

ARDANYANS, REVENGE



AN EARTHDAWN ADVENTURE BY CARSTEN DAMM



ARDANYANS
REVENGE

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ARDANYAN'S REVENGE

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You regard this tome as complete? Very well. Show me then where I can find the Names of the heroes that survived this story?

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SHARP SURPRISE

I... I can acknowledge now what you stated in front of the council, Master Leldrin. They will not be pleased, but the doubters will be silenced once and for all.

• **Master Jandaan** •



“Never trust an elf...”

When Fearghus heard these words for the first time, he considered them nothing more than a proverb. But now, lying flat in the dusty old mineshaft, he realized their wisdom.

“Quiet!” he hissed, lifting a finger to his mouth. “They could be here any minute!”

He glanced at his companion, Dunar, whose hands were shaking as he tried to defuse a trap containing hundreds of poisoned arrows. Fearghus felt a drop of sweat crawling down his face, leaving a visible trail as it washed the dirt from his skin. The two dwarfs had almost made it—only this accursed tunnel separated them from their goal. He turned his head, looking for their pursuers, but the passage behind them was dark and silent.

Dunar was working on a set of stone plates set into the walls and the ground. He was the best craftsman Fearghus knew. Back home, many people admired his skill as a Weaponsmith. As a follower of the Warrior discipline, Fearghus knew first-hand how adepts used magic to accomplish their goals—but even Fearghus sometimes wondered how much magic was needed to compensate for Dunar’s normally coarse and stubby fingers when crafting such well-balanced weapons. Many people were jealous over the magical abilities of adepts, often expressing it by open shows of distrust. In the past, the adepts’ most arduous adversaries had even tried to pass laws to restrict them from using their powers. On a certain level, Fearghus agreed with that notion—even if he wasn’t convinced of the necessity of such an action. There were some adepts who took advantage of their calling and saw themselves as being above the common man—some black sheep individuals who shamed their kind. Sadly, Dunar was one of them, and his haughtiness had led to many arguments between the two friends—until Fearghus witnessed how Dunar sold his weapons for unusually high prices, using his magic to trick some of his customers. That incident led to a serious

fight that ultimately ended their friendship. Before this mission, they had not talked with each other for years.

Fearghus forced the thought from his mind. At this moment, Dunar was the only Name-giver Fearghus could trust.

Their former companions were out to kill them.

The people of Kaer Ardanyan had always quarreled about the differences between the races. Unsurprisingly, Dunar and Fearghus also held differing opinions. Dunar had never liked elves—in his eyes, they were slick and sly, hiding the true meaning of their words behind flowery expressions. Prejudice was a common way for dwarves to see their pointy-eared neighbors. Fearghus knew that Dunar was intelligent enough not to fall for such a shallow point of view. Indeed, he knew that his friend’s aversion was really based on a personal matter. In his youth, Dunar had fallen in love with a young elven lass. When he finally felt bold enough to confront her with his feelings, she just laughed. Even worse, his grandfather had slapped him across the face for entertaining such a foolish infatuation with a pointy-eared one.

Many hard-working dwarven miners failed to see that the comparatively light gardening work of the elves was equally important to the survival of the kaer’s population. This lack of understanding led to a blood feud between the dwarfs and elves of the kaer, an event in the distant past that had separated the population.

Fearghus shivered and glanced around uneasily. Only a few people remembered the incident that had driven the community of Kaer Ardanyan apart. Those times were long over—and now, Fearghus and Dunar had to pay the bill.

“This should do it” Dunar whispered. “This mechanism won’t trigger anything anymore. But I guess it was not the last...” He abruptly ceased talking and sat up to get a better view. Then Fearghus heard the footsteps, too. Suddenly, a light appeared, getting brighter and reflecting off the walls behind them.

They were here.

"Run!" Dunar hissed and vanished into the darkness. Fearghus had no option but to follow. Two elves had just turned the corner, calling out in surprise as they saw him flee, their bows already drawn. Fearghus heard arrows cutting through the air, missing him in the dark. The tunnel ahead curved, and he managed to quickly get out of range. Behind him, the elves followed—Fearghus already heard them running.

Around another corner, the dwarf almost fell over his friend. Dunar was lying in the middle of the passage, staring at something. Fearghus could not determine what it was.

"What the ...?" he began, but Dunar silenced him with a wave of his hand.

"Now take a big step and get down, but be careful," he hissed. Fearghus realized what his friend was staring at—and what he was about to do.

A moment later, the pursuing elves rushed into sight. Their bows now slung over their shoulders, their broadswords were drawn. A puzzled look appeared on their faces when they spotted the two dwarfs lying in the dust right before them. Moving closer to get a better view, they realized both dwarfs were showing their best grins.

With a lightning-fast move, Dunar pulled at the thin wire in front of him. Anguished screams echoed in the tunnel as a broad sharp blade slid out of the wall, slicing through everything in its path. Blood spilled from their tall bodies as the elves dropped to the ground like wet sacks. Vanishing between the stones as quickly as it had appeared, only a thin line of blood showed evidence of the blade's existence.

With a triumphant laugh, Dunar stood and looked down at Fearghus, who stared open-mouthed at the bodies lying in front of him. Dunar helped him to his feet; both were unharmed. Wiping blood from his face with his shirt, he moved to pick up one of the swords. Still stunned, Fearghus did the same. Dunar pushed him down the tunnel.

"Two down. Five to go..."



"You are late, my child" Jandaan said when Ghandjoon entered his laboratory. Closing the door behind her, she hesitated momentarily.

On the large table in the center of the laboratory lay a

dead body. Ghandjoon could not help but stare at it. She had seen many corpses since she signed on as Jandaan's apprentice—but none of them was as badly hurt as this one.

Deep cuts had opened the dwarf's chest, as if a set of enormous claws had torn him apart. Bite marks from hundreds of teeth formed the pattern of a giant jaw, suggesting that a very large creature was responsible for the dwarf's demise.

"Is it him?" she asked.

The magician nodded. "It's him. I need you for the ritual." Jandaan paused, inspecting a wound next to the oversized bite-marks. He lifted a bushy white eyebrow and scratched his bald, tattooed head.

Ghandjoon's master didn't talk much. Jandaan believed that people wasted precious time on chatter, therefore the old Nethermancer always got straight to the point. Faced with this directness, most people preferred to stay out of his way.

"This time, I will do it myself; you're too weak for wounds this deep. The ritual could hurt me—even kill me if I am not cautious. I want you to have a healing potion nearby, just in case."

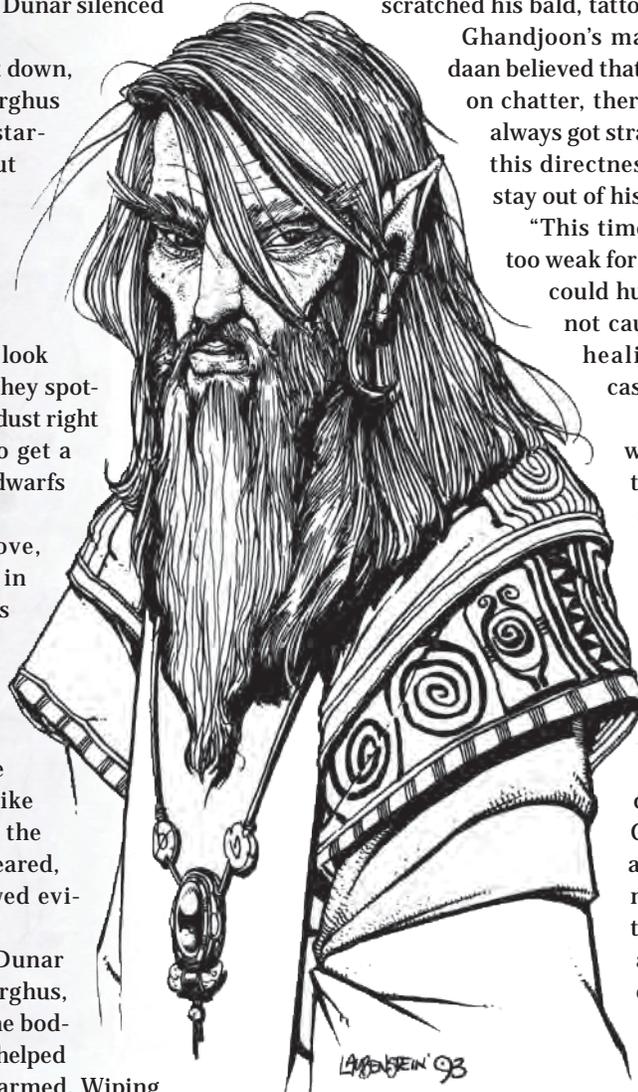
Ghandjoon nodded. She walked to one of the shelves to fetch the potion. The shelves contained all kinds of alchemical ingredients and covered every inch of the walls. She needed some time to find where the healing potions were stored.

Someone knocked at the door.

"Who's there?" Jandaan said in a strong voice. Ghandjoon believed she heard an annoyed undertone. Her master continued to examine the corpse. He received no answer. After a while, someone knocked again. With a subdued curse, Jandaan motioned for his apprentice to open the door. Ghandjoon opened it just enough to peek outside.

A tall elf stood in front of her. She saw that he was bandaged; white linen cloth peeked out under his cloak at his right arm and shoulder. A strong mint odor surrounded him, a smell reminding her of the Garlen shrine in Okoros. She pulled the door open, and the tall figure silently entered the room. His name was Leldrin, the expedition's only survivor. His wounds had been grave, but not deadly.

Master Jandaan greeted him with a nod, but did not care to stand. Again, he received no reply. The visitor



moved quietly into a corner by the door, observing the room with watchful eyes. He was leaning on a stick.

Brilliant, Ghandjoon thought. The two most talkative people of the entire kaer in one room!

"I think we can begin now." Jandaan said after a while and threw a demanding look at Ghandjoon. She moved closer to the table, holding the healing potion in her hands.

The old Nethermancer sat on a small stool next to the table and touched the temple of the dead dwarf. Clearing his throat, he began muttering the formula of a spell he had taught to his apprentice just a few weeks ago. The spell allowed him to experience the final moments of a corpse, images that were bound to bring pain and agony along with them.

Jandaan closed his eyes when he finished the spell and steered his soul into the realm of the dead. His body began to slump forward, but Ghandjoon gently held him in place. When her master reopened his eyes, his pupils had turned pale and stared into an unknown distance.



Jandaan opened his eyes and found himself in a large cave lit by a murky twilight emanating from naturally grown light crystals. His body was that of Fearghus, one of the best Warriors the kaer had ever produced. Fearghus was looking at another dwarf, who crouched behind a large rock. Jandaan recognized him as Dunar, the famous Weaponsmith of Khar Rhûz. Both had taken part in the expedition, a mission to determine if the Scourge had ended. Obviously, the mission had failed.

Leldrin was the only one who had returned, the only survivor of nine adepts that were sent out by the kaer council. Everyone else had been slain shortly after they had turned their backs towards the massive gates. Leldrin had brought Fearghus' corpse back from the journey, and his arrival had truly been one of the saddest moments in Kaer Ardanyan's history. Jandaan remembered the image of the elf stepping through the gate, his fine robes soaked with blood. Countless kaer-dwellers had come to see their heroes return. When Leldrin let Fearghus' body slide to the ground, the sound could be heard even in Council Hall — stunned silence filled the air for an eternity.

Viewing the scene, the Nethermancer saw that Dunar, shaking with fear, was bleeding from a number of wounds. He stared at something behind Fearghus. Jandaan felt Fearghus realizing what his companion was doing and watched him turn his head slowly toward the tunnel in the wall behind him. A scratching, clattering sound, as if from a thousand claws, came from the dark passage. Jandaan felt a shiver running down Fearghus' spine and a sudden rush of adrenaline, as the dwarf jumped to his feet, preparing himself for his last stand.

An abhorrent beast stepped out of the tunnel, standing up until it towered almost three yards above their heads. It opened a large mouth containing countless teeth jutting outwards like needles, and gave a terrible shriek. The sound was so loud that Fearghus could feel the vibration in his chest. The Horror turned its eyeless head toward the

dwarfs, growling deeply. Fearghus moved in front of his friend and stared at the approaching monstrosity.

"You can kill us, but you will never own us!" he screamed, bolting toward the creature. He was fast — his feet not even touching the ground. Slamming his broadsword into a soft spot between the chitinous scales made the beast give out another, high-pitched shriek. Black blood shot from the wound, burning Fearghus' arm.

The Horror turned around, away from Dunar. Three thick tentacles shot after the running Warrior, squirming around his floundering body. Fearghus was lifted up like a toy. He swung his sword at the tentacles like a madman, but to no avail. The air was pressed out of his lungs. Drained of his strength, his broadsword fell from his hand.

Then the maw of the Horror was right in front of him, its sharp teeth looming closer, clicking in anticipation of fresh blood and flesh. Fearghus finally lost his consciousness. Sweet darkness surrounded Jandaan's perception. It took what seemed an eternity until the Nethermancer felt the familiar pull of death swallowing him...



Jandaan woke on his stool, gasping for air. Ghandjoon used a piece of linen to wipe sweat from his forehead and offered him the potion. But her master refused.

After a few moments, he lifted himself up and stood, turning toward Leldrin. The elf had kept a straight face during the ritual, and even now, his features seemed to be set in stone.

"I... I can acknowledge now what you stated in front of the Council, Master Leldrin. They will not be pleased, but the doubters will be silenced once and for all." Jandaan breathed heavily and leaned on the table for support.

"I'd like you to know that it is a great honor for me to share the same halls with a hero. Without you, we would remain ignorant."

Leldrin turned toward the exit. He paused for a moment, then opened the door and left without saying a word.

"Poor man" Ghandjoon said. "His best friends left their lives out there... for us."

She turned to face her master and saw that he had again sat down on the stool, covering his face with his wrinkled hands.



When Dunar saw Fearghus losing consciousness, he ducked deeper behind the rock. His hands were still shaking; panic had taken control of him. He heard the Horror throw the limp body of his friend aside, when footsteps approached.

Four of the remaining elves stepped out of the tunnel, their heads covered with silken hoods.

'Finally!' Dunar thought. 'They might have turned against us, but this Horror is still a common enemy.' A spark of hope made him pick up his sword. He risked a peek over the rock.

The towering black creature did nothing — it just stood still. Dunar watched as one of his former companions strode over to Fearghus, kicking his arm. He did not move. The elf pulled the hood back, and Dunar gasped as he recognized her — Jania, the Swordmaster. Kneeling, she swiftly cut his friend's throat.

"NOOO!!" Dunar yelled, and leaped out from his hiding place.

The Horror shrieked and turned, and suddenly Dunar again felt panic overwhelm him. He wanted to run, but instead he stumbled and fell, sending his blade scattering across the cavern floor.

The beast came closer, but Dunar was immobilized with fear. Eyes wide open, he watched helplessly as the Horror approached. The dwarf swallowed hard and blinked several times when the beast began a transformation. The huge black body shriveled and began to change color. Within seconds, it resembled a humanoid figure — another elf. This

figure also pulled his hood back and revealed his head. Leldrin. Dunar swallowed again, breathing heavily.

"This couldn't be true! Was Leldrin in league with the Horrors? Or was the Horror just one of his illusions?"

The tall elf smiled and walked to where Dunar lay. The other elves surrounded him, two on either side, also revealing their faces by pulling back their hoods — Argethiel, Mangalin, Errin, Jania. All of them laughing at him.

Leldrin unsheathed a dagger and sliced his right palm. Grabbing Dunar with his bleeding hand, he lifted him with ease. His words sounded like an incantation and drowned the quiet whimpering of the shocked dwarf.

"This fellowship shall be named the Cross of Ardanyan. By the blood of Dunar, we swear to commit revenge on all those who destroyed our hopes with their greed.

Oh Raggok, take this sacrifice to give us strength for the task that lies ahead..."



INTRODUCTION

Those who only trust what they can see are easily fooled by simple plays of light and magic. Never trust your mundane senses — it's not gold just because it glitters.

• **Leldrin, Survivor of the First Expedition** •



The age of **Earthdawn** is an era of magic that existed thousands of years ago in our world's dim past. Magic touched every aspect of the lives of men and women of the Name-giver races: humans, elves, dwarves, orks, trolls, windlings, t'skrang, and obsidimen. However, as the levels of magic rose, so did the dangers in the world. The rise of magic brought Horrors to Earth, creatures from the depths of astral space that devoured all life in their path. For four centuries, the peoples of Barsaive hid underground as the Horrors devastated their lands during the dark time that came to be called the Scourge.

Now, the people of Barsaive have emerged from their sealed kaers and citadels, ready to fight for life and freedom against the remaining Horrors and the oppressive Theran Empire. From all across Barsaive, bold heroes step forward to champion their land, arming themselves for their daunting task with powerful magical spells and treasures. Through magic, skill, and daring, Barsaive's heroes strive to heal the world of the scars left by the Scourge. In so doing, they become Barsaive's living legends.

Ardanyan's Revenge is a roleplaying adventure set in the world of **Earthdawn**.

When the Scourge was imminent, the people of the town of Ardanyan sought shelter underground, expecting only the Horrors to be a threat. Over the centuries spent confined in the kaer, small quarrels grew into conflicts, which in turn developed into blood feuds and racial hatred. The Horrors would gladly have fed on Kaer Ardanyan—if they had only found it...

For generations, a secret society betrayed the unsuspecting citizens of Kaer Ardanyan—now they struggle to keep their terrible secret. The player characters are the spark igniting a bonfire of intrigue, deceit and illusion. The heroes have to be careful, however, not to fall victim to the flames while on their dangerous quest to save the residents of a lost kaer!

GAMEMASTERING NOTES

Ardanyan's Revenge is a setting-based adventure, meaning this book provides descriptions of several locations and a few events serving as the basis for an exciting story.

Each important location in this adventure is described in its own section, along with an overview of the events most likely to occur. All event descriptions include sufficient information for the gamemaster to resolve each situation in different ways, depending on the players' actions. This allows the gamemaster to adapt the adventure to suit his particular group of players. To run the adventure, the gamemaster needs a thorough familiarity with the contents of this book.

Ardanyan's Revenge is intended for a group of three to five Initiate and Novice (First to Fourth Circle) adepts of any Discipline, and is ideal as an introductory adventure for a group of new **Earthdawn** players. This book contains everything needed to start an **Earthdawn** campaign, but is also flexible enough to be used in a currently running campaign. Both the **Earthdawn Player's** and **Gamemaster's Compendiums** are required to use this adventure.

The setting material provided in this book can also be used as the basis for further adventures. The town of Ardanyan is *not* a static place; the player characters will play a vital role in its history, however, and likely change the face of the kaer forever. It is a place they will come back to, especially if the characters begin play as kaer-dwellers (see **Preparing the Adventure**, p. 12).

Though gamemaster characters can play significant roles in this adventure, the gamemaster should not allow them to overshadow the player characters. When adventurers attempt to overcome a particular obstacle, or try to think of a way out of some dangerous situation, avoid using

gamemaster characters to tell the players how to resolve the problem. After all, if players make the right choices all the time, both they and the gamemaster have a lot less fun. Whenever possible let your group of players make their own beds and squirm in them.

MAKING TESTS

During the course of **Ardanyan's Revenge**, whenever characters attempt to take actions such as casting a spell, swinging a sword at an opponent, tracking a Horror, or flirting with a barmaid, the gamemaster or the player rolls dice against a **Difficulty Number** to determine the action's outcome. These dice rolls are called **Action Tests** (see the **Game Concepts** chapter of the **Player's Compendium**, p. 18).

To make an Action Test, the player or gamemaster rolls the appropriate **Action dice** based on the **step number** of the ability being used. If the dice roll result is equal to or greater than the Difficulty Number, the test succeeds and the character accomplishes his action. If the result is less than the Difficulty Number, the character fails to accomplish his action. In tests that deal with magic, the result often determines the duration of a magical effect.

Frequently, a test result determines not only basic success or failure, but the degree of success. A test may have one of six result levels: Pathetic, Poor, Average, Good, Excellent, or Extraordinary. A **Poor** result usually indicates simple failure at the task. A **Pathetic** result, less than the Difficulty Number listed for a Poor result, is often bad enough to have unpleasant side effects. An **Average** result, equal to or barely exceeding the Difficulty Number, usually means the character only just accomplished his action. A somewhat better roll yields a **Good** result, and a total close to double the Difficulty Number means an **Excellent** result. To achieve an **Extraordinary** result requires an even better roll again.

Any result level greater than Average may give the character some additional gain for his actions, including valuable extra information. The amount of gain for each result level is determined by the gamemaster, unless specifically noted.

In many cases when the player characters must make a test, the required ability is given, followed by the Difficulty Number of the task in parentheses. For example, a Perception (8) Test means that a character must use his Perception step to make a test against a target Difficulty Number of 8. A result of 8 or better succeeds; anything else fails.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Aside from the **Player's** and **Gamemaster's Compendiums**, this book contains everything required to run **Ardanyan's Revenge**. The gamemaster should read the adventure carefully to familiarize himself with the background before beginning the game.

The pace of **Ardanyan's Revenge** will often go very

fast, much like a rollercoaster ride. To stay on top of the adventure's rapidly changing events, the gamemaster must know what happens in advance so he can hurl the unwitting characters into the next challenging situation before the players have time to think. The gamemaster should be familiar with the basic outline of the plot and know precisely which developments trigger later events. As always, the gamemaster should also be prepared to deal with the unexpected.

SETTING INFORMATION

There are three chapters in this book that provide a complete description of the setting and its background. The **History** section tells the story of what happened and shaped this place in the past. Each chapter provides an overview of the area as well as a complete map for the gamemaster's eyes only.

The following sections give details and maps on different **Places of Interest** and **Personalities** the area contains. The three chapters are:

Kaer Ardanyan

A lost kaer whose population has become divided during its long history. Unaware of the fact that the Scourge has already ended, the people of Kaer Ardanyan believe that a Horror lurks in front of their gates. This chapter also includes notes on how to create kaer-dweller characters.

The Town of Ardanyan

Providing a safe haven from the marauding ork scorchers in the area, many people seek to rest in this prosperous trading town. A secret society Named the Cross of Ardanyan pulls the strings in the background, diverting people from the true source of their wealth.

Deep Mines

The mines hide the entrance to Kaer Ardanyan and are a dangerous and supposedly haunted place, filled with traps of all kinds. Guards installed by the Cross of Ardanyan ensure that no-one enters the mines and returns alive.

ENCOUNTERS AND EVENTS

The **Plot Synopsis** in this chapter summarizes the story background and the most probable course of the adventure. The chapters containing encounters (see below) describe the situations and events the characters must deal with during the course of the adventure. Each encounter contains five sections: **Overview**, **Setting the Stage**, **Themes and Images**, **Behind the Scenes**, and **Troubleshooting**.

The **Overview** gives the gamemaster a summary of the action that occurs during the encounter, and also tells him the encounter's objective.

The next section, **Setting the Stage**, contains a description of the encounter's surroundings and includes maps, if applicable. This section may also contain a narrative describing the player characters' location and what is happening to them as if the character were actually

there. Any special instructions for the gamemaster are highlighted.

Themes and Images helps the gamemaster set the mood and pacing for a particular encounter. It includes hints about imagery to use in the scene, emotions to convey, sounds, sensations, and so on. The information provided varies in form and content from scene to scene, ranging from general themes to specific sensory impressions.

Behind the Scenes explains what is really going on in each encounter. This section provides the gamemaster with all of the information he needs to run the encounter, such as specialized descriptions of locations and events, and statistics for any gamemaster characters the player characters may meet or creatures they may fight. If the players or gamemaster need a map to play an encounter, it appears here. As with **Setting the Stage**, any special instructions for the gamemaster are highlighted.

The final section of each encounter, **Trouble-shooting**, offers suggestions to help the gamemaster get the adventure back on track should things go awry. For example, the characters may miss an important clue or lose a fight that they need to win. Most gamemasters will not want the player characters to get discouraged or killed off too easily. This section offers the gamemaster options for keeping the game going over trouble spots. The gamemaster can, of course, ignore these hints and invent his own solutions, or simply let the chips fall where they may. As noted earlier, however, the freeform nature of roleplaying means we can't anticipate everything the player characters might do! The gamemaster is again advised that he should be prepared to improvise if required.

The opening chapters of **Ardanyan's Revenge** are linear and were designed to set up the story. Once it gets going, further scenes occur in the order the adepts seek them out and the gamemaster presents them. The major events are described here in the order that they are most likely to occur.

False Secrets

This is the starting chapter for heroes starting the adventure inside the kaer, providing hooks and ideas about how to get the characters involved.

Gamemasters are encouraged to run the events detailed here as an introduction to the main story.

A Leap in the Dark

The kaer council needs the characters for a secret and dangerous mission. The exploration party has disappeared and the characters are called upon to scout for the scouts—and report what happened.

En Route

When this adventure is tied into a running campaign, this chapter serves as the starting chapter for a traveling group from outside the kaer.

Gamemasters are encouraged to run the events detailed here as an introduction to the main story.

Death on the Road

The heroes encounter the dying dwarf Tungar, who has been harassed by a band of elven raiders. The heroes will find themselves in deep trouble when the raiders attack to finish what they started.

Tungar has a map and a letter describing an old and forgotten mine near the town of Ardanyan.

With a Pinch of Salt

The heroes enter the town to investigate. Characters from the kaer will recognize some names and faces from people they thought were dead. The heroes will meet Titoo, a human thief who allies with the heroes to get rid of his own problems. With his help, kaer-dweller heroes can find out where their masters are. Other adventurers will find that helping Titoo might provide an answer to their own questions. Unfortunately,

they have to break into the most secure place in town: the Council House, which also serves as the headquarters for the Cross of Ardanyan.

Breaking the Bonds

How can the characters free the kaer from their oppressors and drive the oppressors away? They will have to enter the kaer and convince the population of the truth, eventually starting a revolution.



But have they found out who is behind it all yet? The illusionist Leldrin is out to fool them all!

GAME INFORMATION

The following chapters provide additional information on the adventure, gamemaster characters, optional rules, and handouts.

Loose Ends

Following the encounters, this chapter sums up the consequences of the adventure and suggests ways in which the gamemaster might use the adventure's gamemaster characters and settings in future adventures.

This section includes Awarding Legend Points — guidelines for awarding the adventure's Legend Points to the player characters. The gamemaster awards Legend Points after each gaming session (see **Game Session Legend Points**, below) as well as at the end of the adventure.

Rumors and Research

This chapter provides gamemasters with all the information the characters can obtain from outside sources: rumors, tales and legends, library research, and so on.

If he wishes, the gamemaster can adapt much of the information in this section for future adventures.

Cast of Characters

This chapter provides game statistics and descriptions for the most significant gamemaster characters.

Rites of Protection and Passage

This chapter provides general information on how kaers were designed and built before the Scourge. Gamemasters will find useful hints on how to set up and run a kaer campaign, along with other considerations to make when designing kaers and kaer-dweller characters.

The most recent version of the **Rites of Protection and Passage** (along with other free stuff) is available from our web site at:

<http://www.earthdawn.com>

Player Handouts

Finally, this chapter contains information that the player characters will use during the adventure. This information can be photocopied or handwritten by the gamemaster. Permission is granted to copy these handouts *for personal use only*.

GAME SESSION LEGEND POINTS

In addition to awarding Legend Points to player characters at the end of the adventure, the gamemaster awards Legend Points at the end of each game session, whether or not the entire adventure fits into that session. Each session also has a clear session goal.

The **Awarding Legend Points** section lists the encounters and the appropriate Legend Point Awards in

each session for defeating opponents, finding treasures, creative roleplaying and heroics, and so on.

See the **Gamemastering** chapter of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**, on p. 94, for more information on awarding Legend Points.

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Ardanyan's Revenge can be run from two different perspectives.

If you use this adventure to start off a new campaign, the player characters should start inside the kaer. This allows new players to be introduced easily to the world of **Earthdawn**, since no knowledge of the outside setting is required. Please note that creating kaer-dweller characters requires some additional consideration — refer to the **Creating Kaer-Dweller Characters** section on p. 29 for hints and advice. Complete setting information is provided in the opening chapter, **Kaer Ardanyan** (p. 16). If you are using this approach, begin play with the events detailed in **False Secrets** (p. 31).

This adventure can also be tied into a running campaign. The heroes are drawn into the story by the events detailed in **En Route** (p. 58) and **Death on the Road** (p. 62). After the events detailed in those chapters, the group will have enough unpleasant questions to visit the town of Ardanyan (detailed in **The Town of Ardanyan** chapter, p. 44).

It is impossible to create a published adventure that provides the appropriate opposition level for every diverse group of player characters. Some groups are inherently more powerful than others. The gamemaster must adjust game statistics and capabilities of the opposition to provide an appropriate level of difficulty for his group.

If the adventure does not suit the player characters' strengths and weaknesses, the gamemaster may use it as an outline, the bones on which to develop an adventure of his own. Or, if it works well except for a glitch here and there, the gamemaster can change any part of the plot or events to make the adventure a better one.

Several maps and handouts are included with this adventure. The gamemaster should photocopy any handouts and have them ready to use when needed. In addition to props, gamemasters might want to use background music to help convey mood. Use the descriptions in the **Themes and Images** sections to find out what kind of music might be appropriate for a given encounter.

Keep in mind that you, as the gamemaster, have a unique responsibility to make the adventure exciting, keep the players involved, and hold the story on track. In describing the world of **Earthdawn**, try to answer all the players' questions about what the characters see, hear, touch, smell, and taste. Feel free to go beyond the descriptions provided in this book when evoking places and moods.

To keep the players connected to the action, ask them "*What do you do?*" each time you describe a new scene to them. By having to describe what they want their characters to do, the players help to tell the story and add to their own enjoyment.



If the players wander from the storyline, nudge them back in the right direction. If the players make choices that interrupt the story or make them miss a vital clue, drop hints to encourage them to do what the adventure expects. Remember, however, to try keep things subtle. A gamemaster guides the players; he does not tell them what to do.

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Since the end of the Scourge, the dwarfs of Throal try to breathe new life into the trade between the large cities—mainly by finding safe routes for caravans. Some of these do not have much traffic, while others have grown into busy trade routes.

One of the more important routes connects Bartertown with Tansiarda, one of the largest post-Scourge construction sites. The people of Tansiarda are building a large bridge across the Serpent River. They have their problems though—there are many factions unhappy about the construction, who express their anger by sabotaging it. But once the bridge is finished, a direct overland connection between Throal, Urupa and Parlainth will become a reality. So it comes as no surprise to most that the road to Tan-

siarda already has a lot of traffic these days—the route is brimming with new workers, merchants, and caravans.

The road makes its way through the town of Ardanyan, a welcome stop and place of rest for any traveler. People say that this town is one of the few places in Barsaive that were constructed without its people coming from a kaer. Instead, a group of wealthy merchants chose this place for trade. Ardanyan is a rich town for rich people—because they founded it.

Aside from wealthy merchants and construction workers, there are a large number of other people who have settled down in Ardanyan. The town is bustling with activity, on its best way to becoming a city. Troubadours sing their songs and perform their arts openly. Each day sees new faces offering their goods before they continue their journey. Countless rumors and stories from across Barsaive are told on the local marketplace, and often adepts and other adventurers pay a visit to Ardanyan—hoping to get hired by the merchants.

But a dark secret is hidden behind this peaceful setting. A selected circle of people—a secret society named the Cross of Ardanyan or simply the Order—keeps this secret and ensures silence. The Order is controlling the town from behind the curtains. Quite a few people have vanished just because they dared to ask the wrong ques-

tions. The Order is led by a handful of elves hailing from a kaer in the nearby foothills of the Throal Mountains. No one else remembers it, and those who did have no reason to care about it... anymore. The kaers existence is the Orders' biggest treasure — because it is still populated.

The people living inside the kaer never opened it since their first expedition revealed a Horror lurking just outside the gates. They don't know that the Horror was just an illusion, and perhaps the kaer-dwellers will stay under the earth forever if no one tells them the truth. The reason for their blissful ignorance is an ancient feud between the dwarves and the elves of the kaer.

The feud is a terrible act of revenge — fuelled by the patron Passion of the kaer: Rashomon, which once stood

for endurance, tolerance, and perseverance. During the Scourge, the Passions Erendis, Rashomon, and Vestrial went mad and became Dis, Raggok, and Vestrial. Raggok is the new Name of Rashomon, and its ideals are now vengeance, bitterness, and envy. The Order teaches the way of Raggok to its members.

While the people of Kaer Ardanyan think that they are threatened by a Horror, the questors of Raggok celebrate their sweet vengeance and revel in the luxury provided by the miners inside the kaer (see **Kaer Ardanyan**, on p. 16, and **The Town of Ardanyan**, on p. 44, for more details).

But there is a glimpse of hope. The town has become quite a favorite among travelers — Ardanyan is growing quickly, and the Order had problems silencing everyone who does not fit into their plans. Countless rumors exist about the extreme wealth of the founders and the cursed mines in the nearby foothills. The mines are a haunted and dangerous place. No one who dared to go there ever came back. So far, no one found out about the kaer hidden below the mines.

Inside the kaer, the last hope of the current generation is preparing to leave. The kaer council bowed to the will of the population and decided to send another scouting party out of the gates — despite the dangers involved. Almost fifty years after the first expedition, another band of adepts will dare to look if the Horror threatening the kaer has gone.

The Cross of Ardanyan is prepared to counter these problems. It has dispatched a group of loyal cavalymen to stand guard at the mines. Farathiel, the leader of the group, has orders to imprison everyone who comes out of the kaer. In town, the members of the Order are everywhere. Newcomers usually serve the town watch to look for trouble, while senior members pull the strings from behind the scenes.

The kaer is also watched from the inside: the leader of the Order, an Illusionist named Leldrin, is a hero honored by the kaer council. His hatred sits deep, and while business is running very well outside, he feeds on the ignorance of his prisoners. While most of the others have succumbed to decadence and enjoy living in luxury, Leldrin chose to live among his victims — who regard him as the greatest hero alive.

The player characters are the spark that will inflame this heap of intrigues, deceit, and illusions. It will burn bright, but the characters have to be careful not to fall victim to the flames. As mentioned before, the characters can either be kaer-dwellers or adventurers from elsewhere.

KAER-DWELLERS

Beginning characters will most likely start the adventure inside the kaer. They will take part in a large celebration and witness the scouting party leaving through Freedom Gate. The expedition consists of their masters, some of the best adepts Kaer Ardanyan has to offer. But they fail to return — and the characters will be sent out on a secret mission by one of the councilors. Their goal is to find out what happened to their masters and return to report immediately.



The heroes will encounter the deep mines, a complex of shafts and traps that once served to keep intruders away from the kaers' entrance deep underground. The Order has modified the mines to ensure no one gets in or out unseen. Overcoming these mechanisms is the first part of the adventure. Once the characters reach the surface, they will realize that the Scourge has indeed come to an end, but their masters are gone. Returning to the kaer will prove impossible — the characters are forced to find another way inside.

The heroes explore the forests surrounding the mines, and sooner or later they will find out that their masters have not fought the Horror, but must have discovered the town nearby. That the town bears the same Name as their kaer is only the start of their problems. They will encounter familiar faces — people they considered dead for years. People who had the chance to leave the kaer and now serve the Order. They will also discover that they are wanted themselves — the Order knows about them.

The characters will have many questions, but there aren't a lot of people giving answers. They are in danger of being spotted and taken away — the same fate that occurred to their masters.

Once the heroes understand the game being played in Ardanyan, they will have to find a way to communicate with their people. This is harder to accomplish, but there is another way into the kaer. Unfortunately, it is located in the cellars of the town's Council House — the Order's headquarters.

If the characters manage to get inside, they can start a rebellion — the sheer numbers of people leaving the kaer will be enough to confront the Cross of Ardanyan. With luck, it will be the end of the betrayers.

ADVENTURERS

If the adventure is tied into an ongoing campaign, the heroes have to start somewhere else. On their travels, they meet a dwarf named Tungar, who is suffering from several wounds he received in an attack. He begs for help, and is thankful if the heroes come to his aid. He promises to share his treasure with them in return, a treasure buried in the vicinity of the nearby town of Ardanyan.

While he is sharing what he knows of the old mine, his enemies arrive to finish him off. They are the cause of his injuries and they will fight until the dwarf is dead. Tungar will most probably die, but even if he manages to survive, the heroes' questions can only be answered in Ardanyan. Tungar carries a letter and a map giving hints about the cursed mine close to the town, providing a basis for the heroes' investigation.

The group will investigate the mines and the surrounding forest. The old complex is lined with traps, but there seems to be nothing there worth being guarded. Farathiel and his men will do anything to prevent the heroes to get in or out of the mines. Depending on their actions, the Order might perceive the group as a disturbing factor, which has to be eradicated.

The town of Ardanyan is the most likely place where the heroes will get answers on their questions. The Cross of

Ardanyan is in control here, however, and will do anything to discredit the characters and capture them. Only few people will trust the characters. For the main part of the adventure, the heroes try to find out who is fighting them and why. As soon as they have lifted the secrets guarded by the Order, they will have to find a way to free the people in the kaer.

It will be difficult to leave the town to get outside help, because the Order will take every opportunity to cover its tracks. The heroes will only succeed with caution and an open mind — they have to enter the Council House and find the alternative entrance to the kaer. With the help of the disgruntled kaer-dwellers, they can start a rebellion and set an end to the tyranny of the Cross of Ardanyan.



KAER ARDANYAN

Can't say that centuries-long nap wasn't refreshing, but things definitely changed around here — especially the smell. Did you drill holes in the sky because the air went bad?

• **Caszt T'Mordan, visiting the Hall of Khar Rhûz** •



Kaer Ardanyan is a closed environment — three small villages with no connection to the outside world. Past conflicts have had profound consequences on Kaer Ardanyan's society.

This chapter provides setting information and background material on Kaer Ardanyan, including maps of the most interesting areas in the kaer. At the end of this chapter are some hints and advice on how to create kaer-dweller characters. Players should not read this chapter — this information is for the gamemaster's eyes only.

To best use Kaer Ardanyan with this adventure, the gamemaster should be thoroughly familiar with the setting. Before creating any player characters, he should be able to describe the kaer and its history to the players. Inviting players to explore how life works in the kaer may spark their creativity by allowing them to incorporate some of their own ideas.

The gamemaster should work with the players to find explanations for questions that aren't answered in this book and should run with those ideas that work best for himself and his group.

HISTORY

Before the Scourge, the Theran Empire ruled over the province of Barsaive. The Therans tamed the wilderness by constructing roads and trade flourished almost everywhere. Not all cities and towns were connected by Theran roads, however, and alternative trade routes emerged where the roads did not reach.

One of these trade routes developed in the foothills of the southern Throal Mountains. It was Throal's link to the Serpent River, where a Theran road ran from the city of Parlainth to the settlements along the coast of the Aras

Sea. Back in those times, dwarven engineers decided to build their own road and a bridge across the Serpent River. Theran governor Kern Fallo disliked the idea; his secret intent was to keep the dwarven kingdom small. Without support and protection from Theran cavalry, the route to Throal remained largely insecure — the caravans were easy prey for ork scorchers and brigands.

ON THE FALL OF ARDANYAN

The trade route forked in the forests between the Coil and Alidar rivers, allowing travelers to reach the settlements in the south. This crossing was the site of a shrine devoted to Rashomon — a place where the questor Ardan Yan blessed travelers with courage and endurance for the rest of their journey. Many people rested here, and used the opportunity to trade with the elves of the nearby forests. Over time, as more people settled down in the area, the crossing slowly turned into a permanent village.

Ork scorchers became interested in the site when it became palisaded, watching the settlement carefully. On a clear night, they attacked, razing the place without mercy, and slaying the few warriors brave enough to take up the fight. Ardan Yan died along with them. The scorchers took everything they could load upon their massive thundra beasts.

After the ork scorchers had moved on, the elves decided to rebuild the village, naming it Ardanyan in honor of the fallen questor. Word spread fast, and soon other questors came to expand the shrine into a larger temple. Wealthy Throalic merchants funded the construction for their own interests, and provided mercenaries to protect the village from further scorcher raids. The elves soon found themselves governing a small town that was growing so fast that bigger walls were needed for defense against scorcher attacks.

ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF KAER ARDANYAN

A few decades before the Scourge, the town council negotiated with Theran officials to receive the *Rites of Protection and Passage*. A settlement of the size of Ardanyan was barely worth the Therans' attention, so they suggested that the people of Ardanyan join a bigger kaer instead of constructing their own. When the council members insisted on purchasing the *Rites*, the Therans grudgingly demanded a price so high in goods, gold, and slaves, that the town would not have been able to afford to build their own kaer if they agreed to the deal.

Negotiations were again taken up when dwarven stonemasons found deposits of precious gold and silver in the nearby foothills. They took this as evidence of a cache of elemental earth buried deeper below the surface. Sup-

porting the masons with Elementalists to dig into the hills faster than usual, enough elemental earth was mined to pay the Therans for the *Rites* without resorting to slavery. And there was still plenty more True earth to be found.

Rich from their find, Ardanyan's council hired the famous dwarven architect Ghandoz to plan the construction of the kaer. Four large halls were carved out of the natural caves near the mines. Like an orb-shaped shield, protective runes were dimensioned to incorporate the surrounding rock—providing sufficient space for further excavation during the Scourge without risk of disturbing the kaer's wards. The temple of Rashomon was integrated into the central hall where fantastic mosaics and paintings decorated the long hallways. The domes of the halls were painted sky-blue and enhanced with illusion magic to make everyone forget that they were underground.



ON MINING WITH GREED

The mines of Kaer Ardanyan were soon brimming with activity. Once the kaer's gates had closed, everything of value was stripped from the rocks and processed in anticipation of a new beginning after the Scourge ended. The treasures were enormous—some veins of elemental earth were so rich that generations of miners would be needed to work them. The kaer council decreed that all families would share the treasure in equal parts, as all of them contributed to the common goal of survival—miners or not. A lion's share would be held back, however, saved to rebuild the town.

But all the riches served no one as long as the kaer was sealed. There was no trade, and gold is impossible to eat. Still, some dwarven miners considered it unfair that their hard-working families would receive the same share as those elves tending the crops and demanded bigger shares for their heirs. The kaer council denied their requests on several occasions, and even the Miner's Guild did not back their requests.

Frustrated, several miners joined forces and developed a plan. Hiring an Illusionist to hide a secretly constructed tunnel, they fooled the Miner's Guild, the kaer council, and the architect Ghandoz, at the same time. In a dark cavern at the end of the tunnel, they stored everything that was not reported to the guild and council: chunks of silver and gold, precious gems—even elemental earth.

For decades, their tunnel remained a secret—until the kaer council decided to expand the temple of Rashomon. Samiel, highest questor and spiritual leader of the kaer, had requested more space to house and train his followers. The tragedy happened a few years later, when tons of rock broke from the ceiling and buried the new temple wing underneath. Almost all of the temple's questors died, and—in shock at what he thought was his own failed planning—Ghandoz almost took his own life.

The architect's innocence was proved when the hidden riches were found beneath the rubble and the secret tunnel was uncovered. The dwarven miners' greed had taken the lives of Samiel and his followers. Most of the culprits were caught and imprisoned in the days following the investigations. The kaer council, still consisting of the same elves that founded Ardanyan, decided to penalize the miner's betrayal with death. The practice of illusionism by dwarves was outlawed and the kaer guard enforced stricter control of the mines.

Samiel's fate hung like a curse over the temple grounds. Without his guidance, the few remaining followers lost both their hope and their courage. No one was ready to step into Samiel's shoes, and no one dared to rebuild the temple. The temple grounds were Named the Temple of Greed, and left abandoned.

ON THE SEPARATION

When the betrayal was discussed and investigated, the Miner's Guild finally took a firm stance. While they lamented the destruction of the temple and the elven questor's death, they began to understand the problem that drove the miners to betray the council. The guild's official request

for bigger shares led to a fight in the council house, when a council member slipped a condescending remark about dwarven family business. He and two guild members were banned from Council Hall as a result.

The presence of kaer guards in the mines fuelled unrest among the miners. Being watched so closely, they almost felt like slaves. Dwarven thick-headedness and elven arrogance had turned Kaer Ardanyan into a powder keg threatening to explode at any time.

In the following years, more and more people sought the neighborhood of their own kin rather than living peacefully and side-by-side. No elf wanted to live next door to a dwarven family possibly involved with the Temple of Greed and vice versa. Slowly, Khar Rhûz became the home of all dwarves while the gardens of Shal'Minar eventually housed the complete elven population.

When the architect Ghandoz died of old age, the situation grew desperate. The architect's reputation and experience had made him a respected negotiator between the elven kaer council and the dwarven Miner's Guild. His successor, Tahrkusz, was different. He had always sided with the miners, but no one even suspected him of being the architect of the hidden tunnel. Officially backed by the Miner's Guild, Tahrkusz provoked the council by open rebellion. His expectations were surpassed when the kaer council imprisoned him, closed the mines, and disbanded the Miner's Guild altogether.

The council's decision was unacceptable for all dwarves. Mining works went on while the swords of the kaer guard clashed with dwarven warhammers and pick-axes. When Tahrkusz was displayed in Council Hall for his trial, several dwarven warriors took hostages and freed him in a small skirmish, turning Council Hall into a cauldron of openly displayed racial hatred.

The fighting stopped when the population of Okoros decided to seal themselves off and exiled all remaining elves and dwarves living there. For the first time in Ardanyan's history, one of the halls had closed its gigantic gates leading to Council Hall. The lines were drawn, and the kaer community was shattered into pieces when the other halls closed their gates as well.

ON THE NEED FOR TRADE

Supplies grew thin only a few months after the separation. No hall was able to feed their citizens alone—Kaer Ardanyan had not been designed for this. Cautious negotiations were taken up in the only neutral area left: Council Hall. The ambassadors agreed on a compromise: the treasure currently in the vault would be distributed evenly among the families, minus a share for rebuilding the town at the end of the Scourge. Everyone was allowed to increase his treasure by mining as long as he signed up with the Miner's Guild and paid taxes. Additionally, each hall was allowed to set up its own laws on trading, enabling everyone to master his own wealth.

Council Hall became a marketplace, where designated merchants bartered with what their halls had to offer in exchange for other things needed. The ambassadors regulated and governed the new system of trade. It worked, but

an undertone of distrust between the halls remained.

Within two centuries, a new government evolved. Generations of ambassadors had met in Council Hall regularly. They were aware of problems affecting the whole kaer, the only ones able to see the big picture. The ambassadors already helped each other out, sometimes even bypassing the laws for the good of everyone. After a long time, they eventually convinced their rulers to officially declare peace and create a new, united council governing the whole kaer. The governors formed the new kaer council, each of them still ruling over his own hall with their own laws and customs.

ON RASHOMON'S MADNESS

The Temple of Greed, once the proud centerpiece of the kaer — now closed and in ruins, slowly dissolved into oblivion. The madness that befell the Passion Rashomon during the Scourge went by unnoticed by the population. No one witnessed how it changed to become Raggok — Passion of vengeance, bitterness, and jealousy. Only the remaining handful of followers felt a growing urge for revenge.

Leldrin, the oldest of Samiel's surviving followers, sought to satisfy the urge. He rallied the other followers and began turning his plans into reality — decades before the Scourge was predicted to end. A fire in the central library marked the beginning. The kaer guard perceived it as arson, aimed to destroy the kaer's documents. For Leldrin, it was just a diversion to steal the *Book of Sigils*, a massive tome containing the secrets of the powerful Theran wards.

ON LEDDRIN'S BETRAYAL

A few decades following the new council's founding, the magicians of Kaer Ardanyan suggested that the time had come to mount an expedition. They frequently performed the ritual written in the *Book of Tomorrow*, and interpreted the results as an indicator for the Scourge's end. A call for volunteers went out to the adepts of the kaer. After a few weeks of preparation, the kaer council sent out an exploration party to find a safe way through the wards and traps their forefathers had put into place.

Led by the illusionist Leldrin, the party consisted mostly of his followers. The highly regarded dwarfs Dunar and Fearghus of Khar Rhûz — the only explorers not part of Leldrin's quest for revenge, accompanied them. No evil had touched the wards outside the kaer; only a single trap had snapped and bound a minor Horror. Leldrin led the party safely to the surface. Everything seemed fine, the Scourge was over.

When the two dwarves cheerfully turned back to report to the council, the rest of the party unveiled their true intentions. Fleeing back into the maze, the dwarves killed two of them before they met their final destiny. Leldrin used his illusions to disguise himself and mimic the trapped Horror. Fearghus died fighting, and Dunar was sacrificed — his blood was used to create the Cross of Ardanyan with Death Magic. The newly founded secret society parted ways: Leldrin returned into the kaer while his followers remained

outside. With the help of the *Book of Sigils* and Leldrin's illusions they would use the kaer's treasury to rebuild the town (see **The Town of Ardanyan** on p. 44 for more details on their story).

When Leldrin returned carrying the dead body of Fearghus in his arms, voices arose in the hall of Khar Rhûz. The governor demanded to verify what happened. The kaer council ordered the human Nethermancer Jandaan from Okoros to prove Leldrin's words. Jandaan did as requested — but Leldrin's illusions had fooled him as well. The council's worst fears came true — the Scourge was not over yet, and there was a Horror lurking in front of the gates.

ON HOPE RETURNING

The mood in Kaer Ardanyan slowly dropped to an all time low. People went missing over the next years, and each day sprouted new, scary stories. Whispered rumors of a secret cult devoted to the Horror at the gates made their round, of cultists sacrificing innocent people to strengthen the Horror. Of all the Name-givers that vanished, the elven population was hit hardest. Apart from the missing, a series of strange diseases killed dozens of elves in the gardens of Shal'Minar. More rumors were raised when people feared that Leldrin had brought a curse back with him. Repeated investigations revealed that there was no truth to these rumors, and they eventually ebbed a year ago — when a shining ray of hope returned to end the dark times.

Once every century, the only two obsidimen of Kaer Ardanyan wake from hibernation. They end their long time dreaming and talk to the people to hear stories of the things that happened and how the kaer developed. This time, the obsidimen stayed awake. They didn't say why, but everyone knew it had something to do with the Scourge. A few weeks later, their awakening was followed by the t'skrang. No one expected their return, and a fisherman of Okoros almost had a stroke when the first reptilian Name-giver appeared on the shore of Lake Vross.

Almost fifty years have passed since the first expedition — and everyone feels that the Scourge must have ended. A great burden lasts on the shoulders of the kaer council. They are forced to mount a new expedition by public demand, risking opening the kaer to a Horror waiting outside...

THE KAER

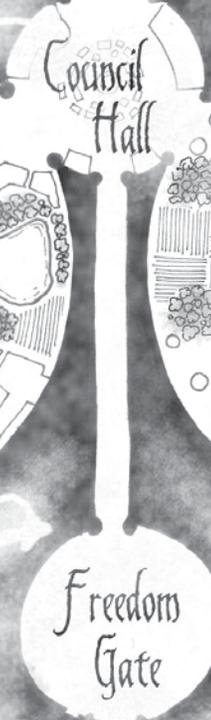
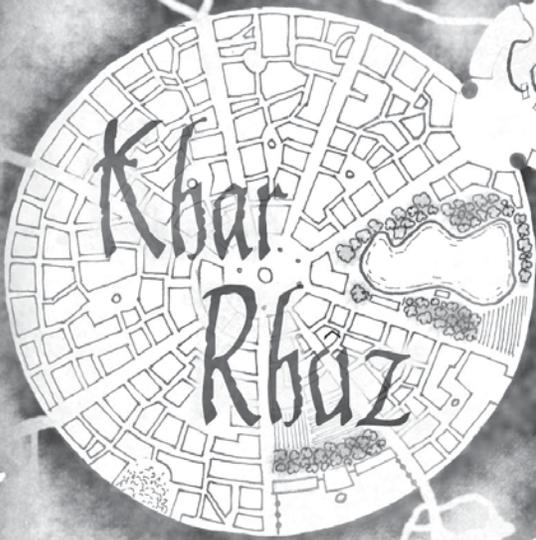
The following section describes the kaer in general and the separate halls in detail, including places of interest and important personalities. The maps presented here are intended for the gamemasters eyes only, since they show locations unknown to the characters. Players should use the hand-out maps in the back of this book.

