

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

CAMPAIGN SUPPLEMENT

FORGOTTEN REALMS®

# Lost Empires of FAERÛN™



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# INTRODUCTION

Faerûn is littered with the wreckage of the past—shattered castles, ruined cities, forgotten dungeons, nameless strongholds, shunned temples, and other ruins too decayed to identify. But what were these places in their days of glory, and what forces brought them low? Each crumbling edifice has a story to tell—a tale of glory and power followed by slow decline or outright destruction through betrayal, war, or catastrophe. When heroes explore such a site, they venture into its story and become part of it, adding their deeds to a tale that may have begun thousands of years before their birth.

Like our own world, the land of Faerûn has been sculpted and shaped by the merciless winds of history and time. Ancient wars, terrible catastrophes, personal tragedies, and great triumphs have all given rise to consequences that in turn caused other wars and disasters. Thus has the endless cycle of cause and effect been propagated across thousands of years and hundreds of cities and kingdoms.

*Lost Empires of Faerûn* offers rationales for how and why the ruined places of the past may demand the attention of the player characters in your game. In a FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign, no ruined castle should be a nameless mound of rubble filled with random monsters. Was it once the stronghold of a Netherese lich who outlived his land by centuries? Or the fortress of an evil warlord who dreamed of carving out his own kingdom from the chaos following Phalorm's fall? Or could it be the secret retreat of a sinister Nar conjurer who bound a demon within its walls some fifteen centuries ago? An adventure site with links to the past offers a wonderful opportunity to ground your adventures in the setting and immerse your players in the fantastic world that their characters inhabit and explore.

## The Ruin-Based Campaign

The history of Faerûn's lost empires is a tale of unparalleled magical might, lost imperial majesty, and age-old, cataclysmic wars involving numerous realms and many races. It is also an incomplete chronicle replete with overlooked arcane wonders, untold entombed evils, and long-forgotten gods. In ancient vaults and ruins, legacies both foul and fair lie patiently in the dark, awaiting the right moment, the right adventurer, or the right sign to herald their return to the light.

Campaigns in Faerûn can embroil characters in ongoing events occurring throughout the continent. From the plots and schemes of ambitious rulers to the hidden agendas of rival churches and secret societies, the adventuring landscape of Faerûn is an ever-shifting backdrop whose precise nature varies with the successes and failures of numerous factions. *Lost Empires of Faerûn* adds to this rich tapestry of deeds and machinations by returning to present-day Faerûn some of the lore and magic of the civilizations gone by.

The history of Faerûn is the foundation upon which the current-day world rests. To most people, the overt signs of history are meaningless, and old ruins and empty mines are places to be avoided. To a sage or adventurer, however, such locations serve as windows into the past. A fallen realm or forgotten empire may seem to exert little influence in the here and now, but it holds great potential for both dire perils and marvelous wonders.

The historical realms described in *Lost Empires of Faerûn* are not meant to be intriguing destinations for time-traveling characters. Rather, adventures and even entire campaigns can be designed around an ancient kingdom that the heroes know only from stories. For example, addressing a threat from the vanished past might require adventurers to explore an ancient empire's culture, learn its history, and understand its magical nuances. In so doing, characters could acquire a particular mastery necessary to survive a disaster or solve a problem that began long ago. At that point, the way is open for them to rediscover spells created

by long-dead mages, recover lost swords of legend, learn the secrets of forgotten gods, and confront the horrors and failures of fallen empires.

## what's inside

*Lost Empires of Faerûn* includes information intended for both players (most of Chapter 1) and Dungeon Masters (most of the rest of the book). The information is broken down by chapter, as follows.

**Chapter 1: Ancient Secrets** details prestige classes, feats, and spells commonly employed by characters who delve into the secrets of the past or keep alive the ancient traditions of realms now vanished into history.

**Chapter 2: Dreams of the Past** examines the role of the ancient past in an ongoing D&D campaign and offers advice on how to use Faerûn's legacy of catastrophe, tragedy, ambition, and failure in your own current-day campaign.

**Chapter 3: The Crown Wars** describes the most ancient of Faerûn's kingdoms—the elven realms of the Crown Wars. The great wars these kingdoms waged upon each other led to the destruction of forested lands, the descent of the drow, and the establishment of refuges such as Evereska and Evermeet.

**Chapter 4: God-Kings of the East** details the first great realms of humankind—the Old Empires of Mulhorand and Unther, and the rival empires of Narfell and Raumathar.

**Chapter 5: Realms of the High Forest** describes the kingdoms of Eaelrann, Siluvanede, Sharrven, and the surrounding states. It also chronicles the Seven Citadels' War in which Siluvanede was destroyed.

**Chapter 6: Fallen Netheril** describes the most famous of Faerûn's fallen lands—the mighty Empire of Netheril, which now lies buried under the shifting sands of Anauroch.

**Chapter 7: The Imperial South** examines the powerful states of Coramshan (and later the Shoon Imperium) and Jhaamdath, the Twelve Cities of the Sword.

**Chapter 8: The Dream of Cormanthyr** describes the fabled realm of Myth Drannor and its fall hundreds of years ago.

**Chapter 9: The Old North** relates the history of the Sword Coast North and the fate of storied cities and lands such as Phalorm and the Kingdom of Man.

**Chapter 10: Artifacts of the Past** introduces magic items created and used by the people of various lost empires.

**Chapter 11: Monsters of the Ancient Lands** presents twenty-nine monsters that originated in these long-lost lands or are now commonly encountered in and around their ruins.

## what you need to play

To use this supplement, you need the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting*, plus the three core rulebooks of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. *Player's Guide to Faerûn* is also a useful source, since it includes many of the feats, spells, and items used by various NPCs described in this book. You may also find the *Expanded Psionics Handbook* helpful, since a small amount of this material refers to the psionics rules.

Finally, several books are referenced herein. In many cases, this reference is in the form of a superscript abbreviation of the book's title, which is tacked onto the end of the name of a spell, monster, or some other game element. The books (including some of those mentioned above) and their abbreviations, when applicable, are as follows: *Book of Vile Darkness* (BV), *City of the Spider Queen*, *Epic Level Handbook* (EL), *Expanded Psionics Handbook* (XPH), *Faiths and Pantheons* (FP), *Fiend Folio* (FF), *Lords of Darkness* (LD), *Magic of Faerûn* (Mag), *Manual of the Planes*, *Monster Manual II* (MM2), *Monster Manual III* (MM3), *Monstrous Compendium: Monsters of Faerûn* (Mon), *Player's Guide to Faerûn* (PG), *Races of Faerûn* (Rac), *Serpent Kingdoms* (SK), *Shining South*, *Silver Marches*, *Unapproachable East* (Una), and *Underdark* (Und).

## MONSTER SUBSTITUTES

Many creatures mentioned in this book are described in one of the sources mentioned above. If you do not own the source in question, use the designated substitute, which appears either in the *Monster Manual* or in this book.

Creature (Source)	Substitute
Archlich ( <i>Monsters of Faerûn</i> )	Trumpet archon
Asabi ( <i>Serpent Kingdoms</i> )	Lizardfolk
Baelnorn ( <i>Monsters of Faerûn</i> )	Trumpet archon
Baphitaur ( <i>Underdark</i> )	Tiefling
Bar-Igura ( <i>Book of Vile Darkness</i> )	Babau (demon)
Bheur hag ( <i>Unapproachable East</i> )	Night hag
Brain golem ( <i>Fiend Folio</i> )	Flesh golem
Brown dragon ( <i>Monsters of Faerûn</i> )	Blue dragon
Caller in darkness ( <i>Expanded Psionics Handbook</i> )	Dread wraith
Crystal dragon ( <i>Monster Manual II</i> )	Copper dragon
Dao ( <i>Manual of the Planes</i> )	Efreeti
Death knight ( <i>Monster Manual II</i> )	Mummy lord
Deep dragon ( <i>Monsters of Faerûn</i> )	Black dragon
Dekanter goblin ( <i>Monsters of Faerûn</i> )	Fiendish goblin
Demilich ( <i>Epic Level Handbook</i> )	Human lich wizard 20
Elder brain ( <i>Underdark</i> )	Mind flayer wizard 20
Gemstone golem ( <i>Monsters of Faerûn</i> )	Stone golem
Hagswan template ( <i>Unapproachable East</i> )	Fiendish creature
Illithilich ( <i>Monsters of Faerûn</i> )	Mind flayer sorcerer 9
Keening spirit ( <i>City of the Spider Queen</i> )	Ghost
Leucrotta ( <i>Monsters of Faerûn</i> )	Dire wolf
Maur ( <i>Underdark</i> )	Stone giant
Myconid ( <i>Monster Manual II</i> )	Svirfneblin (gnome)
Nycaloth ( <i>Monster Manual III</i> )	Glabrezu (demon)
Orglash ( <i>Unapproachable East</i> )	Air elemental
Orog ( <i>Races of Faerûn</i> )	Orc
Phrenic creature ( <i>Expanded Psionics Handbook</i> )	Half-fiend
Sarrukh ( <i>Serpent Kingdoms</i> )	Yuan-ti abomination
Sharn ( <i>Monsters of Faerûn</i> )	Mind flayer
Skulk ( <i>Fiend Folio</i> )	Grimlock
Sporebat ( <i>Fiend Folio</i> )	Yrthak
Swordwraith ( <i>Fiend Folio</i> )	Dread warrior (see page 169)
Tanarukk ( <i>Monsters of Faerûn</i> )	Fiendish orc
Udoroot ( <i>Expanded Psionics Handbook</i> )	Tendriculos
Yellow musk creeper ( <i>Fiend Folio</i> )	Assassin vine



# ANCIENT SECRETS

Exploring the ruins of ancient civilizations is probably the single most common activity for adventuring companies. Whether they're confronting an ancient evil in its lair or simply treasure-hunting for personal gain, most groups of PCs find themselves in ancient ruins more than a few times over the course of their careers. However, few adventurers ever consider the origins of the ruins they explore. Ancient dungeons and crumbling crypts don't just spring up out of nowhere; the peoples who constructed them did so for specific reasons using styles and methods particular to their cultures.

This chapter is dedicated to characters who go beyond the surface—those who choose to learn the whys and wherefores of the ancient civilizations whose monuments dot Faerûn. These historians and scholars safeguard the knowledge of Faerûn's past, and they can be valuable assets to adventurers as well. For example, a trap could be so cunningly hidden that the most keen-eyed rogue might miss it, but a character versed in history and ancient cultures would recognize the crumbling friezes on the walls as the decorations of a royal tomb and warn her companions that it's certain to be well protected. Or a character who knows ancient languages might be able to read ruined signposts and determine the fastest, safest route to the PCs' objective.

Not all characters with detailed knowledge of the ancient past are historians, tomb guardians, or mages eager to recapture the mighty lore of the past. Many undead creatures and other long-lived beings still remember Myth Drannor and Ascalhorn firsthand, and Netheril's numerous legacies include a secret society of watchers and guardians that has passed down the traditions of the Arcane Age from one generation to the next. This chapter is for the players of these characters as well.

## Ancient feats

Those who study the lore of the vanished past often come across long-lost arcana, forgotten schools of combat, and boons granted by gods who are no longer worshiped in Faerûn. In addition, characters with a scholarly interest in the works and writings of fallen civilizations often wish to learn unusual tricks and techniques to make their studies easier.

