toward it, the air rushing all around her. . . . A smile played across her face.

She was looking down at herself and the mariner.

*—Feril demonstrates animism,
The Dawning of a New Age*

The use of magic in the land of Ansalon changes constantly as mystics and sorcerers evolve in their skills. Discoveries at the Citadel of Light and elsewhere have led to spellcasting breakthroughs, unique sphere combinations—even the marriage of mysticism and sorcery. Rules for these new arcane applications appear in this chapter, along with optional rules describing how to play Kagonesti wild elves, like Ferilleeagh Dawnsprinter in the passage above.

The Mystic Spheres

The spheres of mysticism encompass more than the brief descriptions in the *Book of the Fifth Age* might suggest. This look at the nine spheres offers additional insights into the feats heroes can accomplish with each type of magic.

The discussions of each sphere in

the pages that follow recommend difficulty ratings for common spell effects associated with that sphere. *These are not the difficulty ratings for the entire spell*, but merely for the spell effect; the player must determine the difficulty ratings for invocation time, range, duration, and area of effect separately, depending on the circumstances of the casting, and pay out the hero's appropriate spell point total.

For reference, see the "Step Five: Effect" section of Chapter Five in the *Book of the Fifth Age* or the general spell effect magic tables (Va to Vc) on the reference card in the FIFTH AGE boxed set. Where no spell effect adjustment is recommended, the Narrator should assign a difficulty based on the nature or severity of the spell effect.

Alteration

The sphere of *alteration* allows a mystic to change his shape and appearance. Such alterations can vary from subtle adjustments in one's appearance to complete disguises to assuming the form of another type of creature entirely.

The degree of alteration possible depends on the hero's Spirit code. Those with a "B" can alter their form or appearance to that of any other type of creature. They cannot, however, alter themselves to look like a particular individual. Such mastery of the sphere is limited to mystics with an "A" code in Spirit. A mystic with a "B" could, for example, change his shape to that of a cat, become a hawk in order to fly, or make himself look like a common peasant. He could not, however, assume the appearance of a particular peasant, nor could he assume the shape of a particular merchant's cat.

Alteration can be used on others as well. A mystic might use his magic to disguise a member of his adventuring group, for example, or he could transform a hostile Knight of Takhisis into a

OPTIONAL RULES

less offensive attacker—like a mouse.

The difficulty of alteration spells varies depending on the extent of the desired changes. However, using this magic on another is more difficult than casting it on oneself, as the original form naturally resists being changed by a foreign hand. Altering others, therefore, adds an extra point to the spell's total difficulty. Heroes who find themselves involuntary spell recipients may oppose the casting with a *Presence* (*Spirit*) action; again, the difficulty depends on the severity of the intended spell effect.

The use of alteration magic affects only the body of the person or creature being altered. In no case does any clothing or equipment change form as well. Transforming such nonliving items would require transmutation magic.

Alteration can be enhanced by the magic of other mystic spheres. Animism offers advantages for mystics taking the form of an animal. Channeling can make the transformation into significantly larger or smaller creatures easier. Sensitivity proves especially useful for those using alteration to disguise themselves; with this combination, they could alter the appearance of their aura, making it that much harder for an opponent to realize the deception.

Mystic-sorcerers might use alteration with various schools of magic. Combined with transmutation sorcery, alteration can allow someone to alter the appearance of his clothes and equipment as well as his own form: Thus can a prince become a pauper. Alteration combined with shamanism can make any disguise or shapechange even more powerful. For example, say a hero fleeing his enemies dashes into a thicket near a forest. When his pursuers approach, a covey of pheasants bursts from the thicket, startling them. The hero has altered his form into that of a pheasant and created several mirror images using spec-

tramaney. When the pheasants startle the pursuers, the hero can (hopefully) make good his escape.

Animism

The wielder of *animism* has a special attunement with the plants and animals of the natural world. With the magic of this sphere, a mystic can communicate with, control, detect, and otherwise influence animals and plants—which includes their giant counterparts—with a Reason score of 2 or less.

Hero races, hostile nonhumans, monsters, and supernatural creatures are not affected by the magic of this sphere, regardless of Reason score. An owlbear, for example, is not a normal animal; an ice bear is. Players can use the "Animals of Ansalon" chart in Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age* as a guideline to help them determine what types of creatures might be susceptible to animism. However, animals with a Reason score higher than 2 are better influenced with the sphere of mentalism than with animism. To communicate with an intelligent creature like a dolphin, for example, a mystic should use mentalism.

Those mystics with only a "B" code in Spirit and access to animism are limited to communicating with and detecting plants and animals. Any control or influence they exert over an animal or plant is limited to what they can gain by the force of their own personalities—a *Presence* (*Presence*) action with a difficulty assigned by the Narrator. Communicating with an animal requires a spell effect difficulty of 2 points, while speaking with a plant involves a difficulty of 3 points. (Speaking with plants is harder, as they "think" much more slowly than mortals and in terms alien to most races.)

Heroes or characters with an "A" Spirit code and skill in animism can actually influence plants and animals



with their magic. The spell effect's difficulty likely will vary depending on the circumstances. For example, say a hero encounters a bear in the woods after the animal has just eaten his fill. Influencing this nonaggressive creature might require a difficulty rating of 2 points. However, calming an angry mother bear seeking to defend her cubs carries a higher difficulty—say 4 points. To magically influence a plant requires at least 3-point spell effect, due to the difficulty of communicating with herbal life. And of course, the animist cannot influence a subject to do the impossible, such as commanding a plant to uproot itself and walk.

Note that when the hero's Presence score exceeds his Spirit score, he may opt to use his magic just to communicate with an animal or plant, relying on his persuasive skills to influence it.

Understanding the mystic sphere of animism also brings with it mundane knowledge of the natural world. Whenever a player wants to know whether his hero is familiar with a par-

ticular detail of nature, he may attempt an unopposed Reason action with a difficulty assigned by the Narrator.

Animism combines well with such magic as alteration, enabling a mystic in his new guise to communicate with others of his assumed species. Mentalism comes in handy when dealing with animals whose Reason scores exceed 2.

In addition, rumors circulate in the halls of the Citadel of a mystic who, thanks to his knowledge of the sorcerous school of summoning, can summon an animal friend to her. This magic seems to transcend the mere translocation of the animal, for the creature seems predisposed to aid her upon arrival.

Animism combined with divination sorcery might let a mystic see a place through the eyes of an animal at that location. For example, a hero who has been putting out milk every day for an alley cat in Palanthas might use his mystic power to locate the cat and invoke a combination of divination and animism to experience what the cat sees and hears.



Channeling

Among the spheres favored by more physically-minded mystics is the sphere of *channeling*. This magic becomes especially useful for temporarily raising the Physical ability scores of the mystic or an ally, or for reducing these scores in an opponent. In some cases, this ability can mean survival for the mystic and his companions.

Adjusting each individual ability requires a separate spell. However, a spellcaster could raise one ability score in a number of subjects at the same time. For example, say a mystic and his six companions are about to enter battle with two talons of Knights of the Lily. The mystic could give his allies a magical boost by first casting a spell to increase the Strength of himself and his companions (requiring an "area of effect" difficulty rating of 4 points). To ensure that his allies incur less damage from attacks than they might expect, he could cast a second spell to increase his team's Endurance (requiring the same area of effect component to affect all of them). Finally, our adept caster could even lower the Strength score of the enemy Knights (requiring an area of effect rating of 5 points, to affect more than ten individuals). Our mystic, probably nearly out of spell points at this point, nevertheless gave his friends a fighting chance against the heavily armed Dark Knights.

Using channeling magic to affect one of a mystic's own Physical scores requires an effect difficulty rating equal to the number of points by which the caster wants to adjust the score (in other words, raising one score by 2 points requires an effect adjustment of 2 points, and so on). Note that, should a hero achieve an *impossible* action thanks to an action ability enhanced by channeling, he may *not* automatically increase his number of quests by one. Others' scores are harder to affect than one's own, however. To change a Physical score of another member of the caster's own race adds an extra point to the spell's total difficulty rating. (So,

raising one or more scores in the same ability by 2 points requires an effect adjustment of 3 points.) The Narrator should assign an appropriate effect adjustment for attempts to use channeling on other races, depending on how foreign the race is to the caster. Trying to affect creatures like Great Dragons with channeling almost certainly requires cooperative magic.

Should a hero become the unwilling target of such a spell, he may attempt a *Presence (Spirit)* action to resist its effects, with a difficulty based on the severity of the intended change.

Persons with only a "B" code in Spirit might consider choosing channeling as their single sphere, because its effects do not rely on the scope of a hero's mystic knowledge. A hero's mastery of channeling is the same whether he has an "A" or a "B" code. Furthermore, channeling is a good stand-alone sphere. While it can be combined with other spheres of mysticism, such as alteration, it does not combine well with sorcery.

Healing

One of the most popular spheres of mysticism, *healing* magic also has the distinction of being the sphere that brought the new magic of mysticism to Krynn. When Goldmoon drew upon her own desire and the power of her heart to heal the young dwarf Jasper, injured in a dragon attack at the Inn of the Last Home, she opened the door to human understanding of the gods' mystic gift to the world. She and others began to study this gift, and to a large extent, much modern knowledge of mysticism is due to the efforts of Goldmoon and the other early mystics of the Citadel of Light.

What mystic healers of varying levels of ability can accomplish is generally up to the Narrator, though the following guidelines can help him with such decision-making. Mystic healers with a "B" code in Spirit use their magic to perform advanced first aid. They can heal damage to themselves and others, but repairing permanent





injuries and such is beyond their ken. Healers with an "A" Spirit code, on the other hand, use their magic to greater effect, curing diseases and repairing injuries so severe as to otherwise have a permanent effect on the victim. Such a potentially crippling injury adds an extra 2 points of difficulty to a healing spell. Of course, the Narrator may decide that a particularly severe injury or magically induced ailment will have some permanent effect on the victim, regardless of the healer's skill.

For example, suppose an ogre strikes a hero in battle and inflicts such great harm that the Narrator decides the hero will have a permanent limp, possibly resulting in a decrease in his Agility score. A healer with a "B" code could take away the pain of the injury and knit flesh and bone, but the victim would retain the limp and possible score reduction. Treatment by a healer with an "A" code, however, would remove all permanent effects and eliminate the loss of Agility points.

Even an "A" code has its limits, though. First, the injury must be relatively recent. Only the most extraordinary healer could repair damage sustained in a fall years before. Such a miracle is not impossible, but few healers have the skill and good fortune to accomplish it. Healing an old injury that already has caused some permanent disability adds 3 points to the difficulty of the spell. Neural injuries or those that cause a sensory loss are even more difficult. If a hero lost the use of an eye in a fight or accident, for instance, repairing that injury adds 4 points to the healer's spell. Narrators should feel free to make the repair of neural injuries sustained some time in the past even more difficult. Normally, the only way to repair such injuries is through cooperative magic (see sidebar, page 81).

Healers with the "A" code also can cure magical ailments, such as a disease inflicted by a powerful necromancer. (Without this level of training, a healer could merely stay the illness's effects, at best.) This is not an easy

task, however. Curing such an ailment requires a spell with an effect adjustment of at least 4, cast after the mystic has healed the victim of all actual damage (lost cards or Endurance points). Curing a disease in its advanced stages becomes even harder.

Finally, the skilled healer can perform one of the most difficult miracles of all: bringing someone back to life. The healer can attempt to resurrect only a hero or character who has died a very short time ago (a number of minutes equal to or less than the victim's Spirit score); after that, no attempt is possible. This spell requires an action score of 24, assuming the mystic spends a half-hour on the invocation and can actually touch the victim. In addition, seeing the world of death forces the mystic's player to make a random draw; a resulting aura of red or black means the mystic loses 1 Spirit point immediately, with the resulting spell point loss. Normally, this action requires cooperative magic for any reasonable chance of success. An individual restored to life regains one card (or Endurance point) and must immediately receive further healing to be restored to normal health. However, the experience of having died lowers a victim's Endurance by 1 point once he returns to world of the living.

In addition to the magical ability to heal, those with access to this sphere are well-versed in mundane means of healing as well, such as herbal remedies and first aid.

The sphere of healing works well with certain other spheres. For example, mystics who also know animism are better able to heal injured animals. The sphere of meditation can temporarily increase the mystic's Spirit score, which should add to his chance for success at a healing spell. Sensitivity allows a healer to view the victim's aura to help determine the extent of an injury. (Narrators might allow mystics who use sensitivity this way to reduce the difficulty of a healing spell by several points.) The sphere of mentalism has some benefit to healers as well, for

it may assist them in dealing with psychological trauma; this use of mentalism requires a mystic strong enough to handle another person's nightmares.

Healing magic does not combine well with any of the schools of sorcery.

Meditation

Mystics who learn the sphere of *meditation* are often known for their intellect rather than their physical skills. These individuals can focus their minds to accomplish what others cannot. They are capable of great insights, they can see things that others will likely never notice, or they can persuade others seemingly without effort. Scholars use this sphere to improve their intellectual abilities, as do diplomats to improve their persuasive skills.

The magic of meditation works similarly to that of channeling. Its effect in combat, while not as pronounced as that of channeling, can prove even more critical in certain circumstances. Possibly the only way heroes might have any effect against as powerful a beast as a dragon, for example, is to lower its resistance to sorcery or mysticism by decreasing its Perception or Presence scores. A party might defeat such a grand creature by talking its way out of danger, thanks to the persuasive powers of one hero with an increased Presence score. Or, say a group of Dark Knights is searching for the mystic and his allies. The heroes have no direct way to make themselves invisible (none of them can cast spectramantic spells), but the mystic can use meditation to lower the Dark Knights' Perception scores, thereby making them less likely to detect the party.

As with channeling, each increase or decrease in one of the Mental ability scores requires a separate spell. So, if a mystic wanted to increase his own Perception and improve an ally's Presence, he must cast two different spells. Mystics who complete an *impossible* action through the use of an action ability

enhanced by meditation do *not* enjoy an automatic bonus of one quest, however.

As with channeling, a meditation spell that a mystic casts on himself has an effect difficulty rating equal to the total of the desired point adjustment. Thus, raising a score by 2 points calls for a 2-point effect difficulty.

However, the scores of others are harder to affect than one's own. Changing one Mental score of another member of the caster's own race adds an extra point to the spell's total difficulty rating (no matter how many targets there are). The Narrator should assign an appropriate effect adjustment for attempts to use meditation on other races; such magic targeted at creatures like Great Dragons almost certainly requires cooperative magic.

A hero opposing the effects of meditation can do so with a *Presence (Spirit)* action; its difficulty depends on the severity of the intended change.

Meditation can go well with nearly any other sphere of magic. If a mystic alters his shape into that of a hawk to scout out a safe route through enemy territory, for example, he could use meditation to increase his Perception score, thereby improving his chances of spotting signs of trouble. Used in cooperation with sensitivity, meditation lets a mystic more readily discern details of an aura. A necromancer who increases his own Spirit score before engaging in magical combat would be a formidable opponent, indeed.

Other combinations are possible, limited only by the player's imagination. At the very least, using meditation to increase a hero's Spirit score makes mystic spellcasting that much simpler.

Mentalism

Mentalism can be used to communicate telepathically with another, read someone's surface thoughts, or influence another mind. A mystic with this knowledge can gain insights into the plans of an enemy, help a friend overcome a phobia, cause a shadow-wight





to seek its next victim elsewhere, or charm a guard into opening a city's main gate on a cold, rainy night. Such magics rarely last very long—a mystic usually needs to charm the guard just long enough so his party can make it through the gate.

Mentalism is a subtle magic. Those untrained in it generally have no idea that they are being affected by it. Therefore, detecting the use of mentalism used against oneself is usually a *challenging Perception (Spirit)* action. For mystics trained in this sphere, however, this action becomes *average*.

Mentalism is nearly always directed at another person; rarely would a mystic use this magic on himself. (The caster could use meditation to unlock a memory buried within his own mind, but the sphere of meditation might prove more useful.) However, not all targets of mentalism necessarily seek to resist its effects. For example, using this magic to communicate with a friend telepathically would not likely be resisted, unless the subject was superstitious (likely possessing a Spirit code of no higher than "D") or had something to hide. When a mystic uses mentalism to charm or otherwise influence another, the target always opposes the spell with his Presence score.

Of Ansalon's major mystic groups, only the Knights of Solamnia make little use of mentalism, considering such magic dishonorable. The few mentalists among the Knights use this magic more to communicate with others than to read their thoughts or dominate them.

Not so the Knights of Takhisis. They freely explore mentalism's boundaries to learn new ways to dominate others. They have more than once used cooperative magic to achieve an extended charm over someone they consider important to their ends. They particularly enjoy using mentalism to cause Solamnic Knights or Legionnaires to commit heinous acts for which they feel they must atone. The Dark Knights prefer to destroy their opponents

rather than killing them outright, to make an example of them. The Cabal of the True Heart, the inquisitors of the Knights of Takhisis, uses mentalism during the Test of Takhisis to break down the supplicant's mental defenses and to ensure his loyalty. They also engage periodically in "witch hunts" to maintain the purity of devotion their goddess demands of Dark Knights.

The Legion of Steel also makes extensive use of mentalism. Like the Knights of Takhisis, they use it to police their ranks, for the Dark Knights ever seek to bring the Legion to its knees. Any spies they find are killed outright, although some cell leaders prefer to leave them in place, feeding them false information that leads them into a trap.

If Legion elders discover through mentalism that a member uses his affiliation with the Order to enrich himself or win some other selfish advantage, they immediately cut him off from any further communication or support—even if that means withdrawing his cell from the area. Legion mentalists can live the most dangerous lives of any Legionnaires, for often the success of an operation rests on their ability to ferret out information while protecting the cell's anonymity.

The Citadel of Light studies mentalism as much to protect itself and those under its care from harm as for more "academic" reasons. In exploring the limits of the power of the heart, Citadel mystics have found that a combination of mentalism, healing, and sensitivity can reduce the spiritual trauma a person has suffered at the hands of the dragons or other enemies. This method has not yet achieved great success, but it may yet, as the Citadel's understanding of the mind continues to improve. One factor in the slow progress is that only mystics of strong will can hope to survive the mental experience of another's trauma unscathed. Few currently have the skill to attempt such a spiritual healing, but the number is slowly growing.

Mystics with a "B" code in Spirit

and access to mentalism are able only to communicate telepathically with and read the mind of another person. They can both send and receive mental messages involving another intelligent mind (Reason score of at least 3). Communicating simple images or emotions requires a spell effect difficulty of only 1 point, while more complex sendings may call for an effect rating of 3 points or more. This use of mentalism can affect even undead creatures with sufficient intellect (a minimum Intellect score of 3 points), although the magics of spiritualism and necromancy are more powerful against such creatures.

Mystics with an "A" Spirit code enjoy other uses of mentalism as well. They can probe deeper into another person's mind, using their magic to erase or alter a memory; extract a memory; charm or dominate; or create a phantasm only that person can see. Such effects require a minimum spell effect difficulty rating of 3 points and remain subject to the intelligence requirements outlined above.

Mentalism combines well with other spheres of mysticism and even a few schools of sorcery. When used with healing magic, it can help treat trauma of the mind or spirit. Mentalism used in conjunction with sensitivity can give a mystic a deeper understanding of another person's psyche. A necromancer or spiritualist might use this sphere to feed off the terror they could inflict on a victim. So too could a mentalist use his power to discover exactly what might terrify someone, then use spectramancy to create a false image of this very thing, which seems more real to the victim because it exists as both an illusion created out of light and air in front of him and as a "real" figment in his mind.

Necromancy

The dark art of *necromancy* is one of the most powerful mystic spheres, shunned by all but a very few. The Citadel of Light forbids its mystics even to study

necromancy, as do the Knights of Solamnia. It is rare among the Legion of Steel, and the few Legionnaire mystics who study the sphere do so to understand a weapon used by their enemies: the Knights of Takhisis. Only Skull Knights make regular use of necromancy, and few of them truly master it.

Necromancy is most commonly used to animate corpses, thus creating skeletons, zombies, or wights. These unintelligent abominations possess no free will of their own. The magic of their creation gives them enough rudimentary intellect to follow their creator's orders, but no more than that. Creating a skeleton or zombie requires at least a spell effect adjustment of 3 points, while creating more advanced forms of corporeal undead, such as ghouls, calls for an effect difficulty of 4 points. Necromancy cannot be used to create spectral undead or creatures of chaos (frost- and shadow-wights and daemon warriors).

The same magic allows a necromancer to sever the bonds that created the undead, rendering them again lifeless corpses, or lets him wrest them from their creator's control. Either of these actions requires a spell effect difficulty rating of 3 or 4 points, depending on the type of undead. The Spirit score of the creator opposes either action, even if he is not present.

In perhaps the most terrifying use of this dark art, necromancy can also wound a person or creature. Only the most reprehensible of persons perform such acts. The aged Skull Knight who leads the Cabal of the True Heart, unable now to wield a sword effectively, uses such magic to open extremely painful wounds on those who dare oppose him. With nothing more than a gesture, he has cut down fully armored aspirants who fail the Test of Takhisis. Victims can resist such spells with their Endurance scores.

Instead of causing actual wounds, necromancy can merely inflict pain. This pain normally causes no permanent damage, so players need pay out





no cards for stricken heroes. However, the effects of such a spell can leave victims exhausted and defenseless or cause them to black out. As above, targets use their Endurance to resist.

Tied to the ability to cause pain is the power to sap a creature's energy. This application of necromancy differs from channeling magic in that it does not target a particular ability, like Strength or Endurance, but instead acts like an invisible wound. A hero loses the points of "exhaustion" from his Hand of Fate, just as with a normal wound; a character's energy is drained as points from his Endurance (Physique) total. Instead of healing at the rate of one card/point per week, however, the victim recovers lost energy at the rate of one card/point per day, assuming he has the chance to rest. Players should use the numeric adjustment chart for damage and defense spells (chart Va) to determine the difficulty of this effect. Heroes can resist the attack with a *Presence (Spirit)* action; the difficulty depends on the severity of the drain.

The necromancer can then transfer the tapped energy to himself, using it to heal his wounds (restore cards to his Hand of Fate) or refresh himself when he feels fatigued. Because this "life leech" method is little more than a perverted form of healing magic, the wounds or fatigue it treats do not reappear after a limited duration (the necromancer may be wounded anew, however). Absorbing the drained energy calls for an effect adjustment of 1 point for each point of energy to be absorbed. Energy cannot be stored, so surplus points go to waste.

Necromancers with a "B" code in Spirit can use this sphere only to create and destroy mindless undead. The full scope of necromancy is available only to those who have mastered its intricacies; using it to wound or acting as a "life leech" requires an "A" Spirit code.

Meditation magic can enhance necromantic efforts by lowering the spell resistance (Presence score) of a target creature. Necromancers also seek a connection between animism and their favored sphere in hopes of

improving their ability to tap sources of life energy to power their dark magic. Some necromancers, believing the spirit world a powerful source of magic, also study spiritualism in hopes of finding a way to tap this energy.

Whispers arise from Sable's realm of a necromancer who created a zombie that burst into flame whenever it entered combat at its master's bidding. The fire did not damage the zombie until the creature fell in combat, whereupon the flames consumed it. Another tale from the New Sea suggests that one young girl there can derive magical energy from the sea itself—perhaps a connection between the magic of hydromancy and necromancy.

Sensitivity

Sensitivity is the sphere hardest for practitioners of the mystical arts to define. It encompasses a mystic's perception of others' auras, his awareness of his surroundings, and—among some—even the ability to perceive in an individual the movement of time. These skills manifest themselves differently from mystic to mystic.

- ♣ A prodigy at the Citadel of Light knows more than an hour in advance when someone is coming to see Goldmoon. This adept can even identify some visitors—those she has met on a prior occasion.
- ♣ A particularly brutal and efficient independent tracker for the Knights of Takhisis follows his prey by the trail their aura leaves on their surroundings. To date, no one has ever managed to gain the advantage of surprise against him.
- ♣ Some mystics believe that the archmage Raistlin Majere may have possessed some latent ability in this sphere of magic. Others scoff at the idea, arguing that his ability to perceive the effects of passing time through his hourglass eyes was a gift of the gods of magic.

Most magical actions using mysticism are opposed by the Presence of

the targeted individual. However, characters and heroes oppose sensitivity magic instead with their Spirit score; those with a high Spirit score, even if untrained in mysticism, are calmer and more “in control” of themselves than those with a low score.

Mystics who have studied the sphere of sensitivity may, with the Narrator's permission, wield a unique power: They can allocate 9 mysticism points each day to maintain a heightened awareness of their surroundings. This awareness is not intrusive—it is more like a “sixth sense,” giving them a moment's warning before an attack or alerting them to someone watching them. This ability is only a “feeling,” intended more for its story possibilities than for any advantage it gives a mystic. It does not reveal the exact nature or location of a threat—only that it exists.

Furthermore, heightened sensitivity is not infallible. Instead of the player using a card from his hand to determine success or failure, the Narrator draws a card at random to generate the action score any time he feels something might have triggered the hero's sixth sense. The required action score varies with the situation, though detecting a threat shouldn't be easier than an *average Spirit (Spirit)* action (resisted by the opponent with the highest Spirit score). The Narrator might also determine the success of the “trigger” using an aura-based random draw:

- ♣ **White aura:** The mystic gains reasonably reliable information about the threat. For instance, he might know that an observer lurks nearby, rather than watches him magically.
- ♣ **Red aura:** Something triggers the mystic's sixth sense, but he has no idea what to expect. He would not know whether his foe was nearby.
- ♣ **Black aura:** The mystic remains unaware of the threat.

Narrators may draw cards as needed during play, or draw a couple before the game session begins and record





their values and auras, so as not to alert players that something might be amiss.

A mystic also can use his knowledge of sensitivity to observe the unique aura of another individual. He can identify others by aura, even if they have disguised their physical form. The mystic first must cast a spell to see the aura (normal spell effect adjustment of 2 points), then attempt a *challenging Perception (Spirit)* action to perceive details of the aura. If the mystic thinks he has seen the aura before, he can identify the individual with a *challenging Reason* action.

Even the walking dead (skeletons and zombies) have enough of a motive spark for a mystic to determine their nature. He likely would feel a sense of pervasive cold or emptiness when perceiving the aura of a zombie, for example. However, the undead nature of such a creature often appears obvious with just a cursory visual inspection.

A mystic who understands sensitivity can use his magic to alter his aura, too. The difficulty of such an alteration depends on the extent of the intended changes, but it's usually quite a difficult spell (minimum of 2 points of effect difficulty for even a small change). An aura alteration becomes even more difficult when a mystic tries to cast it upon someone else; the aura represents one's basic nature and resists being changed by another. Therefore, the mystic must add an extra point of difficulty to the spell intended for another. To resist such magic, heroes can attempt *Spirit (Spirit)* actions of varying difficulty based on the severity of the change.

Finally, those skilled in sensitivity can actually use their magic to perceive the passage of time in an individual. Unlike Raistlin's ability to involuntarily witness life turning to death all around him, however, heroes can control and direct this power. For example, upon the birth of a child, a midwife or seer might foretell a facet of the child's destiny by reading his future aura. This type of spell requires a temporal area

of effect (using spell chart IVc, normally reserved for divination spells). This power lets Narrators create some colorful characters, such as a crone who foretells the death of a hero or an oracle who offers glimpses of Fate.

Sensitivity can combine with nearly any other sphere or school of magic. Even such a seemingly odd combination as sensitivity and summoning has been reported to the Citadel of Light. A woman who runs an orphanage in Caergoth keeps tabs on her charges through extending her aura perception outward. Connected to her perception is a small ring of light, which grows rapidly into a magical gate back to her location. If, in her searches, she discovers one of her charges in trouble, she whisks him away to safety. She has also rescued several cats, mice, dogs, Legionnaires, wayward Knights, and other harmless creatures.

The dwarves of Ansalon, who consider Krynn itself to be a great living creature, use the sphere of sensitivity to attempt to understand what the earth is trying to tell them. Their success in this magic has led to much speculation: Might not other elements also be viewed as "alive?" Thus far, elemental-sensitivity experiments have produced no results, but scholars continue in their attempts to determine the basic nature of the world around them.

Spiritualism

The sphere of *spiritualism* is considered by some to be one of the "dark arts." Many of its practitioners number among the Knights of the Skull, while others are independent dark mystics in league with the creatures of chaos spawned in the Chaos War. But spiritualism is also the magic most often practiced by the barbarians of Ansalon, for it is through this sphere that they speak with the spirits of their ancestors. Like most magic, spiritualism is a tool that individuals can use to their own ends, Evil or Good.