ON HOW KAER ARDANYAN WORKS

The dwarven architect Ghandoz designed Kaer Ardanyan, who dimensioned it large enough that there was



KAER ARDANYAN



Kaer Ardanyan



enough space for coming generations and mining work. The protective wards are shaped like an orb incorporating the surrounding rock, with a tunnel circling the kaer's equator. This border tunnel also marks ground zero of the kaer—there are levels above and below it. Four large halls were carved out of existing natural caves, which were widened and expanded to have a domed ceiling. The three largest halls—called **Khar Rhûz**, **Shal'Minar**, and **Okoros**—were planned as living areas centered around the smallest one, **Council Hall**, which served administrative purposes only. Today, the kaer is home to about 3,200 Name-givers.

All halls are illuminated by a large light crystal mounted in the center of each dome. During the day, the crystals emanate a yellowish glow reminding of sunlight. The ceilings were painted in a light blue and enhanced with illusion magic to create the image of a clear sky. The crystal light slowly fades on and off twice a day to create the illusion of dusk and dawn. Countless smaller light quartzes set into the domes simulate stars during the night.

The underground levels serve various purposes. The levels directly under the surface are mainly used for storage and cooling food, sometimes even as living quarters. Chamber pots are emptied in the lower halls and come back as fertilizer for the fields. The deepest levels contain the death pits, where the bodies of the deceased are disposed. A deep layer of mud covers these pits, which are regularly skimmed for bones.

An underground river was diverted to supply Kaer Ardanyan with water. The river is entering the kaer's wards near the hall of Okoros and descends deep under the lowest levels, where it exits the wards again. A number of water elementals were bound to ensure the purity of the water and the safety of the kaer. These spirits also divert enough water to feed the lakes inside the halls.

Apart from naturally grown air sponges, several air elementals clean the air and circulate it. As with the water elementals, the spirits work in the background and are mostly invisible. When the library was on fire many years back, the displeased spirits manifested in a great storm to clean out the smoke.

ON CUSTOMS

The Separation and the circumstances of living in a closed underground environment had many lasting effects on Kaer Ardanyan's society. Even if each hall has developed its own laws and customs, everyone works hard to ensure the survival of the kaer. For example, most materials need to be recycled. The death pits in the lowest levels are not only used to get rid of dead bodies—the mud filling the pits is highly acidic and decomposes organic matter in a matter of days. The bones skimmed from the mud are usually returned to the families, who carve tools or jewelry from it. It is not unusual to use an ancestor's skull as a mug or sit on a stool made from his bones.

Since water is a common resource, it is frowned upon to swim in the lakes of the kaer. Some people don't like to drink anything others swam in. Only Lake Vevenna in Shal'Minar is reserved for this activity, but curiously

enough, all people seem to ignore what the t'skrang do in Lake Vross.

There was no trade in Ardanyan until the Separation. According to kaer law, only certified merchants are allowed to trade in Council Hall. Not all merchants sell their wares with profit on their hall's local market—Shal'Minar makes an exception, and barter only for goods of equal value.

Minted coins are seldom used for trading, far more common is the practice of accumulating a certain debt before filing a transfer of money at Council Hall. Coins are used to pay smaller sums, however. Most taverns only accept hard currency as some people tend to forget paying when they're drunk.

Being a neutral place, Council Hall is not open to everyone. Travelers must check with the kaer guard on their destination and approximate duration of their stay, before passing through Council Hall in a quick fashion. Travelers have to spend at least one night at a local inn when visiting another hall.

THE MINES OF KHAR RHÛZ

Khar Rhûz roughly translates as *Home of the Rock-eaters*, because the hall was the first one to start mining. Dwarves mainly populate this hall, but a handful of humans and orks have immigrated in the past few years to work and learn here. About one thousand Name-givers live here.

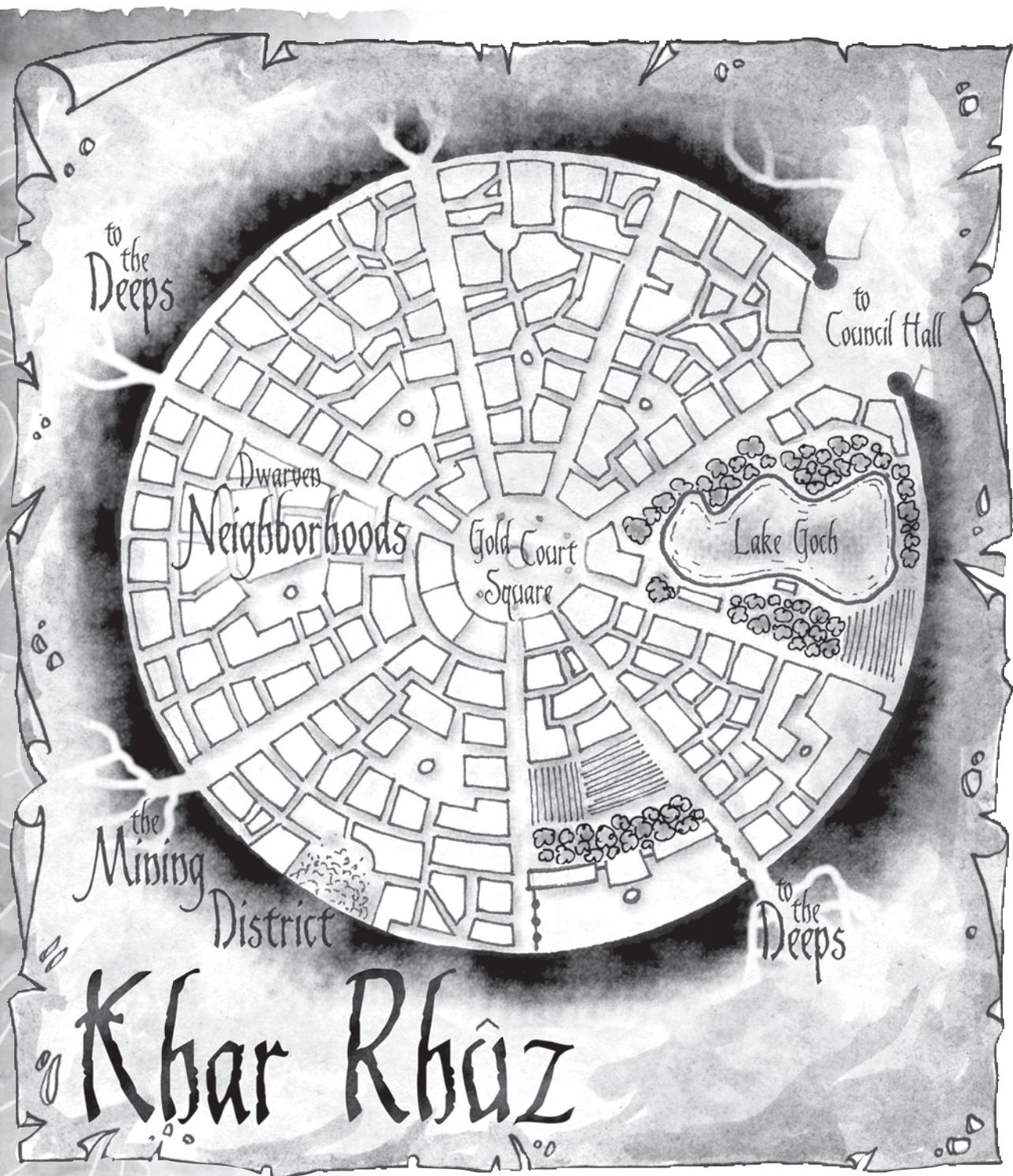
Many people say that there are as many holes in the sky of Khar Rhûz as in a colander, because the illusion of this hall's blue sky is disturbed by a large number of frames, pulleys, and stairs. Each stairway leads up to a mine entrance in the domed ceiling, appearing like holes in the heaven.

Ore is processed in large workshops, and the fine smoke rising from the chimneys along with the constant noise of hammers hitting countless anvils adds an industrial feeling to the hall during the day. Khar Rhûz has only limited space for plants and animals. Sheep and goats, along with chickens, ducks, and geese are housed in a small number of guarded corrals. Fast-growing and nutritious grain and crop fill the small fields, but none of the harvest is used for trade in Council Hall—it's barely enough for the dwarfs.

A small grove consisting mostly of *bal'nesh* trees serves as a small park and recreational area. These trees grow relatively fast and are mainly used to fuel the fires in the forges, as they produce almost no smoke when burned. Several ponies spin the wheels on the shore of Lake Goch to transport the water into a system of small channels running above the houses to fill the cisterns distributed throughout the neighborhoods.

PLACES OF INTEREST

The most prominent spots of Khar Rhûz include Gold Court Square, the Mining Districts, the Deeps, and the Dwarven Neighborhoods.



Gold Court Square

A large statue of Upandal dominates the favored meeting place of troubadours in Khar Rhûz. Every morning, food and tools are traded here and the place is filled with people bartering small shares of their family's treasures for items bought in from Council Hall. Several impressive buildings of fine dwarven craftsmanship encircle the square: the governor's house, Kaldarn's Tavern, Wuldon's Bakery, and a number of shops.

Governor's House

The governor's house is a most impressive building, displaying mosaics detailing the hall's history. With five

floors, it is also the highest building of the entire hall. A large balcony is directed toward the market, where Governor Kolgan Redbeard frequently holds speeches of public interest.

Kaldarn's Tavern

The best inn of Khar Rhûz has also developed a reputation for being the most expensive. But the money is well-invested: Kaldarn himself serves delicious dwarven food and home-brewed stout ale. The rooms are clean and service is exceptionally friendly. The upper class of Khar Rhûz meets here regularly to celebrate.

Wuldon's Bakery

Wuldon's Bakery is not only known for his heavy and dark bread, but also for his delicious cinnamon rolls. The flavors rising from his ovens are enjoyed every morning by the people on the square outside. Wuldon also sells traveling rations, as most dwarfs proudly take their own food on journeys to other halls.

Shops

The remaining buildings are little stores selling tools, clothing, and jewelry crafted by dwarven hands. Among others, Thelia's Silkworks creates the latest fashion; a garb from her is a must for every well-heeled dwarf around. Orgut's Warehouse sells almost everything: candles, parchment, rope, tools, sacks, potions, and perfume. Astendar's Blessing is rather small in comparison, but Felar Spiderhands is the most talented goldsmith who ever existed in Kaer Ardanyan.

Mining District

A collection of workshops is dedicated to process the mined ores and metals on Astendar's Square. Gems are brought into shape, gold and silver melted to bars and elemental earth is stored in special containers laced with orichalcum. A number of goldsmiths have settled here to be the first to pick the best pieces.

The large house of the Miner's Guild bustles with activity. The sidewall of the house bears a large map of the Deeps, and has two small shrines devoted to Upandal and Chorrolis next to it. Mongar Goldtooth, who coordinates the mining activities, leads the guild. The treasures of Khar Rhûz are not stored in a vault inside the Hall—they never were, not even in times of unrest. The kaer's treasury is located underneath Council Hall, considered the safest place of the kaer by everyone.

The Deeps

The mines are commonly known as the Deeps, forming a labyrinth of corridors, galleries, pits, and smaller halls on a disturbing number of levels. The miners of Khar Rhûz have created a large part of the Deeps. As a result, most of the ceilings are low—built for dwarven size. Almost all of the entrances are located in Khar Rhûz; a few others are located in Okoros, which is also engaged in mining.

The border tunnel on the kaer's equator serves as a measure for planning the mining. No one dares to dig too close to the wards, to avoid the risk of weakening them. The architectural calculations are done by the Miner's Guild, which takes great care to avoid another disastrous cave-in.

Dwarven Neighborhoods

Dwarven houses are small, build for dwarven size. The houses have usually three or more levels, most of them underground. Over the centuries, the houses coalesced together. While a neighborhood might look like a group of separate houses from the outside, the opposite is true on the inside. Most of the neighborhoods in Khar Rhûz belong to a single, extended family and form a labyrinth of rooms, floors, stairs, and windows.

Several places in Khar Rhûz are only known to the dwarfs living there. For example, the tavern called Razier's Den is visited exclusively by a certain kind of dwarven miners—those who tend to drink a pint too many after a long day in the mines. Needless to say, it is not advisable for other Name-givers to show up here.

Deep inside the neighborhoods, the guards of Khar Rhûz train their soldiers. As a branch of the kaer guard, these dwarfs maintain a state of law and order in Khar Rhûz and their part of the Council Hall. Most of the guards in positions of command are adepts.

PERSONALITIES OF KHAR RHÛZ

The following Name-givers hail from Khar Rhûz and are well-known throughout the kaer:

Mongar Goldtooth

Despite being the head of the Miner's Guild and a relative of Tahrkusz, Mongar is anything but greedy. While feeling bad for his heritage, he fears giving up the position he inherited from his forefathers and spends most of his time among the miners—leaving most of the decisions to Dolbek Stonehammer, current master architect and questor of Upandal.

Helman von Gut

Although Helman's work on the *Grand Airships of Barsaive* is mostly theoretical, this human can often be seen on the only airboat in Khar Rhûz. He often practices his skills over the rooftops, tempting the air elementals to gusts and even storms, much to the annoyance of the neighborhoods below.

Flim and Jhonda Vreen

These dwarf siblings of the warrior and archer disciplines are the heroes of the kaer guard. Their teamwork made them very popular and there are at least two different songs about them sung in the taverns.

Flim and Jhonda are investigators, known all over the kaer for their effectiveness.

Fohr Brosle

Brosle the thief became famous when he picked a star from the heaven for the woman he fell in love with, a feat no other Scout or Thief has managed to top.

The star in question was the one closest to the light crystal at the center of the Hall's domed ceiling.

Elmar Firehammer

Besides being the main weaponsmith of Khar Rhûz, Elmar Firehammer is the son of Dunar, the famous weaponsmith who died on the first expedition.

Elmar has a deep-rooted hatred for all Horrors and works on his own heartblade that shall be used to destroy the Horror at the gate.

Brelduin

This dwarven Nethermancer lives underneath the pump house of Lake Goch. He is seen rarely, and there are

rumors that he had a major dispute with Ghandjoon, the grandmistress of Ardanyan's Nethermancers.

THE SILENCE OF SHAL'MINAR

Being the home of Kaer Ardanyan's elven population, Shal'Minar is the main source of food for the whole kaer. Idyllic fruit-gardens, wide fields, small forests and huts woven from living plants define the landscape of this hall—even the sidewalls are covered by ivy and wine. Horses, cows, sheep, and goats run freely here, guarded by shepherds. Ghandoz designed Shal'Minar with the elven and windling races in mind. Each of the huts dotting the landscape is woven from living plants, although only the roof is visible. Most of the huts extend further underground, some even have extended cellars.

After the Separation, most Name-givers of the other races decided to leave the elves alone and moved out. There is not much change in Shal'Minar as a result—elves grow very old and have only few children. Additionally, the elven population seemed to have an increasing rate of deaths due to a mysterious plague in the past decades. Even though Shal'Minar was always sparsely populated, only five hundred Name-givers live under the domed ceiling. The windlings make up at least half of the population.

Scholars suspect the illness is just a random event, as there are no clues indicating Horror taint as the cause. Their investigations counter the rumors in which Leldrin has brought back a disease from the expedition. The hero was examined several times for Horror taint, but always with negative results. Now, about five decades after he returned, no one dares to accuse the kaer's greatest hero without hard evidence.

PLACES OF INTEREST

The most prominent spots of Shal'Minar include the Wise Tree, the various lakes and fields, and the Groves.

The Wise Tree

A massive, old oak grows in the center of Shal'Minar. It is the largest tree in the kaer, and the treetop holds the governor's house—woven from the branches of the tree in elven tradition. Right in front of the Wise Tree is the largest gathering place of the hall—Sand Square. A wooden statue of Jaspree was carved from a dead tree that once grew here. There is a large gathering here once a week, when the elven merchants come to distribute tools, clothing and jewelry they traded for the good of the community in Council Hall.

Of the Name-givers following the magician disciplines, most of the apprentices seem to come from the hall of Okoros. The house of the Magician's Guild is located in Shal'Minar, however, and it is the only one built with traditional materials—wood, stone, and metal. There is only

one grandmaster for every single magician discipline. They form the Council of Mages and are tasked with the control of the kaer's wards.

Lakes and Fields

As Kaer Ardanyan's main source of food, Shal'Minar's rolling fields produce enough wheat and grain for the entire kaer population. Over a dozen smaller springs water the fields, forming small streams flowing toward Lake Sumven and Lake Vevenna. While Sumven is the main source of Shal'Minar's drinkable water, Vevenna is used for swimming and washing.

The Groves

Ijandii Grove, Jaspree's Grove, and Sweetgrove are the three main forests of the hall. Ijandii Grove contains a huge, hive-like formation of rocks. The formation houses the windling clan of Ijandii. Small windling homes have been carved from the soft sandstone, but some windlings have built new homes in the nearby treetops. Jaspree's Grove is home to Ardanyan's woodworkers and woodcrafters. The fast-growing bal'nesh trees produce firewood exported to the forges of Khar Rhûz. A small shrine devoted to Jaspree can be found where the woodcrafters create wooden farming tools. The largest forest is Sweetgrove, although it looks more like a large garden. Entirely composed of trees bearing fruit, Sweetgrove is a popular spot for taking extended walks.

PERSONALITIES OF SHAL'MINAR

The following Name-givers hail from Shal'Minar and are well-known across the kaer:

Asandel

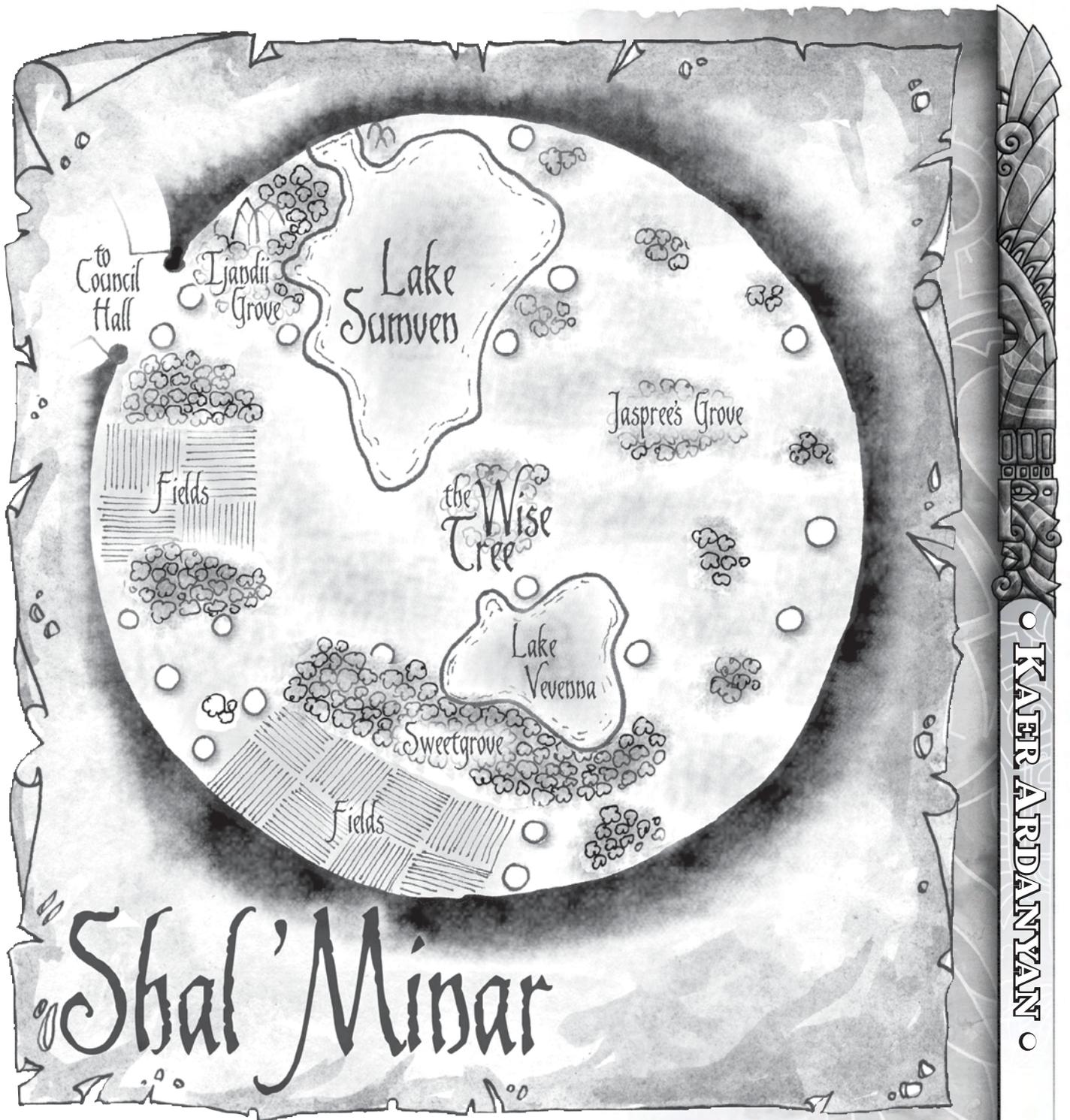
As governor of Shal'Minar, Asandel lives on top of the Wise Tree alone. He is relatively young, and his family was killed by the mysterious plague a decade ago. He relies on the judgement of his mentor, although he constantly tries to better the relationship with the dwarves of Khar Rhûz against Leldrin's advice.

Ghandjoon

As a Nethermancer, Ghandjoon lives in a small hut on the edge of Ijandii Grove. The windlings are rarely seen here, they consider the grounds around it cursed. Ghandjoon's master Jandaan died only recently and she was appointed as a new member of the Council of Mages.

T'Schrret Zru'Ul

This t'skrang Wizard came to the Magician's Guild right after his awakening, stating that his long-time membership entitles him to a seat in the Council of Mages. His request was denied on the behalf of the human Wizard Khandif, although very old documents clearly state that T'Schrret was one of the guild's founders almost five hundred years ago.



Vespundi

Beastmaster Vespundi is tending to a swarm of Zoaks native to Shal'Minar. He is often seen taming them and teaching other windlings how to ride. The elves watch his activities with care, uncomfortable with the thought of a windling-gang on fast-flying mounts.

Rokku u Rôl

In charge of the horses living in Shal'Minar, the elven Cavalryman Rokku has a long and proud family history, which was said to have ancestors native to the elven nation of Shosara. His brown steed Varak is always close.

Sylphis

Although it is forbidden to enter other halls and houses without checking with the kaer guard, the windling Thief Sylphis slips by them almost every day.

His enemy is Jhonda Vreen; the Archer usually pays him a visit first if anything of great value is reported stolen.

THE CHAOS OF OKOROS

When the population of Okoros decided to separate themselves from the rest of the kaer, the Hall became the home of almost all Name-givers not of the dwarven and elven races. Okoros is filled with houses of different architectural styles, each one dominating a different district. Everyone began building using their own plans after the Separation, with no visible concept.

The large longhouses of the kaer's trollmoot stand right next to the orkish and rather hive-like Castel — which looks like a large number of buildings placed on top of each other. Simple, but elegant houses with shops on the floor level dominate the human district while the t'skrang hibernated in their underwater houses beneath Lake Vross. The two obsidimen known as The Sleepers have no house at all, living on the streets or with anyone providing them shelter.

Remarkable is the unity that binds the different cultures together, despite the fact that Okoros is only a few Name-givers short of being overpopulated. The 1,700 Name-givers show their heritage openly, and tend to side with each other as soon as they deal with anyone not from Okoros. Outsiders are sometimes treated like intruders, as there is a definitive mistrust towards elves and dwarfs. More jokes about elves and dwarves make their rounds than jokes about orks and trolls — although that might have a different reason...

PLACES OF INTEREST

The most prominent spots of Okoros include the Sleeper's Square, Lake Vross, the Castel, and the Okoroi.

Sleeper's Square

As opposed to the central squares of the other halls, Sleeper's Square has no statue anymore. But a rounded base is still there, which once held the obsidimen brothers known as The Sleepers. On the way to their Liferock, they were forced to enter Kaer Ardanyan just before it closed its gates. The Scourge was already too near, making it impossible for them to return in time.

A few months after the closing, the brothers embraced each other and became the statue on Sleeper's Square. The sleepers woke up only once every century, spending several weeks to eat and talk to the population. Almost a year ago, they woke up again and haven't entered their sleep since. All they say is that they don't feel like dreaming anymore.

A U-shaped building is the residence of Galvan Andur, the human governor of Okoros. The house is made of white marble and its steps lead up to the many pillars surrounding the house. The steps are a favorite spot to sit on and watch the stars during the evening or the colorful market in the morning.

Following the street towards the gate, a number of small workshops form the Artisan's Mile. The craftsmen and artisans of Okoros settled here to create clothing, barrels, tools, and even butcher animals. Most of them have a small store attached to their workshop. Members of all Name-giver races can be found here, dominated by an above-average share of humans.

Lake Vross

The waterfall of Lake Vross is the main attraction of Okoros. The underground river enters the kaer here, and the lake below holds the t'skrang *niall* of K'Tan Vross. The *niall's* small tower juts out of the water on the northern shore, sealed shut until a few months ago, when the t'skrang awoke from their hibernation.

The first t'skrang to come out of the water scared away the local fishermen, who had never seen a living t'skrang before. One fisherman almost had a stroke, so it took a moment before they realized that the reptilians were not Horror-spawn, but Name-givers.

The Castel

The birth rate of orks is high. The kaer Council once had strong regulations to control breeding, but the law was not enforced since the events of the Separation. The orks needed more space fast and — akin to the dwarven neighborhoods of Khar Rhûz — they connected their buildings before building upwards. Orks build for their own convenience and not for beauty, so the entire quarter looks chaotic and haphazard. Entire buildings have collapsed over time, but the orks are tirelessly rebuilding and expanding them.

This district is dubbed the Castel by the other Name-givers, because there is only one street left leading into the district. Near the end of this street, the Gate Tavern serves the dreaded beverage *hurlg* and is a favorite meeting place.

The Okoroi

The simple longhouses of the trollmoot Okoroi are known for their festivities. Every month sees a different challenge or game, which is usually physical in nature. The festivities are open to everyone, and every so often, orks and even humans dare to enter a challenge, much to the joy of the whole hall.

The Okoroi are lowland trolls, and proud of their heritage. They insist that they have no connection to the uncivilized highlander pirates.

PERSONALITIES OF OKOROS

The following Name-givers hail from Okoros and are well-known throughout the kaer:

Galvan Andur

The governor of Okoros is constantly trying to keep his hall under control. That's harder than one might think, as all the different cultures are constantly quarreling with one another — the unity shown to the outside is just that: show.

Okoroi Mangrath Armbreaker

Mangrath is the main initiator of the games and challenges in the Okoroi quarter. He uses these challenges to practice the warrior discipline and oversee the training of his apprentices. As a regarded questor of Thystonius, he takes part himself — usually as an opponent for anyone participating.



Haragasun K'Tan Vross

Haragasun tries to reestablish her rightful position in the kaer. As the *lahala* of the K'Tan Vross *niall*, she strives to become the new governor, or to at least get a seat in the kaer Council.

Marliena Swordsinger

This troubadour's lute is almost as famous as her sword. Marliena is also a Swordmaster and has written countless poems and songs about Ardanyan's history.

She knows how to touch a Name-givers heart and her fans tend to go crazy when she appears somewhere to give a performance.

Grishnag the Poor

This Cavalryman and his trusted donkey Maul are a sad sight. Grishnag lost his family's money to a gambler and was exiled from the Castel afterwards. His mount remains his only friend, and Grishnag is often seen in his company on the shore of Lake Vross.

Sham'Sin

Sham'Sin is the highest-ranking Elementalist of Kaer Ardanyan and head of the Council of Mages. He is in charge of the kaer's wards and elemental spirits. He recently moved to Okoros with his sluggish apprentice, a fat little windling nicknamed Broom.

Spilvan the Red

Spilvan is a common sight in the taverns of Okoros. He is belligerent, and very quick to pull his blade. As a human Swordmaster of some reputation, Spilvan has found new friends among the t'skrang—although he has had to prove himself worthy of their attention.

COUNCIL HALL

The central hall of Kaer Ardanyan is nothing more than a very large square with several buildings huddled up against the walls. Four gates dominate the hall. The three largest gates each lead to one of the other halls, while the fourth one is smaller and opens to Freedom Gate. The way to Freedom Gate is opened only during the Passing of Years festival, when the entire kaer celebrates the beginning of a new year.

The large gates leading to Council Hall are usually closed, but the kaer guards let travelers pass between the halls. The gates open only in the early morning of every third day, when the designated merchants enter Council Hall for business. During these hours, the large square turns into a colorful market. The merchants offer their wares and deliver orders. They buy or trade for items their hall needs, depending on demand. The merchants from Khar Rhûz are known to be the greediest, using their position to sell everything with a huge profit to their own kin.

Travelers passing through Council Hall must check with the kaer guards of their own hall and the guards of their destination. They need to file their names along with their estimated duration of stay, which must include at least one night.

PLACES OF INTEREST

The most prominent spots of Council Hall include Council House, the Pillar, the Temple of Greed, the library, and Freedom Gate.

Council House

Every day after the market closes, the kaer Council meets in the grand council house overlooking the Hall. The council members usually discuss current events and problems affecting the kaer as a whole. Kaer politics are made here, and many of the discussions eventually lead—as the people say—nowhere. On the front wall near the entrance hangs a golden memorial plate, honoring the dead of the first expedition. A second door leading to the levels underneath the council house contain the detention cells and are heavily guarded.

The Pillar

A wide pillar stands in the middle of Council Hall's square bearing a huge statue of Garlen on top of it. Two large metal doors covered with orichalcum ornaments lead to the levels directly underneath Council Hall. The doors are heavily guarded and a metal railing keeps people from getting too close to the pillar.

The door facing the council house leads to the safest and most disputed place in Kaer Ardanyan: the treasury. All of the kaer's treasures are stored in the caverns below, warded with mechanical and magical traps of all sorts. A special division of the kaer guard watches the treasures underground.

The other door is the entrance to the Azhûn-ka, a room in the exact center of the orb-shaped kaer. The walls inside the Azhûn-ka are made of shimmering white marble lined with orichalcum. Each piece of marble is enchanted with magical runes controlling one of the numerous wards of the kaer. Only members of the Council of Mages have access to this room.

Library

A few decades have passed since the great fire, which destroyed countless tomes—including the original copy of the *Book of Tomorrow* and the only copy of the *Book of Sigils*. The Library has been rebuilt and restocked, so most of the literature remaining is of a more recent date. The hall of records is located in the basement of the library, and governs birth and death certificates, logs of past council meetings, and the status of the treasury.

The library used to hold the extended texts of kaer law until the Separation. Most parts have been removed and are governed in the separate halls. The current laws stored here still concern kaer-wide rules only, but mainly include rules on how business is conducted in Council Hall. When the trading came, much changed for the librarian, Master Xond. He now administers the transfer of treasure between the halls and families' accounts.

Temple of Greed

The temple grounds are abandoned; there is no questor of Rashomon left. After the hidden treasures have been collected, no one touched the temple ever since. Broken pillars, shattered walls and piles of rocks have been put behind a fence. A layer of dust has settled on the ruins over the centuries.

Freedom Gate

A long, broad corridor runs from Council Hall toward Freedom Gate. The walls are covered with beautiful mosaics depicting the kaer's history and Ardanyan's past. Once a year, the gate leading to the corridor is opened for festivities marking the beginning of a new year. On the first day of these celebrations, a new mosaic is uncovered showing the events of the past year. Dancers and troubadours sing of the beauty of the world to which the kaer-dwellers will once return.

Freedom Gate itself is watched by at least four kaer guards at any given time. The massive gate is the largest one in the kaer, and seems to be made entirely from orichalcum. Thin lines of warding emanating an eerie white light cover the gate. Close to the gate is a small caisson, resembling a round doorway. The caisson works like a sluice, with one door on the inside and another on the outside. Only one door can be opened at any one time, allowing Name-givers to leave the kaer without compromising the wards.



In front of Freedom Gate is an elemental well, crafted to perform the rituals from the *Book of Tomorrow*. The well holds elemental water and a ball of elemental earth hovers just above the surface. The ball has not moved in decades, which leads to discussions among the magicians every so often.

PERSONALITIES OF COUNCIL HALL

The following Name-givers spend most of their time in the Council Hall and are well-known throughout the kaer:

Joran Hardhelm

A distinguished human in his early 40s, Joran is the ambassador for Okoros. He also acts as the speaker for the Council whenever something needs to be announced to the public. Joran is not an adept, although he usually wears long robes colored in brownish tones and embroidered with elaborate patterns.

Gathlaen Velidien

Leldrin usually accompanies Ambassador Gathlaen when she attends a council meeting, and relies heavily on him whenever she makes a decision. Like Shal'Minar's Governor Asandel, she is young and lacks experience.

Kolgan Redbeard

Being governor of Khar Rhûz, Kolgan is also one of the most prominent Troubadours in the hall. He believes in taking things into his own hands to make anything work. He displays the three braids of his flaming red beard proudly and always has a story to tell.

Master Xond

The changes concerning the Passion of Erendis were barely noted in Kaer Ardanyan. Following the ways of Erendis, Xond's personality twisted to become a follower of Dis almost unnoticed.

As head of the hall of records and the library, he delegates massive amounts of writing work off to his underlings, while he takes endless joy in calculating the current balances of the kaer's numerous accounts.

CREATING KAER-DWELLER CHARACTERS

Some guidelines have to be established before characters can be created that have lived inside Kaer Ardanyan for their entire lives. Gamemaster and players alike should be familiar with the setting and the kaer's history in order to create believable characters that have a place inside the kaer. This section contains advice for creating characters living in Kaer Ardanyan. While we have taken great care to integrate almost every character type available from the **Player's Compendium**, there are a few exceptions.

NAME-GIVER RACES

Dwarfs clearly dominate the population of Khar Rhûz, followed by elves of Shal'Minar. There is an animosity between members of these races, based on the events of the kaer's past. Orks, humans or trolls living in Okoros tend to mistrust dwarves and elves due to these historical events. Mistrust and animosity have no effect on character

MASTERS AND MENTORS TABLE

Name	Race	Discipline	Location	Page Number
Helman von Gut	Human	Air Sailor	Khar Rhûz	23
Jhonda Vreen	Dwarf	Archer	Khar Rhûz	23
Vespundi	Windling	Beastmaster	Shal'Minar	25
Rokku u Rôl	Elf	Cavalryman	Shal'Minar	25
Grishnag the Poor	Ork	Cavalryman	Okoros	27
Sham'Sin	Elf	Elementalist	Okoros	27
Leldrin	Elf	Illusionist	Shal'Minar	108
Brelduin	Dwarf	Nethermancer	Khar Rhûz	23
Ghandjoon	Human	Nethermancer	Shal'Minar	24
Fohr Bosle	Dwarf	Scout	Khar Rhûz	23
Spilvan the Red	Human	Swordmaster	Okoros	27
Sylphis	Windling	Thief	Shal'Minar	25
Marliena Swordsinger	Human	Troubadour	Okoros	27
Flim Vreen	Dwarf	Warrior	Khar Rhûz	23
Mangrath Armbreaker	Troll	Warrior	Okoros	26
Elmar Firehammer	Dwarf	Weaponsmith	Khar Rhûz	23
T'Schrrt Zru'Ul	T'skrang	Wizard	Shal'Minar	24

creation rules, but should be taken into account whenever the character interacts with members of those races. Of course, exceptions make the rule—it should be allowed to create open-minded characters.

The two obsidimen of Okoros do not have their own Liferock inside Kaer Ardanyan. As explained above, they could not make it back home in time and were forced to enter the kaer before the Scourge. We haven't provided any names in case a player might want to play an obsidiman. However, a good adventure hook would be to find his Liferock once the Scourge is over.

The t'skrang are new to Kaer Ardanyan's society. Although they have lived inside the kaer ever since, they did so in a state of torpor beneath Lake Vross in Okoros. Their hibernation ended only a few months ago, and the K'Tan Vross *niall* is still learning about the events that took place during the past centuries. Playing a t'skrang means that the character was either born before the Scourge or hatched in the early years after the kaer closed its gates. Effectively, every t'skrang is over 400 years old—although none of them have aged.

Keep in mind that due to their extended life spans, certain Name-givers might have experienced the events of the Separation first-hand. We do not recommend playing characters older than 50 years, although it might be an interesting option. T'skrang and obsidimen pose an exception to this rule, as they haven't witnessed the Separation.

Like elsewhere in Barsaive, windlings are also rare in Kaer Ardanyan. Windling characters from the kaer usually belong to the Ijandii clan (see **The Groves**, p. 24).

DISCIPLINES

All of the Disciplines presented in the **Player's Compendium** are available to player characters from Kaer

Ardanyan, except for Sky Raiders. Each Discipline has a place in the kaer, but the gamemaster should feel free to come up with his own restrictions.

We have mentioned different personalities available as trainers in the kaer's description above, along with the Names of the most prominent adepts. Apart from the personalities presented in this book, there is plenty of leeway for gamemasters to develop their own masters and mentors. Note that, with the exception of Leldrin, no adept inside Kaer Ardanyan has advanced beyond Eighth Circle, and there are no masters or ghost masters of higher Circles available.

While there are a number of adepts integrated into the setting, feel free to create your own—the kaer is large enough to accommodate a few more adepts and their stories. We haven't outfitted these characters with game statistics, which allows gamemasters to tailor them to their needs. However, we do recommend that the masters for player characters should be adepts in the Fifth or Sixth Circle of their Disciplines.

Each player should know the Name and description of his mentor, and gamemasters should consider fleshing out the relationship between the player characters and their masters. The gamemaster characters listed below serve a crucial role in the main adventure, because they have been chosen by the kaer council to form the next exploration party. It is not crucial to the story if not all characters have a master participating in the mission, but the majority of them should.

The Masters and Mentors Table, above, gives an overview of the gamemaster characters presented earlier.

FALSE SECRETS

Be patient and keep your mouth shut! It will only take a few minutes, brother. Wait and see — those dumb tusk-heads will start any minute now. Ah, there we go... Happy Birthday!

• Sylphis, Windling Thief •



This chapter contains everything you need to get started when running **Ardanyan's Revenge** from a kaer-dweller's perspective. This chapter assumes that you are familiar with the setting of Kaer Ardanyan, and that the players have already created their characters (see **Creating Kaer-Dweller Characters** in the **Kaer Ardanyan** chapter, on p. 29). Gamemasters are encouraged to run an introductory scenario before moving on to the main story (which begins with **A Leap In The Dark**, on p. 35). This section provides three adventure hooks set in Kaer Ardanyan, any of which can be used for this purpose.

The following adventure hooks are intended to give both the gamemaster and the players a chance to explore the setting of Kaer Ardanyan and forge the relationships of their characters. Gamemasters should feel free to add their own or run the hooks presented in any order desired.

FOOD POISONING

It's open market in Council Hall — everyone can come and see. While eating a cinnamon roll bought from the food stand of Wuldon's Bakery, one of the heroes bites down on something hard, which turns out to be a glittering, deep-blue jewel. The eating player character has to pass a Willpower (7) Test to avoid yelling out in pain. Wuldon, the dwarven owner of the food stand will inevitably take notice and ask the character what he had bitten on. The dwarf intends to offer a free roll as compensation, but will scream "*By the beard of Upandal!*" when he spots the jewel. The gem is an old elven family heirloom worth about 1,000 silver pieces, reported stolen weeks ago.

Among the other customers at the food stand are three orks: Gimrod, Brakash, and Bolg. The trio are renowned for being greedy, dumb and violent. Someone told Gimrod about a secret deal, in which the jewel was to be transferred

from the thief to an unknown buyer inside a delicacy sold by Wuldon. Gimrod figured that he could get his hands on the jewel first by eating everything Wuldon has to offer — and he brought two of his friends. Even though other customers complain about the orks bad manners, Wuldon sees no reason to send them away — they're well-paying after all! When the orks realize that the player character found the gem before them, they will try to wrestle it from him, which is likely leading to a brawl among the customers of the food stand.

The whole scene is a prank played on the orks by the windling thief Sylphis (see **Personalities of Shal'Minar** in the **Kaer Ardanyan** chapter on p. 24). Gimrod had harassed Sylphis' little brother Keshrin a few weeks before and now it's payback time. Sylphis had stolen the jewel, told Gimrod about a 'secret deal happening on market day', and placed the gem inside one of the cinnamon rolls — just to stage-manage a birthday surprise for his little brother. Thus, Sylphis, Keshrin, and a handful of other windlings sit atop another market stand close to Wuldon's, observing the brawl with great joy.

Other player characters might want to intervene and stop the brawl, but that event just triggers Gimrod's gahad — no one else has to meddle with his affairs! The orks will probably lose the fight, and it is unlikely that they get their hand on the jewel — which will be confiscated by the Kaer Guard, when they arrive several combat rounds after the fight has started. Seeing the three orks go to jail deeply satisfies the windlings.

ORK THUGS (3)

Attributes

Dexterity (14): 6/D10

Strength (16): 7/D12

Toughness (17): 7/D12

Perception (7): 4/D6

Willpower (11): 5/D8

Charisma (5): 3/D4

Characteristics

Initiative: 6/D10

Physical Armor: 0

Mystic Armor: 1

Death Rating: 40

Wound Threshold: 11

Unconsciousness Rating: 32

Combat Movement: 30

Full Movement: 60

Physical Defense: 8

Spell Defense: 5

Social Defense: 4

Recovery Tests: 3

Knockdown: 7/D12

Skills

Artisan:

Acting (1): 4/D6

Knowledge:

Okoros Lore (2): 6/D10

General:

Avoid Blow (2): 8/2D6

Streetwise (2): 6/D10

Unarmed Combat (2): 8/2D6

Equipment

Belt Pouch

Peasant's Garb

Loot

2 copper pieces

Legend Points

60 Legend Points

Notes

The character possesses the ork racial abilities of Low-Light Vision and *Gahad*.

Commentary

Gimrod, Brakash, and Bolg are a trio of orks hailing from the Castel in Okoros.

The orks frequently get involved in fist fights and brawls (whether they or others start them). They are dressed in simple but dirty clothing. Before the jewel is found, the orks are displaying very bad table manners, wolfing down as much of Wuldon's baked goods as they can. Although they are extremely short of money, they have just spent most of their savings on Wuldon's delicacies — "a safe bet," says Gimrod.

RETURN OF THE LAHALA

Joran Hardhelm, the speaker of the Kaer Council, approaches the player characters. He wants them to deliver an official invitation to Okoros, which they have to deliver to the recently awakened lahalaharagasun of the t'skrang.

The invitation is rather short, but very important. Being in hibernation for so long has made the lahalaharagasun's place among the council void, and this invitation gives her a chance to get it back.

When the heroes enter the underwater habitat of the t'skrang, K'van, a t'skrang servant who sees to the needs of the lahalaharagasun, welcomes them. K'van is happy for the invitation, but he excuses that the player characters cannot meet the lahalaharagasun in person. However, he'll gladly take the message and bring it to her. A t'skrang player character passing a Perception (4) Test might notice that he has never met this fellow before. If he is confronted with this fact, K'van states that he is rarely seen outside the lahalaharagasun's chambers and that he doesn't know the player character either.

A few days later, the council meeting takes place. The population awaits the announcement of several important decisions, and many people have gathered in Council Hall to hear Joran Hardhelm talk. The player characters should be invited to accompany their masters. They will notice that a large number of t'skrang have assembled — most likely because of the lahalaharagasun. This assumption is countered by the fact that several of them seem to be angry and throw things at Joran Hardhelm as soon as he steps out onto the balcony of the council house. The kaer guard intervenes after a few combat rounds, calming the crowd.

Joran Hardhelm announces that the Council has not yet agreed on sending another group of explorers through the gates. The discussion on this topic is still going. A wave of murmurs goes through the masses, everyone had anticipated a positive announcement — weeks of discussion have passed already. The second announcement, however, is worse. Joran Hardhelm states that the lahalaharagasun of the K'tan Vross niall will not receive a seat in the council. Her failure to show up at such an important meeting — despite an explicit invitation — indicates that she has lost interest in the kaer's affairs. One of the t'skrang yells that there never was an invitation. At this point Joran names the player characters who have delivered the message and calls out for them.

Now the heroes have to explain openly what they did. If they mention that they gave the message to K'van, the t'skrang will oppose that there is no one of that name in the entire niall and may react very emotionally if the player characters insist otherwise ("Are you calling us folk, liars? You don't want us to be in the council, is that it?"). All it



takes to resolve this situation is a little diplomacy. Someone has tricked the player characters and the message never got delivered. Although they cannot find out who K'van really was, they can try negotiating with the council and the lahala to deliver another invitation personally — prompting the council to vote again.

The real perpetrator was Leldrin, the elven Illusionist. His goal is to create unrest and fear among the kaer's population, to propagate the feeling that the Horror's influence has extended into the kaer. Leldrin does not want the council to send a team of explorers and he acts very subtle to influence the decision. In regards to the fact that Leldrin is the villain of the main adventure, the heroes should not be able to receive any hint to his involvement. They will figure it out later.

T'SKRANG BULLIES (4)

Attributes

Dexterity (16): 7/D12 **Perception** (10): 5/D8
Strength (13): 6/D10 **Willpower** (12): 5/D8
Toughness (14): 6/D10 **Charisma** (11): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 9 **Initiative:** 7/D12
Spell Defense: 6 **Physical Armor:** 0
Social Defense: 7 **Mystic Armor:** 1
Death Rating: 36 **Recovery Tests:** 3
Wound Threshold: 10 **Knockdown:** 6/D10
Unconsciousness Rating: 28
Combat Movement: 32
Full Movement: 64

Skills

Artisan:

Sculpting (1): 6/D10

Knowledge:

T'skrang Politics (2): 7/D12

General:

Avoid Blow (2): 9/D8+D6

Unarmed Combat (3): 10/D10+D6

Equipment

Belt Pouch
Sculpting Tool
Wealthy Traveler's Garb

Loot

6 silver pieces

Legend Points

75 Legend Points

Notes

The bullies all possess the t'skrang racial ability of Tail Attack (Damage 6/D10).

Commentary

These t'skrang came to Council Hall to openly display their protest. Dressed in colorful clothing, they are not the brightest members of their niall.

They assume that a fight will solve their problems, and want to show the player characters that they cannot be messed around with.

WEAPONS OF CHOICE

The player characters have to help their masters by participating in a contest held among the kaer's most reputable adepts. The contest takes place on the Gold Court Square of Khar Rhûz. It is likely that not every player character has a master who wants to participate (see **Creating Kaer-dweller Characters** in the **Kaer Ardanyan** chapter on p. 29), but everybody comes to see and enjoy this event. The contests are mostly based on combat and involve duels in melee and unarmed combat, archery and a show of spells. While the player characters do not take part themselves, they assist their masters in carrying weapons and equipment and generally act as their servants throughout the event. Have fun to flesh out and describe the various contests in detail.

While the magicians show off their spells, a strange thing happens. The giant light quartz in the ceiling of Khar Rhûz flickers for a short moment just as the elven Elementalist Sham'Sin lets loose a Fireball spell. Everybody looks puzzled for a moment, but gets back to business with a shrug. Player characters witnessing the event are allowed to make a Perception (5) Test. Success indicates that they notice three humans arguing in the crowd and then leave the place through a small alley.

If anyone follows, he'll notice that the three humans head toward the next entrance to the Deeps. They climb a staircase and enter the mines through one of the holes in the ceiling. If the player characters don't follow, they might spot the same trio they saw before entering the hole by passing another Perception (5) Test. If they don't show any interest at all, one of their masters can send them to investigate. Following the humans through the Deeps will not be easy, but the player characters might figure out where their targets were headed when they pass a small door close to the entrance hole. A small light quartz is attached to the door and it appears to lead to a small room above the giant light quartz of Khar Rhûz.

Five humans, including the trio that went up before the heroes, occupy the light quartz room. The other two have tried to sever the light crystal's bondings, but failed in their first attempt. With the help of the others, they might succeed in having the massive light crystal fall down and kill everyone below! Player characters who listen to the muffled talk inside the room will overhear the plan with a successful Perception (6) Test. The player characters can enter a fight to prevent this from happening, but other creative solutions might also work. However, warning everyone below might give the criminals enough time to flee into the mazelike Deeps and escape unpunished.

The attempt to sever the light crystal was a Rite of Passage to gain membership to the Gate-Cult (see **A Leap In The Dark**, p. 37). While this fact can be obtained from the perpetrators through interrogation, they don't know who is behind the cult — none of the cult leaders' identities are revealed.

HUMAN WANNABE CULTISTS (5)

Attributes

Dexterity (14): 6/D10

Strength (13): 6/D10

Toughness (14): 6/D10

Perception (13): 6/D10

Willpower (13): 6/D10

Charisma (13): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 8

Spell Defense: 7

Social Defense: 7

Death Rating: 36

Wound Threshold: 10

Unconsciousness Rating: 28

Combat Movement: 28

Full Movement: 56

Initiative: 6/D10

Physical Armor: 3

Mystic Armor: 1

Recovery Tests: 3

Knockdown: 6/D10

Skills

Artisan:

Carving (1): 7/D12

Knowledge:

The Deeps (2): 8/2D6

General:

Avoid Blow (2): 8/2D6

Streetwise (2): 8/2D6

Melee Weapons (2): 8/2D6

Unarmed Combat (2): 8/2D6

Equipment

Leather Armor (Phys 3)

Short Sword (Damage 10/D10+D6; w/scabbard)

Belt Pouch

Carving Tool

Traveler's Garb (w/Linen Robe)

Loot

4 silver pieces

Legend Points

60 Legend Points

Commentary

Heron, Salvar, Poan, Justus, and Hevar are in their late teens and bored from their life in Okoros.

Frustrated that none of them has the magical ability to become an adept, they followed another path and tried to make contact with a rumored cult that worships the Horror on the other side of Freedom Gate. They received their orders from a shadowy figure that approached Hevar in his bedroom one night. All of them are dressed in brown linen robes.



A LEAP IN THE DARK

Ask yourself what our great hero Leldrin would do when in trouble and make sure you come back. Your return is important. The entire kaer will be doomed if you fail.

• **Joran Hardhelm, Councilor of Kaer Ardanyan** •



The encounters in this chapter open the main story of this adventure and allow player characters to start earning a reputation by helping their masters to prepare for the exploration and expose the rumored Gate-Cult. A few days after the exploration party left the kaer, Joran Hardhelm contacts the heroes for a secret and dangerous mission. The explorers seem to be lost and the council is divided. Now the player characters are the only ones who can find out what happened.

OVERVIEW

The kaer council has finally reached a decision. After weeks of discussion, the talking has been concluded in favor of public opinion: a new group of explorers will leave the kaer! The bold heroes might face the same Horror who killed the first expedition five decades ago, but despite the dangers involved, some of the kaer's best adepts have volunteered for the mission.

A few days before the expedition team is sent into the dark unknown behind Freedom Gate, the population prepares a ceremony to honor the leaving adepts. Meanwhile, the explorers meet in Kaldarn's Tavern to discuss the details of their task and gather any helpful knowledge from Leldrin, the only survivor of the last expedition. Most of the adepts have brought one of their apprentices along—the player characters. The apprentices are not directly involved in the meeting; they act as trusted servants in case their masters need anything. Waiting outside the meeting room, the would-be heroes might uncover a plot to undermine their masters' power.

When the expedition team fails to return a few days later, Joran Hardhelm of the kaer council reacts fast to prevent old feuds tearing the council apart. In secret, he contacts the heroes to scout for the lost expedition and sends them out unnoticed by the public.