### Arcane manipulation

You are learned in the arcane ways of Netheril, where masters of magic once molded and shaped arcane energy to their own will.

**Prerequisite:** Wizard level 1st.

**Benefit:** When you prepare spells, you can break down up to three existing arcane spell slots to create a specified number of lower-level spell slots. (A 0-level spell counts as 1/2 level for this purpose, so a 1st-level spell slot could be broken into two 0-level spell slots.) The sum of the levels of all the new spell slots must equal the level of the original. The number of spell slots you can create in this manner is otherwise unlimited. Spell slots that you break down into multiple lower-level slots remain that way until the next time you prepare spells, at which time you can choose to restore your spell slots to normal or break them up again.

**Normal:** A character can always choose to use a higher-level spell slot to prepare a lower-level spell, but any "remainder" spell levels are lost.

### Arcane transfiguration

Drawing upon forgotten lore, you broaden your arcane studies and master a school of magic previously prohibited to you.

**Prerequisites:** Item Reprieve, Spell Reprieve, specialist wizard level 10th.

**Benefit:** Choose a school of magic that was previously prohibited to you because of your arcane specialization. You can now learn and cast spells from that school normally, as if you were not a specialist wizard.

## ANCIENT SECRETS

TABLE I-1: FEATS

General Feats	Prerequisites	Benefit
Arcane Manipulation	Wizard level 1st	Break down higher-level spell slots into lower-level ones
Channel Charge	Use Magic Device 5 ranks, ability to cast 4th-level spells	Power a charged magic item with spell slots or prepared spells
Cormanthyrn Moon Magic	Knowledge (history) 4 ranks, ability to cast 3rd-level spells	Increase effective caster level by 2 in moonlight
Familiar Concentration	Improved Familiar, caster level 9th	Familiar can control a spell for its master
Greenbound Summoning	Ability to cast any <i>summon nature's ally</i> spell	Summoned animals acquire the greenbound template
Jergal's Pact	Knowledge (history) 4 ranks, Great Fortitude	Gain a +2 bonus on saves to resist gaining negative levels or to remove them
Multilingual	Int 15	Learn three additional languages
Netherese Battle Curse	Knowledge (history) 4 ranks, Power Attack, arcane caster level 1st	Perform a battle curse as a melee attack
Servant of the Fallen	Cleric level 1st, dead or forgotten deity as patron	Receive cleric spells normally and gain a +1 luck bonus on one die roll; you can also be raised normally
Spell Reprieve	Knowledge (history) 2 ranks, specialist wizard level 1st	Learn and prepare one spell from a prohibited school
Arcane Transfiguration	Item Reprieve, Spell Reprieve, specialist wizard level 10th	Learn and cast spells from a prohibited school
Item Reprieve	Spell Reprieve, specialist wizard level 5th	Use spell completion and spell trigger magic items from a prohibited school
Trapmaster	Int 13, trap sense +2	Increase trap sense benefit by 4 and gain a +2 bonus on Disable Device checks

Item Creation Feat	Prerequisites	Benefit
Craft Scepter	Knowledge (history) 4 ranks, caster level 9th	Create a scepter of any 7th-level or lower spell

Metamagic Feat	Prerequisites	Benefit
Wounding Spell	Knowledge (history) 4 ranks, Empower Spell	Inflict a bleeding wound with any damage-dealing spell

Regional Feat	Prerequisites	Benefit
Godsight	Cha 13, Mulhorandi (aasimar, human [Mulan], or tiefling), Mulhorand region	Gain spell-like abilities involving detection

**Special:** You can select this feat only once. The school you choose must be one for which you have already taken both the Spell Reprieve and the Item Reprieve feats.

### channel charge

You can power a charged magic item with your own magical ability.

**Prerequisites:** Use Magic Device 5 ranks, ability to cast 4th-level spells.

**Benefit:** When you use a spell trigger magic item with charges (such as a wand or a staff), you can make a Use Magic Device check (DC 15 + the item's caster level). If you succeed, you can sacrifice a spell slot or prepared spell instead of using a charge. The spell slot

or spell sacrificed must be one level higher than the level of the desired effect from the item. If the check fails, both your spell slot (or prepared spell) and 1 charge from the item are expended.

### cormanthyrn moon magic

You have mastered the ancient elven techniques of drawing power from Sehanine Moonbow's light.

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (history) 4 ranks, ability to cast 3rd-level spells.

**Benefit:** When you cast a spell under moonlight, your effective caster level increases by 2. This feat provides no benefit when the moon is not visible (during the day, underground, during a new moon, or the like).



## craft scepter [item creation]

You know the ancient Netherese secret of creating magic scepters—devices that can contain much more powerful spells than a magic wand can.

**Prerequisite:** Knowledge (history) 4 ranks, caster level 9th.

**Benefit:** You can create a scepter that holds any spell of 7th level or lower that you know. Unlike a magic wand, a scepter can contain up to two spells, each of which has a cost in charges to use. Both spell effects draw from a common pool of charges, so they can be used in any combination.

Crafting a scepter takes one day for each 1,000 gp in its base price. The base price of a scepter is its caster level × the spell level × 750 gp for the highest-level spell included, plus the caster level × the spell level × 375 gp for the second spell, if any. To craft a scepter, you must spend 1/25 of this base price in XP and use up raw materials costing one-half of this amount. A newly created scepter has 50 charges. Any scepter that stores a spell with a costly material component or an XP cost also carries a commensurate cost. In addition to the cost derived from the base price, you must expend fifty units of the material component or pay fifty times the XP cost.

See page 153 for more information on scepters.

## familiar concentration

In the tradition of Narfell's ancient summoners, your familiar can concentrate to maintain spells for you.

**Prerequisites:** Improved Familiar, caster level 9th.

**Benefit:** When you cast a spell requiring concentration, you can designate your familiar as the "concentrator." At any time during the spell's duration, you can hand over control of it to your familiar as a free action, provided the creature is within 5 feet of you and its Intelligence score is at least 10 + the level of the spell. The familiar then concentrates to maintain and direct the spell just as you would. You cannot take back control of a spell once you have transferred it to your familiar.

## godsight [regional]

You enjoy the special blessing of a deity of the Mulhorandi pantheon, who has granted you unerring powers of perception.

**Prerequisites:** Cha 13, Mulhorandi (aasimar, human [Mulan] or tiefling), Mulhorand region.

**Benefit:** You gain the following spell-like abilities, each usable three times per day: *detect evil*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *detect undead*, *read magic*. Your caster level equals your character level.

When you take this feat, you can choose *detect chaos*, *detect good*, or *detect law* instead of *detect evil*.

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

## greenbound summoning

You are learned in a long-forgotten manner of summoning once practiced by the Eaelranni elves of the High Forest. Creatures

answering your call are automatically imbued with the powers of the forest.

**Prerequisite:** Ability to cast any *summon nature's ally* spell.

**Benefit:** All animals that you summon using *summon nature's ally* acquire the greenbound template (see page 173) for as long as the summoning spell lasts.

## item reprieve

You learn how to use items from a school of magic previously prohibited to you.

**Prerequisite:** Spell Reprieve, specialist wizard level 5th.

**Benefit:** Choose one of the schools of magic that was previously prohibited to you because of your arcane specialization. You now can use spell completion and spell trigger magic items from that school normally, as if you were not a specialist wizard.

**Special:** The school you select must be one for which you have already taken the Spell Reprieve feat.

## Jergal's pact

You have made a bargain with Jergal, seneschal to the god of death. Although Myrkul, Cyric, and most recently Kelemvor have all served as the god of death, each has honored these pacts.

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (history) 4 ranks, Great Fortitude.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 bonus on saves to resist gaining negative levels or to remove them. If the effect that bestowed a negative level allows a Fortitude save to remove it, you can choose to attempt it after only 1 hour. (You can also choose to wait the usual amount of time before attempting the save.)

**Normal:** You make saving throws to remove negative levels 24 hours after gaining them.

## multilingual

You have an uncanny knack for languages.

**Prerequisites:** Int 15.

**Benefit:** You know three more languages than you normally would. Your choices for these extra tongues are not restricted to your racial or regional list of bonus languages, though you still can't select secret languages such as Druidic unless you belong to the race or class in question. Furthermore, Speak Language is always a class skill for you, and you receive a +2 bonus on all Decipher Script checks.

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

## Netherese battle curse

You can channel your own arcane energy into a powerful curse upon those who dare to face you in battle.

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (history) 4 ranks, Power Attack, arcane caster level 1st.

**Benefit:** By giving up an arcane spell slot or prepared spell before making an attack roll, you can perform a battle curse as a melee attack. You gain a bonus on the attack roll equal to the level of the spell or spell slot so sacrificed. If your attack hits, the target must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 +

level of spell or slot expended + your Cha modifier) or take a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, ability checks, skill checks, and weapon damage rolls for 1 minute. The effects of multiple battle curses don't stack, and any foe that successfully resists your battle curse cannot be affected by it again for 24 hours.

Any effect that dispels or removes a curse eliminates the battle curse. Your caster level equals your character level for this purpose.

## servant of the fallen

You keep alive the worship of a deity who has died or vanished. Your faith in this fallen deity allows you to wield divine magic in his or her name.

**Prerequisites:** Cleric level 1st, dead or forgotten god (for example, Amaunator, Bhaal, Moander, or Myrkul) as patron deity.

**Benefit:** You can name a dead god as your patron deity and still receive your cleric spells normally. In addition, you can call upon the universal remnant of your deity's power once per day to gain a +1 luck bonus on any single die roll. You can also be raised or resurrected normally.

**Normal:** Dead or fallen deities cannot grant cleric spells, so clerics who choose such patrons do not normally receive spells. Characters who do not worship active gods in Faerûn suffer the fate of the Faithless in the Fugue Plane after death.

**Special:** You can take this feat only once. Choosing this feat changes your patron from your previous deity to the dead or forgotten deity of your choice, and you take no penalties for making this change. If you later choose a different patron deity, you lose the benefit of this feat, but your new patron may grant you spells just as he or she would for any other cleric.

See Ancient Deities, page 41, for a list of notable dead gods, their alignments, and their domains.

## spell reprieve

Your studies of the less restrictive arcane traditions of old allow you to cast one spell from a prohibited school.

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (history) 2 ranks, specialist wizard level 1st.

**Benefit:** Choose a spell from one of your prohibited schools of a level that you can cast. You can now learn and prepare that spell normally.

**Special:** You can take this feat multiple times, each time choosing a new spell from any of your prohibited schools.

## trapmaster

You have studied the funereal architecture and lethal traps of a dozen long-dead cultures. Your familiarity with ancient tombs, vaults, and other such sites has instilled in you an uncanny knack for avoiding traps.

**Prerequisites:** Int 13, trap sense +2.

**Benefit:** The bonus for your trap sense ability increases by 4. In addition, you gain a +2 bonus on all Disable Device checks.

## wounding spell [metamagic]

Because you have studied the cruel arts of the Athalantan magelords of old, you know how to cast spells that cause terrible, bleeding wounds.

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (history) 4 ranks, Empower Spell.