A spiritualist can contact and com-

municate with the spirits of the dead. Barbarian shamans use this magic to seek advice from the shades of their ancestors. Spiritualism remains fairly rare even among barbarian tribes, however—those with the talent often find themselves ostracized by the rest of their tribe. Most natural spiritualists are marked at an early age and taken to live with the tribal shaman for training in the ways of the spirit. Young barbarians do not always covet the ability to speak with spirits, however, despite the respect a shaman generally enjoys within the tribe, for this role ostracizes them somewhat from the rest of the tribe—people fear the shamans even as they respect them.

Barbarian shamans generally do not encounter great hostility from the spirits of their ancestors, for calling upon their aid in times of need is a long accepted part of their culture. There are exceptions, however. A shaman who calls upon the spirit of a great and terrible warrior must show the spirit great respect or risk angering it enough to make it turn against him.

Others also learn to communicate with spirits of the deceased, for these spectres often possess many secrets. Calling upon a spirit is a dangerous undertaking, though, for spirits at rest do not like to be disturbed, and restless spirits are capable of great Evil. Contacting a spirit generally requires a spell with an effect difficulty of 2 points; the spirit normally resists the spell with its Presence score.

Spiritualists also can call the shades of the dead (spirits' noncorporeal forms) directly back into the world. Such a spell requires an effect adjustment of 4 and normally involves opposition from the spirit's Presence score. Understandably, a spell to recall a spirit's form into the material world proves more dangerous than one that merely makes contact. Should a called spirit slip the mystic's bonds of control (in the event of a mishap in the spell-casting action), it remains in the world, wreaking havoc where it may. The mystic may die upon losing a battle of wills with the spirit—he must succeed at a *daunting Spirit (Presence)* action to





survive. Of course, when a mystic dies this way, the secret of calling the spirit dies with him.

Spiritualism also allows one to create spectral undead: banshees, ghosts, spectres, wraiths, death knights, and shadows. This sphere cannot be used to create corporeal undead or creatures of chaos (frost- and shadow-wights and daemon warriors).

Some mystics learn spiritualism to specialize in banishments and exorcisms. A single powerful malevolent spirit loose in a village can destroy the entire community. These spiritualists serve to rid the world of these troublesome creatures and put them to rest. The spiritualists of the Citadel of Light, as well as a few Sword and Rose Knights, practice this sort of spiritualism almost exclusively.

The Legion of Steel is more open in its approach to this sphere, but its senior mystics keep in mind the Citadel's warnings against delving too deeply into the world of the spirit. To exorcise or banish a spirit requires a minimum spell effect difficulty of 3 points if the banisher knows the spirit's name, and a minimum of 4 points if he does not know its name. In either case, the spirit resists the spell with its Presence score.

Spiritualism combines well with mentalism, allowing the mystic to more forcefully compel the spirit's cooperation. Sensitivity also helps spiritualists a great deal, for it offers insights into a spirit's nature as well as alerting the mystic to the presence of spectral undead in his vicinity.

Some independent dark mystics reportedly can combine spiritualism with necromancy to call and control creatures of chaos, neither corporeal nor spectral. However, Skull Knights have not been able to reproduce this effect. Scholars guess that certain mystics can use their magic to tap directly into the Chaos permeating Krynne from the time of its creation to acquire this power.

Mystics who prefer to bring spirits to them rather than seeking them out can unite this sphere with the school of

summoning. A particularly Evil mystic who combined spiritualism with divination in an attempt to explore the spirit world was visited by three powerful ghosts and shown his own future. The experience drove him hopelessly insane.

Mystical Combinations

The previous section introduced the idea of combining two or more spheres or schools of magic to achieve a particular arcane effect. It is not surprising that spellcasters just recently unlocked the secrets to these combination spells, for only lately have they begun to acknowledge that the magic of Krynne in the Fifth Age stems from a single divine source.

The main distinction between the various spheres of mysticism was in the minds of the mystics, they learned. More surprising still are the discoveries of similarities between sorcery and mysticism. Until very recently, these magics were thought to be two distinct forms of magic, with two distinct sources of power. Mastery of sorcery relied upon the user's intellect, while mysticism derived from the wielder's emotional and spiritual strength.

Lately, however, those able to manipulate both magics have come upon crossovers. Much of this discovery has come from mystics—perhaps because they have been studying the nature of the new magic longer than sorcerers have.

As students of sorcery and mysticism grow more comfortable with the commonalities between the various magical specialties, multi-sphere and hybrid spells doubtless will become more popular. (Details on multi-school sorcerous spells appear in the *Heroes of Sorcery* dramatic supplement.)

Multi-Sphere Spells

A mystic with a Spirit code of "A" can cast one spell which draws from his

Mystic Applications of New Magic Rules

This sidebar summarizes the mystical uses of the optional spellcasting concepts introduced in *Heroes of Sorcery*.

Spirit Codes

A few guidelines can help players determine what the various Spirit codes mean to a mystic hero. Of course, there are always exceptions: A hero with a code of "A" may, in fact, have no background in mysticism whatsoever. Instead, his advanced code might reflect more traditional religious training.

- ♣ **"A" code:** The hero has studied mysticism extensively, understands both its theory and practice, and can cast and teach magic from three spheres.
- ♣ **"B" code:** The hero can cast spells related to one sphere, perhaps due to innate talent, and might also be able to offer instruction in this sphere.
- ♣ **"C" code:** The hero understands the principles of mysticism but can cast no spells. This code can mark a student or one with mystic potential.
- ♣ **"D" code:** The hero has seen mystic magic performed—maybe on him! Although he sees this magic as a fact of life, he does not grasp how it works.
- ♣ **"X" code:** The hero has heard of mysticism but has never seen or experienced it. This magic may either frighten or impress him.

Spellcasting Difficulty

Factors besides opposition from a resisting subject can make a spell harder to cast than its difficulty point total might suggest. These factors—distractions, stress, or anything that might disturb a mystic's concentration—may add points to the spell's difficulty point total. They do *not* increase the number of mysticism points needed to cast the spell. (The spell's energy cost remains the same, it's just harder to cast it right.) The Narrator can assign proper action penalties for less-than-perfect casting conditions.

Casting New Spells

The first time a mystic casts a new spell is always the hardest. Therefore, Narrators should assess a -5 penalty to the hero's spell action score on his first attempt to create a particular spell effect. (This penalty does not affect the required spell point total.) The penalty would not apply to spell effects the hero commonly uses or to minor adjustments to a spell he has cast before (Narrator's judgment).

The hero can work to offset this "first spell" penalty in a number of ways:

- ♣ **Research:** Reading notes relevant to the spell's effect offers a +1 action bonus for a week of such research (maximum of +4 total for one spell).
- ♣ **Personal advice:** Talking with a mystic who has cast such a spell gives a caster a +1 bonus for each day of consultation (maximum of +2 total).
- ♣ **Skilled assistants:** Each mystic with an "A" Spirit code and knowledge of the relevant sphere adds a +2 bonus. A "B" mystic with the proper sphere or an "A" mystic without it adds a +1 bonus (maximum of +4 total).
- ♣ **Unskilled assistants:** The aid of two individuals with Spirit codes of "C" or four with codes of "D" offers a mystic a +1 bonus (maximum of +2 total). However, each aide with an "X" code exerts a -1 action penalty to the spell.
- ♣ **Extended invocation:** Four hours of spell invocation (rather than the normal thirty-minute maximum) gives the mystic a +2 action bonus. Eight hours of invocation allows the player, in addition, to use either the top card of the Fate Deck or one from his hand for the spell action, discarding the unused card. Twelve hours of invocation gains the mystic the aforementioned perk *plus* an automatic trump bonus for the spell action. A mishap at an extended invocation spell costs the mystic double the number of mysticism points normally required. (If he doesn't have enough, he must give up additional points as he earns them.)

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knowledge of two or three spheres of magic. Casting such a multi-sphere spell works in exactly the same way as casting a single-sphere spell: After determining the spell's desired effects and figuring its difficulty rating (adding in any relevant opposition), the player selects a card for the spell action.

The key concept to remember with regard to multi-sphere spells is that all mystics contributing to the casting must be familiar with all the involved spheres (though assistants need not). A combined spellcasting action (see sidebar) will fail unless every mystic participant is trained in all the relevant spheres.

As with multi-school sorcerous spells, each multi-sphere spell counts as one spell per involved sphere, for the purposes of determining how many spells the hero is maintaining at once. In other words, if a mystic has cast a spell using both animism and alteration, he technically is maintaining two spells for its entire duration.

Hybrid Spells

Mystics who also study at the Academy of Sorcery have found they can combine certain schools of sorcery with mystic spheres to create a hybrid magical effect. These effects are not clearly understood by the Academy students, but they seem limited generally to the "utility magic" schools: enchantment, divination, summoning, and transmutation.

For example, although summoning is usually used only for teleportation magic, some mystics have combined it with animism to summon one or more animals; the power of the animism magic makes these creatures inclined to look favorably upon the summoner.

Another interesting use of sorcery with mysticism involves a shapeshifter who found it rather embarrassing that his clothing did not change with his form when he used his magic. Combining transmutation with alteration allowed him to alter his apparel when he altered his shape—his clothes became other types of clothing when

he altered his form to that of another humanoid being or melded into the fur or feathers of a wolf or hawk, his two preferred forms. This discovery allowed the modest shapeshifter to bring his clothes with him on his travels. The only drawback is that the transmuted fur or feathers tended to take on the tint of his clothing, so the mystic learned to wear earth-toned clothes.

Some wielders of the new magic have discovered a natural connection between the school of divination and the sphere of sensitivity. Either, when used individually, could determine whether a subject is under the influence of a spell. A sorcerer examines the actual magic but cannot determine how it has affected the individual. The mystic, by targeting the subject's aura, can detect whether it has been altered, but cannot determine the exact nature of the magic used. But a spellcaster who understands both divination and sensitivity gains a clearer understanding of the "big picture," making him better able to counter the influence. In such a case, the Narrator might give a bonus to the hero's attempt to override the magic—offering a +1 action bonus, reducing the difficulty of the task by one degree, or giving the hero a trump bonus for the action. These bonuses vary depending on what the hero actually attempts.

Casting Hybrid Spells

For now, as sorcerers and mystics struggle to understand the new magic, only a few schools and spheres seem to combine well. The schools of divination, enchantment, summoning, and transmutation, also known as "utility magic" schools, are most easily combined with various aspects of mysticism. This is not to say that other schools cannot combine, at least theoretically. Rather, no one has yet successfully managed to effect such a hybrid. And even utility magic schools do not combine well with every sphere of mysticism. It is hard to see much use for using divination and channeling, for example, to produce a combination effect.

Extraordinary Spell Parameters

Mystics may want to cast spells that surpass the parameters of the spell design charts in Chapter Five of the *Book of the Fifth Age*. In such extraordinary circumstances (say, casting a spell affecting more than twenty-five people), the Narrator can assign higher than the maximum difficulty rating of 5 points for the relevant component (area of effect, etc.). He could also just assign the maximum 5-point rating, then assess a penalty to the spell action. Of course, this flexibility should *not* let heroes succeed at impossible spells, such as one to bring back the gods.

Group Castings

Mystics working together can accomplish feats no one could reproduce on his own. Heroes pooling their mystic efforts in a *combined casting* each must have access to the relevant sphere and pay the spell's full mysticism point total.

After figuring the spell's difficulty and adding in relevant opposition values, the hero with the highest Spirit score plays a card for the spell action, adding all the mystics' Spirit scores to his base action score to get the final action score. No one involved can attempt other actions during the spell's invocation. Should any caster drop out, the spell fails. The consequences of a mishap or spell disruption affect the entire group as the Narrator decrees.

A mystic can use even nonmystics to help him cast a powerful *coordinated spell*. After figuring the spell's difficulty rating (including opposition), the hero must succeed at an *average Presence* action to coordinate his assistants. His Presence code determines how many people he can coordinate: An "A" code allows ten helpers, a "B" allows five, "C" permits two, and a "D" allows one. (Those with a Presence code of "X" cannot coordinate spell actions.) Then the hero casts the spell, adding one-half of each contributor's Spirit score to his own to produce the action score (round fractions down).

The mysticism points for the spell

can come from the caster, the assistants, or both—nonmystics have spell points just like mystics, but they cannot access this energy on their own—as long as the caster pays at least 1 spell point. Those involved can attempt no other action during the invocation. Should a participant drop out, the mystic must make a *challenging Presence* action to continue. The consequences of a mishap or spell disruption affect the caster only. However, the participants must pay double the number of spell points they had offered and will remain disoriented for ten minutes less one minute for each point of Endurance they have.

Magic Batteries and Reservoirs

Like sorcerers, mystics can draw spell points from "magical batteries": items of magic that have mystic effects, such as rings of healing. How many total points an item has to offer depends on its nature:

- Item of distinction: 10–20 points
- Item of renown: 20–40 points
- Item of fame: 30–60 points
- Item of glory: 50–100 points
- Item of legend: 100+ points

An item can regain 1 point per week. After losing more than one quarter of its points, however, it no longer functions as intended until it regains them.

Mystic sites—such as the celestial ladders—can act as magical reservoirs for those with the power of the heart. The Narrator determines the number of mysticism points a hero can draw from a locale based on the nature of the site and the hero. For instance, the Silver Stair would offer points to mystics pure of heart, but those of questionable or Evil intent have little luck. When in doubt as to whether a site offers a hero spell points, the Narrator can attempt an aura-based random draw. On a favorable result of white, the hero may receive the number of points indicated by the card's value, while a neutral red result might offer only half the card's value, and a black card none at all.





The Narrator may allow whatever hybrid effect he deems reasonable—he may even encourage players to come up with imaginative spell combinations. He should keep in mind a couple observations, however. First, because the folk of Ansalon have discovered the basic secrets of sorcery only recently (and mysticism itself is not much older), most highly complex combinations of sorcery and mysticism are not yet possible. Second, attempting new combinations can be dangerous, presenting significant risk of some uncontrollable magical effect or worse.

A spellcaster's success when combining magical effects depends upon his understanding of sorcery and mysticism. A hero with only a "B" code in both Reason and Spirit cannot accomplish even the most rudimentary hybrid effects, for he does not possess a strong enough understanding of magic. Heroes with at least "B" code in one relevant ability and an "A" in the other may try to cast a hybrid spell, but any such attempt is based upon the lower score. (A sorcerer-mystic with 6A in Reason and 8B in Spirit must use his Reason score as the base for the spell action.) Only casters with an "A" code in both Reason and Spirit can use the higher of the two scores for the task base.

The hero always divides the spell-point cost of hybrid castings evenly between the two pools (sorcery and mysticism points), rounding up when necessary. If a caster does not have enough points in one pool to pay for the required portion of the spell effect, the attempt fails.

It is always harder to cast hybrid spells than to create "simple" sorcerous or mystical effects. The Narrator should represent this increased difficulty by imposing a minimum -2 penalty on the spell action score. For example, altering one's shape to that of another mammal might have a total spell difficulty of 9 points. Shaping one's clothing into fur with transmutation magic in the same spell makes the

difficulty at least 11 points—12 or 13 points for a flawless color blend.

Narrators should feel free to assign even higher action penalties if they feel a hybrid spell warrants it. A spell could be difficult enough to require the assistance of others grounded in the same magical knowledge. In other words, all participants in the combined spell action must possess all the spheres and schools relevant to the spell.

Kagonesti Elves as a Hero Race

The Book of the Fifth Age describes elves as one of the races appropriate for players to choose for their heroes. The description in that book, however, applies more to Krynn's two common races of elves—the Silvanesti and the Qualinesti—than to the race of wild Kagonesti elves. For countless centuries, the reclusive Kagonesti have followed traditions that differ greatly from their more "civilized" kin.

Like those of their cousins, the legends of the Kagonesti claim that elves are the "firstborn" of Krynn. However, the wild elves believe that only they have remained true to their heritage. Other elves, whom they refer to as "the fallen ones," have adapted their ways to races born after the elves. With this change, the Kagonesti claim, the Silvanesti and Qualinesti have distanced themselves from the profound connection with the natural world the gods gave elves during the Age of Starbirth.

The Kagonesti, or Wilder elves, maintain that connection, despite the tumultuous events of Krynn's history. Through the Dragon Wars and the rise and fall of Takhisis, the Cataclysm brought on by the hubris of the King-priest, the departure of the gods, the Chaos War and Second Cataclysm, the Kagonesti have remained true to their ancient traditions. This heritage calls them to maintain a balance between mortals and the natural world and to

protect the wilds. The Kagonesti believe that, should they ever give up their traditional ways in favor of a more urban lifestyle, they will disappear forever, becoming nothing more than a footnote in history.

The Kagonesti, like other elves, are a handsome people, yet they hide their faces beneath layers of tattoos and painted symbols that make them look more fierce and intimidating than handsome. Unperceptive outsiders label them savages; other elves, the Silvanesti in particular, do nothing to eliminate this stereotype. Wild elves are darker than the other elven races. Their brown skin helps them blend in with their dark forest. Their hair also tends toward dark shades, although some Kagonesti have honey-brown hair. Silver hair is normally a sign of age, but some rare young Kagonesti also have silver hair, considered a mark of distinction. Some young elves believe the silver-haired among them enjoy a mysterious connection with the great silver dragons. Tribal elders

consider these ideas nothing more than a romantic reaction to the legend of Silvara, the Kagonesti who was really the silver dragon D'Argent (sister to the legendary Heart, the beloved of Huma).

The Kagonesti prefer the company of their own kind and keep their distance from members of the other two races of elves. During the War of the Lance, Silvanesti and Qualinesti refugees fled to Southern Ergoth, where they created realms-in-exile after their lands were ravaged by the dragonarmies. The wild elves' experience with these intruders was not friendly. In fact, the newcomers used the members of some tribes as slaves, considering the wild elves an unclean and inferior race. Tensions rose when the Kagonesti, who had already left some of their lands, could retreat no farther, and occasional hostilities broke out along the borders. Open warfare was averted when the leaders of the peoples enacted a truce following the war.





Role-Playing

The Kagonesti have a very different view toward the natural world than their "fallen" cousins. The Silvanesti in particular, and the Qualinesti to a lesser extent, believe that the world may be shaped by those with the skill to do so. They use this ability to turn their surroundings into a great marvelous garden of stunning beauty.

Rather than reshaping the natural world, the Kagonesti believe they must tend and protect it. This is not to say that they will not plant a thorny hedge as a barrier against enemies or construct a maze of living plants to redirect a foe away from their homes. The key difference lies in the Silvanesti attitude that nature must be reshaped to reach the greatest heights of beauty. The Kagonesti see nature as wondrous by itself, requiring no improvements—only protection from the disasters spawned by careless or abusive people.

The Silvanesti and Qualinesti have become soft and lazy in their forest cities, according to their wild cousins. The trappings of civilization, which these elves view as progress, the Kagonesti see as misguided arrogance.

The Kagonesti, as proud as the Silvanesti, are a fierce, passionate people. Toward those of other races, they seem aloof and difficult to know, but less haughty than their eastern kin.

Requirements

Like others of their race, wild elves are a lithe, graceful people. To represent this quality, a Kagonesti hero must possess at least a 6 in both Agility and Dexterity. They are adept with bows, requiring of them at least a "B" code in Dexterity. They prefer light shields, which limits them to a "D" Agility code.

Kagonesti are stronger and tougher than other elves, so they have no maximum scores in Strength or Endurance. Their skill at wielding melee weapons is not as well developed as other elves', however; they may have no higher than

a "B" code in Strength. In addition, wild elves never wear metal armor, even after they have adventured outside of their traditional lands, for they find such equipment too noisy and restricting. This attitude, therefore, limits them to an Endurance code of no higher than "D." This code may not increase regardless of the hero's adventuring experience.

Although not an overly intellectual people, the Kagonesti are as perceptive as kender. Wild elf heroes must possess a score of at least 6 and a code of at least "B" in Perception. They are limited, however, to a score of 7 in Reason. Kagonesti are also a deeply spiritual people; a hero of this race must have at least a score of 5 and a code of "D" in Spirit. Finally, these folk share the handsome looks of their cousins of the other elven races. A Kagonesti hero must have a Presence score of at least 6.

Players may lower any scores and codes voluntarily to allow their heroes to meet these requirements. However, lowering certain scores or codes does not permit players to raise others.

Advantages

Kagonesti are masters of the bow. Their ability to provide food for their people and to maintain their independence from their enemies depends upon their skill with this weapon. As a result, instead of the trump bonus offered to the other elven races for swordsmanship, Kagonesti gain this advantage whenever they use a bow in combat. This benefit applies only for straight or recurved bows (the self bow, horse bow, long bow, and great bow from Appendix Two: Arms and Armor in the *Book of the Fifth Age*). Kagonesti never use crossbows or other such mechanical weapons, as they do not possess the skill to make them.

Furthermore, all Kagonesti heroes of Adventurer reputation or better can, in their own lands, enchant their arrows to inflict greater damage. This traditional ability can be used once per day for every card the hero's player normally holds; for example, an archer with a

reputation of Champion may enchant five such arrows per day, as he can hold five cards in his Hand of Fate. These shafts act as magical arrows of renown, granting a +4 bonus to attacks and to the damage they inflict. Regardless of whether an arrow hits its target, it loses its magical bonus once it has been fired by the archer who created it. The arrow also loses its bonus if not used the day it was created, but it can be enchanted anew some later day. As this ability depends upon the hero's connection to his homeland, a Kagonesti elf cannot perform these enchantments outside his ancestral home—generally the forests of Southern Ergoth, though wild elves do live elsewhere as well. The elf need not be a sorcerer to use this ability, though a Kagonesti sorcerer who knows enchantment magic can exceed the above limits.

Kagonesti enjoy an automatic trump bonus when attempting Perception actions in a forest. They also gain this bonus when they attempt to move quietly or remain unseen in a forest. Stories related by those who have met Wilder elves suggest that they can appear literally out of nowhere and disappear with equal ease. Most who know them claim that, in a forest setting, the Kagonesti are formidable foes indeed.

Disadvantages

The Kagonesti do not like to use forged metal weapons or armor. Some wild elves, in their travels and adventures in the outside world, have learned to use metal weapons, but only those very rare Kagonesti who have forsaken their traditional ways can feel comfortable wearing metal armor. For game purposes, Kagonesti may not use weapons or armor crafted of metal. Their weapons must come from natural materials such as wood and stone.

Because the insular Kagonesti are considered savages by most, they never gain a trump bonus for a Presence action when dealing with members of other races (except when opposing mystic magic). In addition, they receive a -3

action penalty to such actions when interacting with the Silvanesti and a -2 penalty if dealing with the Qualinesti.

In previous ages, the Kagonesti never mastered High Sorcery. In the Fifth Age, their understanding of the new sorcery is limited, too, for these folk understand magic as tied to the elements. Most are limited to studying aeromancy, geomancy, hydromancy, and pyromancy. Some can learn the schools of divination, enchantment, and summoning, but the more unusual schools of cryomancy, electromancy, spectramancy, and transmutation are not within the ken of the Kagonesti.

Likewise, the Kagonesti have little or no knowledge of certain spheres of mysticism. They are most adept with animism, alteration, healing, and sensitivity. Some wild elves show skill with mentalism, others with channeling or meditation. However, these elves consider necromancy an abomination and spiritualism almost as bad, believing it wrong to disturb a spirit that has returned to the world or to recall one from its rest.

Half-Kagonesti

Like other half-elves, half-Kagonesti possess some attributes of their elf parent and some of their human one. To begin with, they must meet three of the six Kagonesti score requirements, as well as one code minimum and one code maximum (player's choice).

The hero's advantages and disadvantages depend on how long he lived with the Kagonesti. Those raised as wild elves who continue to follow their ways should receive this race's trump bonuses (but not its arrow enchantment power) as well as its armor, weapon, and magic restrictions. The Narrator should work with the player of a half-Kagonesti to decide exactly which benefits and drawbacks fit the hero's background and his chosen score and code requirements.

Due to their half-breed status, half-Kagonesti never receive a trump bonus for Presence actions that involve elves.



CHAPTER FIVE



*y head tells
me that you
are wrong,
but my heart
listens to you.
I think, in this
matter, I will
go with my
heart, for
that is where
belief begins."*

*—Lord Oswal bids Huma farewell,
The Legend of Huma*

As in the times of the great Knight Huma Dragonbane and the famed Companions of the Lance, the Age of Mortals is a time of heroes strong in spirit—heroes who, like Lord Oswal in the passage above, are not afraid of listening to their hearts.

The FIFTH AGE boxed set presented the character of Goldmoon in the Age of Mortals and described her mystic awakening. Subsequent dramatic supplements have introduced readers to her protegee Jasper Fireforge, whose life she saved through the power of the heart in one fateful moment at the Inn of the Last Home.

But these mystic figures are only the beginning! The land of Ansalon is filled with characters strong in the power of the heart.

A Mystic Sampler

Players can create a wealth of mystic heroes just by applying the ideas offered in this book. Perhaps the best way to illustrate this potential is by offering a selection of sample characters for players of mystic heroes to use as examples.

This chapter describes six characters, all with their own sets of mystic abilities. Each of these figures is based on one of the mystic roles described in Chapter One: These pages bring to life the role of barbarian shaman, centaur shapechanger, independent mystic, dwarf earth mystic, and Knight of the Skull.

Some of these individuals—such as Sir Morham Targonne, the Lord Knight of the Order of the Skull—are very important figures in the world of the Fifth Age. Others are young adventurers, for whom the road to fame still lies ahead. Either way, each of them has something unique to teach about the workings of mysticism in Ansalon.

In addition, each of these characters embodies a facet of the Spirit ability, around which the power of mysticism revolves. For instance, they all have a strong sense of dedication to their individual beliefs. This devotion—be it to a cause, an Order, a lifestyle, or to mysticism itself—guides these characters throughout their lives. They also have a strong will and a powerful drive that springs from the depths of their emotions. Finally, these characters all exhibit a deep faith in something—if not a deity, then another influential figure or perhaps themselves. Even questioning one's faith, or searching for a way to find it again, is a quality of a character who is strong in Spirit.

When using these characters in campaigns or as a basis for creating new heroes, Narrators and players should keep in mind that these qualities of devotion, passion, and faith are more than merely bits of background information. Instead, these facets of personality make up the character's fundamental motivations. For mystic figures such as these, the qualities of the Spirit often become a guide to life.

MYSTIC FIGURES

Ghostwolf

Ghostwolf is the shaman for the Aranshi tribe of the Plains of Dust. Though relatively young, he shows promise in his mastery of mysticism. He inherited his position two summers ago when his mentor, the shaman Elkhorn, was killed in battle with a rival tribe. The old shaman had chosen him from among the tribe's younger warriors, for he had sensed that the spirits would answer the youth's call. Ghostwolf had not yet undergone his naming ceremony as a warrior, so when Elkhorn died, the elders bestowed upon him the title of shaman and the name he now bears.

In the lore of the Plains people, a ghostwolf is the rogue wolf that hangs around the edges of the pack, not quite part of the pack, but not entirely shunned from it. The creatures are a symbol of wisdom, for they come and go as they please and often must survive in the wilds on their own. The shaman Ghostwolf was so named to represent both his aloofness from much of the tribe and his knowledge of the spirit world. It is perhaps no accident that his totem spirit is the coyote.

Ghostwolf is a capable warrior, skilled in both sword and bow. What he lacks in reason he makes up for in common sense and instinct. Many of his actions are governed by those same instincts. So far, Ghostwolf has given his tribe only good advice, but he realizes that he did not learn everything Elkhorn had to teach. He would very much like to gain more of the powers of mysticism, but the only ones who could teach him are the shamans of rival tribes. He has heard rumors from travelers of an island to the north where people come from far away to learn from great shamans who teach there, but he believes such stories are no more than tales for around the cookfire.

At present, Ghostwolf can use his knowledge of spiritualism to summon



only the spirits of animals; he has yet to master the ability to contact nature spirits or those of his tribe's ancestors. The wisdom he has gained from animal spirits has helped his tribe find game in its shrinking lands.

The spirits seem increasingly restless, as if they sense some great Evil stirring. Ghostwolf has held these confidences to himself, for he fears that telling the tribal elders would only cause them to seek shelter for the tribe elsewhere. But a migration now would bring only grief, for the Aranshi would have to cut across other tribal lands—likely setting off a battle with other tribes, which no one can afford right now. He hopes to convince the elders to let him approach other tribal shamans to determine whether they sense this growing spirit uneasiness as well.

So far, the elders have refused all his requests, warning him to mind the concerns of his own people and leave the restless spirits to themselves. But Ghostwolf is an inventive young man. He will yet find a way to achieve his aim—and take the opportunity to learn more of the mystic arts from the other shamans at the same time.

♣ **Ghostwolf:** *Barbarian human young adult male, cunning demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8D, Dx 7B, En 7D, St 6C, Re 4X, Pe 7B, Sp 8B (64), Pr 5C, Dmg +5 (scimitar), Def -4 (leather armor/kite shield), also missile weapons (long bow/+6), acute smell, mysticism (spiritualism).