SETTING THE STAGE

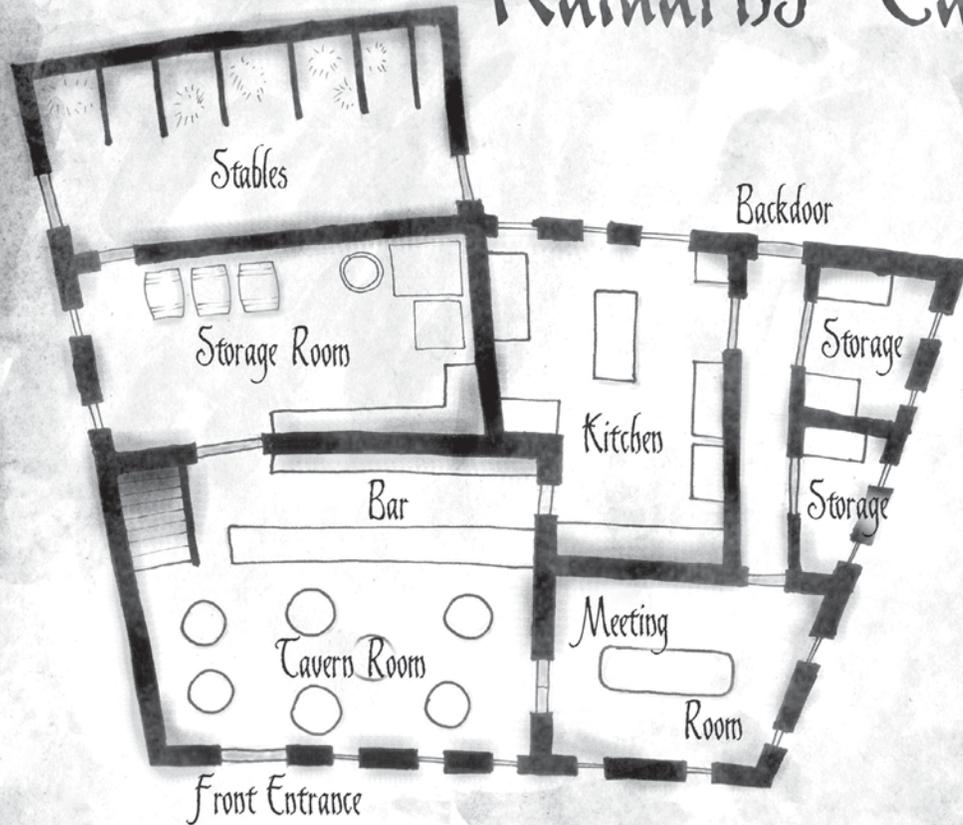
As suggested in the **Creating Kaer-Dweller Characters** section of the **Kaer Ardanyan** chapter on p. 29, each of the player characters should have a master who trains him. We assume that these master adepts are those who form the exploration party. If you haven't run any of the events presented in **False Secrets** on p. 31, the meeting at Kaldarn's Tavern forms the hook that will bring the characters together. While there are other ways to incorporate player characters into the story from here on, they should be related to these events.

AT THE TAVERN

The master adepts and their apprentices arrive one after another in the afternoon, with a few hours of spare time before the meeting begins. Everyone at Kaldarn's Tavern seems to be in a hurry, tending their honored guests with the best service possible. The meeting room has already been prepared, and no one but the master adepts and Kaldarn are allowed inside. While the masters mind their own business, the player characters are left on standby in the main tavern room. Each of the players should be allowed to describe his character and have the proper time to introduce himself.

From time to time during the meeting, a master will send for his apprentice, asking him to run an errand (*"Get that bone scroll case from my room, but hurry up!"*). Other than that, the characters will have a lot of time to gossip while waiting. The main tavern room is filled with more people than usual; most of them being drawn there to get a glimpse of the heroes to come. Several rumors make the round, new ones developing each time another explorer arrives. A dwarven barmaid named Cecilia ensures that the characters have something to eat and drink, and apart

Kaldarn's Tavern



from information about their masters, she is interested in talking about the strange illness that haunts the elven population of Shal'Minar. She tells that an elven physician living in Khar Rhûz has died because of it a few days ago, and fears that the illness might affect dwarves as well.

In return for the character's answers, she shares other rumors. For example, a gang of unknown criminals has recently beaten the kaer's only questor of Mynbruje to death. He had no followers to replace him — the number of questors in Kaer Ardanyan seems to drop ever since the cave-in at the temple of Rashomon.

Cecilia thinks it might have been the rumored cult that worships the Horror in front of the gates — these foul people always need to sacrifice good men for their cause.

Kaldarn's Tavern

Refer to the map above for the layout of Kaldarn's Tavern:

Tavern Room

The large tables in the main tavern are filled with patrons — mostly humans and dwarves talking, drinking, and listening to the music of a troubadour playing a lute.

Most of the interior is dwarf-sized; three dwarven barmaids serve food and ale.

Bar

When not personally taking orders from the master adepts in the meeting room, Kaldarn works as bartender.

Meeting Room

The master adepts have retired here to discuss their meeting in secret. A large table dominates the room.

Storage Rooms

The storage room behind the bar contains mostly barrels and excess furniture, while the smaller ones store food for the kitchen.

Stairs

A large set of stairs leads up to Kaldarn's guest rooms on the upper floor. The apprentices and their masters have rented one each. The same set of stairs also leads to the small cellar, where Kaldarn stores exclusive wine and other spirits.

Kitchen

Two dwarven cooks work the kitchen, which is renowned for the finest of dwarven cuisine.

Stables

The stables are mostly empty; housing the mounts Kaldarn's guests came with. A dwarf stable-boy tends to the animals.

Backdoor

This is the backdoor through which Angius tries to enter the meeting room unseen (see **Behind The Scenes**, below).

T H E M E S A N D I M A G E S

After long years of uncertainty, depressing rumors and strange illnesses, a refreshing wave of hope energizes the population. People feel that the Scourge is over, and most of them interpret the awakening of the t'skrang and the obsidimen as a sure sign for it. There are the usual doubters—but to everyone's surprise, they are few in number. The explorers have become the personified hope in the eyes of the kaer-dwellers and are already celebrated as heroes. People try to get their attention, bringing the explorers small gifts or paying for their drinks. The player characters are affected by this, since being so close to the heroes of tomorrow gives them a certain status.

The mood in Kaer Ardanyan sets people into high spirits in the days leading up to the explorer's departure—a most anticipated event by the entire population. An eerie silence follows once the door closes behind the explorers, and the kaer seems quieter than ever before. This time, the characters will be affected directly. People eye them and often come over to ask for news—a frustrating experience, since the characters don't have more information than anyone else.

B E H I N D T H E S C E N E S

Leldrin's influence over the kaer council is fading. His voice as advisor is not worth as much as it was in the decades before. Despite his advice to vote against the expedition—reasoning that the rumored Horror cult inside the kaer has to be found and eliminated first—the other councilors decided for the expedition.

Since the exploration party poses a threat against his conspiracy, the old elf has decided to play an ace from his sleeve to gain an advantage. By turning the attention of the kaer council to the danger of the secret Gate-Cult worshipping the Horror outside, the expedition will most likely be postponed—giving him enough time to properly prepare the Cross of Ardanyan for their arrival.

To achieve this goal, Leldrin needs to expose the cult. So far, the cult's existence has just been a rumor—however, it is rather easy for Leldrin to reveal the cult: many years

ago, he founded it himself in disguise (see **The Gate-Cult**, below). His aim was to frighten the population enough so they would never open Freedom Gate without weeding out the cult first. By controlling the cult and most of the council, his plan has worked for years.

THE GATE-CULT

Angius, a former human potter from Okoros, once took a walk during the night and accidentally observed a man he knew was dead for years. He did not realize that the dead man who entered the kaer was actually a member of the Cross of Ardanyan planning to meet with Leldrin in secret. When Angius told other people about what he saw, they just laughed at him, and no one believed his story. One day, Leldrin heard about the potter and did his part to drive him over the edge of sanity. Angius was quickly shunned by the society of Okoros, lost his workshop and home and lived on the streets ever since. Using his illusions and various disguises, Leldrin made him believe that the Horror will spare his life, and that of any other believers if they do his bidding.

Over the years, other outcasts of society joined Angius—people who have lost hope and seek power by serving the Horror in front of the gates. They are about a dozen in number, but so far, only one adept has joined their ranks—a fallen Nethermancer named Silverbrow. Recently, several cult members have beaten the kaer's only questor of Mynbruje to death. The questor had investigated the cult and was close to uncovering some of its members. Their game statistics are listed further below.

In the days leading up to the meeting, Leldrin disguised himself again and provided Angius with information about the explorers. He suggested that the cult has to acquire a pattern item representing their unity, which would increase the cult's chances to bring the Horror inside by manipulating the explorers using thread magic. He dropped a hint that the explorers will form a Named group during the meeting—a perfect chance, as the needed item can be stolen during or after the meeting. When the adventure begins, the majority of the cult has already assembled in the streets of Khar Rhûz. Angius has entered Kaldarn's Tavern and waits for the sign—which must be a bowl of some sorts delivered to the meeting room.

If the cult succeeds, Leldrin plans to use the stolen blood against the explorers. Other members of the Cross of Ardanyan will be able to use thread magic (see the **Thread Magic** chapter on p. 264 of the **Player's Compendium** for details) against them, providing them with an advantage to capture them.

THE MEETING

Apart from their masters, the revered hero Leldrin himself is attending the meeting at Kaldarn's Tavern as well. He arrives last and comes alone. Everyone in the tavern sends his regards by nodding or bowing to him when he passes by. Leldrin remains silent when entering the tavern, heading straight to the meeting room.

Once the meeting has begun, the characters will not

know what is going on. Curious characters might want to look for a peep-hole—they can easily find one, but risk being frowned upon by everyone else in the tavern. If they find a way, they overhear Leldrin sharing what he knows on the traps and wards outside. His knowledge is a little rusty, since so much time has passed since he was out there. The elf has prepared some drawings and writings of the mines and explains these to the explorers—as a result, peeping characters won't have a chance to know what exactly the old elf is talking about unless they get hold of the maps.

About two hours later, the player characters will be notified that their masters are preparing for a ritual and require someone to fetch a silver bowl from Leldrin's quarters. Characters who are trying to eavesdrop can overhear that the ritual is intended to create a group pattern (see **Thread Magic** on p. 270 of the **Player's Compendium** for details). A successful ritual insures that no one in the party betrays the mission.

To bring the bowl to Leldrin, one of the player characters has to pass through the tavern room—where he is spotted by Angius, (sitting in the crowd waiting for the right moment). It is possible that the characters take notice of him if they keep an eye on the guests, but remember that Angius tries to keep a low profile. On passing a Perception (8) Test, the characters might notice Angius leaving after the bowl has been fetched. He leaves to prepare the cult's attack from the outside. If he is followed, he tries to lure the player character(s) into a dark alley where the other cultists wait and attack on his command. Angius tries everything to escape the combat to resume spying on the meeting.

The last stage of the group ritual requires each of the explorers to swear a blood peace oath (see the **Player's Compendium**, p. 260, for details) to the group Named Ardanyan's Saviors. While speaking the oath, each explorer cuts himself and releases some of his blood into the small silver bowl in the center of the meeting room table. The ritual ends once the last of the explorers has dipped his weapon of choice into the collected blood.

UNDER FIRE

If Angius has managed to witness the end of the ritual, he signs his followers to move. Silverbrow casts an Ethereal Darkness spell on one of the meeting room windows, blinding everyone inside. The other cultists smash the remaining windows and start throwing flasks of burning oil at the tavern. Their aim is to create a diversion by setting the tavern house on fire, hopefully sending the tavern's patrons and staff fleeing outside. In the confusion, Angius tries to enter the meeting room using the back door to steal the silver bowl. Leldrin might help him to achieve his task, but the elf will only do so if there are no witnesses. With his experience, Leldrin is unlikely to make any errors.

On passing a Perception (5) Test, any player character near the back door of the tavern can spot Angius fleeing with the silver bowl. It's very likely that everyone is occupied with the diversion, so the heroes will have to go after him themselves.

Angius tries to enter the Deeps, where he meets the rest of his followers. The cult has set up camp in an aban-





doned tunnel of the mines. Following Angius through the winding tunnels, shafts and passages is a hard task if none of the player characters has the Tracking talent or skill. Angius' fellow cultists also help him to get away safely, trying to play cat and mouse with everyone who follows them — they know that getting involved in a direct confrontation with an adept means certain death! If none of the player characters has the Tracking talent or skill, each of them is allowed a Perception Test for each combat round in the pursuit. The Difficulty Number is equal to Angius' Knowledge: The Deeps skill step.

If the player characters manage to beat Angius three times in a row, they have captured him. Likewise, if the characters fail three times in a row, Angius gets away. Whenever the player characters roll a Pathetic result, Angius meets one of his fellow cultists — commanding him to stop the characters. Angius reaches the abandoned tunnel after ten combat rounds, where he meets the remaining four of his fellow cultists. Refer to the map for an overview of the hideout.

The player characters can prove themselves worth their training by defeating the cult and securing the silver bowl. Leldrin's plan will be spoiled if they succeed, but the Illusionist has succeeded in buying some time for his great plan in either case.

MAD ANGIUS

Attributes

Dexterity (14): 6/D10
Strength (16): 7/D12
Toughness (15): 6/D10

Perception (13): 6/D10
Willpower (14): 6/D10
Charisma (6): 3/D4

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 4

Initiative: 6/D10
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 2

Death Rating: 38
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: 30

Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 7/D12

Combat Movement: 28
Full Movement: 56

Skills

Artisan:

Craftsman: Pottery (2): 8/2D6

Knowledge:

Gate-Cult Lore (2): 8/2D6
 The Deeps (2): 8/2D6

General:

Avoid Blow (5): 11/D10+D8
 Melee Weapons (5): 11/D10+D8
 Silent Walk (4): 10/D10+D6
 Streetwise (8): 14/D20+D4
 Unarmed Combat (5): 11/D10+D8

Equipment

Leather Armor (Phys 3)
 Short Sword (Damage 11/D10+D8; w/scabbard)
 Belt Pouch
 Craftsman Tools
 Traveler's Garb

Loot

20 silver pieces

Legend Points

205 Legend Points

Commentary

Stubs of black, greasy hair cover Angius' shaved head and he usually wears stained and tattered clothes. However, to gain entrance to Kaldarn's Tavern, he has recently bought new clothing.

Angius is obviously insane; he speaks openly of the visions he has during the night. When talking, he switches subjects very fast, often contradicting what he said moments earlier.

SILVERBROW, SECOND CIRCLE

HUMAN NETHERMANCER

Attributes

Dexterity (11): 5/D8 **Perception** (16): 7/D12
Strength (13): 6/D10 **Willpower** (14): 6/D10
Toughness (13): 6/D10 **Charisma** (8): 4/D6

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7 **Initiative:** 5/D8
Spell Defense: 9 **Physical Armor:** 0
Social Defense: 5 **Mystic Armor:** 2
Death Rating: 35 (43) **Recovery Tests:** 2
Wound Threshold: 9 **Knockdown:** 6/D10
Unconsciousness Rating: 27 (33)

Combat Movement: 22
Full Movement: 44

Karma Points: 12 **Karma Step:** 5/D8

Talents

Astral Sight^D (2): 9/D8+D6
Durability (4/3) (2): 2
Frighten (2): 8/2D6
Karma Ritual (2): 2
Read and Write Language (2): 9/D8+D6
— Elven
Read and Write Magic^D (2): 9/D8+D6
Spellcasting^D (3): 10/D10+D6
Spell Matrix (2): 2
Spell Matrix (2): 2
Thread Weaving (Nethermancy)^D (3): 10/D10+D6

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Robe Embroidery (2): 6/D10

Knowledge:
The Deeps (2): 9/D8+D6

General:
Silent Walk (2): 7/D12
Streetwise (2): 9/D8+D6

Spells

Bone Dance, Chilling Circle, Command Nightflyer, Dry and Wet, Ethereal Darkness^M, Gadfly, Insect Repellent, Putrefy, Spirit Dart^M

^M Denotes a spell currently attuned into a spell matrix.

Equipment

Belt Pouch
Embroidery Tools
Grimoire
Wealthy Traveler's Garb (w/Embroidered Robe)

Loot

40 silver pieces

Legend Points

150 Legend Points

Notes

The character possesses the human racial ability of Versatility.

Commentary

Silverbrow is a fallen human adept hailing from Okoros. He usually has a sad look on his face and a deep scar on his right cheek. He wears a black robe adorned with silver and gray embroideries. The council forbade the former apprentice to practice his Discipline as punishment for his many criminal activities in the past.

HUMAN CULTISTS (6; 4)

Attributes

Dexterity (14): 6/D10 **Perception** (9): 4/D6
Strength (16): 7/D12 **Willpower** (12): 5/D8
Toughness (16): 7/D12 **Charisma** (8): 4/D6

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 8 **Initiative:** 6/D10
Spell Defense: 6 **Physical Armor:** 3
Social Defense: 5 **Mystic Armor:** 1
Death Rating: 39 **Recovery Tests:** 3
Wound Threshold: 11 **Knockdown:** 7/D12
Unconsciousness Rating: 31

Combat Movement: 28
Full Movement: 56

Skills

Artisan:
Carving (1): 5/D8
Knowledge:
Gate-Cult Lore (2): 6/D10
The Deeps (2): 6/D10

General:
Avoid Blow (2): 8/2D6
Streetwise (4): 8/2D6
Melee Weapons (3): 9/D8+D6
Throwing Weapons (3): 9/D8+D6
Unarmed Combat (3): 9/D8+D6

Equipment

Leather Armor (Phys 3)
Club (Damage 10/D10+D6)
3 × Flasks of Oil (Damage: 5/D8; Range: 6–10–12)
Belt Pouch
Traveler's Garb

Loot

8 silver pieces

Legend Points

85 Legend Points

Commentary

The people following Angius are usually outcast non-adepts from Okoros. The game statistics above are representative for an average human cultist. There are six



cultists helping to create the diversion, and another four waiting in the cultists' hideout.

FAREWELL

Because of the previous incident, the expedition is likely to leave a few days later than planned, allowing the kaer guard to investigate the cult and interrogate the remaining members. The characters might take part in the investigation or leave it to the guards. Their masters call them shortly before the ceremony begins.

People are lining up in Council Hall to get a glimpse of the departing heroes. The long corridor leading to Freedom Gate is filled with people. Music can be heard; several troubadours try to keep the masses entertained. As apprentices, the characters carry their master's equipment, following them to the gate. It's not easy—the masters have brought everything they thought they could probably need: various weapons, ropes, grappling hooks, light quartzes, healing potions, blankets, rations and much more.

Once the procession arrives at the gate, Joran Hardhelm of the kaer council steps onto a podium and waves his arms to silence the spectators. The voices fade to whispers in the background. Joran nods to the members of the Council of Mages, who occupy the area in front of the large gate. The magicians begin to chant in unison, making a show of weaving powerful threads to impress the onlookers (and securely open the Caisson). The rounded door is part of a sluice bypassing the main gate, so nothing can happen—or so they say. The runes covering the Caisson flash in a gleaming white, blinding everyone for a second before fading to black. The crowd moves a few steps back and some doubters even leave the hall, changing their minds at the last minute. One of the magicians opens the Caisson, revealing an empty tunnel whose walls are lined with orichalcum.

One by one, the heroes of the day enter the chamber, waving goodbye to a cheering crowd. The door is closed behind them. Under the chanting of the magicians, the light of the runes fades back until they glow with a bright white light again. The cheering slowly ebbs away, until an eerie silence fills the hall. No one knows what happens next,

and no one even dares to talk about what might.

While the people walk back to their halls, the burly dwarf Kaldarn approaches the characters. He invites them to stay at his tavern free of charge until the explorers have returned. They would honor him and his family if they accept.

WHISPERED MESSAGES

A full day goes by after the explorers leave the kaer, giving the characters time to relax and enjoy the amenities of Kaldarn's invitation. While Kaldarn himself is serving the meals—large, bowls of sweet rice, vegetables, and meat, as well as foaming tankards of dark ale—the characters notice a person watching them. The tables and seats around her are left empty, even though the tavern is filled with customers. It is easy for them to realize who she is: Ghandjoon, the Nethermancer from the Council of Mages. Ghandjoon is a weird figure, born to a human family with snow-white skin. Dark, silken robes seem to blur her outline in the dim lights of the tavern. A full glass of blood-red wine stands in front of her. Ghandjoon moved to Ijandii Grove recently—right after she was appointed to the Council of Mages. People tell strange things about her and one of the rumors states that she has no friends—especially among the windlings.

"Such people are bad for business," says Kaldarn, serving a new round of ale. With a nod of his head, he points to the Nethermancer. He continues whispering: *"She has not had a sip of wine yet—and she's been here for almost half an hour. I fear she'll curse me if I point that out. Can't afford that, though—harr harr!"*

Ghandjoon has a message for the characters. Waiting and observing, she waits to see if the heroes have the guts to approach her. If the characters ignore her or have too much respect to go over, she'll talk to them once they leave the tavern. Ghandjoon does not talk loudly, but whispers every word she says. She is deadly serious about everything she says—and she always takes the characters by their word. Once she has ensured that no one else listens, she whispers:

"You have to travel to the hall of Okoros as fast as possible. Enter the shop named 'Upandal's Hammer' on the Artisan's Mile. You will find that there's a very special offer waiting for you, but you have to be fast. Don't talk to anyone about this, just leave. Your lives depend on it."

Ghandjoon is not very keen to answer questions. If asked what the offer is about, she'll whisper something cryptic like 'Life and death'. She won't answer who the characters will meet there or why she delivered the message. If they insist and keep her occupied with their questions, she'll let slip that they are about to see what their masters are doing. With that, Ghandjoon leaves for her room upstairs.

UPANDAL'S HAMMER

Upandal's Hammer is a tool shop, selling pickaxes, hammers, torches, and knives. It's the last shop on the Artisan's Mile, located close to Okoros' only entrance to the Deeps.

The shop owner, an ork called Harg, greets the characters. If asked for the special offer, he nods and asks them to get inside. After locking the door, Harg picks up a carpet revealing a trapdoor leading to the cellar. He hands a light quartz to one of the heroes, and signs everyone to follow. The cellar of the shop is small and crammed with boxes and barrels. Harg pulls a lever hidden behind a dusty chest. A secret door opens slowly, revealing a dark passage. The ork encourages the characters to move down the corridor and follows, closing the door behind him.

After a long walk, the passage ends before a blank wall. Another secret door is hidden here, and can be detected with a Perception (9) Test. Hidden under a stone on the ground is a lever, pulling it opens the door. The lever can be detected with a successful Perception (5) Test. Behind the secret door is a dimly-lit prison cell. Two human kaer guards stand behind the open cell door. The guards greet the characters, and seem to have waited for them. They introduce themselves as Giessvald and Jus. Harg gives them a nod and closes the secret door before he heads back to his shop. It is not possible to open the door from the inside of the cell.

Jus leaves and returns a few minutes later with Joran Hardhelm, the speaker of the kaer council. Joran enters the cell with the characters, ordering the guards to close it and stand guard from the outside. He says:

“Please excuse the inconvenience of this place, my friends. You are obviously not here to stay. For the moment, this cell just serves as a secure room to talk. Hear me out.

We need your help. Our worst expectations have come true. Our heroes — your masters — have not reported back as agreed upon. From what we know about the outside, this is a bad sign.

Unfortunately, the council is divided on the reason. Sha’Minar believes that the Horror killed them, while Khar Rhûz is sure that the adepts are either struck somewhere or have attacked and killed the beast, too weak to come back in. One side wants to send out another team, and the other one refuses to waste any more lives. Okoros stands

somewhere in the middle since we can’t afford to take sides without some facts. From what we know, it might be some other problem entirely. Who can be sure about the Horror being still there? It has not even probed our wards in five decades.

Here is another problem: we cannot officially send anyone out there fast without risking a public outcry — the old feuds between Khar Rhûz and Sha’Minar might flame up again because of that. There are other volunteers, of course, but sending a whole group of them would definitely be noticed. We need to be fast, and you have already proven that you are able to work together — and we are able to hide the fact you’re gone.

I want you to leave the kaer in secret, to take a quick look and find out what happened. If there really is a Horror outside, run on the first sign you see and come back. It is almost certain that the creature is unable to lurk right in front of the gates — the wards have too much power and the Council of Mages would have noticed the presence by divining the wards. It is a safe place for you.”

Joran tries to make clear that the mission is just about taking a peek and coming back. The characters are not allowed to attack the Horror if it is there, or go deeper into the mines outside than necessary. If they are able to determine what happened to their masters, the council can officially start a rescue mission.

Any character who does not accept the mission stays inside the cell until Joran decides otherwise. He can’t risk anyone spilling the beans among the population. The official story will be that the characters have wrongly beaten up Harg for being a member of the Gate-Cult. Their reputation will be cleared once the situation is over. If the characters agree, Joran will provide them with anything they need. He tries to get his hands on any requested piece of equipment within the next several hours. He does not want to lose precious time, so he does what he can.

Joran tells the characters how to use the *kaon-ma*, a mechanism integrated into the Freedom Gate on the outside. It allows them to create telepathic contact with a known individual inside the kaer — their masters have



somehow failed to use it. If the characters use the *kaonma* to contact Joran, he'll open the Caisson again to let them back in. He also hands them a set of three keys, which will allow them to turn off the various traps and wards that protect Kaer Ardanyan. He cannot tell them anything about the traps because the Book of Sigils that described them was lost in a fire almost a century ago. The player characters will just have to try their luck.

THE CAISSON

The mission starts in the same night. Using another secret passage through the lower levels, the characters are led by Joran to Freedom Gate, where Ghandjoo joins them. The small hall is dark and quiet, only illuminated by the light of the runes and the deep hum of the wards. Giessvald and Jus have been assigned to guard the gate. Ghandjoo moves to perform the ritual to open the inner door of the Caisson. As the runes on the door fade, she turns toward the characters and explains how they open the outer door:

"You need to speak three words to transfer the magic of the outer ward to the inner wards. The words are magical and only work if spoken in the right order. Don't dare to pronounce the words in a different way and don't even try to speak them in the wrong order. The words are Feh, Thark and Berram. Feh, Thark and Berram. Make sure you come back."

With the help of the guards, she closes the heavy door behind the characters. Speaking the words, they feel strong waves of magic passing through them. The runes on the inner door begin to glow while the runes on the outer door fade to black.

The heroes now enter the old mines and natural caves described in the **Deep Mines** chapter on p. 72.

Caisson Ward

This magical trap was designed to keep people from opening the outer Caisson door without permission. Three magical words are required to be spoken in front of it during the combat round before it is opened. The words are not known to anyone, and the Kaer Council keeps track of who knows about them.

Detection Difficulty: 10

Spell Defense: 16

Disarm Difficulty: 36

Trigger Condition: When the three words *Feh*, *Thark*, and *Berram* are not spoken in the correct order, the gamemaster makes a Spellcasting Test (Step 16/D20+D8) for the ward and compares the result against the Spell Defense of any characters in front of it.

Trap Initiative: 30

Trap Effect: If the Spellcasting Test succeeds, a bolt of lightning strikes up to three characters at the same time inflicting Step 16 damage on each. Non-metallic Physical Armor protects against this damage.

TROUBLESHOOTING

A few things can go wrong in this chapter. If the characters fail to recover the blood of their masters, the Cross of Ardanyan has an edge over the explorers. The master adepts will not leave until the cult has been rooted out and their blood is found—the risk is simply too high. If the player characters are unable to find the hideout, they can try to interrogate the people who were at the tavern—it's likely that one of them noticed and recognized one of the cultists. The players may also try to work with the kaer guard or call upon their masters, but due to their apprentice status, it is likely that control of the situation will be taken out of their hands if they exercise this option. It is a quick and non-heroic solution, and will increase someone else's reputation.

Their leaving will most probably be delayed by another few days, giving Leldrin and the Cross of Ardanyan more time to prepare a proper welcome. The characters might be able to spoil the attack of the Gate-Cult altogether, which will raise their status once Angius is interrogated and blows the whistle about his plans. It should be impossible to trace the connection back to Leldrin, as Angius does not know his true identity. However, the characters can find out that the cult has killed the questor of Mynbruje, giving them extra credit in the eyes of the population and the council.

If the characters don't accept Joran's mission or are reluctant to do so, Joran will try to appeal to their morale. The characters have the chance to save the lives of the whole kaer and their masters. They will be heroes, no matter what the outcome of their mission is. Joran does not want to force them to do it, but he can promise them anything they want. Joran could force them to do it, but we don't encourage him to do so—**Earthdawn** is about legendary heroes and not about cowards.

If the magical words for opening the Caisson are spoken in the wrong order, they set off the ward trap. Cruel gamemasters could also alter the trigger condition to set the trap off if the words are pronounced incorrectly...

THE TOWN OF ARDANYAN

Look stranger, 'sis is a clean place. You're probably better off gettin' out of those rags and takin' a bath — Ardanyaners don't like people lookin' like beggars. Can't imagine why they let you past the gates in the first place!

• **Wuschwusul, T'skrang Swordmaster** •



Ardanyan is a town unlike any other. Its wealthy citizens live behind secure, massive walls uncommon for a settlement of this size. In the past, ork scorchers of the Skull Wharg tribe have failed miserably to overcome the town's fortifications. Keeping a safe distance, they remain a threat to caravans outside Ardanyan's sphere of influence. For travelers and adventurers alike, Ardanyan represents a safe haven for those seeking rest from traveling the trade route between Bartertown and Tansiarda. But behind this peaceful atmosphere, a secret order of Raggok questors pulls the strings. Emerged from a nearby kaer several decades ago, the Cross of Ardanyan exists to keep it hidden from the rest of the world. The kaer is their main source of wealth, and also their greatest secret. Members of the Order silently take care of everyone asking the wrong questions...

This chapter holds a description of the town of Ardanyan. The history picks up where the First Expedition left the kaer (see the **Kaer Ardanyan** chapter on p. 19), concluding the plans of Leldrin and his followers. The town is divided in three sections, each listing people and places of interest. Adventurers and other travelers might know something about the place; check the **Rumors and Research** chapter on p. 104 for details on what's told on the streets.

HISTORY

When the First Expedition passed the final ward and stepped on the world's surface, the bold heroes realized that the Scourge was over. Sworn to participate in Leldrin's conspiracy, the majority of the explorers were unwilling to pass this information on to the rest of the kaer. The others — two dwarfs Named Fearghus and Dunar — ran for their lives, but never reached the safety of Freedom Gate.

Both met their death at the hands of the conspirators, who founded the Cross of Ardanyan with their blood.

Before saying their farewells, the elf Leldrin and his companions swore a pact to meet again two decades later. Only Leldrin returned into the kaer. He carried Fearghus' corpse in his arms, convincing the kaer's population that he was the only survivor of the mission. The nightmare of a Horror lurking outside the gates became a terrible certainty with Leldrin's help. Using the books the Order had stolen from the kaer library, the mad questor worked from inside the kaer to deactivate a small number of the kaer's Runes of Warding. Concealed with permanent illusions, the Council of Mages never found out. Leldrin gathered more followers over the coming years, and used them to dig a tunnel to the outside. Although his workers left no evidence, he ensured that all of them were killed. Only his most fanatic followers survived. Refer to the **Kaer Ardanyan** chapter on p. 16 for more information on what happened inside the kaer.

Meanwhile, on the surface, the remaining conspirators — Argethiel, Mangalin, Errin, and Jania — explored Barsaive. Most of the kaers and citadels had already opened their gates, although the land had not yet recovered from the Scourge. Traveling from city to city and from town to town, the four of them searched and destroyed evidence of Kaer Ardanyan's existence. They erased all entries they could find about the kaer in the logbooks of the Kingdom of Throal, burned ancient trading agreements and other papers related to Kaer Ardanyan's construction. The elven questors even paid ork mercenaries to wipe out expeditions looking for kaers in the area. While it took years, their efforts were successful in the end — any remaining traces of Ardanyan would be hard to find.

Shortly after the war against the returning Therans, the group returned to the kaer. As promised, they met their friend Leldrin — whose workers had finished the tunnel in time.

ON THE FIRST BUILDING

The sparse remains of pre-Scourge Ardanyan proved helpful in the construction of a small house erected to cover the secret entrance. Only a few miles away, the old trade route had been infused with new life. The dwarf kingdom had recovered the old plans to construct a bridge at Tansiarda and put them back into motion.

Once the house was finished, the Order decided to get into business. They opened a tavern and organized a ferry service. Using the ferry eased the journey of the caravans, which had to pass through the craggy foothills of the Throal Mountains further north to get past the river. Even with the additional coin involved to use the ferry, the merchants saved an additional day on their journey—a deal they couldn't refuse.

Posing as merchants, the conspirators promised the first dozen Name-givers willing to settle a handful of gold pieces and a house made of stone. Soon, settlers and craftsmen arrived, and the first dozen houses were erected. The settlement quickly turned into a small boomtown, frequently visited by passing caravans. After just a few years, the small settlement outgrew all expectations. A new tavern was built, and the old one expanded to serve as Council House.

In a big celebration, the four founders officially named their new settlement Ardanyan. Despite the potential risk of being recognized and uncovered, they chose the same Name as a trap for those people who might know about the kaer, allowing the Order to take care of them should they start questioning the settlement's past.

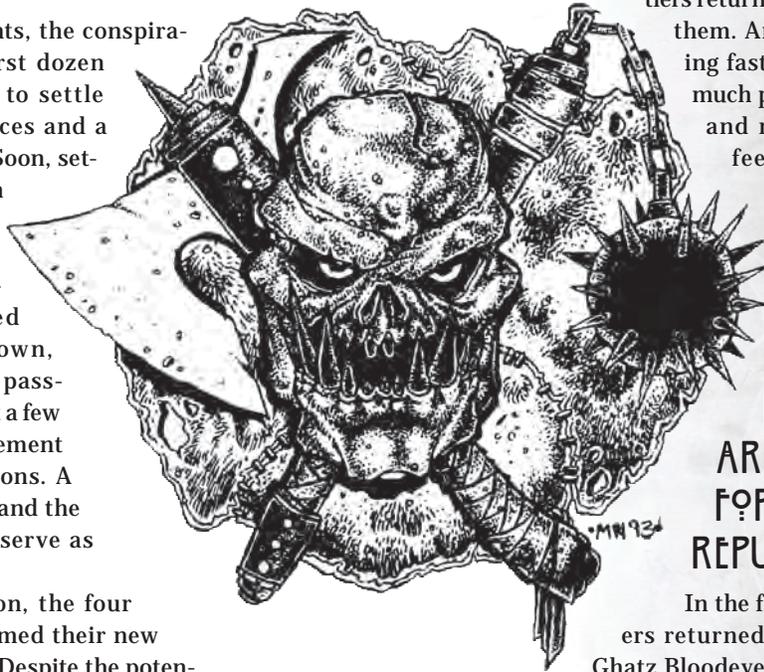
ON THE SKULL WHARG MENACE

Word of Ardanyan spread like wildfire, and eventually found its way into the ears of Korron Bor, a clan chieftain of the Skull Whargs—an overly violent and destructive ork scorcher tribe. He dispatched a small group of ork scorchers and sent them off to Ardanyan. Harassing the villagers in a small raid, they took their lives, gold, and food. Full of pride, they even announced their return. Many villagers feared for their lives, but Argethiel, leader of the council, promised that the ork scorchers wouldn't be able to harm Ardanyan any further. Only a few of them believed the elf's words, and many families left during the days that followed.

Only a week later, the scorchers came back for more. Behind them, Korron Bor's entire clan followed. Stopping on the hilltop overlooking the area, the orks were surprised to find a fortified village instead of a defenseless settle-

ment. Argethiel had hired a coven of Elementalists to erect a protective wall encircling the village. Still, the fortification was too small to prove a hindrance for the chieftain. His men were hungry for battle, and he called upon them to raze Ardanyan on the same afternoon. But Argethiel had prepared another surprise for the charging scorchers. A dozen earth elementals buried in the ground emerged during the attack, throwing the raiders off their mounts and forced them to retreat. Korron Bor was furious, but intelligent enough not to strike again. When the last scorcher passed out of sight into the foothills of the nearby Throal Mountains, there was no doubt that the orks would not be easily defeated.

For a time, nothing happened. Soon, the settlers returned, and more came to join them. Ardanyan was again growing fast—a place which showed much promise for many settlers and merchants. With mixed feelings, Errin and Jania trained a small force and hired other adepts to protect the town from scorchers and other bandits.



HOW ARDANYAN FORTIFIED ITS REPUTATION

In the following year, the scorchers returned under the command of Ghatz Bloodeyes, chieftain of the entire Skull Wharg tribe. The news of his underling's defeat had enraged the old warrior—he had strangled Korron Bor with his own hands to remove the stain of his failure. The growing settlement of Ardanyan was a thorn in his side, as he claimed the caravans south of the Throal Mountains as his personal property. One day after Ghatz Bloodeyes arrived with the entire Skull Wharg tribe at his back, he ordered an all-out attack.

Although the scorchers arrived in daunting numbers, they fell for Argethiel's creativity in battle. Two dozen Archers had been put into place on the half-finished wall, and several dozen mercenaries were waiting on the streets on the other side. A hard fight ensued, but the old ork chieftain was sure that Ardanyan would be reduced to rubble at the end of the day.

When Ghatz Bloodeyes decided to enter the battle himself, he charged behind the walls with his massive thundra beast. It was the fatal mistake Argethiel had waited for. On the top of Council House, the elf revealed two fire cannons he purchased from the t'skrang downriver. The cannons were mounted, able to be aimed at everything in sight—but there was only one target. Ghatz Bloodeyes was hit directly while charging down the main road, he and his massive beast were torn apart in a huge explosion. In the ensuing

chaos, most of the Skull Whargs fled. Ghatz' successor Karak Bloodeyes decided to leave Ardanyan alone from then on. It was perhaps his wisest decision, but it fueled unrest among the tribe's leaders, turning them against each other.

The victory turned Ardanyan's Name into gold and it became synonymous as a safe haven. Again, the settlement grew in size and was soon too large to be ignored by dwarven officials. The Kingdom of Throal now offered official support to Ardanyan, although the town remained an independent ally. With dwarven trading houses recognizing the small market of Ardanyan, money began to flow into the town's coffers. In time, a bridge replaced the ferry and the walls and gates were finished.

HOW THE ORDER RULES IN SECRET

The Cross of Ardanyan has a tight grip on the town of Ardanyan. The secret society has eyes and ears everywhere, controlling the town with an invisible, but iron, hand. Initiating more and more people to the cause, the Order traditionally binds its members' loyalty with blood magic. Several questors of Raggok have joined the Order since it was founded, helping keep its secrets and spread their influence. While Leldrin enjoys living an ascetic life

among the unsuspecting kaer-dwellers, his companions prefer the decadent wealth provided in the bustling town on the surface. Everyone in the Order directly answers to them. See the **The Cross of Ardanyan** section on p. 55 for more information.

THE TOWN

The following section describes the town of Ardanyan in general and its different parts in detail, including places of interest and important personalities. The maps presented here are intended for the gamemasters eyes only, since they show locations unknown to the characters. Players should use the hand-out maps provided at the back of this book.

ON THE SURROUNDING LANDS

The craggy foothills of the southern Throal Mountains cover most of the area, rising up to a spine of mountains separating Ardanyan from the Alidar River on the other side. The trade route winds mostly through the hills, going over them only on rare occasions. Patches of wood and



small forests are a common sight. The Throal Mountains tower over the area to the north, their peaks almost always vanishing between the clouds.

The trade route coming from Bartertown parts a few miles before Ardanyan's gates, reaching further south along the shores of the Coil River. It's a five-day walk from Bartertown to Ardanyan and about a day's walk from Ardanyan to Darranis. To the east, the route meanders between the foothills and eventually ends at Tansiarda. Mostly due to the terrain, it takes about twelve days to walk from Ardanyan to Tansiarda.

The rocky terrain allows only a handful of farmers to grow crops in the area. Their houses remain close to Ardanyan, because of the threat of wandering ork scorchers. Cavalrymen of Ardanyan's Second Company (see **Organizations**, p. 52) patrol the road up to half a day's ride from the town, visiting the outlying farms frequently.

ON WHAT ARDANYAN LOOKS LIKE

The town of Ardanyan is separated into three distinct parts, surrounded by an impressive wall, which usually leaves an impression of strength on passing travelers. The fortifications connect a handful of smaller towers, and four large towers form the two gates of Ardanyan: Westgate and Eastgate. The road from Eastgate leads to Tansiarda, and travelers from Bartertown arrive at Westgate. The bridge is located inside Ardanyan, preventing it from being used without paying a toll.

The Ring is the oldest part of town. A protective wall forms a ring around the most important buildings at the town's center. The wall dates back to the first time when the town successfully defended itself against the Skull Wharg tribe and was initially erected by earth elementals.

Hangside is the upper part of town, both rhetorically and literally. Its residences and mansions rise between the lush trees on the side of a hill, overlooking the Ring and the lower part of town called Landside. The rich populate Hangside: wealthy merchants, the council members, and Mangalin, whose landmark tower stands on top of the hill.

Landside can be considered the seedy part of town, but only from a rich man's perspective. To the common man, Landside looks wealthy enough to be upper class — even though common folk live here. The citizens of Landside are workers and craftsmen. The town's guild houses are located in the winding streets.

THE RING

Surrounded by the old wall once erected by Argethiel's hired Elementals, the central part of Ardanyan holds the Council House, the Thirsty Dragon Inn, Argethiel's Forge, six permanent shops, and the central marketplace. The council has decided to leave the wall in place to commemorate the attack and to separate the market from the rest of town. A third reason is that the fortification eases the prospect of guarding the treasury in the lower level of Council House.

PLACES OF INTEREST

The most prominent spots of the Ring include the Thirsty Dragon Inn, Argethiel's Forge, the market and Council House.

Thirsty Dragon Inn

This tavern is owned and run by Errin, an elven Warrior (see the **Cast of Characters** chapter on p. 112). As an expensive alehouse, it is a place for people who do well — caravan leaders, merchants, and adepts. It is also a common spot for adventurers, because Errin has set up a board where the merchants can provide offerings for caravan protection. Errin usually reviews the offers and the hirelings personally. The elf warrior has a reputation for testing the adepts who want a job. Errin is a member of the town council, as well as one of the leaders of the Order.

Argethiel's Forge

Although Argethiel is no longer working as a Weaponsmith, this forge still bears his name. Being the chief councilor of the town, Argethiel finds himself with less and less time to practice his discipline. Handreaux, who once was Argethiel's apprentice, runs the forge. He has a reputation to produce high quality weapons and armor, and has an exclusive contract to supply the town watch with weapons, armor, and other equipment.

Marketplace

Six houses huddle up along the wall, three on each side of Council House. The central square is filled with tents and wagons of passing caravans, and the setup of the market changes on a daily basis. The houses are permanent stores, each belonging to a local merchant. All of them employ at least one wagon running the trade route between Bartertown and Tansiarda. Their shops sell imported wares from these settlements, along with equipment and tools produced locally.

Council House

The second-largest building in Ardanyan was once used as a tavern. Built decades ago, Council House was the town's first building, and it has been expanded several times over the years. When the settlement reached a certain size, the Order feared that the secret tunnel underneath the building could be unveiled. They turned the tavern into the Council House, and built a new one — the Thirsty Dragon Inn. The cellar houses Ardanyan's treasury, which is a secret shrine devoted to Raggok. The Market Authority and the Hall of Records are located in the ground floor of the building. For more information on Council House, see **Break and Enter** on p. 90.

PERSONALITIES OF THE RING

The following Name-givers can be encountered in this part of town:

Handreaux

Handreaux is an elven Weaponsmith, who was born in the Hall of Okoros of Kaer Ardanyan. Inside the Kaer,



people still talk of him and of his family who committed suicide only a few decades ago.

This is a complete fabrication set up by Leldrin, as Argethiel wanted his apprentice of the kaer very soon after his return. Kaer-dwellers might recognize him or his name and vice versa.

Whill Bronzeleaf

While Whill Bronzeleaf is not a questor of Raggok, he is a low-key initiate to the Order. As an old acquaintance of Errin, their common hatred of dwarfs has convinced him to settle in Ardanyan and enjoy a life in luxury.

Whill was once a wandering Troubadour, but in the rare cases when he practices his talents, he now uses them to increase his profits.

Khalos Morgond

An unsuccessful dwarf merchant who has tried his luck on the trade route, Khalos is close to giving up his business. He seems to be haunted by bad luck and is known to be a prime target by speculators. As a dwarf, Khalos is not initiated in the Order and is unaware of its existence. His bad luck is actually nothing more than sabotage and has become a running gag among the Order's merchants.

Borrusk

This ork outcast is relatively new to Ardanyan and he offers his services as a bodyguard to everyone in the Ring during the day. His real intention is to gather information about Ardanyan's defenses and the town watch. He intends to find a way to rob the treasury and return with glory to his tribe — the Skull Whargs.

HANGSIDE RESIDENCES

The walls of Ardanyan encompass the side of a large, rocky hill. A few mansions are visible between the lush trees, leaving no doubt that Hangside is the richest part of town. Only merchants, nobles, and high-ranking Order members call Hangside home. Rumor has it that the trees have been infused with Jaspre's magic to grow this large. The trees serve as an additional defense, preventing attacks from the hill side.

PLACES OF INTEREST

The most prominent spots of Hangside include the Path of Gold, the Silent Scream Tavern, and the residences of the wealthy.

Path of Gold

A path of white cobblestones runs from the bridge to Eastgate, branching several times to connect the mansions in an elaborate pattern.

Founder's Place

In the middle of Hangside, the path runs into Founder's Place, boasting a large well containing animated water sprites. The center of the well shows a miniature version of Ardanyan, while the well's outer rim shows ork scorcher mounted on fearsome beasts. The scorcher are held at bay by the water sprites who dance between them and the miniature city. A path runs from the place down to the guarded rear entrance of Council House.

Silent Scream Tavern

Standing between the trees close to the Founder's place, travelers find the best part of town: the Silent Scream Tavern. Exclusive and reserved for only the most influential and wealthiest guests, the usual clientele prefers to remain among their own. No one else could possibly afford the rare delicacies served by the house — the prices are outrageous and fuel a variety of rumors in Landside. The tavern serves as meeting place for doing business, and offers a few guest rooms for that purpose.

Residences

Of the dozen villas, only a handful are of primary interest for this adventure:

Omasu's Landhouse

Although the obsidiman is almost never present, his landhouse is open for any obsidiman passing through Ardanyan. It might seem like an inhospitable place to other

Name-givers, mainly because the entire house has no roof or windows, and the bottom is made of cobblestones. The innkeepers of the town are happy about the house, and often send traveling obsidimen there instead of offering them a room, reducing the cost for new furniture in their own houses.

Mangalin's Tower

Because of its location on top of the hill, Mangalin's tower is the landmark building of Ardanyan — it can be seen even from a few miles away. Its roof bears a midnight-blue flag with the crest of Ardanyan on it. A few years ago, Mangalin had two apprentices, but his madness caused him not to train others anymore. Despite being one of Ardanyan's founders, the wizard does not leave his tower much nowadays — only on very rare occasions. There are many dark rumors surrounding the tower and its inhabitant, because he does not even employ personnel — as opposed to the other people living in Hangside.

Argethiel's Villa

The mansion of the head councilor of Ardanyan is the only one surrounded by an additional wall. A small forge is attached to the building and it is rumored to have a secret tunnel leading to Council House. The rumor is only partly true — Argethiel's cellar is connected to Mangalin's tower and the tree of Errin and Jania, but not to Council House.

Errin and Jania's Tree

The three tree houses owned by this couple are the most prominent in Ardanyan. With the help of a questor of Upandal, they built their residence out of three dead *sol'tan* trees on the hill. *Sol'tan* trees have bark almost as hard as stone, while the wood inside is very soft. When the trees caught fire and died during the last scorcher attack, the strong bark was all that remained. Errin and Jania hollowed the trees out and built their residences inside and on top of them.

PERSONALITIES OF HANGSIDE

The following Name-givers can be encountered in this part of town:

Caedrus

The current inhabitant of Omasu's landhouse is an obsidiman Warrior Named Caedrus. He is very calm and usually silent, but friendly and open to receive other guests. Caedrus has a secret however, which he shares with the merchant Omasu: his liferock. Ever since the Theran fortress *Triumph* landed on top of Ayodhya, Caedrus has been one of the leaders in Omasu's Liferock Rebellion. Caedrus is looking for new members, but keeps a low profile. Theran spies are interested in his capture, which would be a hard blow for the rebels.

Selbion

Posing as a tour guide, the elf Selbion is an initiate of the Order. He was raised in Kaer Ardanyan and emerged only a few years ago, feigning his death with a disease and

Leldrin's help. His hatred for dwarfs runs deep, he lost his elder brother in the Separation (see the **Kaer Ardanyan** chapter, p. 18). Although he is not a questor of Raggok, Selbion informs the Order of any newcomers that might pose a danger. Older kaer-dweller characters might recognize him or his Name, and vice versa.

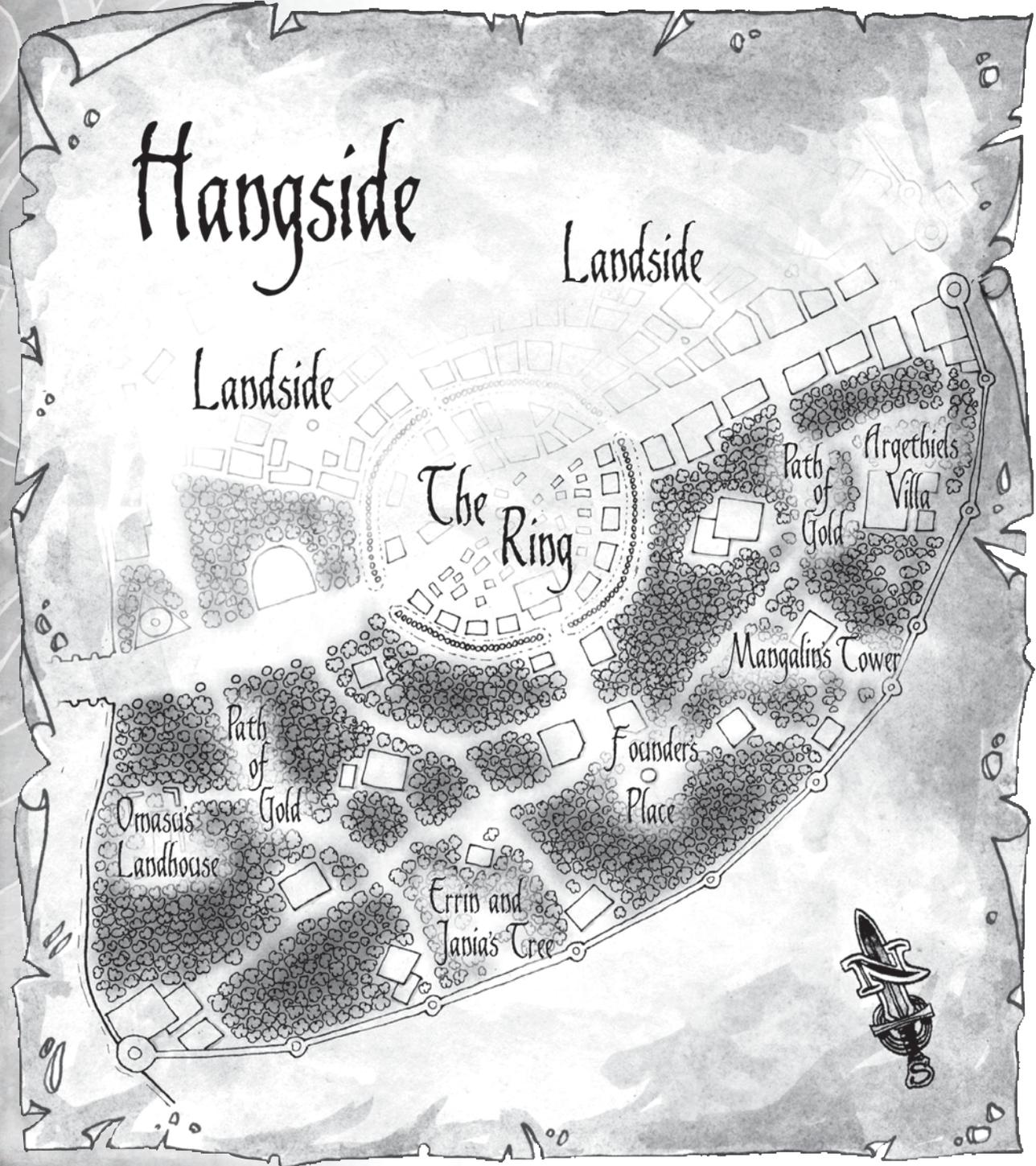
Arraskan Sanabar

This human from Marrek is of noble blood. The fall of his kingdom has left him with nothing but a title and a little money. He tried his luck at trading and left his home. Arraskan got lucky and turned his starting investment into a small fortune when he decided to join the first settlers

of Ardanyan. He is not initiated in the Order, but has the feeling that something is going on behind everyone's backs. Fortunately for him, the thought of waking something dangerous prevents him from investigating the matter.