A wounding lightning bolt

**Benefit:** When affected by this feat, a spell that deals damage to a creature also inflicts a bleeding wound that does not heal normally. On each subsequent round, the victim loses 1 hit point at the beginning of your turn. The continuing hit point loss can be stopped with a Heal check (DC equal to the spell's save DC, or the save DC it would otherwise have in the case of a spell with no save), a *cure* spell, or a *heal* spell.

Illustration by Chris Hawkes





You cannot apply this feat to a spell that does not deal damage (such as *charm person* or *baleful polymorph*).

A wounding spell occupies a spell slot two levels higher than the spell's actual level.

## prestige classes

Elf sages watch over the prisons of ancient demons and guard artifacts of terrible evil power. Modern mages resurrect the ancient magic of Athalantar. In Mulhorand, servitors of ancient gods rule the nation and lead its armies. A secret society composed of fallen Netheril's descendants works to prevent the return of that empire, struggling covertly against the Shades and any mage they deem too close to discovering Netheril's secrets.

### cultist of the shattered peak

*"The pride of wizards and arcanists nearly doomed Faerûn once. Never again."*

—Khemal Serist, Cultist of the Shattered Peak

The Cult of the Shattered Peak is a highly secretive society whose members are all direct descendants of the Netherese. Cult cells are scattered all across Faerûn, but the majority are concentrated within and around the former boundaries of Netheril. Many cultists live among the Bedine tribes of the Anauroch and the folk of the North and Tun. Smaller cells operate across the Western Heartlands, monitoring Netherese ruins both known and unknown.

Most of the tales about secret Netherese cults depict their members as power-mad wizards bent on raising the Empire of Magic once again, or exploiting its secrets for personal gain. But the Cult of the Shattered Peak bears no resemblance to the cults in these stories, since its membership includes not a single arcane spellcaster. The members of this cult recall the hubris of Netheril and its citizens' oppression of those they viewed as "lesser races," and they seek to ensure that the ways of old Netheril remain dead and buried. To that end, they employ a variety of tactics—spreading misinformation, discrediting scholars who get too close to resurrecting some aspect of Netherese life, and even outright assassination, if necessary. Their methods may be ruthless at times, but the cultists firmly believe that they are working toward the greater good.

TABLE I-2: THE CULTIST OF THE SHATTERED PEAK

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	1	2	3
1st	+0	+0	+2	+2	Ominous presence, zeal	0	—	—
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+3	Sneak attack +1d6	1	—	—
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+3	Smite mage	2	0	—
4th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Sneak attack +2d6	3	1	—
5th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Death attack	3	2	0

**Class Skills (6+ Int modifier per level):** Appraise, Bluff, Climb, Craft (any), Decipher Script, Disable Device, Escape Artist, Gather Information, Hide, Intimidate, Jump, Knowledge (history), Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Profession (any), Sleight of Hand, Spot, and Use Rope.

## BECOMING A

### CULTIST OF THE SHATTERED PEAK

Cultists of the Shattered Peak possess skill at arms, stealth, and a smattering of ancient lore. Most of those now operating in Faerûn began their careers as fighter/rogues. Single-class rogues or ranger/rogues are also fairly common, though they must wait until they have gained the requisite combat training. The cult's sometimes ruthless tactics make paladins rare in its ranks, and arcane spellcasters are simply not permitted.

#### ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

**Race:** Human of Netherese descent (home region Anauroch, Halruaa, Nimbral, the North, the Ride, Uthgardt Tribesfolk, or the Western Heartlands).

**Base Attack Bonus:** +5.

**Skills:** Decipher Script 4 ranks, Disable Device 4 ranks, Knowledge (history) 4 ranks, Speak Language (Loross).

**Special:** Sneak attack +1d6.

**Special:** You may not have any levels in an arcane spellcasting class.

#### CLASS FEATURES

As a cultist of the Shattered Peak, you are focused on preventing arcane spellcasters from rediscovering the old ways of Netheril. Because that goal sometimes places you in direct conflict with arcane spellcasters, cult training grants you a number of abilities aimed at ensuring victory against such foes. All the following are class features of the cultist of the Shattered Peak prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** You are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, as well as with light armor and bucklers.

**Spellcasting:** You have the ability to cast a small number of arcane spells. To cast a cultist spell, you must have an Intelligence score of at least 10 + the spell's level, so if you have an Intelligence of 10 or lower, you cannot cast these spells. Bonus spells are based on Intelligence, and saving throws against these spells have a DC of 10 + spell level + your Int modifier. When you get 0 spells per day of a given level (for instance, 0 1st-level spells at 1st level), you gain only the bonus spells you would be entitled to based on your Intelligence score for that spell level. You can learn sorcerer/wizard spells from the schools of abjuration

HIT DIE: d6

or enchantment only. You have access to any spell on those lists and can freely choose which to prepare, just as a wizard can. You prepare and cast spells just as a wizard does.

**Ominous Presence (Ex):** When adventurers or explorers come too close to discovering some great Netherese secret, you prefer to frighten them off rather than kill them if at all possible. Upon becoming a cultist of the Shattered Peak, you gain a bonus equal to your class level on all Bluff and Intimidate checks.

**Zeal (Ex):** You gain a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls against arcane spellcasters and a +1 morale bonus on saving throws against arcane spells and effects. The bonus on attack rolls does not apply to a creature with arcane spell-like abilities unless it is also an arcane spellcaster.

**Sneak Attack (Ex):** Beginning at 2nd level, you deal extra damage when you are flanking an opponent or at any time when the target would be denied its Dexterity bonus. This extra damage applies to ranged attacks only if the target is within 30 feet. See the rogue class feature, page 50 of the *Player's Handbook*.

**Smite Mage (Su):** If you are forced into battle with an arcane spellcaster, your life depends on quick and decisive action. Starting at 3rd level, you can attempt to smite an arcane spellcaster with one normal melee attack once per day. You add your Charisma bonus (if any) to your attack roll, and you deal an extra 1 point of damage per cultist level you possess on a successful attack. If you accidentally smite a creature that is not an arcane spellcaster, the smite has no effect, but the ability is still used up for that day.

**Death Attack (Ex):** Sometimes the only way to stop especially determined foes from acquiring forbidden knowledge is to kill them. At 5th level, you gain a death attack that works like the assassin ability of the same name, except that the DC of the Fortitude save to avoid the kill or paralysis effect is 15 + your Int modifier. See the assassin class feature, page 180 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

### PLAYING A CULTIST OF THE SHATTERED PEAK

Certain objects and places are best left undisturbed, and sorcerers and wizards are the most likely to disturb them. Your task is to stop such individuals from doing so by any means necessary. This goal places you in direct or indirect conflict with many of Faerûn's arcane spellcasters. Not all mages are opposed to your cause, but until you know that a particular arcane spellcaster

isn't going to abuse his power, it's only wise to treat him as a potential adversary.

Secrecy allows you to do your work with a minimum of resistance from your adversaries and also protects you from reprisals. Thus, you usually operate covertly, as part of a hidden cell within the organization. You receive information and orders through the one or two other cell members you know, or through messages left for you by comrades you never see. You might also be assigned to protect and assist other members without their knowledge. This high degree of secrecy means that if you or any of your colleagues are captured or questioned, none of you can reveal much about the cult.

**Combat:** You admire efficiency. When combat seems the best way to achieve the cult's goals, you don't shrink from it, but you can often accomplish the same ends through stealth, guile, or distraction. Your fighting skills are on a par with the rogue's, and you excel in any fight in which a rogue would do well.

A carefully planned sneak attack is your best way to begin any violent encounter, and you should actively seek opportunities to flank opponents so that you can make even more use of sneak attacks. A well-aimed enchantment spell, such as *charm person* or *sleep*, may allow you to avoid a fight altogether, but save such assaults for weaker foes that are more likely to prove susceptible to them. Defensive spells such as *shield* can give you a nice edge in a fight and may prove more reliable than offensive spells.

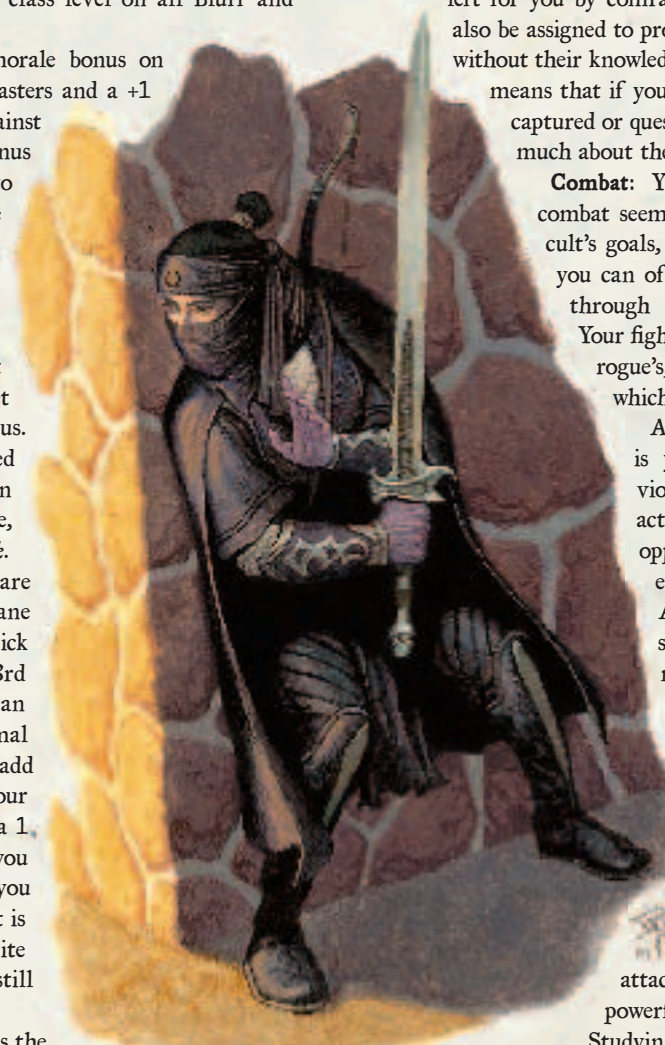
At 5th level, your death attack becomes one of the most powerful weapons in your arsenal. Studying your foe before you strike is essential, so don't be in a hurry to enter combat if you think you could

watch from concealment and strike a decisive blow before the fight really begins.

**Advancement:** Cultists of the Shattered Peak believe in the value of information. Upon joining the cult, you receive few orders other than "Keep your eyes open" and "Report back when you find information of interest, especially concerning powerful magic or mages."

Later, you may be called upon to join your fellow cultists on a mission of particular importance. At this point, you might be asked to steal a dangerous artifact from the vaults of a powerful mage, or attack the camp of an evil adventuring party looking for old magic in Netherese tombs, or assassinate someone who knows too much.

Illustration by Matt Cavotta & Steve Prescott



Khemal Serist, a cultist of the Shattered Peak



As you advance, you may want to add levels of rogue, fighter, or ranger as well as levels of cultist because increasing your stealth, your combat skills, or both is always a good idea. Pay attention to your spell selection as well. Aim for a mix of defensive spells (such as *resist energy* and *nondetection*), offensive spells (such as *touch of idiocy* and *deep slumber*), and generally useful spells (such as *dispel magic*, *rage*, *arcane lock*, and *heroism*). The more varied your spell selection, the more flexibility you have.