'feather'

Alendric is the younger son of the former chieftain of the centaurs of clan Willik and a female named Iskandra, who died in battle against the goblins and draconians of Beryl's army. His older brother, Medeus, has become the clan's chief, which suits him just fine, for Feather, as the clan calls him, is far more interested in other things.

Feather has an abiding interest in seeing what he can of the world. He is considered quite an oddity among his people, who tell him that the world extends no farther than their clan lands; everything else is unimportant.

But young Feather is not daunted by the sadly narrow views of his clan elders. He has explored the boundaries of his clan lands, and to be honest, it's not very exciting. He can see mountains in the distant east and west on clear days. He would love to climb them and gaze at his people's lands from their peaks. When he travels to the far northern part of the clan holdings, he can smell a strange scent on the air that others have told him was the sea. What an experience it would be to swim in a lake so vast that one couldn't see the far shore!

His older brother tries to steer him toward the more acceptable path of the shaman, but Medeus does not truly understand that path, so his words haven't the weight they might with Feather. The ancient shaman who serves the clan advises that Feather be allowed to satisfy his yearnings to see the world, but the elders say that would only encourage others to assume that their desires outweigh those of the clan. And in these dangerous times, the clan's survival is paramount. Medeus in particular does not want to see his brother leave; even though he knows Feather is basically a sensible fellow, he

feels responsible for him. When their mother died, he gave her his word that he would look after the youth. Unfortunately, Feather does not make this task an easy one.

The young centaur travels the range of his clan lands extensively—there is no corner that he does not know. He uses his natural talent with alteration magic to assume the shape and characteristics of a number of different creatures. He has swum the streams and lakes of Duntollik as an otter (albeit a rather large one!) and a fish. (Once he assumed the shape of a trout and ate a tasty-looking minnow only to discover a hook behind it. He still delights in

relating the story of the look of terrified surprise on the face of the fisherman when he resumed his true shape on the shore of the stream!) He has soared the skies in the form of an eagle, riding the thermals above the Plains of Dust and diving on unsuspecting field mice. He even nearly tricked a barbarian

hunter into thinking he was a kender—until the hunter noticed his hoofprints nearby; Feather narrowly avoided being speared as some foul creature of chaos.

Recently, Feather's journeys have lasted longer and longer and have taken him increasingly farther afield. He has visited most clan shamans to learn what he can of their mystic abilities, including the arts of channeling and animism. Soon may come the day when he does not return to his own people at all.

✦ **Feather:** Centaur young adult male, inquisitive demeanor, Novice. Ag 6B, Dx 7A, En 10X, St 7B, Re 5C, Pe 7A, Sp 8A (64), Pr 6B, Dmg +6 (battle axe), Def -4 (horse shield), also missile weapons (great bow/+8), acute sight and taste, mysticism (alteration, channeling, animism).



Jahran Kaldeist

Jahran has never quite fit in with his people. The hierarchical Silvanesti social system has always seemed to him to be more of a means of preserving the status quo of the wealthy, powerful nobles than serving the people. When the people did benefit from the decisions of their leaders, it always seemed to Jahran that it was almost accidental.

Being born into House Protector, devoted to safeguarding the Speaker and his family, gave him no liberty to air these rebellious perceptions, however. To make matters worse, he found that the Silvanesti preference for the god Astarin (known to others as Branchala) appealed primarily to those who could afford the leisure time to pursue the artistic activities he represented. In short, by the time he reached adulthood, this fairly well-to-do elf had come to realize he was not especially happy about the Silvanesti way of life, so he left for other realms.

During the Fourth Age, Jahran became one of the Silvanesti exiles who worked to restore his country after the Nightmare released by King Lorac's Dragon Orb nearly consumed Silvanesti Forest. A superbly talented former scout, he gave up his profession to become the first priest of Chislev when the gods returned. After Porthios ended Lorac's Nightmare in the closing years of the Fourth Age, Jahran used his magic to help repair the damage it had caused. After nearly three decades of self-imposed exile, Jahran had come home.

Despite the loss of his priestly powers after the Chaos War, Jahran has remained steadfast in his devotion to the principles Chislev espoused. He believes the goddess has not abandoned the world, for she is herself a part of the natural world. The Silvanesti believes that his goddess, and the other gods, have simply chosen to grant their favor

upon their worshipers through the powers of the new magic. Jahran was one of the first Silvanesti elves to seek out Goldmoon and the Citadel of Light when that institution was founded. He was there, in fact, studying the mysteries of spiritual magic, when the borders of Silvanesti were sealed by a magical shield. Prevented from returning to his homeland, he has taken the opportunity to travel the free realms with companions, using his magic to give aid

where he can. He studied the elemental schools at the Academy of Sorcery as well, adding several of them to his magical repertoire.

This training has allowed this insightful elf to regain the magic he once knew as a priest of Chislev.

Despite his history of opposition to the Silvanesti social order, he longs for home. Ironically, he sees the best hope for his race in the person of exiled Queen

Alhana, whom he and many of his kinsmen once fought to protect. In Jahran's opinion, Alhana possesses the character necessary to unite the Silvanesti people against the might of the Great Dragons and other menaces. The leader of House Protector—Konnal, who rules as military governor in Alhana's absence—serves only himself and the traditions of uncontested power in Silvanesti. Jahran believes Konnal partially responsible for erecting the unnatural shield. And, having seen the decaying trees at the edge of the Silvanesti Forest, the elf mystic knows something sinister is going on in his homeland.

♣ **Jahran Kaldeist:** *Silvanesti adult male, resourceful demeanor, Champion.* Ag 9D, Dx 9B, En 6D, St 8C, Re 7A (49), Pe 9A, Sp 8A (64), Pr 6B, Dmg +5 (scimitar), Def -2 (leather armor), also missile weapons (crossbow/+5), acute hearing and smell, sorcery (pyromancy, hydromancy, and aeromancy), mysticism (healing, alteration, animism).



Drincabir Redstone

Drincabir Redstone has seen a great deal of the world. She has seen underground grottoes so beautiful that she could do little other than stare in wonder. She has gazed from the peaks of great mountains out over lush, forested vales never before viewed by any but the most intrepid explorers. And she has assisted in building one of the great wonders of the Fifth Age: the Citadel of Light. Through it all, she has remained the same as the day she departed her home: straightforward, dour, and practical.

Redstone—she is embarrassed about her first name, which her father pronounced as “drink-a-beer,” and prefers (or demands) to be called Redstone—is skilled in fighting with a number of different weapons. However, her greatest love is exploring the world Reorx crafted, and she puts her mystical skills to use pursuing this passion.

The dwarf relies on these skills to find routes through the underground, which the dwarves of Thorbardin use to outflank and outmaneuver their enemies. These tunnels prove handy when the forces of Beryl attempt to breach the fortifications protecting the ancient dwarven kingdom. She also has located pockets of ore that her people can mine to create weapons, armor, and other dwarven works of art. Redstone has even discovered a place of refuge deep below her homeland, which holds a pool with strange healing properties.

Redstone is a fairly solitary dwarf, but not purposely so. She enjoys undertaking a journey by herself just

as much as taking one with companions. Her self-reliance is her hallmark among those of Thorbardin's Hylar thane. This purposeful dwarf considers her skill with the earth a gift of Reorx—one which sets her apart even from other dwarves, for they cannot understand the Forge's creation as well as she can. Redstone seems quite indifferent about whether other

people like or understand her, though. She has friends, not all of them dwarves, who respect her unique skills and let her go her own way. Others she does not need.

Redstone's deep connection with the child of Reorx, Krynn itself, gives her the ability to sense danger whenever she is in contact with the

ground—which is nearly

always, for she gets uncomfortable when she cannot feel the earth beneath her feet. This unique talent, produced by a blend of the sorcerous school of geomancy and the mystical sphere of sensitivity, is simply something she and other dwarf earth mystics possess. She cannot explain this gift in terms of what Academy sorcerers and Citadel mystics know of magic. Such analysis seems, to Redstone, a pointless waste of time. Her magic works by the will of Reorx, and that is all she cares to know.

♣ **Drincabir Redstone:** *Hylar mountain dwarf middle-aged female, pragmatic demeanor, Champion.* Ag 6C, Dx 6B, En 9A, St 7B, Re 7B (49), Pe 6D, Sp 7B (49), Pr 5D, Dmg +6 (broad sword), Def -8 (leather armor/kite shield of renown), also missile weapons (sling/+2), diminished sense of smell, sorcery (geomancy), mysticism (sensitivity).



Lord Morham Targonne

Governor-General Mirielle Abrena and her assembly of Lord Knights chose Morham Targonne to lead the Order of the Skull because of his brilliant administrative ability rather than the depth of his spiritual understanding. As Lord Adjudicator, he is responsible not only for governing the Order of the Skull, but also for the management of religious properties of the church of Takhisis and the other Evil gods. (Practically speaking, however, the Lord Adjudicator rarely attempts to invoke his authority over the churches of other gods in the Evil pantheon, for many of these remaining churches are fiercely territorial and jealous of their prerogatives.)

Morham is a contemporary of Mirielle Abrena. Unlike many of the Knights now entrusted with positions of authority and responsibility, Morham was not a member of her wing. He began his service at the age of eighteen, a few years after the Summer of Chaos, and soon became a junior officer in one of the eastern wings. By the age of twenty-five, he commanded a compgroup. Many rivals attribute his meteoric rise to his family, one of the most prominent and powerful noble families in Neraka. The Targonnes not only own some of the best agricultural land in the region, they control a huge mercantile empire as well. Morham's identity as a scion of this great family made his rise to prominence smoother, surely, but it was his keen mind that brought him to the notice of his superiors.

Morham learned the mysticism of the Skull Knights only about ten years ago. Rather than pursue some of the

more violent disciplines his brethren learned, this officer chose to discover the secrets of the more subtle mystical spheres. A very astute man, he uses his understanding of sensitivity only in the few cases in which he cannot get a clear insight into a person's motivations. His mentalism knowledge gives him an understanding of the tactics of his enemies, both outside and within the Order of Takhisis.

The Lord Knight of the Skull is both an erudite and worldly man. Some of his brethren believe him not as committed to the ideals of the Dark

Knights as he should be. They are right, but they will never be able to prove it. Through

his administrative abilities, Morham has seen to it that the Targonne family receives as much of the trade commissions from the Dark Knights as possible. Much of this trade takes place through other companies in which the family has interests. The clan has thrived under the

dominion of the Knights of Takhisis.

Much of the shipping that passes through Sanction is controlled by the Targonne family, as well. Their holdings outside Neraka provide them with wealth and Morham with a steady supply of information. Not all this information reaches the ears of the other Lord Knights, but this master conniver takes care to turn over any information that can be corroborated by other sources.

♣ **Morham Targonne:** Human adult male, gregarious demeanor, Master. Ag 7C, Dx 6B, En 8A, St 7A, Re 9C, Pe 9A, Sp 7A (49), Pr 9A, Dmg +9 (sabre of renown), Def -2 (plate armor/kite shield), acute senses of smell and taste, mysticism (sensitivity, channeling, mentalism).



Saraele Mellivaene

Knight-Officer Saraele Mellivaene, a half-elf of Silvanesti stock, commands the talon of Skull Knights that currently advises the Khurish Khan Hali-no. Shortly after the Summer of Chaos, the young Saraele fled her native forestland; she was inducted into the Knighthood just a few years later. She has never revealed the reasons for her exile to anyone—even Mirielle Abrena, her former wing commander, does not know why she left Silvanesti. Most people with whom she is acquainted simply assume the traditional elven disdain for half-breeds brought about her exile.

It did not.

After Queen Alhana Starbreeze was removed from her throne and exiled from Silvanesti toward the end of the Fourth Age, a resistance movement arose in Silvanesti to oppose the military government set up by the Sinthal-Elish. Even after Alhana was declared a dark elf, this force wanted her returned to the throne as the rightful Speaker of the Stars. Saraele's elf father and her human mother both sought Alhana's return, for the queen—who once loved the human Solamnic Knight Sturm Brightblade—was far more tolerant of interracial unions than were the narrow-minded nobles of the Sinthal-Elish.

The couple's firebrand daughter—though barely old enough to carry a sword, let alone able to wield one—passionately supported the return of the hero queen. When her parents were arrested for treason, betrayed by one of Alhana's closest supporters, Saraele's world came crashing down

around her. Thanks to her mother's warning, she managed to escape the dragnet searching for her, and she fled Silvanesti.

Saraele hooked up with a young Mirielle Abrena, who discovered in the half-elf a formidable fighting spirit. The Dark Knight leader taught her the arts of war. Although at first Saraele

felt a pang at embracing the enemies of her dark elf

queen, in time the young woman

trained herself to forget the cause that killed her parents. Where the Silvanesti had brought her only betrayal, the Knights gave her a home. When

Saraele was old

enough to be considered for membership in the Order of the Lily, Mirielle herself sponsored her.

Early in her career, it became clear that Saraele was a very capable military leader, as skilled with a word as she was with a sword. While serving as a wing commander in Mirielle Abrena's own compgroup, this aggressive and brilliant half-elf consistently defeated even those opponents who vastly outnumbered her own forces. Saraele's troops follow her as much out of respect for her daring as for her personal leadership qualities.

And the mystical abilities she has learned as a member of the Order of the Skull have only enhanced her reputation. Saraele's most demonstrable talent is channeling, which allows her to accomplish the impossible in battle and in other physical activity. While she does not disguise the fact that she and the members of her talon are Skull Knights (unlike many diplomats in this order, as explained in Chapter One), Saraele does remain highly secretive about the extent of her mystical abilities.



Few realize, for instance, that she has mastered both mentalism and healing as well as channeling—the half-elf doesn't want the other Knights to learn everything she's capable of. She rarely uses her healing skills on anyone but herself and her most trusted troops. And, rather than utilizing her mentalism to test the loyalties of the Knights of other orders (as many Skull Knights do), she uses it to gather information. For instance, she surreptitiously plucks hidden facts from the minds of those she meets in her role as ambassador. She tends to wield such magic sparingly, though, relying normally on her excellent understanding of human nature. When she does use her mentalism skills, Saraele works subtly.

Her deftness and perception have garnered her the assignment of ambassador to the Khur tribe and its allies, the Mayakhur. Despite the harsh climate, it is considered a plum posting, for the Khur are among the fiercest of Neraka's sometime allies. For three years, Saraele has served as Neraka's ambassador, and during this time, she has established herself as a formidable warrior among the fierce tribesmen. She has managed to deflect Khan Hali-no's amorous advances while establishing Neraka as a powerful ally. Even Hali-no's enemies among the independent and neutral tribes accord Saraele a great deal of respect, for she has proven her superior fighting talents against their warriors time and time again.

Knight-Officer Mellivaene maintains the tribes' loyalty by helping them avert attacks from Malys—she has convinced the Dark Knights in the dragon's employ to direct Great Red's attentions elsewhere. She also urges the Khur on to further attacks against the independent tribes. Neraka's agenda calls for her to increase the holdings of

Hali-no and his allies until the Knights of Takhisis effectively control the entire western portion of Malys's realm. The Mayakhur have already begun to expand south beyond their traditional tribal borders, thanks to her strategic aid.

Saraele still maintains a good relationship with the Governor-General. In fact, she has stronger feelings of loyalty to Abrena as an individual than to the Dark Knights as an Order. Not only did the Governor-General save the orphaned half-elf long ago from a miserable existence, but she gave the girl the tools to seek her revenge upon those who betrayed her family and their queen.

Should ever the Silvanesti Shield fall, let the members of the Sinthal-Elish beware: Saraele Mellivaene will have her day.

♣ **Saraele Mellivaene:** *Half-Silvanesti elf adult female, commanding demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 5B, En 8A, St 7A, Re 9C, Pe 6B, Sp 8A (64), Pr 9A, Dmg +7 (long sword), Def -8 (plate armor/target shield), also missile weapons (horse bow/+4), acute hearing, mysticism (mentalism, channeling, healing).



APPENDIX

Barbarian Shaman

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
All Physical scores 4 min. (<i>aggressive tribes only</i>); Sp 5 min.	Sp "B" min.	Must have a barbarian upbringing; spiritualism sphere required.	Trump bonus for spellcasting in trump sphere; trump bonus for outdoor actions in home terrain.	No trump bonus for for PR actions to deal with "civilized" folk; must use tribal weapons; cannot adopt role during play.

Centaur Shapechanger

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
EN 7 min. St 7 min. RE 7 max. PE 7 min. Sp 6 min.	Dx "A" EN "X" Sp "B" min. (alteration skill based on code)	Centaur only; quests 3 max.; alteration sphere required.	Trump bonus using bow; soothes horses; trump bonus for alteration magic used on self; mobility advantage.	No trump bonus for spellcasting (except alteration on self); assumed Dx code of "X" for any missile weapon but bow; no trump bonus for PR actions with own clan; can adopt role during play only as first mystic role.

Citadel Mystic

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Sp 4 min.	AG "B" max. Dx "C" max. EN "B" max. St "C" max. Sp "B" min.	Cannot derive nature from a Hearts card with a black aura or a Dragons card; healing sphere required.	Trump bonus to PR actions involving peasants; random draw to gain aid from lords of free realms; can adopt role during play.	Necromancy forbidden; study of spiritualism limited to those with permission only.

Dwarf Earth Mystic

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
AG 8 max. Dx 8 max. EN 6 min. St 6 min. RE 5 min. Sp 5 min.	RE "B" Sp "B" min.	Dwarves only; geomancy school and sensitivity sphere required.	Trump bonus to resist poison or sorcery and for earth magic and earth-related PR actions; can adopt role during play.	No trump bonus for certain personality-related actions, using nonearth magic, or any PR actions.

Independent Mystic

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Sp 3 min.	Sp "B" min.	May not belong to any mystic organization.	"A" Sp code allows trump bonus for specialty sphere; can adopt role during play.	-3 penalty for PR actions with strangers (doubles if caught in a lie about belonging to a mystic group).

ROLES QUICK REFERENCE

Kagonesti Shaman*

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
AG 6 min. DX 6 min. RE 4 min. but 7 max. PE 6 min. SP 5 min. PR 6 min.	AG "D" max. DX "B" min. EN "D" max. ST "B" max. RE "B" SP "B" min.	Kagonesti elves only; animism and one elemental school required.	Trump bonus in combat w/straight or recurved bow, when using PE, moving silently, or hiding in the forest, and for animism; enchant arrows; +3 bonus to PR actions involving animals.	No trump bonus for PR actions w/other races (except to resist mystic magic); -6 PR action penalty for dealing with Silvanesti and -3 penalty for Qualinesti; forbidden spheres and schools; cannot adopt role during play.

* Uses the base Kagonesti racial standards introduced in Chapter Four of this book.

Kender Nightstalker

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
AG 7 min. DX 7 min. EN 6 max. ST 6 max. SP 4 min. PE 6 min. or PR 6 min.	AG "D" max. EN "D" max. (true) or EN "C" max. (afflicted); SP "B" PE "B" min.	Kender only; acute eyesight; sensitivity or spiritualism required; other require- ments by subrace.	SP or PE action to detect spirits; spirits attack only on a black aura draw; handling; trump bonus for sleight-of-hand (true) or sneaky (afflicted) actions; can adopt role during play.	Meets opposition from other heroes; short concentration; "A" code allowed only for PE.

Knight of the Skull

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
EN 6 min. ST 6 min. SP 5 min. PR 5 min.	EN "A" ST "A" SP "B" min. PR "C" min.	Human or half-elf only; demeanor 5 max.; nature 4 min.; quests 5 max.	Trump bonus to close range, for spell attacks vs. Legionnaires, for mounted melee attacks, and to resist mysticism; +3 PR action bonus in negotiations.	Death for failure at a Test of Takhisis or if found guilty of violating the Code; owes 40-60 days' service; difficult to acquire role during play.

Knight of the Sword or Rose†

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
EN 6 min. ST 6 min. SP 6 min. PR 6 min.	EN "A" ST "A" RE "C" max. SP "B" max. SP "A" max. PR "B" min.	Human or half-elf only; wealth 3 min.; nature 5 max.; demeanor 4 max.; necromancy forbidden, spiritualism discouraged.	Trump bonus to close range, in melee attacks vs. Dark Knights and Legionnaires, for mounted melee attacks, and for PR actions involving locals under Solamnic protection; can access Order's trea- sury; advancement.	No trump bonus to gain surprise; PR falls 1 point if fails to advance; owes 40-60 days' service; donates wealth; has a character flaw; difficult to adopt role during play.

† Requirements, advantages, and disadvantages in italic type apply to Rose Knights in addition to the normal Sword Knight standards (or instead of them, if a conflict arises).

APPENDIX

Legionnaire Mystic

Ability Scores SP 4 min.	Ability Codes SP "B" min.	Other Req's Wealth 5 max.; nature 6 max.; demeanor 6 max.	Advantages Trump bonus for mysticism against Dark Knights and for mystic defense against Solamnics; code improvement bonus; apprentices; can acquire role during play.	Disadvantages Death if captured by a Dark Knight; extra brutal treatment while a prisoner of Skull Knights; apprentices.
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Monk

Ability Scores AG 6 min. EN 6 min. RE 5 min. PE 6 min. SP 7 min. PR 6 min.	Ability Codes SP "B" min.	Other Req's Human or half-elf; spiritualism and necro- mancy forbidden.	Advantages Trump bonus for unarmed combat or combat with VL melee or thrown weapons.	Disadvantages May use only VL or L weapons and only VL armor and shield; difficult to acquire role during play.
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Mystic-Sorcerer

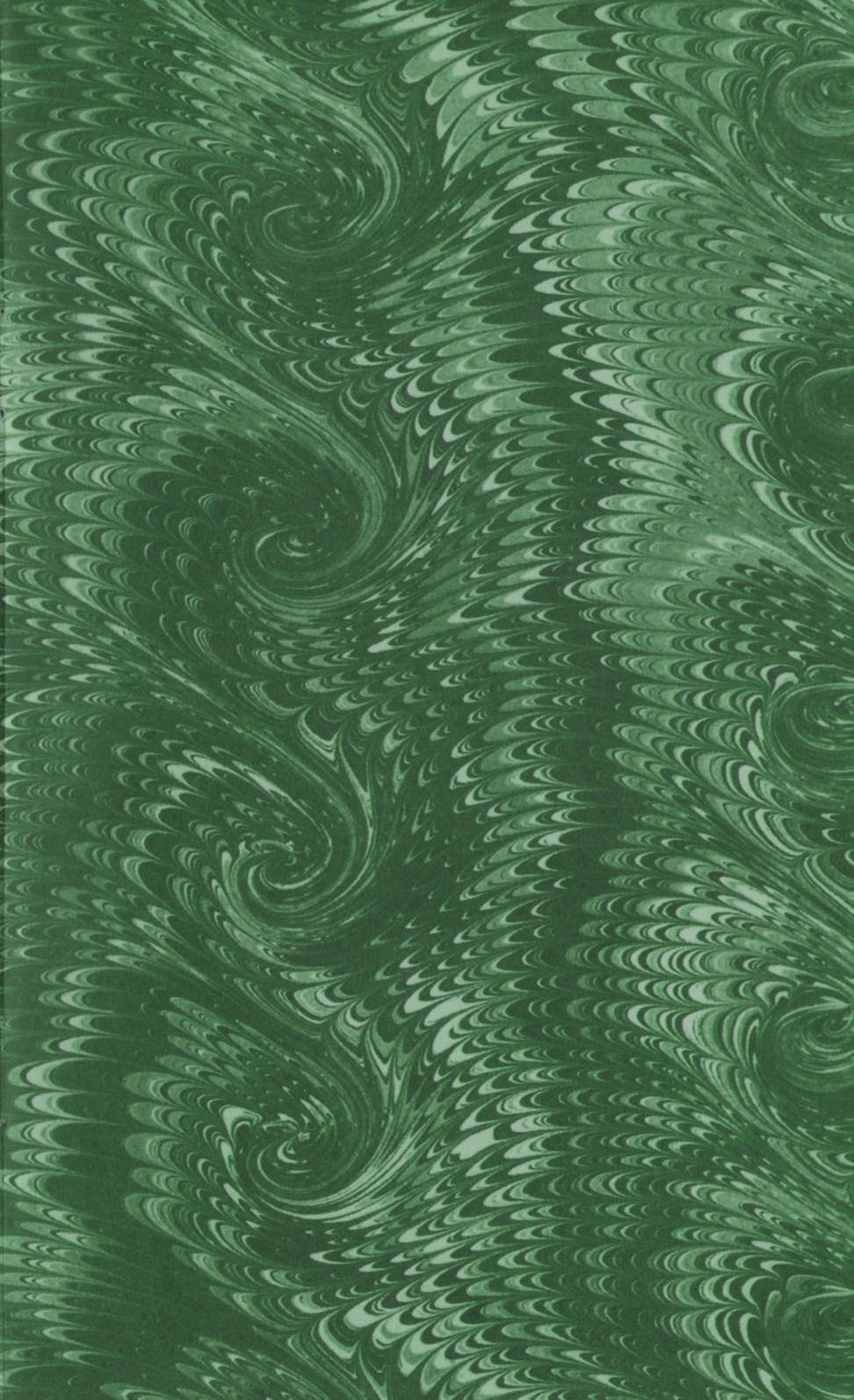
Ability Scores RE 6 min. SP 6 min.	Ability Codes RE "B" min. SP "B" min.	Other Req's By race.	Advantages Those with "A" RE and SP codes can combine spheres with schools; can adopt role during play.	Disadvantages No Physical codes higher than "C" (may lower them voluntarily).
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Rogue

Ability Scores AG 5 min. DX 5 min. PE 5 min. SP 4 min.	Ability Codes PE "C" min. SP "B" min.	Other Req's By race.	Advantages Trump bonus for PR actions invol- ving criminals and for certain channel- ing or meditation spells; can adopt role during play.	Disadvantages No trump bonus to PR actions with authorities; cannot use VH weapons.
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True Believer

Ability Scores SP 4 min.	Ability Codes SP "B" min. (for priests) or SP "D" min. (for followers)	Other Req's Must select a god to worship.	Advantages +3 action bonus for PR actions involving other believers; trump bonus to any action once per quest; can adopt role during play.	Disadvantages PR action penalty between -1 and -6 points when dealing with those who don't share beliefs.
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Dragonlance[®]

FIFTH AGE[®]

ELVEN RACES QUICK REFERENCE

Chapter Four of this book offers optional rules for creating Kagonesti heroes. Their special requirements, advantages, and disadvantages make these wild elves distinct from Krynn's other two elven races.

Kagonesti Elf

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
AG 6 min. DX 6 min. RE 7 max. PE 6 min. SP 5 min. PR 6 min.	AG "D" max. DX "B" min. EN "D" max. ST "B" max. PE "B" min. SP "D" min.	By role.	Trump bonus for attacks with straight or recurved bows; each day can enchant one arrow for every card in Hand of Fate as an arrow of renown; trump bonus when using Perception, moving silently, or hiding in a forest.	Cannot use forged metal weapons and crossbows or armor; no trump bonus for Presence actions with other races (except to resist mysticism); -3 penalty for Presence actions with Silvanesti, -2 penalty with Qualinesti; schools of cryomancy, electromancy, spectramancy, and transmutation and spheres of necromancy and spiritualism forbidden.

Half-Kagonesti

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Three Kagonesti score requirements.	One Kagonesti code minimum and one maximum.	By role.	Choose Kagonesti advantages based on length of time spent with them (can't enchant arrows).	No trump bonus for elf-related Presence actions (except to resist mysticism); choose other Kagonesti disadvantages based on length of time spent with them.

Qualinesti or Silvanesti Elf

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
AG 6 min. DX 6 min. EN 8 max. ST 8 max. PR 6 min.	AG "C" max. DX "B" min. EN "C" max. ST "B" min.	By subrace or by role	Trump bonus in sword combat and when using Perception in forest.	No trump bonus for non-elf related Presence actions (except to resist mystic spells).