Korman Witherspoon

The elven cook of the Silent Scream Tavern was among the first to emerge from Kaer Ardanyan. He is a high ranking questor of Raggok and frequently mixes his food with alchemical ingredients to help his conspirators manipulate other merchants. As a skilled poisoner, his cellar is full of skeletons — from people who once stood in the way of the Order's interests.



CIVIL LANDSIDE

The base of the hill is called Landside, and home to most of Ardanyan's citizens. While Landside is not as beautiful as Hangside, the houses are a testament to the town's prosperity nonetheless. The streets of Landside are a small maze, and the houses stand close together, often reaching three stories high. Apart from a number of guildhouses, Landside offers various smaller shops and taverns. Workers, craftsmen and other commoners live here, with the occasional adept in between. Landside is a very civil place, but some of the darker passages are better left alone during the night.

PLACES OF INTEREST

The most prominent spots of Landside include the Passion's Walk, the Red Raven Inn, the civil quarters, and the guild quarters.

Passion's Walk

Between the bridge and the Ring lies the Passion's Walk and citizens tend to argue if it belongs to Hangside or Landside. The argument has never turned into a serious debate, however. The largest temple is devoted to the Passion Garlen, houses a number of beds for the ill and an alchemical laboratory for producing healing potions, salves and other medicine. Close to the bridge lies the temple of Upandal, whose questors tend to the bridge and collect the bridge toll from anyone passing it. The tolls are shared with the town's council and invested in the temple's workshops, who work for free on behalf of the citizens. A number of smaller shrines devoted to the other Passions line the road, usually tended by traveling questors passing through Ardanyan. There are no shrines devoted to the mad Passions.

Red Raven Inn

Close to the river is the Red Raven Inn, offering rooms and a tavern for caravaners and other travelers. Run by the t'skrang Hchal'Tssan, the personnel are rumored to smuggle goods in and out of the town. No one dared to accuse them so far — his personal bodyguard Sant'Zabur is a high-Circle Warrior adept no one dares to mess with. The house was built close to the water, and a small pier serves as a dock for fishing boats and other small ships trading with settlements further down the river. This sidearm of the Coil River is too shallow for t'skrang riverboats.

Civil Quarter

Apart from the many residences rising upwards throughout the quarter, this part of town also holds the headquarters of the town watch. Led by Jania, who enjoys training the adepts who join the watch, it is the place where she is found most often. A part of the building features prison cells, mostly for people who have been sentenced for hard labor. Long-term prisoners are held in the cellar of the Council House.

Guild Quarter

The guild quarter is called that because most of the Guild Houses stand close to one another. The guilds serve all kinds of interest groups, and most of them fail to have a real impact on the town's politics. The most prominent building belongs to the Magician's Guild, which does not hold much power in the town ever since Mangalin left. Halizum, an elderly human wizard, was appointed as his successor. A wealthy place draws many scoundrels, and Ardanyan is no exception. The thieves of Ardanyan are not only well organized, but also very nosy. Unknown to many, they have founded the Thieves' Guild, and their secret guild house is facing the town watch headquarters from the other side of the street.

PERSONALITIES OF LANDSIDE

The following Name-givers can be encountered in this part of town:

Ferhaan

As the guild master, the human thief Ferhaan tends to make long-term plans. He planted several spies among the other guilds, with access to the plans and cargo manifests of passing caravans. Ferhaan requires other thieves to share with him and his small syndicate. His enforcers are known to separate Name-givers from their hands if they don't follow this rule.

Sant'Zabur

Sant serves as the bodyguard of Hchal'Tssan, the owner of the Red Raven Inn. His frightening appearance, combined with his smell of rotting fish, has earned him respect throughout the town. He is challenged every now and then, but so far has retained his status. Sant is very straightforward and impatiently takes matters into his own hands when others hesitate.

Astan

The human Astan is a ruthless bully who was a long term member of the Thieves' Guild. His cold-bloodedness earned him the post of Ferhaan's right hand. He knows the ins and outs of Ardanyan very well, and keeps his buddies always alert. If they ever catch anyone stealing without the guild's consent, it's likely that Astan will cut the culprit's hands off himself.

Halizum

The aloof old Wizard is the current head of the Magician's Guild. He does not care for power or influence, and is only interested in researching the existence of the Passions. As a former apprentice of Mangalin, Halizum is one of the few who know about his madness and devotion to Raggok.

He does not know about the Order, however — his interest in researching Mangalin's madness blinds his senses regarding anything else.



ORGANIZATIONS

Although Ardanyan is just a town, a number of organizations are at work. This section gives an overview on how these work together and highlights the most influential organization: the Cross of Ardanyan.

TOWN COUNCIL

Ardanyan's town council consists of four members, which has not changed since the town was founded decades ago. The town council makes all decisions regarding the town's future and paves the way to turn Ardanyan into a

city someday. The four council members are Argethiel, Errin, Jania, and Mangalin—the same ones forming the leadership of the Cross of Ardanyan. Argethiel is the council's head and enjoys his reputation of turning Ardanyan into a safe haven by tricking the ork scorchers. Political ties are important and mainly taken care of by Argethiel. As chief justice and head of the town watch, it's Jania's responsibility to ensure law and order in the town.

The law is loosely based on Throal's *Council Compact*, but has a new section that allows slavery on a very limited level—sentenced prisoners have to work on behalf of the town. Errin serves as a mediator between the guilds and the council. Mangalin used to control the Magician's Guild,

but has resigned his post a few years ago. He still influences the head of the guild, but only sparingly.

MERCHANT'S GUILD

What began as a simple union of the six most influential merchants that settled in Ardanyan, has turned into the Merchant's Guild. Responsible for the export and import of goods, the guild's merchants have a tight grip on the trade. They are allowed to raise taxes, but have to pay an annual tithe to the town council for their freedom. Some, but not all of the merchants have been initiated into the Order.

The Merchant's Guild maintains good contacts to the trading houses of Throal and Bartertown and organizes caravans and guards to Tansiarda. Unfortunately, the guild's hired guards don't enjoy the best reputation, since everyone able to hold a sword has a good chance to get hired. Every caravan leader in need of good protection turns to Errin, whose hiring service stands in keen competition with the guild.

The guild house is located in Landside and features a workshop to repair carriages and wagons. The meadows and stables close to Westgate also belong to the guild's properties and are used to harbor a caravan's mounts during their stay.

TYPICAL GUILD MERCHANT

Attributes

Dexterity (12): 5/D8 **Perception** (14): 6/D10
Strength (11): 5/D8 **Willpower** (12): 5/D8
Toughness (8): 4/D6 **Charisma** (14): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7 **Initiative:** 5/D8
Spell Defense: 8 **Physical Armor:** 3
Social Defense: 8 **Mystic Armor:** 2
Death Rating: 28 **Recovery Tests:** 2
Wound Threshold: 7 **Knockdown:** 5/D8
Unconsciousness Rating: 19

Combat Movement: 24^H or 26^E

Full Movement: 48^H or 52^E

^{H,E} Denotes human or elf Movement rates, respectively.

Skills

Artisan:

Robe Embroidery (1): 7/D12

Knowledge:

Throal Trade Routes (2): 8/2D6

General:

Bribery (2): 8/2D6

Conversation (2): 8/2D6

Evaluate (2): 8/2D6

Haggle (2): 8/2D6

Speak Language (3): 9/D8+D6

— Dwarven (Throalic), Elvish, Human

Trading (5): 11/D10+D8

Equipment

Espagra-Scale Cloak (Phys 3; Myst 1; Init 0/1)

Dagger (Damage: 7/D12; Range: 9–15–18)

Belt Pouch

Elfweave Robe

Embroidery Tools

Wealthy Traveler's Garb

Loot

2 gold pieces, 25 silver pieces, 50 copper pieces

Legend Points

45 Legend Points

Notes

Elf merchants possess the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision.

Commentary

The above game statistics represent an average merchant operating from out of Ardanyan. Descriptions vary widely, but most merchants are human or elven.

MARKET AUTHORITY

All trade conducted inside Ardanyan's walls is watched closely by the Market Authority. Located on the ground floor of Council House, it administers the central market and its enforcers assign spots for traveling merchants every day. Disputes are usually solved in the offices of the Authority, which also serves as a tax collection office for the merchants conducting business on their grounds.

The Market Authority is run entirely by initiated members of the Order who serve to protect the Order's interests. Enforcers of the Market Authority can also be seen in Landside, collecting taxes from merchants selling their wares in their own stores. Collected taxes flow directly into the town's coffers and are used to expand the market.

TOWN WATCH

The town watch of Ardanyan is divided in three companies. While members of the Order can be found everywhere among the watchmen's ranks, only the Third Company consists entirely of insiders.

First Company, the largest part of town watch, enforces law and order in both Hangside and Landside. Serving in Hangside has a better reputation among the watchmen, because the area is not a busy place. The watchmen of the First Company also accompany the tax collectors of the Market Authority on their rounds each month. Captains of the First Company are usually adepts of the Swordmaster or Warrior disciplines.

The **Second Company** guards Ardanyan's surroundings and mans the town's fortifications. The influence of the company extends about half a day's ride from the town in both directions. Watchmen patrolling the road usually ride in groups of four or five. Adepts are usually employed as captains and follow the Scout or Cavalrymen Disciplines.

The most reputable **Third Company** serves at the very center of Ardanyan. They are responsible for law and order within the Ring, working hand in hand with the Market Authority and protect Council House and the treasury. Known as the elite of the town watch, the Third Company employs a larger number of adepts. Non-adepts have to be well-trained to join the Third Company.

TYPICAL TOWN WATCHMAN

Attributes

Dexterity (13): 6/D10

Strength (15): 6/D10

Toughness (12): 5/D8

Perception (13): 6/D10

Willpower (12): 5/D8

Charisma (11): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7

Spell Defense: 7

Social Defense: 7

Death Rating: 34

Wound Threshold: 9

Unconsciousness Rating: 26

Initiative: 6/D10

Physical Armor: 3

Mystic Armor: 1

Recovery Tests: 2

Knockdown: 6/D10

Combat Movement: 26^H or 28^E

Full Movement: 52^H or 56^E

^{H,E} Denotes human or elf Movement rates, respectively.

Skills

Artisan:

Craftsman; Leatherworking (1): 7/D12

Knowledge:

Ardanyan Lore (2): 8/2D6

General:

Avoid Blow (2): 8/2D6

Melee Weapons (2): 8/2D6

Streetwise (2): 8/2D6

Throwing Weapons (2): 8/2D6

Unarmed Combat (2): 8/2D6

Equipment

Leather Armor (Phys 3)

Club (Damage 9/D8+D6)

2 × Flasks of Oil (Damage 5/D8; Range 6–10–12)

Sap (Damage 7/D12)

Belt Pouch

Craftsman Tools

Hooded Lantern

Traveler's Garb

Loot

10 silver pieces

Legend Points

50 Legend Points

Notes

Elf town watchmen possess the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision.



Commentary

The above game statistics represent an average member of Ardanyan's town watch. Most of them are of human or elven origin. Their leather armor has been dyed a deep blue and shows the golden insignia of Ardanyan on the breast.

TYPICAL TOWN WATCH CAPTAIN

Attributes

Dexterity (14): 6/D10

Strength (16): 7/D12

Toughness (14): 6/D10

Perception (13): 6/D10

Willpower (12): 5/D8

Charisma (12): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 8

Spell Defense: 7

Social Defense: 7

Initiative: 6/D10

Physical Armor: 3

Mystic Armor: 1

Death Rating: 36 **Recovery Tests:** 3
Wound Threshold: 10 **Knockdown:** 7/D12
Unconsciousness Rating: 28
Combat Movement: 28^H or 30^E
Full Movement: 56^H or 60^E

^{H, E} Denotes human or elf Movement rates, respectively.

Skills

Artisan:

Craftsman: Leatherworking (1): 7/D12

Knowledge:

Ardanyan Lore (2): 8/2D6

Ardanyan Politics (2): 8/2D6

General:

Avoid Blow (4): 10/D10+D6

Detect Weapon (2): 8/2D6

Disarm (2): 8/2D6

Melee Weapons (4): 10/D10+D6

Riposte (3): 9/D8+D6

Streetwise (4): 10/D10+D6

Tactics (2): 8/2D6

Unarmed Combat (4): 10/D10+D6

Equipment

Leather Armor (Phys 3)

Broadsword (Damage 12/2D10; w/scabbard)

Club (Damage 10/D10+D6)

Sap (Damage 8/2D6)

Belt Pouch

Light Quartz Lantern

Traveler's Garb

Loot

20 silver pieces

Legend Points

105 Legend Points

Notes

Elf town watch captains possess the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision.

Commentary

The above game statistics represent an average leading member of Ardanyan's town watch, a non-adept of human or elven origin (adepts of the town watch usually follow the Warrior, Cavalryman, or Swordmaster disciplines). Their leather armors have been dyed in a deep blue and show the golden insignia of Ardanyan on the breast.

THE CROSS OF ARDANYAN

Its members also call this secret organization the Order. The Order holds all power in Ardanyan. Its founders are exceptionally rich and like to show it. While they pose as merchants, their real source of wealth lies in the

treasure chests of Kaer Ardanyan, however. The coin rolling in from the town is also considerable. The Order is devoted to Raggok, and all of the founders are questors to some degree.

The Cross of Ardanyan was founded in revenge and is dedicated to hold the kaer-dwellers as unsuspecting slaves for eternity. Denying the existence of a lost kaer is hard to accomplish, so the main task for members of the order is to carefully remove the sources of any rumors that spring into existence. In return, the treasures extracted from the kaer's vaults ensure the luxurious standard of living for members of the Order. There are only a few long-term plans for the Raggok questors, which include expanding to other towns and cities in Barsaive.

COMMAND STRUCTURE

The Cross of Ardanyan has a pyramidal command structure, with the Founders at the top, the Inner Circle in the middle, and the Initiates at the bottom.

The Founders

The Order was founded by five elves, all of which were born in Kaer Ardanyan and betrayed their people out of revenge. All of them are described in detail in the **Cast of Characters** chapter, on p. 107. The Founders frequently engage in a Group Ritual to strengthen their bonds (see the **Thread Magic** chapter, on p. 270 of the **Player's Compendium**, for more information).

Leldrin is the leader of the Order. He is the only one who chose to live an ascetic life inside the Kaer, while the other four decided to live above ground. Leldrin is a mad Illusionist, who enjoys being revered as the greatest hero inside the kaer (see **Kaer Ardanyan**, on p. 16, for more information).

Argethiel is the undisputed, official head of Ardanyan's town council. As a trained Weaponsmith who has his own forge, he has proven to be resourceful in combat. Due to the constant coming and going of traveling Weaponsmiths, he is able to keep track of rumors and frequently hears news from the outside world.

The Swordmaster **Jania** is in control of the town watch and personally commands Ardanyan's Third Company, a considerable little group of veterans responsible for the security of the market and the treasury. She is a fierce opponent, and her reputation with the blade has spread far beyond Ardanyan's walls.

Errin owns the Thirsty Dragon Inn, one of the most luxurious alehouses in town. Errin has taken a step back from practicing the Warrior Discipline. Instead, he prefers to run a service for caravan leaders, hiring adepts to protect his customers and their possessions.

Mangalin has gone mad and has left his post as the head of the Magician's Guild years ago. As a result, the magicians of Ardanyan don't have much influence on the town's politics. Mangalin is rarely seen outside his tower, and a number of rumors make their round on what's happening inside.

The Inner Circle

The Inner Circle of members consists of Name-givers who are aware of the betrayal. Most of them emerged from Kaer Ardanyan themselves; only a few others joined their ranks out of racial hatred or deep-rooted friendship to the Founders. Each of them has a controlling function in the Order; refer to the various character descriptions provided in this chapter for examples. They are paid well for their services, and have vowed their loyalty with a Blood Oath (see the **Workings of Magic** chapter on p. 260 of the **Player's Compendium** for more information).

TYPICAL QUESTOR OF RAGGOK

Attributes

Dexterity (14): 6/D10 **Perception** (13): 6/D10
Strength (13): 6/D10 **Willpower** (13): 6/D10
Toughness (13): 6/D10 **Charisma** (16): 7/D12

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 8 **Initiative:** 6/D10
Spell Defense: 7 **Physical Armor:** 3
Social Defense: 9 **Mystic Armor:** 1
Death Rating: 33* **Recovery Tests:** 2
Wound Threshold: 9 **Knockdown:** 6/D10
Unconsciousness Rating: 25*

* These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

Combat Movement: 28^H or 30^E

Full Movement: 56^H or 60^E

^{H, E} Denotes human or elf Movement rates, respectively.

Talents

Questor of Raggok (2): 2
 — Cause Pain, Inspire Rage, Raise Undead (2): 9/D8+D6

Skills

Artisan:

Bone Carving (1): 8/2D6

Knowledge:

Undead Lore (2): 8/2D6

General:

Avoid Blow (4): 10/D10+D6
 Melee Weapons (6): 12/2D10
 Riposte (3): 9/D8+D6
 Streetwise (4): 10/D10+D6

Equipment

Leather Armor (Phys 3)
 Short Sword (Damage 10/D10+D6; w/scabbard)
 Belt Pouch
 Traveler's Garb

Loot

12 silver pieces

Legend Points

250 Legend Points

Notes

Elf questors possess the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision. All questors have taken a blood oath to serve the Order.

Commentary

Use the above stats if the characters are confronted with a member of the Inner Circle. Descriptions vary widely, but almost all of the members are humans or elves.

Initiates

The Initiates are unaware of the kaer's existence, but they do know that there is a very dark secret that needs to be protected. Paid well for their services and their loyalty, members at this level are initiated by a member of the Inner Circle, who ensures that his underlings don't trust each other and report back frequently. Since there is no way to recognize a member of the Order, most Initiates fear to be spied upon by other members unknown to them — which prevents most of them from talking.

Most of the Initiates have a background that allows them to be blackmailed or to have some pressure put on them to keep them under control, if required. To make sure that they honor their promise, each and every one of them has vowed his loyalty to his master with a Blood Oath (see the **Workings of Magic** chapter, on p. 260 of the **Player's Compendium**, for more information).

TYPICAL INITIATE

Attributes

Dexterity (16): 7/D12 **Perception** (11): 5/D8
Strength (16): 7/D12 **Willpower** (11): 5/D8
Toughness (14): 6/D10 **Charisma** (11): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 9 **Initiative:** 7/D12
Spell Defense: 7 **Physical Armor:** 3
Social Defense: 7 **Mystic Armor:** 1
Death Rating: 34* **Recovery Tests:** 3
Wound Threshold: 10 **Knockdown:** 7/D12
Unconsciousness Rating: 26*

* These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

Combat Movement: 32^H or 34^E

Full Movement: 64^H or 68^E

^{H, E} Denotes human or elf Movement rates, respectively.

Skills

Artisan:

Weapon Runic Carving (1): 6/D10

Knowledge:

Creature Lore (2): 7/D12

General:

Acrobatic Strike (1): 8/2D6
 Animal Handling (1): 6/D10
 Avoid Blow (3): 10/D10+D6
 Charge (1): 8/2D6



Melee Weapons (3): 10/D10+D6
 Streetwise (2): 7/D12
 Taunt (1): 6/D10
 Trick Riding (1): 8/2D6
 Unarmed Combat (1): 8/2D6
 Wound Balance (1): 8/2D6

Equipment

Leather Armor (Phys 3)
 Broadsword (Damage 12/2D10; w/scabbard)
 Dagger (Damage 9/D8+D6; Range 9–15–18)
 Spear (Damage 11/D10+D8; Range: 18–30–36)
 Riding Horse
 Bit, Bridle, and Harness
 Saddle, Stirrups, Blanket
 Small Saddlebag
 Traveler's Garb

Loot

10 silver pieces

Legend Points

65 Legend Points

Notes

Elf Initiates possess the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision. All Initiates have taken a Blood Oath to serve their masters.

Commentary

Use the statistics shown above if the characters are confronted with a non-adept Initiate (adepts initiated in the Order usually follow the Warrior, Cavalryman, or Swordmaster Disciplines).

Descriptions vary widely, but almost all of the members are humans or elves.

HOW THE ORDER WORKS

The Founders meet frequently with Leldrin, usually once every other week. On these occasions, Leldrin leaves the kaer through the secret tunnel leading to Council House, where he joins his companions in the temple of Raggok.

The Third Company is the executive arm of the Order and ensures that it gets what it wants. By controlling the laws and the system of justice, Jania has the power to imprison anyone on any grounds that come to her mind. Initiates will usually be paid to act as witnesses, if there is need for such a thing.

Members of the Inner Circle keep their eyes and ears open, and rely on the Initiates to determine potential threats to the Order. For example, if an adventurer asks about rumors regarding the old mine, it is very likely that an Initiate hears about it or is asked directly. The Initiate would report this to his master, who in turn informs Jania or someone else belonging to the Third Company. Soon, the adventurer will be faced with charges and transported into the prison at Council House, where he is tortured until he reveals others who might be interested in the mines. If these are also in Ardanyan, they are likely to end up inside the prison.

Threats outside Ardanyan's walls are usually killed outright. So far, there has not been a threat to the Order from another city. If there was, however, one of the Founders is always ready to take care of it.

EN ROUTE

Think about it and you will come to the undoubted conclusion that my offer is reasonable and honest. What else would you expect from a dwarf with my reputation?

• **Khalos Morgond, Merchant of Throal** •



This chapter contains everything you need to get started if you intend to tie **Ardanyan's Revenge** into a running campaign or start with a new group of traveling adventurers. We assume that you are familiar with the setting of **The Town of Ardanyan**, and that the players have already created their characters according to the rules presented in the **Player's Compendium**.

Gamemasters are encouraged to run any type of introductory scenario before moving on to the main story (which begins in **Death on the Road** on p. 62). This section provides three adventure hooks set in and around Ardanyan, which can be used for this purpose.

The following adventure hooks are intended to give both the gamemaster and the players a chance to explore the setting of the town of Ardanyan and forge the relationships between their characters. Gamemasters should feel free to add their own or run the hooks presented in any order desired.

CARAVAN GUARDS

Phregas Kular, a human merchant running a small caravan on the trade route between Bartertown and the town of Ardanyan, hires the player characters to guard his precious goods on the caravan's next tour. He does not expect any real trouble, but the ork scorcher bands roaming the area might find his wagons an easy target if not protected well.

Somewhere along the trade route, the caravan gets into trouble—a small band of ork scorchers has blocked the road and attacks from behind. The fight, however, is staged—the scorchers don't intend to kill everyone and pilage the wagons. Instead, the player characters will find it rather easy to drive them off. During the fight, the player character with the highest Perception step discovers that

one of the coaches seems to be dealing with one of the scorchers behind a wagon, taking a package aboard while everyone else is diverted. Soon after, the orks break off their attack and leave.

If the player character confronts the coach with his observation, he will deny that such a thing happened. If they talk to Phregas Kular, he offers them an extra reward if the heroes keep a low profile and find out where the package is delivered.

When the caravan has arrived in Ardanyan, the heroes discover that the package in question is handed over to Borrusk (see **Personalities of the Ring** in the **The Town of Ardanyan** chapter on p. 48). It contains a carrier pigeon that he intends to use to send a status report back to his scorcher band. With a little effort, the heroes might manage to uncover Borrusk's plan and activities. Informing the town council will get the heroes a reward for their efforts: Argethiel will gladly cover their expenses during their stay in Ardanyan.

SKULL WHARG ORK SCORCHERS (8)

Attributes

Dexterity (13): 6/D10
Strength (15): 6/D10
Toughness (11): 5/D8

Perception (10): 5/D8
Willpower (13): 6/D10
Charisma (9): 4/D6

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 6

Initiative: 2/D4-1
Physical Armor: 10
Mystic Armor: 1

Death Rating: 32
Wound Threshold: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 24

Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 6/D10



Combat Movement: 26/49^R

Full Movement: 52/98^R

^R The second value is the character's riding Movement rate

Skills

Artisan:

Tattooing (1): 5/D8

Knowledge:

Caravan Trade Routes (2): 8/2D6

General:

Animal Bond (2): 6/D10

Animal Handling (1): 7/D12

Charge (1): 7/D12

Fence (2): 6/D10

Melee Weapons (1): 7/D12

Tactics (1): 6/D10

Trick Riding (1): 7/D12

Unarmed Combat (1): 7/D12

Equipment

Chainmail (Phys 7; Init 3)

Rider's Shield (Phys 3; Init 1; ST 19)

Broadsword (Damage 11/D10+D8; w/scabbard)

Dagger (Damage 8/2D6; Range 9–15–18)

Long-spear (Damage 11/D10+D8)

Spear (Damage 10/D10+D6; Range 18–30–36)

Adventurer's Kit

Bit, Bridle, and Harness

Large Saddlebag

2 × Oil Flasks

Riding Horse

Saddle, Stirrups, Blanket

Trail Rations (2 weeks)

Tattooing Tools

Traveler's Garb

Waterskin

Loot

5 silver pieces

Legend Points

80 Legend Points

Notes

The character possesses the ork racial abilities of Low-Light Vision and Gahad.

Commentary

Use the statistics above for both the ork scorchers and Borrusk.

RIDING HORSES (8)

DEX: 6

STR: 7

TOU: 8

PER: 4

WIL: 4

CHA: 5

Initiative: 7

Number of Actions: 1

Attack (1): 7

Damage:

Trample (2): 9

Death Rating: 44

Wound Threshold: 13

Unconsciousness Rating: 36

Combat Movement: 49

Full Movement: 98

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Listen, Smell) (2): 6, Great Leap^S (2): 8

^S Indicates a General Skill.

Legend Points: 75

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Commentary

The scorchers' riding horses are unbarded, but heavily braided with small bones and metal fragments.

FINAL REST

During their stay in Ardanyan, Isir Faang, a Nethermancer who has set up a small fortune-teller's shop in the back alleys of Landside, approaches the player characters. During his regular talks with the denizens of the spirit world, he has heard about an ancient necklace buried near a snow-white birch tree in the woods close to the town. He wants to hire the group to retrieve the item.

When the player characters leave for the site mentioned by Isir Faang, they are already shadowed by a group of

Initiates of the Cross of Ardanyan. Upon their arrival, an elven player character (or anyone who passes a Knowledge: Elven Lore (5)-Test) will notice that they have stepped onto an elven burial site. The birch tree is easy to find, as its bark is the only one of pure white color. At this time, the Order's Initiates reveal themselves, posing as elves native to this forest. They demand that the characters leave immediately.

If the heroes decide to dig anyway, they will be attacked by the elves. However, the heroes might create a diversion or find another way of getting rid of their opponents. Buried next to the birch tree is a skeleton wearing the desired necklace. Astral examination of the item reveals that it is non-magical. Made from silver and gold, the necklace has an estimated worth of about 500 silver pieces. The only interesting thing about it is an engraving on the back which reads "In memory of Ardan Yan".

After the player characters deliver the item to Isir Faang, he tells them that he might have another assignment and invites them to come back in a few days. When the group returns, they find that he has left without a trace — his shop is empty and his neighbors pretend not to know him (indeed some of them try to act a bit puzzled if confronted with this curiosity). Closer investigation reveals that the Faang has threatened to curse anyone who answers questions regarding his whereabouts. If the player characters are very convincing they can find out that Isir Faang was seen leaving the town through the western gate, perhaps traveling towards Throal.

If the heroes decide to follow him, they can find his dead body a few miles from Ardanyan. The Order has learned of Isir Faang's research and killed him after he received the necklace, staging the evidence as if ork scorchers have attacked him. Although the body in the grave was not that of Ardan Yan, it held the only item that was missing from the original burial site — which was of great interest for the Order.

Finding Faang's body should conclude the hero's investigation. The Order will not bother the heroes as long as they don't ask too many questions. No one else seems to care, so it is unlikely that any investigation regarding Isir Faang turns up anything of value.

ELF WARRIOR INITIATES (5)

Attributes

Dexterity (16): 7/D12 **Perception** (11): 5/D8
Strength (16): 7/D12 **Willpower** (11): 5/D8
Toughness (14): 6/D10 **Charisma** (11): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 9 **Initiative:** 7/D12
Spell Defense: 7 **Physical Armor:** 3
Social Defense: 7 **Mystic Armor:** 1
Death Rating: 34* **Recovery Tests:** 3
Wound Threshold: 10 **Knockdown:** 7/D12
Unconsciousness Rating: 26*

* These values have been adjusted for blood magic.



Combat Movement: 34

Full Movement: 68

Skills

Artisan:

Acting (1): 6/D10

Knowledge:

Elven Lore (2): 7/D12

General:

Acrobatic Strike (1): 8/2D6

Avoid Blow (2): 9/D8+D6

Disguise (2): 7/D12

Melee Weapons (2): 9/D8+D6

Missile Weapons (2): 9/D8+D6

Streetwise (2): 7/D12

Unarmed Combat (2): 9/D8+D6

Equipment

Leather Armor (Phys 3)

Broadsword (Damage 12/2D10; w/scabbard)

Dagger (Damage 9/D8+D6; Range 9–15–18)

Shortbow (Damage 10/D10+D6; Range 30–60–120)

Quiver (w/20 shortbow arrows)

Adventurer's Kit

Disguise Kit

Trail Ration (1 week)

Traveler's Garb

Loot

5 silver pieces

Legend Points

65 Legend Points

Notes

The character possesses the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision. All Initiates have taken a Blood Oath to serve the Order.

Commentary

Use the statistics above for the elves attacking the heroes.

A SLAVER'S DEBTS

While the player characters are buying equipment on the market in the Ring, they witness how a group of slavers is imprisoned in the cells underneath Council House. While most of the prisoners are unknown to the public, one of them rouses attention among the bystanders. It's a dwarf named Grankar Eisengiesser, a local merchant and shop owner from Landside. Rumor has it that he was the supposed head of the slavers and that Ardanyan's town watch was finally successful in uncovering his activities.

Later that same day, Khalos Morgond, the only dwarven merchant with a permanent shop in the Ring, approaches the heroes (see **Personalities of the Ring in The Town of Ardanyan** chapter, on p. 48). Khalos tells them that Grankar Eisengiesser was indebted to him and produces a certificate of debt proving his story. The merchant is on bad terms with the town Council and fears that he might not be able to reclaim the debt himself. Even worse, he feels that his reputation might be at stake if people find out that he dealt with a slaver! Since the heroes are new in town, Khalos figures that they might be willing to deal with the situation. He offers to sign the certificate over to their names, and in return they can keep a third of the sum they retrieve from the town council.

If the player characters agree, they will find out that the town council has already seized all of Grankar's possessions and closed his shop. If the group appears in Council House to retrieve the debt, the council refuses to pay the sum demanded. Instead, they suggest that the Eisengiesser family has to come up for Grankar's debts. The heroes won't be allowed to meet the criminal, so they have to investigate on their own where his family hails from.

This information can be easily found by talking to his neighbors in Landside, who state that Grankar was very proud of being born in the Kingdom of Throal. However, one of Grankar's neighbors — a human mason Named Pilvar — tells them that he suspects Grankar is being held prisoner under false pretenses. He knows that Grankar had influential friends and family in Throal, who would be interested in helping Grankar (and possibly pay the heroes for their trouble).

Pilvar is not willing to say more because his reputation is at stake — he fears losing his job and his friends if word gets out that he is helping to free a slaver.

Of course, the Order has a close eye on the heroes and is already planning to intervene. In the coming night, a Thief Initiate of the Order tries to steal the document from the player characters. Whether the Thief is successful or

not, the heroes should decide to travel to Throal and find the Eisengiesser family — which puts them on their way to the events described in **Death on the Road** on p. 62.

ELF THIEF INITIATE

Attributes

Dexterity (19): 8/2D6

Strength (11): 5/D8

Toughness (12): 5/D8

Perception (16): 7/D12

Willpower (11): 5/D8

Charisma (11): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 10

Spell Defense: 9

Social Defense: 7

Death Rating: 32*

Wound Threshold: 9

Unconsciousness Rating: 24*

Initiative: 8/2D6

Physical Armor: 3

Mystic Armor: 1

Recovery Tests: 2

Knockdown: 5/D8

* These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

Combat Movement: 40

Full Movement: 80

Skills

Artisan:

Acting (1): 6/D10

Knowledge:

Ardanyan Lore (2): 9/D8+D6

General:

Avoid Blow (1): 9/D8+D6

Fast Hand (2): 10/D10+D6

Forgery (2): 10/D10+D6

Lock Picking (2): 10/D10+D6

Melee Weapons (1): 9/D8+D6

Picking Pockets (3): 11/D10+D8

Silent Walk (2): 10/D10+D6

Streetwise (2): 9/D8+D6

Equipment

Leather Armor (Phys 3)

Dagger (Damage 7/D12; Range 9–15–18)

Short Sword (Damage 9/D8+D6; w/scabbard)

Belt Pouch

Map/Scroll Case

Traveler's Garb

Writing Kit

Loot

15 silver pieces

Commentary

Use the statistics above for the thief robbing the heroes. He is a tall, wiry-looking elf with dark hair. The thief is very cautious when attempting to steal the document and will retreat, rather than fight, if detected — only to attempt to steal the document again at the next opportunity.

He is completely loyal to the Cross of Ardanyan and will not reveal his true occupation.

DEATH ON THE ROAD

Thank the Passions you found me! Those pointy-eared bastards really made my day — let's hope they had enough and don't show their ugly faces again. Listen, I really owe you. Let me get my bag and show you what I have to offer...

• **Tungar, Dwarf Prospector** •



This chapter marks the beginning of the main story for a traveling group from outside the kaer, independent of the encounters described in **En Route** on p. 58. The heroes will find themselves fighting new enemies during the events of **Death on the Road** — and make a new friend who puts them on a trail to a forgotten treasure.

OVERVIEW

While traveling on the trading route between Bartertown and Tansiarda, the heroes encounter the injured dwarf Tungar, who has been harassed by a band of elven raiders. The heroes will find themselves caught in the middle, as Tungar's enemies prepare for a quick attack to finish the dwarf off.

Tungar has a map and a letter describing an old and seemingly forgotten mine near the town of Ardanyan. The cold-blooded murder of Tungar suggests that there is more going on than a simple dispute over the ownership of a mine. If the heroes have played the adventure hook **A Slaver's Debts** (see p. 60), they will realize that Grankar Eisengiesser is not a slaver. The player characters are the only ones able to find out why he has been accused of a crime he didn't commit.

SETTING THE STAGE

A group traveling through Barsaive's wilderness rarely encounters any other Name-givers. But following a trading route usually leads to new acquaintances — which is not always a good thing. In the shadows of the mighty Throal Mountains lies such a road, leading from the edge of Bartertown to the construction site at Tansiarda. The characters might have heard from the bridge-building proj-

ect, as the construction draws workers from all over the province. It's a mild day, and the rain clouds of the early morning have given way to the warm face of the sun. The road is not fortified and still muddy from the rain. Rising smoke from a campfire comes into sight; it seems that the road's crossing to Darranis lies ahead.

The crossing is a perfect spot for midday rest, and is already being used by another group of travelers. The site bears a distance marker — a small stone monolith six to seven feet high, bearing the symbol of the dwarf kingdom of Throal. The pointed top has broken off, but each of the three sides is still readable. One side indicates that four days of walking are all it takes to reach the kingdom. The second side points south - to Darranis, which lies on the shores of the Coil River — a twelve day walk in the southern direction. The third side leads travelers to Ardanyan, which lies only two days walking from the crossing.

THEMES AND IMAGES

The first part of this chapter thrives on the element of surprise. The quietness of a seemingly uneventful day of travel is disturbed by an attack of masked raiders, who suddenly appear from out of nowhere, engaging the heroes in combat. Once Tungar dies, the raiders vanish as fast as they've appeared — only to leave a group of puzzled heroes behind.

The second part of this chapter inevitably throws up more questions than the player character's can answer — they realize that there is some kind of intrigue going on, a malevolent opponent of unknown size. But what is it about? Who are the people behind it? Why do innocent people have to die or go to prison? The feeling of taking up a fight against an unknown enemy defines the remaining encounters.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Distance markers are small milestones, which have been put all over the province by the dwarfs of Throal. King Varulus III saw the wisdom of marking the trade routes to guide the people to his kingdom. Traveling has become a lot easier ever since, because the route markers not only show how far it is to Throal, but also how far away other cities and towns are. This particular marker shows the directions to Bartertown, Darranis and directs travelers to the town of Ardanyan, which is only two days away.

If the players haven't heard of such a marker before, every character skilled in Barsaive History or any other skill related to traveling in Barsaive is allowed to make a test against a Difficulty Number of 5 — if the test succeeds, the character knows the information given above.

CROSSROADS

Assuming that the heroes travel on the trade route between Bartertown and Tansiarda, they sooner or later end up on the road crossing to Darranis. It is likely that the group has started its journey in Ardanyan if they have entered an agreement with the dwarf merchant Khalos Morgond (see **A Slaver's Debts** in the **En Route** chapter on p. 60), but that's not a requirement for the story. The group can also come from Darranis, Bartertown — or even out of the wilderness if their previous adventures have taken them there.

A group of eight humans has set up camp near the distance marker of the crossing. A flock of chakta birds settles

down for rest at the time the heroes arrive, landing in the surrounding trees or on the grass near the crossing. Chakta birds are capable of telepathic communication and appear to be very civilized. Find complete game statistics and a detailed description on these creatures below.

If the player characters approach the camp openly, the other travelers greet them from where they sit, and invite them to share their fire if the heroes seem to be friendly. They introduce themselves as honest workers on their way to Darranis. Jilas, who seems to be their leader, is curious about the hero's past adventures and politely asks them to share a story or two with them. In return, he can relate some gossip from Bartertown.

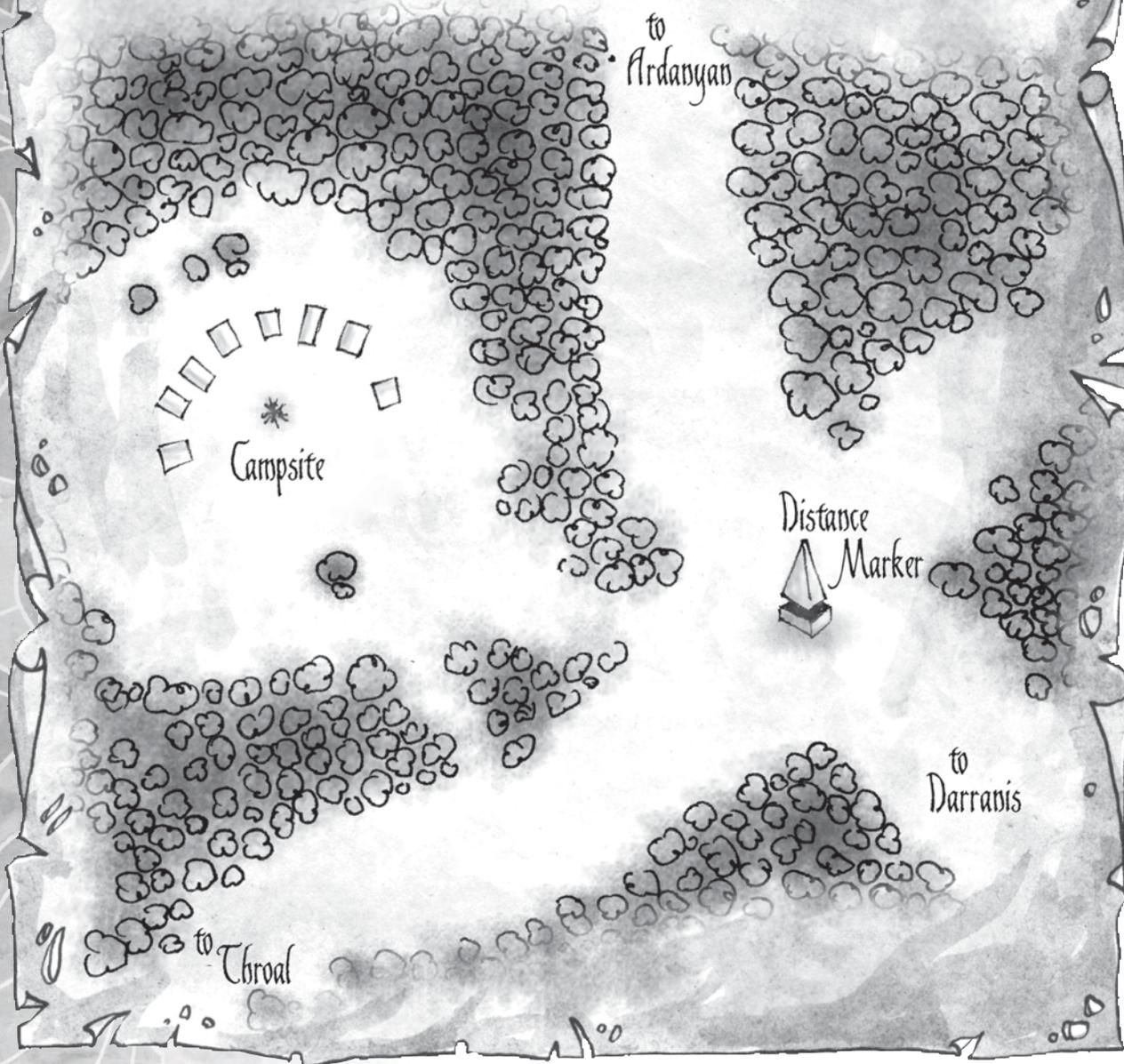
Soon, some of the chakta birds eye the new travelers with interest. Their gold-flecked feathers glisten in the sun. Once everyone has settled down, a trio of chakta birds swoops down and lands near the player characters, waiting to be invited to join them. Any player character who passes a Creature Lore (5) Test knows that chakta birds are generally friendly animals, which expect to be treated with courtesy.

Rude behavior enrages them, so the heroes should look out and resist scaring them away — Jilas might hold them back and point out that the birds seem to be somewhat civilized. If the group acts friendly towards the birds, they share their knowledge of what happened on the Coil River in the past days and will also relate what they have heard from the other travelers.

The map shows the general layout of the road crossing. Refer to the **Rumors and Research** chapter on p. 104 for more details on what the player characters can learn here.



Crossroads



CHAKTA BIRDS (24)

DEX: 8	STR: 3	TOU: 4
PER: 6	WIL: 7	CHA: 8
Initiative: 8	Physical Defense: 10	
Number of Actions: 1	Spell Defense: 8	
Attack (1): 9	Social Defense: 10	
Damage:	Physical Armor: 0	
Bite (7): 10	Mystic Armor: 3	
Death Rating: 30	Recovery Tests: 2	
Wound Threshold: 7	Knockdown: 3	
Unconsciousness Rating: 21		

Combat Movement: 24/55+
Full Movement: 48/110+

+ The second value is the creature's flying Movement rate.

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Sight) (2): 8, Paralyzation (5): 12

Legend Points: 140

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Commentary

Chakta birds resemble large ravens with red-tipped wings and gold-flecked feathers. These social animals

usually travel in flocks of 15 to 25 birds, and can use their limited telepathy to communicate with intelligent beings within a 60 yard radius.

They often approach travelers to share news of the air (or road) ahead, an example of the “civilized” behavior that has prompted some scholars to speculate about their origins. Courteous animals, chakta birds expect courtesy in return. Any rude behavior or omission of simple road courtesies, such as sharing of bread or hunting catch, proper introductions, or offering of places at a fire, enrages chakta birds.

Rules

When angered, most chakta birds attack the offending character, and some usually attack the offender’s companions. Chakta birds begin an attack by flying around their targets in a whirling circle, cawing and screeching madly. If the chakta birds manage to paralyze their targets, they swoop in to physically attack.

A character can break the paralysis before the duration has expired if he apologizes profusely to the bird (through stiffened, rigid lips), or makes a successful Charisma Test against the bird’s Social Defense.

A PLEA FOR HELP

About two hours after the heroes continue their journey, they hear a whimpering noise from the nearby bushes. Closer inspection reveals a trail of blood leading away from the road. Any character who passes a Perception (4) Test can hear that it sounds like if someone is in pain, a Good result even reveals that it must come from a dwarf. The source of the noise is Tungar, a dwarf who lies hidden in the bushes. Several broken arrows protrude from his chest; the dwarf is heavily wounded and delirious from the sun. His clothing is torn and dirty, and Tungar has lost his boots—it seems that the dwarf has been fleeing from someone. Refer to the map on the following page for his exact location.

The heroes can help Tungar using a healing potion or other healing magic. Tungar’s game statistics are provided below, including his current damage. Should the player characters take advantage of Tungar’s situation and search his belongings, they can find a letter and a map in his backpack. Both items are described further below.

Once he has recovered, Tungar thanks them and starts cursing the ‘raiders’ and ‘pointy-eared bastards’ who did this to him—although he is sensible enough to refrain from any racial insults if there are elves among those who help him. If asked what happened, he willingly tells his story.

Along with his companions—Uri, Galthan, Grankar, and Khordar—Tungar explored a forgotten mine close to the town of Ardanyan. The mine is very old and appears to be from pre-Scourge times. Its entrance was hidden by dense undergrowth, and once the dwarfs found it, they were attacked without warning by a group of elves native to the forest surrounding the mine. The elves were far stronger than the dwarfs, and when they fled, the elves hunted them down. Tungar and his friends ran and ran, but the elves did not let them go—one after another, all of Tungar’s companions had to die.

Tungar’s last encounter with the raiders happened the previous night, and he was barely able to escape alive. Most of his equipment and his pony were left behind in his haste to get away. Tungar suspects that the elves are raiders who use the mines as their hideout, and don’t want anyone to find out where it is. He doesn’t realize that a larger organization is at work here.

Once Tungar is again able to walk, he promises to reward the heroes. He has no money to give them, but offers ten percent of everything they find in the mines if they agree to be part of his next exploration team. All he needs is to contact a few of his friends back in Throat to set up another expedition, but he can only do it if the heroes agree to protect him.

At this stage, player characters who have played the events in **A Slaver’s Debts** on p. 60 might realize that Tungar is in league with Grankar Eisengiesser, since he mentions his name. They might believe that Tungar is a slaver himself, and that he is lying to them. If they confront him about it, he produces his map and Grankar’s letter to support his story. He has never heard of slavers in this area, and is proud of his Throalic heritage—depending on how the heroes talk to him about the matter, he might even take offense. However, hearing that Grankar is alive fills Tungar with joy.

TUNGAR, DWARF PROSPECTOR

Attributes

Dexterity (11): 5/D8

Strength (16): 7/D12

Toughness (14): 6/D10

Perception (11): 5/D8

Willpower (16): 7/D12

Charisma (7): 4/D6

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7

Spell Defense: 7

Social Defense: 5

Death Rating: 36

Wound Threshold: 10

Unconsciousness Rating: 28

Combat Movement: 18

Initiative: 5/D8

Physical Armor: 0

Mystic Armor: 2

Recovery Tests: 3

Knockdown: 7/D12

Full Movement: 36

Skills

Artisan:

Craftsman; Blacksmith (2): 7/D12



A Plea for Help



Knowledge:

Mining (2): 7/D12

General:

Animal Bond (2): 6/D10

Animal Handling (1): 8/2D6

Avoid Blow (3): 8/2D6

Melee Weapons (3): 8/2D6

Streetwise (2): 7/D12

Unarmed Combat (2): 7/D12

Equipment

Dwarf Sword (Damage 10/D10+D6; w/scabbard)

Backpack

Letter and Map (in Map/Scroll Cases)

Torn Traveler's Garb

Loot

None

Legend Points

None

Notes

Tungar possesses the dwarf racial ability of Heat Sight.

Commentary

Tungar is small, even for a dwarf, but tough. He has a long black beard and thick eyebrows, which almost cover his eyes, and stand in contrast to his otherwise shaved head. The dwarf is dirty from his escape; most of his clothing is torn. When the heroes find him he has 25 points of current damage, 3 Wounds and only 2 Recovery Tests left.

SURPRISE — YOU'RE DEAD!

While the characters talk to Tungar, Garethiel has spotted their position from the nearby hill overlooking the area. He and his men had been searching for the dwarf the entire day, but Tungar has managed to cover his tracks well. A few hours earlier, the elves set up camp on a hill to look out for the dwarf. By the time the player characters have

managed to heal him, Tungar's enemies prepare for attack and Garethiel has ordered his men to surround the site. The map on p. 66 provides an overview of both Tungar's and the elves' positions.

The attack should come as a surprise, but wary characters might have set up a watch post. Any hero standing guard might spot the attackers early on by passing a Perception (6) Test. On a Good result, they hear the sound of horses approaching and have one combat round to prepare and warn the others. An Extraordinary result extends this time to two rounds.

Charging in on their horses from different sides, the elven raiders concentrate their attacks on Tungar. Most of the fight is resolved using the Mounted Combat rules found in the **Combat** chapter on p. 413 of the **Player's Compendium**. Player characters defending the dwarf are also attacked, but only until the elves can get to Tungar.

Once the dwarf dies, the raiders try to escape. Garethiel doesn't consider the heroes as a threat to the Cross of Ardanyan, simply because they have nothing in hand. The raiders don't want any more trouble than they already have, and head back to Ardanyan once they finish what they started. He and his men don't realize that Tungar still has a map. It is a shame for them that the dwarf was able to elude them for so long — he just hopes his superiors in the Order won't find out.

However, one or more of the elves might be captured during the attack. His companions will try to save them from the hands of the player characters, but will flee if the task seems foolish to attempt. Only Garethiel is willing to take desperate measures if forced to: he might choose to shoot one of his companions if he feels that the secrets of the Order might be in danger.

Questioning or interrogating one of the raiders seems to prove Tungar's theory — the elves will lie about their true motives and state that they are nothing more than raiders. They have nothing to lose — if the Order finds out they spilled the beans, they will certainly be killed. Taking a prisoner with them might prove very hazardous for the player characters, as other members of the Order will come looking for them. The raiders are unlikely to share this fact, hoping the Order retaliates any torture they might suffer.

GARETHIEL, SECOND CIRCLE ELF SCOUT

Attributes

Dexterity (17): 7/D12
Strength (13): 6/D10
Toughness (12): 5/D8

Perception (16): 7/D12
Willpower (13): 6/D10
Charisma (12): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 7

Initiative: 7/D12
Physical Armor: 2
Mystic Armor: 4

Death Rating: 32 (44)*
Wound Threshold: 9
Unconsciousness Rating: 24 (34)*

Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 6/D10

* These values have been adjusted for blood magic.



Combat Movement: 36/49^R

Full Movement: 72/98^R

^R The second value is the character's riding Movement rate

Karma Points: 8

Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents

Avoid Blow^D (3): 10/D10+D6
Climbing^D (2): 9/D8+D6
Durability (6/5) (2): 2
Karma Ritual (2): 2
Maneuver (2): 9/D8+D6
Melee Weapons (2): 9/D8+D6
Read and Write Language (2): 9/D8+D6
— Elven, Human
Silent Walk^D (3): 10/D10+D6
Tracking^D (2): 9/D8+D6

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:

Wood Carving (1): 6/D10

Knowledge:

Barsaive History (1): 8/2D6
Elf Lore (1): 8/2D6

General:

Animal Bond (2): 7/D12
Animal Handling (2): 8/2D6
Missile Weapons (1): 8/2D6
Trick Riding (2): 9/D8+D6

Equipment

Fernweave (Phys 2; Myst 3)
Broadsword (Damage 11/D10+D8; w/scabbard)
Shortbow (Damage 9/D8+D6; Range 30–60–120)
Quiver (w/ 20 shortbow arrows)
Adventurer's Kit
Bit, Bridle, and Harness
Carving Tool
Hooded Mask
Riding Horse
Saddle, Stirrups, Blanket
Small Saddlebag

Trail Rations (2 weeks)
 Traveler's Garb
 Waterskin (2)

Loot

20 silver pieces

Legend Points

115 Legend Points

Notes

Garethiel possesses the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision. He has taken a Blood Oath to serve the Cross of Ardanyan.

Commentary

Garethiel is a slender elf with long, blonde hair that he usually wears tied in a knot. His clothing is typical for his Discipline—fernweave armor worn over green and brown linen. He wears a hooded mask during the attack.