**Resources:** Upon joining the Cult of the Shattered Peak, you receive a badge or other identifying mark that you must wear on your clothing at all times, so that other cultists can easily recognize you. The Cult of the Shattered Peak has at least twenty such identifiers, ranging from scarves tied in a certain manner to brooches set with a specific type of stone. A DC 15 Spot check is sufficient to recognize a cultist's secret sigil, provided that the observers know what to look for. In certain special circumstances (such as the pursuit of a traitor to the cult who knows the sigils), you may choose not to wear the mark for a short time, but if you forgo it without good reason, you face stringent loyalty tests and questioning from cult leaders.

You can also deliver messages to other cult members by means of a variety of special signs and signals. For example, flowers tied with a green ribbon and hanging upside down in a window might indicate a cult member in trouble, or a discolored stone in a cobbled street might indicate a safe house nearby.

## CULTISTS OF THE SHATTERED PEAK IN FAERÛN

The Cult of the Shattered Peak consists of no more than a few dozen individuals of widely disparate origins. Of necessity, they must sift through countless tidbits of from informants, rumor-mongers, and the stories of travelers for clues as to who might be seeking ancient Netherese lore. Cultists often assume cover identities as traveling merchants, peddlers, sellswords, hunters, or other folk who can wander over great distances without inviting suspicion.

**Organization:** The organization of the cult is simple. All members, called Brothers or Sisters, are free to act as they see fit to achieve the organization's goals. Bitter rivalries sometimes spring up between individuals who embrace different methods for accomplishing those goals. For example, members inclined toward evil tend to favor assassination and intimidation, while those inclined toward good prefer misdirection and suggestion.

The leader of the organization, known as the Master of the Shattered Peak, is the most senior Brother who is willing to take on the mantle of leadership. He coordinates the efforts of dozens of individuals scattered over many lands, communicating through traveling cult members and secret signs.

The Cult of the Shattered Peak maintains a secret stronghold in the southern reaches of the Scimitar Spires. There, within the legendary Shattered Peak, lies a mountain fortress hidden beyond gaping chasms and torturous cliffs.

**NPC Reactions:** The few people who are aware of the cult generally view it as an organization of dangerous, wizard-hating

zealots. Arcanists of any sort are likely to hold unfriendly attitudes toward known cultists, but most other individuals are indifferent toward the organization and its goals. In the past, the cult has often interfered with the activities of Zhentarim wizards skulking about in the sands of Anauroch, and so the Zhentarim are almost always hostile toward members of the cult.

Cultists of the Shattered Peak regard magelords (see page 17) as cruel and dangerous, and most magelords return the sentiment.

## CULTIST OF THE SHATTERED PEAK LORE

Characters with Knowledge (local) can research the Cult of the Shattered Peak to learn more about it. When a character makes a skill check, read or paraphrase the following material, including the information from lower DCs.

**DC 15:** "A mysterious organization of magic-hating zealots sometimes interferes with adventurers and wizards searching for old lore."

**DC 20:** "The organization is known as the Cult of the Shattered Peak. Its members hunt those who seek out the secrets of old Netheril."

**DC 25:** "The Cult has a stronghold or base somewhere in the Scimitar Spires, in the legendary mountain known as the Shattered Peak. The Bedine tribesmen of the surrounding desert are allies of the Cult and often conceal cult members in their midst."

**DC 35:** Characters who achieve this level of success can learn important details about specific members of the cult in your campaign.

## CULTISTS OF THE SHATTERED PEAK IN THE GAME

Any time the PCs seek out the lost lore or magic of fallen Netheril, they risk drawing the attention of the Cult of the Shattered Peak. The cultists take a dim view of adventurers recklessly opening Netherese tombs or unearthing powerful Netherese magic. If intimidation and deception fail to turn the intruders away, the cult takes decisive action to remove them, either via its own members or through intermediaries such as mercenaries or paid assassins.

Conversely, PCs pursuing a villain who seeks ancient Netherese power, or who simply wields arcane magic cruelly or recklessly, may find a secret ally in the cult. Cultists might provide the heroes with information about their adversary's whereabouts and activities, or even offer the services of a cult scout or assassin to ensure the defeat of their common foe.

A player character cultist is apt to receive orders or requests for aid at unexpected times. Not all the character's cult activities should occur as a result of orders from the cult hierarchy; the cultist should have plenty of opportunities to discover situations or information that allow proactive advancement of the cult's interests.

As the cultist accumulates successes in the field, the character should acquire more cult contacts. Eventually, he should be in a position to get information through a network of junior cultists and have the authority to direct their activities to some degree.

## ADAPTATION

The Cult of the Shattered Peak could be active throughout Faerûn because foolish, irresponsible, and greedy arcane spellcasters can be found almost everywhere. Cult cells could monitor (and counter) the magical activities of the Zhentarim and the Red Wizards of Thay wherever they operate, and both organizations cover a lot of territory. Likewise, the cult might be active anywhere arcane spellcasters hold the reins of power, from the Elven Court to Rashemen and from the Vilhon Reach to Waterdeep.

## ENCOUNTERS

When the PCs explore a mysterious desert ruin and recover a trove of magic items, the cult decides that they cannot be allowed to keep what they have found. An experienced cultist known as Khemal Serist is dispatched to ensure that their discoveries remain lost to the world.

**EL 9:** Khemal Serist has risen quickly within the cult, proving his effectiveness and adaptability on a number of missions. Though he has slain a few arcane spellcasters who could not be turned from their goal of unearthing Netherese lore, he much prefers to distract opponents, focusing their attention elsewhere when they get too close to knowledge that should remain lost. Since his target group on this mission has already recovered artifacts, he must take them back by either force or guile.

**Khemal Serist:** Male human rogue 2/fighter 4/cultist of the Shattered Peak 3; CR 9; Medium humanoid; HD 5d6+10 plus 4d10+8; hp 60; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +7; Grp +8; Atk +9 melee (1d6+2/18–20, +1 scimitar) or +11 ranged (1d6+2/×3, +1 composite shortbow); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d6+2/18–20, +1 scimitar) or +11/+6 ranged (1d6+2/×3, +1 composite shortbow); SA smite mage 1/day, sneak attack +2d6, spells; SQ evasion, ominous presence, trapfinding, zeal; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +4; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +11, Climb +5, Decipher Script +6, Diplomacy +3, Disable Device +6, Gather Information +9, Hide +7, Intimidate +4, Jump +5, Knowledge (history) +5, Move Silently +7, Open Lock +8, Ride +7, Search +6, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +9, Speak Language (Loross), Survival +2, Use Magic Device +4; Blind-Fight<sup>B</sup>, Combat Expertise<sup>B</sup>, Dodge, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Quick Draw<sup>B</sup>, Survivor.

**Languages:** Common, Loross, Midani, Netherese.

**Smite Mage (Su):** Once per day, Khemal can attempt to smite an arcane spellcaster with one normal melee attack, adding +0 to his attack roll and dealing an extra 3 points of damage on a successful attack. If he accidentally smites a creature that is not an arcane spellcaster, the smite has no effect, but the ability is still used up for that day.

**Sneak Attack (Ex):** Khemal deals an extra 2d6 points of damage on any successful attack against flat-footed or flanked targets, or against a target that has been denied its Dexterity bonus for any reason. This damage also applies to ranged attacks against targets up to 30 feet away. Creatures with concealment, creatures without discernible anatomies, and creatures immune to

extra damage from critical hits are all immune to sneak attacks. Khemal can choose to deliver nonlethal damage with his sneak attack, but only when using a weapon designed for that purpose, such as a sap (blackjack).

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

**Ominous Presence (Ex):** Khemal gains a bonus equal to his cultist of the Shattered Peak level on all Bluff and Intimidate checks (already figured into the statistics above).

**Trapfinding (Ex):** Khemal can find, disarm, or bypass traps with a DC of 20 or higher. He can use the Search skill to find, and the Disable Device skill to disarm, magic traps (DC 25 + the level of the spell used to create it). If his Disable Device check result exceeds the trap's DC by 10 or more, he discovers how to bypass the trap without triggering or disarming it.

**Zeal (Ex):** Khemal gains a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls against arcane spellcasters and a +1 morale bonus on saving throws against arcane spells and effects. The bonus on attack rolls does not apply to a creature with arcane spell-like abilities unless it is also an arcane spellcaster.

**Cultist Spells Prepared** (caster level 3rd; 10% arcane spell failure): 1st—*charm person* (DC 12), *endure elements*, *shield*.

**Spellbook:** as above plus 1st—*hold portal*, *hypnotism*, *protection from evil*, *protection from good*.

**Possessions:** +2 mithral shirt, +1 scimitar, +1 composite longbow (+1 Str bonus) with 20 arrows.

## glorious servitor

"Let the enemies of my lord and god fall before my might. I am his chosen, and I shall let none stand who dare oppose his will!"

—Netheris Ket, Glorious Servitor of Sebek

Glorious servitors are exceptionally loyal and devout servants of the Mulhorandi gods. Exalted above most other mortals, a glorious servitor strives to live an exemplary life that embodies her deity's beliefs and values. She has many rivals and enemies both inside and outside her deity's cult, but she welcomes any challenge that gives her an opportunity to demonstrate her faithfulness and dedication.

## BECOMING A GLORIOUS SERVITOR

Most glorious servitors are chosen from the multitude of paladins, clerics, fighters, and monks dwelling throughout the Mulhorandi lands. Of these, clerics and paladins have the easiest route into the prestige class, since they have Diplomacy and Knowledge (religion) as class skills. Monks and rangers also take up this holy cause from time to time, although some of the required skills are cross-class for them. Those who were rogues or rogue/assassins before entering this class usually serve Set, while those who were sorcerers or wizards typically serve Thoth.

The key abilities for a glorious servitor are Charisma (to lead and influence her deity's church), Wisdom (to understand the motivations of her religious and political enemies), and Strength (to fight the battles ahead).



TABLE I-3: THE GLORIOUS SERVITOR

HIT DIE: D8

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Bestial form, fearlessness, spell resistance
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Divine shield +2, increased Strength +1
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	Divine voice, <i>true seeing</i>
4th	+3	+1	+1	+4	Divine shield +4, increased Strength +2
5th	+3	+1	+1	+4	<i>Greater command</i> , immunity to poison
6th	+4	+2	+2	+5	Divine shield +6, increased Strength +3
7th	+5	+2	+2	+5	Divine transformation, <i>mass cure light wounds</i>

**Class Skills (2+ Int modifier per level):** Bluff, Craft (any), Diplomacy, Handle Animal, Intimidate, Knowledge (history), Knowledge (local), Knowledge (religion), Listen, Profession (any), Sense Motive, Spot, Survival.

### ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

**Race:** Aasimar, human, or tiefling (home region Mulhorand).

**Base Attack Bonus:** +7.

**Skills:** Diplomacy 6 ranks, Knowledge (Mulhorand local) 6 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 6 ranks.