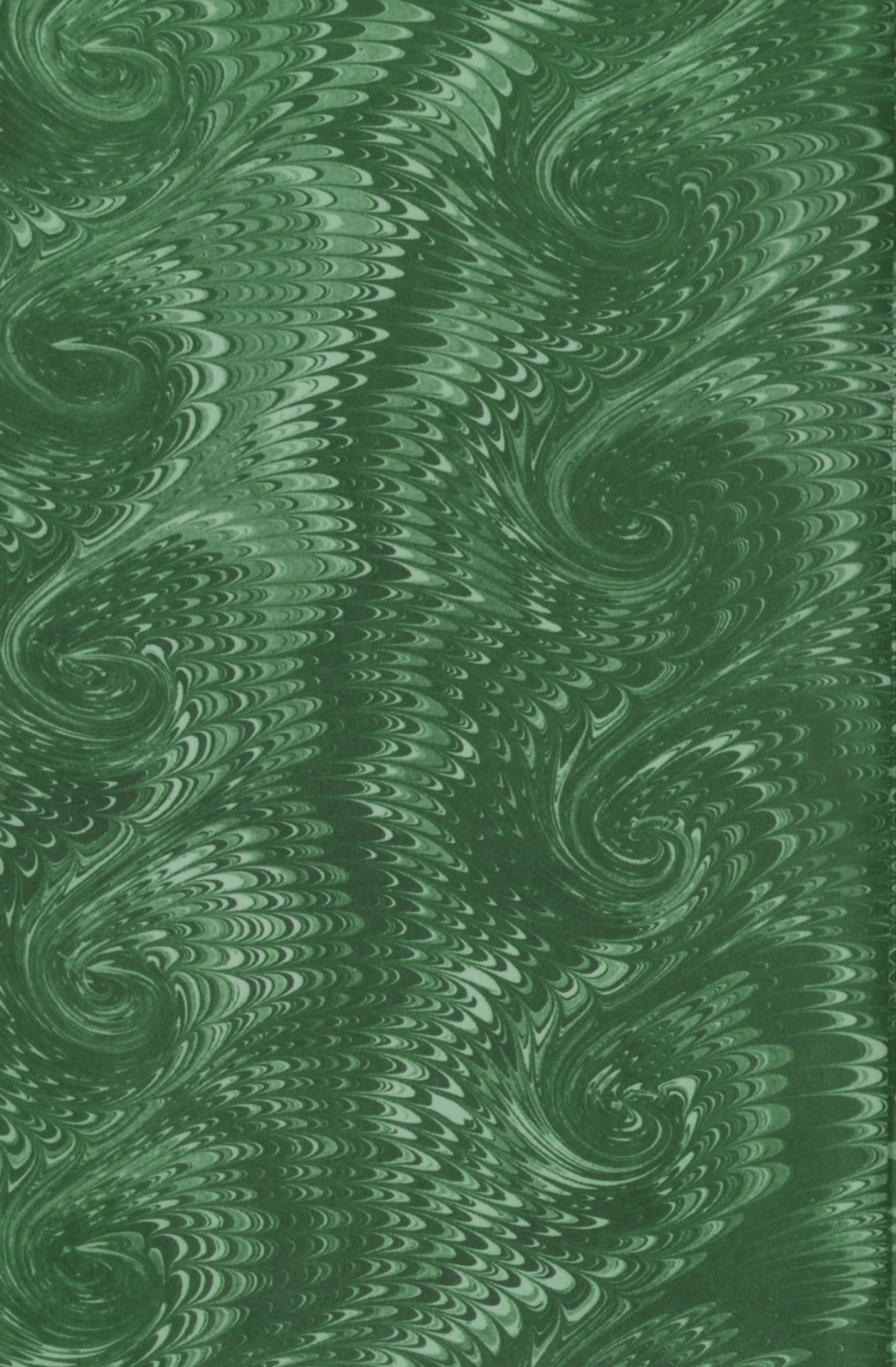
Half-Qualinesti or Half-Silvanesti

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Two elf minimum scores and one elf maximum	DX "B" min. or ST "B" min.	By elf subrace or by role	Choose one elf advantage	No trump bonus for elf-related Presence actions (except to resist mysticism).



HEROES OF HOPE

BOOK
TWO





THE CROWN AND THE SERPENT

Dragons of a New Age, Part Four



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Author's Foreword



The Crown and the Serpent is the fourth DRAGONLANCE®: FIFTH AGE® adventure in the five-part series titled *Dragons of a New Age*. This cycle, which parallels the events of the first trilogy of FIFTH AGE novels, explores the valiant struggles of the Heroes of the Heart against the tyranny of the dragon overlords. In this adventure, the heroes embark upon a quest for an artifact, the Dimernesti Crown of Tides, which could prove decisive in foiling the schemes of the Blue Dragon, Khellendros.

The story opens with a bang as the heroes, guests at the Citadel of Light, witness an attack on the mystic master Goldmoon by agents of the Red Dragon Malistryx. Only quick thinking on their part can save her life.

After informing the elders at Legion of Steel headquarters of the attack, the heroes and their Legionnaire guide set off on the long journey to Dimernesti, home of the sea elves and resting place of the Crown of Tides. As they trek across the Plains of Dust, they camp one night near the Grandfather tree, an immense vallenwood thought to hold mystic powers. There, several heroes experience dreams that offer portents of what lies before them. After a tangle with two unusual denizens of the Black Dragon's swamp, they reach the edge of the Silvanesti Shield—and witness its horrifying effects on the elven forest.

No sooner do the heroes cross the Khalkist Mountains into the lands of the Khur in Act Two when they encounter a tribe of warlike barbarians who reveal a startling secret about their guide's past. Ultimately, the group arrives at the desert city of Ak-Khurman, a Legion stronghold on the Bay of Balifor. Finding passage to Dimernesti is no trouble; running the blockade the Dark Knights have set up is something else again! With the help of some firepower from the Legion of Steel, the heroes make it out of the harbor alive.

Act Three pits the heroes on board ship against a spy in their midst, then brings them face to face with the sea dragon Brine, lord of Dimernesti. Assuming they manage to flee his steaming breath, can they convince the sea elves to give up their treasured crown? And, more importantly, will Brine really let them escape a watery grave?

The Crown and the Serpent can be played as part of the *Dragons of a New Age* series or as a stand-alone scenario. While this adventure traces the route used by the Heroes of the Heart in Jean Rabe's novel *The Eve of the Maelstrom*, a sidebar in Act Two offers the Narrator hints for leading the heroes along an alternate route to Dimernesti, via the Missing City mirage on Ansalon's southern coast. If all goes well, the heroes end their quest ready to face Takhisis herself!

Diane C. Maxwell



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PROLOGUE



grand quest," he muttered half under his breath. "Schallsea. My destiny. Maybe I'm crazy to be doing this, going after a ghost. Maybe I imagined the whole thing."

*"He's talking to himself again, Blister."
"Hush. . ."*

*—Dhamon Grimwulf sets out;
two curious kender follow,
The Dawning of a New Age*

Heroes of the Fifth Age can be found nearly anywhere, from the chambers of state to the chambers of a roadside inn. They are united by one tie: the desire to win freedom from the Great Dragons for themselves, their friends, and their people. But before players select or create their heroes, Narrators should brief them on events that occurred earlier in the *Dragons of a New Age* cycle.

The Story So Far

The first part of the series, *The Rising Storm*, saw the heroes take up a quest at the behest of Goldmoon, mistress of the Citadel of Light. While investigating the disappearance of some villagers, they discovered that Khellendros, the Blue Dragon, was magically transforming the kidnapped folk into "spawn," a twisted draconian-human hybrid.

In the second part, *Storm Over Krynn*, the heroes freed scores of prisoners—including the elf Gilthanas, a Hero of the Lance—from the dragon's

foul Bastion of Darkness and visited a spawning camp. After a narrow escape from the Blue Dragon himself, an old scholar they rescued told them that the dragon was attempting to gather artifacts to use in an incredible spell. These items included an elven scepter called the Fist of E'li, Dalamar's golden ring of healing, Goldmoon's medallion of faith, the Dimernesti Crown of Tides, and Huma's own true dragonlance.

A *Killing Frost*, the third adventure, took the heroes to Foghaven Vale in frozen Southern Ergoth, desperate to recover the lance from Huma's Tomb before the Blue Dragon's Dark Knight agents did. Gilthanas accompanied them, believing the Vale held for him a clue to the whereabouts of Silvara, his lost silver dragon love. After many travails, the heroes managed to best the Dark Knights and retrieve the lance. In the process, they witnessed the wrath of Gellidus the White, spied a strange shadow dragon that appeared to be following them, and learned a startling fact: Malystrixx planned to return the Dark Queen to Krynn! Armed with this news, they returned to nearby Castle Eastwatch. There, Gilthanas was at last reunited with his beloved Silvara, who has disguised herself as a Solamnnc Knight named Lady Arlena Plata.

Heroes Old and New

Some of the heroes described in the next pages have been featured in the FIFTH AGE novels, others in previous dramatic supplements, and one is brand-new. Players may use these Heroes of the Heart if they wish, altering their personalities or backgrounds as they see fit. They could also come up with their own heroes, bringing them in from previous FIFTH AGE game sessions, or perhaps try a bit of both to create their adventuring party.

Whatever the case, these chosen heroes are about to make history!

PROLOGUE

Rig Mer-Krel

Description	Human male (barbarian), mariner role
Demeanor	Roguish (8)
Nature	Clever (5)
Reputation	Champion (Quests 8, Hand 5)
Social status	Guildsman (Wealth 5)
Agility 8C	Reason 5D
Dexterity 6A	Perception 5A
Endurance 9C	Spirit 4C
Strength 7C	Presence 5B
Melee weapon	Sabre of renown (+9)
Missile weapon	Fang (+2)*
Additional weapon	Lesser dragonlance
Armor	Padded silk (-1)
Shield	None

* Weapon introduced in *Heroes of Steel*.

"Rig is just a nickname, but it suits me. I picked it up as a kid doing odd jobs on the docks in Sea Reach. I've been a sailor ever since I celebrated my twelfth birthday by stowing away on a ship. The home I left was not a happy one, but I joined a much larger family—the brotherhood of sailors.

"Now I'm in my mid-twenties. I've steered a ferry in the New Sea, and I've sailed the open sea as a pirate. A few months ago, I found myself drawn into a fight against Khellendros the Blue, and I haven't felt a deck beneath my feet for some time.

"I'm at my best when I have salt water in sight. If I'd been in my element, I could have saved Shaon, a bright-eyed lass who'd sailed with me for years. Instead, this beautiful girl died at the claws of one of Skie's blue dragons, cut down in her prime. I'll go back to the sea some day, but not until

I've avenged Shaon. The Storm Over Krynn will pay dearly for her death."

Game Information

As a mariner, Rig (8) enjoys a trump bonus for any action he attempts involving combat at sea or an act of seamanship. In land combat, however, he suffers a -3 action penalty. (The mariner role appears in *Heroes of Steel*.)

Rig is always ready for a fight. Besides his two primary weapons, he conceals several others: a weighted sash that looks like a bit of normal clothing, two daggers in his boots, and two more hidden under his shirt. He wears a fancy hat with a garrote concealed in the headband and conceals razor-sharp blades in the soles of his boots. He even wears a dagger-shaped earring that doubles as a lockpick.

In a recent trip to Palanthas, the sorcerer Palin Majere retrieved the last piece of the footman's dragonlance once wielded by Sturm Brightblade and gave it to the heroes. Unless Dhamon Grimwulf remains with them, Rig now carries this lance.

The mariner has developed such a strong hatred for blue dragons that he has grown immune to the effects of dragonawe. (This immunity applies only if Shaon appeared as either a hero or a character in the Narrator's campaign and was slain by the blue dragon Gale, as occurred in *The Dawning of a New Age*.)

Rig enjoys acute eyesight and taste—no one will ever get a poisoned meal past him.

Appearance

Tall and muscular Rig has brown skin and short, dark hair that mark him as an Ergothian. He favors bright, flashy clothes.



Ferillecagh Dawnsprinter

Description	Female Kagonesti elf
Demeanor	Curious (2)
Nature	Wild (7)
Reputation	Champion (Quests 9, Hand 5)
Social status	Commoner (Wealth 3)
Agility	6D
Dexterity	6B
Endurance	4D
Strength	7B
Reason	7A (49)
Perception	5A
Spirit	6A (36)
Presence	6C
Melee weapon	Broad sword (+6)
Missile weapon	Long bow (+6)
Armor	Leather (-2)
Shield	Kite (-2)

"I'm usually not one to take sides in an argument. Even among my own people, the wild and independent Kagonesti, I've always been a loner. I enjoy solitude, and I admire—even envy—the wild creatures, living free of the constraints of society. Animals have pure motives: They kill only for food and know how to enjoy simple pleasures. I would prefer a solitary life in the wilderness with them to just about anything else.

"Now, however, I've gotten involved in one of the greatest struggles ever to face Kryn: the battle between mortals and the Great Dragons. I know how to pick enemies, don't I?

"I love the wilderness and would sacrifice my life to defeat those affronts to nature, the Great Dragons. The White Dragon, Gellidus, has transformed my home isle of Southern Ergoth into a vast glacier: All it took was the touch of Frost to turn a land of temperate plains and forests into a polar desert. I have nothing against polar deserts, but I want them to stay where they belong: at the poles! Other chromatic dragons have wreaked similar havoc in their territories, but I have made it my job to find a way to thwart their schemes.

"I try not to let my grim task keep me from enjoying the wonders I see around me, however. There is beauty almost everywhere you look, from the simple grace of a butterfly to the crisp geometry of a dwarven building. Whenever I find myself somewhere I haven't been before, I can't help stopping to drink in all the sights, sounds, and smells."

Game Information

As an elf, Feril (7) is skilled with a sword and perceptive in woodland settings. Any card she plays to resolve an attack with a sword or to resolve a Perception action in a forest becomes automatic trump. However, like others of her race, Feril can seem haughty to non-elves. Therefore, she never enjoys a trump bonus for Presence actions involving a non-elf. (Cards played to resist magic are an exception.)

This Kagonesti can employ three schools of sorcery: pyromancy, geomancy, and aeromancy. She also can cast spells from three mystic spheres: animism, alteration, and healing. Her two acute senses are sight and hearing.

Note: A player using Feril as a hero for the first time should feel free to adjust her established scores and codes to fit the new Kagonesti elf and Kagonesti shaman requirements. She would then have the advantages and disadvantages set forth in *The Magic Within* rather than those listed above.

Appearance

Feril is beautiful, tanned, and wildly exotic. Her brown hair falls in waves to her shoulders, like a lion's mane. Even though she has not recently been among her people, the Kagonesti, she proudly wears the strange and colorful tattoos of this race of wild elves. Feril bears a tattoo of an orange and yellow oak leaf on one cheek and another of a red lightning bolt across her forehead.



Dhamon Grimwulf

Description	Male human (civilized), rogue knight role
Demeanor	Independent (5)
Nature	Brave (1 ♠)
Reputation	Champion (Quests 9, Hand 5)
Social status	Commoner (Wealth 3)
Agility	8A
Dexterity	6C
Endurance	7A
Strength	8A
Reason	7D
Perception	6B
Spirit	5C
Presence	7A
Melee weapon	Long sword of renown (+11)
Missile weapon	Crossbow (+5)
Armor	Chain mail of distinction (-5)
Shield	Target (-3)

"When I was twelve, I caused quite a stir in my hometown by joining the Dark Knights. I came from a noble but poor family that had never been popular; it pleased me to see the shock in the faces of my neighbors when I rode out of town carrying the Knights' banner.

"After several years of training, I became a full member of the Order. My pride swelled when I became a dragon rider, paired with the blue dragon, Gale.

"During an attack on Sanction about five years ago, I became separated from Gale, but fought on. I exchanged blows with a Solamnic Knight and, although I fought well, he wounded me gravely. As I felt my life draining away, I prayed that Her Dark Majesty would give me strength to land a final blow. Only blackness answered.

"I was taken prisoner and brought to Solamnia, where my opponent tended me himself. Surprisingly enough, I came to admire the man. While I recovered from my battle



injuries, I listened eagerly to his stories about Huma, Sturm Brightblade, and other famous Solamnics. His tales and his kind manner toward me made me realize that, although the Dark Knights had taught me honor, they never taught me compassion. In nightmares I began to see the faces of every man I had ever killed. It made me shudder to realize that, while I was battling for glory, they had been fighting to defend their homes.

"When I became well, I resolved to leave the Knights of Takhisis. I realized that they had taken advantage of a bitter youth, twisting my anger to their own ends. I had barely made my decision when my fellow Dark Knights came to my 'rescue.' I shouldn't have been surprised that they tracked me down, but I didn't want to be rescued. In fact, I joined my captor-turned-mentor in defending his home.

"Only I survived that battle. When I buried the dead, I buried my old armor and weapons, too—and my old life. My one option, as I saw it, was to become a sellsword. True, the mercenary life isn't honorable. But it's better than I deserve."

Game Information

As a rogue knight, Dhamon (5 |) receives a trump bonus when fighting Knights of Takhisis or trying to impersonate a Dark Knight. When fighting from a mount, he can also play any card as trump. However, he never receives a trump bonus to resist mysticism, thanks to the grueling "training" his old Order put him through as a youth. If the Knights of Takhisis ever capture Dhamon, they will kill him.

This rogue knight has acute eyesight.

Appearance

Lean, muscular Dhamon turns the heads of many young ladies. This young man ties his long, wheat-blond hair back in a pony tail and wears old, plain clothes.

Blister Nimblefingers

Description	Female kender (afflicted)
Demeanor	Cautious (4✓*)
Nature	Resourceful (2✓*)
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 6, Hand 4)
Social status	Tradesman (Wealth 4)
Agility	8D
Dexterity	7B
Endurance	5D
Strength	4C
Reason	5C
Perception	6A
Spirit	4C
Presence	6B
Melee weapon	Bear claws (+1)*
Missile weapon	Bolas (+2)*
Armor	Leather (-2)
Shield	None

* Weapon introduced in *Heroes of Steel*.

"About thirty years ago, I struck out from my home in Kendermore on an important mission for the Hero of the Lance Riverwind—I was the one who warned the Knights of Solamnia of the coming of Malystrixy, the Red Dragon!

"Of course, I've never been back to Kendermore—there's not much worth seeing there these days, except Malys. I've never seen a red dragon, let alone one big enough to destroy my whole country.

"I've spent most of my life in Hylo with other kender who managed to escape Malystrixy. But now that I'm approaching middle age, I've decided to venture out into the world again. I'd forgotten just how much there is to see!

"Anyway, I'm not what most people expect when they meet a kender. Oh sure, I'd like to see what's inside every wrapped parcel, behind every locked door, or inside each padlocked chest. But I've got discipline. I almost never go poking my nose into someplace unless there's a really good reason to do so.

"When my curiosity overrides my common sense—umm, I mean when I have to confront the unknown—I'm careful. I'll prod a suspected trap from

a safe distance with a spear, or maybe I'll just throw a rock at it. I can snag pouches and other small objects with a fishing line. I have a spyglass I use to peer into campsites. I like to be careful, just like Uncle Tas did: He always knew exactly what he was doing.

"I wear gloves when I go out in public because of my scarred-up, misshapen hands; when I was a girl I was foolish and let a trap spray acid all over my hands. (That's how I got my nickname, Blister. Before that, everyone called me Verae.) It used to really hurt to do fine work, like picking locks and stuff. But, when I talked with Goldmoon not long ago, she got me to see the pain was all in my head. My hands still don't work quite right, but at least they don't hurt any more. Goldmoon's the greatest!"

Game Information

As an afflicted kender, any card Blister (4✓*) plays is trump if it involves stealth or graceful, careful movement. The kender carries an assortment of gloves and tools to help her with

simple tasks. She has a studded pair that serve as weapons, a pair covered with beeswax to help her pick things up, and a pair fitted with picks to help her with fine work.

She also carries a magical net—well, she thinks it's magic. If Blister closes to personal range, she can automatically trap a creature smaller than a cat

inside the net. To capture larger creatures, she must attempt an *average Agility (Agility)* action. The net can hold a creature as large as a horse.

This kender has acute senses of hearing and eyesight.

Appearance

Blister has graying blond hair and a ruddy complexion. Her hands and fingers resemble a bird's feet: thin, twisted, and scaly from her injury.



Jasper Fireforge

Description	Male Neidar dwarf
Demeanor	Decisive (3♥)
Nature	Honest (2♥)
Reputation	Champion (Quests 9, Hand 5)
Social status	Gentry (Wealth 6)
Agility	6B
Dexterity	5C
Endurance	7B
Strength	7A
Reason	6D
Perception	5B
Spirit	8A (64)
Presence	7B
Melee weapon	Battle axe of fame (+12)
Missile weapon	Crossbow (+5)
Armor	Scale armor of renown (-8)
Shield	Horse shield of distinction (-6)

"I'm Flint Fireforge's nephew. That's right: Flint Fireforge, Hero of the Lance, was my uncle. It seems that Fate has cast the Fireforges as saviors of Krynn, or at least of Ansalon. Now it's my time to be a hero, and I'll do my best to fill the role Fate has set for me.

"I've inherited my uncle's tolerance for other races, particularly elves and kender. Don't laugh—Uncle Flint's best friends were Tanis Half-Elven and Tasslehoff Burrfoot. I know elves are a bit full of themselves, so I just let them walk around with their noses in the air. Why should I let myself be offended by their behavior? I also don't understand why other people get so upset when kender are around—can't they appreciate a kender's quick wit? I'll admit that I seem to 'lose' things more often when there's a kender nearby, but that's no problem, because the kender always find my things for me. It would be rude to call a kender a thief or demand my property back: Harsh words are for enemies, not friends.

"That's a truth I learned from Goldmoon, First Master of Mysticism. I'm a student of hers at the Citadel of Light on Schallsea. Not only is she my spiritual instructor, she's a personal friend



of mine. She even saved my life once, back during the Dragon Purge, before anyone even knew what mysticism was. I just might be the first person in Ansalon ever to benefit from mystic healing.

"The world is lucky to have Goldmoon around—she's brought the gift of healing back to a world that has lost it twice now. The power of her spirit has made her an ageless beauty, at least to my eyes (I understand that less enlightened folk see her differently). Goldmoon is a wonderful teacher, and I never tire of working under her guidance. I could happily spend all my days studying with her, but she has reminded me that I have more important work to do and ought not spend all my time at the Citadel."

Game Information

As a dwarf, Jasper (2♥) is resistant to poisons and sorcery in the form of a trump bonus to any actions to counter a poison or block a sorcerous attack.

Jasper can employ three spheres of mysticism: healing, mentalism, and sensitivity. In addition, he has an acute sense of smell.

Appearance

Though well into his middle age, Jasper has a jovial nature that makes him seem much younger. He keeps his reddish-brown hair and beard neatly trimmed, as befits a dwarf of his station.

Ladine Dralathalas

Description	Female Silvanesti elf, displaced noble role
Demeanor	Bigoted (7●)
Nature	Reserved (1●)
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 5, Hand 4)
Social status	Commoner (Wealth 3) <i>Aristocracy*</i> (Wealth 7)
Agility	7C
Dexterity	9A
Endurance	8C
Strength	6B
Reason	8B (64)
Perception	7B
Spirit	5C
Presence	7C
Melee weapon	Long sword (+7)
Missile weapon	Arbalest (+9)
Armor	Leather (-2)
Shield	None

* The social status and wealth score in *italics* are Ladine's standing in Silvanesti.

"I come from the long line of diplomats in House Advocate. Immediately after the War of the Lance I served my queen, Speaker of the Stars Alhana Starbreeze, in negotiations with the Qualinesti and Kagonesti to ensure fair treatment of Silvanesti refugees in Southern Ergoth. Later I worked in vain to clear up the misunderstanding that led to my liege becoming a dark elf—an exile from our people.

"It was a long and distinguished service to the Tower of Stars, and it came to an end twenty years ago when I discovered that I could not return to my beloved Silvanesti, recently restored from the spiraling Nightmare it had been during the War of the Lance through the efforts of Porthios of Qualinesti.

"Somehow, someone has encased my homeland in a magical shield that nothing can penetrate. Even my teleportation powers prove useless against the Silvanesti Shield.

"I have spent the past twenty years trying to unlock this mystery. Some of my brothers and sisters have sought aid from humans in bringing down the shield, which I refuse to do. My years among humans and the Kagonesti savages have granted me an appreciation for these races, but I refuse to show weakness before them. I will stand by them in their struggles against the dragon overlords and even aid them on their personal quests. But my isolation from my beloved land is my plight alone."

Game Information

Ladine has an elf's skill with a sword, which offers her an automatic trump bonus for attacks with that weapon. Likewise, her excellent elfen perception in the forest gives her a similar bonus to woodland Perception actions. She remains aloof toward other races, which means she never receives a trump bonus in Presence actions involving non-elves. (Cards played to resist magic are an exception.)

Her role as a displaced noble, introduced in *Heroes of Defiance*, allows Ladine a trump bonus to imitate her former rank. She has contact with

various Silvanesti elves also trapped outside their homeland, who can lend her aid. However, other such exiles know of her loyalty to Alhana Starbreeze

and seek her death (once per quest).

Ladine can employ spells from the sorcerous school of summoning and has acute eyesight.

Appearance

Ladine carries herself with an icy formality, accentuated by her pale gray eyes set within a white, expressionless face. She wears her long, silvery tresses in a series of complex braids, a typical fashion among Silvanesti nobles.



Avonathalonus

Description	Male Silvanesti half-elf
Demeanor	Sensible (3♥)
Nature	Resolute (2♣)
Reputation	Champion (Quests 9, Hand 5)
Social status	Tradesman (Wealth 4)
Agility 6C	Reason 9A (81)
Dexterity 6C	Perception 7C
Endurance 8C	Spirit 5C
Strength 9A	Presence 6B
Melee weapon	Two-handed sword of distinction (+10)
Missile weapon	Crossbow (+5)
Armor	Chain mail (-3)
Shield	None

"The last time I saw Silvanesti, my homeland, was just over twenty years ago, right before the magical shield went up around its emerald forest. Funny, but I haven't missed it. 'Half-breeds' do not fare well among those elves.

"I fought both with and against the forces of Takhisis during the War of the Lance. I started out as part of a mercenary company working for the Blue Dragonarmy—as a Red-Robed Wizard, I was the only magical firepower they had. My company stayed with the Blue Army for nearly a year, but when our captain discovered we were about to be betrayed by the Blue Highlord, we broke our contract and left the army's service.

"When they came after us, it was with everything they had. The few of us who survived that fight kept a low profile over the next several years, stirred up as much trouble for the dragon-armies as possible, and just stayed alive. When our captain died in a raid against the Green Dragonarmy near the end of the war, we went our separate ways. I wandered the length of Ansalon, practicing magic and paying for my education with my military skills. I was doing

pretty well until the Chaos War.

"I never realized how much magic meant to me until it was gone. But when the gods of magic left, they took a part of me with them. Suddenly, I was just another guy with a sword.

"Somehow, though, I knew the magic couldn't really be gone. I still sensed its power all around me—I just couldn't figure out the formula to make it work again. So I did the only thing I could: hired myself out for more sellsword work. I used my earnings to study wild magic from the Age of Dreams—the primordial magic that worked without the trappings of High Sorcery. I traveled a lot, too, tracking down rumors of 'new magic.' I discovered a lot of hoaxes and charlatans in those days and, when I

heard about Palin Majere's Academy, I figured I had just found one more.

"Of course, I was wrong, and I'm happy to admit it. Just like I'm happy to spend the rest of my life as more than just another guy with a sword."



Game Information

As a half-elf, Avon gains some of the abilities of his Silvanesti forbears. He is trained to use numerous melee weapons but has excelled at the sword. He gains a trump bonus any time he uses a sword in combat. Because of his half-elf heritage, however, he never gains a trump bonus during interactions with elves, especially the Silvanesti (except to resist the effects of mysticism).

Avon, a talented wielder of magic, has studied at the Academy of Sorcery and acquired an expertise in pyromancy, electromancy, and spectramancy.

Appearance

At five and a half feet, Avon is tall for a half-elf, and his powerful, muscular build makes him look even taller. Few who meet him see anything other than a blond, hazel-eyed mercenary warrior.



ACT ONE

Introduction: The Best-Laid Plans

After their recent activities, the heroes have come to the Citadel of Light on the island of Schallsea to seek aid and information from two of the leaders of the free peoples of Ansalon: Goldmoon, First Master of Mysticism, and Palin Majere, head of the Academy of Sorcery.

Heroes who participated in the adventure *A Killing Frost* (from the *Heroes of Sorcery* dramatic supplement) can use this scene as an opportunity to report the success (or, if necessary, the failure) of the mission to recover Huma's true dragonlance. If necessary, healing and resupply are also available here.

Overview

In a shocking surprise attack, a group of assassins in the employ of Malistryx makes an attempt on Goldmoon's life.

Getting Started

The Narrator should have Goldmoon's and Palin Majere's character cards available for this scene, as well as the Citadel of Light information in Chapter Two of *The Magic Within* and Chapter Three of *Dusk or Dawn* in the FIFTH AGE boxed set.

First Impressions

It is late at night as you approach the Citadel of Light. The huge harvest moon has just set, but lamps from within the Citadel's great crystal domes light the last steps of your way. Armed sentries called Guardians motion you through once they determine your business, and sleepy pages show you to rooms and much-needed beds. They explain to you that Goldmoon has been anxious for news of you and will probably want to see you at your convenience in the morning. But for now, rest.

The sound of thunder in the distance brings a welcome sigh of relief to your lips as you drift off to sleep in a warm, dry bed.

The Story Begins

Perhaps it is the activity of the morning world that awakens the heroes early the next day, or perhaps they have grown too accustomed to sleeping with one eye open, but they find themselves awake shortly after dawn, to the beauty of the red morning sky.