He was young when Jania, one of the Order's Founders, initiated him. Garethiel is secretly in love with her, ever since she rescued him from his village, which was burned down by ork scorchers. He will fight to the death for her and the Order.

ELVEN RAIDERS (5)

Attributes

Dexterity (13): 6/D10 **Perception** (13): 6/D10
Strength (13): 6/D10 **Willpower** (11): 5/D8
Toughness (14): 6/D10 **Charisma** (12): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7 **Initiative:** 6/D10
Spell Defense: 7 **Physical Armor:** 2
Social Defense: 7 **Mystic Armor:** 4
Death Rating: 34* **Recovery Tests:** 3
Wound Threshold: 10 **Knockdown:** 6/D10
Unconsciousness Rating: 26*

* These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

Combat Movement: 28/49^R
Full Movement: 56/98^R

^R The second value is the character's riding Movement rate

Skills

Artisan:

Wood Carving (1): 6/D10

Knowledge:

Barsaive History (1): 7/D12
 Elf Lore (1): 7/D12

General:

Animal Bond (2): 7/D12
 Animal Handling (2): 7/D12
 Charge (2): 8/2D6
 Fence (1): 6/D10
 Melee Weapons (2): 8/2D6
 Missile Weapons (2): 8/2D6

Trick Riding (2): 8/2D6
 Wilderness Survival (2): 8/2D6

Equipment

Fernweave (Phys 2; Myst 3)
 Broadsword (Damage 11/D10+D8; w/scabbard)
 Shortbow (Damage 9/D8+D6; Range 30–60–120)
 Quiver (w/ 20 shortbow arrows)
 Spear (Damage 10/D10+D6; Range 18–30–36)

Adventurer's Kit
 Bit, Bridle, and Harness
 Carving Tool
 Hooded Mask
 Riding Horse
 Saddle, Stirrups, Blanket
 Small Saddlebag
 Trail Rations (2 weeks)
 Traveler's Garb
 Waterskin (2)

Loot

5 silver pieces

Legend Points

55 Legend Points

Notes

The raiders possess the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision. All of them have taken a Blood Oath to serve the Cross of Ardanyan.

Commentary

The elven riders wear hooded masks during the fight. They are loyal to Farathiel, Garethiel, and the Order, but will retreat when injured, rather than fighting to the death (returning to attack on another occasion).

RIDING HORSES (6)

DEX: 6 **STR:** 7 **TOU:** 8
PER: 4 **WIL:** 4 **CHA:** 5

Initiative: 7 **Physical Defense:** 8
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense:** 6
 Attack (1): 7 **Social Defense:** 7
 Damage: **Physical Armor:** 0
 Trample (2): 9 **Mystic Armor:** 0
Death Rating: 44 **Recovery Tests:** 4
Wound Threshold: 13 **Knockdown:** 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 36

Combat Movement: 49 **Full Movement:** 98

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Listen, Smell) (2): 6, Great Leap^S (2): 8

^S Indicates a General Skill.

Legend Points: 75

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Commentary

The strong riding horses of the elves are not branded, and don't wear any barding.

PICKING UP THE PIECES

The raiders try to disappear as fast as they came—they just came to finish Tungar off. The elves have agreed on a meeting place about a mile away, and they leave the scene in the same manner as they came—in different directions. Following them is possible, although it proves to be a demanding task (see **Onwards!**, on p. 70).

In the unlikely case that Tungar survives the attack, he grows bold enough to return to the mines himself. All he needs to do is travel to Throal to assemble some friends and equipment, to be properly prepared for another expedition. He will, of course, see that he hires some able bodyguards before he returns—a job the player characters might want to fulfill. The heroes can accompany him or wait for his return in Ardanyan, Tungar strongly suggests the latter. The dwarf provides them with a copy of his map, so that they might explore the mines before he arrives. Tungar is also willing to take care of any business the heroes might have in Throal, as he was born there. If the heroes have played the events of *A Slavers Debts*, Tungar offers to approach the Eisengiesser family himself—which might increase their chances of retrieving the debt.

If the heroes told Tungar of Grankar's whereabouts, he is puzzled—they had never anything to do with slaves. Grankar has clearly been imprisoned for a crime he didn't commit. Tungar expects the heroes to help him to correct the wrong—they're adepts after all. However, if the heroes act like mercenaries, they will find that Tungar has not much to offer—except for a share of what's found in the mines.

Apart from that, the heroes might get hurt enough to take a vested interest in investigating the matter. Several things clearly don't add up here, and there seems to be more to the story more than a simple ownership dispute over an old mine. The situation has escalated into cold-blooded murder for no apparent reason. The elves have something to hide, and if Grankar's fate is known, there are

more people involved than just the elves. It should become clear that if the heroes don't act, it's very likely that no one will ever know the truth.

If the dwarf has not shown them to the heroes already, they will find a map accompanied by a letter rolled into a bundle in Tungar's backpack—instructing him to meet some of his friends in Ardanyan. Both items are shown below, and are also available as player handouts (see the **Handouts** chapter, p. 124).

Tungar's Map

The map was hand-drawn by Grankar on a separate piece of parchment. It is the result of their search for the mine entrance.

The Letter

The letter is an invitation for Tungar to meet his old friend Grankar Eisengiesser in Ardanyan. Although the player characters don't know it, the contracts mentioned in the letter are the last remaining items of proof that Ardanyan has existed before the Scourge. Argethiel and his companions were very thorough when they set out to search and destroy all evidence of the kaer's existence—alas, erasing everything proved to be an impossible task.

ONWARDS!

Before the story goes on, the player characters need to decide what to do next. Where will they go to answer their questions? Do they plan to tie up the loose ends of their previous adventures first? Will they track the raiders down?

A band of ork scorchers of the Skull Wharg tribe threatens the area marked on the map (refer to the **En Route** chapter on p. 58 for game statistics). The orks prey on passing caravans and hunt game in the surrounding wilderness. Unwary player characters traveling through this area might have to deal with them.

Unfinished Business

Depending where the player characters came from, they might want to continue their journey and finish any business they have. Since such an adventure deviates from the



Greetings, Tungar!

We haven't heard much from each other in a long time, but I can assure you that I haven't forgot how much I owe you.

A few days ago, my friend Titoo provided me with a set of old, but rather interesting documents. They tell of a rich vein of elemental earth somewhere in the Throal Mountains. The interesting part is that this vein is located in the foothills and therefore easy to reach. The documents are contracts between a Throalic house of merchants and a group of miners who needed funds to explore the area.

The Throalic merchant house does not exist anymore, and since the contract was sealed on the 9th day of Strassa 994 TH, we can safely assume that the works in the mine were interrupted by the Scourge a few years later and never taken up again. My friend, imagine how wealthy we could be once we find the mine and take it back into production!

I urge you to meet me and some of my companions in the town of Ardanyan as soon as you can, so that we can start an expedition.

Yours,
Grankar Eisengiesser

main story presented here, the gamemaster should ensure that the players come back before they lose interest.

If Khalos Morgond has hired the heroes in **A Slaver's Debts** (see p. 60), the player characters might decide to travel to Throal first to collect the debt from Grankar's family. With a little luck, they should be able to find the Eisengiessers sooner or later. The Eisengiesser dwarfs are miners and most of Grankar's relatives live and work in Throal, in the mines deep under the mountains.

Grankar's mother Tula is the person the heroes will

most probably talk to. If the heroes show her the certificate of debt, she sadly shakes her head and explains that the Eisengiessers do not have much and that she is not willing to pay the debt. Depending on what the player characters tell her, Tula might even come to believe that the heroes are swindlers when they state the reason of Grankar's imprisonment.

Even if Grankar and his family have not always been on good terms, there is no way that he would become a slaver!

If the heroes can convince her that they are honest, she is willing to hire them to find out why someone would do this to her son. If the heroes find out what really happened and free Grankar, Tula will not only pay the debt, but also double the amount.

Following the Raiders

The raiders meet on the other side of the hill after the fight, and prepare to travel back to Ardanyan. However, they have to camp for the night a few hours later, which opens a possibility for the heroes to ambush them.

In the rare case that the player characters are able to capture or kill all of the raiders, the Cross of Ardanyan will eventually notice that they are missing but will not know that the heroes are responsible. If only one elf makes it back, the Order will react accordingly—and look out for the troublemakers (see **How the Order Works in The Town of Ardanyan** chapter on p. 57 for more details).

The Order might also decide to send a scouting party to search for Garethiel and his men. The scouts will likely not attack the heroes unless they know about their involvement. Clever player characters might take advantage of the situation and talk to them, feigning innocence and offering to help—only to find out that the scouts came from Ardanyan.

Searching for the Mines

Should the players decide to follow the directions noted on Tungal's map and search for the mines right away, refer to the **Deep Mines** chapter on p. 72. They will be faced with another group of elves, under the lead of Farathiel.

It is unlikely that the heroes will find anything of interest on their first visit, even if they manage to get past Farathiel and his men. It is very likely that they might have to purchase some additional equipment in Ardanyan (see below).

To Ardanyan

The heroes might decide to travel back to Ardanyan and start asking uncomfortable questions. While they might have another encounter with the raiders along the way, the Order will most probably expect their arrival. The gamemaster can run any other encounter he deems appropriate to make the journey more interesting for the players.

Once they have reached Ardanyan's gates, refer to the **With a Pinch of Salt** chapter on p. 83, which deals with the events happening in the town.

TROUBLESHOOTING

The player characters will have a problem if they don't find the map and the letter, or if these fall into the raider's hands. If this happens to be the case, the gamemaster should make sure the bundle falls out of his pack by accident or gives the players a chance to get them back.

If the player characters decide not to investigate and leave things as they are, the gamemaster should provide them with more motivation to solve the adventure. For example, Garethiel might change his mind and consider the player characters to be a threat. The elf might decide that the heroes have to be wiped out. Garethiel is able to call on reinforcements to help him.

If Garethiel is dead, the Order might have sent others to look for them. The gamemaster is allowed to harass the players this way if they deliberately avoid walking the way of legend! However, it makes no sense to kill a player character this early in the adventure if it can be avoided.

If the player characters decide to finish their business in Throal, it should be played out as quickly and briefly as possible—it is not part of the main story and serves only to bring the player characters back on track if they don't have enough motivation to investigate Ardanyan.

DEEP MINES

We can deal with this situation in two ways. Both end with you getting out of this forest — you only have to choose if you want to walk out or be carried out. The latter could be amusing, but I prefer you leave our territory on good terms...

• **Farathiel, Guardian of the Mines** •



An old, abandoned mine lies hidden in the forests near the town of Ardanyan and separates a lost kaer from the surface. Its dark tunnels and abandoned foundries are lined with traps of all kinds — build to prevent anyone entering from leaving alive. This chapter holds everything the gamemaster needs to know when the heroes come this way.

OVERVIEW

Since there are two ways for the heroes to approach the mines, the entire complex is presented from top to bottom. The Cross of Ardanyan is interested in no one leaving the kaer, which is why the Order has assigned Farathiel and his men to guard the mines and the surrounding forest at all times.

The mines are intended as a mystery for the heroes — a vital clue indicating that something must be horribly wrong. It will take some time until kaer dweller heroes realize that there is no such thing as a Horror waiting for them. Instead, they will find out that someone else has taken care of their masters — and that this someone will take care of them if they aren't cautious.

Adventurer characters will most likely come here because the mine is marked on Tungar's map. The dwarf's suggestion that this place is probably a hideout for a band of raiders might even prove true if the characters assume that Farathiel and his men are nothing but thieves. The heroes will have no clue that a lost kaer is hidden in the depths of the mines, but what will happen when they uncover that the elves guard a place void of any treasure?

SETTING THE STAGE

We do not recommend handing out the maps presented in the following descriptions. Instead we suggest that the gamemaster uses them to describe what the characters see while sketching the cave's outline on a piece of scrap paper. Players may even want to use miniatures to indicate their position on the map.

Once the player characters approach the mines, read one of the following passages aloud or paraphrase. The first is for heroes from inside the kaer, the other one for a group from the outside:

KAER DWELLERS

The massive door slams shut behind you, and a sudden silence follows. An uneasy feeling spreads in your stomach. The silence is broken by a high-pitched noise as the wards on the inner door charge with magical power.

The tube-like chamber is small, with just enough space for all of you. Dozens of small light crystals are set into the walls, creating a weird illumination coming from all sides. On the other end of the tube is the outer door, leading upwards. The door's wards give off the same eerie light you saw on Freedom Gate. The central part of the outer door is dark, and you can make out three smaller runes that seem to lie dormant, as if they are just waiting to be activated...

ADVENTURERS

For hours, you have walked through the light forests of the foothills of the Throal Moun-

tains—trying to make sense of Tungar’s smeary handwriting. You haven’t met anyone, save for a few creatures living here.

Tired and exhausted, you long for the coziness of a campfire and a sip of ale. But then you see something familiar: the three large boulders marked on the prospector’s map! Small trees and some underbrush cover them—but finally, the entrance to the mines lies in front of you!

THEMES AND IMAGES

The mines are a dangerous place: guarded by the Order, dark tunnels end abruptly in deep chasms, traps around every corner and some foul creatures who call this place home. The mood in this scene is uneasiness with a good part of paranoia added in for good measure—no one knows what lurks in the darkness. Heroes from Kaer Ardanyan will expect a Horror playing games with them, while simple adventurers will be surprised when they find out what treasure is hidden on the other side of those traps. The gamemaster should try keeping the players on their toes, describing moving shadows and weird noises to keep the tension as thick as possible.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The mines consist of three distinct parts: the **Mine Entrance** (p. 73), which connects to the outside world; the **Halls** (p. 78), which hold the heart of the abandoned mines; and the **Caverns** (p. 80), which connect to Kaer Ardanyan. Regardless of where the heroes come from, they have to travel through each level to reach their goal. Kaer-dweller heroes from Kaer Ardanyan start at Freedom Gate in the caverns and have to work their way up, while adventurers from the outside start at the brithan’s cave in front of the entrance and have to work their way down. Depending on how the story unfolds, the heroes may decide to come back later in the adventure.

THE MINE ENTRANCE

The upper part of the mines once had a lorry system, but the tracks have rusted and rotten almost beyond recognition over the centuries. A few remains prove its existence, and someone who knows what to look for might even be able to dig up parts of a lorry wagon from the dirt.

The small caves here are small compared to what lies underneath, and the miners began digging straight down from the beginning—searching for elemental earth. When the kaer was finished decades later, the shafts were covered with rocks to avoid raising unnecessary attention from whatever entered the caves during the Scourge.

After the Scourge, the Cross of Ardanyan installed heavy doors to keep intruders out. They also created a trap to keep unwanted visitors in place: each door has been warded to trigger a portcullis near the cave entrance. Farathiel and his men check on the portcullis regularly.

The Guards

The elf Farathiel is leading a group of five guards who have been assigned to guard the mine entrance and the surrounding area. While Farathiel is usually close to the caves, he tends to rely on the brithan defending its territory—the creature’s roar is usually enough to serve as a warning to the elf. The other guards take shifts in patrolling the surrounding forest—usually in pairs and on horseback.

Farathiel’s game statistics can be found on p. 74. For the five other guards, use the game statistics presented for the elven raiders in **Death on the Road** on p. 67.

Kaer-dwellers exiting the mines have a slight advantage—Farathiel is not informed about a second party leaving the kaer, so none of the guards expect them to appear. However, kaer-dwellers will be surprised to find Name-givers other than their masters here. Adventurers, in turn, are what the guards are looking out for—but given Tungar’s warning, the heroes will be expecting to find elven raiders here.

The gamemaster should take a look at the map of the upper mines and the surrounding area, staging an encounter with the brithan, Farathiel, and/or a pair of guards as appropriate for the time of the heroes’ arrival. It’s likely that the heroes encounter the brithan first—once the creature roars, Farathiel and his men will be alarmed and sneak up to see what happens. Farathiel has ordered his men to wait and see what the intruders do with the brithan—they intervene only if the characters attack the creature and/or try to enter the mines.

If it comes to a fight, it’s likely that the guards have surrounded the heroes already, attacking with their bows before charging into a melee. Their goal is to hurt and capture the characters, killing them only if necessary—they intend to interrogate their captives later on to find out what they know. If the guards lose at least three of their men, Farathiel and the remaining guards will flee to Ardanyan for help. If Farathiel dies, the remaining guards will flee at once.

If the heroes manage to capture one or more of the elves, they will want to ask questions. A selection of possible questions and answers are found below. The gamemaster should be aware that the list is by no means comprehensive, and use it as guideline only, extrapolating further answers from the information presented. Interrogating characters are allowed to make an Interaction test against the Social Defense of the guard (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 91 of the **Gamemaster’s Compendium** for more information on how to handle Interaction Tests). Share the following information with the players, depending on the question asked and Result Level achieved on the test.

Interrogating Farathiel shows he’s a tough nut, however—he would die for the Order because he owes them so much. To get him to talk, the heroes have to achieve a test result at least one result level higher than those presented below to achieve the equivalent result.

Why did you attack us?

Poor Result: “Ha! The Passions guide my ways and I do not have to answer your questions.”



Average Result: “You attacked the brithan and we felt obliged to help.”

Good Result: “We live here and you have violated our territory.”

Excellent Result: “We guard this place; the caves are not to be entered.”

Extraordinary Result: “The mines belong to the Order and we protect them.”

Who hired you?

Poor Result: “You tiny worms! Kill me if you must, I’m not saying anything!”

Average Result: “My friends are powerful. You’ll experience what that means in a short while.”

Good Result: “My employers are the rightful rulers of this land and will punish you if you don’t leave at once.”

Excellent Result: “We work for the town council of Ardanyan.”

Extraordinary Result: “I am an Initiate to the Cross of Ardanyan. Flee, you fool—or the Order will be your doom!”

Where are our masters?

Poor Result: “You have masters? How funny! Ahaa-ahaha-ahahahaha!!!”

Average Result: “I don’t know who your masters are.”

Good Result: “They came through here like you did, but we did not fight them. They have traveled to Ardanyan, it seems.”

Excellent Result: “They’ve been brought to Ardanyan. It’s likely that they are dead now.”

Extraordinary Result: “The Order keeps them prisoner. They’ll be sacrificed soon.”

FARATHIEL, THIRD CIRCLE SCOUT

Attributes

Dexterity (18): 7/D12

Strength (12): 5/D8

Toughness (13): 6/D10

Perception (16): 7/D12

Willpower (12): 5/D8

Charisma (12): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 10

Spell Defense: 9

Social Defense: 7

Death Rating: 33 (51)*

Wound Threshold: 9

Unconsciousness Rating: 25 (40)*

Initiative: 6/D10

Physical Armor: 6

Mystic Armor: 2

Recovery Tests: 2

Knockdown: 5/D8

* These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

Combat Movement: 38

Full Movement: 76

Karma Points: 11

Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents

Astral Sight^D (3): 10/D10+D6

Avoid Blow^D (4): 11/D10+D8

Climbing^D (3): 10/D10+D6

Durability (6/5) (3): 3

Karma Ritual (3): 3

Maneuver (3): 10/D10+D6

Melee Weapons (3): 10/D10+D6

Read and Write Language (3): 10/D10+D6

— Elven, Human, T'skrang

Silent Walk^D (4): 11/D10+D8

Sprint (3): 10/D10+D6

Tracking^D (3): 10/D10+D6

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:

Wood Carving (2): 7/D12

Knowledge:

Creature Lore (2): 9/D8+D6

The Deeps (2): 9/D8+D6

General:

Fishing (1): 8/2D6

Great Leap (2): 9/D8+D6

Hunting (2): 9/D8+D6

Missile Weapons (2): 9/D8+D6

Swimming (2): 7/D12

Equipment

Espagra-Scale Cloak (Phys 3; Myst 1; Init 0/1)

Leather Armor (Phys 3)

Broadsword (Damage 10/D10+D6; w/scabbard)

Longbow (Damage 9/D8+D6; Range 60–120–240)

Quiver (w/ 20 longbow arrows)

Adventurer's Kit

Carving Tool

Climbing Kit

Fishing Kit

Trail Rations (1 week)

Traveler's Garb



Loot

30 silver pieces

Legend Points

140 Legend Points

Notes

Farathiel possesses the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision. He has taken a Blood Oath to the Cross of Ardanyan.

Commentary

Farathiel wears ragged clothing made of soft leather. He is at home in the wilderness, and everything about him seems to reflect that. He was born in an elven community of the Servos Jungle, which was at constant war with a tribe of Cathan ever since the Scourge came to an end.

Argethiel, one of the Founders of the Cross of Ardanyan helped the elven community during one of his journeys, and accepted young Farathiel to join him—the young elf despised the human race and showed a certain potential to become initiated as a questor of Raggok.

Brithan Cave

A brithan uses the cave entrance as a lair. The creature is in or close to the cave most of the day (and inside all night), leaving only to hunt for food.

Use the following game statistics for the brithan.

DEX: 5

STR: 6

TOU: 9

PER: 5

WIL: 5

CHA: 4

Initiative: 5

Physical Defense: 7

Number of Actions: 1 or 2

Spell Defense: 7

Attack (2): 7 (see text)

Social Defense: 9

Damage:

Physical Armor: 5

Bite (7): 13 (see text)

Mystic Armor: 2

Death Rating: 48 (54)

Recovery Tests: 4

Wound Threshold: 14

Knockdown: 7

Unconsciousness Rating: 41 (46)

Combat Movement: 32

Full Movement: 64

Powers: Battle Shout^S (Roar) (3): 7, Climbing^S (2): 7,

Durability (1), Enhanced Senses (Smell) (2): 7,

Swimming^S (2): 8

^S Indicates a General Skill.

Legend Points: 120

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Commentary

Dwarf hunters have described the brithan as a cross between a bear and an elemental having a bad day. Luminescent flecks color these animals' eyes, and their large heads sit atop ursine bodies covered with shaggy, deep brown or blue-black fur.

Brithans are extremely territorial and will stand on their hind legs and roar a challenge to anything that enters their domain. If a single character answers the challenge,



the brithan enters into ritual combat with him, and the two fight until one submits.

This brithan has given up challenging Farathiel and the guards, because it has never won so far—so the creature allows Farathiel and his fellows to enter its territory.

Rules

The brithan submits after taking a first Wound; but battering the creature to unconsciousness is also a victory. A character need not kill the creature in order to win the combat. Defeating the brithan in ritual combat earns the character all of the creature's Legend Points. The brithan's submission lasts for about three days, after which it tends to forget who beat him.

Any character (including his group) who submits to a brithan must move at least half a mile away from the victorious creature, or the brithan will attack to kill him. If more than one character attacks a brithan, the animal fights back savagely, gaining +1 additional attack in each round of the encounter, and adding a +4 bonus to its Attack and Damage Tests.

Portcullis

A heavy portcullis falls down and locks into place if anyone opens one of the doors without using Farathiel's keys (see below). Iron bars lock into the ground, preventing the portcullis to be lifted up again. Anyone inside the cavern will be trapped.

The portcullis and the corresponding holes in the ground can be spotted with a Perception (5) Test, and the locking mechanism on a Perception (8) Test. With a Good result, the character also notices that the locking mechanism is freshly oiled.

One of the keys on Farathiel's chain can be used to unlock the portcullis, enabling the characters to lift it up manually. The keyhole for this lock is hidden near the cave entrance, as marked on the map. Anyone searching for the keyhole must pass a Perception (10) Test.

Krilworm Nest

A nest of krilworms is hidden in the back of the caverns. Both entrances have been barricaded with dead wood from the surrounding forests, preventing the krilworms from entering this side of the cave.

The krilworms swarm out each a year during the month of Rua, trying to find a krillra to mate (refer to the **Crea-**

tures chapter on p. 317 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on krillras). The swarm is harmless while left alone, but can be dangerous if the characters enter the small cave with a torch.

There is, of course, another opening in the krilworm cave that can be used to escape if the portcullis traps the characters. All they have to do is convince the krilworms that they don't taste good.

The krilworms use the following game statistics.

DEX: 5 **STR:** 5 **TOU:** 5
PER: 6 **WIL:** 7 **CHA:** 2

Initiative: 6 **Physical Defense:** 8

Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense:** 7

Attack (1): 6 **Social Defense:** 7

Damage: **Physical Armor:** 0

Bite (1): 6 **Mystic Armor:** 2

Death Rating: 31 **Recovery Tests:** 2

Wound Threshold: 8 **Knockdown:** 5

Unconsciousness Rating: 22

Combat Movement: 30+ **Full Movement:** 60+

* This value is the creature's flying Movement rate.

Powers: Locate Target (2): 8

Legend Points: 45

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Commentary

Krilworms have segmented bodies about 18 inches long, with bat-like wings sprouting near the front. Eyeless, they "see" through divination magic organs that look like six open, running sores.

Krilworms are nocturnal flyers, and this swarm is 50 members strong. It feeds on the larger insects and small mammals of the surrounding forests. The needle-like teeth of the krilworms drip a foul-smelling substance that many believe to be toxic.

Rules

On occasion, this swarm of krilworms attacks large animals and humanoids, but a determined hero can easily drive them off. For each krilworm killed fighting a larger opponent, the swarm makes a Willpower (4) Test. If the test succeeds, the swarm continues its attack on the target, otherwise the swarm leaves to find easier pickings.

Krilworms have a peculiar affinity for Nether-mancers, and Nethermancers in turn often harbor a soft spot for these loathsome creatures. This unusual affinity allows Nethermancers to add a +2 bonus to any Interaction Tests they make against a krilworm's Social Defense.

The krilworm's ability to locate their targets replaces their normal sight, and also works on invisible or hidden targets. The powerful divination organs can (so far) only be used by krilworms, and are worthless on the open market.

Mine Entrance



Doors

The Order installed three doors made of heavy oakwood to seal each shaft separately. All of the doors are locked. Each lock is reinforced with iron and uses a different key. Opening the doors without using Farathiel's keys will cause the installed doorguards to trigger the portcullis near the front of the cave.

Doorguard

A doorguard is a simple mechanism, using a thin wire spanned from the lock of a door to the portcullis near the cave entrance. The wires are cleverly hidden, running along the back of each door and underneath the ceiling

into a hole near the portcullis. Anyone standing in front of a locked door cannot determine that the wire is connected to the lock unless achieving an Excellent result against the Detection Difficulty.

Detection Difficulty: 9

Disarm Difficulty: 9

Trigger Condition: Opening the lock without using the proper key (in the possession of Farathiel).

Trap Initiative: 8/2D6

Trap Effect: The portcullis near the cave entrance falls down and locks into place.

Shafts

Each of the three shafts is ten yards deep and three yards across, leading into the halls below. Centuries ago, when the mines were still used and Kaer Ardanyan still was being constructed, conveyor cages transported all kinds of cargo up and down. Nothing but rusted remains bear witness of this forgotten time, and only one shaft is frequently used by the Order to get down into the mines.

During the Scourge, heavy stone lids covered the shafts, and their broken remains can be found nearby. Examining the lids will reveal that each of them has symbols carved on its underside. Any character passing Knowledge (7) Test using a suitable Knowledge skill (Magic Lore or History of the Scourge, for example) can determine that the symbols on the stones are remains of powerful illusion magic. Illusionist characters may make a Perception-based Half-Magic Test for this. A simple rope ladder is used to traverse to the halls below, which usually lies rolled up into a bundle in the corner of the western room (as marked on the map). However, after the explorers from the kaer were taken prisoner, Farathiel's guards forgot to pull the rope ladder back up.

THE HALLS

The halls have seen lots of change in the past. They were once the main part of the mines, holding foundries, grinding mills, forges, tunnels and shafts, workshops and a good number of lorry rails — the rotten and rusted remains of all these things can still be found here. In the decades before the Scourge, the halls became a staging area for Kaer Ardanyan's construction. After the kaer was finished, craftsmen filled the tunnels and shafts with deadly traps of all kinds. Runes of Warding and illusions were installed to lure intruders away from the northern part of the complex leading to the natural caves hidden beyond.

Shafts

The three shafts connect the halls with the mines entrance (see above). Beneath each shaft is a small area once used to load and unload conveyor cages. A rope ladder hangs down from the western shaft.

Grand Hall

Eight pillars hewn from the surrounding rock support the ceiling of the Grand Hall, surrounding an enormous crystal hovering in the hall's center. The crystal is twice a troll's size, emanating a pulsing violet light illuminating the entire hall. Dancing shadows inside the crystal support the illusion that something in it must be alive. A large skeleton made of black bones lies on the ground nearby. The crystal is a powerful trap called a soulcatcher. The dancing lights within the crystal have an immediate effect on anyone looking at them, magically invoking the urge to touch the crystal — which, of course, proves to be fatal. The powerful magic inherent in the crystal binds the consciousness of anyone touching it. The skeleton on the ground is one of those victims — a Horror who entered the Grand Hall during the Scourge. His physical body died, as it was unable to do anything other than staring at the dancing shadows.

Soulcatcher

A soulcatcher is a giant crystal imbued with powerful magic designed to attract and capture Horrors. Unfortunately, the soulcatcher also has a limited effect on Name-givers. Any Name-giver or creature looking into the pulsing lights must pass a Willpower (8) Test. The Difficulty Number for Horrors and Horror Constructs is 24. If the target fails the Willpower Test, it feels the urge to touch the crystal and must do so if possible. Once the crystal is touched, the gamemaster rolls the Trap Effect dice. If the result equals a Good result against the target's Spell Defense rating, it becomes trapped. A trapped target may try to resist the effect by making a Willpower Test against the Trap Effect step (use the Step Number in parentheses for Name-givers). However, unless the target has been blinded, it must pass another test to avoid falling for the same trick again.

Detection Difficulty: 24 (8)

Disarm Difficulty: NA

Trigger Condition: Looking directly into the pulsing lights emanated by the crystal.

Trap Initiative: NA

Trap Effect: 30/D20+D10+D8+2D6 (8/2D6)

Pits

There are numerous steps and stairs in the tunnels of the halls, but only those surrounding the Grand Hall actually pose a danger to any intruder. The Order has filled the pits with a heavy gas. The gas in these pits makes anyone inhaling it feel drowsy and tired. The gas is odorless, but it requires more strength to inhale. Passing through the pits takes three combat rounds if walking cautiously. A character is allowed to make a Perception (6) Test each round — the Detection Difficulty of the gas. If the test succeeds, the character realizes what's going on and can act accordingly — hold his breath and/or walk out of the pit.

For each round in which a character breathes the gas, he must make a Willpower (4) Test. If the test succeeds, the character feels just a little tired. If the test fails, he falls unconscious and risks drowning if still in the pit.

Small Cave

The small cave in the northern part of the halls is of natural origin — the first one in a larger complex of natural caverns unearthed by the miners. A thin stream flows through it, sustaining the rich subterranean vegetation found here and deeper below. A crevice has been broadened into a tunnel, leading downward to the lower mines (see below).

The crevice holds a deadly combination of traps: two arrow traps on either end of the crevice, and a blade trap in its center. Although there is a mechanism that once allowed deactivation of the traps (using the keys Joran Hardhelm issued to the kaer-dwelling characters), the Order destroyed it. The remains of the mechanism are found on each side of the crevice — in the walls close to the arrow traps. Characters searching for the mechanism can find it with a successful Perception (6) Test.

Arrow Trap

A dozen small holes on either side of the tunnel shoot tiny, poisoned arrows at passing targets, tranquilizing their victims. Numb and confused, most of them stumble right into the blade trap at the center of the crevice.

Detection Difficulty: 7

Disarm Difficulty: 7

Trigger Condition: A number of pressure plates spread all over the ground. A character who wants to avoid stepping on one of them must pass a Dexterity (5) Test.

Trap Initiative: 8/2D6

Trap Effect: If the trap is triggered, dozens of tiny poisoned arrows shoot out of the walls. The arrows are impossible to avoid and have a combined Damage step of 12/2D10. Physical Armor protects against this damage. The trap can shoot up to ten salvos. If the damage suffers any damage, the debilitating poison takes effect; the poison has a Step Number of 6/D10 and, unless resisted, takes effect on the following round. The gamemaster rolls the poison's Effect step of 6/D10, the result of which is the duration of

the poison in minutes. While affected by the poison, the character suffers a -4 penalty to his Perception step.

Blade Trap

The nasty blade hidden in the wall means death to unwary (or tranquilized) victims. A complicated feather mechanism allows the trap to arm itself, causing the tripwire to stretch again.

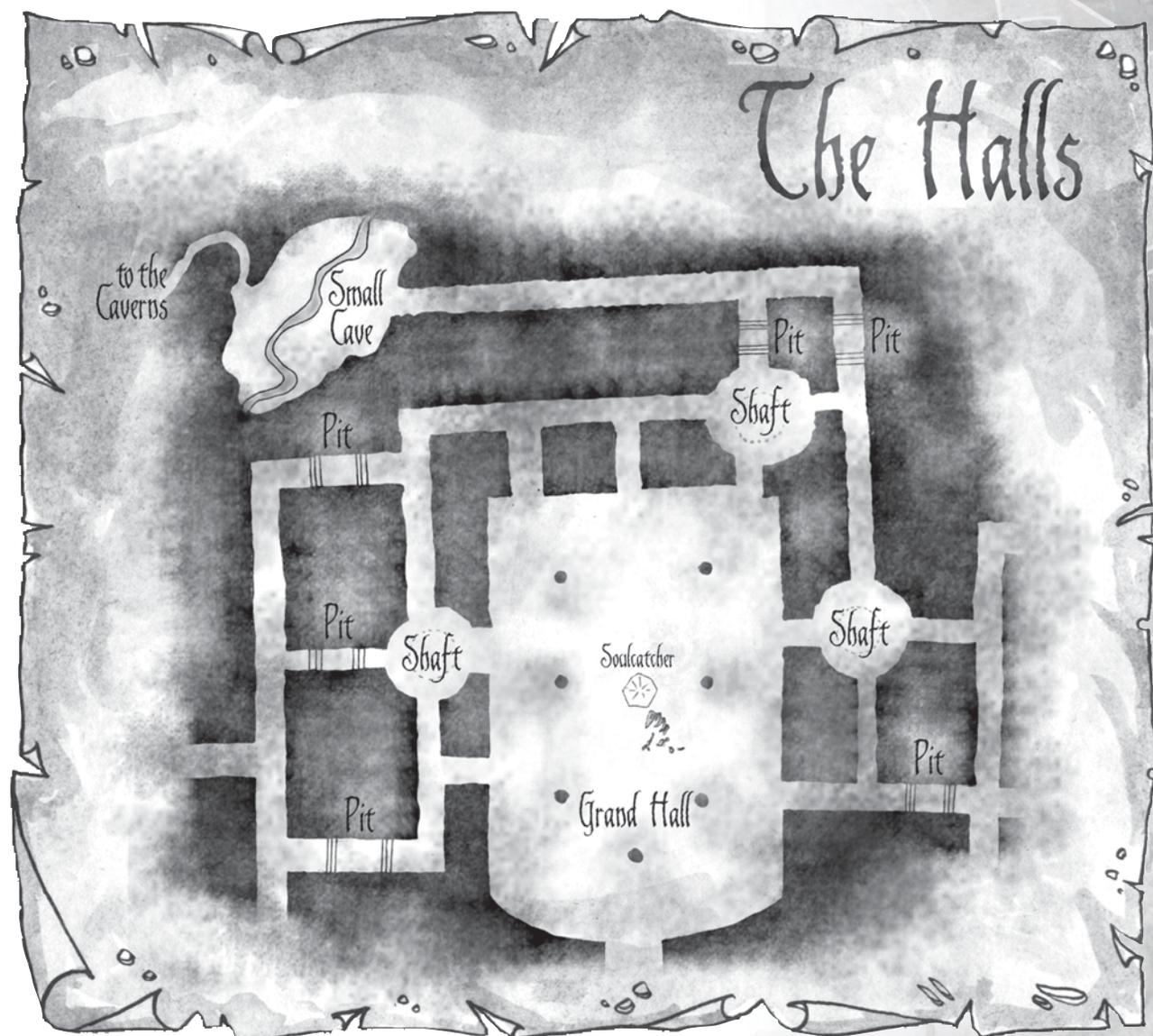
Detection Difficulty: 7

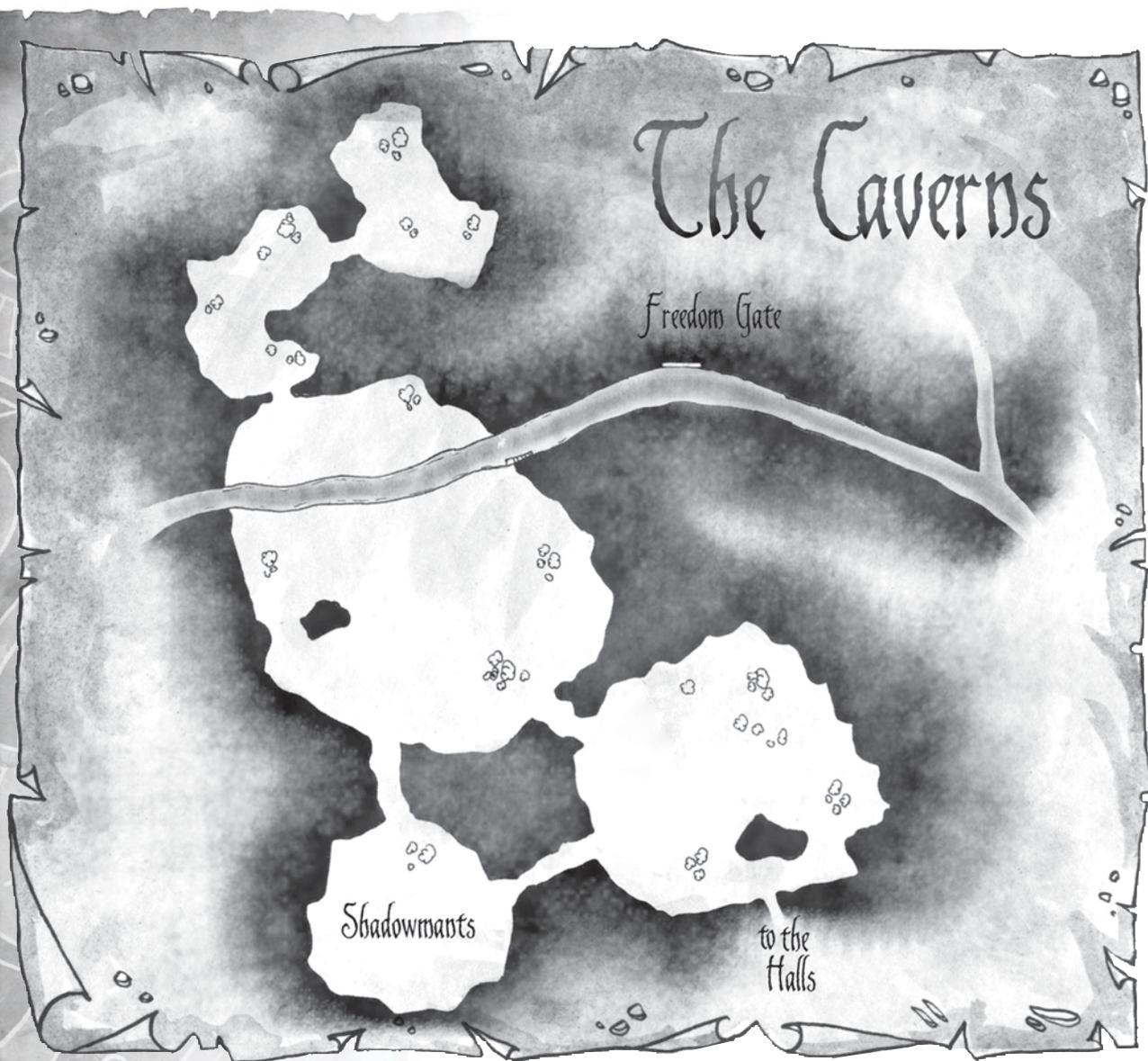
Disarm Difficulty: 6

Trigger Condition: A thin tripwire two inches above the ground.

Trap Initiative: 9/D8+D6

Trap Effect: A long, very sharp blade swings out of the wall to cut through anything one yard above the ground. Everything within 5 yards of the tripwire takes Step 18/D20+D12 damage. Physical Armor protects against this damage.





Tunnels

The remaining tunnels and shafts on the map contain all types of nasty traps installed to defend the kaer against invading Horrors. None of these traps are maintained by the Order. Some traps have been triggered during the Scourge, but most of them have never been used.

The gamemaster is free to place any trap he can imagine in here, but he should give his characters a fair chance of recognizing what will happen to them if they step into the tunnels—and that all of them are actually dead ends.

At the gamemaster's discretion, using Joran's keys may deactivate each trap. However, if the players are stubborn and insist to search every last inch of the halls, they probably deserve to deal with the effects of a trap capable of taking out an elephant.

THE CAVERNS

A large complex of natural caverns makes up the lower part of the mines. In the remaining caves, a good number of subterranean plants and creatures thrive, used to the absence of daylight. Large patches of glow moss and natural light quartzes illuminate the caverns in a dim light. A

large underground stream flows right through the largest one, providing sustenance to the wildlife down here. The fast-flowing water is several yards deep and of vital importance for Kaer Ardanyan—its part of the kaer's defense mechanism as well as its main source of water. It covers Freedom Gate almost completely, which is located upriver from the main cavern.

Freedom Gate

The kaer's entrance was hidden beneath the fast-flowing water of the underground stream; only the upper part is visible. The caisson door is completely covered by water, since it opens to the riverbed. The magic of the gate and the flow of the stream are connected by elemental magic. When the wards on the outer side of the caisson are deactivated, a barrier of elemental water diverts the flow of the stream into an alternate tunnel allowing the caisson to be opened safely once the water has drained to a small rivulet.

A few minutes after the door is closed again, the barrier reverts to its original position and the stream comes back with full force—likely to wash anything in front of the gate away. The barrier can also be moved by casting the spell inscribed in the stones on shore of the stream (located in

the main cavern, see below). A small set of stairs leads up into the main cavern, allowing characters to get out of the way in time.

Between the wards of the gate is a metal orb, covered with finely etched lines of orichalcum — this is the *kaon-ma*, a magical item dedicated to create a telepathic connection between the user and one of the kaer's inhabitants. Like so many things useful for returning to the kaer, however, the Order made sure to dispel the *kaon-ma*'s magic.

Shadowmants

A pair of shadowmants lair inside the caverns, preying on other small creatures living down here. The creatures are harmless if the heroes stay at a distance. However, the shadowmants care about their recently hatched young, and attack anyone coming too close to their nest. Anyone entering the smaller cavern containing the nest (as indicated on the map) will find that the wildlife found in these caves can be very hazardous.

Shadowmants have the following game statistics:

DEX: 5	STR: 5	TOU: 6
PER: 4	WIL: 5	CHA: 4
Initiative: 7	Physical Defense: 7	
Number of Actions: 1	Spell Defense: 6	
Attack (2): 7	Social Defense: 7	

Damage:
Stinger (2): 7

Death Rating: 35
Wound Threshold: 9
Unconsciousness Rating: 27

Combat Movement: 32+
Full Movement: 64+

+ This value is the creature's flying Movement rate.

Powers: Low-Light Vision, Poison (SD 8; Damage)

Legend Points: 95

Equipment: None

Loot: Stinger worth D10 × 10 silver pieces (counts as treasure worth Legend Points).

Commentary

8 feet wide with a 5 foot long tail, shadowmants resemble large, flying stingrays. A shadowmant's outer side is black, its underside dark gray, and its tail ends in a crystalline stinger. A shadowmant has two eyes and a small mouth lined with rows of tiny, needle-sharp teeth. Being nocturnal creatures, the shadowmants have everything they need to survive in the lower mines. Alchemists prize shadowmant stingers, using them to brew magical potions.



Rules

A shadowmant uses its tail to sting its victims. The stinger contains a poison powerful enough to kill a troll within 10 rounds. Once the poison has killed its prey, the shadowmant eats its victim.

Poison: The virulent poison resists the healing effects of talents or healing aids with a Spell Defense of 8.

Runes of Opening

A set of magical runes is etched into the stones along the stream's shore. A long time ago, these runes controlled the elemental barriers diverting the water flow away from the gate.

Water Ward

To activate the Runes of Opening, a magician must read the inscription aloud. Once the words have been spoken, a deep voice answers from out of nowhere — asking for a password.

Unfortunately for the heroes, the password is written down into the *Book of Sigils* — the book, which detailed the kaer's defenses and wards, and was presumed lost to the fire when the kaer's library burned down decades ago (the book can be found in Mangalin's Residence in the town of Ardanyan, since the fire was a ploy initiated by Leldrin — refer to the **History** section of the **Kaer Ardanyan** chapter on p. 16 for more information on how this came to be).

Detection Difficulty: 4

Spell Defense: 12

Disarm Difficulty: 14

Trigger Condition: Reading the inscription requires the magician to make a successful Read and Write Magic (6) Test.

Trap Initiative: 10/D10+D6

Trap Effect: A deep voice asks the magician for a password. If the correct answer is given, the elemental barriers divert the water away from the kaer's gate into an alternate tunnel for a few minutes — leaving enough time to enter or exit the kaer.

TROUBLESHOOTING

The mines should be nothing more than an obstacle for the heroes. There are lots of potential dangers here, but the characters should be able to enter and exit the mines without dying. Clever players should be able to trick and/or circumvent the traps and gamemaster characters presented here.

Farathiel is the most important factor in this chapter. He is the connection to the Order and will do everything to capture the characters once he learns of their presence. The elf and his men aren't dumb, and he will change their tactics to inform the Order should the heroes prove to be more trouble than expected.

It should be very difficult to spot the kaer entrance, especially when the heroes don't know what they are looking for. It should be next to impossible for any hero to open the kaer from the outside. The Order prevents any exploration team to get back and report by using the kaer's defenses against them.

If the characters have access to the Kaer Knocking spell (or similar magics), the gamemaster must decide whether he wants the kaer-dwellers to react or not. Joran has explicitly stated that the *kaon-ma* must be used, so he and/or the council might consider anything else a trick. Of course, the *kaon-ma* is broken, so no one will be able to use it.

Characters unfortunate enough to get washed away by the underground stream will find themselves in the river less than a minute later — the stream leads directly into the waterfall shown on Tungar's map.

WITH A PINCH OF SALT

I order you to halt in the name of the Council! You are accused of serious crimes against the people of Ardanyan, and you will not leave this place unpunished. Hey — don't you dare run away! Hey! Stop! Stop!

• **Prelor, Captain of the Town Watch** •



In this chapter, the characters enter the town of Ardanyan to investigate, and soon face more trouble than they can handle. They will meet — and probably ally with — Titoo, a human Thief in a similar situation. Unfortunately, the answer to their questions is only found in the most secure place of town: the Council House, which also serves as headquarters for the Cross of Ardanyan.

OVERVIEW

It may not be the first time that the characters have visited Ardanyan, but this time the heroes know that something doesn't add up. Kaer-dweller characters come here most likely after they had a confrontation with Farathiel and his men (as described in the **Deep Mines** chapter on p. 72). Adventurers may not have visited the mines yet and come into town to stock up on equipment and gather information. Either way, the heroes will have questions that need to be answered — likely raising the attention of the Order. The situation might also be worse if the Order already considers the heroes a threat (based on the outcome of any previous encounters).

While the characters explore the town, they continue to get into deeper trouble. When push comes to shove, they run into Titoo, a human thief facing similar problems. One hand washes the other, and the heroes may decide to ally with him against a common enemy.

SETTING THE STAGE

Seen from the road, Ardanyan's stone defenses look like they have been erected just yesterday. The walls and towers of Ardanyan are an impressive sight — the town's fortifications almost resemble those of a fortress. One half

of Ardanyan was built on the side of a forested hill, and the ceilings of pompous residences can be spotted between the treetops. A tower bearing the flag and crest of Ardanyan stands on top of the hill — a landmark that can be spotted from miles away.

A couple of caravan wagons wait right before the western gate, waiting to be scrutinized by the town watch, which appears to be very thorough. Slowly, one wagon after another enters the gates and vanishes behind the walls. No doubt that the local market will be bustling with activity today.

THEMES AND IMAGES

Ardanyan is a wealthy town, and a haven from the dangers of the wilderness. The town is peaceful, but the waters are deep. A huge conspiracy blinds the population with wealth and a false sense of security. The Order's grip on Ardanyan is very tight, as the heroes will soon find out.

The encounters contained in this chapter should impose a sense of paranoia on the characters; they have become prey to an unknown predator — which will slowly be revealed in this chapter, allowing the heroes to turn the tide in an uneven fight. Once it has become clear what is going on, the heroes can do their part and start thinking of freeing the kaer and the town.

BEHIND THE SCENES

This chapter starts when the characters approach one of the town's gates. The traffic is controlled by the town watch's Second Company — which is not a direct part of the Order, but controlled indirectly. Regardless of the previous

encounters, the heroes are unknown to the guards, and will be expected to perform a greeting ritual before being allowed to approach the guards (see the **Skills** chapter on p. 231 of the **Player's Compendium** for more information on greeting rituals).

AT THE GATES

Depending on the outcome of the previous encounters, the Order might have been warned of the characters. In this case, an informed spy from Ardanyan's Third Company is posted at the gates. The spy looks for the heroes as described by the gamemaster character who warned the Order. If the heroes disguise themselves, have the spy make a Perception Test against the Detection Difficulty of the disguise or similar abilities used by the heroes.

If the spy manages to spot the heroes, he will discredit them by telling the guards that the characters are known troublemakers—suggesting that the regular town watch keeps an eye on them. This will buy him some time to inform the Order that the group has entered the town—while the guards take a close look at the heroes' possessions. If the guards can't find anything that would justify keeping the characters outside, the heroes will be asked to pay a toll of two silvers each for entering the town and using the bridge.

THIRD COMPANY SPY

Attributes

Dexterity (15): 6/D10
Strength (10): 5/D8
Toughness (11): 5/D8

Perception (19): 8/2D6
Willpower (13): 6/D10
Charisma (14): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: 8
Death Rating: 30*
Wound Threshold: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 22*

Initiative: 6/D10
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 1
Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 5/D8

* These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

Combat Movement: 32
Full Movement: 64



Skills

Artisan:

Acting (2): 8/2D6

Knowledge:

Ardanyan Law (2): 10/D10+D6

General:

Conceal Weapon (3): 9/D8+D6
 Detect Weapon (2): 10/D10+D6
 Disguise (2): 10/D10+D6
 Evidence Analysis (2): 10/D10+D6
 Fast Hand (2): 8/2D6
 Forgery (3): 9/D8+D6
 Lip Reading (2): 8/2D6
 Melee Weapons (2): 8/2D6
 Picking Pockets (2): 8/2D6
 Silent Walk (4): 10/D10+D6
 Speak Language (3): 11/D10+D8
 — Dwarven (Throalic), Elven, Human
 Surprise Strike (2): 7/D12

Equipment

Espagra-Scale Cloak (Phys 3; Myst 1)
 Dagger (Damage 7/D12; Range 9–15–18)
 Short Sword (Damage 9/D8+D6; w/scabbard)
 Belt Pouch
 Traveler's Garb
 Writing Kit

Loot

10 silver pieces

Legend Points

90 Legend Points

Commentary

The Third Company spy looks for outsiders investigating Ardanyan or the mines too closely; as well as for locals who get too curious about the town's leadership. No one is safe from his ever-watchful gaze; even Third Company men have been brought up on fake charges and executed.

The spy usually begins stalking his targets, determining if they pose a threat to the Order. If the spy deems a person a threat, it is his job to remove the individual from society without arousing suspicion (usually by faking documents and other evidence before turning it over to the town watch on trumped up charges). The spy also tries to seize any of the target's possessions that would be a threat to the Order if discovered.

EXPLORING ARDANYAN

Kaer-dweller characters exploring Ardanyan might recognize familiar features from the kaer by making a successful Perception (5) Test. While the players are wandering through the streets, the gamemaster should take turns in asking each player individually for such a test.

Every time a character passes the test, he may hear a familiar name or recognize a familiar face. For example, a kaer-dweller character spotting the sign of the Silent



Scream Inn should be allowed a Perception (5) Test. If the test is successful, he remembers that a tavern of the same name once stood in Council Hall, before the halls of the kaer separated. Another character might want to buy something on the market, and — upon passing the test — he will recognize the merchant he is buying from — an elf who died years ago on a strange disease.