**Feats:** Godsight (see page 8), Improved Turning.

**Spells:** Ability to cast 2nd-level divine spells.

**Patron Deity:** Any from the Mulhorandi pantheon.

**Special:** You must have the approval of your patron deity's church.

### CLASS FEATURES

As a glorious servitor, you dedicate your life to the service of a single deity. To that end, you gain a variety of abilities that allow you to advance your deity's agenda in Faerûn. All the following are class features of the glorious servitor prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** You are proficient with the short sword, longsword, and khopesh, as well as with all types of armor and all types of shields except tower shields.

**Bestial Form (Su):** You can assume the bestial form of your patron deity (animal, vermin, or magical beast, as given on Table 1-4, below) as a standard action and remain in that form for up to 1 hour. This ability functions like a *polymorph* spell (caster

TABLE I-4:

### BESTIAL FORMS OF MULHORANDI DEITIES

Deity	Bestial Form
Anhur	Lion
Bast	Leopard
Geb	Brown bear
Hathor	Bison
Horus-Re	Giant eagle
Isis	Giant eagle
Nephthys	Huge viper snake
Osiris	Brown bear
Sebek	Giant crocodile
Set	Large monstrous scorpion
Thoth	Giant owl

level equals your glorious servitor level), except that you can use it only on yourself, you do not regain hit points for changing form, and you can assume only the designated shape. This ability is usable once per day per glorious servitor level.

Your natural attacks in your bestial form are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

**Fearlessness (Su):** Because the power of your deity suffuses both your body and your mind, you are immune to fear effects.

**Spell Resistance (Su):** Your deity's glory makes you more resistant to magic than other mortals. You gain spell resistance equal to 12 + your glorious servitor level.

**Divine Shield (Su):** At 2nd level, you gain a +2 deflection bonus to AC when you are in animal form. This bonus increases to +4 at 4th level and to +6 at 6th level.

**Increased Strength (Ex):** Your connection to the divine grants you great physical strength. At 2nd, 4th, and 6th level, you gain a +1 inherent bonus to Strength in both your normal and your bestial form.

**Divine Voice (Ex):** Beginning at 3rd level, you can speak any languages you know with your normal human voice while in bestial form. This ability allows you to cast spells with verbal components normally while in bestial form, although you cannot cast spells that require somatic components unless you use the Still Spell or Natural Spell feat.

**True Seeing (Sp):** Upon attaining 3rd level, you gain the ability to use *true seeing* once per day (caster level equals your character level).

**Greater Command (Sp):** At 5th level and higher, you can use *greater command* once per day (caster level equals your character level).

**Divine Transformation (Su):** When you attain 7th level, your deity rewards you for your faithful service by changing your type to outsider (native).

**Immunity to Poison (Ex):** Your devotion to your deity has rendered you immune to poison.

**Mass Cure Serious Wounds (Sp):** At 7th level, you can use *mass cure serious wounds* (or *mass inflict serious wounds* if your patron is Set or Sebek) once per day (caster level equals your character level).

### UNFAITHFUL SERVITORS

If you willfully violate the orders of your deity, you lose all supernatural and spell-like abilities of the prestige class and cannot progress further as a glorious servitor.

In much the same way as a paladin, you regain your abilities and advancement potential if you atone for your violations. You can also regain your abilities if you switch allegiance to one of your deity's rivals in the Mulhorandi pantheon—a tactic that earns you the unending enmity of your previous deity's church.

### PLAYING A

#### GLORIOUS SERVITOR

Because you maintain such a deep connection with the divine, each action you perform is in fact an act of your deity. Those outside Mulhorand may perceive you as just a god's pawn, but they are wrong. In Mulhorand, you are more than a hero—more even than a guardian of the people. You are a champion of all that Mulhorand was, is, and will be.

From the moment you become a glorious servitor, you play a variety of roles on behalf of your god and your church—messenger, emissary, guardian of the sacred tombs, and more. As you earn greater trust and accumulate ever more glorious accomplishments, your duties expand to include recruitment, crusading, spying, assassination, and any other tasks that advance your deity's agenda in Mulhorand and the rest of Faerûn.

When you reach the pinnacle of your power, you may be placed in charge of your own church or awarded a high position within the government or military.

**Combat:** The wishes of your deity dictate your approach to combat. Horus-Re demands fairness and righteousness from his minions, while Set encourages deception and trickery.

Your spell resistance can ward off some magical attacks, especially from low-level spellcasters, allowing you to concentrate your defenses on more formidable foes. Furthermore, your Godsight feat and your *true seeing* ability allow you to pierce false illusions, identify your enemies, and see the world as it truly is.

Your ability to change shape is one of your god's greatest gifts to you. In bestial form, you can travel unnoticed, especially through wilderness lands, and fight using the natural attacks of your bestial form.

If your form allows you to fly or swim, you gain still more strategic options in combat. When you reach 2nd level, you gain greater protection against attacks while in your bestial form, and that defense grows stronger as you attain higher levels. At 3rd level, your ability to speak in your bestial form allows you to communicate strategic information to your

Illustration by William O'Connor



Netheris Ket,  
a glorious servitor of Sebek



allies and even cast spells without changing back to humanoid form. At 5th level, you can use your *greater command* ability to stop enemies in their tracks before they can attack you. Finally, your transformation to outsider at 7th level renders you immune to many effects that work only against humanoids, though you are still vulnerable to *holy word* and other spells and effects that target outsiders.

**Advancement:** Before naming a glorious servitor, the church carefully screens and tests initiates for their loyalty, combat ability, and faithfulness. Thus, by the time you enter the class, you are fully aware of your place in your deity's grand scheme.

Your role upon entering the prestige class is to serve as a special emissary, agent, and troubleshooter for your church. Your routine duties are likely to involve delivering messages to outposts, other churches, and the far-flung armies of Mulhorand. In addition, you may be tasked with hunting down the enemies of your deity, seeking out lost artifacts and treasures that might bring glory to your faith, and spying on your church's enemies to discover their secrets.

Keeping your ranks maximized in Diplomacy and one or more Knowledge skills is an excellent strategy, since knowledgeable and politically savvy glorious servitors make the most effective emissaries of the gods. You may also wish to buy ranks in Bluff and Intimidate if you plan to work in foreign lands where your deity may not have such a fearsome reputation.

**Resources:** The best resource you have to offer your compatriots is the full support of your church. In addition to gear, money, and shelter in times of need, the church can offer a wealth of information. Knowing that you would never willingly cause harm to your church, the faithful rarely question your actions and provide whatever support they can without reservation. You are also an asset to any group that must navigate the great bureaucracy of Mulhorand. Because of your high status, your requests are handled with greater urgency than those of lesser citizens. Finally, you may be able to use your bestial form to spy on others and access forbidden areas inconspicuously, thus reducing the risk to yourself and your comrades.

### GLORIOUS SERVITORS IN FAERÛN

Glorious servitors are found primarily in the larger cities of Mulhorand, and to a lesser extent in Murghôm, Semphar, and the conquered lands of Unther. The glorious servitors of Horus-Re and Anhur may also be encountered in border outposts defending Mulhorand from outside threats. Many of those who have attained high levels in the prestige class also hold positions of importance in Mulhorand society and act on matters of state on behalf of their patron deities. Set's glorious servitors, however, tend to assume less prominent positions in Mulhorand so that they can carry out their deity's poisonous plans from the shadows. Glorious servitors who travel to other regions of Faerûn sometimes serve as ambassadors and spies for Mulhorand, accumulating information while carrying out their deities' plans. Many of those who have attained high levels in the prestige class hold positions of importance in Mulhorand society and act on matters of state on behalf of their patron deities.

Glorious servitors have no common organization, since each is first and foremost a member of her particular church.

### NPC REACTIONS

A glorious servitor is a champion of her faith just as a paladin or a high-level cleric is, and she is treated in much the same way by the allies and enemies of her church. Anyone favorably disposed toward a cleric of Anhur, for instance, should also be favorably disposed toward a glorious servitor of Anhur. Almost all Mulhorandi begin with a helpful attitude toward glorious servitors of any deities except Set and Sebek.

Clerics, paladins, and servants of non-Mulhorandi deities are generally suspicious of a glorious servitor's motives and begin with an indifferent or unfriendly attitude toward her.

### GLORIOUS SERVITOR LORE

Characters with Knowledge (religion) can research the various Mulhorandi deities to learn more about their glorious servitors. When a character makes a skill check, read or paraphrase the following material, including the information from lower DCs.

**DC 10:** "Mulhorandi gods are served by special champions known as glorious servitors."

**DC 15:** "Glorious servitors often begin their careers as clerics or paladins but later become elite emissaries and agents of their gods. Many high-ranking Mulhorandi bureaucrats, generals, and officials are glorious servitors of one god or another."

**DC 20:** "Glorious servitors have a number of special powers, including the ability to take on the form of creatures sacred to their gods."

**DC 30:** Characters who achieve this level of success can learn important details about specific glorious servitors in your campaign.

### GLORIOUS SERVITORS IN THE GAME

Most glorious servitors undertake missions on behalf of their churches in the lands of the Old Empires. In addition, they sometimes investigate matters of interest to the Mulhorandi in foreign lands. They often explore newly discovered dungeons, work against Thayan agents, and spy out the strength of various rulers and wizards.

As a character attains higher levels in the prestige class, she gains increasing fame among the faithful. This added recognition means that she receives an increasing number of requests for assistance and advice from rank-and-file members of her church. Likewise, she becomes a target for enemies of the faith—particularly the glorious servitors of rival gods. But fame isn't all bad—the character can expect a warm welcome and a good dose of hospitality whenever she visits a place where her patron is venerated. Members of the faithful may also be able to provide useful information or timely warnings of impending trouble. Requests for aid aren't always troublesome, either—the character can accept or reject tasks at her own discretion (though she can't expect to go far if she makes a habit of flatly refusing orders from superiors), and some missions can lead to satisfying and profitable adventures as well as increased rank and status in the faith. A senior glorious servitor seldom gets ordered around, and she may even get a chance to give a few orders of her own.

### ADAPTATION

In campaigns set outside Mulhorand and its environs, most glorious servitors have connections with a Mulhorandi enclave of some kind. Some such enclaves are mercantile (a group of Mulhorandi families conducting business in a foreign land, for example); others have a diplomatic function (such as the neighborhood around a Mulhorandi embassy in a foreign capital). A glorious servitor operating in foreign lands might be asked to serve as a scout or spy, or to carry out some other clandestine mission. She can also serve as a missionary for her faith outside her own country.

### ENCOUNTERS

When the PCs investigate reports of slavers operating in the coastal marshes along the Sea of Fallen Shores, they find a glorious servitor of Sebek acquiring slaves to send back to her masters in Gheldaneth.

**EL 12:** Netheris Ket has fought hard to gain her exalted position within the cult of Sebek. Now that she has access to her deity's giant crocodile form, she uses it frequently to inspire loyalty in her followers. She scouted this area in her bestial form, planned the slave-gathering operation, then moved her followers into position. When accosted by the PCs, Netheris attempts to talk her way out of the situation using her Diplomacy skill. Should that tactic fail, she begins combat with spellcasting, then closes for melee in her bestial form.