Members of the Citadel staff offer the heroes morning refreshments in a large dining hall in the complex's biggest dome. When they have eaten their fill, a plucky girl with a tangled mop of red curls, a smudged face, and an impudent smile approaches and asks if they are adventurers. She says her name is Mina and asks their names, too. Without waiting for a response, though, she barrages the heroes with all kinds of questions about their adventures. She especially wants to know if they've ever seen a dragon, because, you see, she has . . . a big one so black it looked like it was made of night!

As she regales the heroes with her increasingly improbable tale, a Citadel aspirant, or novice, approaches and asks if the group would have time to meet with Goldmoon as she makes her morning rounds among the pilgrims. When Mina complains loudly that she was telling a story, the aspirant rounds on her and shoos her off to do her chores. When he turns his back, the orphan sticks her tongue out at him, then scampers off with a peal of giggles.

The aspirant, a young man named Telmer, leads the heroes out toward the shore. Goldmoon is strolling outside, taking in the sea breeze and speaking with the faithful approaching the mystic capital. In the distance, coming up the road from the port of Schallsea, is a group of twenty or so more pilgrims.

Smiling at the heroes, Goldmoon asks if they are well after their journey, and apologizes if the members of the Citadel disturbed their rest this morning. Despite her polite small talk, however, she seems anxious for information. As the heroes recount the tale of their recent adventure, she listens carefully, hoping to glean new insights about the state of affairs in other realms. If the group retrieved Huma's lance, she offers to place it in a secure room within the Citadel to prevent it from being recaptured by the Dark Knights or other Evil forces.

As you stroll along the New Sea shore with Goldmoon, approaching pilgrims draw near and call out their greetings to her. They have come from the port of Schallsea to the south and are overjoyed to meet her. As she approaches, four of them throw back their traveling cloaks and draw knives, attacking the other pilgrims—and Goldmoon herself!

The Battle

Unless the heroes act very quickly, the attack on Goldmoon succeeds, and she falls to the ground, bleeding profusely from a mortal wound. The fight with the assassins is not an easy one. Despite using only knives as weapons, these skilled combatants manage to wound several pilgrims, whom they attack to sow confusion and clear a path for their escape.

As Palin Majere and several enraged, heavily armed Guardians pour out of the Citadel, the assassins try to break off the combat and escape. They launch a savage attack at the heroes and any others who are in their way, then turn and run back up the road. It will be difficult to capture any of them alive, for they fight potential captors savagely, expecting to be tortured to death if they are taken prisoner.

Should any hero wear the scale of Malys due to a tangle with her Dark Knight minion in *A Killing Frost*, the dragon seizes control of his mind in this scene and forces him to join in the attack.

The Assassins

The assassins were sent by Malys the Red. They are her personal "trouble-shooters," achieving by stealth and assassination what the Dark Knights loyal to her cannot achieve by their more direct means.

These four come from the Elian Wilds, an island east of Malys's realm. Even before the first Cataclysm, their culture was cut off from the rest of Ansalon, separated both by a mountain chain and the sense of disdain Istarans held toward these "barbarians." Although many of their sect died three decades ago during the Red's invasion of south-eastern Ansalon, the few survivors continue to reside in their ancestral home.

Their training resembles that of monks (see the role description in Chapter One of *The Magic Within*). While they do not follow the precepts of the god Majere, as do most monks, they have that role's requirements, advantages, and disadvantages. It is not known if they follow the teachings of any of the gods of Krynn. Although these Elians are not specifically trained as assassins, their sect's intense and difficult training—which includes arena combat against minotaur opponents—makes them effective in that capacity. While these harsh tests necessarily make the Elians few in number, those who survive prove formidable foes.

Atmosphere

The mood in the morning should be like that of any morning following a night of too little sleep. The rapid-fire conversation with an overly curious little girl should dispel the heroes' remaining sluggishness, however.

The mood turns more serious dur-





ing the conversation with Goldmoon. If the heroes managed to recover the true lance from Dragon Mountain, Goldmoon gives a sigh of relief. When the attack comes, however, everything turns wild and frantic.

Actions

Little in the Citadel should necessitate the heroes wearing their heavy armor around. Carrying weapons is more acceptable, but only marginally so. If heroes insist on wearing their heavy armor and carrying huge weapons, the Narrator should make any Presence actions they attempt one degree more difficult (for example, from *average* to *challenging*). The one exception is a Presence action to resist mystic magic.

Paranoid heroes suspicious of Mina's boundless curiosity may wish to attempt a magical action to determine her "true" motives. Those with access to mentalism may cast a spell to read Mina's thoughts, and those skilled in sensitivity can attempt to gain a sense of her motives. In either case, they find Mina nothing more than an overly romantic, bored little girl.

The approach of the pilgrims presents another opportunity for players to utilize their mystic skills. If a hero who understands the sphere of sensitivity has allocated 9 spell points daily to maintaining his "danger sense," the Narrator should draw a card to determine whether the hero anticipates trouble at the approach of the "pilgrims" (see "Sensitivity" in Chapter Four of *The Magic Within*). In this case, if the hero succeeds at a *daunting Spirit (Spirit)* action on the random draw, he receives a warning immediately before the attack. The results of this warning are up to the Narrator and may range from preventing the attack on Goldmoon to warning the rest of the heroes in time to prevent the assassins' escape.

When the attack occurs, the player with the highest Perception score may make a *challenging Perception (Agility)*

action to warn the other heroes of an attack. This alarm may not come in time to prevent the attack on Goldmoon, but it should prevent the assassins from getting in a second counterattack.

A hero who knows the sphere of healing and gets to Goldmoon within a few moments of the attack can save her life with his magic. If the hero cannot cast healing spells, he can attempt first aid: a *daunting Dexterity* action, due to the severity of her wounds. Either action, if successful, stabilizes Goldmoon enough to move her into the Citadel.

Characters

- ✧ **Citadel staff:** *Humans of varied age and demeanor, Unknowns.* Co 5, Ph 5, In 5, Es 6, Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing).
- ✧ **Mina:** *Human female child, curious demeanor, Rabble.* Co 8, Ph 3, In 7, Es 8, Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing).
- ✧ **Telmer, an aspirant:** *Human male young adult, reserved demeanor, Unknown.* Co 5, Ph 5, In 6, Es 7 (49), Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing), also mysticism (animism).
- ✧ **Four assassins:** *Human barbarian male adults, crafty demeanor, Champions.* Ag 9D, Dx 7D, En 8D, St 7D, Re 6D, Pe 8B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 7C Dmg +2 (dagger), Def -2 (leather), also one acute sense (eyesight or hearing), mysticism (all have mentalism; one also knows healing and channeling).
- ✧ **Citadel Guardians:** *Humans and elves of varied age and demeanor, Adventurers.* Co 5, Ph 6, Re 5, Es 6, Dmg +6 (long swords), Def -6 (chain mail/target shields).
- ✧ **Pilgrims:** *Humans of varied age and demeanor, Unknown and Rabble.* Co 5, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing).

Outcome

In this scene, the forces of Evil succeed (or nearly succeed) in bringing about a terrible tragedy at the Citadel of Light. Through the quick actions of the heroes, this tragedy can be averted.

However, the attack accentuates even more the need for speed in achieving the quest Goldmoon had set before them—for clearly, someone doesn't like the heroes' efforts to collect artifacts that the Blue Dragon also seeks!

Palin asks the heroes to try to put the tragedy behind them, for the free world needs them now to recover the Crown of Tides, an artifact reportedly hidden in Dimernesti. Meanwhile, he will inform the Academy of Sorcery and Last Conclave of the attack, obtain Dalamar's golden ring of healing from the Tower of High Sorcery, and seek the Fist of E'li, a scepter hidden in the Qualinesti Forest. (Optionally, the heroes can seek this scepter; see sidebar.) He does not object if the heroes insist on remaining until Goldmoon is out of danger and arranges for them to outfit themselves from the Citadel's stores.

If the heroes managed to capture any of the assassins, interrogating them is no easy undertaking. The four have been conditioned to give little or no information about themselves or their mission. They were assigned this task by their master, whose orders and motives they do not question. All they know is that their master agreed to serve a foreign woman. They do not know what she looks like, for they have never seen her. They do not fear death, only failure. After many unsuccessful hours of questioning, Palin suggests that perhaps Goldmoon would permit someone (either a Citadel mystic or one of the heroes) to attempt a magical interrogation—normally considered an unethical method—but she will not be well enough for several days. By then, the heroes should be on their way.

Palin asks them to journey first to Solace, both to inform the elders of the Legion of Steel what happened at the Citadel—he doesn't want to create a stir as they get information through hearsay—and to find a guide to take them east. The sorcerer gives them a letter of introduction to Legion elders.

The Narrator can now move on to Scene One.

The Fist of E'li

Instead of heading east immediately to recover the Crown of Tides, the heroes can travel south into the Qualinesti Forest to locate the Fist of E'li, an artifact carrying the elves' name for Paladine and once wielded by Silvanos himself.

The Fist is a small mace of polished wood. Emeralds, garnets, and diamonds encrust its bulbous head, and bands of silver and gold inlay decorate its haft. This mace of legend has a damage rating of +17 and a bonus of +10 to attack actions. It also gives the wielder a trump bonus to leadership-related Presence actions.

Palin can tell the heroes that the old fort said to house an item matching the Fist's description lies in a thick wood just west of Ahlanost and north of Wayreth Forest; he ran across the place years ago while helping Speaker Gilthas search for Beryl's lair. However, unbeknownst to Palin, this crumbling tower has become a hideout for draconians opposed to the draconian conscriptions Beryl has instigated in her efforts to create spawn; they favor more "natural" reproduction methods for their race.

Arriving at the fort, the heroes find a force of two Auraks, six Sivaks, and a dozen each of Baaz, Bozaks, and Kapaks. If the heroes don't attack, the draconians tell them they were ambushed just hours ago by a unit of Dark Knights and brutes, most of whom died in the attack. However, two Knights and two brutes made off into the wood with the Fist. If the heroes can convince the draconian leader, General Urek (*Aurak, independent demeanor, Master*), that they will not reveal him to Beryl—that, in fact, they work for Palin Majere, who actively fights her—he makes them a deal: If the heroes can track the Knights and get the Fist before dark, they can keep it. But at dusk, the draconians will emerge from the fort to seek their artifact, shielded from Beryl's spawning recruitment teams under cover of night.

Creative Narrators might wish to design several scenes to cover this side trip, for the Fist would give the heroes an advantage fighting Brine in Act Three.





Scene One: The First Step

The heroes journey south from the Citadel to the tree-city of Solace, as Palin asked. (This scene takes place before the heroes begin seeking the Fist of E'li, should they take up that option.)

Overview

The heroes update High Elder Silver Claw of the Legion of Steel on the Citadel happenings, secure a Legionnaire guide for their trip, and spend some time at the Inn of the Last Home.

Getting Started

Caramon and Tika's character cards can help in this scene, as can the details on Solace from Act One of *Heroes of a New Age*, the adventure included in the FIFTH AGE boxed set. Silver Claw is described in the Appendix to *Dusk or Dawn*.

First Impressions

Approaching the town of Solace, you see its cozy buildings nestled among the tops of great vallenwood trees. Near the edge of the town, you pass by the Tomb of the Last Heroes, a great edifice of obsidian and marble sitting in the middle of a field filled with picnickers.

As you walk through town, locals nod and give you a brief smile as you pass. In addition to these townsfolk and some members of the local militia, a few more heavily armed soldiers patrol the paths through the trees. Their livery proclaims them as soldiers of the Legion of Steel.

The Story Continues

The heroes can learn the whereabouts of Legion headquarters from any of the passers-by. Should they ask instead about food and lodging for the night, most locals direct them to the famous Inn of the Last Home; others might send them to a lesser known inn.

The heroes can locate Legion headquarters with little difficulty. This sprawling structure sits high in a vallenwood overlooking the Last Heroes' Tomb. In addition to serving as the organization's center of operations, it is the home of Silver Claw, Legion High Elder.

Presenting their letter to one of the guards outside, they wait for a few moments, then are ushered up the winding stairs and inside to Silver Claw's office. The middle-aged plains barbarian greets them soberly and is shocked and angered to hear about the attack on Goldmoon. He asks for all available details about the assassins. "This time the Dark Knights have grown too bold!" he exclaims. He snaps out an order to one of the guards outside his door to summon the other Elders to a meeting.

Then he turns back to the heroes and asks about their plans, offering to assist them in any way he can. Should they merely request a guide across the Plains of Dust, he asks their reasons for crossing the Plains. The eastern Plains have grown quite dangerous of late, he says, due to rising hostilities between the local dragon lords: brass Iyesta and Thunder, her volatile blue neighbor. His cells and scouts have told him that a northern route, even one that traverses Sable's domain, would be much safer at this time.

Silver Claw is curious as to the heroes' ultimate destination and the reason for their trip. Assuming they tell him of their quest to recover an artifact from Dimernesti to use in their fight against the dragons, he comments on the difficulty of getting to Dimernesti due to the Silvanesti Shield, which forces eastbound travelers to cross Dragon Realms and has closed off access to much Ansalon's southeastern coastline. Nevertheless, he promises to have his best available scout take them as far as the Bay of Balifor. He will send this guide to meet them the next morning; if they have no accommodations yet, he recommends the Inn of the Last Home, which the Legion used as its

headquarters in its early years.

In addition, Silver Claw gives them the name of Karina Duskborn, a Legion sea captain in nearby New Ports who can take them safely across to the Duntollik shore. He also writes them a letter of introduction to Kenat Three-Lives, the commander of the Legion's cell in Ak-Khurman on the Bay of Bali-for, who can help them find passage to the realm of the sea elves. In closing, the High Elder offers to supply the heroes with anything they need, within reason, from Legion stores.

Regardless of where the heroes choose to spend the night, it passes quietly. At the Inn of the Last Home, they are likely to hear a tale or two about great deeds of the War of the Lance or the Chaos War—it's never hard to persuade Caramon to relate one. In addition, some of the locals will tease Caramon lightly about a book he is writing about the creatures he encountered in his long life of travels. Various locals, merchants, and travelers have come to sit with a legend and partake of the Inn's famous spiced potatoes and delicious ale.

Relating to him the story of the attack on Goldmoon brings a somber mood to the public room. If informed of their quest, Caramon gives them what advice he can about the Plains of Dust and the situation there (the details from the "Duntollik" and "Iyesta and Stenndunuus" entries in Chapter Two of *Dusk or Dawn*). Toward the end of the evening, Caramon stands and asks everyone to join him in a toast. "To the memory of dear friends," he says. Tika and the assembled crowd respond, "May they live with us forever."

In the morning, the heroes' guide meets them at the Inn of the Last Home (or wherever they are staying). He is obviously of barbarian heritage. Just shy of medium height, he looks thin but wiry. He carries a few daggers, a wicked-looking short sword with a bone handle, and a great bow and a quiver of arrows slung over his back. The man introduces himself as Hevar Tarn. He has been told of the heroes'

need to get to Ak-Khurman, but was given no other details of their journey.

Atmosphere

Although there is a certain urgency to the quest the heroes have accepted, they should take the opportunity of their stay in Solace to prepare themselves, both physically and mentally, for the rigors of the coming journey.

Actions

Most of the action in Solace revolves around role-playing. Unless the heroes initiate it, there is little likelihood of combat in town.

Characters

- ☞ **Solace locals:** *Humans of varied age and demeanor, Unknown and Rabble.* Co 5, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing).
- ☞ **Silver Claw:** *Human barbarian middle-aged male, determined demeanor, Hero.* 6 ☜. Ag 7C, Dx 7A, En 8C, St 8B, Re 9C, Pe 8A, Sp 7B (49), Pr 8A, Dmg +6 (battle axe), Def -6 (chain mail/target shield), also missile weapons (great bow/+8), acute sight and taste, mysticism (animism).
- ☞ **Hevar Tarn:** *Human barbarian male adult, cunning demeanor, Master.* Ag 10X, Dx 8A, En 8D, St 5C, Re 6D, Pe 9A, Sp 7A (49), Pr 6C, Dmg +5 (scimitar), Def -2 (leather), also missile weapons (great bow/+8), acute senses of smell and sight, mysticism (sensitivity, animism, healing).

Outcome

With their guide, the heroes can make their way to New Ports and contact Karina Duskborn (*minotaur female adult, serious demeanor, Champion*), the captain of the *Star Wanderer*, a small coast-hugger. Karina accepts Silver Claw's letter as payment for the voyage.

After an uneventful two-day sail, the heroes reach the shore of Duntollik late in the night. The next day, Hevar leads them along a merchant trail toward the settlement of Duntol, and the quest continues with Scene Two.





Scene Two: Grandfather

Hevar sets a swift pace through the northwestern Plains and, after a full day's travel, the heroes reach the settlement of Duntol.

Overview

The heroes meet some Plainsfolk and experience dreams of great import at the Grandfather tree, an ancient mystic site.

Getting Started

The Narrator can refer to the "Duntolik" section of Chapter Two in *Dusk or Dawn* for background on the area.

First Impressions

In the distance to the west, you can see the Kharolis Mountains, part of the great chain that runs, broken by the New Sea, all the way north to the Bay of Branchala. All day yesterday, a sea of grassland lay to the east, with only the occasional copse of trees or plateau to break up the landscape.

Now, however the rough, bustling settlement of Duntol commands your easterly view. Hevar has told you that some eight hundred people live here, but it looks like enough folks come in from the surrounding area to trade to double the population. Most locals are human, but you see a few half-elves, kender, and centaurs as well.

The Story Continues

Hevar easily finds the heroes reasonable accommodations for the evening in this rugged town. He suggests that, from here, they travel cross-country; he knows the route well. If they prefer, he can take them along the Run, the road that rings most of Duntolik. It is generally a safe route, he says, but one that will take them several days out of their way to the north. He explains that he's

making for the City of Morning Dew, a Legion outpost between Sable's and Iyesta's realms, at which point they'll strike out across the New Swamp for the mountains of Blöde. After they all agree on the route, Hevar bids them good night.

The guide gets the heroes up early the next morning. As they travel, they can see that, despite the name, the Plains of Dust boast a rich ecology with an array of prairie plants and animals. Occasionally they spy the ruins of ancient pre-Cataclysm civilization on the horizon—nothing more than broken heaps of stone.

During the next few days of the trip, the heroes may meet hunting parties from local barbarian tribes, such as the nomadic Ereshu and the more settled Wan-kali, and even the northernmost centaur clan, the Windwalkers. Because Hevar accompanies them, the warriors leave them in peace—unless the heroes act belligerently. The proud Plains peoples will tolerate no insolence or aggressiveness from outsiders. Heroes who pick a fight may find themselves facing up to forty angry and armed hunters.

As the third day draws to a close, the heroes glimpse in the distance an enormous tree. The peoples of the Plains call it Grandfather, Hevar tells them; others call it the World Tree. It is sacred to the god Zivilyn, he explains—some even say it is the god of wisdom himself.

All the next day, the great vallenwood tree looms ever larger on the horizon. When they finally reach it late in the afternoon, the heroes can get a true idea of its enormity. If a hundred grown men spread out their arms and linked hands around the trunk of the tree, they could just barely surround it. No one may ever make a fire from the wood of the tree, Hevar says, for to do so is to disturb the god it represents. Those who are especially quiet and respect the tree as a symbol of life and the ancient ways may be granted a gift from the god. Heroes may scoff at this belief, but it remains very strong among the Plainsfolk.

That night, a vision comes to heroes with a Spirit score of at least 4 and a nature derived from a card with a white or red aura. One hero dreams of a whale with a long horn rising from its head, making it look like a unicorn of the sea. Another hero dreams of a sun rising over a distant calm sea; in the foreground, the sea is turbulent, with much flotsam and jetsam. Other dreams include a dog barking at shadow behind a velvet curtain; and a group of vicious hyenas huddled together against the violence of a magical windstorm, their intended prey disappearing into the storm.

Any mystic hero skilled in animism dreams of a dying glade, at the edge of which stands a tiny green sapling. In the morning when that hero awakens, a single seed from the great vallenwood falls from a low branch to his feet. Hevar seems in awe of this event, for Grandfather seldom offers such gifts.

The Dreams

The visions from Grandfather are not mere dreams but portents of things to come. In each one lies a clue about an event that awaits the heroes. (However, the Narrator should not interpret these dreams for the players—half the fun is the sense of discovery!)

- The “sea unicorn” is a subtle clue to the ship the heroes should take from Ak-Khurman: the *Narwhal*, so named for the long, sharp bowsprit projecting from its bow.
- The sunrise over the turbulent sea suggests an escape route when Ak-Khurman falls under the Dark Knights’ attack: If the heroes head due east, they can avoid the main force of the blockade after the Legionnaires repulse the first attack.
- The dog barking at a shadow behind a curtain hints that the hero should seek a spy in the Legion headquarters in Ak-Khurman (who can warn them about the impending attack).
- The image of the hyenas in the magical storm suggests that using sorcery might allow the heroes to escape

when they encounter the Khurriish warriors at the start of Act Two.

- The dream of the dying glade hints that the heroes can slow the rate at which the Silvanesti Shield causes the elven forest to decay (which they will see later in Act One) by planting a Grandfather seed there.

Atmosphere

The mood of this scene is one of discovery, both of the Plains and its people and of the magic of Grandfather. If the heroes start a fight with local hunters, however, the mood quickly turns nasty.

Actions

For each day of the journey, the Narrator should ask a different player to make a random draw. If the card’s aura is white, the heroes meet a group of centaur hunters that day. On a red aura, they meet human barbarians, and in the event of a black aura, they meet no one.

Characters

- **Hevar Tarn:** *Human barbarian male adult, cunning demeanor, Master.* Ag 10x, Dx 8A, En 8D, St 5C, Re 6D, Pe 9A, Sp 7A (49), Pr 6C, Dmg +5 (scimitar), Def -2 (leather), also missile weapons (great bow/+8), acute senses of smell and sight, mysticism (sensitivity, animism, healing).
- **Ereshu or Wan-kali hunters:** *Human barbarian adults of varied demeanor, Adventurers.* Co 5, Ph 6, In 4, Es 5, Dmg +2 (daggers), Def 0 (common clothing), also missile weapons (throwing stick/+2 or long bow/+6).
- **Windwalkers:** *Centaur adults of varied demeanor, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 7, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3, Def -3, also missile weapons (long bow/+6).

Outcome

Two days after leaving Grandfather (three if the group took the Run), the heroes reach the River Torath, the border with Iyesta’s realm. This wide, lazy river is an excellent place to replenish water supplies and rest. After the heroes cross the river, Scene Three can begin.





Scene Three: Friend or foe?

Iyesta's realm seems little different from Duntollik. As they travel, though, the heroes see evidence of fewer settlements here—even nomads are less common. Windstorms kick up great clouds of dust from time to time, but Hevar hurries the group along, fearful of earning the notice of the brass's enemy, Thunder.

At the Narrator's discretion, the heroes can cover the distance between the River Torath and the City of Morning Dew in a week. After a night's stay at the home of a local Legionnaire, the group presses on into the swamp: the realm of Onysabet.

Overview

This scene shows heroes the cruelty of Sable's "experiments" and gives the heroes an item that will prove valuable in Act Three when they meet the sea elves.

Getting Started

Information on the bakali, a race of lizard men widely considered lost, appears in Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age* in the FIFTH AGE boxed set.

First Impressions

The oppressiveness of the dank surroundings weighs on you as you slog through Sable's morass. The mosquitoes are dreadful, but after days of travel through this humid wilderness, you've almost gotten used to them. Dim light filters down through the tangle of trees, and the stench of damp rot fills the air. Throughout most of your journey, the footprints you leave in the muck fill with water the instant you take a step. Sometimes, however, this "dry" land recedes, forcing you to wade through stretches of mire as deep as your chest. Not surprisingly, it's hard to find any kind of trail. All you can do is try to keep yourselves pointed east.

The calls of the unseen wildlife surround you now, as they have throughout your trek. Then, from up ahead, you hear the sounds of a fight: hissing and snarling—and a man's screams.

The Story Continues

Heroes who rush forward toward the sounds see before them four bakali lying unmoving in the stagnant water at the feet of a man. He stands doubled over in pain, grabbing his midriff, his sword arm low. Drawing near to him is a creature the likes of which the heroes have never seen. The humanoid figure looks lizardlike—quite a bit like the fallen bakali, in fact—except that it walks on all fours, has wicked pincers instead of front claws, and drags a long, lobsterlike tail behind it.

From the context of this scene, the heroes may assume that this abomination is preparing to finish off the wounded man who killed its bakali comrades. All is not as it seems, however, for this creature is actually the man's ally. Together, they just defeated the four bakali minions of Sable that had ambushed them. The crustacean lizard man seeks only to help his injured friend, a Legionnaire scout from the City of Morning Dew on a mission north to gather information.

The hybrid creature, Sloss, was born a bakali. This hidden race of lizard men, created at the dawn of the world, have become slaves to Sable, thinking it their duty to worship and serve the Great Dragons as they once served the First Born Five dragons. However, when the Black Dragon, in her love of experimentation on the creatures of her realm, reshaped Sloss into the lobsterlike horror he is today, she forever lost that warrior's fidelity. After escaping the dragon's lair in Shrentak to the north, he sought sanctuary in the long-abandoned Wentil's Tor, not far back. From there, he launched raids on the dragon's hunters and the trustees of her zoo, hoping to fight the chain of horrors that produced him—for Sloss is not the *most* wretched

of Sable's abominations.

It saddened Sloss to see his former kinsmen to turn on him. Outraged at his rebellion, as well as his blasphemous new form, Sable's bakali minions do not suffer him to live. But the sense of honor that runs through all bakali compels Sloss to work toward the day when the Black Dragon can no longer work her horrors on the creatures of Ansalon.

To that end, Sloss has become an inside contact for the Legionnaire, Guy Nightwatcher, who frequently reconnoiters Sable's realm to report her evils to his cell leader in the City of Morning Dew. In fact, he has just received a package from Sloss, which the mutated bakali recovered from a pair of slavers. They had been conducting a sea elf prisoner captured at the Silvanesti shore in to Shrentak but, according to Sloss, the sea elf died before he could become subject to the dragon's cruel experiments. Only his personal effects remain: a pair of shell bracers, with an account of the elf's captivity etched (in the Dimernesti tongue) into the inside surface. Guy planned to deliver these relics to his Legion superiors.

The Battle

If the heroes, seeing the abomination as a threat to the wounded man, move in to attack, Hevar rushes forward as well, shouting a warning to the fellow. Guy glances up, a startled look on his face, and quickly holds out a hand to the group, as if to keep them back. At the same time, he draws out a pendant hanging from his neck. Seeing it, Hevar stops up quick: The man wears the Legion's starjewel symbol. The guide shouts to the heroes to hang back.

Should the heroes fight the pair, Sloss lashes out ferociously with his pincers, fearing that the newcomers also serve the Black Dragon. The wounded Guy tries to shout out to the heroes that Sloss is an ally, but will enter battle to defend his friend if he must. If the heroes cease their hostilities, they can learn the pair's story.

Atmosphere

The scene begins slowly, to match the heroes' slogging pace. However, it quickly shifts to a feeling of horror as the heroes catch sight of the mutant bakali. It may erupt into a frantic and brutal fight or level out as the heroes discover the truth about the Legionnaire and his ally.

Actions

When the party first emerges onto the scene, heroes can make *desperate Perception* actions to note the lack of malice in the crustacean lizard man's demeanor.

If the heroes ask to return the bracers to the Dimernesti, one hero can attempt an *average Presence (Reason)* action to convince Guy to part with them. (The action is *easy* for a Legionnaire hero or one with an "A" Presence code.)

Characters

Sloss has the dark green scales of a bakali, which shade to black on his crayfishlike tail and claws.

♣ **Sloss:** *A monster, obsessive demeanor.*

Co 4 (7 in water), Ph 7, In 5, Es 8, Dmg +7 (pincers), Def -2 (scales).

♣ **Guy Nightwatcher:** *Human male adult, charismatic demeanor, Champion.*

Co 6, Ph 3 (down from 6 due to wounds), In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def 0 (common clothing), also missile weapons (shuriken/+1).

♣ **Hevar Tarn:** *Human barbarian male adult, cunning demeanor, Master.* Ag 10X, Dx 8A, En 8D, St 5C, Re 6D, Pe 9A, Sp 7A (49), Pr 6C, Dmg +5 (scimitar), Def -2 (leather), also missile weapons (great bow/+8), acute senses of smell and sight, mysticism (sensitivity, animism, healing).

Outcome

After the Legionnaire bandages up his wounds, he and Sloss wish the heroes all the best on their trip. They leave to continue their scouting work, and the adventure continues in Scene Four.