Gamemasters should make these bits of information up as they go — revealing only names or faces, and keeping the information as vague as possible. The player characters can never be sure if they remember things correctly, they

only have a hunch that something isn't right — almost like a feeling of *deja vu*. The intention is to prompt the heroes to ask questions, allowing the Order to take notice accordingly (if they haven't already).

Adventurer characters may come to Ardanyan before an exploration of the mines. Any heroes trying to gather information are likely to rouse the Order's attention. If this happens, an Initiate will be sent to warn Farathiel to expect company. In case the spy at the gates missed the heroes for some reason, their behavior might also enable the Order to spot them while in town.

Either way, the player characters must be very clever to avoid raising the Order's attention — which should be almost impossible unless they know who they are dealing with in the first place.

WUSCHWUSUL AND CAEDRUS

The player characters are likely to meet other adventurers while in town, and this encounter gives an example of how these might look like. Both of the adepts below have arrived just days ago and are happy to talk to like-minded people. This encounter is intended to apply some color to the setting and enable the heroes to hear news and stories from the rest of the province. If the player characters roleplay well, Wuschwusul and Caedrus can become potential allies — able to help the heroes later in the adventure. Of course, both of them will mind their own business should the heroes show no interest in social interaction.

WUSCHWUSUL, THIRD CIRCLE T'SKRANG SWORDMASTER

Attributes

Dexterity (19): 8/2D6

Strength (13): 6/D10

Toughness (14): 6/D10

Perception (12): 5/D8

Willpower (12): 5/D8

Charisma (14): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 10

Spell Defense: 7

Social Defense: 8

Death Rating: 36 (57)

Wound Threshold: 10

Unconsciousness Rating: 28 (46)

Initiative: 7/D12

Physical Armor: 8

Mystic Armor: 2

Recovery Tests: 3

Knockdown: 6/D10

Combat Movement: 38

Full Movement: 76

Karma Points: 11

Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents

Avoid Blow^D (4): 12/2D10

Durability (7/6) (3): 3

First Impression (3): 9/D8+D6

Heartening Laugh (3): 9/D8+D6

Karma Ritual (3): 3

Maneuver^D (3): 11/D10+D8

Melee Weapons^D (4): 12/2D10

Riposte^D (3): 11/D10+D8



Taunt (3): 9/D8+D6
 Throwing Weapons (3): 11/D10+D8
 Wound Balance (3): 9/D8+D6

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:

Dancing (2): 8/2D6

Knowledge:

Creature Lore (3): 8/2D6

General:

Climbing (2): 10/D10+D6
 Fishing (1): 6/D10
 Gliding (2): 10/D10+D6
 Great Leap (2): 10/D10+D6
 Sailing (1): 9/D8+D6
 Swimming (1): 7/D12
 Wilderness Survival (3): 8/2D6

Equipment

Buckler (Phys 1; ST 17)
 Espagra-Scale Cloak (Phys 3; Myst 1; Init 0/1)
 Padded Leather Armor (Phys 3)
 Broadsword (Forged +1; Damage 12/2D10; w/scabbard)
 2 × Daggers (Damage: 8/2D6; Range: 9–15–18)
 Short Sword (Forged +1; Damage 11/D10+D8; w/scabbard)
 2 × Spears (Damage 10/D10+D6; Range 18–30–36)

Adventurer's Kit

Climbing Kit
 Fishing Kit
 Trail Rations (1 week)
 Wealthy Traveler's Garb

Loot

30 silver pieces

Notes

Wuschwusul possesses the t'skrang racial ability of Tail Attack (Damage 6/D10).

Commentary

Wuschwusul belongs to a group of adventurers called the Starblades and is more than happy to relate his (usually overly-impressive) stories to anyone paying for his drinks. The t'skrang is a *k'stulaami*, a member of the rare t'skrang subrace born to the winds. He hails from the House of the Spirit Wind located in the nearby Throal Mountains.

Wuschwusul has just returned from a visit and is now a guest at the Red Raven tavern, waiting for the rest of his group to arrive.

CAEDRUS, FIFTH CIRCLE OBSIDIMAN WARRIOR

Attributes

Dexterity (13): 6/D10
Strength (22): 9/D8+D6
Toughness (20): 8/2D6
Perception (11): 5/D8
Willpower (12): 5/D8
Charisma (11): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 7
Death Rating: 44 (99)
Wound Threshold: 16
Unconsciousness Rating: 36 (71)

Initiative: 3/D4
Physical Armor: 13
Mystic Armor: 5
Recovery Tests: 4
Knockdown: 9/D8+D6

Combat Movement: 20

Full Movement: 40

Karma Points: 19

Karma Step: 3/D4

Talents (Knacks)

Acrobatic Strike (5): 11/D10+D8
 Air Dance** (5): 8/2D6
 Anticipate Blow^D (5): 10/D10+D6
 Avoid Blow^D (5): 11/D10+D8
 Down Strike^D (5): 14/D20+D4
 Durability (9/7) (5): 5
 Gliding Stride (5): 11/D10+D8
 Karma Ritual (5): 5
 Melee Weapons^D (6): 12/2D10 (Deflect Blow)
 Swift Kick^D (5): 11/D10+D8
 Tiger Spring (5): 5
 Thread Weaving (5): 10/D10+D6
 Throwing Weapons (5): 11/D10+D8
 Unarmed Combat^D (6): 12/2D10 (Head Butt)
 Wood Skin^D (5): 13/D12+D10

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.

** Step number adjusted for Initiative Penalties.

Skills

Artisan:

Weapon Runic Carving (3): 8/2D6

Knowledge:

Ancient Weapons (3): 8/2D6
 Trade Route Lore (3): 8/2D6

General:

Disarm (3): 9/D8+D6
 Etiquette (3): 8/2D6



Riposte (3): 9/D8+D6
Tactics (3): 8/2D6

Equipment

Body Shield (Phys 5; Init 2; ST 21)
Espagra-Scale Cloak (Phys 3; Myst 1; Init 0/1)
Fernweave (Phys 2; Myst 3)
Battle-Axe (Forged +2; Damage 17/D20+D10)
2 × Hawk Hatchets (Damage 13/D12+D10; Range 24–40–48)
Spear (Forged +1; Damage 14/D20+D4; Range 18–30–36)
Troll Sling (Damage 13/D12+D10; Range 30–60–120)
Large Sack (w/ 15 sling bullets)
Bracers (Rank 3; PhysDef +2; SpellDef +2)
Adventurer's Kit
Brooch (Cloaksense)
Carving Tool
Trail Rations (1 week)
Waterskin (1)
Wealthy Traveler's Garb

Loot

80 silver pieces

Notes

Caedrus possesses the obsidiman racial abilities of Increased Wound Threshold and Natural Armor.

Fourth Circle: Karma on Willpower-only Tests

Fifth Circle: Karma on Dexterity-only Tests

Commentary

Caedrus is an obsidiman Warrior hailing from the ancient Liferock of Ayodhya—although he would not reveal his heritage to anyone. He resides in Omasu's landhouse, waiting for some of his friends to arrive. Caedrus is calm and usually silent, but welcomes guests at any time. As one of the few remaining brothers of Omasu, he is a high-ranking figure in the Liferock Rebellion (see the **How It Came to Pass** chapter on p. 31 of the **Player's Compendium** for details on the Liferock Rebellion). The 'friends' he is meeting with are rebels—usually t'skrang and obsidimen passing through Ardanyan to receive new orders.

It is unlikely that Caedrus reveals any of this to the heroes at this stage, but he may remember them in later adventures, possibly recruiting them to his cause.

WANTED!

Once the Cross of Ardanyan has been warned, the Order closely watches their actions, eventually dispatching a squad of Third Company watchmen with orders to capture and detain the heroes on charges of slavery. When the player characters arrive at a tavern of their choice (or try to get hold of the spy), they spot a warrant freshly glued to a wall nearby. Alternatively, an honorable citizen might point at the characters and yell that they look like *the criminals!* The faces displayed on the warrant match the description of the characters—and the reward offered on their heads reads 300 silver pieces each—dead or alive!

If the Third Company squad arrives at roughly the same time the heroes read the warrant, they won't have time to prepare—possibly sending the group on a wild goose chase through the town. Of course, the whole situation reeks of a setup. A direct fight with the Third Company squad should be hard, and fleeing should become the only viable option. The gamemaster should make clear that—while the heroes might manage to win this fight—more watchmen are already on their way.

When the characters get caught, they will be accused of having worked with Grankar Eisengiesser, who has been imprisoned a few days earlier. Of course, nothing of this is true—but it doesn't matter: the Order wants the characters out of their way in any case and put them in jail to find out what they know. While there will be a trial, it will be completely staged by the Order. Jania as chief justice will make sure that the characters remain locked away, approving forged evidence and fake witnesses controlled by the Order.

The gamemaster is advised to carefully time the arrival of the squad—it makes little sense if the heroes aren't aware of the conspiracy. The best moment is when the heroes have realized that someone (the spy) is shadowing them. Using a situation in which the heroes try to capture the spy is probably the most fun.

In any case, the player characters deserve a chance to fight and escape.

TOWN WATCH CAPTAIN, FIRST CIRCLE WARRIOR ADEPT

Attributes

Dexterity (14): 6/D10
Strength (16): 7/D12
Toughness (14): 6/D10

Perception (11): 5/D8
Willpower (14): 6/D10
Charisma (11): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 7

Initiative: 5/D8
Physical Armor: 8
Mystic Armor: 3

Death Rating: 34*
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: 26*

Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 7/D12

* These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

Combat Movement: 28^H or 30^E
Full Movement: 56^H or 60^E

Karma Points: 10^H or 6^E

Karma Step: 5/D8^H or 4/D6^E

^{H,E} Denotes human or elf Movement rates and Karma, respectively.

Talents

Acrobatic Strike (1): 7/D12

Air Dance (1): 7/D12

Karma Ritual (1): 1

Melee Weapons^D (2): 8/2D6

Unarmed Combat^D (2): 8/2D6

Wood Skin^D (1): 7/D12

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:

Craftsman: Leatherworking (1): 7/D12

Knowledge:

Ardanyan Lore (2): 8/2D6

Ardanyan Politics (2): 8/2D6

General:

Detect Weapon (2): 7/D12

Disarm (1): 7/D12

Riposte (1): 7/D12

Streetwise (4): 9/D8+D6

Tactics (2): 7/D12

Equipment

Buckler (Phys 1; ST 17)

Espagra-Scale Cloak (Phys 3; Myst 1; Init 0/1)

Padded Leather Armor (Phys 4)

Broadsword (Damage 12/2D10; w/scabbard)

Club (Damage 10/D10+D6)

Sap (Damage 8/2D6)

Belt Pouch

Cloaksense Brooch

Craftsman Tools

Light Quartz Lantern

Trail Rations (1 week)

Traveler's Garb

Loot

10 silver pieces

Legend Points

105 Legend Points

Notes

Human town watch captains possess the racial ability of Versatility. Elf town watch captains possess the racial ability of Low-Light Vision. All town watch captains have taken a Blood Oath to the Cross of Ardanyan.

Commentary

The Third Company employs adepts who are loyal to the Order and to the Cross of Ardanyan. The Third Company soldiers use the information gained by their spies to root out and capture or kill any threats to the Order. The statistics above represent an average Third Company soldier, a warrior adept of human or elven origin. Their

padded leather armors and bucklers have been dyed in a deep blue and show the golden insignia of Ardanyan on the breast.

ON THE RUN

Fortunately, the heroes are not the only ones facing this situation. A young human Thief Named Titoo is in deep trouble himself—although he isn't wanted by the Order, but by the Thieves' Guild. A few months earlier, Titoo broke into the Red Raven Inn to separate a merchant from his possessions. While searching the merchant's bags and coffers, Titoo found a scroll case that he claimed (among other things). He wasn't able to read the documents, but the writing appeared to be ancient. Unsure what to make of it, Titoo sold the scroll case to Grankar Eisengiesser, a close friend of his with an interest in old writings. The dwarf merchant had settled down in Landside just a year ago, opening up a shop selling tools and equipment imported from Throal.

Grankar deciphered the documents and contacted his friend Tungal (see **Death on the Road** on p. 65 for details of Tungal's story). He told Titoo that he might have found something, but wasn't very specific. Titoo has seen a group of dwarfs arriving at Grankar's house a few weeks ago, mounting an expedition. Curious by nature, Titoo asked what Grankar had found, but never received a satisfying answer. Only days later, Titoo witnessed that all of them were taken to prison, accused to be slavers!

Titoo knows that the true reason for the imprisonment must be a different one: as a dwarf proud of his Throalic heritage, he knew Grankar deeply despised slavery. Titoo asked a fellow Thief for help, another human named Jerail. Both of them entered the cellars of the Council House to speak to Grankar and find out what happened, but the mission quickly turned into a disaster—Jerail died at the hands of the guards in the backyard of the Council House, and Titoo barely managed to get away with his life.

Unfortunately for Titoo, Jerail was the son of guildmaster Ferhaan (see **Organizations in The Town of Ardanyan** chapter, p. 51)—and Ferhaan now wants Titoo's head. Out of luck, Titoo has almost no chance to prove his case—but he does not want to leave Ardanyan either. Being wanted by the Thieves' Guild and the Order leaves but a few options for survival, however.

A few days ago, however, Titoo witnessed another group of 'slavers' go to jail. Upon seeing the fresh warrant, he tries to find and help the characters—expecting them to help him gather more information. Thus, the player characters should run into Titoo sooner or later—the Thief might either witness the fight with the Third Company squad, showing the characters a way out by guiding them through the winding streets of Landside; offering them a safe place to hide from the guards. While the heroes might not trust Titoo on their first meeting, he will help them nonetheless. The safehouse he guides them to is the cellar of Grankar Eisengiesser's old shop on Amber Lane.

Here, Titoo will tell his story and exchange information with his new friends. Together, the heroes might be able to figure out what is going on. It's very likely that Adventurer characters still don't know what lies hidden below



the mines, but now they know where to find a person that does: Grankar Eisengiesser, who is rotting in the cellars of the Council House. Kaer-dweller characters will find out where their masters are — also down in the Council House's cellars. Determining what to do next should be easy, but the heroes might decide to take another look at the mines first. Refer to the Deep Mines chapter if they do, otherwise proceed with **Break and Enter**, p. 90.

TITOO, SECOND CIRCLE THIEF

Attributes

Dexterity (14): 6/D10

Strength (10): 5/D8

Toughness (10): 5/D8

Perception (14): 6/D10

Willpower (14): 6/D10

Charisma (16): 7/D12

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 8

Spell Defense: 8

Social Defense: 10

Death Rating: 31 (41)

Wound Threshold: 8

Unconsciousness Rating: 22 (30)

Initiative: 6/D10

Physical Armor: 3

Mystic Armor: 3

Recovery Tests: 2

Knockdown: 5/D8

Combat Movement: 28

Full Movement: 56

Karma Points: 12

Karma Step: 5/D8

Talents

Climbing (2): 8/2D6

Durability (5/4) (2): 2

Karma Ritual (2): 2

Lock Picking^D (3): 9/D8+D6

Lock Sense^D (2): 8/2D6

Melee Weapons (2): 8/2D6

Picking Pockets^D (3): 9/D8+D6

Silent Walk^D (2): 8/2D6

Surprise Strike^D (2): 7/D12

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:

Acting (1): 8/2D6

Knowledge:

Ardanyan Lore (3): 9/D8+D6

General:

Conversation (3): 10/D10+D6

Shackle Shrug (2): 8/2D6

Streetwise (4): 10/D10+D6

Equipment

Espagra-Scale Cloak (Phys 3; Myst 1; Init 0/1)

Short Sword (Damage 9/D8+D6; w/scabbard)

Dagger (Damage 7/D12; Range 9–15–18)

Adventurer's Kit

Belt Pouch

Traveler's Garb

Loot

15 silver pieces

Notes

Titoo possesses the human racial ability of Versatility.

Commentary

Titoo is small for a human, and looks almost like a child. The Thief has short, dark hair and prefers clothing in dark colors. He usually wears a dark brown cloak.

Titoo usually frequents the market—his main source of income—during the day. However, his recent troubles with the Thieves' Guild require him to keep a very low

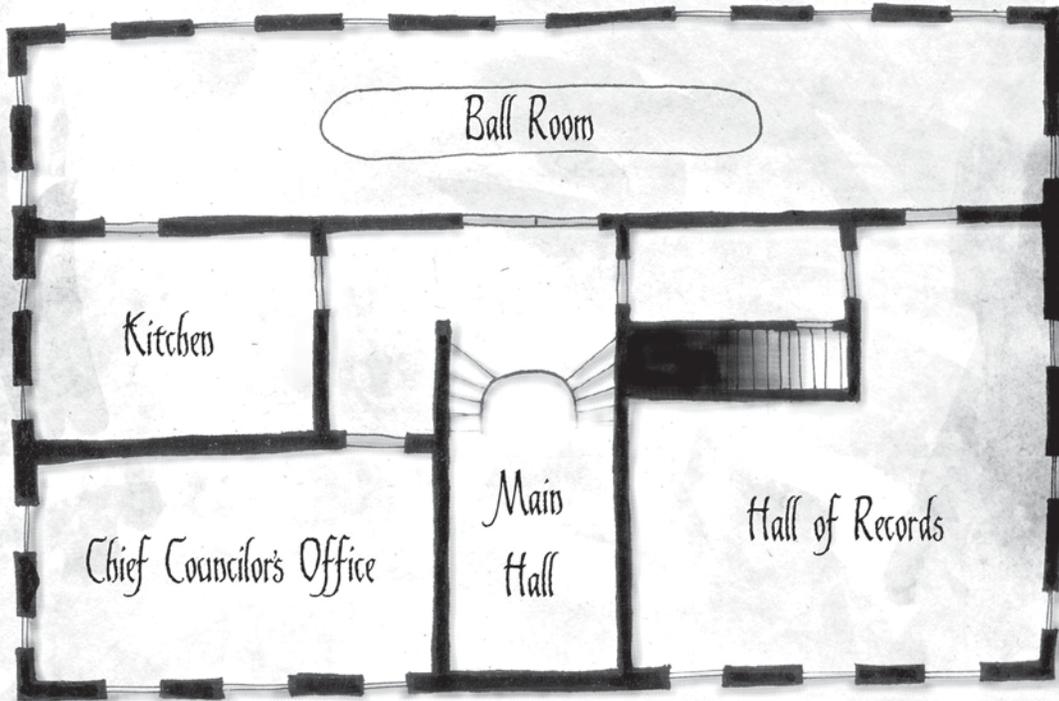
profile. Titoo is usually friendly and supportive, regardless of whom he talks to. He even smiles when interrogated by the town watch.

BREAK AND ENTER

The solution to the player character's problems is located in the cellars of Ardanyan's Council House. There is no guideline on how the heroes should approach a break-in—the group must find a way on their own. The players may want to observe the building to find a weak spot, so the Council House is described in detail below.



First Floor

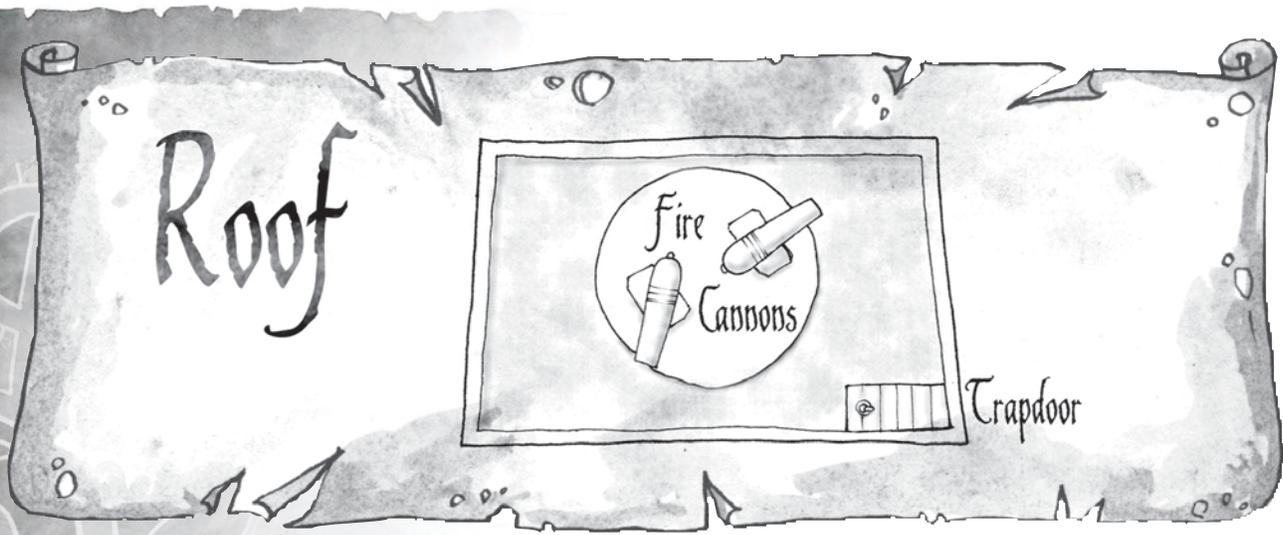


The gamemaster should remember that this is the Order's headquarter — it's a daunting task to get in and out unharmed, and it is possible that one or more of the characters die. However, clever player characters have a few aces up their sleeve — Titoo will help them, and other characters like Caedrus and Wuschwusul may be convinced to help as well. Creative players will create a diversion of some kind, and the gamemaster should keep in mind that the Order is not omnipresent. If the heroes find a clever way of getting in and out, he should enable them to do so.

The gamemaster is free to call up reinforcements of any number — if the Order finds out that their headquarters are

compromised, they will do everything to stop the intruders from getting away unharmed. Note that the characters don't necessarily need a way back out: the secret passage located in the cellar will lead them directly into the kaer (see below).

The doors of Ardanyan's Council House are made of strong wood, with a Physical Armor of 9 and a Death Rating of 30 (see **Barriers and Structures** on p. 106 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). All doors and windows are usually kept closed, although the doors are locked only during the night. A successful Lock Picking (7) Test is required to open any of the entrance locks.



Ground Floor

The ground floor holds Ardanyan's tax offices and houses the Market Authority (see the **Organizations** section on p. 53 of **The Town of Ardanyan**). Two guards of the Third Company each guard both the front and back entrances. These guards work in six-hour shifts.

Front Entrance

The large, heavy portal stands three steps above the ground and bears the town's crest. Both doors are lined with gold and lead into the main hall of the building. It's probably not the wisest idea to tear this door down, but the barrier rating resembles that for a reinforced door (see **Barriers and Structures** in the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 106 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for details). The two guards posted here stand in front of the building.

Main Hall

The purpose of the main hall is to impress visitors, a display of the town's wealth. Ornamented tapestries, large portraits of the founders and golden statues line the walls. A large mosaic, showing a map of the town from a bird's perspective, covers the ground. Two stairs lead up to the first floor. The door to the right leads to the Tax Collector's Office, and bears the tax collector's crest. The door to the left leads into the offices of the Market Authority. Two Initiates guard the main hall during office hours — the halls are filled with people from the eighth hour to midday.

Tax Collector's Office

The small reception room of the tax collector's office holds countless records filled with boring numbers about tax payments and debts. Apart from these documents, no treasure can be found here — the collected taxes are stored in the vaults below. A small staircase (behind a reinforced door) connects to all floors of the house, including the roof.

Market Authority

The offices of the Market Authority house a small reception room, a large meeting room and an office. Trade agree-

ments are negotiated and signed here, and every merchant wanting to see his wares on the market outside needs to register and pay a small percentage of his profits before he leaves town.

Guard's Rooms

These facilities are used when the guards take a break or change shifts. There are bunks that are used during the night, to allow for additional guards to remain on standby.

Backyard

The council members and everyone more important than the general public use the backyard as the main entrance. The backyard's gate opens onto the Path of Gold (see **Hangside Residences** on p. 49 of **The Town of Ardanyan** chapter). A metal fence keeps unwanted visitors away and the four watchdogs inside. The two guards posted here often remain inside the guard rooms playing games of chance.

WATCH DOGS (4)

DEX: 4 **STR:** 5 **TOU:** 3
PER: 5 **WIL:** 3 **CHA:** 4

Initiative: 4 **Physical Defense:** 6
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense:** 6
Attack (2): 6 **Social Defense:** 5
Damage: **Physical Armor:** 0
Bite (5): 10 **Mystic Armor:** 0

Death Rating: 26 **Recovery Tests:** 1
Wound Threshold: 6 **Knockdown:** 6
Unconsciousness Rating: 17

Combat Movement: 28 **Full Movement:** 56

Powers: Battle Shout (Bark)^S (2): 6, Enhanced Senses (Listen, Sight, Smell) (3): 8

Legend Points: 55

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Commentary

These dogs are trained to guard the backyard of the Council House. They bark at anyone who enters their territory and will attack if the intruder persists.

First Floor

The first floor is reserved for the Town Council and Ardanyan's Hall of Records. Argethiel is found here most often and four additional guards are present during the day. Note that the other council members only show up here once or twice each day, as they fulfill various other tasks throughout the town.

Chief Councilor's Office

Argethiel's office is large and contains all sorts of magical amenities. The desk is stuffed with documents, usually trade agreements and contracts.

Hall of Records

These rooms contain countless files on the town's citizens. Each citizen has a file holding a certificate of birth, detailed summaries on each citizen's properties and filed contracts. A small elevator connects to the Tax Collector's office below. The Hall of Records is occupied by a human scribe named Horan the Wise, who appears to be living in the offices.



Ball Room

This large hall overlooks the marketplace and serves for official council meetings and festivities. Often, the room is used to negotiate contracts between Ardanyan and prominent trading houses or noble families.

Roof

The roof of the Council House bears two fire cannons to defend the city's perimeter. Mangalin once purchased these from a t'skrang *niall* down the Coil River.

The heavy cannons are made of stone and are mounted on a rotating platform, enabling them to fire in any direction. Their range extends far past the town's walls, and both cannons have proven to be very effective in defending the town from the ork scorchers.

Cellar

The cellar of the Council House holds the Order's heart — which is closely guarded, since it contains the prison cells, the town's treasury, and a secret temple devoted to Raggok. At least two guards are present at all times, usually playing a dice game at the table in the guard room. All of the guards assigned to the cellars are adepts.

Prison

The large prison cell of the Council House is only used for 'special' prisoners — those who have taken actions against the Order (all other criminals are detained in the town watch buildings). The cell currently holds the masters of the kaer-dweller characters and Grankar Eisengiesser. The adepts are bound and gagged, and the magicians also wear a blindfold. The Order didn't treat them too gently — each of them has at least three Wounds.

"The prisoners are aware of the Order's doings and know of a secret temple hidden in the treasure vault. They also suspect that there is a secret passage leading into the kaer, since some of the master adepts have seen Leldrin coming in and out of the vaults. The prison door is made of metal and has Physical Armor 13 and a Death Rating of 50 (see **Barriers and Structures** on p. 106 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). A successful Lock Picking (10) Test is required to open the lock.

Treasure Vault

Ardanyan's treasury is usually locked. Two of the guards have a key each, and both keys are needed to open the vault. The treasury also hides a secret door leading to the temple. The door has a Detection Difficulty of 10 (see **Secret Doors** in the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 108 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information).

Secret Temple

At least once a week, the Order's founders assemble here to praise Raggok and discuss their secrets. New members are initiated here. Leldrin is a frequent visitor, using the secret passage to get in and out of the kaer unseen.

Needless to say, the temple is filled with treasure from the kaer. It won't be of much use to the characters in this situation, though. The equipment from the prisoners is kept here.

Passage

The temple hides a secret underground passage connected to the Deeps of Kaer Ardanyan (for more details on the passage, refer to the **Breaking the Bonds** chapter on p. 95).

The secret door leading to the passage is hidden behind the statue and has a Detection Difficulty of 9 when closed. If the heroes use this passage, continue with the next chapter, **Breaking the Bonds**.

TROUBLESHOOTING

It is crucial that the heroes get in contact with Titoo. If the characters are not wanted by the Order, this might be a bit difficult. In any case, the heroes seem to be new arrivals and Titoo might consider hiring them instead of helping them out. The thief will offer 100 silver pieces per character if they help him (he does not have the money, but has plans to steal it from the treasury).

This scene can become unpredictable and very dangerous if the characters don't find out what is going on. The gamemaster should be careful with his timing — and use the Third Company squad only when the characters have figured out that someone is playing games with them. Otherwise, the heroes might just give in and get arrested, hoping that they can refute the charges pressed.

The master characters will encourage the heroes to find and use the secret passage. The confines of the cellar work in the player character's favor — blocking the only entrance will hold the guards outside, which is important once reinforcements arrive. We don't encourage the gamemaster to have the characters face the founders directly — which is likely to mean certain death, especially if the heroes are First Circle characters! The founders are intended to be recurring villains and a direct confrontation should be avoided at this stage.

Should one or more of the heroes get caught in any of the encounters presented above, they will be brought into the prison cells of the Council House. The drawback is that detained players cannot take part in the action when the group breaks into the Council House.

If the entire group ends up here, the gamemaster can play his wildcard and use Wuschwusul, Caedrus, and Titoo to intervene at the last minute — helping the heroes out of trouble, and creating a debt which can be repaid in later adventures.

BREAKING THE BONDS

Why didn't the Horror come after us? Where are the evil things that were supposed to break in and tear our kaer apart? It seems to me that the Scourge has already ended — a long time ago!

• **Joran Hardhelm of the Kaer Council** •



This chapter leads the player characters to Kaer Ardanyan, where they can begin to realize what happened. The characters have to convince the unsuspecting kaer population and council that the Scourge is over while fighting the real mastermind behind the conspiracy: the Illusionist Leldrin. With wits and luck, the heroes will be able to free the kaer and its people, driving the Cross of Ardanyan from the town.

OVERVIEW

The passage hidden in the temple of Raggok leads through a long tunnel ending in Kaer Ardanyan's Deeps. In this scene, the player characters enter the passage and end up inside the kaer. Unsuspecting characters might stumble out of it and be really surprised — as are the kaer-dwellers. Finding the kaer will answer a lot of questions, and the player characters are likely to convince the kaer-dwellers of what is really going on. If they manage to start a rebellion, they will be able to destroy the Order's plans and put an end to the Cross of Ardanyan's oppression. There is one catch, however — the kaer's greatest hero is now their enemy.

While the characters might yet be unaware of Leldrin's involvement, the Illusionist does his best to trick the characters and save his own hide. The mad questor is a formidable enemy, with more than a few tricks up his sleeve!

SETTING THE STAGE

Opening the heavy door reveals a dark passage, a long tunnel winding through the earth. Two light-quartzes

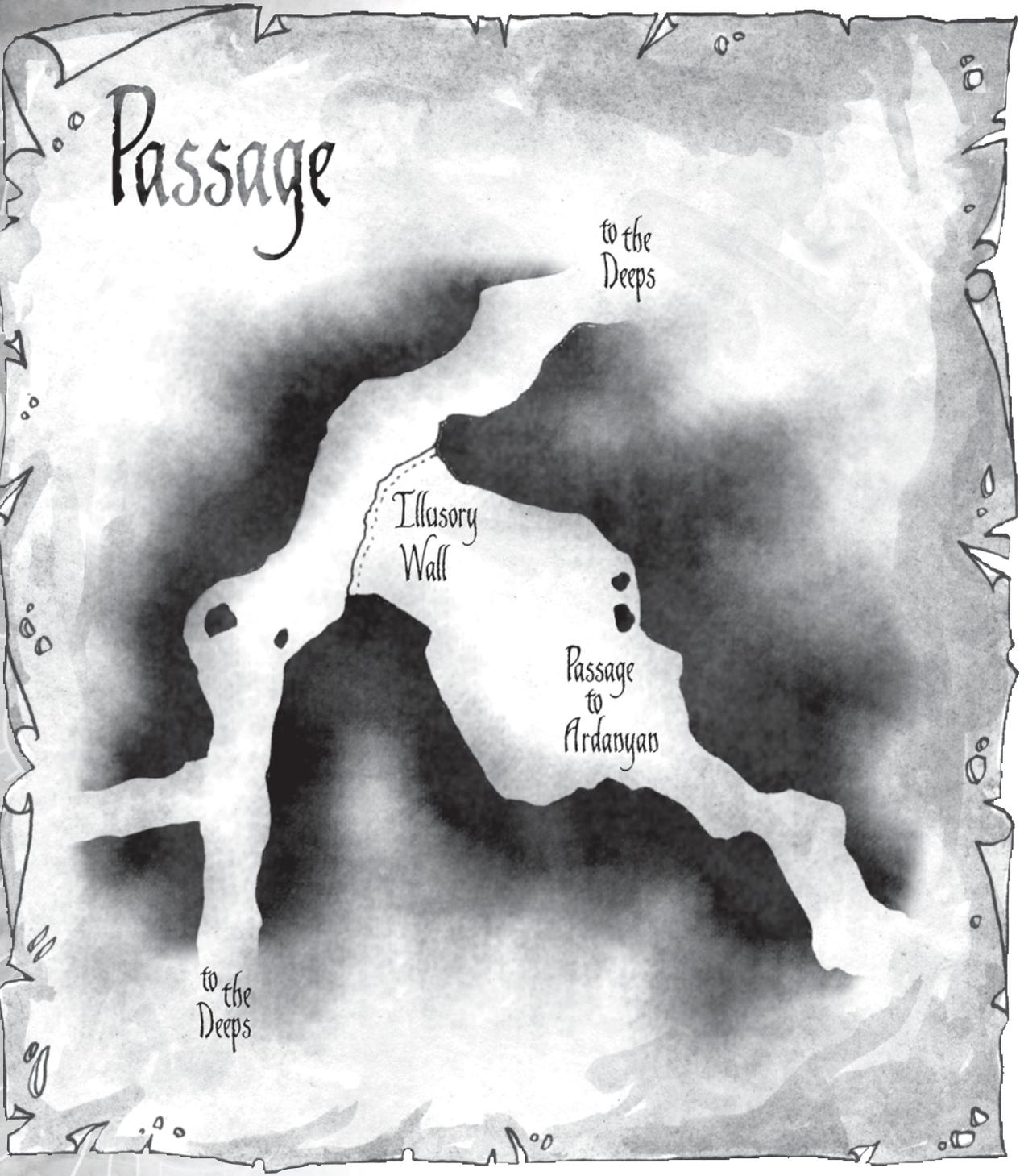
hanging at the walls wait to be taken up and illuminate the way. Behind you, you hear angry shouts of the guardsmen. The reinforcements have arrived! Suddenly, the tunnel in front of you appears to be the only healthy way out of this situation.

THEMES AND IMAGES

The first part of this scene is likely to be an escape from the Council House and should be run fast and loose. The guards will try to follow the characters through the passage, but not into the kaer — which will allow the characters to escape, but prevents them from going back. The second part takes place inside the kaer, where the characters are confronted with an (probably) unknown enemy. While they are likely to find out that Leldrin is the real perpetrator, the player characters will have to share their knowledge with the council — which is easier said than done. Leldrin is prepared to do everything in his power to stop the characters and turn the tide against them. The old Illusionist is powerful enough to succeed — at least as long as it takes to escape.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The passage is well secured against intruders. The Order wants to prevent that anyone stumbles over it and finds out about its true purpose. A handful of pit traps take care of intruders along the way. While the traps are very hard to disarm, they are easily spotted once a character knows what to look for.



PIT TRAP

A five yard long section of false floor covers a deep pit filled with wooden stakes.

The trap is activated when a character steps on a pressure plate, causing the floor beneath and behind him to fall down on the stakes below.

Detection Difficulty: 7 (5 after encountering the first one)

Disarm Difficulty: 10

Trigger Condition: Pressure plate

Trap Initiative: 10

Trap Effect: A section of the floor drops away and dumps the characters into a 5-yard deep pit lined with stakes, causing Step 10 falling damage and an additional Step 12 damage from the stakes.

At the other end of the passage is a small room, which is connected to the Deeps of Kaer Ardanyan. When members of the Order enter the kaer, they usually bring two Initiates to guard this room, preventing kaer-dwellers from accidentally finding it or getting past this point. The room is shrouded from the Deeps by a permanent illusion, which

works like a one-way mirror: characters can look through from the side where the passage ends, but not from within the Deeps. Outside the room, the passage is virtually undetectable. Unless a character knows what he is looking for, or starts to hack at the illusion with a pick-axe (which would allow him to perform a Sensing Test against a Difficulty Number of 27, see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions** on p. 322 in the **Illusionism Spells** chapter of the **Player's Compendium**), he's unlikely to find the passage.

LELDRIN INTERVENES

Once the characters start wandering around in the kaer, people are likely to notice them sooner or later. Since Kaer Ardanyan consists of three communities, the outsider characters might only raise little attention (most likely due to accents and dressing styles unknown to the kaer-dwellers). Depending on how the characters act, the kaer-dwellers may ask them questions. Characters that grew up in the kaer will attract some attention, as the kaer council has officially held them in prison.

By the time the characters enter the kaer, Leldrin has already been warned of their presence and is waiting for them to deal with them in his own way. Illusionists are known for their subtlety, so he doesn't give much for a direct confrontation—Leldrin doesn't plan to blow his cover unless it is unavoidable. Instead, he uses his powers to turn the kaer's population against the characters.

Leldrin's Plan

Leldrin makes use of the One of the Crowd or Nobody Here spells to stay close to the characters. He then tries to cast Twisted Tongues on each of them to prevent the populace from understanding them. The spell has an interesting side-effect: the nonsensical blather is likely to cause suspicion among the kaer-dwellers. Leldrin expects that, trying to push the population into believing that the characters are Horror-tainted. To this end, he casts Rebel Limb (causing a player character to attack a kaer-dweller for no reason) and/or Reversal of Passion to turn their argumentation against them (a character wanting to convince the kaer-dwellers that there is no Horror outside the gates will tell the opposite). Leldrin may even go so far and cast Revulsion or Flesh Eater on one of the characters and have a number of illusory Horror constructs attack the kaer-dwellers using the Leaping Lizards spell (game statistics are provided below). If that isn't enough, he uses his Inspire Rage questor power to send selected kaer-dwellers into a blood frenzy.

This scene is supposed to be fun for the gamemaster—the old elf has a few good spells up his sleeve to meet this end, and also has the advantage of knowing how to trick 'his' flock. See the **Cast of Characters** chapter on p. 108 for Leldrin's game statistics. As a result of his manipulations, the kaer-dwellers are likely to form a large mob hunting the characters down—who had better not get caught, as the kaer-dwellers don't intend to talk this over. The mob is out to kill the tainted intruders and save their kaer from the demons. From a safe distance, Leldrin will try to cast more spells as needed.

ILLUSORY MONSTERS

DEX: 6 **STR:** 15 **TOU:** 15
PER: 2 **WIL:** 6 **CHA:** 2

Initiative: 6 **Physical Defense:** 8
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense:** 3
Attack: 6 **Social Defense:** 3
Damage: **Physical Armor:** 0
Bite: 15 **Mystic Armor:** 2

Death Rating: 59 **Recovery Tests:** 7
Wound Threshold: 17 **Knockdown:** 15
Unconsciousness Rating: 52

Combat Movement: 28 **Full Movement:** 56
Legend Points: 325
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

These abhorrent beasts are almost 10 feet tall, with eyeless heads and large mouths containing countless teeth that jut out like needles. They give out high-pitched shrieks when attacking. These illusions will vanish as soon as Leldrin leaves the scene and is more than 150 yards away.

MOB OF KAER-DWELLERS

Attributes

Dexterity (10): 5/D8 **Perception** (10): 5/D8
Strength (11): 5/D8 **Willpower** (11): 5/D8
Toughness (11): 5/D8 **Charisma** (10): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 6 **Initiative:** 5/D8
Spell Defense: 6 **Physical Armor:** 0
Social Defense: 6 **Mystic Armor:** 1
Death Rating: 32 **Recovery Tests:** 2
Wound Threshold: 8 **Knockdown:** 5/D8
Unconsciousness Rating: 24

Combat Movement: 20 **Full Movement:** 40

Skills

Artisan:

Craftsman (Profession) (4): 9/D8+D6

Knowledge:

Kaer Ardanyan Lore (2): 7/D12

General:

Streetwise (2): 7/D12
Melee Weapons (1): 6/D10
Unarmed Combat (1): 6/D10

Equipment

Knife (Damage 6/D10)
Belt Pouch
Craftsman Tools
Peasant's Garb
Torch

Loot

2 copper pieces

Commentary

Description of a bunch of kaer-dwellers armed with pointy weapons. These game statistics represent human kaer dwellers; add other racial modifiers and abilities as needed for other kaer-dwellers of different races.

ESCAPE!

The heroes may try to get back into the Deeps, hiding there and hoping that the mob disperses. Which isn't going to happen soon: Leldrin continues to turn the kaer-dwellers against the characters and plants rumors about them in various locations. The kaer watch and a large number of able-bodied kaer-dwellers continue searching for the intruders. Leldrin does his best to steer the mob, sometimes even hiding among them with his One of the Crowd spell. The player characters face a serious problem, as they cannot get back through the passage as well — the Order waits for them on the other side!

Through the Kaer

If the heroes don't know where to go, the gamemaster might provide them with clues on where to find Council Hall. Kaer-dweller characters have an advantage in this situation, as they might recall the secret tunnel that leads from Upandal's Hammer into the prison cells underneath Council Hall.

There are various ways to get to Upandal's Hammer, but the player characters have to be sneaky to get there — using the kaer's shadows and disguise. Keep in mind that all people living in the kaer are suspicious of what's going on and will alert the mob once they spot the heroes.

Harg, the owner of Upandal's Hammer, is likely to be reasonable when confronted by the kaer-dweller heroes since he knows of Joran Hardhelm's little conspiracy. If they can convince him that something is foul in the kaer, he opens the trapdoor for the characters and lets them proceed. Otherwise, he must be overcome.

HARG

Attributes

Dexterity (11): 5/D8
Strength (16): 7/D12
Toughness (12): 5/D8

Perception (11): 5/D8
Willpower (11): 5/D8
Charisma (8): 4/D6

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 5

Initiative: 5/D8
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 1

Death Rating: 34
Wound Threshold: 9
Unconsciousness Rating: 26

Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 7/D12

Combat Movement: 24
Full Movement: 48

Skills

Artisan:

Armor Runic Carving (1): 5/D8
 Weapon Runic Carving (1): 5/D8

Knowledge:

Ore Appraisal (2): 7/D12

General:

Craft Armor (5): 10/D10+D8
 Craft Weapons (4): 9/D8+D6
 Craftsman; Blacksmithing (6): 11/D10+D8
 Haggle (4): 8/2D6
 Melee Weapons (2): 7/D12

Equipment

Knife (Damage 8/2D6)
 Warhammer (Damage 14/D20+D4)

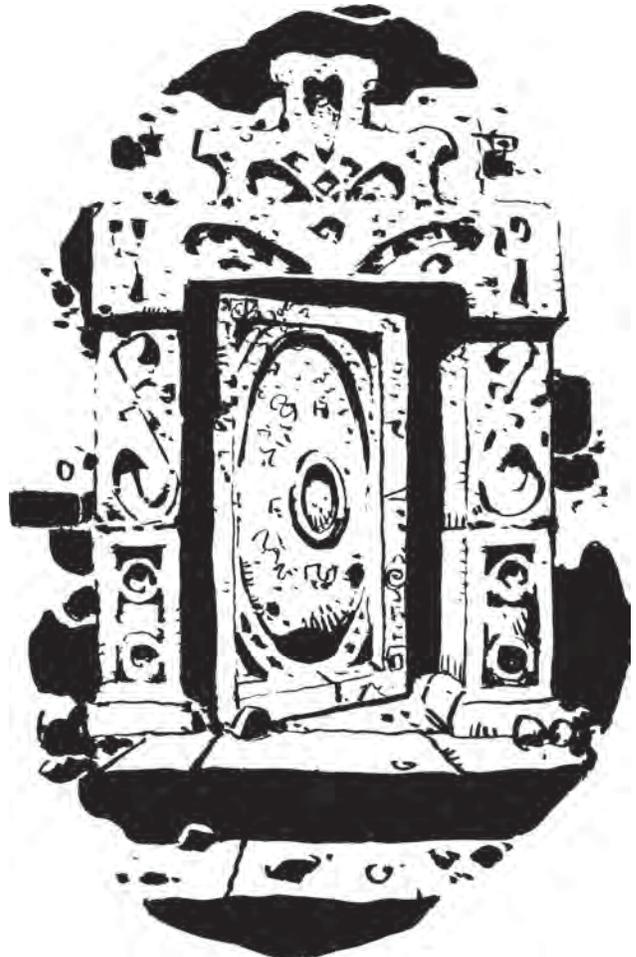
Armor Carving Tools
 Weapon Carving Tools
 3 × Craftsman Tools
 Torch
 Traveler's Garb

Loot

12 silver pieces; 9 copper pieces

Notes

Harg possesses the ork racial abilities of Low-Light Vision and *Gahad*.



Commentary

Harg is the owner of Upandal's Hammer, the last shop on the Artisan's Mile in Okoros. His shop holds a secret, a trapdoor leading to a prison cell underneath Council Hall. It is an ideal location for a hideout since his shop is also near the Deeps for an easy escape route. As keeper of this secret for the Council and watchman of the route, he knows about Joran Hardhelm's plans and receives generous pay from the Council, which makes up for his shop's poor location.

THE COUNCIL

Joran Hardhelm and Sham'Sin can be found at the Council House. Both have been informed about the mob and the intruders—and they approach the heroes with great care. Both are likely to believe the character's story, but they want to see proof. They agree to accompany the heroes to see the tunnel, because they want to see it with their own eyes. They use another secret passage to get into the Deeps, and take a number of trusted kaer guards with them for protection. It is likely that Leldrin loses track of the characters at this stage—he continues to keep the mob going.

Once they have seen the tunnel, Joran and Sham'Sin will be convinced of the treachery and shocked by the implications. They will do their best to hide the characters from the mob, and call for an immediate emergency Council meeting to inform the remaining members and the kaer guard. The meeting will take place about an hour later, as soon as everyone has arrived in Council Hall. The characters are kept close to the meeting room and are even put in chains, because Joran fears that the other members believe he might be under their influence. The shackles will not be locked if the characters insist—Joran just wants to give everyone else a feeling of safety.

Once the Council is assembled (note that Leldrin will be among them), Joran begins to talk:

If the heroes are kaer-dwellers, read the following:

"Some serious events have happened in the past hours. Some of our trusted adepts seem to have fallen under the influence of a Horror, threatening the peaceful life we live here. It has taken a while, but we have captured them."

Joran reveals the captured characters, and the assembled Council gasps.

"Don't worry folks, they are harmless. However, their presence raises an interesting question: how did the Horror influence them? Freedom Gate is under lock and guard—and security has been higher than ever before in the past few days. It is hard to believe that the demon opened the gate unnoticed!"

The answer to this mind-boggling question is easy: there is a secret entrance to our kaer! An entrance which has—much to our own

surprise—been there for decades, hidden by an illusion! Someone has kept it a secret—in the same way some people hid stolen treasures in the past!

Now, I have assembled the Council to answer the question of who created the entrance and the secret tunnel leading from it to the outside. Why has this been kept a secret? The wards around the tunnel are deactivated—the kaer has been unsafe for a long time. Why didn't the Horror come after us? Where are the evil things that were supposed to come down and to tear our kaer apart? It seems to me that the Scourge has ended—a long time ago!"

The Council starts mumbling and discussing Joran's statements. He continues.

"My friends, there is only one man in this room who might know an answer to this question. Master Leldrin, would you..."

Joran looks puzzled for a moment and starts to scratch his head.

"...ahem, please excuse me for a moment..."

Joran then leaves the room, while the rest of the Council starts discussing the matter. If the characters observe Leldrin, they see that he also looks confused. Sham'Sin and some other Council members approach him, taking his hands and asking if he is all right. Suddenly, Leldrin starts screaming:

"Traitor! Get him! Get him back in here!"

If the heroes are adventurers, read the following:

"Some serious events have happened in the past hours. Intruders have entered our kaer and threaten the peaceful life we live here. It has taken a while, but we have captured them."

Joran reveals the captured characters, and the assembled Council gasps.

"Don't worry folks, they are harmless. However, their presence raises an interesting question: how did they get in here? Freedom Gate is under lock and guard—and security has been higher than ever before in the past few days. It is hard to believe that the intruders opened the gate unnoticed!"

The answer to this mind-boggling question is easy: there is a second entrance into our kaer! A secret passage which has—much to our own surprise—been there for decades, hidden by an illusion! Someone has kept it a secret—in the same way some people hid stolen treasures in the past!

Now, I have assembled the Council to answer the question of who created the entrance and the secret tunnel leading from it to the outside. Why has this been kept a secret? The wards around the tunnel are deactivated—the kaer has been unsafe for a long time. No Horror came after us; no evil came down to tear our kaer apart. It seems to me that the Scourge has ended—a long time ago!"

The Council starts mumbling and discussing this outrage. Joran continues.

“My friends, there is only one man in this room who might know an answer to this question. Master Leldrin, would you...”

Joran looks puzzled for a moment and starts to scratch his head.

“...ahem, please excuse me for a moment...”

Joran then leaves the room, while the rest of the Council starts discussing the matter. If the characters observe Leldrin, they see that he also looks confused. Sham’Sin and some other Council members approach him, taking his hands and asking if he is all right. Suddenly, Leldrin starts screaming:

“Traitor! Get him! Get him back in here!”

What Happened?

As a master of his Discipline, Leldrin has prepared a spell once he realized that his scheme has been uncovered. At the end of Joran’s speech, he cast Form Exchange on Joran Hardhelm (see the **Illusionism Spells** chapter on p. 340 of the **Player’s Compendium**). The spell effect switched his appearance and his position with Joran, allowing him to flee once he had been blamed!

Perceptive heroes can disbelieve the illusion if they pass a Willpower (14) Test. The gamemaster should not offer his players this option; they should ask for it themselves. If they don’t trust this situation, they can roll for it. The illusion falls apart about 15 minutes later.

If the heroes go after Joran/Leldrin, they might run into the mob out in Council Hall. The mob does not know the whole story yet, and will react accordingly. Meanwhile, Leldrin heads for the secret tunnel to get out of the kaer as fast as possible. The player characters might even be able to capture him — probably with help of other gamemaster characters. Joran Hardhelm and the council are unlikely go after Leldrin in time; there is probably enough confusion because of his spell. They will order the kaer guard to aid the player characters and to secure the secret passage.

It is very likely that Leldrin escapes, but it might annoy your players if they do not manage to defeat him at the adventure’s climax. Leldrin and the Order are perfect candidates to become recurring villains in future adventures; but unless you plan do have them reappear in your campaign, the player characters should be able to confront Leldrin directly.

There are a number of gamemaster characters who can come to their aid if the group has trouble defeating Leldrin. The same is true for the rest of the Order — if you don’t intend to let them get away this easy, they could stay and take up the battle against the kaer-dwellers. It is a fight they’ll lose eventually — the truth can’t be hidden any longer and the number of the Order’s enemies will grow quickly over time. Argethiel is aware of that and smart to withdraw from the town. Once the Order is gone, there is no Town Council nor is there a Third Company — everyone initiated in the Order will leave, along with the majority of the town’s coffers of course.

THE OPENING OF KAER ARDANYAN

In the days following these events, the Council prepares to open Freedom Gate and formally end the Scourge for Kaer Ardanyan. When the gates of the lost kaer open for the first time in centuries, the player characters are celebrated for their victory. They made their way into the history books of Ardanyan. The return of Kaer Ardanyan’s population to the surface takes time.

Upon their return, the Kaer Council will seize control of the town. They’ll face hard negotiations with the merchants who settled here since, given the kaer’s history, but the arrival of the kaer dwellers changes the face of the town of Ardanyan forever. Ardanyan’s population virtually doubles overnight, which is bound to cause problems that need to be taken care of.

TROUBLESHOOTING

It’s not easy to flee from a raging mob, especially in a closed environment. Running into a group of axe-swinging Name-givers crazy with bloodlust is unhealthy and likely ends with dead bodies. It’s a dangerous situation in which even high-Circle adepts don’t stand much of a chance. The gamemaster should allow the characters to escape, however — a mob isn’t that bright, so it should be manageable to get out of sight.