**Netheris Ket:** Female human cleric 5 of Sebek/fighter 4/glorious servitor 3 of Sebek; CR 12; Medium humanoid; HD 8d8+8 plus 4d10+4; hp 74; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +9; Grp +11; Atk +12 melee (1d10+3/19-20, +1 *khopesh*) or +9 ranged (1d8+2/×3, masterwork composite longbow); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d10+3/19-20, +1 *khopesh*) or +9/+4 ranged (1d8+2/×3, masterwork composite longbow); SA rebuke undead 4/day (+3, 2d6+3, 6th), spell-like abilities, spells; SQ bestial form (giant crocodile), divine shield +2, divine voice, fearlessness, increased Strength +1, spell resistance 15, *true seeing*; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +12; Str 15, Dex 9, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 13.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +4, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +14, Handle Animal +5, Jump -3, Knowledge (Mulhorand local) +6, Knowledge (religion) +9, Listen +6, Ride +3, Sense Motive +8, Spot +6; Alertness, Blind-Fight<sup>B</sup>, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*khopesh*)<sup>B</sup>, Godsight<sup>†</sup>, Improved Turning, Lightning Reflexes, Natural Spell, Negotiator, Power Attack<sup>B</sup>.

<sup>†</sup> New feat described on page 8.

**Languages:** Common, Mulhorandi.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 3/day—*detect good*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *detect undead*, *read magic*. Caster level 12th.

**Bestial Form (Su):** Three times per day, Netheris can assume the form of a giant crocodile as a standard action and remain in that form for up to 1 hour. This ability functions like a *polymorph* spell (caster level 3rd), except that she can use it only on herself, she does not regain hit points for changing form, and she can assume only the giant crocodile form.

**Divine Shield (Su):** Netheris gains a +2 deflection bonus to AC when she is in giant crocodile form.

**Divine Voice (Ex):** Netheris can speak any languages she knows with her normal human voice while in giant crocodile form. This ability allows her to cast spells with verbal components normally while in bestial form.

**Fearlessness (Su):** Netheris is immune to fear effects.

**Increased Strength (Ex):** Netheris has a +1 inherent bonus to Strength in both her humanoid and her giant crocodile form.

**True Seeing (Sp):** Netheris can use *true seeing* once per day (caster level 12th).

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (caster level 5th): 0—*detect magic* (2), *guidance*, *resistance*, *virtue*; 1st—*command* (DC 15), *cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *endure elements*, *magic fang*<sup>D</sup>; 2nd—*augury*, *fog cloud*<sup>D</sup>, *silence* (DC 16), *spiritual weapon*; 3rd—*cure serious wounds*, *know bloodline*<sup>†</sup>, *water breathing*<sup>D</sup>.

**D:** Domain spell. Domains: Scalykind<sup>PG</sup> (rebuke/command snakes and reptilian creatures 4/day) and Water (turn fire creatures or rebuke water creatures 4/day).

<sup>†</sup> New spell described on page 32.

**Possessions:** +1 *half-plate*, +1 *heavy steel shield*, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *ring of protection* +1, +1 *khopesh*, masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str bonus) with 20 arrows, *periapt of Wisdom* +2, *lesser strand of prayer beads*, *lesser metamacrod of Silent Spell*, *wand of endure elements* (37 charges), 4 gp, 3 sp, 8 cp.

## Magelord

"So they ran me out of Secomber. They said I wasn't good enough. They said my spells were too weak. Now they will see what kind of wizard I've become. They'll see. Who'll be sorry then?"

—Rimmen the Magelord

Quick to anger, haughty, and proud of his Art, the magelord is an arcane spellcaster who studies an ancient magical tradition known for extremely fast and versatile spellcasting. Sometimes a spellslinger for hire, sometimes a professional arcane duelist, the typical magelord believes he has the right to wring respect, wealth, and power from the world around him through the use of arcane force. In reality, he is little more than a cruel bandit lord who uses his magical gifts to dominate and intimidate less talented individuals.

Like a school of fencing or a martial arts style, the magelord tradition has been passed down over the centuries from one practitioner to another. Few magelords give away such knowledge—indeed, anyone who would study this aspect of the Art must either bribe a magelord with princely gifts and service or undertake years of research to unearth ancient texts describing the techniques.

The way of the magelord rewards ambition and recklessness, and it tends to encourage a certain contempt for the risks of power. Thus, most magelords regard their power as a tool with which to fulfill their own desires as opposed to a gift they can use to serve others. A few, however, study magelord lore in hopes of using their magic against tyranny and injustice.



Magelords are relatively rare, but societies and fellowships of them have arisen in many lands over the centuries. The most famous of these was based in the old realm of Athalantar, the Kingdom of the Stag. Bards still sing of the cruelty and evil of the magelords who ruled over the nation, evoking terrible images of a century when tyranny and deadly ambition reigned. The wizards of the Stag Kingdom were cruel, avaricious, driven men with an exceptional talent for magic. Ostensibly, they served as high officials of the realm who brutally enforced their prince's will, but in truth they ruled the Stag Kingdom from behind the throne.

### BECOMING A MAGELORD

You must find a practicing magelord and persuade her to teach you the secret techniques of using magic in the magelord style. This process usually requires you to spend at least ten days in that wizard's company and either pay her at least 10,000 gp or offer a service of equivalent value. If you cannot find a magelord willing to tutor you, you can research the secret traditions of the magelords on your own. To do so, you must locate and obtain rare tomes and treatises costing at least 10,000 gp and spend 1 month practicing the techniques described therein. You can fulfill this requirement at any point in your arcane career prior to adding a level of magelord, so you need not wait until you are ready to advance to do so.

Wizards, wizard/rogues, and wizard/assassins make excellent magelords, and wizard/blackguards are also good candidates for this class. Wizard/fighters are more rare, though their fighting ability lends itself well to this prestige class.

Intelligence is the most important ability for a magelord, since it bears directly on spellcasting. Constitution is also important, since magelords tend to live in uncivilized lands and often engage in combat, making Concentration checks a frequent necessity.

### ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

**Skills:** Intimidate 3 ranks, Knowledge (history) 6 ranks, Knowledge (arcana) 6 ranks.

TABLE I-5: THE MAGELORD HIT DIE: D4

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Sneak attack +1d6	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Bonus mastered spell	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
3rd	+1	+1	+3	+1	Signature supremacy	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
4th	+2	+1	+4	+1	Bonus mastered spell	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
5th	+2	+1	+4	+1	Sneak attack +2d6	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
6th	+3	+2	+5	+2	Bonus mastered spell	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
7th	+3	+2	+5	+2	Signature supremacy	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
8th	+4	+2	+6	+2	Bonus mastered spell	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
9th	+4	+3	+6	+3	Sneak attack +3d6	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
10th	+5	+3	+7	+3	Magelord mastery	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class

**Class Skills (2 + Int modifier per level):** Bluff, Concentration, Craft, Hide, Intimidate, Knowledge (all skills, taken individually), Move Silently, Sense Motive, Spellcraft, Spot, Tumble.

**Feats:** Improved Initiative, Spell Mastery, Signature Spell<sup>PG</sup>, Weapon Focus (ray).

**Spells:** Ability to cast 5th-level arcane spells.

**Special:** You must have the evasion special quality as either a class feature or a racial trait.

**Special:** You may not be lawful in alignment.

**Special:** You must be tutored by a magelord or obtain rare tomes to study the tradition. Either option costs no less than 10,000 gp or a service of equivalent value.

### CLASS FEATURES

The magelord tradition emphasizes mastery of a variety of spells and teaches practitioners to employ mastered spells with greater speed and flexibility. All the following are class features of the magelord prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** You gain no new proficiency with weapons, armor, or shields.

**Spellcasting:** At each magelord level, you gain new spells per day and an increase in caster level (and spells known, if applicable) as if you had also gained a level in an arcane spellcasting class to which you belonged before adding the prestige class level. You do not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained. If you had more than one arcane spellcasting class before becoming a magelord, you must decide to which class to add each level for the purpose of determining spells per day, caster level, and spells known.

**Sneak Attack (Ex):** Beginning at 1st level, you deal extra damage when you are flanking an opponent or at any time when the target would be denied its Dexterity bonus. This extra damage applies to ranged attacks only if the target is within 30 feet. See the rogue class feature, page 50 of the *Player's Handbook*.

**Bonus Mastered Spell (Ex):** When you attain 2nd level, you can choose one spell that you already know. From that point on, you can prepare that spell without referring to a spellbook, as if you had chosen to master it with the Spell Mastery feat. You can choose another known spell to master in this manner at 4th, 6th, and 8th level.

**Signature Supremacy (Ex):** By 3rd level, you have become so familiar with your mastered spells that you can convert any 4th-level or lower prepared spell into any 4th-level or lower mastered spell, just as a good cleric can spontaneously cast prepared spells as *cure* spells. Upon attaining 7th level, you can convert any 9th-level or lower prepared spell into a 9th-level or lower mastered spell in the same manner.

**Magelord Mastery (Ex):** At 10th level, you can apply one or more metamagic feats that you know to a spell that you have converted to a mastered spell by means of either the signature supremacy ability or the Signature Spell feat. The level of the prepared spell to be converted must equal or exceed that of the mastered spell with the desired metamagic feats applied. For example, you could convert the 5th-level prepared spell *teleport* into the 1st-level mastered spell *magic missile* modified by the Empower Spell, Still Spell and Silent Spell feats.

### PLAYING A MAGELORD

To survive and thrive in their treacherous world, the original magelords of Athalantar developed a highly resourceful means of handling spells. Their new ways of managing magic gave them more personal power, a better chance to survive, and a variety of ways to eliminate foes. Now those first magelords are gone, and their power is yours. You can be as intimidating as a thug, as stealthy as a rogue, and as murderous as an assassin without sacrificing the ability to cast potent arcane spells.

You answer to no one and use your power as you see fit. Though you aid others when doing so suits your purpose, no organization supports your ways or offers you resources.

**Combat:** You have learned to wield magic in an incredibly flexible manner. Initially, you can use spells that keep you out of sight (such as *invisibility*) to increase your opportunities for sneak attacks. At 3rd level, you can swap out a mid-level or low-level prepared spell for a mastered spell on the fly, and at 7th level, you can swap out any prepared spell for any mastered spell.

The key to success as a magelord is to select your mastered spells carefully. If you prefer a defensive approach to combat, master spells that provide instant protection or a quick escape. If you want to be ready for a fight at any time, master a good selection of offensive spells. With the offensive option, for example, you should master attack spells such as *magic missile*, *scorching ray*, *fireball*, *phantasmal killer*, and *cloudkill*. You can then prepare defensive or generally useful spells, such as *shield*, *protection from arrows*, *fly*, *globe of invulnerability*, and *wall of stone*, and swap them out for attack spells as needed. This approach

to spell selection allows you to be prepared for most situations you might face and still have a good selection of spells available for attack.

Finally, when you reach the pinnacle of magelord power, you can apply metamagic feats to mastered spells during casting.

**Advancement:** Your versatile command of magic is your greatest asset, so maximizing the advantage it provides is the wisest course. Whenever you become eligible for another feat, consider taking Spell Mastery again. After all, the more spells you master, the less you must rely on a spellbook—a distinct advantage if you must travel light or if your spellbooks are stolen. If you plan on taking Spell Mastery multiple times, increase your Intelligence to maximize the benefit it offers. In addition, you should consider taking metamagic feats that power up your already formidable spellcasting ability.