Scene Four: The Slow Death

This scene begins as the heroes cross the eastern fork of the Thon-Rishas River, just southeast of the Trueheart Mines.

Overview

Near the river, the heroes are beset by a band of elf thieves—refugees, cut off from Silvanesti when the magical shield around the forest rose. Here, the heroes get a chilling glimpse of the slow death happening inside the shield and have a chance to revitalize part of the land.

Getting Started

If the Narrator wants to extend the heroes' stay in Sable's swamp, he can insert a scene at the Trueheart Mines, described in Chapter Two of *Dusk or Dawn*, before the action of this scene begins. The heroes might have been captured by Sable's minions and taken to the mines, or perhaps they joined Guy and Sloss in their attempt to liberate slaves from the mines.

Before beginning this scene, the Narrator should refamiliarize himself with the nature of the Silvanesti people by reviewing the elves section in Chapter One of the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

First Impressions

You have finally put the rigors of Sable's swamp behind you. Now the sight of the majestic Khalkist Mountains ahead fills your field of vision, while immediately before you lies the northernmost tip of the Silvanesti Forest.

Suddenly, an arrow whizzes past your shoulder, narrowly missing you. Your companions jump, similarly startled, as a volley of arrows passes harmlessly through the group. As you turn, you see approaching from a cliff-side to the north a band of elves of twice your own number. "Throw down your weapons!" their leader orders.

The Story Continues

These elf bandits are not evil, only desperate. Their leader, a former Silvanesti border guard—Outrider Faetar Lorathalan of House Protector—can see no other way to feed himself and those who depend on him.

Should the heroes fight, the elves battle to win. However, they do not want to kill the heroes, only rob them. They even bind the wounds of severely injured heroes to prevent them from bleeding to death. Faetar and his band take all valuables (including any artifacts and the bracers from the Scene Three), but they leave the horses.

If the heroes throw down their weapons and attempt to talk with the elves, Faetar may very well listen (see "Actions"). Assuming they convince him they are on a mission for the Citadel or the Legion, Faetar orders his men back, saying that he is not one to steal from such groups dedicated to justice.

He explains that he and a group of elves trapped outside the Silvanesti Shield have lived in these plains since the shield went up twenty years ago. They have a small settlement near a bluff overlooking the Thon-Rishas River. Recently, they've had to resort to banditry, however, for the local vegetation started to die, as did their crops. "We are like the forest now," Faetar laments, "dying a slow, painful death."

If the heroes ask him to explain his statement, Faetar offers to lead them to the edge of the Silvanesti Forest, where they can see for themselves. When the heroes reach the wood, a horrible sight confronts them—horrible especially to heroes of Silvanesti origin.

Faetar spoke the truth. Silvanesti is dying.

The shield still stands, solid as ever along Silvanesti's tall defensive hedge. Once, Faetar says, the only way to detect it was to feel the solid surface under one's hand. The touch would send ripples running along its surface, making the forest on the other side look as though one were viewing it through

strong summer heat. But now, the land itself shows the presence of the shield.

No longer are the plains bordering the wood a luscious sea of grass as high as a man's waist. Now, they are brown and withered. For ten yards or so out from the edge of the shield, as well as in the fields the elves had tilled nearby, only lifeless dust covers the ground.

The sight of the forest within the shield is even worse. As far as the eye can see, the stately Silvanesti trees are dying. The tall hedge and the trees closest to the shield stand naked, bare of leaves and life. Deeper in, leaves look brown and withered. Beyond, some green boughs might still live, but it's hard to tell. You can neither see nor hear evidence of any animal, elf, or any creature at all within the shield.

Heroes who recall the vision of a green sapling in a dying glade from Scene Two may think to plant the seed from the Grandfather tree here. Once they do so, the grass around the seed revives within seconds, and even the plants farther away seem to improve a bit. By the end of the day, trees inside the shield sprout buds. There is still hope.

Atmosphere

The scene begins with a feeling of desperate brutality in the attack, but it takes on an air of sorrow once the plight of the elves and the forest is known.

Any elf feels a deep sense of horror at the sight of what is happening to this land. The Narrator may even try to make Silvanesti heroes believe the green they see in the distance is only wishful thinking. (It is there, though; the trees are dying only near the shield now.)

Actions

A successful robbery reduces all heroes to temporary wealth scores of 3 (they will revert to normal when the heroes return to their homelands or the Citadel). Their social status remains the same.

If the heroes try to talk their way out

of the robbery, the party leader can attempt a Presence action to get Faetar to stop the attack: an *average* action for elves, but *challenging* for humans and kender, and *daunting* for all other races.

An *average Reason* action allows a hero who received the Grandfather seed to plant it here at the shield (the action is *challenging* for anyone who did not have the dream himself). Heroes with animism who make *average Spirit* actions when the seed is planted sense a rush of life spilling from the seed and flowing through the ground.

Characters

This scene introduces Faetar and his warrior band of refugee elves:

- ❖ **Faetar Lorathalan:** *Silvanesti adult male, dogmatic demeanor, Champion.* Ag 6B, Dx 8A, En 5C, St 7B, Re 7C, Pe 8A, Sp 6D, Pr 6B, Dmg +4 (long sword), Def 0 (common clothing), also missile weapons (horse bow/+4), acute vision.
- ❖ **Refugees:** *Silvanesti adults of various ages and demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 6, Ph 4, In 5, Es 6, Dmg +2 (daggers), Def 0 (common clothing).
- ❖ **Hevar Tarn:** *Human barbarian male adult, cunning demeanor, Master.* Ag 10X, Dx 8A, En 8D, St 5C, Re 6D, Pe 9A, Sp 7A (49), Pr 6C, Dmg +5 (scimitar), Def -2 (leather), also missile weapons (great bow/+8), acute senses of smell and sight, mysticism (sensitivity, animism, healing).

Outcome

The heroes may be horrified by what is happening to the forest, but Hevar reminds them that he was ordered to escort them to Ak-Khurman in all haste. He guesses that southern Legion cells, studying the shield near the Missing City, are already aware of the problem—assuming it permeates the circumference of the forest.

After bidding farewell to Faetar, the heroes head into the Khalkist Mountains via the Pashin Gap. Narrators can use this time to create scenes of their own suitable for mountainous terrain, or can move right to Act Two, which begins as the heroes emerge in Khur.



ACT TWO

Scene One: Hevar's Secret

After an uneventful but tiring journey through the Pashin Gap in the southern Khalkists, the heroes can rest a bit in the tiny town of Pashin, then continue east toward Ak-Khurman.

Overview

This encounter with warlike Khurish nomads who have a score to settle with the heroes' guide, Hevar Tarn, forces the group to choose between caution and honor.

Getting Started

The Narrator can refer to the section on Khur in Chapter Three of *The Magic Within* for helpful details on the tribal warriors in this scene. Those wishing to add an extra scene describing the heroes' trip through the mountains of Blöde may want to have the heroes run across a group of ogre sentries in the mountain pass.

First Impressions

For several days, you followed the dry eastern bank of the east branch of the Thon-Thalas River—little more than a trickle this far into Khur. Your long trek is almost over now, for you have just left the comfort of the river behind to venture across the Burning Lands, the final step in the journey to Ak-Khurman. As you climb one last, dusty hill, you can actually see the seaside city, barely visible on the eastern horizon.

The Story Continues

A war party of thirty tribal nomads has just spotted the heroes' party—a fact that the group may or may not have detected. These horsemen circle the

travelers, cutting off any chance of retreat. If the heroes heard the riders approach and managed to find some sort of cover (see "Actions"), the nomads draw up before them. The barbarian leader sends six of his horsemen around to the high ground behind the heroes to prevent any escape.

The first thing unsuspecting heroes will see is six more of the barbarians that broke off from the others to approach the group. Four flank the two apparent leaders, two to each side of them. One of the leaders wears chain mail and carries a variety of wicked-looking weapons. He has a vicious scar running down the left side of his face, across the eye (which appears undamaged). He looks upon the party with obvious hostility. The other figure in the center wears no armor. She carries a horse bow slung on her mount, but the only other weapons visible are a pair of daggers. Tattoos and ritual scars covering her face and arms suggest the markings of a tiger. She gazes at the heroes calmly, steadily, a hint of explosive power barely beneath the surface.

As the six riders approach, Hevar Tarn edges behind some cover, obviously nervous about the horsemen. The male leader shouts some words at the heroes in a variant on the common tongue that is difficult to understand (although the heroes may get the gist of it). He demands a tribute—all their horses and any weapons he chooses—from the heroes for passing through his tribe's lands. The warrior is Bor Tavlik, chieftain of the Mayakhur tribe, but he does not deign to give his name unless asked with the proper respect. The woman beside him, the tribe's shaman or seer, is Agra Varran.

Should the heroes agree to this outrageous demand, the barbarians allow them to walk away, throwing insults about their courage after them. It is obvious that these nomads seek a fight. If the heroes attempt to negotiate, Bor

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listens, but he drives a hard bargain. This shrewd and cunning man is not easily tricked (see "Actions"). In the middle of the talks, Bor stops suddenly and looks the heroes over, demanding that they all step forward so he can see them. One of the heroes' group has disappeared, he announces (his scouts counted them earlier). When the heroes step forward, they note that Hevar Tarn had attempted to hide from the tribesmen. Now he steps forward with them, however, a look of resignation on his face. As he sees Tarn, Bor's eyes widen, then narrow viciously. The woman beside him smiles; it is not a pleasant sight. The negotiations are over, Bor informs the heroes: They will take Tarn and let the group go on its way.

Old Wounds

The scar on Bor's face was given him by Hevar Tarn several years ago. The two clashed when Hevar was leading a

small force of Legionnaires through the lands of the Mayakhur to Ak-Khurman. Sand storms had caused them to stray off course, and they ended up crossing the lands of the Mayakhur tribe. His demand for tribute was rebuffed by the Legion's detachment commander, and in the ensuing battle, Tarn slashed the chieftain's face, nearly blinding him. If the heroes do not do something, Bor's revenge will likely be terrible.

Of course, Hevar had no idea that Bor's tribe had expanded the range of the Mayakhur lands so far south; if he had known, he would have led the heroes around it. The guide can only guess that Bor and his warriors destroyed or chased off one or two of the southern tribes. If the heroes manage to prevent Bor from taking his revenge, Hevar will be grateful, promising them his aid if ever they need it.





A Dilemma

At this point, it may seem that a battle against overwhelming odds is imminent. The heroes have three basic options:

- ❖ Give Hevar to the barbarians;
- ❖ Hand Hevar over, then rescue him at night under cover of darkness; or
- ❖ Fight the nomads.

If the heroes simply let the Mayakhur take Hevar prisoner, the nomads seize him gladly, but they treat the heroes with contempt for such a betrayal. The look in Hevar's eyes tells all but the densest heroes that they have just made a mortal enemy, assuming he manages to escape Bor's revenge.

Should the heroes choose the second option, Hevar has the same reaction described above. If they somehow let him know that they plan to rescue him (perhaps using a language the barbarians are not likely to know), then the reaction is purely for show, so the nomads do not become suspicious. If he is not told of the plan, however, Hevar's anger is real. Assuming the heroes rescue him later, he thanks them but will have as little conversation with them as possible for the rest of the trip. He will leave them immediately upon fulfilling his obligation to get them to Ak-Khurman, and the heroes will not be able to find him anywhere in town.

The Battle

Heroes who choose to fight find themselves at a noticeable disadvantage, but a clever group might still prevail. Should they engage the two barbarian leaders and their escort in melee combat, the other Mayakhur waiting at farther range cannot risk firing at them. The heroes also have the advantage of some cover among a stand of trees just down the hill (see "Actions"), to offer them some protection from enemy missile fire and mounted charges.

Furthermore, if the heroes have access to sorcery and unleash a visibly

dazzling spell, especially one that causes physical damage, the barbarians break and run; they fear sorcery a great deal. Hevar remembers this fact and shouts it to them over the din of the battle. The only drawback to using sorcery is that the Mayakhur will regroup and counterattack—and when they do, they fight ferociously, their fear driving them into a frenzy.

The barbarians have two distinct advantages: numbers and Agra Varran. The seer will attempt to use her mystic magic to transform herself into a great tigress or other predatory cat, increase her Physical scores, then attack. This extremely dangerous foe fights utterly without fear or remorse.

Atmosphere

This meeting with the Mayakhur is a very hazardous situation for the heroes. If they act belligerently toward the short-tempered barbarians, Bor Tavlik will order his archers to kill them and leave them for the vultures. The calm gaze of Agra Varran can unnerve nearly anyone. Add to that the barbarians' demands for Hevar Tarn, and the situation is likely to explode at any minute. The Narrator should work to maintain that sense of tension throughout the scene—or until battle erupts.

Actions

As the Mayakhur approach, the party scout may make a *challenging Perception* action to notice the sound of hoofbeats before the horsemen arrive. This gives the heroes a chance to find cover before they arrive. If the Narrator allows the optional interpretation of the sensitivity sphere to generate a "danger sense" ability (as described in Chapter Four of *The Magic Within*), this would be a good chance for a hero who spent his daily 9 mysticism points to discover the approach of danger. Assuming no one sensed the coming danger, the Narrator can choose whether Hevar notices the drumming

of horses' hooves in the distance in time to warn the heroes (or make a random draw to decide the matter).

A successful *average Perception* action reveals the perfect temporary defensive position: Down the hill from the heroes is a draw (a shallow valley between two small ridgelines) with a sheltering stand of trees. This spot allows enemy horsemen access only from the front. Enemies on foot can climb up the sides of the ridgeline and come at the heroes from the sides or the rear, but this will take some time.

Heroes may attempt a *challenging Reason* action to understand and converse with the barbarian leader. Negotiating with him requires that they succeed at an *average Presence (Reason)* action to convince him to leave with relatively few of their belongings—as the Mayakhur are an independent tribe with no love for Malys and the other Great Dragons, they might prove sympathetic to the heroes' cause. If the heroes succeed at a *challenging Presence (Reason)* action, Bor and the nomads leave before he realizes that one of their number (Hevar) is missing. Once he sees the guide, however, there is no more negotiation.

Characters

These tribal warriors can serve as models for others the Narrator may care to create for the heroes to meet in Khur; their trip takes them near the lands of the Mikku and the Tondoon tribes.

- **Bor Tavlik:** *Human barbarian male adult, belligerent demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 6D, En 7D, St 7C, Re 7X, Pe 6B, Sp 4D, Pr 6B, Dmg +7 (scimitar of distinction) or +9 (light lance), Def -6 (chain mail/target shield), also missile weapon (horse bow/+4), acute hearing.
- **Agra Varran:** *Human barbarian female adult, calm demeanor, Champion.* Ag 7X, Dx 6D, En 8X, St 7D, Re 5D, Pe 7A, Sp 8A (64), Pr 8B, Dmg +2 (dagger), Def 0 (no armor), also missile weapons (horse bow/+4), acute hearing and smell, mysticism (spiritualism, channeling, alteration).

- **Tigress:** *Agra Varran in altered form with channeled Physical scores.* Ag 16, Dx 6, En 20, St 20, Re 5, Pe 7, Sp 8, Pr 8, Dmg +10 (claws), Def -2 (fur).
- **Thirty Mayakhur horse warriors:** *Human barbarian adults, aggressive demeanor, Adventurers.* Co 5, Ph 6, In 5, Es 4, Dmg +5 (scimitar) or +9 (light lance), Def -5 (leather armor/target shields), also missile weapons (horse bows/+4).
- **Hevar Tarn:** *Human barbarian male adult, cunning demeanor, Master.* Ag 10X, Dx 8A, En 8D, St 5C, Re 6D, Pe 9A, Sp 7A (49), Pr 6C, Dmg +5 (scimitar), Def -2 (leather), also missile weapons (great bow/+8), acute senses of smell and sight, mysticism (sensitivity, animism, healing).

Outcome

If the heroes manage to prevent Hevar Tarn from becoming victim of Bor Tavlik's great thirst for vengeance, they can continue their journey—and will have made a friend for life, especially if they saved him through battle. The barbarians will pursue them, but only for one day, for as the heroes flee east, they enter the protected lands of Ak-Khurman, whose warriors the Mayakhur have no wish to fight.

Once the heroes exit the area known as the Burning Lands (see poster map), they will be in territory directly under the stewardship of Ak-Khurman. The rest of the trip to that fortified city should be relatively uneventful. However, if they arrive there without Hevar, they will have to answer some difficult questions. The letter they bear from Silver Claw mentions their guide, and Hevar is known to many of the Legionnaires in town who will want to know the details of his death or disappearance.





Scene Two: In Ak-Khurman

This scene begins as the heroes arrive at the gates of Ak-Khurman.

Overview

In addition to describing a major seaside town, this scene gives the heroes a chance to capture a Dark Knight spy.

Getting Started

The region of Ak-Khurman is covered in Chapter Three of *The Magic Within*.

First Impressions

The Narrator will have to alter this passage if Hevar is not with the heroes.

The glittering waters of the Khurman Sea ahead seem to welcome you, though it is a hot breeze that blows from the water. "At last!" Hevar whispers as you approach the stout city gates. "Ak-Khurman!" This fortified town, he goes on to explain, has grown up around an old lighthouse, Khurman Tor. It offers protection to local independent folk when tribes allied with Neraka step up their raiding. It also serves as a hub of Legion activities in the East.

The Story Continues

This section describes the areas of town shown on the map opposite. Heroes can wander the city in this scene if they wish, though Hevar reminds them that he is expected at Legion headquarters.

The City Gates

Set in a twenty-foot high wall, the solid, iron-bound wooden West Gate and East Gate are manned by three Legionnaires on either side, with three more on the wall above, as well as other wall patrols.

The Legion is concerned about the threat of Dark Knight spies and sabo-

teurs entering the city. Known visitors or those carrying credentials (like the heroes' letter from Silver Claw) are passed through immediately but ordered to check very heavy weapons with the guards. Belligerent heroes are held in the gatehouse until a ranking officer arrives to interrogate them.

Residences and Businesses

Most of the buildings in Ak-Khurman are constructed from rock, as trees are scarce here. Although they stand close together on cramped, dusty streets, many residences are fairly large, with enough rooms and beds in each so that six people could live there comfortably. The town is not that crowded yet, but the Legion knows that a major offensive by the Khur tribe and their allies against the local independent peoples will spur sudden growth. It is best to be ready.

The businesses here cater primarily to seafaring and warrior types. Others, such as butchers and bakers, provide no-frills, basic services. Adventurers and explorers can be outfitted here, and common folk will find what they need to live. However, those used to royal treatment find Ak-Khurman lacking.

Legionnaires patrol the streets singly during the day and in pairs at night.

Legion Headquarters

A small fortress stands just off the eastern waterfront. An open plaza surrounds the Legion headquarters where, on most days, members of the Order conduct weapons practice. A garrison of two hundred Legionnaires lives here, as does cell leader Kenat Three-Lives and his second, Lionel uth Dartan.

The entrances are guarded, but heroes in the company of Hevar Tarn or carrying a letter of introduction are admitted to see local Legion leaders. Kenat, a desert barbarian and ranking Legionnaire in Ak-Khurman, meets the heroes in a small conference room. Lionel is clearly of Solamnian heritage. If a hero should press him for details on his background, he admits, his back

stiffening, that he was drummed out of the Knighthood for cowardice and that he has joined the Legion in an effort to regain his lost honor. Lionel will not discuss the details of the incident.

Kenat asks about the heroes' mission, then promises his support to help them get to Dimernesti. He will ready the *Narwhal* for them, a small cog the Legion frequently uses for special missions. He does caution the heroes that he has received reports of Dark Knight ships in the Bay of Balifor to the south.

During this conversation, perceptive heroes may note a shadow moving behind a curtain: Someone has been eavesdropping. Should they move to intercept the figure, they take him by surprise. He was no longer paying attention to the conversation in the room, but was in the process of releasing a carrier pigeon out a window. Despite the heroes' efforts, the bird gets away.

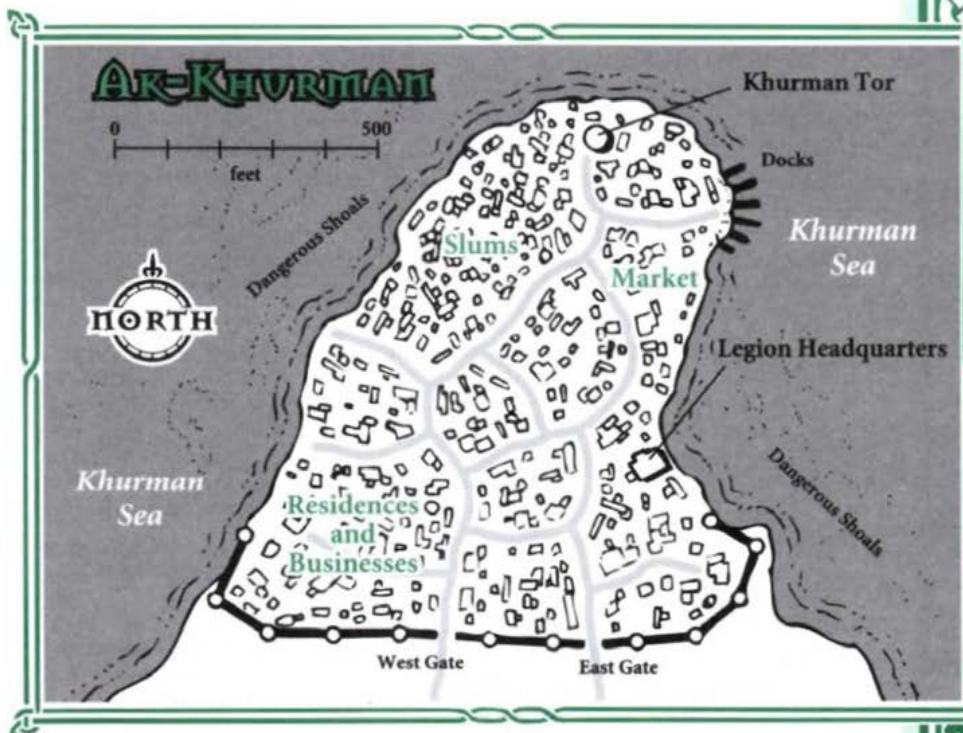
The eavesdropper, who identifies himself only as Wort, immediately surrenders. At even the slightest hint of violence, he begs for his life and con-

fesses to being a Dark Knight spy. He claims he was forced into this duty, because the Knights have his family hostage. The pigeon he released is headed to the Dark Knight fleet, which is coming to attack, with the goal of halting the heroes' mission. Wort does not know how the Knights knew to expect the heroes, only that he was to watch for them and alert the fleet as soon as they met with Kenat or Lionel.

Kenat thanks the heroes for noticing the wretch. He offers his hospitality while their ship is prepared for departure and orders Lionel to organize the cell's fleet for deployment.

Market District

The dusty local marketplace bustles with activity and rings with the cries of barbarian vendors and foreign merchants. Traders bring newly arrived stock up from the docks, and local folk operate out of rude stalls and tents to sell their wares to passers-by.



The Docks

As in most Krynish port towns, Ak-Khurman's waterfront features warehouses and docks for mooring ships of varying sizes. The port here can accommodate galleons and other deep seafaring vessels, but the approach is treacherous, due to the dangerous shoals surrounding the peninsula. Vessels that stray from the narrow approach to the docks do so at their own peril. Khurman Tor, the lighthouse that commands the inland skyline, was built long ago to warn approaching ships of the treacherous surrounding waters.

The *Narwhal* is docked here, along with a dozen other sailing ships. The Legion's favored vessel takes her name from her unicorn figurehead with an unusually long—and sharp—textured bowsprit (a spar extending from the bow, to which rigging lines are tied). The captains who put into port at Ak-Khurman are brave, rough merchants. Their crews are either busy with routine work, offloading cargo, or lounging in waterfront taverns.

Atmosphere

This bustling port looks and feels much like Cairo as depicted in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. It's one of the more cosmopolitan places in the lands of the Khur—though that's not saying much. A constant feeling of tension hangs in the air, for locals know they live only through the good graces of Malys.

Actions

During their conversation with Kenat at Legion headquarters, heroes can attempt *challenging Perception* actions to notice the eavesdropper. The hero who dreamed of the dog barking at the curtain in Act One can make a *challenging Reason* action to recall the dream and interpret it in this context. However, the heroes are too late to stop him from releasing the carrier pigeon. Any attempt to shoot it down or other-

wise hinder its flight should fail (they lose it in a flock of other birds). It is key to the story that the pigeon get away.

Any mystic hero with sensitivity can determine, after an *easy Spirit (Presence)* action, that the prisoner is lying about being forced to eavesdrop. This well-paid spy serves the Dark Knights willingly but concocted a sympathetic story in the hopes of avoiding torture at the hands of his enemies.

Finally, a hero who dreamed of a sea unicorn in Act One can attempt a *challenging Reason* action to figure out its meaning, when he sights the *Narwhal*.

Characters

The heroes may interact with the following characters during their stay.

- ♣ **Legionnaires:** Humans and half-elves of varied age and demeanor, Adventurers. Co 7, Ph 8, In 5, Es 6, Dmg +7 (long swords), Def -6 (chain mail/ target shields).
- ♣ **Locals:** Human barbarians and half-elves of varied age and demeanor, Unknown and Rabble. Co 5, Ph 5, In 4, Es 5, Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing).
- ♣ **Kenat Three-Lives:** Human barbarian adult male, dedicated demeanor, Champion. Ag 7C, Dx 7A, En 8C, St 8B, Re 7C, Pe 8C, Sp 7C, Pr 6A, Dmg +6 (battle axe), Def -6 (chain mail/target shield), also missile weapons (great bow/+8).
- ♣ **Lionel uth Dartan:** Human adult male, distant demeanor, Champion. Ag 7A, Dx 7C, En 8C, St 8A, Re 7C, Pe 8C Sp 9C, Pr 6B, Dmg +8 (two-handed sword), Def -5 (plate mail).
- ♣ **Wort:** Human middle-aged male, cowardly demeanor, Novice. Co 5, Ph 3, In 6, Es 4, Dmg +2 (dagger), Def -2 (leather).
- ♣ **Captains:** Humans of varied age and demeanor, Adventurers. Co 6, Ph 7, In 7, Es 6, Dmg +5 (sabres), Def -2 (leather).
- ♣ **Sailors:** Humans and half-elves of varied age and demeanor, Novices. Co 6, Ph 5, In 5, Es 4, Dmg +4 (cutlasses), Def -2 (leather), also half use missile weapons (crossbow/+5).

Outcome

After completing their talk with Kenat and seeing as much of town as they care to, the heroes move on to Scene Three.

An Alternate Route

After their visions at the Grandfather tree (Act One, Scene Two), the heroes may disregard their guide's advice and take a southerly route toward the sea. Hevar grudgingly accompanies them, reminding them again of the dangers of the journey across the eastern Plains of Dust.

Instead of heading toward the Pashin Gap via the City of Morning Dew and Sable's swamp, the heroes may take the King's Road east across Splendor's realm, then head southeast toward the Missing City. Narrators can modify the scenes in Acts One and Two as follows to handle this alternate route.

Splendor's Realm

The trek from the Grandfather tree toward the King's Road takes the heroes dangerously close to the realm of Thunder. The blue dragon, believing that his brass nemesis covets his territory, has been launching unexpected forays into her realm to stave off her supposed aggression. The Narrator can adapt the events of "Friend or Foe?" to the drier, more barren Plains of Dust. The scene will be more straightforward, however, as Sloss would become a minion of Thunder instead of a mutant rebel.

The heroes make good time along the high road through Splendor's barren realm. Along the distant eastern horizon they can see a strip of green—the Silvanesti Forest. The events of "Hevar's Secret" can take place along the high road (the Mayakhur tribe becoming native to the Plains of Dust), and "The Slow Death" can take place after the group has left the road and is traveling near the Silvanesti Shield.

The Mirage

As the heroes approach the small port known as Missing City on the southeastern coast of the Plains, they spy the phenomenon that gave the town its name: a shimmering vision of a city, which vacillates between opaque and

semitransparent. The flickering but permanent mirage is of unknown origin and should fill the heroes with wonder.

Traveling through this strange site is disorienting. The illusion of a city is complete: walls, buildings, streets, trees—even people and animals wandering the streets. None of these images take notice of the heroes, but they otherwise behave like real people. No matter how long the group stays in the phantom city, no element of the illusion repeats itself, save for the ebb and flow of activity that comes with night and day. The place feels like a true city—one that doesn't quite exist in the real world.

The Missing City

A Legion-sponsored port settlement, the Missing City has the air of a frontier town. It has grown from the ruins of an older port that once existed here, the elven city of Gal Tra'kalas, built to facilitate trade between Istar and the Silvanesti. It was sacked by Istaran legions in the final years before the first Cataclysm, though, and the shattered ruins of stone buildings surround the newer settlement. The wall around the Missing City and most structures within it have been built with stones culled from these ruins. In some cases, builders have arranged the stones to recreate the frescoes from the original buildings, but on others, fragments of Silvanesti art and inscriptions appear haphazardly on walls (often upside down). The only thing that has been built from scratch in Missing City are the docks, for nothing remained of the ancient elven pier. Iyesta herself dredged the harbor to allow even the largest of ships to dock here.