Leldrin is a very deadly opponent due to his accumulated experience. Fortunately, he’s a coward and avoids direct confrontation. Leldrin expects to become the winner in this situation, but he is unaware of the character’s alliance with Joran Hardhelm — which is an advantage, should the characters be kaer-dwellers.

LOOSE ENDS

Your deeds have changed our future and we are proud that our kaer produced such fine adepts as yourselves. Now we finally leave our home behind us and stand at the dawn of a new era for Ardanyan — and with your protection, no harm will come to us ever again.

• **Joran Hardhelm, Councilor of Ardanyan** •



This chapter answers open questions and provides some suggestions for using characters and story elements of this adventure in future **Earthdawn** adventures and campaigns.

AFTER THE ADVENTURE

After the Cross of Ardanyan has been uncovered and expelled from town, the first days after the kaer's opening are spent in celebration. The party is everywhere — ale flows freely and people dance in the streets. Kaer-dwellers begin to explore the surface, and mingle with other Name-givers for the first time.

Of course, the celebration is followed by weeks of hard work. While everyone in the kaer wants to be the first to move outside, people from the kaer emerge to this world one family after another. This leads to serious problems in the town, as the population virtually doubles in a very short time. Most people huddle in tents on the open meadow on the west side of the bridge, while others camp between the trees of Hangside. The Council struggles to maintain security and has to coordinate the task of expanding the town as quickly as possible.

HOME SWEET HOME

While the town of Ardanyan gets crowded quickly, the Council is likely to offer one of the deserted residences to the player characters as a reward for their help. They can choose which mansion they want and use it as a base for further adventures. In addition, each character receives the right to take the title Protector of Ardanyan.

AWARDING LEGEND POINTS

The following section provides guidelines for awarding Legend points to the player characters. As recommended in the **Introduction** chapter on p. 12, the gamemaster should award Legend Points at the end of each game session as well as at the end of the adventure. The following guidelines for Legend Awards suggest the points to be awarded for each task accomplished or goal reached in a game session.

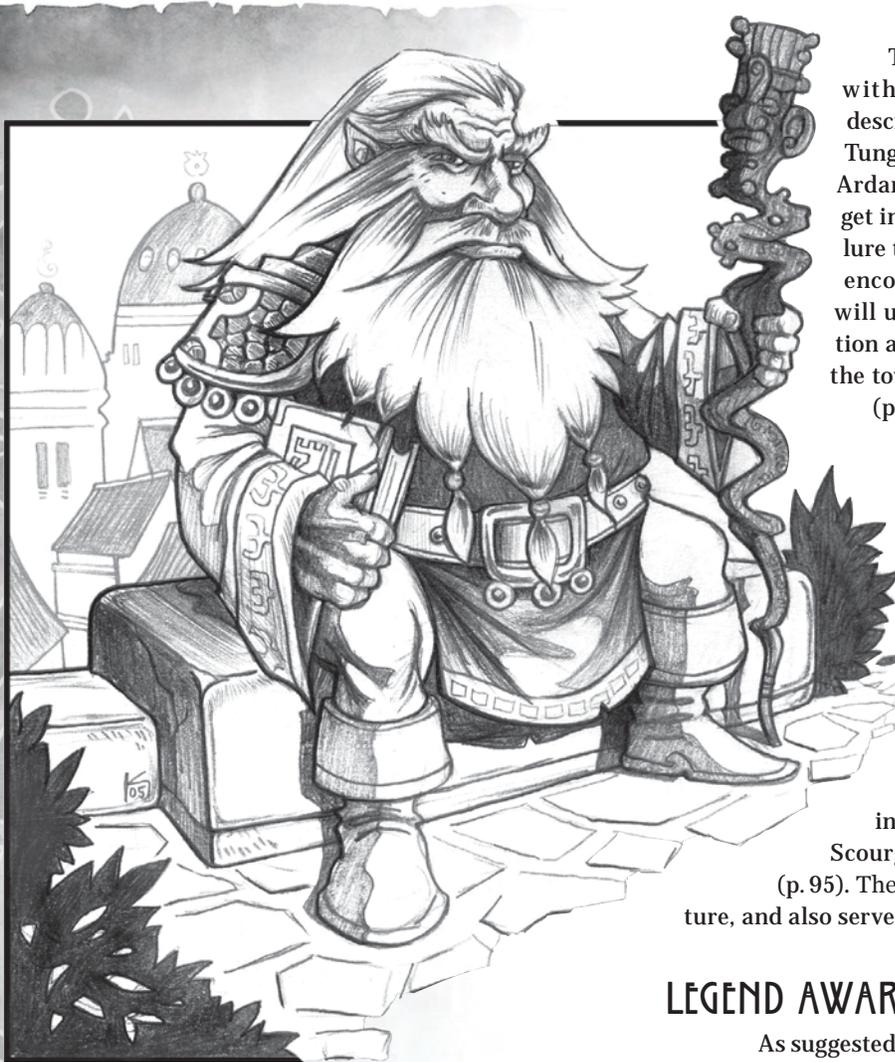
GAME SESSIONS

Ardanyan's Revenge is intended to be played over the course of at least three game sessions. Use the following suggestions to organize your game sessions, depending on where the player characters hail from.

Kaer-dwellers

We suggest running the introductory adventure outlines provided in **False Secrets** (p. 31) before starting with the main adventure. These scenarios can be run in any order — or even simultaneously. The session goal is to resolve these scenarios. Gamemasters are encouraged to add their own ideas to the ones provided and allow the characters to get a feel of living in a kaer. Of course, experienced gamemasters can run an entire kaer campaign before moving on with the plot of this story and take the characters outside (see **Rites of Protection and Passage** on p. 118 for detailed information on running a kaer campaign).

Once your characters are ready, start a new game session with the events outlined in **A Leap In The Dark**



(p. 35), and have the player characters explore the **Deep Mines** (p. 72) in the same session. The players will notice that there is no way back into the kaer and that Farathiel and his men are watching the mines for a reason. Once the characters start following their tracks or explore the surrounding territory, it is likely that the characters will enter the town and even meet Titoo in **With a Pinch of Salt** (p. 83). The session goal is to exit the mines and find out about the town of Ardanyan and the Order.

During the last session, it is likely that the characters will try to find a way to survive in the town of Ardanyan and enter Council House without permission. The adventure can be concluded with them trying to convince the kaer population of Leldrin's betrayal in **Breaking the Bonds** (p. 95). The kaer's opening concludes the adventure, and also serves as the adventure goal.

Adventurers

Gamemasters wishing to run **Ardanyan's Revenge** with established characters should run any of the adventure outlines provided in **En Route** (p. 58) before starting with the main adventure. These scenarios can be run in any order—or even simultaneously. The session goal is to resolve these scenarios. Gamemasters are encouraged to add their own ideas to the ones provided and allow the unsuspecting characters to get an overview of the town Ardanyan and its surroundings.

The main adventure should begin with a new session and the events described in **Death on the Road** (p. 62). Tungar will lead the heroes to the town of Ardanyan, but it is unlikely that they will get into trouble yet. The dwarf's map will lure them to explore the Deep Mines and encounter Farathiel and his men. They will undoubtedly raise the Order's attention and be in big trouble once they enter the town again in **With a Pinch of Salt** (p. 83), where they are likely to meet Titoo. The session goal is to explore the mines, learn about the Order, and find out that they are hiding something in the mines.

The last game session will be dominated by the character's attempts to get by in the town of Ardanyan and enter the Council House to finally get some answers. The adventure can be concluded with the heroes stumbling into the kaer, trying to convince the population that the Scourge is over in **Breaking the Bonds** (p. 95). The kaer's opening concludes the adventure, and also serves as the adventure goal.

LEGEND AWARDS

As suggested in the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 94 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**, each game session in **Ardanyan's Revenge** awards a number of Legend Awards to the player characters. The potential number of Legend Awards each character may earn in each game session should take the following elements into account: completing the game session's goal (1 Legend Award), defeating creatures and opponents (award the number of Legend Points listed with each creature or gamemaster character), individual deeds and roleplaying (1-2 Legend Awards), and acquiring magical treasure (as listed with the magical treasure).

A single Legend Award should award a number of Legend Points as determined by the character's Circle. For example, a First Circle character receives from 25 to 75 Legend Points per Legend Award, and a total of 2-5 Legend Awards per game session. In the final game session that concludes the adventure, the characters may gain two extra Legend Awards for completing the overall adventure goal.

CAMPAIGN IDEAS

Published **Earthdawn** adventures are designed to fit into an existing campaign with little or no extra work on the part of the gamemaster. **Ardanyan's Revenge** is special since it allows starting a new campaign in a way unique to **Earthdawn** by offering an intriguing setting that can

be used as a starting point for further adventures.

Adventures do not exist by themselves if run in a campaign. The world of **Earthdawn** is dynamic and changes over time. For example, when using the events from this adventure to change the overall course of a campaign, the players can watch the changes as they happen and play an active role in it. This adds a sense of reality vital to good roleplaying. No matter how you use this adventure, it is likely to make your **Earthdawn** game more interesting; whether you use it as written or only by drawing on the ideas and information given in this book to enhance your own stories.

Many of the situations and gamemaster characters presented in this book provide hooks for further stories, and can be used to supplement a longer campaign. Feel free to use them in your ongoing **Earthdawn** campaign in whatever ways you see fit, and find some additional advice below.

NEW FRIENDS

The deeds of the player characters have changed the face of Ardanyan entirely. The heroes will impress other adepts, especially when they are of lower Circle. All of them will continue on their own path, but will eventually meet the heroes again along the way. It's always beneficial to be on good terms with other adepts, as they can serve as potential trainers or worthy allies in other situations. Gamemaster character adepts can also share legends from their own travels, adding color to the game and provide an easy way for the gamemaster to set the group up for further adventures.

For example, Caedrus is a high-ranking member of the Liferock Rebellion (see the **How It Came to Pass** chapter on p. 31 of the **Player's Compendium** for details), and might become interested in recruiting the characters for his cause. Of course, while the characters have proven that they are worth their training, Caedrus needs to make sure that they will be loyal allies. The obsidiman might ask the heroes to deal with a band of Theran slavers and send them to meet his brother Omasu if he is satisfied with the results. This way, the player characters might get actively involved with the rebellion and fight their own little war against the Theran oppression.

THE CITY OF ARDANYAN

Ardanyan is a living place with a shining future. The player characters can use the town as a base for their adventures. To retain their status as respected members of the community, the town Council expects them to continually serve for the good of the town and protect Ardanyan from harm.

The Mines

Only a few months after the adventure, the meadow on the western side of the river is gone — filled with newly-constructed houses, populated by the new citizens. The dwarfs of Khar Rhûz, however, will not entirely move to the town. Mongar Goldtooth and Kolgan Redbeard agree that the kaer should be turned into a mining facility — with the remaining wards turned off, there will be even more riches! The mine will soon draw new workers from Throal — there's enough space below the ground to house an entire mining community with their own workshops and a newly-built lorry system.

Of course, the mines are still the official property of Ardanyan, which might lead to friction with the miners — history is likely to repeat itself once the mining community grows out of its bounds and again struggles to establish independence from Ardanyan.

Ork Scorchers

With Argethiel and the Order gone, the town may become prone to a newly raised interest by the Skull Whargs. The ork scorchers might get a tip from Bor-rusk (see **Personalities of the Ring in The Town of Ardanyan** on p. 48) and hear that their former enemy is gone — and also that the town Council is struggling to keep Ardanyan secure.

Of course, the kaer itself makes a good target for a raid — who knows what treasures are still hidden underground?

The Order

The Order has been hit hard — their secrets have been revealed and they have been forced to abandon Ardanyan. The Founders part ways and a good number of the Order's members leave them behind, decimating the secret societies' numbers. Only a small group of loyal fanatics remains around each of the Founders. The Cross of Ardanyan turns into a loose confederation of small sects devoted to Raggök. However, this serves only to gather strength and hide from public attention. As soon as the Order finds a way, they will come back and seek retaliation for their defeat.

Of course, the player characters may also set out with the goal of bringing each of the Founders to justice. They will need to track each of them down, possibly stopping them from performing other crimes across the province.

RUMORS AND RESEARCH

Adventurers and explorers of the unknown, eh? Been there, done that. Once I fell victim to one of those traps aimed to ward off the Horrors — do you know what that means. No? Wanna see my scars?

• **Xarnabee Bardreen, retired Adventurer** •



This chapter describes information that the player characters may learn from the various gamemaster characters presented in this book. It also includes detailed descriptions of the magical treasure the characters may come across.

ARDANYAN

The following tidbits of information can be heard from people on the streets of the town or along the trade route. No test is needed to hear them, the gamemaster can use them as he deems fit.

“You’re going to Ardanyan, he? Clean place, I tell ya. Rich people relying on us honest workers to do the dirty work, though. But we’re paid well! I’m tellin’ ya, that money’s not coming from outta nowhere — trade’s big ‘round here!”

“I stop there often — every time my trek has to cross the Coil. Nice market, but pay attention to your pockets. Thieves all over the place — pretty darn effective folks. I heard that they even organized into a guild — not a surprise once you’ve seen how rich this place is.”

“The month of Rua is a plague — every year a swarm of flying worms comes from outta nowhere and feasts on everything! Even Name-givers are on their menu. Dunno where those beasts come from, but fortunately, it’s just Rua.”

“The town’s founding happened after the Scourge — I think it was in the decade when the Therans came back. One of the few places that struck a vein, the town really prospers. But that’s kind obvious — just take a good look around.”

“All these merchants have a skeleton in the closet if you ask me. I heard they imported the stones for the walls from Darranis, downriver! How stupid is that; with the Throal Mountains right in front of yer doorstep? As if stones were a rare thing. Who paid for that stuff?”

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

Characters hearing about Ardanyan for the first time can use Knowledge Skills or Research to associate the following information with the town. Especially useful are the following Knowledge Skills: Barsaive History (5) and Legends and Heroes (7). (The Difficulty Number for the Skill Test is shown in parentheses.)

Kaer-dwellers cannot know this information, even if they possess these skills.

Average Result

Ardanyan is a trading town in the foothills of the Throal Mountains. It provides a safe haven from ork scorchers in the area. The town is located on the trade route running from Bartertown to Tansiarda. Ardanyan has a bridge that crosses a sidearm of the Coil River. Travelers and caravans use the bridge so they don’t need a ferry. The town is safe and ensures law and order in the surrounding area.

Good or Better Result

The town was founded by a group of wealthy merchants who wanted to provide more security to their caravans from the fierce Skull Wharg ork scorcher tribe. The tribe still threatens parts of the trade route, but the area has become a lot safer in the past decade. The merchants who founded the town are very wealthy — and have a reputation for being decadent in certain circles. However, the trade route seems to be a gold mine — and is under strict control of these merchants.

THE OLD MINES

Apart from the Order, no one knows details about the mines. There are a number of rumors making the rounds, but people tend to believe that talking about the mines is bad luck.

Characters who ask questions about the mines must make a successful Interaction Test against the gamemaster character's Social Defense before hearing any of the quotes below. If the test is failed, the gamemaster character turns away, refusing (politely or rudely) to talk about the subject.

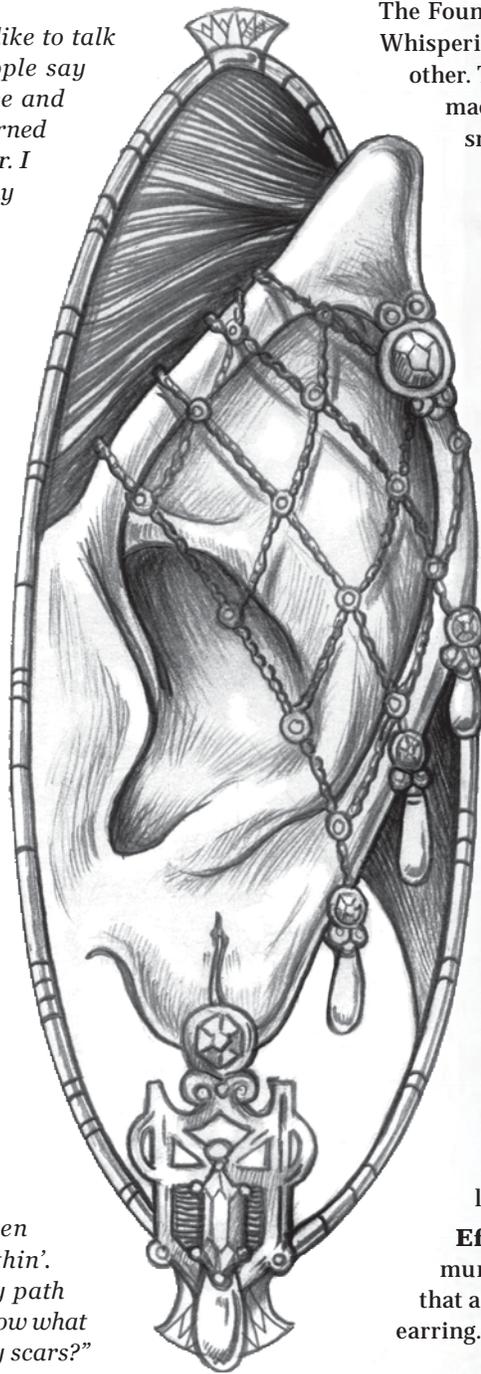
"Shhh, quiet! People don't like to talk about that cursed place. People say that Mangalin was there once and went mad—which is why he turned down his post as a guild master. I can only advise you to stay away from the woods."

"Mine? What mine? Please, don't tell me you believe it exists? It's a child's story! The wood's full of bad monsters and demons haunting the place... buhaarr!"

"I once knew someone who went there. He thought there was something to be gained—one day he left, never to be seen again!"

"You haven't heard of the Skull Whargs yet, have you? They have a camp in the woods, where they hide their stolen treasures. You shouldn't dare venturing there, really—those orks don't like people on their territory! Maybe you manage to get past a few of them—but they will come back to hunt you down with ten times as many. Even the town watch won't be able to help ya!"

"Treasure hunter, eh? Been there, done that. There's nothin'. Nothin'! A brithan crossed my path over in the woods—and you know what that means. No? Wanna see my scars?"



MAGICAL TREASURES

The following magical treasures can be found during the adventure. Each of them is in the possession of a gamemaster character, who generally won't give their item away.

WHISPERING EARRINGS

Maximum Threads: 6

Spell Defense: 14

The Founders of the Cross of Ardanyan use the Whispering Earrings to communicate with each other. The earrings come in a set of six and are made of ornate silver jewelry, shaped like a small net made of silver chains.

The net covers the wearer's ear. The edges of the net are studded with small green and purple gems. The gems glow with a soft light when used for communication.

Thread Rank One

Cost: 300

Key Knowledge: The wearer must learn the Name of the earring.

Effect: Everything the wearer says while wearing one of the earrings can be heard by anyone wearing another of the earrings. Those listening must have a thread woven to their own earring and be within a range in miles equal to the thread rank of the speaker.

Thread Rank Two

Cost: 500

Effect: The wearer can select who hears him talking by stating the other wearer's Name.

Thread Rank Three

Cost: 800

Key Knowledge: The wearer must learn the Name of the earring's creator.

Effect: The earring makes mental communication possible to other characters that also have a Rank 3 thread woven to their earring.

LELDRIN'S STAFF

Maximum Threads: 3

Spell Defense: 13

Leldrin's staff appears to be made of solid iron, although it is very light. The staff is heavily decorated with golden ornaments, but otherwise has the same characteristics as a normal quarterstaff.

The staff was created from a delicate mix of forged iron and elemental air, and was given to Leldrin as a gift by Samiel when he became a questor of Rashomon.

Thread Rank One

Cost: 200

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the staff.

Effect: The staff is now Damage step 4. It contains a single spell matrix with a rank equal to the thread rank. A magician may place a spell in the staff and the wielder may cast that spell as if casting from a spell matrix.

Thread Rank Two

Cost: 300

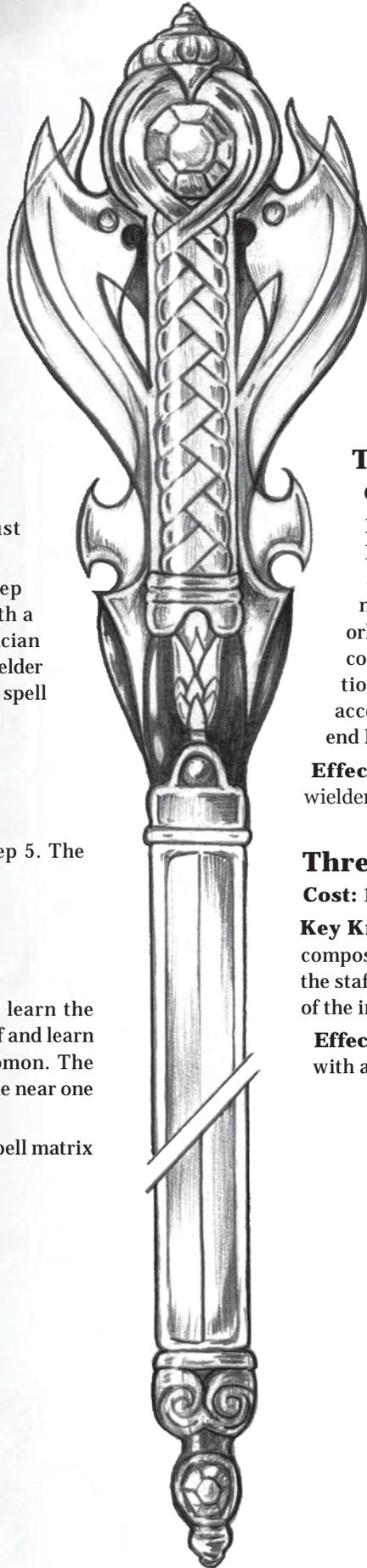
Effect: The staff is now Damage step 5. The wielder adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Thread Rank Three

Cost: 500

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the previous owner of the staff and learn that he once was a questor of Rashomon. The wielder must inscribe the owner's Name near one of the staff's ends.

Effect: The staff now holds a second spell matrix with a rank equal to the thread rank.



Thread Rank Four

Cost: 800

Deed: The wielder must decide upon a Deed that tests his courage and endurance. For example, the wielder might negotiate a truce with the Skull Wharg ork tribe or beat a t'skrang in a swimming contest. He must publicly declare his intention of doing the Deed. Once the wielder accomplishes the Deed, he gains 800 Legend Points.

Effect: The staff is now Damage step 6. The wielder adds +2 to his Spell Defense.

Thread Rank Five

Cost: 1,300

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the composition of True air mixed with the iron of the staff. Additionally, he must learn the source of the iron ore from which the staff was forged.

Effect: The staff now holds a third spell matrix with a rank equal to the thread rank.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

I can feel the rage that makes your blood boil, my friend. It's revenge that you're after — the glint in your eye gives it away. What if I tell you that you aren't the only one who feels this way?

• **Argethiel, questioning a potential Initiate** •



The secret organization called the Cross of Ardanyan holds all the power in town. Its Founders, posing as merchants, are exceedingly rich; their real source of wealth, however, lies in the treasure chests of Kaer Ardanyan.

The Order is devoted to Raggok, and all of the Founders are questors to some degree. The Cross of Ardanyan was founded on the motive of revenge and is dedicated to holding the kaer-dwellers as unsuspecting slaves for eternity.

This chapter holds game statistics and additional information on the most powerful gamemaster characters of **Ardanyan's Revenge** — the Founders of the Cross of Ardanyan.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

Gamemasters might want or need to alter the game statistics for the characters and creatures given in this adventure to fit the needs of their group. Generally, if you want to increase the overall power level of the opposition, the easiest method is simply to increase the opposition's numbers. For example, Farathiel could easily command twice the number of men to guard the mines and there could be any number of krilworms nesting in the upper caves.

Another solution is to increase the gamemaster character's statistics — increasing an adept's Circle, for example, will give him access to more talents and higher step numbers. Refer to the **Gamemaster Characters** (p. 219) and **Creatures** (p. 268) chapters of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on how to change the opposition's game statistics to tailor them for your group.

The gamemaster characters given below are an exception, however. They are extremely powerful adepts — for a reason, since it is quite a feat to pull off a conspiracy of the size described in this book. Gamemasters who pit low-Circle kaer-dwellers against these adepts will likely end up with a lot of dead player characters in their first adventure, a situation which is bad for everyone involved. While it is reasonably possible to lower the game statistics of these gamemaster characters by up to three Circles, we advise you not to do so. There are better ways to deal with them, as they were designed (and intended) to become recurring villains — have fun with them later in your campaign!

At the end of this adventure, the Founders most likely want to save their hides and get away with as much of the treasure as they can carry — and come back for vengeance another day. They're questors of Raggok — what's the point in having a direct confrontation with the player characters anyway? The Founders may win the fight, but lose precious time the Order needs to escape from the rebelling kaer-dwellers (which are unstoppable, even for the Order).

If the gamemaster doesn't intend to use these gamemaster characters as recurring villains, and chooses to have a big fight as the climax of the adventure, he should definitely use some or all of them. For Novice characters (First to Fourth Circle), the gamemaster is advised to use friendly gamemaster characters like Caedrus or Wuschwusul as equalizers — entering the fight to turn the tide when it looks like the player characters are losing. Journeyman characters (Fifth to Eighth Circle) might not get into trouble if they fight the Founders one after another, and Master adepts (Ninth Circle and higher) are powerful enough to survive a direct confrontation.

L

ELDRIN, TENTH CIRCLE ELF ILLUSIONIST

Leldrin is of slender build, with long white hair that he usually wears in three long braids. He possesses only two silken robes — of white and gray color — which he wears alternately, in turn. Opposed to the other members of the Order, who have given in to decadence, Leldrin doesn't care about money and treasure. He lives a sparse existence, fueled by passionate revenge. Apart from his staff, he doesn't appear to own anything of value. Leldrin is the mastermind of the Cross of Ardanyan.

It has been a long time since Leldrin was one of Samiel's pupils. The old questor of Rashomon was a role-model for Leldrin, but when his mentor was buried in the temple cave-in, something snapped in Leldrin. It took a while, but when Rashomon went mad during the Scourge, some years later, Leldrin's hatred of the dwarfs flared up again. His hatred turned into a plan, which he turned into reality with the founding of the secret society Named the Cross of Ardanyan.

Attributes

Dexterity (13): 6/D10
Strength (11): 5/D8
Toughness (11): 5/D8

Perception (19): 8/2D6
Willpower (19): 8/2D6
Charisma (19): 8/2D6

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 13^G
Spell Defense: 18^G
Social Defense: 16^G

Initiative: 6/D10
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 8^G

Death Rating: 29 (69)*
Wound Threshold: 13^G
Unconsciousness Rating: 21 (51)*

Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 5/D8

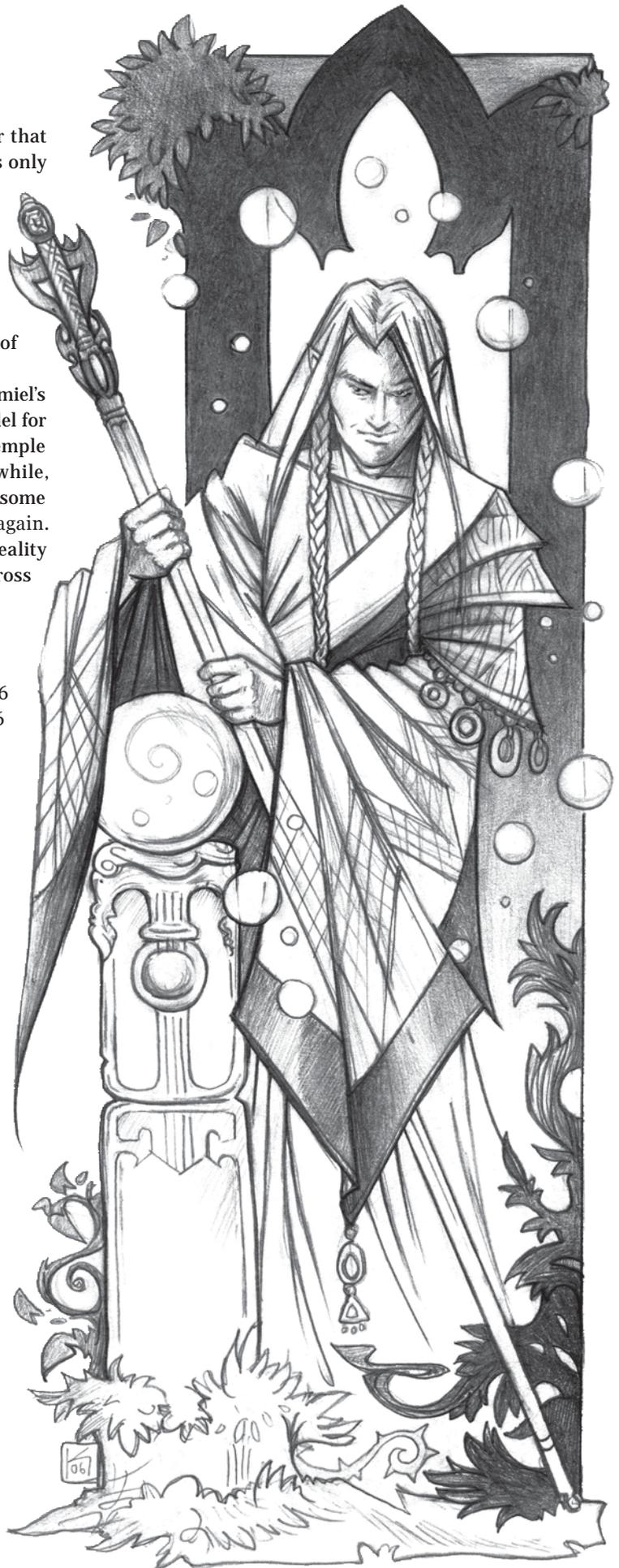
^G Enhanced by +5 for group True pattern.
 * These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

Combat Movement: 28
Full Movement: 56

Karma Points: 25 **Karma Step:** 4/D6

Talents (Knacks)

- Armored Matrix (10): 10
- Astral Sight^D (10): 18/D20+D12
- Dead Fall^D (10): 18/D20+D12
- Detect Falsehood^D (10): 18/D20+D12
- Disguise Self^D (10): 18/D20+D12
- Durability (4/3) (10): 10
- Engaging Banter^D (10): 18/D20+D12
- Enhanced Matrix (10): 10
- Enhanced Matrix (10): 10
- False Sight^D (10): 10
- Fast Hand^D (10): 16/D20+D8
- Karma Ritual (10): 10
- Leadership (10): 18/D20+D12



Memorize Image (10)**: 18/D20+D12
 Mind Wave^D (10): 18/D20+ D12
 Questor of Raggok (10): 10
 — Cause Pain, Inspire Rage, Raise Undead
 Read and Write Language (5): 13/D12+D10
 — Elven, Human, Ork, T'skrang, Windling
 Read and Write Magic^D (10): 18/D20+D12
 Resist Taunt^D (10): 18/D20+D12
 Speak Language (4): 12/2D10
 — Human, Ork, T'skrang, Windling
 Spellcasting^D (11): 19/D20+2D6
 (Maintain Spell Threads)
 Slough Blame^D (10): 18/D20+D12
 Spell Matrix (10): 10
 Spell Matrix (10): 10
 Spell Matrix (10): 10
 Spell Matrix (10): 10
 Thread Weaving (Illusionism)^D (11): 19/D20+2D6
 (Thread Masking)
 True Sight^D (10): 10
 Willforce (10): 18/D20+D12

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.

** Note: Blood Boil, Doom Missile, Flame Strike, Juggler's Touch, Lightning Cloud, and Razor Orb images have been memorized as illusory versions for use with Do Unto Others or Illusory Spell.

Skills

Artisan:

Robe Embroidery (5): 13/D12+D10

Knowledge:

Kaer Ardanyan Lore (5): 13/D12+D10

Passion Lore (6): 14/D20+D4

General:

Avoid Blow (5): 11/D10+D8

Melee Weapons (5): 11/D10+D8

Streetwise (4): 12/2D10

Spells

Alarm, Bellow of the Thundras, Blazing Fists of Rage, Chosen Path, Clarion Call, Conceal Tracks, Displace Image, Do Unto Others^M, Encrypt, Ephemeral Bolt, Flesh Eater^M, Form Exchange^E, Great Weapon, Improved Alarm, Innocent Activity, Illusory Spell, Leaping Lizards^A, Light, Nobody Here^M, One of the Crowd^M, Phantom Fireball, Rebel Limb^E, Revulsion^M, Reversal of Passion^M, Switch, True Ephemeral Bolt, True Blazing Fists of Rage, Twisted Tongues^M, Unseen Voices

^M Denotes a spell currently attuned in a Spell Matrix (Note: With Leldrin's Staff, he has 7 Spell Matrices available).

^E Denotes a spell currently attuned in an Enhanced Matrix.

^A Denotes a spell currently attuned in an Armored Matrix.

Equipment

Dagger (Damage 7/D12; Range 9–15–18)

Leldrin's Staff (Rank 5; Damage 11/D10+D8; see

Rumors and Research on p. 106)

Whispering Earrings (Rank 3; see **Rumors and Research**, p. 105)

Adventurer's Kit
 2 × Embroidered Robes
 Embroidery Tools
 Grimoire
 Peasant's Garb
 Symbol to Rashomon (Group Pattern Item)
 Trail Rations (1 week)

Loot

None

Legend Points

10,000 Legend Points

Abilities

Fourth Circle: Glamour (1 Damage Point)

Fifth Circle: Karma on Dexterity-only Tests

Sixth Circle: Karma on Willpower-only Tests

Seventh Circle: Karma on spell Effect Tests

Eighth Circle: +1 Spell Defense

Ninth Circle: Karma on Recovery Tests

Tenth Circle: +1 Physical Defense; +1 Social Defense.

Notes

Leldrin possesses the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision.

Leldrin has formed a group True pattern with the core members of the Cross of Ardanyan. He has five Rank 5 threads attached to his Defense Ratings, Mystic Armor, and Wound Threshold.

ARGETHIEL, TENTH CIRCLE ELF WEAPONSMITH

Argethiel is very tall and muscular for an elf. He is the Order's de-facto leader, and rules the town of Ardanyan. A follower of the Weaponsmith Discipline, he is also a master tactician, and is occasionally seen riding through the town wearing a masterfully-crafted suit of plate mail armor. Argethiel enjoys his public appearances, especially since most of his daily routine involves being confined to the upper floor of Ardanyan's Council House — dealing with the bureaucratic tasks necessary to keep the town running.

Argethiel is driven by his unsatisfied lust for power. He is loyal to Leldrin and their common cause for as long as the conspiracy remains hidden; but he has secret plans for his own future, should it ever be uncovered. As a trained Weaponsmith, Argethiel has his own forge, which enables him to keep track of rumors and news from the outside world. However, the human Handreaux runs his forge — Argethiel's council duties give him precious little time to do so personally.

Attributes

Dexterity (14): 6/D10

Strength (15): 6/D10

Toughness (14): 6/D10

Perception (16): 7/D12

Willpower (16): 7/D12

Charisma (16): 7/D12

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 14^G

Spell Defense: 15^G

Social Defense: 15^G

Death Rating: 33 (93)^{*}

Wound Threshold: 10

Unconsciousness Rating: 25 (75)^{*}

Initiative: 4/D6

Physical Armor: 14

Mystic Armor: 13^G

Recovery Tests: 3

Knockdown: 6/D10

^G Enhanced by +5 for group True pattern.

^{*} These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

Combat Movement: 30

Full Movement: 60

Karma Points: 25

Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents (Knacks)

Abate Curse^D (10): 17/D20+D10

Avoid Blow (11): 17/D20+D10

Conceal Weapon (10): 16/D20+D8

Detect Weapon^D (10): 17/D20+D10

Disarm (10): 16/D20+D8

Durability (6/5) (10): 10

Enhanced Matrix (10): 10

Forge Blade^D (10): 17/D20+D10

Haggle^D (5): 12/2D10

Improve Blade^D (10): 17/D20+D10

Karma Ritual (10): 10

Leadership (10): 17/D20+D10

Melee Weapons (11): 17/D20+D10

Metal Ward (10): 17/D20+D10

Questor of Raggok (10): 10

— Cause Pain, Inspire Rage, Raise Undead

Read and Write Language (5): 12/2D10

— Elven, Human, Ork, T'skrang, Windling

Read and Write Magic (10): 17/D20+D10

Sense Magic Weapon^D (10): 17/D20+D10

Speak Language (4): 11/D10+D8

— Human, Ork, T'skrang, Windling

Spellcasting (10): 17/D20+D10

Spot Armor Flaw^D (10): 17/D20+D10

Steel Thought^D (10): 17/D20+D10

Temper Other^D (7): 14/D20+D4

Temper Self^D (10): 17/D20+D10

Thread Weaving (Elementalism) (10): 17/D20+D10

Thread Weaving (Smithing)^D (11): 18/D20+D12 (Create

Thread Item, Thread Masking)

Warp Missile^D (10): 17/D20+D10

Weapon History^D (10): 17/D20+D10

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:

Armor Runic Carving (5): 12/2D10

Weapon Runic Carving (5): 12/2D10

Knowledge:

Ardanyan Lore (5): 12/2D10

Creature Lore (4): 11/D10+D8

General:

Animal Bond (4): 11/D10+D8

Animal Handling (4): 11/D10+D8

Animal Training (4): 11/D10+D8

Charge (4): 10/D10+D6

Streetwise (3): 10/D10+D6

Tactics (6): 13/D12+D10

Trick Riding (4): 10/D10+D6

Spells

Air Armor, Astral Sense (Elementalism), Detect Magic (Elementalism), Dispel Magic (Elementalism), Fireball^E, Flame Strike, Flame Weapon, Fuel Flame, Ironwood, Lighten Load, Lightning Shield, Perimeter Alarm (8), Puddle Deep, Repair, Rust, Shield Willow, Smoke Cloud, Snuff, Storm Manacles (7), Weapon Back

^E Denotes a spell currently attuned in an Enhanced Matrix.

Equipment

Espagra-Scale Cloak (Phys 3; Myst 1; Init 0/1)

Plate Mail Armor (Rank 4; Phys 11; Myst 2; Init 1)

Rider's Shield (Phys 3; Init 1; ST 19)

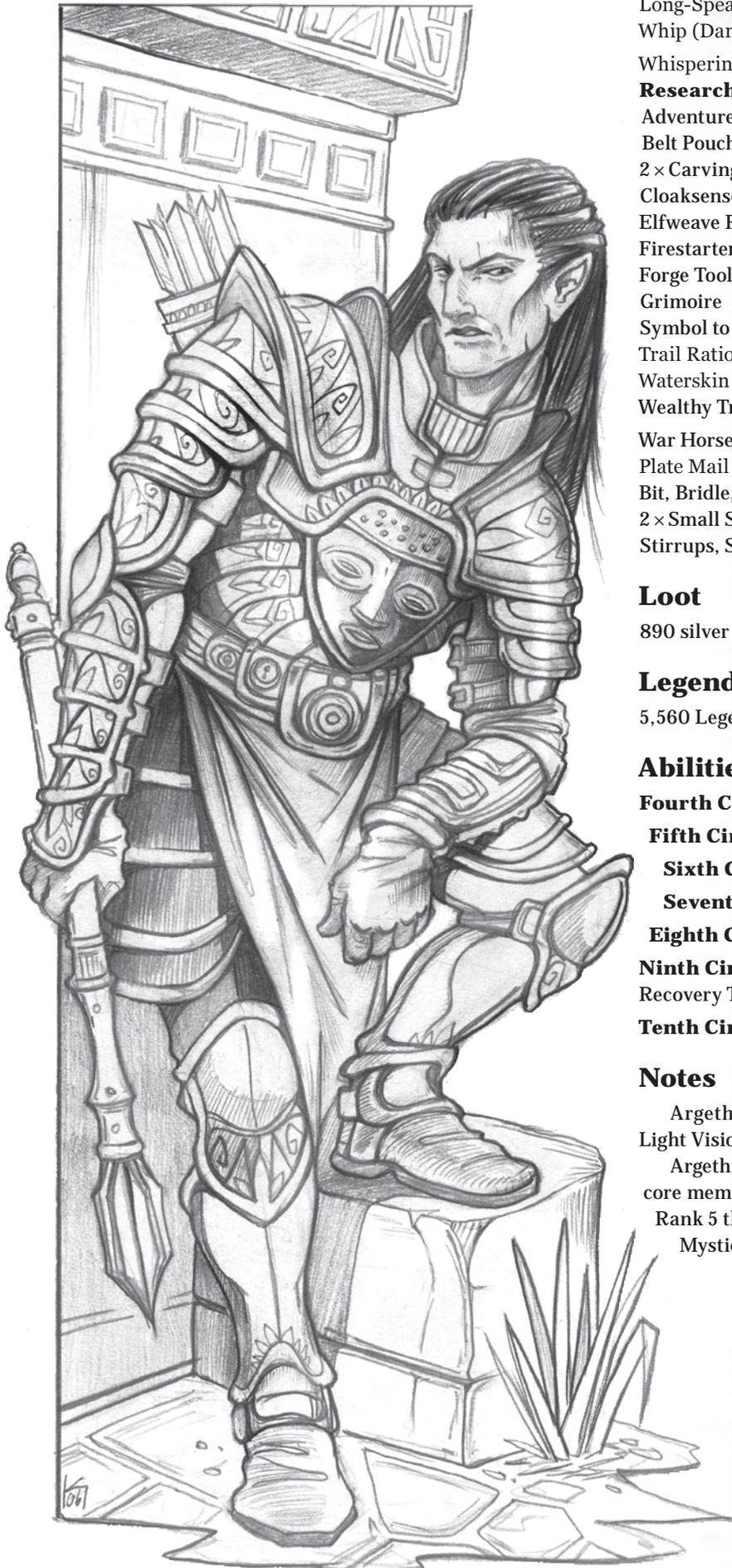
Broadsword

(Forged +3; Damage 14/D20+D4; w/scabbard)

Dagger (Forged +1; Damage 9/D8+D6; Range 9–15–18;

Weapon Back spell)

Spear (Forged +3; Damage 13/D12+D10; Range 18–30–36; Weapon Back spell)



Long-Spear (Forged +6; Damage 17/D20+D10)
Whip (Damage 9/D8+D6; Group Pattern Item)

Whispering Earrings (Rank 3; see **Rumors and Research** on p. 105)

Adventurer's Kit

Belt Pouch

2 × Carving Tools

Cloaksense Brooch

Elfweave Robe

Firestarter

Forge Tools

Grimoire

Symbol to Rashomon

Trail Rations (2 weeks)

Waterskin (1)

Wealthy Traveler's Garb

War Horse:

Plate Mail Barding (Phys 9; Init 4)

Bit, Bridle, and Harness

2 × Small Saddlebags

Stirrups, Saddle, and Blanket

Loot

890 silver pieces

Legend Points

5,560 Legend Points

Abilities

Fourth Circle: Evaluate Weapon (1 Damage Point)

Fifth Circle: Karma on Dexterity-only Tests

Sixth Circle: Karma on Perception-only Tests

Seventh Circle: Karma on Willpower-only Tests

Eighth Circle: +1 Spell Defense

Ninth Circle: +1 Physical Defense; Karma on Recovery Tests

Tenth Circle: +1 Social Defense; +1 Initiative step.

Notes

Argethiel possesses the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision.

Argethiel has formed a group True pattern with the core members of the Cross of Ardanyan. He has four Rank 5 threads attached to his Defense Ratings and Mystic Armor.

ERRIN, EIGHTH CIRCLE ELF WARRIOR

Errin owns the Thirsty Dragon Inn, one of the best ale-houses in town. A few years ago, the elf took a step back from practicing the Warrior Discipline, although his abilities are still considerable.

Nowadays, Errin prefers to run a service for caravan leaders, hiring adepts to protect his customers and their possessions.

As a son of Samiel, Errin is more than loyal to the Order, following Argethiel's and Leldrin's orders without question.

Attributes

Dexterity (19): 8/2D6

Strength (14): 6/D10

Toughness (14): 6/D10

Perception (13): 6/D10

Willpower (13): 6/D10

Charisma (16): 7/D12

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 10

Spell Defense: 7

Social Defense: 14^G

Initiative: 5/D8

Physical Armor: 14

Mystic Armor: 9^G

Death Rating: 34 (106)^{*}

Wound Threshold: 15^G

Unconsciousness Rating: 26 (82)^{*}

Recovery Tests: 3

Knockdown: 6/D10

^G Enhanced by +5 for group True pattern.

^{*} These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

Combat Movement: 40

Full Movement: 80

Karma Points: 25

Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents (Knacks)

Acrobatic Strike (8): 16/D20+D8

Air Dance ** (8): 14/D20+D4

Anticipate Blow^D (8): 14/D20+D4

Avoid Blow^D (8): 16/D20+D8

Cobra Strike^{D**} (8): 14/D20+D4

Down Strike^D (8): 14/D20+D4

Durability (9/7) (8): 8

Earthskin (8): 8

Gliding Stride (8): 16/D20+D8

Karma Ritual (8): 8

Leadership (8): 15/D20+D6

Life Check^D (8): 14/D20+D4

Melee Weapons^D (9): 17/D20+D10

(Improvised Weapons)

Missile Weapons (8): 16/D20+D8

Questor of Raggok (8): 8

— Cause Pain, Inspire Rage, Raise Undead

Second Attack (8): 16/D20+D8

Spirit Strike^D (8): 14/D20+D4

Swift Kick^D (8): 16/D20+D8



Thread Weaving (War Weaving)^D (9): 15/D20+D6
(Thread Masking)
Throwing Weapons (8): 16/D20+D8
Tiger Spring (8): 8
Unarmed Combat^D (8): 16/D20+D8
Wood Skin^D (9): 15/D20+D6

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.
^{**} Adjusted for Initiative Penalties.

Skills

Artisan:

Wood Carving (5): 12/2D10

Knowledge:

Ardanyan Lore (5): 11/D10+D8
Trade Route Lore (6): 12/2D10

General:

Animal Bond (4): 11/D10+D8
Animal Handling (4): 10/D10+D6
Haggle (3): 10/D10+D6
Speak Language (3): 9/D8+D6
— Dwarven (Throalic), Elven, Human
Streetwise (5): 11/D10+D8
Trading (5): 12/2D10

Equipment

Espagra-Scale Cloak (Phys 3; Myst 1; Init 0/1)
Hardened Leather Armor (Rank 4; Phys 8; Myst 2; Init 1)
Rider's Shield (Phys 3; Init 1; ST 19)
Broadsword (Forged +3; Damage 14/D20+D4; w/
scabbard)
Dagger (Forged +1; Damage 9/D8+D6; Range 9–15–18)
Elven Warbow (Damage 11/D10+D8; Range 80–160–320)
Quiver (w/20 warbow arrows)
Short Sword (Damage 10/D10+D6; Group Pattern Item;
w/scabbard)
Spear (Forged +3; Damage 13/D12+D10; Range
18–30–36)
Whispering Earrings (Rank 3; see **Rumors and
Research** on p. 105)
Adventurer's Kit
Belt Pouch
Booster Potion
Carving Tools
Cloaksense Brooch
Elfweave Robe
Healing Potion
Light Quartz Lantern
Symbol to Rashomon
Trail Rations (2 weeks)
Waterskin (1)
Wealthy Traveler's Garb
Riding Horse:
Bit, Bridle, and Harness
2 × Small Saddlebags
Stirrups, Saddle, and Blanket

Loot

340 silver pieces

Legend Points

3,235 Legend Points

Abilities

Fourth Circle: Karma on Willpower-Only Tests

Fifth Circle: Karma on Dexterity-only Tests

Sixth Circle: Karma on Strength-only Tests

Seventh Circle: Karma on melee weapon Damage Tests

Eighth Circle: Karma on unarmed combat Damage
Tests

Notes

Errin possesses the elf racial ability of Low-Light
Vision.

Errin has formed a group True pattern with the core
members of the Cross of Ardanyan. He has three Rank 5
threads attached to his Social Defense, Wound Threshold,
and Mystic Armor.

JANIA, EIGHTH CIRCLE ELF SWORDMASTER

When Jania was young, she hated being an elf—after her parents died, humans in Okoros raised her. However, some kaer-dwellers continually picked on her because of her elven heritage. The turning point in her life came when she cut the tips off her ears to look more human, in a pathetic attempt to end her shame. She succeeded in that—the ridicule ended as soon as her self-mutilation became publicly known. Leldrin took her under his wings and allowed Jania to flee the confines of Okoros and start a new life in Shal'Minar.

Jania usually wears a headband to cover her disfigurement. The teachings of her mentor helped her turn her self-hatred into hating others—humans, for the most part. She enjoys harassing other Name-givers, and has the means to do so, as she is in charge of the town watch.

Jania personally commands Ardanyan's Third Company, a small but considerable group of veterans responsible for the security of the market and the treasury. She is a fierce opponent, and her reputation with the blade has spread far beyond Ardanyan's walls.

Attributes

Dexterity (20): 8/2D6

Strength (17): 7/D12

Toughness (16): 7/D12

Perception (11): 5/D8

Willpower (14): 6/D10

Charisma (9): 4/D6

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 10

Spell Defense: 13^G

Social Defense: 12^G

Death Rating: 37 (93)*

Wound Threshold: 11

Unconsciousness Rating: 29 (77)*

Initiative: 7/D12

Physical Armor: 9

Mystic Armor: 11^G

Recovery Tests: 3

Knockdown: 7/D12**

^G Enhanced by +5 for group True pattern.