A number of skills can also provide considerable benefit for you. Improving your stealth-oriented skills aids you in making sneak attacks, which augment your combat prowess considerably. In addition, purchasing some ranks in Bluff and Intimidate to back up the threat of your magic is a wise move.

**Resources:** Like all magelords, you are a loner. Anyone else who follows this path is a rival, not an ally. You must rely on yourself, because no one else is trustworthy—and that is as it should be.

### MAGELORDS IN FAERÛN

Because magelords often hire themselves out to anyone willing to meet their prices, they can be found almost anywhere in Faerûn. However, their generally greedy and ambitious nature makes them likely to switch employers on the spot when a better deal presents itself. In fact, it's not uncommon for a hired spellslinger to become the master of the house if his employer proves weak or foolish.

Magelords flourish in lands without a strong central authority, particularly

places where an individual's wits, skill, and ruthlessness offer the best opportunities for personal gain, and where issues of law are settled by tests of individual strength.

The fact that no societies or fellowships of magelords exist in Faerûn today is probably a result of the fact that most magelords are loners. However, if a group of them were to find common cause, a new society could arise at any time.

Illustration by Brian Despain



Rimmen of the Scarlet Eye, a magelord



## NPC REACTIONS

Most people regard hired spellcasters as cold-hearted mercenaries who are reliable only to the limits of their own self-interest. Magelords in Faerûn are viewed in much the same way. All too often, these wizard-robed thieves and tyrants use their power to plunder and dominate those who lack the strength to stop them. On the bright side, very few nonarcanists can really distinguish between a magelord and any other kind of wizard, so few people are prejudiced against magelords in particular. Thus, a magelord can expect the same welcome that any wizard would receive in a town or city.

Other wizards are usually indifferent or unfriendly toward the magelord because of his obvious contempt for the Art in its traditional form.

## MAGELORD LORE

Characters with Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (history) can research the magelord tradition and find information on notable magelords (or magelord societies) and their actions. When a character makes a skill check, read or paraphrase the following material, including the information from lower DCs.

**DC 10:** "Wizards who call themselves magelords are skillful, quick, and often quite proud and cruel as well."

**DC 15:** "At best, magelords are spellslingers or duelists-for-hire. More often, however, they are petty tyrants and villains who use their magic to plunder and dominate the weak. In the past, societies of magelords have virtually ruled kingdoms, such as ancient Athalantar."

**DC 20:** "Their magical tradition emphasizes the alteration or exchange of spells on the fly, so that they always have battle-spells ready and are rarely caught without a good offense or defense at hand."

**DC 30:** Characters who achieve this level of success can learn important details about specific magelords in your campaign.

## MAGELORDS IN THE GAME

Evil magelords make excellent adversaries for good-aligned adventurers. Defeating a black-hearted wizard whose spells and hired swords are terrorizing a town is a classic adventure. Magelords may also appear as "hired muscle" in the service of other, more powerful lords. Despite their tarnished reputation, many magelords are perfectly content to work for good- or neutral-aligned princes and nobles. Such magelords tend to remain quite loyal as long as their employer rewards them handsomely for their services.

Most magelords don't require much in the way of specialized adventures to be happy. However, having a magelord in the game can provide lots of adventure opportunities. As a magelord gains power and accumulates successes, the demand for his specific abilities increases. Likewise, a high-profile magelord tends to attract rivals in much the same way that notorious gunfighters once did in the American west. Finally, most magelords (particularly those who delight in mayhem) are natural foes for the Cult of the Shattered Peak.

## ADAPTATION

Experienced magelords can be found almost anywhere in Faerûn, but prospective magelords might find it necessary to visit a locale where wizards congregate in order to locate tutors or acquire the necessary research materials. Such locales include regions in which wizards are a preferred class (see page 28 of the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting*).

## ENCOUNTERS

An enemy of the PCs hires a magelord to hunt down and destroy the party leader (preferably an arcane spellcaster) to punish the PCs for their previous interference in his plans. Claiming that the character in question is holding stolen property, the magelord Rimmen of the Scarlet Eye challenges her to an arcane duel.

**EL 14:** Rimmen shares the attitude of the old magelords of Athalantar that arcane might entitles the bearer to take what he wants. He enjoys showing off his power and intimidating others with it. In combat, he uses defensive spells to prepare if he has the chance, but he readily converts any nonattack spells he has left to *fireball*, *magic missile*, or *disintegrate* during battle.

**Rimmen of the Scarlet Eye:** Male human rogue 2/wizard 9/magelord 3; CR 14; Medium humanoid; HD 2d6+4 plus 12d4+24; hp 65; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +6; Grp +6; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1/19–20, +1 *short sword*); Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6+1/19–20, +1 *short sword*); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ bonus mastered spell (*disintegrate* [+9 ranged touch, DC 21]), evasion, familiar, familiar benefits, signature supremacy, trapfinding; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +13, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 8, Cha 12.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +4, Bluff +6, Concentration +19, Decipher Script +12, Diplomacy +5, Disable Device +10, Escape Artist +7, Hide +8, Intimidate +13, Jump +2, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +12, Knowledge (history) +11, Knowledge (the planes) +12, Listen +6\*, Move Silently +7, Profession (scribe) +6, Search +10, Sense Motive +4, Spellcraft +18, Spot +6\*, Tumble +7; Alertness\*, Dodge, Empower Spell<sup>B</sup>, Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>, Signature Spell (*magic missile*), Spell Mastery (*fireball* [DC 18], *magic missile*), Weapon Focus (ray).

**Languages:** Chondathan, Common, Elven, Midani, Tethyrian.

**Sneak Attack (Ex):** Rimmen deals an extra 2d6 points of damage on any successful attack against flat-footed or flanked targets, or against a target that has been denied its Dexterity bonus for any reason. This damage also applies to ranged attacks against targets up to 30 feet away. Creatures with concealment, creatures without discernible anatomies, and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are all immune to sneak attacks. Rimmen can choose to deliver nonlethal damage with his sneak attack, but only when using a weapon designed for that purpose, such as a sap (blackjack).

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

**Familiar:** Rimmen's familiar is a weasel named Shensa. The familiar uses the better of her own and Rimmen's base save bonuses. The creature's abilities and characteristics are summarized below.

**Familiar Benefits:** Rimmen gains special benefits from having a familiar. This creature grants Rimmen a +2 bonus on Reflex saves.

**Alertness (Ex):** \*Shensa grants her master Alertness as long as she is within 5 feet.

**Empathic Link (Su):** Rimmen can communicate telepathically with his familiar at a distance of up to 1 mile. The master has the same connection to an item or a place that the familiar does.

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

**Signature Supremacy (Ex):** Rimmen can convert any 4th-level or lower prepared spell into any 4th-level or lower mastered spell, just as a good cleric can spontaneously cast prepared spells as *cure* spells.

**Trapfinding (Ex):** Rimmen can find, disarm, or bypass traps with a DC of 20 or higher. He can use the Search skill to find, and the Disable Device skill to disarm, magic traps (DC 25 + the level of the spell used to create it). If his Disable Device check result exceeds the trap's DC by 10 or more, he discovers how to bypass the trap without triggering or disarming it.

**Wizard Spells Prepared** (caster level 12th): 0—*detect magic* (2), *ghost sound* (DC 15), *mage hand*; 1st—*burning hands* (DC 16), *expeditious retreat*, *feather fall*, *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement* (+10 ranged touch), *shield*; 2nd—*Aganazzar's scorcher* (DC 17), *invisibility*, *Melf's acid arrow* (+9 ranged touch), *protection from arrows*, *scorching ray* (+10 ranged touch); 3rd—*blink*, *dispel magic*, *flame arrow*, *fly*, *lightning bolt* (DC 18); 4th—*ebon ray of doom*† (+10 ranged touch; DC 19), *fear* (DC 19), *polymorph*, *stoneskin*; 5th—*cone of cold* (DC 20), *feeblemind* (DC 20), *telekinesis*, *wall of force*; 6th—*chain lightning* (DC 21), *true seeing*.

**Spellbook:** as above plus 0—*acid splash*, *arcane mark*, *dancing lights*, *daze*, *detect poison*, *disrupt undead*, *flare*, *light*, *mending*, *message*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue*; 1st—*chill touch*, *endure elements*, *expeditious retreat*, *shield*; 2nd—*blindness/deafness*, *detect thoughts*, *resist energy*, *see invisibility*; 3rd—*fireball*, *haste*, *slow*; 4th—*arcane eye*, *fire shield*, *ice storm*; 5th—*hold monster*; 6th—*disintegrate*, *greater dispel magic*.

† New spell described on page 31.

**Possessions:** *amulet of natural armor* +1, *bracers of armor* +3, *ring of protection* +2, +1 *short sword*, *dusty rose ioun stone*, *headband of intellect* +2, *gloves of Dexterity* +2, *ring of counterspells*, *pearl of power* (1st-level spell), *pearl of power* (2nd-level spell), scroll of *minor creation*, scroll of *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, scroll of *false life*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, 8 pp, 10 gp.

**Shensa:** Weasel familiar; CR —; Tiny magical beast; HD 14d8; hp 32; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +6; Grp –6; Atk or Full Atk +10 melee (1d3–4, bite); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA attach; SQ deliver touch spells, improved evasion, low-light vision, scent, speak with master, speak with weasels; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +11, Will +8; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 5.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +10, Bluff +2, Climb +10, Concentration +17, Escape Artist +7, Hide +16, Intimidate +7, Jump –10, Listen +6, Move Silently +11, Search +5, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6, Weapon Finesse.

**Attach (Ex):** If Shensa hits with a bite attack, she uses her powerful jaws to latch onto the opponent's body and automatically deals bite damage each round. She loses her Dexterity bonus to Armor Class and has an AC of 12. While attached, Shensa can be struck with a weapon or grappled herself (by achieving a pin against her).

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

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

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

**Speak with Weasels (Ex):** Shensa can speak with weasels, minks, polecats, ermines, skunks, wolverines, badgers, dire weasels, and other creatures of the family Mustelidae. Such communication is limited by the intelligence of the conversing creatures.

**Skills:** Shensa has a +4 racial bonus on Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus on Balance and Hide checks. She uses her Dexterity modifier instead of her Strength modifier for Climb checks. She can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

## olin gisir

"Hush! Know that we walk in the ruins of the temple of Astaroth, a demon lord of the Abyss. It is said that the demon sleeps here still, seeking to poison the words of those who wander in. Luckily, I know just the spells to ensure that he remains asleep. . ."

—Meraera of the Olin Gisiae

As all Faerûnians know, elves have very long memories. Events that took place thousands of years ago and have been largely forgotten by the shorter-lived races are still fresh in the minds of the elves, since they occurred only a generation or so ago from their perspective. Along with such clear memories comes considerable knowledge, some of which is best kept secret.

The Olin Gisiae (which means "secret keepers" in Elven; singular Olin Gisir) are elite elf mages who have taken it upon themselves to guard these dark secrets from the rest of the world, ensuring that ancient demons remain bound away in protective circles, unholy artifacts remain forgotten, and places of dark power remain unvisited by mortals.