The Narrator may set the events of "In Ak-Khurman" and "Blockade!" in the Missing City with only minor changes. Instead of meeting Kenat Three-Lives, however, the heroes speak with local cell leader Falaius Taneek (*desert barbarian middle-aged male, tough demeanor, Adventurer*).





Scene Three: Blockade!

A mass of red sails appears on the horizon as dawn breaks over Ak-Khurman. The Dark Knights are setting up a blockade, and their wicked, dragon-prowed galleys head straight for the harbor.

Overview

As a fleet of Dark Knights attacks Ak-Khurman in this scene, the heroes must flee if they hope to complete their mission. The difficulty of the ensuing sea battle depends on whether the heroes managed to capture the spy the night before. If they did, Lionel uth Dartan has readied the Legion's ships and can engage the enemy fleet effectively to cover the heroes' escape. If not, then two Legion caravels will attempt to escort the heroes' ship to safety, but all three ships will be engaged.

Getting Started

The map of Ak-Khurman from the previous scene might prove helpful in this blockade-running scene, as will the poster map showing the Khurman Sea.

First Impressions

The action begins just after dawn, as a page summons the heroes before Kenat Three-Lives for an urgent meeting.

The halls of the fortress are alive with activity this morning. When the page brings you into Kenat's meeting room, the cell leader and Lionel are fully armed and armored, clearly ready for battle.

"Lookouts spotted red sails on the horizon," says Kenat. "It appears the Knights of Takhisi have chosen this morning to attack. We will have to launch every available ship and engage the Dark Knights on the high sea. I want your band to escape south into the Bay of Balifor. Your mission to Dimernesti is too important to delay."

The Story Continues

If the heroes apprehended Wort the day before, Kenat feels confident of success, for the Legion's ships are ready to launch as soon as the heroes get to the *Narwhal*.

If the spy went undetected, however, the Legion commanders are presently scrambling to get their ships ready. However, the heroes' craft and two caravels have been given priority, and the crews are ready to launch as soon as the heroes reach the docks. The caravel captains have orders to escort the heroes through the Dark Knight blockade and ensure their escape, even at the expense of their own ships and crews. Lionel commands the escort ships.

Hevar bids farewell to the heroes at the fortress. He must remain behind in Ak-Khurman to help his comrades, for the barbarian would prove far more valuable in town, should the Dark Knights manage to land troops.

All of Ak-Khurman buzzes with activity. Ships are being readied, ballistas moved into position, and homes being fortified. Lionel uth Dartan walks you to your cog, seeming even more withdrawn than usual. The crew on board the *Narwhal* is silent, clearly tense over the need to sail right into danger.

Whether the heroes' craft launches as part of a fleet or simply as one of three fast sailing vessels, the wall of red sails spread across the horizon should make their hearts sink into their stomachs as the *Narwhal* casts off.

The wind is strong in their sails, and the *Narwhal* and the two caravels shoot across the waves. Immediately, two galleys separate from the oncoming wall of red sails and cut east as they pick up speed. Clearly, the Dark Knight commander wants no craft to escape Ak-Khurman. A third, larger galley follows the two lead vessels more slowly.

Assuming the heroes caught Wort the spy the previous day, the Legion has put enough ships to sea to prevent any real Dark Knight interference with the

Narwhal's rapid departure east and south. If they did not catch him, however, the Dark Knight attack slows their craft until one of the pursuing ships catches up with them. The *Narwhal* is boarded, although efforts from the heroes and crew can keep too many boarders from getting onto the deck.

The Battle

Lionel's caravel signals the *Narwhal's* captain, Lothar Claes, ordering him to catch the wind blowing off the land and sail southeast at top speed, skirting the shoals. Then his caravel banks to port, the other to starboard, and they turn to engage the enemy vessels. As they do, the large Dark Knight galley starts hurling large flaming balls of greek fire from on-deck ballistas. The Narrator should make a random draw from the Fate Deck to see which ships get hit, if any.

- ❖ If the card has a white aura, none of the fiery missiles hit.
- ❖ If it has a red aura, one of the two caravels gets hit, while another ball of fire splashes harmlessly into the ocean near the *Narwhal*.
- ❖ If the card has a black aura, the *Narwhal* sustains a hit. The fiery missile impacts on the aft section of the cog, killing Captain Claes and injuring the navigator.
- ❖ If the card drawn is from the Suit of Dragons, two fiery missiles hit the *Narwhal*—one with the effects described above, while the other sets one of the sails ablaze. In the ensuing chaos, one of the pursuing Dark Knight galleys overtakes the heroes' vessel, barring extraordinary measures on their part. (See "Actions.")

Should the Dark Knights catch up with the heroes' ship, they sail alongside it while crossbowmen pepper the

deck with bolts, hoping to send sailors and heroes alike running belowdecks for cover. Their initial boarding party consists of fifteen Knights, who rappel down the sides of their larger ship onto the deck of the heroes' small cog. The *Narwhal's* navigator and helmsman, who survived the fiery attack, think to swiftly steer the ship away (if no hero thinks to order it).

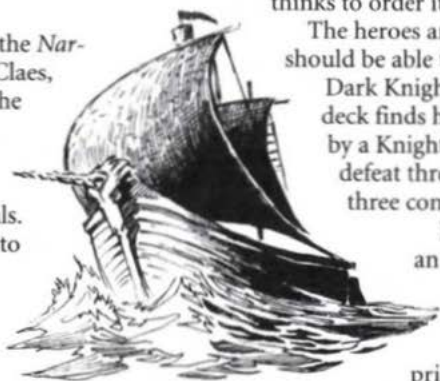
The heroes and sailors should be able to defeat fifteen Dark Knights. Any hero on deck finds himself engaged by a Knight. The sailors defeat three Knights every three combat minutes.

Heroes keeping an eye on events around their vessel witness a surprising sight: An enormous dark form

swoops down from the sky—a shadow dragon! The wyrm skims the surface of the water, heading straight toward the Dark Knight galley that dropped the boarders, even as the vessel was drawing close again. As the terrified Knights on board scramble to bring the ship hard to port, the dragon zooms in, nearly shaving off the galley's masts before streaking toward the horizon.

Lionel seizes the opportunity to engage the galley in a boarding action of his own, even though the Legionnaires are outnumbered three to one. Lionel looks down upon the heroes' ship. Over the noise of battle, his voice booms to the heroes: "Get the *Narwhal* to safety, my friends! Do not jeopardize your mission! We'll keep these Nerakese dogs off your tail! Never fear!" Then he joins his boarders on the Dark Knight vessel. He disappears from view, engaging a Dark Knight as bravely as any Solamnic Knight.

It should seem clear to the heroes that they must simply flee the scene. If they want to assist Lionel and his warriors, spellcasters might be able to help.





Atmosphere

Early in this scene, the atmosphere is one of hectic activity. When the heroes board the *Narwhal*, the crew seems nervous, clearly expecting the worst of this voyage. Further, the sailors should appear somewhat unsavory—a rough bunch, perhaps even pirates.

Once the sea battle starts, the Narrator should make the players feel like an epic engagement is about to take place. They will know that, when dawn breaks the following day, either Ak-Khurman will be reduced to a smoking ruin, or the Dark Knight fleet will be nothing more than shattered hulks on the sea floor.

Actions

At the beginning of the battle, the hero who dreamed of the rising sun in Act One can attempt a *challenging Reason* action to realize its meaning: The *Narwhal* must head due east, not southeast as ordered; even though it would lose the wind in doing so, it would stay out of the reach of the Dark Knight galley.

Mariners, river pirates, or other heroes with sea-related roles can help the crew sail the ship with an *average* action based on the appropriate ability—Strength, Agility, or Reason, depending on what niche the hero fills on board.

When the Dark Knight galleys initiate pursuit of the *Narwhal*, spellcasting heroes can slow them by using aeromancy (changing the direction of the wind in their sails), combining cryomancy and hydromancy (to cause icebergs to form in front of their ship), or applying hydromancy alone (to raise large waves to slow them). Other heroes with shipboard knowledge can help the sailors trim the sails and perform other actions that might speed the *Narwhal*. However, any heroes near the wheel if and when the fireball hits must make *challenging Endurance* actions or suffer 5 damage points each.

Should the Dark Knights board the *Narwhal*, combat proceeds according to the rules in FIFTH AGE boxed set.

Sorcerers can conceivably help Lionel's men by using electromancy or pyromancy to attack the Dark Knights or cause confusion and panic in their ranks. However, any sorcerer who summons himself or others to the deck of the Dark Knight galley is met with angry shouts from Lionel and other Legionnaires: They are fighting a delaying action so the heroes can make good their escape. Anything a hero does to delay the escape of the *Narwhal* or to endanger the heroes further is considered sabotage, not help.

Characters

A few new characters join the familiar ones in this naval battle scene.

- ✦ **Kenat Three-Lives:** *Human barbarian adult male, dedicated demeanor, Champion.* Ag 7C, Dx 7A, En 8C, St 8B, Re 7C, Pe 8C, Sp 7C, Pr 6A, Dmg +6 (battle axe), Def -6 (chain mail/target shield), also missile weapons (great bow/+8).
- ✦ **Lionel uth Dartan:** *Human adult male, distant demeanor, Champion.* Ag 7A, Dx 7C, En 8C, St 8A, Re 7C, Pe 8C, Sp 9C, Pr 6B, Dmg +8 (two-handed sword), Def -5 (plate mail).
- ✦ **Captain Lothar Claes:** *Human male young adult, sensible demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 7C, Dx 6C, En 6D, St 5B, Re 9D, Pe 5C, Sp 7D, Pr 6B, Dmg +7 (long sword), Def -5 (leather/target shield), also missile weapons (crossbow/+5).
- ✦ **Sailors:** *Humans and half-elves of varied age and demeanor, Novices.* Co 6, Ph 5, In 5, Es 4, Dmg +4 (cutlasses), Def -2 (leather), also half use missile weapons (crossbow/+5).
- ✦ **Fifteen Dark Knights:** *Humans of varied age, violent demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 8, In 5, Es 6, Dmg +8 (two-handed swords), Def -5 (plate mail).

Outcome

This scene's finale should leave the heroes with a firm sense of the importance of their mission, as well as a feeling of duty and obligation to fulfill it: Countless men and women are giving their lives to see that they succeed.

The story continues in Act Three.





ACT THREE

Scene One: Sailors Take Warning

Once away from the blockade, the heroes find that their sea journey has gotten off to a rocky start.

Overview

An uneventful voyage suddenly heats up as accidents befall the heroes and they discover a pawn of Malys among the crew of the *Narwhal*.

Getting Started

If combat should arise toward the end of this scene, the Narrator might find the expanded options for combat in *Heroes of Steel* to be useful.

First Impressions

Two mornings after the battle at Ak-Khurman, the *Narwhal* enters the southern Courrain Ocean. Low, dark clouds hang over a choppy gray sea. After escaping the blockade, the *Narwhal* turned south into the Bay of Balifor. Once through that sweltering stretch of sea, the sails caught the prevailing winds that blow off the coast of Silvanesti. The last sight of land occurred shortly after daybreak today.

The landlubbers among you have found the journey particularly unappealing so far, and seasickness has leached the last bit of strength from their limbs.

The Story Continues

Despite the gloomy weather, the *Narwhal* is making fairly good time. Captain Claes believes that, weather permitting, they should reach their destination in under two weeks. Nevertheless, the crew of the *Narwhal* are not familiar with these waters, so the sailors seem somewhat less optimistic.

A few days after the vessel left land behind, one of the crew—a small, wiry man named “Slig”—approaches a hero (most likely one of the human men), looks around furtively, and asks, “What is it then, this business you and the captain have cooked up, eh?” Assuming the hero makes up a story or acts evasive, Slig nods noncommittally, but gives the heroes a look that tells them they’re not fooling him.

The hero might answer truthfully, telling Slig that they need to find an artifact of the sea elves before the Great Dragon Skie can find it and use it to threaten the world. Slig answers, “An artifact, eh? Well, beggin’ your pardon, sir, but don’t you think that the dragon that lives there in Dimernesti’ll have a thing or two to say about you stealing what he considers his own?” Before the hero can respond, Captain Claes wanders by, and Slig immediately seems more interested in his work.

If the heroes later try to catch up with Slig to ask him what he knows about the dragon of Dimernesti, they find him rather difficult to corner. Those who seek him out among the crew quarters get sullen stares from the crew and little cooperation. The very air seems about to snap under the tension. Should the heroes ask the captain, he tells them that many sailors have described an avaricious sea dragon that reportedly lairs near the islands above Dimernesti. However, Claes knows of only one ship that has gone missing among those islands, and that was more likely from the treacherous currents and rocks than any dragon.

A few days later, things seem to have calmed somewhat. It is then that a bucket of tar falls near a hero out on deck, forcing him to dodge; it was “accidentally” dropped by a crewman in the upper rigging repairing a sail. A day later, another hero is standing nearby when a rope securing a crate of cargo suddenly snaps, again endangering the

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hero. Other similar accidents occur, always out of sight of the captain.

If the heroes report these bizarre occurrences, Captain Claes dismisses them at first. But even he can see that something is not quite right with the crew. He confronts Slig, and the situation explodes into violence.

The Battle

Most of the crew members immediately join in the fight against Captain Claes and the heroes. The battle progresses as would a normal melee, but if Slig is knocked unconscious or killed, it suddenly seems as if all the fight has gone out of the crew. Some of them actually stumble around, as if in a daze, wondering what is going on.

Atmosphere

There is little about this voyage to recommend it: It's cold, wet, and miserable. The crewmen go out only during watch, remaining below at other times. They do not seem to know what to make of their new passengers. At first, they don't act hostile, but as time goes by, the heroes notice sailors glowering at them and exchanging sidelong glances. A day or so after that comes the first "accident." Tension gives way to a sense of foreboding as the *Narwhal* makes her way through the gray, sunless southern seas.

Actions

A hero who succeeds at an *average Perception* action while Slig is speaking with him early in the voyage notices several crew members nearby surreptitiously listening to the conversation.

Should a fight break out in the wake of the "accidents," the Narrator should feel free to impose modifiers to the combat action scores of those heroes not yet used to fighting on a ship rolling at sea (no more than a -3 action penalty).

Characters

Slig is an unwitting pawn of the Red Dragon, placed on board the *Narwhal* by agents working for Malys. While these allies know he is effective at inciting violence, they have no idea that he has a strange, latent mystic ability.

❧ **"Slig":** *Human male adult, pessimistic demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 7D, Dx 4D, En 5D, St 5C, Re 7D, Pe 7B, Sp 8X, Pr 4X, Dmg +4 (cutlass), Def -5 (leather/kite shield), also acute hearing, mysticism (a mentalism wild talent that manifests as an unconscious ability to stoke the fears and apprehensions of others until either he leaves or the nervousness explodes into violence.)

❧ **Captain Lothar Claes:** *Human male young adult, sensible demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 7C, Dx 6C, En 6D, St 5B, Re 9D, Pe 5C, Sp 7D, Pr 6B, Dmg +7 (long sword), Def -5 (leather/target shield), also missile weapons (crossbow/+5).

❧ **Twelve sailors:** *Humans and half-elves of varied age and demeanor, Novices.* Co 6, Ph 5, In 5, Es 4, Dmg +4 (cutlasses), Def -2 (leather), also half use missile weapons (crossbow/+5).

Outcome

Once Slig is brought low, the voyage continues with no further trouble. The sailors are more than a little embarrassed about the ease with which that weasel riled them, so an uncomfortable silence replaces the onboard tension. The Narrator then turns to Scene Two.

If Slig and the crew overcome the heroes and captain, they sail the *Narwhal* to Flotsam to the north, where Slig's Dark Knight associates take the heroes captive and interrogate them to discover what they know of Khellendros's plans. In the event of this outcome, the Narrator should do all he can to emphasize the heroes' need to escape; if they do not, the adventure continues with *Wings Over Ansalon*, the final chapter of the *Dragons of a New Age* series, in the *Wings of Fury* supplement.





Scene Two: Land Ho!

This scene begins as the *Narwhal* arrives at the small chain of isles that marks the location of Dimernesti.

Overview

The heroes unexpectedly encounter the great sea dragon Brynseldimer.

Getting Started

Narrators can review the sea dragon section in Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age* and Brine's background in Chapter Two of *Dusk or Dawn*.

First Impressions

The sea voyage has been harrowing, but finally the lookout yells the words everyone has been waiting for: "Land ho!"

Within an hour, everyone on deck can see the peaks of volcanic islands in the distance. A little bit of sun peeks through the clouds, but the weather has not improved much. A stiff wind blows, and the sea is still choppy, making the approach to the islands risky. Captain Claes, who visited these islands before, suggests that, once the *Narwhal* maneuvers to an appropriate spot, the heroes take one of its two longships over.

An hour later, the crew is making those preparations when the lookout calls, "Whale off the starboard stern!" and a moment later, "Hey! It's headed our way!" Then, virtually everyone on deck hears a sudden strangled cry, and the lookout screams, "Dragon!"

The Story Continues

This region of the world has been claimed by the sea dragon Brynseldimer, known by men as Brine. He is extremely territorial, punishing intruders ferociously. Today, he is in more of a malicious, playful mood. Instead of simply destroying with a mighty blast

of steam the puny human ship trespassing in his realm, he instead intends to smash it to pieces and watch its crew and passengers drown. Then he might feed their remains to his minions.

Brine surfaces about two miles away, then dives beneath the waves. He approaches the *Narwhal* at a terrifying speed. Captain Claes is having a terrible time getting his crew to hear and obey his orders, for many of them stand transfixed with dread. It is as if they already know they're dead.

The Battle

The *Narwhal* has two ballistas in the bow and two catapults in the stern. (If the aft section was damaged in the battle in Ak-Khurman, only one catapult still works.) Assuming the heroes get the crew to ready these weapons, they might be able to hurt Brine.

The catapult is too slow to help much in the fight, but the captain orders three sailors to man it anyway. If a hero wants to help (at least to keep them focused on a task), they gladly accept his aid. The catapult normally fires burning pitch, but in this case, the captain orders them to try the rocks. The *Narwhal* has but four huge stones on board, so the crew must make them count.

The captain principally works to keep the bow pointed at the dragon so he can bring the *Narwhal's* two ballistas into action. Mariner heroes can aid him at this task, for many of his crew are busy manning the weapons.

In this battle, Brine plays with the ship, building the crew's fear. One sailor has leaped overboard in an attempt to swim to one of the islands, and Brine goes after him first, swallowing the fellow whole in full view of the entire crew. If the dragon should become injured, however, play time is over. He makes straight for the heroes' vessel, ready to use his terrible steam breath to kill everyone on board.

As he races toward the *Narwhal*, however, he is slammed from beneath the waves by a titanic force, which

wounds him enough to make him give up the fight. Moments later, a ray of sunlight pierces the clouds, and a sea elf girl surfaces off the starboard side of the ship. With her are several sea otters.

Atmosphere

The atmosphere turns rapidly from relief at reaching the islands above Dimernesti to sheer terror at the sight of Brine. Although sea dragons do not radiate true dragonawe, most of the sailors are paralyzed with fear nonetheless.

A few run around in a panic. Captain Claes feels as scared as the sailors, but he remembers his responsibilities to his crew and his ship and shakes it off in a few moments to ready the crew for a fight.

Actions

The heroes must try to help the captain gain some sort of control of the crew, or they will have no chance at all. Heroes may attempt *challenging Presence (Spirit)* actions to get the sailors working toward the defense of the ship.

Heroes with a "B" code in either Strength or Dexterity know enough about weapons to assist or actually man one of the ship's ballistas. The crew members will handle the other one. Unskilled heroes can help reload either or both these weapons. Each weapon can fire once every two minutes, even though they work at artillery range; the ballistas' rate of fire and Brine's swimming speed combine to accelerate the normal combat time.

Striking Brine with a bolt from the ballista is an *average Dexterity (Agility)* action. The bolt's damage rating is +18, not enough to harm the well-armored sea dragon very much. If, however, the heroes achieve a *daunting* success with this weapon, they have hit Brine in a

vulnerable area (a broken scale, an eye, the throat, etc.). In this case, the damage rating receives a +8 damage bonus.

To hit Brine with a missile from the catapult is an *average Dexterity*

(*Agility*) action also. If a hit occurs, it penetrates the dragon's defense to inflict 3 actual damage points (taken off his Physique score). The catapult becomes more of a revenge weapon in this scene, though, as Brine comes into target range only when he passes to the stern of the ship following a forward assault.



Characters

Only one new character appears in this scene: the sea dragon.

- ❖ **Brynseldimer (Brine):** *Sea dragon male wyrm, tyrannical demeanor.* Co 13, Ph 58, In 17, Es 17, Dmg +40, Def -30, also dragon breath, swallow whole.
- ❖ **Captain Lothar Claes:** *Human male young adult, sensible demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 7C, Dx 6C, En 6D, St 5B, Re 9D, Pe 5C, Sp 7D, Pr 6B, Dmg +7 (long sword), Def -5 (leather/target shield), also missile weapons (crossbow/+5).
- ❖ **Twelve sailors:** *Humans and half-elves of varied age and demeanor, Novices.* Co 6, Ph 5, In 5, Es 4, Dmg +4 (cutlasses), Def -2 (leather), also half use missile weapons (crossbow/+5).

Outcome

Whatever it was that slammed into Brine has, for the moment at least, driven him off. There is little doubt, however, that the waters around Dimernesti will be doubly dangerous now. Though they survived the fight, the *Narwhal's* crew has made a terrible enemy.

- ❖ Should the heroes wish to speak with the Dimernesti elf who has just appeared near the *Narwhal*, the Narrator can turn to Scene Three.
- ❖ Instead, they can just get out of the area by continuing with Scene Four.





Scene Three: The Sea Elves

Following the battle with Brine, the heroes try to contact the sea elf girl.

Overview

Dimernesti elves lead the heroes to a sea cave and perhaps even to their underwater capital. However, they refuse to give up the priceless Crown of Tides.

Getting Started

The section on Dimernesti in Chapter Three of *The Magic Within* can help the Narrator prepare for this scene, as can the map on the back of this book. The box flap describes the Crown of Tides. The scrolls of water protection the sea elves offer the heroes here were introduced in *The Last Tower*.

First Impressions

Few land dwellers have ever seen a sea elf before. As handsome a people as their surface cousins, nevertheless they appear very different—almost alien—to land dwellers. The elfmaid who has just appeared near the *Narwhal* has bluish skin, silvery white hair, and large dark eyes that peer up at you curiously. Her webbed fingers stroke the head of one of her sea otter companions. She wears tight greenish clothing decorated with tiny shells, and on her head is a glistening crown of brilliant blue coral.

The Story Continues

The huge force that drove Brine off was created by the Crown of Tides, the very artifact the heroes seek. Veylona, the half-sea-elf ward of the Speaker of the Sea, “borrowed” it from its resting place in the elven capital and now gazes up at the *Narwhal* shyly. The girl does not answer any questions—almost as though, now that she has helped drive off Brine, she doesn’t know what to do next.

In moments, several armed Dimernesti warriors break the surface near Veylona, speaking to her harshly in a tongue the heroes do not understand. The warriors seem shocked and angry. Several of them warily surround the ship, and one asks the heroes, “Who are you, to bring war to these already troubled waters?”

If the heroes explain their quest, the sea elf snorts derisively. “The Crown of Tides is not for barter,” he replies. “But come, we must hide your vessel before Brine recovers.” The elf issues a peremptory command in his language, and the elves flanking the girl order her below. They disappear from view, Veylona giving the *Narwhal* one last look of longing.

The elf leader, who introduces himself as Ebrin, remains behind with two others and the sea otters to guide the ship through the treacherous waters into an immense sea cave on the other side of the nearest island. Six vessels the size of the heroes’ craft could easily fit inside. With the *Narwhal* safely out of sight, Captain Claes orders his crew to begin checking below the waterline for damage from the fight with Brine. If anyone asks the elves about the cavern, Ebrin says it used to serve as a marketplace that drew ships from all over the mainland. But with Brine’s arrival, all trade ceased.

The Journey Below

If the heroes display the shell bracers they received from Sloss and Guy in Act One, Ebrin regards them with surprise. The Dimernesti converse among themselves, then beckon the group deeper into the cave. The heroes can take a longboat or swim over to the wide ledge surrounding the cavern, then proceed along the ledge as the elves direct. When the cavern ceiling begins sloping downward toward the water’s surface, Ebrin removes a scroll from a sack on his belt and hands it to the party leader.

This item is a scroll of water protection, a magical treasure which, when opened, creates a sphere around the heroes that no water can penetrate. Once the heroes have broken the seal

and raised their protective bubble, Ebrin motions them into the water—in their bubble, they merely bob upon the surface. Then, he and his comrades tie ropes of strong kelp weave around the heroes' waists. The three elves and their sea otter helpers will tow the group down to meet with the Speaker of the Sea, Ebrin explains. It must be a quick visit, however, as the bubble holds only enough air for ten people to breathe for one hour; then it will vanish.

Cautioning the heroes to hold hands and stay together, Ebrin signals to his companions. It takes quite a tug to counteract the bubble's magical water-resisting surface tension, but the elves and sea otters seem experienced at conducting land dwellers beneath the surface in this fashion. They draw the heroes underwater and along a wide tunnel, which eventually spills them out the side of the peak that rises from the ocean floor to form the island which harbors the *Narwhal*. Far below them lies a rocky terrain. Colorful fish dart all about the strange caravan.

Dimernost

After traveling five minutes or so, the heroes witness an amazing sight: the undersea capital of Dimernost.

The city shines with an alien beauty, its coral spires twining up to form structures that defy the limits of landbound architecture. Luminous plants give the city a strange glow, accented by slanting shafts of sunlight that filter down through the shadows of the waves. As you draw closer, you note that most of the otherworldly coral spires are damaged and that shells and other rubble float amid the beautiful pastel buildings. Few elves are in evidence.

A striking tower in the center of town is surrounded by living coral that dances in the waves. Your escorts draw you through one of many shell-trimmed portals at the base of the tower, then quickly up into an expansive hall. The shell mosaics decorating the walls form dizzying patterns as you speed up through this hall and into the thin neck that divides the tower into two sections.





Ebrin leaves the heroes with their escorts while he swims into the chamber above to announce the visitors. He returns in a moment and signals for the visitors to be brought in. The chamber features the long and graceful decorative patterns familiar to land elves, but it has a vastly different feel than other elf structures—for one thing, the sea elves don't have to confine themselves to a "floor" when they can easily swim in any direction they wish. The building has no stairs, inside or out. The heroes are led to a pearl-trimmed ledge that runs all the way around the grand hall; they are told to hang onto the ledge tightly to keep themselves from floating up to the ceiling in their bubble.

Commanding the attention of all in the room is an elegant Dimernesti woman floating on a mother-of-pearl throne. She wears the crown the heroes saw the sea elf girl wearing earlier, made of brilliant blue coral and inlaid with pearls. The girl herself floats near the woman's right hand. More sea elves drift in the center of the hall, and warriors rest on the ledge. The woman gazes at the heroes for a long moment, then says, "I am Nuqala. Speaker of the Sea for what is left of the Dimernesti people. Why have you come?"

The Request

If the heroes tell her of the threat posed by the Great Dragons and of their own need to collect artifacts to thwart them, Nuqala responds coolly.

"What is that to us? We too face peril every day at the hands of the sea dragon Brine. We too have sought aid from others and we have received nothing, not even the courtesy of a response. Your journey has been in vain, for now more than ever"—and here she pauses to glare at the half-elf girl, who does not meet her gaze—"we depend upon the power of the crown to protect ourselves. The problems of your world are your own. We cannot help you."

Nuqala also asks for news of the Silvanesti. Why they have not responded to her messenger? And where did the heroes get the shell bracers inscribed with the harrowing account of her kinsman's torture at the hands of land-dwelling slavers? The news that the Silvanesti have cut themselves off from the world with a magical shield deflates Nuqala. Holding the bracers, she murmurs, "Now my people are truly alone."

"I am sorry you came so far for nothing," she continues, "but you had best leave now, before Brine returns."

But before she can wave the heroes away, the girl blurts out, "Wait, Mother! Surely we can now strike at Brine, while he is injured, and . . ." Her words trail off as Nuqala turns on her abruptly.

"Have you not done enough for one day, Veylona? You stole the crown and used its power without understanding it. Your rash act could have imperiled us all." With each word, the girl wilts a little more. Finally, Veylona whispers, "I'm sorry. I thought I could help . . ."