^G These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

** Character knows the Wound Balance talent

Combat Movement: 43

Full Movement: 86

Karma Points: 25

Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents (Knacks)

Anticipate Blow (8): 13/D12+D10

Avoid Blow^D (8): 16/D20+D8

Disarm^D (8): 16/D20+D8

Durability (7/6) (8): 8

Engaging Banter (8): 12/2D10

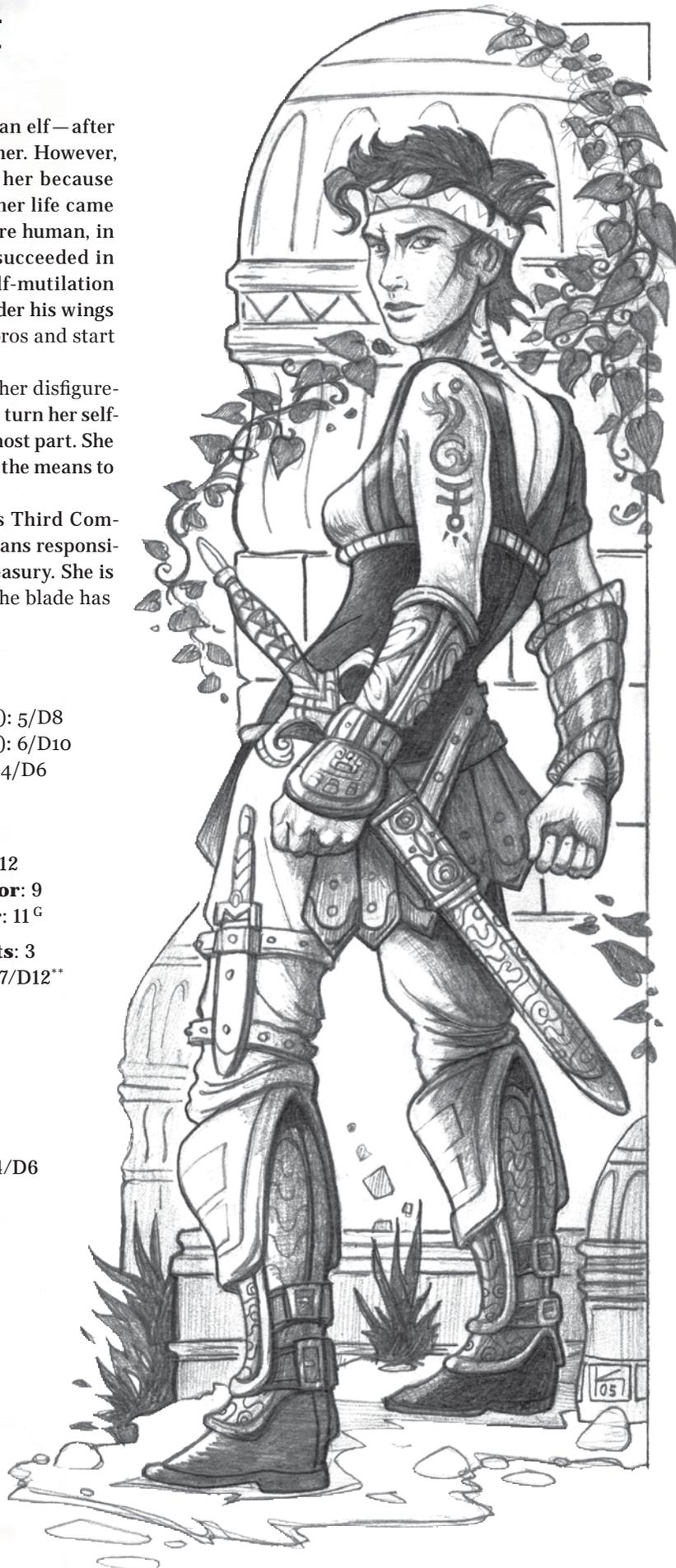
Karma Ritual (8): 8

First Impression (8): 12/2D10

Graceful Exit (8): 12/2D10

Heartening Laugh (8): 12/2D10

Leadership (8): 12/2D10



Maneuver^D (8): 16/D20+D8
Melee Weapons^D (9): 17/D20+D10 (Armor Beater)
Questor of Raggok (8): 8
— Cause Pain, Inspire Rage, Raise Undead
Resist Taunt^D (8): 14/D20+D4
Riposte^D (9): 17/D20+D10 (Claw Riposte)
Second Attack^D (8): 16/D20+D8
Second Weapon^D (8): 16/D20+D8
Speak Language (4): 9/D8+D6
— Human, Ork, T'skrang, Windling
Taunt (8): 12/2D10
Thread Weaving (Weapon Weaving)^D (9): 14/D20+D4
(Thread Masking)
Throwing Weapons (8): 16/D20+D8
Winning Smile (8): 12/2D10
Wound Balance (9): 16/D20+D8

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:

Scarification (4): 8/2D6

Knowledge:

Ardanyan Lore (5): 10/D10+D6

General:

Streetwise (5): 10/D10+D6

Tactics (5): 10/D10+D6

Equipment

Espagra-Scale Cloak (Phys 3; Myst 1; Init 0/1)
Leather Armor (Rank 4; Phys 5; Myst 3)
Buckler (Phys 1; ST 17)
Broadsword (Forged +3; Damage 15/D20+D6; w/
scabbard)
Dagger (Forged +1; Damage 10/D10+D6; Range 9–15–18)
2 × Hawk Hatchet (Damage 11/D10+D8; Range 24–40–
48)
Short Sword (Forged +2; Damage 13/D12+D10; w/
scabbard)
Two-Handed Sword (Forged +5; Damage 19/D20+2D6;
w/scabbard)
Whispering Earrings (Rank 3; see **Rumors and
Research** on p. 105)
Adventurer's Kit
Belt Pouch
Cloaksense Brooch
Elfweave Robe
Headband (Group Pattern Item)
Light Quartz Lantern
Symbol to Rashomon
Trail Rations (1 week)
Wealthy Traveler's Garb

Loot

340 silver pieces

Legend Points

3,190 Legend Points

Abilities

Fourth Circle: Karma on Dexterity-Only Tests

Fifth Circle: Karma on Charisma-only Tests

Sixth Circle: +1 Social Defense

Seventh Circle: Karma on melee weapons Damage
Tests

Eighth Circle: +1 Spell Defense

Notes

Jania possesses the elf racial ability of Low-Light
Vision.

Jania has formed a group True pattern with the core
members of the Cross of Ardanyan. She has three Rank 5
threads attached to her Spell Defense, Social Defense, and
Mystic Armor.

MANGALIN, NINTH CIRCLE ELF WIZARD

When the construction of his tower was finished, Mangalin began to build up a sizeable library by collecting writings from all over the province—the Wizard even hired scribes to copy books from the Great Library in Throal. One day, he acquired a set of books that had their origin in the fallen kaer of Hontiam. As it turned out, these writings were Horror-touched, written by a victim of the Horrors that breached Kaer Hontiam during the Scourge. The curse forced Mangalin to read all of the books, until he went mad himself and lost most of his magic—some of it remains, but his control over it is tenuous, at best.

The mad Wizard rarely leaves his tower. His face is scarred and his body fragile—the result of a powerful curse that almost ended his life and crippled him forever. Mangalin uses a staff when walking and often mumbles senseless words. The other Founders have lost hope that Mangalin will ever return to sanity, and don't seem to care about researching the curse's source—maybe they once did, but they no longer appear to have reason to do anything about it.

Attributes

Dexterity (11): 5/D8

Strength (9): 4/D6

Toughness (7): 4/D6

Perception (22): 9/D8+D6

Willpower (22): 9/D8+D6

Charisma (7): 4/D6

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 13^G

Spell Defense: 12

Social Defense: 11^G

Initiative: 5/D8

Physical Armor: 3

Mystic Armor: 5

Death Rating: 25 (61)^{*}

Wound Threshold: 11^G

Unconsciousness Rating: 16 (43)^{*}

Recovery Tests: 1

Knockdown: 4/D6

^G Enhanced by +5 for group True pattern.

^{*} These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

Combat Movement: 24

Full Movement: 48

Karma Points: 25

Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents (Knacks)

Arcane Mutterings^D (10): 14/D20+D4
(Arcane Curses)

Armored Matrix (9): 9

Astral Sight^D (9): 18/D20+D12

Book Memory^D (9): 18/D20+D12

Book Recall^D (9): 18/D20+D12

Durability (4/3) (9): 9

Enhanced Matrix (9): 9

Enhanced Matrix (9): 9

Evidence Analysis^D (9): 18/D20+D12

Hold Thread^D (9): 18/D20+D12

Karma Ritual (9): 9

Lifesight^D (9): 18/D20+D12

Lip Reading (9): 13/D12+D10

Matrix Strike^D (9): 18/D20+D12

Questor of Raggok (9): 9

— Cause Pain, Inspire Rage, Raise Undead
Range Pattern^D (9): 18/D20+D12

Read and Write Language (5): 14/D20+D4

— Elven, Human, Ork, T'skrang, Windling

Read and Write Magic^D (9): 18/D20+D12

Resist Taunt (9): 18/D20+D12

Speak Language^D (4): 13/D12+D10

— Human, Ork, T'skrang, Windling

Spellcasting^D (9): 18/D20+D12

Spell Matrix (9): 9

Spell Matrix (9): 9

Spell Matrix (9): 9

Thread Weaving (Wizardry)^D (10): 19/D20+2D6
(Thread Masking)

Willforce (9): 18/D20+D12

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:

Robe Embroidery (4): 8/2D6

Knowledge:

Alchemy and Potions (4): 13/D12+D10

Horror Lore (6): 15/D20+D6

General:

Alchemy (4): 13/D12+D10

Research (6): 15/D20+D6

Spells

Astral Sense, Aura Strike, Blood Boil, Clean, Channel Raw Magic^E, Counterspell^M, Crushing Will, Dispel Magic^M, Divine Aura, Doom Missile, Draining Eye^E, False Aura, Healing Sleep, Inventory, Iron Hands, Juggler's Touch, Lightning Cloud, Mental Library, Mind Dagger, Notice Not, Razor Orb, Sanctuary^M, Seal, Triangulate, Wizard's Cloak, Wound Mask^A

^M Denotes a spell currently attuned in a Spell Matrix.

^E Denotes a spell currently attuned in an Enhanced Matrix.

^A Denotes a spell currently attuned in an Armored Matrix.

Equipment

Espagra-Scale Cloak (Phys 3; Myst 1; Init 0/1)

Dagger (Damage 6/D10; Range 9–15–18)

Quarterstaff (Damage 6/D10; Group Pattern Item)

Whispering Earrings (Rank 3; see **Rumors and Research** on p. 105)

Adventurer's Kit

Belt Pouch

Booster Potion

Cloaksense Brooch

Elfweave Robe

Embroidery Tools

Grimoire

Healing Potion

Symbol to Rashomon

Trail Rations (1 week)

Wealthy Traveler's Garb



Loot

55 gold pieces

Legend Points

6,400 Legend Points

Abilities

Fourth Circle: Karma on Perception-only Tests

Fifth Circle: Karma on Willpower-only Tests

Sixth Circle: +1 Spell Defense

Seventh Circle: Karma on spell Effect Tests

Eighth Circle: +1 Social Defense

Ninth Circle: Karma on Recovery Tests; +1 Physical Defense

Notes

Mangalin possesses the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision.

Mangalin has formed a group True pattern with the core members of the Cross of Ardanyan. He has three Rank 5 threads attached to his Physical and Social Defense, and his Wound Threshold.

Mangalin's Tower features a small library and an Alchemist's Lab.

Rules

Whenever Mangalin wants to use one of his talents or spells, he must first make a Willpower (6) Test. This test occurs before he spends any Karma or Strain on the ability. If the test succeeds, he can use the ability as normal, otherwise nothing happens—Mangalin simply stands in place, mumbling quietly to himself or staring about with an obvious lack of focus.

ON THE STRUCTURE OF A KAER

Although each kaer is unique in its design, most kaers constructed under Theran supervision followed similar concepts. For example, the kaer's government was usually housed in a central chamber. If this chamber was large enough, it also contained other buildings such as a common meeting place, a library and hall of records.

Smaller chambers contained living quarters. Only the largest and wealthiest kaers had the space to build real houses and a dome-shaped ceiling, imitating a surface setting. Most kaers were built with a growing population in mind, so that there was enough space to accommodate more Name-givers over the centuries.

Food production and plant growth was usually separate from the living quarters—for several reasons. First, food and plants had to be guarded from thieves and evenly split to ensure everybody's survival. Animals are filthy and stink if housed in cramped quarters—more than a good reason to keep them separate, if at all. Many kaers never housed even a single animal for those reasons.

Light was provided by light quartzes imitating sunlight. Most of the smaller light quartzes that just glow constantly were used to illuminate the tunnels and hallways. Larger and more complex ones were able to imitate a day/night cycle by fading on and off regularly, and usually found their place in the ceiling of the larger halls.



Most important was the supply of air and water. Bound elemental spirits were often used to keep these resources clean, but it is also known that there were other means to filter water and air—such as sponge plants and elemental water filters. If there wasn't an underground river which could be tapped for fresh water, it had to be recycled. Fresh air came in through heavily warded shafts or was produced by tiny portals into the Elemental Plane of Air.

Every kaer has at least one large gate, primarily used to bring in the construction materials. In addition, the kaer usually has at least one smaller opening, called a **caisson**. The caisson works like a sluice, with one door on the inside and another one on the outside. Only one door can be opened at any one time, allowing Name-givers to leave the kaer without compromising the wards.

Strong defense mechanisms—both magical and mundane—surround a kaer. All of a kaer's exits were inscribed with the Runes of Warding, which were powered from an *azhûn*—a powerful magical device which allowed control of the wards from within the kaer. Directly beyond these wards were other defenses—traps of all sizes to defend the kaer from intruders. Some of these traps were designed to kill even the strongest physical horror—and could snap the neck of an elephant within the blink of an eye. From the outside world, a kaer was usually very well hidden. Naturally, the entries from the surface were carefully chosen and altered to be disguised. Powerful deceptions powered by illusion magic often helped to oblique them.

ON LIVING IN A KAER

While daily life in a kaer is mostly dull and unchanging, there are highlights that keep a kaer's inhabitants entertained. Depending on the size of the kaer, it might house Illusionists and Troubadours who tell stories of all kinds, supporting each other with their abilities and illusions. Numerous festivals are celebrated over the year, events that everyone looks forward to.

In a kaer, even the smallest bits of news make their rounds fairly quickly. Most people know each other; there are few secrets and far too many rumors. Feuds usually have their roots in the disputes of previous generations, and peace is not always the state of affairs.

While it took only a few generations to get accustomed to living underground, the unchanging way of things below the earth often led to grievous changes in the customs and culture of the residents. If an enclosed society develops over a time that spans dozens of generations, it inevitably leads to unique ways of life among the population of a kaer. Most kaers housed Name-givers of different races, and it was inevitable that their distinct cultures merged over time, usually in a fashion related to population distribution. For example, in a kaer with a population consisting of dwarfs and humans, human customs would most likely be predominant if humans were more numerous.

The circumstances of an enclosed environment also give birth to customs that seem unnecessary over ground. For example, as a result of the overpopulation that befell the people of Kaer Skirruich, every family was allowed to have only a single child—having more offspring was a

crime punishable by death. Given enough time, these customs became part of daily life and eventually found their way into the culture of the kaer's population.

It demands a lot of creativity to survive in an underground setting over centuries. To ensure survival in a kaer, laws and rules have to be followed strictly. Depending on the government, either the magistrate or appointed judges sentence criminals. Kaer guards are used for law enforcement, to ensure everybody lives in peace.

KAER CAMPAIGNS

The easiest way to introduce new players to the world of **Earthdawn** is to start play inside a kaer still sealed from the rest of the world. By starting the campaign within a kaer, a gamemaster can introduce the players to a self-contained environment which is easy to explain to newcomers. Once the kaer opens, the players can learn about Barsaive along with their characters, exploring Barsaive piece by piece; allowing the gamemaster to carefully control each revelation for dramatic effect and roleplaying value. Experienced players might also enjoy a kaer campaign as a nice change of pace. This section will provide some additional details and considerations for gamemasters interested in running this type of adventure.

CAMPAIGN TIME

The most important consideration is when to start the campaign. **Ardanyan's Revenge** opens the possibility of starting play inside a kaer, where the kaer's residents—including the player characters—are unaware that the Scourge is over. At the end of the adventure, the player characters witness the opening of the kaer—which could also be a long-term goal of a kaer campaign.

A kaer campaign can also start in a different era. In regards to the example above, the long term goal could be the opposite: sealing the kaer from the outside world. The player character would witness the final stages of the kaer's construction and would have to ensure that their kaer is untainted before the gates are closed. The largest part of this campaign would take place in pre-Scourge times, giving the players a chance to see how different the world was before the long night.

A third option would be to have the kaer campaign start during the Scourge—with no hope that the doors are opened during the characters' lifetimes. It is a dangerous and desperate time—the heroes might have to fight Horrors and their spawn, preventing the kaer's wards from being breached. They might witness the separation of the kaer's society into different camps, and might fight a small-scale war against other inhabitants. Diseases, mad questors, natural disasters and—of course—the Horrors would play a prominent role in such a campaign.

The setting material provided in the description of Kaer Ardanyan (see p. 16) might spark some ideas on how to run adventures in the different eras, and gamemasters are invited to expand the material provided and fit their own ideas into this setting.

SETTING

Running a kaer campaign requires a little effort on behalf of the gamemaster. While the bounds of the setting are limited, they have to be fleshed out in greater detail (as outlined in **Designing a Kaer**, below). In an enclosed environment, the characters are likely to know every corner of the kaer. They are familiar with the gamemaster characters and the gamemaster characters know them in turn. The characters will also know most of the kaer's history, which has to be fleshed out in advance.

The location of the kaer is also important, because it might limit the choices the players can make when creating their characters. For example, a kaer located in the high mountains is likely to be populated by dwarfs and trolls, but it might cancel out the choice of playing an elf or windling character. See **Creating Kaer-dweller Characters**, below, for more information. An example on implementing these guidelines can be found on p. 29.

DESIGNING A KAER

Sooner or later, any Earthdawn gamemaster has to develop a kaer for his adventures—be it to use it as a dangerous location for his players or to run a kaer campaign. In the light of the considerations above, designing a kaer follows a series of four steps detailed below.

- 1 Determine Population
- 2 Determine Location
- 3 Develop Kaer History
- 4 Draw a Map

DETERMINE POPULATION

The first decision is the most important one, as it affects every step that follows. What Name-givers populate the kaer? Which race is predominant? How many Name-givers live in the kaer?

If the kaer houses more than one Name-giver race, determine the racial composition of the kaer. The answer to this question influences the next step to a certain degree, as the predominant race is most likely the one that has constructed the kaer. The racial composition of a kaer can change over time—orks, for example, have a high birth rate that might turn the tide in the kaer's future. Gamemasters should keep in mind that the t'skrang race went into hibernation during the Scourge. Likewise, obsidimen either remained merged to their Liferocks or went into hibernation after they spent a few years underground. Unless there is a strong reason why these races are not hibernating in the kaer's setting, the effects of their presence should be taken into account.

Regarding the size of the population, the following figures might help. A small kaer would house between 2,000 and 5,000 inhabitants, which equals a small settlement or town. Kaers of smaller size are very rare, and have most likely failed to survive the Scourge. A medium-sized



kaer has between 5,000 and 30,000 inhabitants, equaling a small city or a large town. Most of the kaers built in Barsaive were of this size. The largest kaers housed up to 100,000 Name-givers, and are not very numerous — at this size, most governments decided rather to build a citadel to preserve their capital city. The kingdom of Throal is the only kaer of this size in Barsaive.

DETERMINE LOCATION

As mentioned above, the predominant race is most likely the one that build the kaer in the first place. You can assume that it was related to a government of pre-Scourge times, who funded the construction. For example, there is a good chance that a dwarven kaer was associated with the kingdom of Throal, and a human kaer might have been build by the humans of the kingdoms of Landis or Marrek.

A kaer is usually located close to the lands of that nation or city state. The exact geographical location can add much to the setting. For example, the main kaer of Scavia was build into the high cliffs of the Scarlet Sea, which are riddled with vast mazes close to rolling waves of hot magma. The king of Scavia believed that this location would provide additional security.

Assuming the kaer is located in Barsaive, refer to the **Barsaive Province** chapter on p. 479 of the **Player's Compendium** for a complete description and a map of the province.

DEVELOP KAER HISTORY

If the kaer is populated by members of more than one Name-giver race, the clash of cultures is likely to have a strong impact on the development of the population. Over-population might lead to unforeseen events. Other dangers — such as the ever-present Horrors, natural disasters or diseases — will definitely find their way into the kaer's history books.

Also decide about the kaer's government — is the kaer ruled by a council of elders? A long-standing dynasty or a charismatic leader? Or perhaps by an oligarchy of magicians, questors, or Master Adepts? Was the government changed during the Scourge? Did a war erupt among different political factions?

The Scourge lasted about four centuries. If the construction time and recent events are included, the entire history of a kaer covers up to 600 years. While the kaer's past needs not be written down on hundreds of pages, the result should be complete enough to cover the most important events — beginning with pre-Scourge times, the Scourge itself and the time after the Scourge.

Try to answer as many of the following questions as possible:

Before the Scourge

Who built the kaer? How were the Rites of Protection and Passage acquired? Did anything unusual happen during the construction? Was the kaer finished in time? Did the kaer take on any refugees before the gates were closed? Did a Horror manage to slip in before the gates were closed?

During the Scourge

Was the kaer attacked by Horrors, or did a Horror enter the kaer unnoticed? Were the gates closed for the entire time? What problems befell the population — were there any diseases, cave-ins, intrigues, feuds or even wars that shaped the history of the kaer? How did the Name-givers manage to overcome their cultural differences? What does the population know about the outside world — is the information contained in the library even remotely accurate?

After the Scourge

Is the kaer still closed? If so, why? If not, when did it open its gates? Did an exploration party exit prematurely and never return? Did a (Mad) Passion visit the kaer? What happened after the population left? Did anyone (or any-

thing) take up residence in the abandoned halls after the inhabitants left?

DRAW A MAP

It's usually best to begin with a simple sketch, one that can be altered later. Once everything is in place, a final version of the map can be created. If the kaer has more than one level, there should be several maps, each indicating how to get from one level to the next.

The previous decisions will have an impact on the layout of the kaer, depending on where it is located and who constructed it. The map should try to take the following things into account: a central chamber, living quarters, food production, animal housings, the main gate (and possibly other exits), the *azhûn*, water and air supply, and any other noteworthy sites (such as a cave in or uninhabited areas).

CREATING KAER-DWELLER CHARACTERS

Some guidelines have to be established before characters can be created that have lived inside a kaer for their entire lives. Gamemaster and players alike should be familiar with the setting and the kaer's history in order to create believable characters that have a place inside the kaer.

NAME-GIVER RACES

The population of a kaer is important for the choice of race. Not all Name-giver races are available in every kaer. If the kaer houses members of more than one race, it's likely that customs and culture differ from the descriptions in the **Player's Compendium**. More importantly, the kaer's history might give reason to superstition and prejudice between the races.

DISCIPLINES

Only the Disciplines that were present after the kaer's gates were sealed are available in a kaer setting—unless there is a very good reason why a Discipline should suddenly spring into existence. Spirits are unable to pass through a kaer's wards, so the use of the Ritual of the Ghostmaster talent is limited to the spirits that remain trapped inside the kaer.

Tradition handed the knowledge down from generation to generation, and there were many cases in which a Discipline was wiped out because the last master of that Discipline died. While many Disciplines (like the Warrior, Swordmaster, Weaponsmith, Scout, and Thief; or Illusionists and Troubadours as entertainers and keepers of song and legend during the Scourge) were pretty common in almost every kaer or citadel, several Disciplines are only practiced in certain kaers, depending on location and population.



Sky Raiders and Air Sailors, for example, were only found in kaers of a certain size, where air boats and ships were at least available for proper training. Needless to say, the Sky Raider discipline was only practiced in certain kaers with a large troll population—most of them located in the Twilight Peaks or the Delaris Mountains.

Practice of the Beastmaster and Cavalrymen Disciplines required the presence of a number of animals in the kaer—which wasn't the case in every kaer. Cavalrymen were usually found in kaers with a large ork population, tending to the animals and beasts that lived among them. The Beastmaster Discipline, however, was a rare sight in most kaers and citadels. Many Beastmasters survived elsewhere—under the wings of a dragon host (Usun or Mountainshadow, for example), among the Cathan tribes of the Servos Jungle, or outside of Barsaive.

Almost every kaer and citadel has a number of magicians present. Elementalists were a common sight in citadels, where large elemental shields had to be taken care of. The Runes of Warding used inside a kaer were commonly tended by Wizards, although their design made it possible for other magicians to control them.

MAGICIANS

Optional Rule: At the gamemaster's discretion, use the following rules for magician characters in a pre-Scourge or kaer campaign.

Magicians in this era don't have access to the Spell (and Enhanced, Armored, and Shared) Matrix talents as these were developed later on — instead, they use raw magic or spell matrix objects. Gamemasters who want to take this historical fact into account for their campaign should use this optional rule for magician characters.

The following guidelines show how this would work.

Raw Magic

Casting raw magic inside a kaer is usually safe — unless the kaer has been breached by a Horror.

Use the entries given for the Safe region type on the Raw Magic Table (see the **Player's Compendium**, p. 289) when making Warping and Damage Tests. The chance of gaining a Horror mark is virtually non-existent, and the gamemaster should ignore the listed Horror Mark step when the spell is cast inside a kaer.

Spell Matrix Objects

Spell matrix objects can be created with the Create Spell Matrix Object talent knack (see the **Talent Knacks** and **Enchanting** chapters of the **Player's Compendium** for details).

These items work similarly to regular spell matrices, as described in the **Spell Magic** chapter of the **Player's Compendium**.

Alternative Talents

Needless to say, the magicians of these times don't have access to the various Spell Matrix talents. Replace them with the following talents when playing magician characters in a pre-Scourge or kaer campaign.

Note that magician characters receive only six, instead of seven, talents at First Circle when using this optional rule.

Elementalist

First Circle: Endure Cold

Second Circle: Item History

Fourth Circle: Gliding Stride

Seventh Circle: Woodskin

Eighth Circle: Fireblood

Ninth Circle: Earth Skin

Twelfth Circle: Warp Missile

Fourteenth Circle: Gold Sense

Fifteenth Circle: Soften Blade

Illusionist

First Circle: Arcane Mutterings

Second Circle: First Impression

Fourth Circle: Lasting Impression

Seventh Circle: Taunt

Eighth Circle: Steel Thought

Ninth Circle: Incite Mob

Eleventh Circle: Steely Stare

Thirteenth Circle: Sense Poison

Fourteenth Circle: Animate Object

Fifteenth Circle: Lion Spirit

Nethermancer

First Circle: Frighten Animals

Second Circle: Abate Curse

Fourth Circle: Item History

Seventh Circle: Lion Heart

Eighth Circle: Blood Share

Ninth Circle: Spirit Mount

Eleventh Circle: Temper Self

Thirteenth Circle: Temper Other

Fourteenth Circle: Develop Animal Sense

Fifteenth Circle: Second Chance

Wizard

First Circle: Haggle

Second Circle: First Impression

Sixth Circle: Creature Analysis

Eighth Circle: Winning Smile

Ninth Circle: Spirit Strike

Eleventh Circle: Temperature

Twelfth Circle: Second Chance

Thirteenth Circle: Detect Falsehood

Fourteenth Circle: Safe Thought

Fifteenth Circle: Astral Pocket

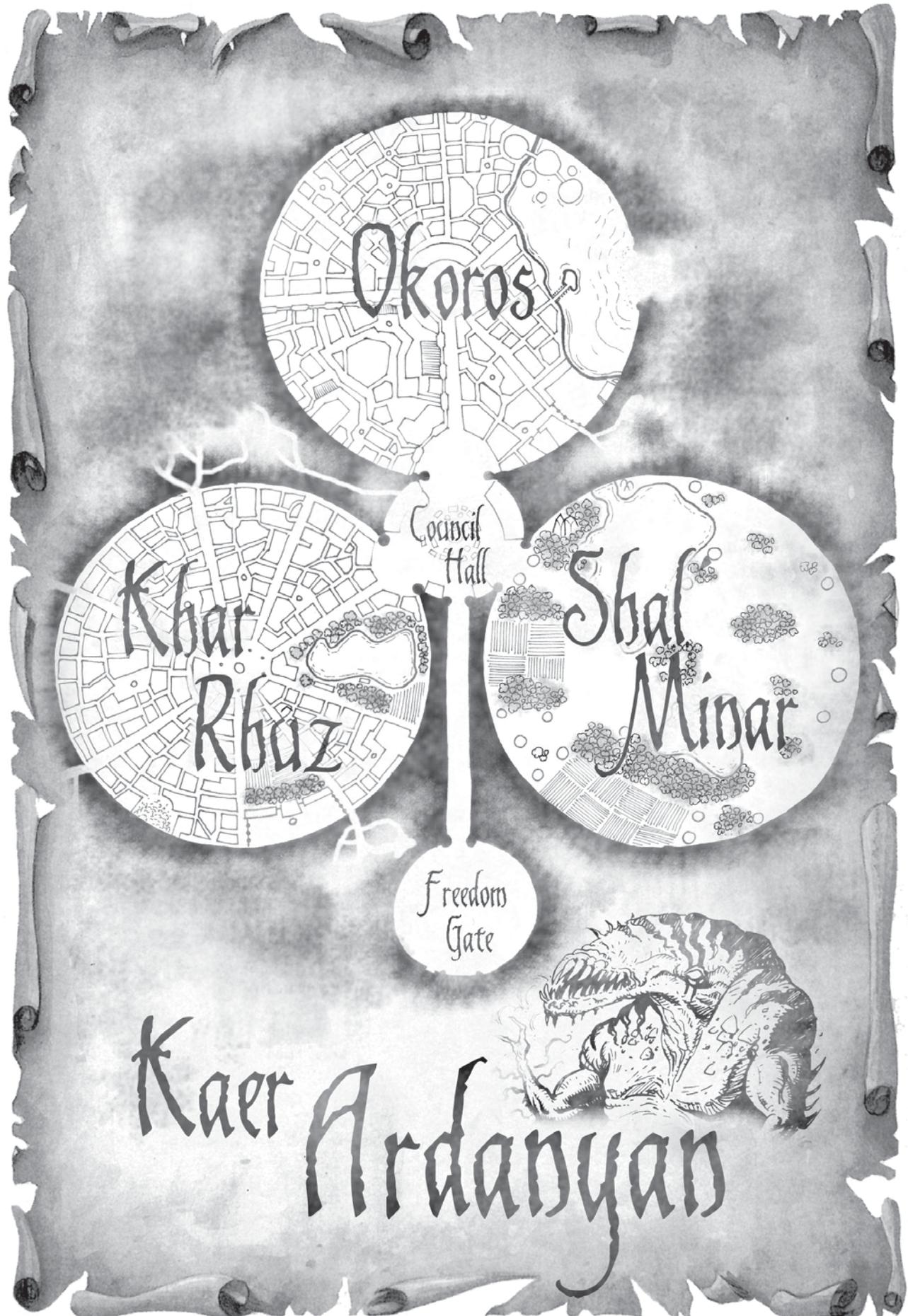
Weaponsmith

Ninth Circle: Steely Stare

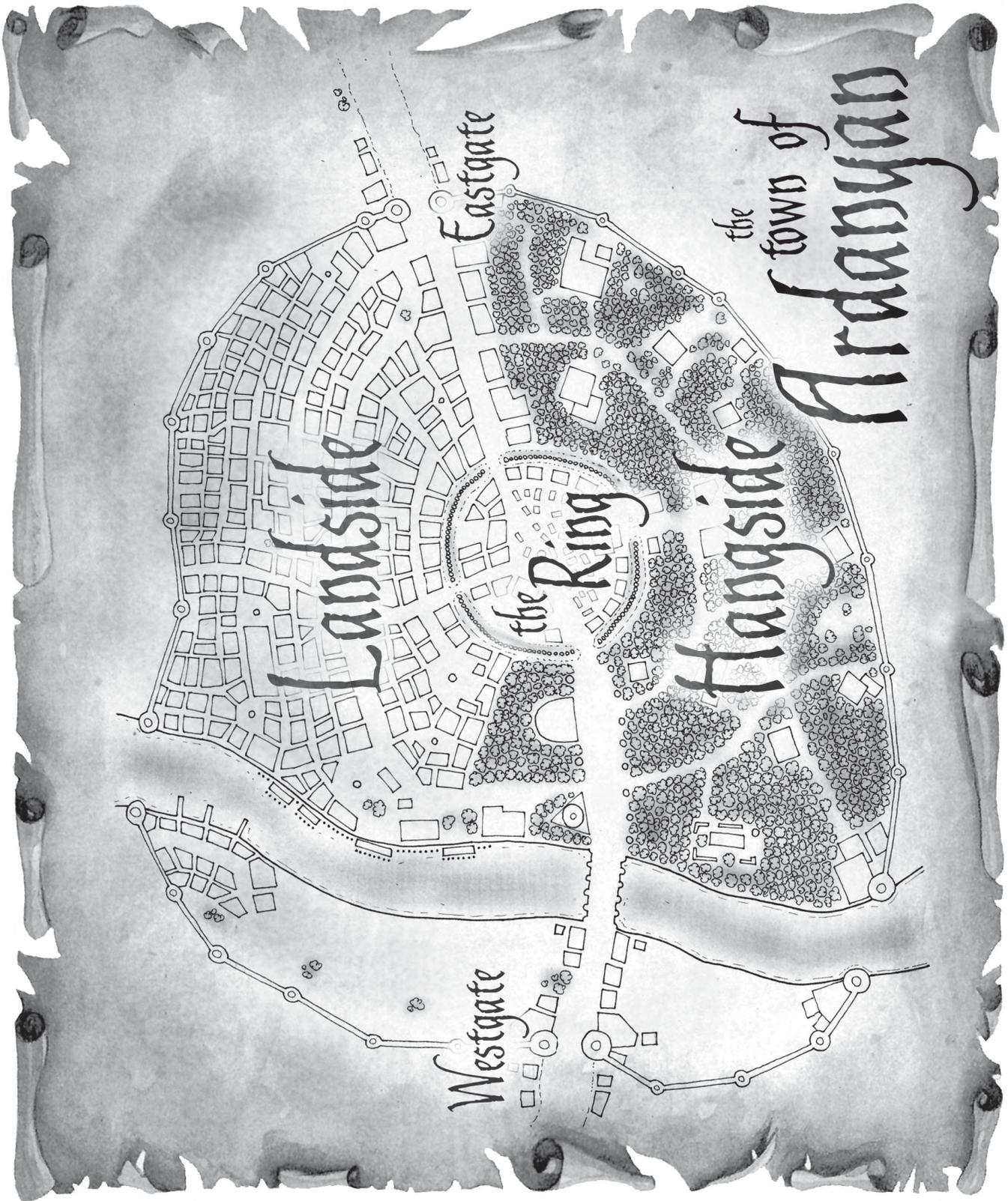
Fourteenth Circle: Blade Juggle

Fifteenth Circle: Ethereal Weapon

Map of Kaer Ardanyan



Map of the Town of Ardanyan



Tungar's Letter and Map

Greetings, Tungar!

We haven't heard much from each other in a long time, but I can assure you that I haven't forgot how much I owe you.

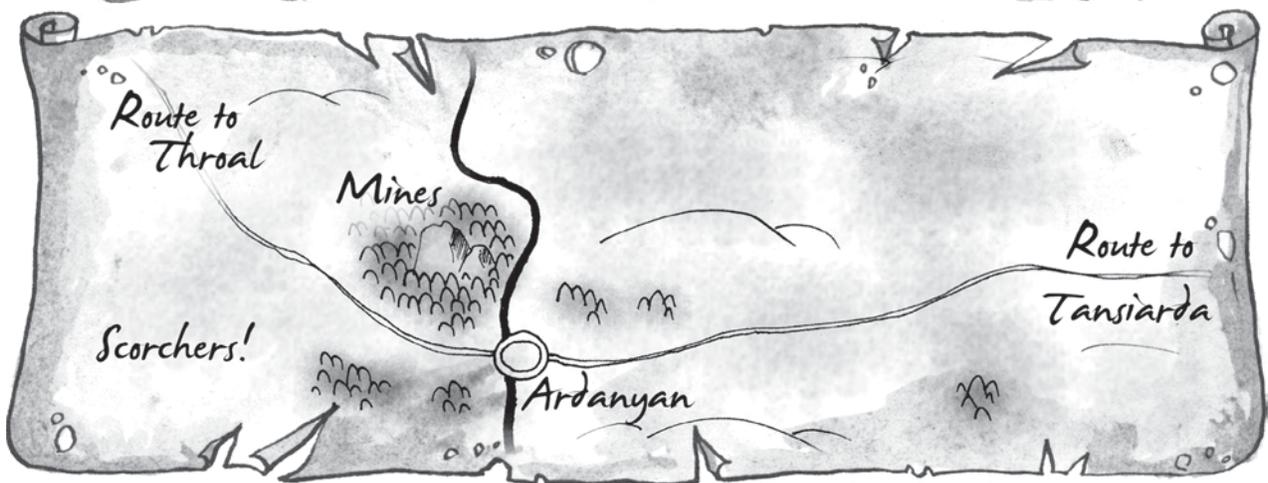
A few days ago, my friend Titoo provided me with a set of old, but rather interesting documents. They tell of a rich vein of elemental earth somewhere in the Throal Mountains. The interesting part is that this vein is located in the foothills and therefore easy to reach.

The documents are contracts between a Throalic house of merchants and a group of miners who needed funds to explore the area.

The Throalic merchant house does not exist anymore, and since the contract was sealed on the 9th day of Strassa 994 TtH, we can safely assume that the works in the mine were interrupted by the Scourge a few years later and never taken up again. My friend, imagine how wealthy we could be once we find the mine and take it back into production!

I urge you to meet me and some of my companions in the town of Ardanyan as soon as you can, so that we can start an expedition.

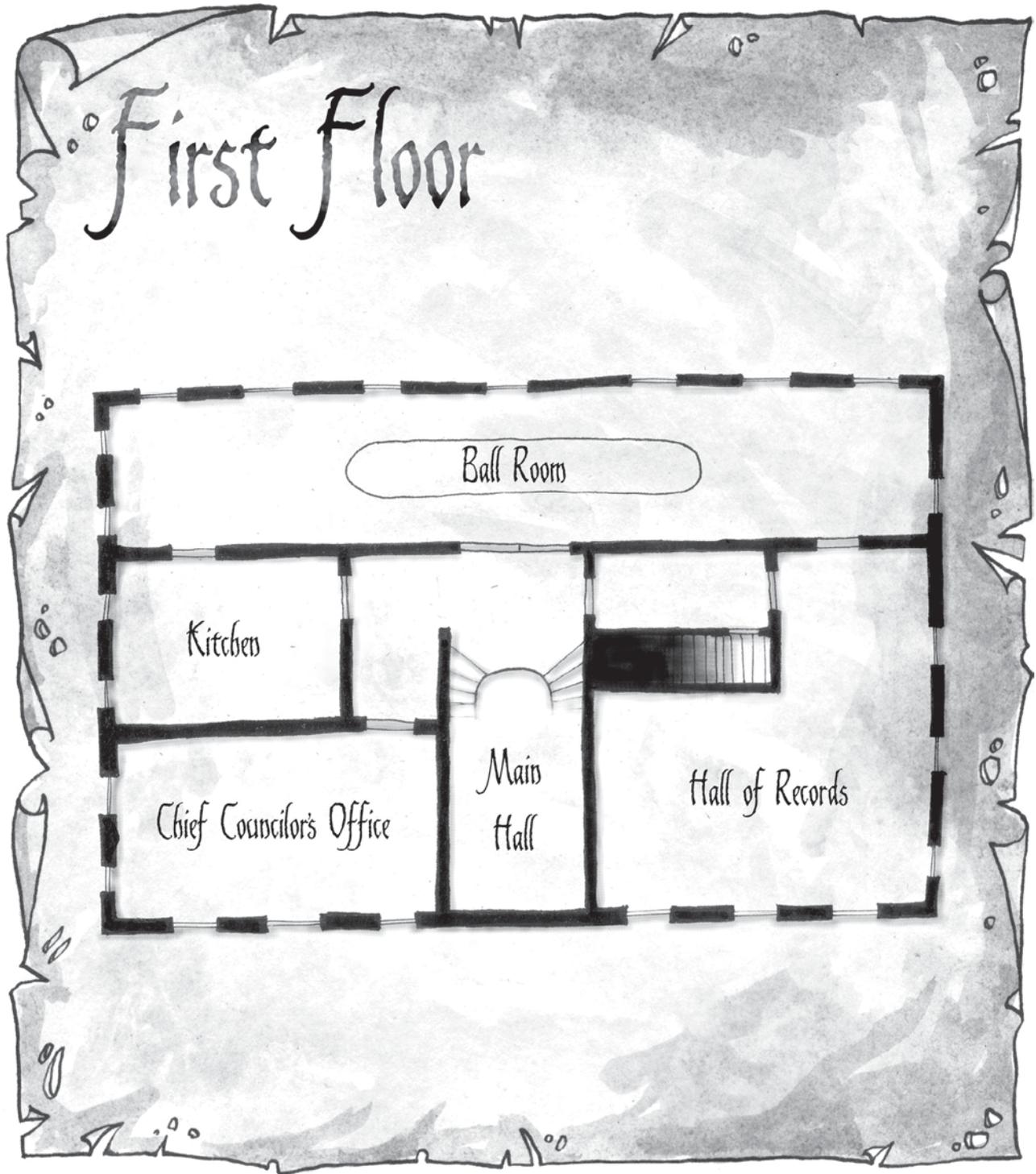
Yours,
Grankar Eisengiesser



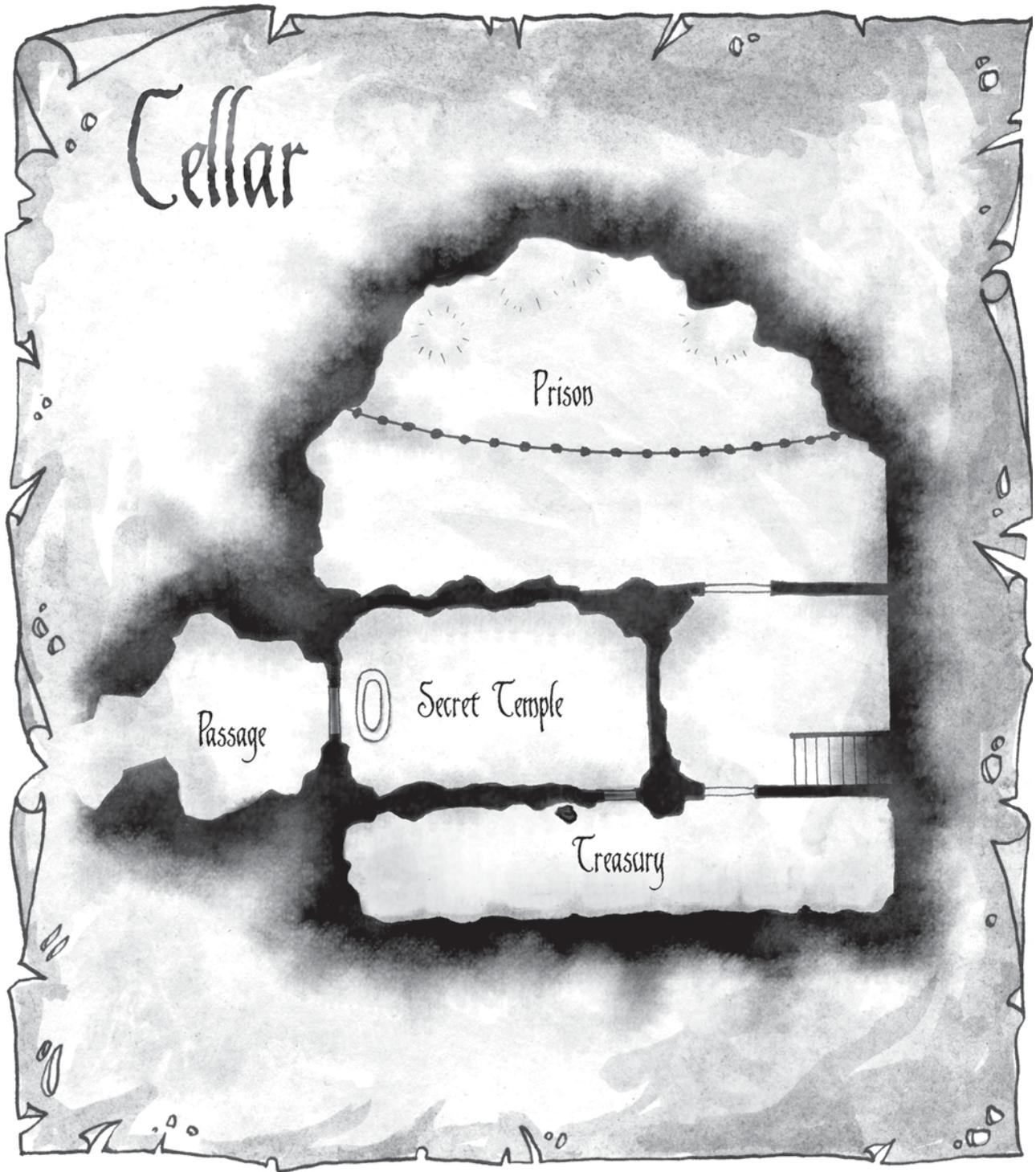
Map of the Ground Floor of Ardanyan's Council House



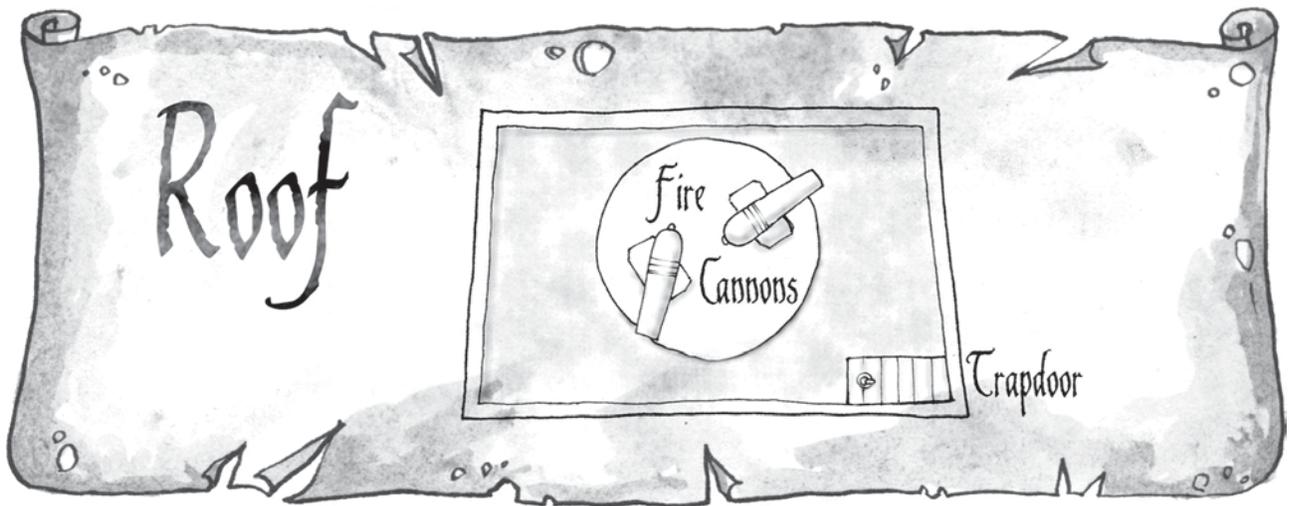
Map of the First Floor of Ardanyan's Council House



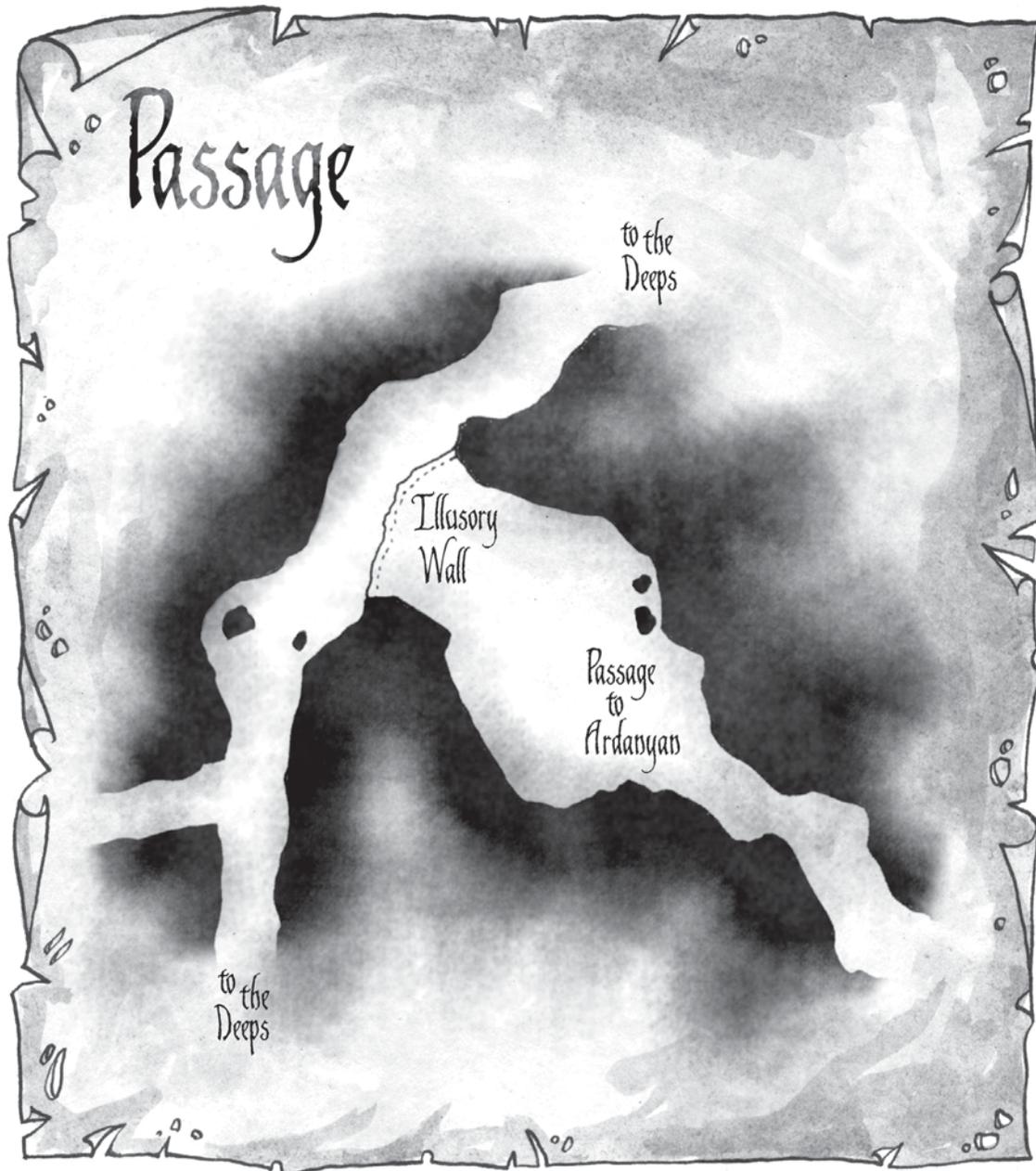
Map of the Cellar of Ardanyan's Council House

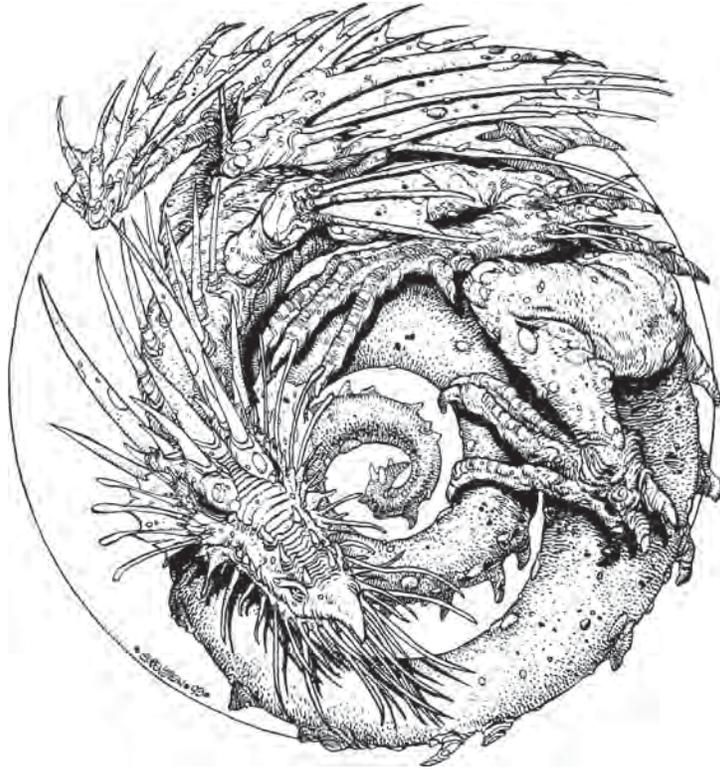


Map of the Roof of Ardanyan's Council House



Map of the Secret Passage leading into Kaer Ardanyan





•FIN•

ARDANYAN'S REVENGE

Before science, before history, an era of magic existed in our world's dim past. Magic flowed freely, touching every aspect of the lives of men and women of the Name-giver races. It was an age of heroes, an age of fantastical deeds and mythical stories.

In this Age of Legend, bold heroes from all across Barsaive band together—ready to fight for life and freedom against the remaining Horrors and the oppressive Theran Empire, which seeks to bend the rebellious province again to their yoke. Through noble deeds and sacrifice, the heroes of the world forge Barsaive's future, arming themselves for their daunting task with powerful magical spells and treasures.

JEALOUSY

When the Scourge was imminent, the people of the town of Ardanyan sought shelter underground, expecting only the Horrors to be a threat. Over the centuries spent confined in the kaer, small quarrels grew into conflicts, which in turn developed into blood feuds and racial hatred. The Horrors would gladly have fed on Kaer Ardanyan — if they had only found it...

BITTERNESS

For generations, a secret society betrayed the unsuspecting citizens of Ardanyan—now they struggle to keep their terrible secret. The player characters are the spark igniting a bonfire of intrigue, deceit and illusion. The heroes have to be careful, however, not to fall victim to the flames while on their dangerous quest to save the residents of a lost kaer!

VENGEANCE

Ardanyan's Revenge is an adventure supplement for **Earthdawn**. Intended for Initiate and Novice characters of any Discipline, this book provides comprehensive information on starting an **Earthdawn** game for kaer-dweller characters, but integrates easily into any running **Earthdawn** campaign. Requires the **Earthdawn Player's** and **Gamemaster's Compendiums** to use.



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