Nuqala softens a bit at that, sighs, and says, "I know you meant well, my dear. You may return the land dwellers to the surface with Ebrin, if you wish."

Nuqala wishes the heroes well, as their escorts pick up the kelp tow lines to guide them back to the surface. Veylona swims up to join them. The sea elves and a new group of otters lead the heroes out of the Tower, up through the waters above Dimernest, and back through the tunnel to the *Narwhal*. Ebrin and Veylona bid them farewell, urging them to escape before Brine returns. Then they dive into the water, ready to guide the vessel past the rocks around the island. The *Narwhal* pulls out of the sea cave and follows the elves into open waters. The Dimernesti wave once, then disappear beneath the surface.

Note: The heroes might try to steal the crown or offer to help the elves fight Brine (thus ending their reliance on it). In these cases, the Narrator should adjust the above passages accordingly.

Atmosphere

Throughout this scene, the heroes can smell the tang of salt water and hear water swirling around their protective bubble. They should feel disoriented moving in a land where the concept of “floor” has little meaning.

They also should sense nervousness among the sea elves, skittish after years of Brine’s unpredictable attacks. Most of them seem cool and distant, as they normally dislike strangers—they let the heroes visit only because they brought the bracers. However, they are never impolite or hostile. But for their fear of Brine, they might have agreed to help.

Actions

As it proves nearly impossible to successfully negotiate for the crown, the heroes might try to take it by force. However, they are at a severe disadvantage fighting underwater within the bubble. Their combat actions become two degrees more difficult than normal (for example, from *average* to *daunting*). Missile weapons are useless due to the water’s density, and swung melee weapons have only half their normal damage ratings.

The Dimernesti, easily outmaneuvering the heroes, launch their counterattacks from all sides, below, and above, darting in to attack with spears, then swimming away. Nuqala orders her warriors to render the heroes unconscious and return them to the surface. Two warriors guard her and the crown.

The heroes might get the crown through magic, as the Dimernesti are fairly unfamiliar with sorcery and mysticism; they have only their natural alteration powers (to the form of a sea otter) and a few “native talents” with an affinity for a single school or sphere. If the heroes attack the elves magically, they cannot respond in kind. However, any hero who attempts to use mentalism to charm Nuqala into giving up the crown meets with failure—the crown renders her immune to this magic.

After such an attack, future negotia-

tion attempts by the heroes or other surface representatives require at least *daunting Presence (Presence)* actions. The long-lived Dimernesti will not soon forget the heroes’ treachery.

Characters

Additional sea elf warriors will respond to any sounds of a battle in the Tower.

- ♣ **Captain Lothar Claes:** *Human male young adult, sensible demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 7C, Dx 6C, En 6D, St 5B, Re 9D, Pe 5C, Sp 7D, Pr 6B, Dmg +7 (long sword), Def -5 (leather/target shield), also missile weapons (crossbow/+5).
- ♣ **Eleven sailors:** *Humans and half-elves of varied age and demeanor, Novices.* Co 6, Ph 5, In 5, Es 4, Dmg +4 (cutlasses), Def -2 (leather), also half use missile weapons (crossbow/+5).
- ♣ **Veylona:** *Half-Dimernesti female young adult, brave demeanor, Novice.* Ag 7X, Dx 7X, En 5D, St 5C, Re 6D, Pe 8C, Sp 9B (81), Pr 6B, Dmg +5 (trident), Def -2 (sharkskin), also mysticism (healing).
- ♣ **Ebrin:** *Dimernesti male adult, calm demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 5D, Dx 5X, En 9C, St 6C, Re 6D, Pe 7B, Sp 6B, Pr 6B, Dmg +5 (trident), Def -2 (sharkskin), also acute hearing, mysticism (alteration to sea otter, animism to speak with sea creatures in local waters).
- ♣ **Warriors:** *Dimernesti adults of varying demeanor, Adventurers.* Co 6, Ph 5, Re 5, Es 5, Dmg +5 (tridents) or +3 (spears), Def -2 (sharkskin), also mysticism (alteration to sea otter).
- ♣ **Speaker Nuqala:** *Dimernesti female adult, realistic demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8X, Dx 6X, En 6B, St 5C, Re 8D, Pe 9C, Sp 7B (49), Pr 7A, Dmg +9 (spear of fame), Def -7 (scale armor of renown, made of shark’s hide and shells), also Crown of Tides, mysticism (healing, alteration to sea otter).

Outcome

No matter what happens beneath the waves, the heroes eventually must return to the surface and Scene Four. As they leave Dimernost, they see handfuls of elves departing the city—swimming for the safety of a newly discovered hidden grotto, Ebrin says.





Scene Four: A Watery Grave

The heroes can arrive at this scene via a number of possible paths: Either they did not attempt to speak with Veylona when she surfaced in Scene Two, they were refused the crown, or they offered to fight Brine in return for the artifact.

Overview

Brine seeks revenge in this fierce sea battle scene—but so do the heroes!

Getting Started

Background information on sea dragons appears in Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age*. Brine is described in Chapter Two of *Dusk or Dawn*.

First Impressions

It may seem to the heroes a very long time since they set out to find the artifacts of great magic that Skie coveted for a fearful spell. They may be in low spirits, having failed to acquire the crown. On the other hand, if they begin this scene seeking to fight Brine, they are infused with a sense of renewed determination.

The *Narwhal* has just cleared the headland of the last island in the chain when the lookout cries out the warning everyone expects but dreads: "It's back!" He points off the port bow. "The dragon is back!" Off in the distance, a great wave of water rushes toward the small craft, accelerating fast.

The Story Continues

The powerful Crown of Tides confused and scared Brine. He has never known fear, and he did not like it . . . not one bit. But the fear turned quickly to anger, and the anger to a full-boil rage. He will punish the sea elves in due time, but news of his brief defeat must not reach the mainland: He will deal with the *Narwhal* first.

The Battle

If the heroes do not act, the *Narwhal* and all aboard it are likely to perish. Brine intends to close rapidly with the vessel, smashing the craft amidships with his mighty tail on the first pass. He then will close again, this time to sweep the decks with his dragon breath, boiling crew members alive with a blast of superheated steam. He will finish the ship at his leisure, using numerous attacks with his tail to reduce it to splinters.

If the heroes are smart, however, they can turn the tables on him. They might recall that the captain sought to point the bow of the *Narwhal* at Brine in the previous attack, both to offer the smallest possible target and to keep the bow-mounted ballistas pointed at him. However, if they can ram Brine with the craft's long, sharp bowsprit they can impale him. Of course, the captain (or a hero at the helm) must keep the bow pointed squarely at Brine, despite the dragon's plan to approach from the side. Or, considering Brine's fury at his injury, the heroes—especially kender—might even be able to taunt him into attacking the bow (see "Actions").

If the *Narwhal* manages to ram Brine, it deals him enough damage to slay him. (The actions required for this maneuver are difficult enough to make actual damage points irrelevant.) He does not go down easily, however. Once pierced by the bowsprit, Brine shrieks out a deafening roar that stuns many hands on deck. His head arched back, the dying wyrm lets out an involuntary blast of steam. Black blood pours from his wound as the bowsprit breaks off and lodges in him. The thrashing dragon hammers the hull, staving in the sides. The *Narwhal* immediately begins taking on water, forcing the crew below to attempt temporary repairs. After what seems an eternity, the vessel perilously close to Brine's death throes, he slowly sinks below the surface of the sea. As the sun triumphantly breaks through the clouds, all the heroes hear is the silence of the grave.

Atmosphere

As the lookout sounds the alert, many sailors again stand transfixed with a mixture of fear and awe. Some of them mutter prayers to the gods, some murmur to themselves, and a few fall to the deck and weep. This terror is not due to dragonawe, but the result of watching a beast nearly two hundred feet long close at a rate at least three times faster than the fastest known ship, and recognizing that it can smash through the *Narwhal* without any risk to itself.

Brine's approach seems to last a lifetime but, after a few moments, the captain's barked orders start to sink in. The heroes can overhear one of the sailors nearby saying, "Don't worry, lads, the captain'll get us through this." The group aboard the *Narwhal* faces the battle knowing it to be an epic fight—perhaps the fight of their lives.

Actions

A hero who succeeds at a *challenging Reason* action during Brine's approach thinks to ram the dragon with the *Narwhal*'s long bowsprit. Keeping the prow pointed at Brine, however, requires an *average Reason (Agility)* action from the hero at the helm. If the captain is at the helm, either a white or red aura result in a random draw allows success, but only drawing a white aura card offers success with a sailor at the wheel.

Those who succeed at another *challenging Reason* action realize that, in his fury, Brine might be taunted into intentionally attacking the bow. A kender can bring into play the remarkable ability of members of that race to taunt their foes into making a critical mistake. With an *average Presence (Presence)* action, a true kender can attempt to taunt an opponent (*challenging* for nonkender). Success makes Brine forego the use of his steam breath, attempt a bite attack against the offending hero, or charge the *Narwhal*'s forward section. On a second taunt, Brine offers only half his normal opposition (rounding up). An afflicted

kender cannot attempt to taunt without first overcoming his acquired caution (an *average Spirit* action).

After a successful attack, heroes must make a *challenging Endurance* action or be stunned for a full minute from the sea dragon's great dying roar. In addition, anyone on deck must attempt an *average Agility* action to avoid Brine's scalding breath; those who fail suffer 10 damage points. Finally, heroes can assist the crew members belowdecks with *challenging Strength* and *Endurance* actions.

Characters

The number of sailors may vary depending on the outcome of the *Narwhal*'s previous battle with Brine.

- ✧ **Brynseldimer (Brine):** *Sea dragon male wyrm, tyrannical demeanor.* Co 13, Ph 58, In 17, Es 17, Dmg +40, Def -30, also dragon breath, swallow whole.
- ✧ **Captain Lothar Claes:** *Human male young adult, sensible demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 7C, Dx 6C, En 6D, St 5B, Re 9D, Pe 5C, Sp 7D, Pr 6B, Dmg +7 (long sword), Def -5 (leather/target shield), also missile weapons (crossbow/+5).
- ✧ **Eleven sailors:** *Humans and half-elves of varied age and demeanor, Novices.* Co 6, Ph 5, In 5, Es 4, Dmg +4 (cutlasses), Def -2 (leather), also half use missile weapons (crossbow/+5).

Outcome

Captain Claes's first concern is to prevent the *Narwhal* from joining Brine in his watery grave. He directs the crew to turn the vessel around and make landfall on one of the nearby islands. But as the craft comes about, some Dimer-nesti appear ahead. They wave the *Narwhal* off its approach and, drawing up to her, place skins of some sort on the hull below the waterline. This measure slows the water flow enough that the crew can keep her afloat using a bilge pump. The elves then lead the *Narwhal* back to the sea cave where they hid her earlier, and the story concludes with Scene Five.





Scene Five: The Crowning Glory

When the *Narwhal* returns the sea cave, the crew set to work making repairs, with the aid of a half-dozen sea elves. Ebrin sends them to fetch more of the sharkskin they used to patch the hole in the *Narwhal's* side, as well as some stored timbers from a boat that was wrecked upon some rocks nearby.

While that work progresses, Ebrin and his companions escort the heroes back to the Tower of the Sea, as recounted in Scene Three. If any heroes or crew members were injured in the battle, the Dimernesti come aboard and carry them gently off the vessel, to be tended by sea elf healers.

Overview

After vanquishing Brine, the Heroes of the Heart are rewarded for their valor.

Getting Started

Sections on Dimernesti in Chapter Three of *The Magic Within* and Chapter Two of *Dusk or Dawn* offer background for this scene, as does the map on the back of this book and the box flap.

First Impressions

Inside the grand hall of the Tower of the Sea wait Nuqala and a beaming Veylona. Taking positions along the curving wall on either side of her throne are more than a dozen older Dimernesti men and women. Several of them stare at you with expressions tinged with awe. A throng of sea elves fills the space of the grand hall, resting on the ledge and watching the proceedings from above and below. "I have summoned the elders to council," the Speaker announces. "Your bravery must be rewarded."

She clears her voice, then begins to speak in the language of her people. Ebrin translates for you. "These people of the surface world have journeyed far

from their homes to seek our aid in their opposition to the rule of great Evil dragons which plague their lands, much as Brynseldimer has plagued ours. They came seeking the Crown of Tides, a gift we could not give them as long as Brine held us in thrall.

"Today, however, we are free of our bonds, and it is because of these land dwellers who sought our aid. Those of you who have seen the battle between their craft and the sea dragon know that I speak the truth. I put before the council and the people, then, this question: Shall we aid them in their battle as they have aided us in ours?"

The Story Concludes

The elders move together into a cluster, confer among themselves for several moments. Then an older male elf swims forward and asks the heroes if they intend ever to return the ancient ancestral crown of their people. Should the heroes answer that they seek only to borrow it on behalf of the peoples of the surface world, the Dimernesti elders confer a moment longer, and then the man moves forward again and nods once to the Speaker of the Sea. (If the heroes answer differently, the sea elves say that swearing an oath to return the crown is a requirement of the loan.)

A cheer from the assembly that can be felt as much as heard rumbles through the waters of the grand hall as Speaker Nuqala removes the coral crown and holds it out to the heroes. The din dies down as she begins to speak again. "Take with our gratitude and blessing the ancient crown of our people. May it bring to your people the peace that you have brought to ours." With that, Nuqala hands the crown to the party leader, and another great cheer goes up among the sea elves.

Atmosphere

The Dimernesti are little short of awed at the heroes' courageous deed, for they had expected Brine to be their nemesis

for many more years. When Nuqala asks her people formally for their permission to loan the Crown of Tides to the heroes, she does so with great solemnity. Their single question of the heroes, as well as their formal answer to Nuqala, is spoken in kind. Once the decision is made, however, the sea elves reveal their more festive natures.

Actions

If the heroes thank Veylona for her role in driving off Brine in his first attack, they will have made a friend for life.

Characters

The number of sailors in this scene may vary, based on whether any of them fell in Brine's attack in Scene Four.

- ♣ **Captain Lothar Claes:** *Human male young adult, sensible demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 7C, Dx 6C, En 6D, St 5B, Re 9D, Pe 5C, Sp 7D, Pr 6B, Dmg +7 (long sword), Def -5 (leather/target shield), also missile weapons (crossbow/+5).
- ♣ **Eleven sailors:** *Humans and half-elves of varied age and demeanor, Novices.* Co 6, Ph 5, In 5, Es 4, Dmg +4 (cutlasses), Def -2 (leather), also half use missile weapons (crossbow/+5).
- ♣ **Veylona:** *Half-Dimernesti female young adult, brave demeanor, Novice.* Ag 7X, Dx 7X, En 5D, St 5C, Re 6D, Pe 8C, Sp 9B (81), Pr 6B, Dmg +5 (trident), Def -2 (sharkskin), also mysticism (healing).
- ♣ **Ebrin:** *Dimernesti male adult, calm demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 5D, Dx 5X, En 9C, St 6C, Re 6D, Pe 7B, Sp 6B, Pr 6B, Dmg +5 (trident), Def -2 (sharkskin), also acute hearing, mysticism (alteration to sea otter, animism to speak with sea creatures in local waters).
- ♣ **Warriors:** *Dimernesti adults of varying demeanor, Adventurers.* Co 6, Ph 5, Re 5, Es 5, Dmg +5 (tridents) or +3 (spears), Def -2 (sharkskin), also mysticism (alteration to sea otter).
- ♣ **Speaker Nuqala:** *Dimernesti female adult, realistic demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8X, Dx 6X, En 6B, St 5C, Re 8D, Pe 9C, Sp 7B (49), Pr 7A, Dmg +9 (spear of fame), Def -7 (scale armor of renown, made of shark's hide and shells), also Crown of Tides, mysticism (healing, alteration to sea otter).

Outcome

Once Nuqala has granted the heroes use of the crown, the sea elves crowd around them. Some simply smile, others speak a few words of gratitude. One ancient, blind elf woman comes over, clinging to her granddaughter's arm. She approaches each hero and reaches out her hand to touch him briefly, nodding and smiling as she does so. The other sea elves watch in silence. After the two women move on, Ebrin tells the heroes that the priestess of Branchala has given them her blessing for their journey, a great honor indeed.

Nuqala sees to it that the heroes are treated as honored guests at a great seafood feast. The crew of the *Narwhal* is invited down to Dimernost, and the entire group may remain, recovering from the battle, for as long as they like (a lengthy stay might require the Narrator to let the priestess cast alteration on the heroes to let them breathe water). Unfortunately, the sea elves are not shipwrights, and they can do little for the *Narwhal* beyond providing patching materials and following the captain's instructions. After several days, the *Narwhal* is seaworthy again, but she still takes on water and lacks some of her rigging. When the time comes, the elves joyfully escort the vessel out of the cave, into a sea free of danger.

The last voyage of the *Narwhal* is not an easy one. Although the sailors do all they can to keep the wounded craft together, when she clears the headland leading into the cove of Port Balifor, she begins to sink. The captain quietly orders the longboats out and tells the crew to abandon her. He is the last to leave her, stopping only to remove a single plank from the deck.

As the longboats approach the shore, the *Narwhal's* prow, where once the great horn had been, disappears beneath the waves. The captain and crew watch in silence. Only the heroes notice the silent, shadowy form of a dragon blotting out the night sky, tracing an elegy among the stars.





❧ EPILOGUE

Afterword

In their journey, the heroes discovered many new facets of their world. The reverence the clans of the Plains of Dust offer to the Grandfather tree, the perfidy of the bloodthirsty raiders in the lands of the Khur, the Silvanesti diaspora, the slow death of the elven forest, and the perils faced daily by the peaceful sea elves all provide opportunities for further exploration. There are many stories yet to tell in the Fifth Age. Narrators who wish to continue such tales can explore the following ideas.

Dimernesti

The Dimernesti have never been officially introduced to the magic of the new age. Cut off as they are from the surface world, the wide breadth of modern magic is unknown to the sea elves. Players who teach them more of the new magic will offer a gift that the Dimernesti could never repay.

At present, few sea elves have natural magical talent beyond the racial ability to adopt sea otter form: Some elf healers find themselves using the power of the spirit instinctively, and Ebrin has developed an unexplainable "wild talent" in animism into a translation skill he can manipulate. However, no sea elf now has better than a "B" code in Reason or Spirit. Formal training in healing, sensing danger, improving the yield of food plants, and manipulating the waters would greatly aid the elves in rebuilding their society. Heroes can offer to begin their education or to bring representatives from the Citadel of Light and Academy of Sorcery to Dimernesti.

Goldmoon

The heroes might investigate the question of who engineered the attack on Goldmoon. Palin has never heard of the people the assassins claim to serve.

Has a new faction entered the race for dominance of Ansalon? What motivates them? How are they trained?

Grandfather

Perhaps the heroes seek to learn more about the World Tree, or "Grandfather," as the peoples of the Plains of Dust call it. What powers does it have? Is it a font of mystic energy? Does it represent a gift of the god Zivilyn? Might someone seek to use it for Evil ends?

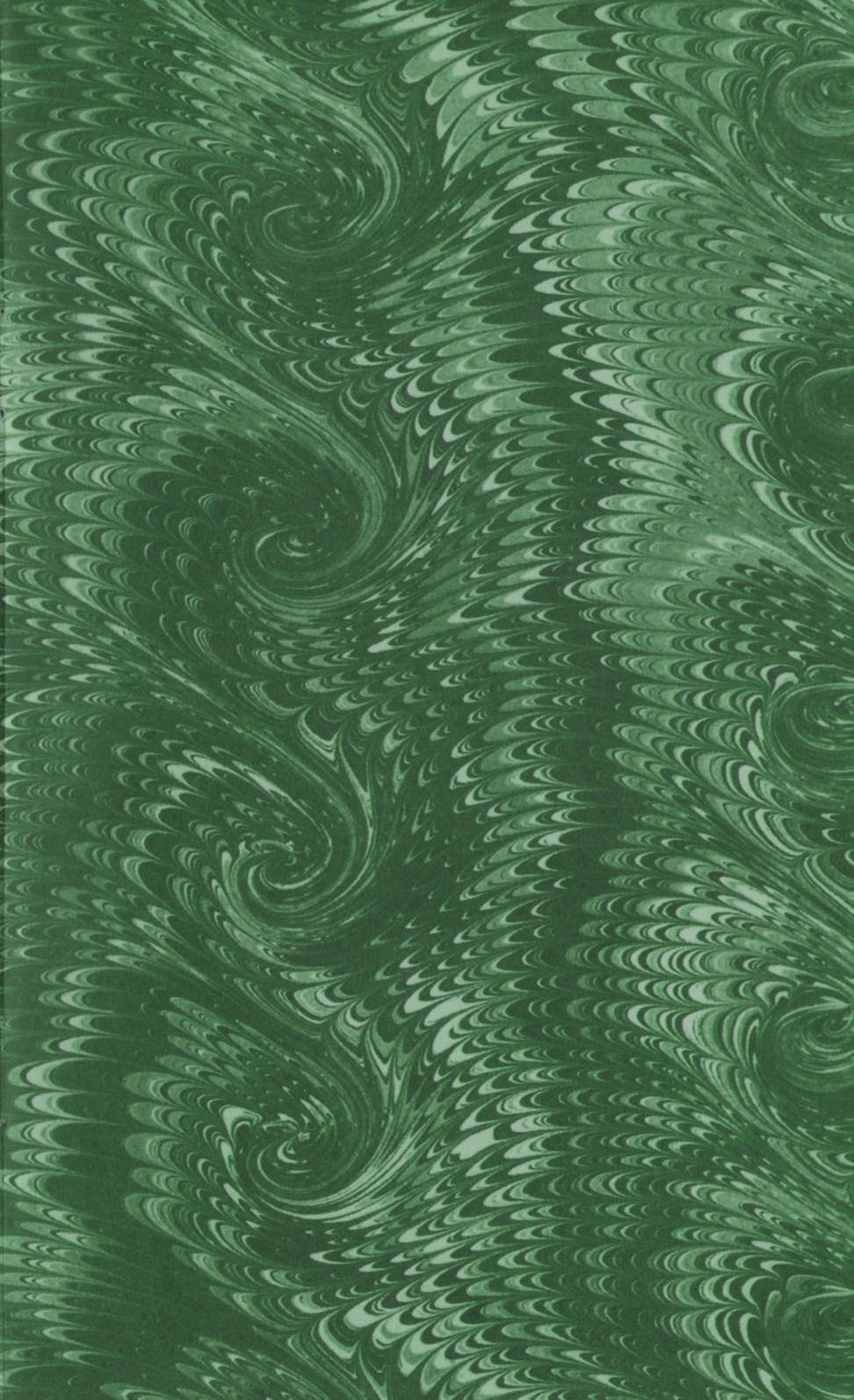
The Silvanesti Shield

The Silvanesti Forest seems to be dying. Is history repeating itself in Silvanesti—will the enchanted wood once again become a nightmare? Perhaps someone has placed the forest under a terrible curse. But who? The heroes could link up with the agents of the Legion of Steel in the Missing City (see "An Alternate Route" sidebar in Act Two) to determine the fate of the insular Silvanesti elves.

Wings Over Ansalon

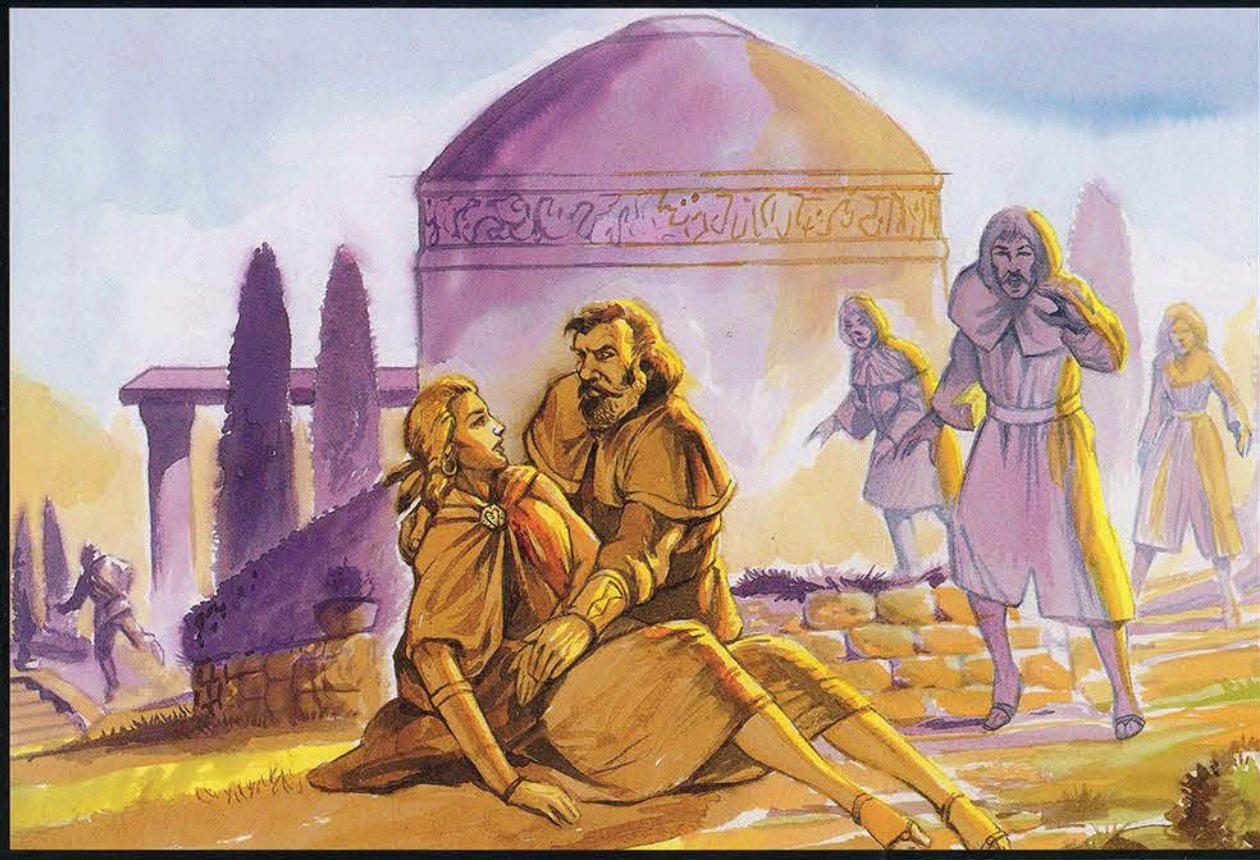
Such adventures may have to wait, however. As the heroes wash ashore in Port Balifor (described in Chapter Three of *The Magic Within*), the shadow dragon swoops in with a message from Palin: Malys seeks to become a goddess! The heroes had heard that the Red Marauder sought to return Takhisis to Krynn, but to take her place as the Queen of Dragons? Could this blasphemous plan have something to do with the spell Khellendros is planning and his obsession with collecting artifacts to power it? And, if so, does the Blue Dragon seek to aid Malystrix . . . or stop her?

The only way for the heroes to find out is to travel quickly with their artifacts to the Window to the Stars in eastern Khur, for Malys's godhood ceremony is imminent. The *Wings of Fury* supplement concludes this epic quest.



THE UNDERSEA CITY OF DIMERNOST





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9546XXX0701 HEROES OF HOPE

THE CROWN AND THE SERPENT



9546

FIFTH AGE®

DRAMATIC SUPPLEMENT

HEROES OF HOPE

BY
DUANE MAXWELL

DISCOVER THE POWERS OF THE MYSTICS!

The free peoples of Ansalon are pushed ever back by the might of the Great Dragons and their fell minions. A hero's best weapon in this ongoing struggle is the energy of life itself, the strength of the spirit—the magic of mysticism.

Shapechangers, healers, necromancers, mentalists: Mystic heroes come in a broad array of character types and wield a wide spectrum of powers. A detailed sourcebook in *Heroes of Hope* offers background on these heroes and guidelines for using their powers in the DRAGONLANCE®: FIFTH AGE® setting. Chapters cover:

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- Background on the most important mystic orders in Ansalon today.
- Overviews of some of Ansalon's mystic lands, including Dimernesti, the magical realm of the sea elves.
- Optional rules for casting spells that blend the magics of sorcery and mysticism.

Heroes of Hope also features *The Crown and the Serpent*, an epic journey over land and sea to seek the Crown of Tides in a realm of aquatic elves. But in order to claim the crown, the heroes must first face Brine, the sea dragon lord of Dimernesti. A full-color illustrated poster map chronicles this quest, which parallels that of the heroes of the third FIFTH AGE novel, *The Eve of the Maelstrom* by Jean Rabe. This scenario is Part Four of the *Dragons of a New Age* cycle, but also is playable on its own.

LET THE POWER OF THE HEART BE YOURS TO COMMAND!

Heroes of Hope uses the SAGA™ dramatic adventure rules from the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE boxed set.

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