TABLE I-6: THE OLIN GISIR HIT DIE: D4

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Ancient knowledge +1, secret	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	<i>Signs and portents</i>	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	—	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Ancient knowledge +2, secret	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	<i>Word of dispel</i>	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	—	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Ancient knowledge +3, secret	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	<i>Word of might</i>	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	—	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Ancient knowledge +4, secret	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class

**Class Skills (2 + Int modifier per level):** Concentration, Craft (any), Decipher Script, Heal, Knowledge (all skills, taken individually), Profession (any), Spellcraft.

### BECOMING AN OLIN GISIR

The Olin Gisiae have an informal organization. As inveterate collectors of useful information, they're quick to notice elves and half-elves who might qualify for the class and just as quick to welcome newcomers into their ranks.

Olin Gisiae are recruited exclusively from the ranks of wizards and other arcane casters. The ideal candidate possesses a keen mind and an irresistible curiosity that sends her hunting for ancient mysteries on her own. Usually, a seasoned secret-keeper watches prospective recruits for some time to determine their motives and desires. Those who seem to be seeking power or personal glory are ignored, or sometimes even killed if their searches threaten to reveal dangerous secrets to the world. Those who respect the secrets they discover are contacted and offered training.

The quickest and easiest path to Olin Gisir is via the wizard class. A wizard gains access to new spell levels faster than a bard or sorcerer does, and her bonus feats allow her to pick up a second metamagic feat at an earlier level than other spellcasters. Sorcerers take up this path on occasion, though they must purchase some cross-class skills to meet the requirements. While bards have easy access to the required skills, their slower spell progression means that they cannot take this class before 13th level.



Meraera of the Olin Gisiae

Intelligence is a key ability, since an Olin Gisir relies heavily upon spellcasting and ancient knowledge. Charisma is also a key ability for sorcerers who choose to follow this path.

### ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

**Race:** Elf or half-elf.

**Skills:** Concentration 8 ranks, Knowledge (arcana) 10 ranks, Knowledge (history) 10 ranks.

**Feats:** Iron Will and any two metamagic feats.

**Spells:** Ability to cast 3rd-level arcane spells.

**Special:** Abjuration must not be a prohibited school for you.

### CLASS FEATURES

Olin Gisiae focus on knowledge, both arcane and mundane. Though they are not front-line combatants, their ability to read signs and banish single threats enable them to protect the secrets of the ancients with great efficiency. All the following are class features of the Olin Gisir prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** You gain no new proficiency with weapons, armor, or shields.

**Spellcasting:** At each Olin Gisir level, you gain new spells per day, and an increase in caster level (and spells known, if applicable) as if you had also gained a level in an arcane spellcasting class that granted you access to 3rd-level spells before you

Illustration by Vince Locke

added the prestige class level. You do not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained. If you have access to 3rd-level spells from more than one arcane spellcasting class when you gain a level as an Olin Gisir, you must decide to which class to add each level for the purpose of determining spells per day, caster level, and spells known.

**Ancient Knowledge (Ex):** You have studied ancient lore in considerable depth. You gain a +1 bonus on all Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (history), and Use Magic Device checks. You also gain the same bonus on bardic knowledge checks if you possess that class feature. The bonus increases to +2 at 4th level, to +3 at 7th level, and to +4 at 10th level.

**Secret (Ex):** You have picked up countless bits of forgotten lore from ancient tomes you have uncovered, the whispers of imprisoned fiends you have been set to guard, and other even more dangerous sources. Add your Intelligence modifier to your Olin Gisir level. You can choose any one secret for which that result equals or exceeds the number in the left column of Table 1-7. You can choose another secret in the same manner at 4th, 7th, and 10th level, though you may not select the same secret more than once.

**Signs and Portents (Sp):** At 2nd level, you learn to ferret out ancient, hidden evils by reading mystic omens in the world around you. Three times per day, you can use *augury*, as the spell (caster level equals your character level).

**Word of Dispel (Sp):** At 5th level, you gain additional power against the old perils you seek to destroy or subdue. You can add *dispel chaos*, *dispel evil*, or *dispel law* (your choice) to the 5th-level arcane spells that you can cast. If you cast spells as a wizard, you simply add the spell to your spellbook. If you cast spells as a sorcerer, you acquire it as a bonus spell known at that level. The spell you have chosen is now an arcane spell for you.

TABLE I-7: OLIN GISIR SECRETS

Level + Int	Mod	Secret	Effect
1		Lore of tongues	Learn 3 new languages (any except secret languages)
2		Secret of health	+3 hit points
3		Secret of inner strength	+2 bonus on Will saves
4		Lore of true stamina	+2 bonus on Fortitude saves
5		Dungeon navigation	Trap sense +2 (as the rogue ability, page 50 of the <i>Player's Handbook</i> )
6		Sight of the hidden	+4 bonus on Search checks
7		Ancient artifice	Any item creation feat as a bonus feat
8		Forgotten spell lore	Any metamagic feat as a bonus feat
9		Fiend warding	+2 sacred bonus to AC and on saves against attacks made by evil outsiders
10 or higher		Focused mind	Spell resistance 20 against enchantment spells

**Word of Might (Sp):** At 8th level, you can use words of power against your enemies. You can add *dictum*, *holy word*, or *word of chaos* (your choice) to the 7th-level arcane spells that you can cast. If you cast spells as a wizard, you simply add the spell to your spellbook. If you cast spells as a sorcerer, you acquire it as a bonus spell known at that level. The spell you have chosen is now an arcane spell for you.

### PLAYING AN OLIN GISIR

You are silent and somber most of the time—after all, the tasks you're charged with aren't trivialities. You tend to keep silent about what you know, as much for the sake of your companions' sanity as for the preservation of secrets. If your knowledge can help your companions, though, you freely offer as much as they need, provided that doing so does not compromise a secret. You keep a detailed journal of odd portents and omens that you see while traveling, so that you can return later and investigate.

Your initiation into the ranks of the Olin Gisiae was almost a seamless transition. After you had spent years seeking knowledge for its own sake, you were approached by an Olin Gisir, who offered you membership in an association dedicated to seeking knowledge and using it to protect and serve the elf race. Though you have no particular obligation to other members, you are always willing to share information with them, assist them with missions, and offer them hospitality as needed.

**Combat:** You are a scholar and watcher, not a fighter, so you prefer to rely on allies or mystically summoned creatures to deal with intruders who are attempting to delve into the secrets you guard. Many of your fellow Olin Gisiae who do not travel learn the art of creating golems, shield guardians, and other loyal constructs that can serve as warriors while their masters stand back and rain down magical destruction on their foes.

Your knowledge of history and magic allows you to identify ruins, read inscriptions on ancient tombs, and activate even the most outlandish magical artifacts. Remain aware of your surroundings—you may be able to avoid perils, elude foes, or summon aid by making good use of the secrets you find in ancient places.

Divination spells help you stay alert and prepared for any danger that might be heading your way. Spells such as *see invisibility*, *detect thoughts*, *arcane sight*, and *true seeing* help monitor your immediate surroundings, and *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *arcane eye*, *screaming*, and *prying eyes* help you look farther afield. You can never have too many allies, so don't overlook the various *summon monster* spells, and make sure you take spells that can boost your allies' abilities. *Haste* gives a big boost to your allies in combat, as do *heroism* and *rage*. *Glitterdust* is also advantageous for making invisible foes visible to those who fight on your side.

**Advancement:** As an apprentice secret-keeper, you learn the lore of long-forgotten places of power and how to harden your mind against ensorcelment by powerful demons and undead lords. In addition, you learn the abjuration spells needed to keep such beings bound and sleeping.

As you gain levels in the Olin Gisir class, you should learn as many abjuration spells as possible. Spells such as *magic circle* and *dismissal* are invaluable for keeping creatures of darkness



at bay, and other abjurations can help keep you alive if you are forced into combat.

Spell Penetration, Greater Spell Penetration, Spell Focus, and Greater Spell Focus are excellent feat choices, since the creatures you are likely to guard tend to have spell resistance and high saving throw bonuses. Metamagic and item creation feats are also useful, since they can give your spells some extra punch in emergencies.

**Resources:** As an Olin Gisir, you are part of a respected fellowship of magical guardians and watchers scattered throughout elf towns and cities. You can expect a warm welcome in any elf realm, and if you discover that you need immediate and significant help to avert a major catastrophe (such as the escape of a demon or the rising of a lich lord), your fellow elves will do everything in their power to assist you. Such assistance might come in the form of skilled warriors to guard you, potions or scrolls to provide you with magical aid, or even the loan of powerful magic items for your confrontation with the forces of evil.

Outside elf settlements, the Olin Gisiae are not widely known. However, a small number of human sages and scholars are aware of your order and inclined to aid you if so requested.

### OLIN GISIAE IN FAERÛN

Olin Gisiae can fill many roles in your campaign. They make excellent NPC advisors, since they can provide information about dungeons the PCs might explore or artifacts they might retrieve. They can also function as reinforcements for a group on a difficult mission or even as adversaries, should the party be unfortunate enough to wander into a protected area. Few secret-keepers subscribe to a philosophy of “Strike first and ask questions later,” but even reasonable Olin Gisiae can be drawn into conflict with PCs intent on meddling in the secrets they guard.

Olin Gisiae are loosely organized, usually coming together only if a truly terrible secret they have been protecting seems about to emerge. The typical secret-keeper chooses to guard a single site or a group of nearby sites, such as a demon’s prison or a tomb complex that serves as a lair for several powerful undead creatures. A few, however, prefer to travel with adventuring groups, seeking out places that even their fellows have forgotten. These roving secret-keepers usually arrange some means, either magical or mundane, to regularly report their findings back to a fellow Olin Gisir, who can quickly send a team to investigate should the missives suddenly cease.

Now and then, an old and very powerful Olin Gisir chooses to sacrifice her mortal life and undergo the transformation into a baelnorn<sup>Mon</sup>—a powerful, good-aligned elf lich who eternally guards a site important to her people. Such fearsome guardians usually choose to stand vigil over the most dangerous of sites, such as the ruins of Myth Drannor.

### NPC REACTIONS

Most elves understand the mission of the Olin Gisiae and support it wholeheartedly. Thus, an Olin Gisir can expect a friendly or helpful welcome in almost any elven community. Among non-elves who know about the Olin Gisiae’s mission and duties, good-hearted folk are usually friendly, but those who see the secret-keeper as an obstacle for some reason are usually unfriendly or

hostile. Characters who are unaware of a secret-keeper’s appointed task are usually indifferent.

Olin Gisiae get along well with loremasters but find the ambitious magelords reckless and arrogant.

### OLIN GISIR LORE

Characters with Knowledge (history) or Knowledge (geography) can research the Olin Gisiae to learn more about them. When a character makes a skill check, read or paraphrase the following material, including the information from lower DCs.

**DC 10:** “The Olin Gisiae are elf spellcasters who guard dangerous sites on behalf of their secret fellowship.”

**DC 15:** “An Olin Gisir’s protectorate is considered sacrosanct. Anyone entering one risks the secret-keeper’s wrath.”

**DC 20:** “Secret-keepers know powerful magic for binding and banishing demonic beings.”

**DC 30:** Characters who achieve this level of success can learn specific, detailed information about important Olin Gisiae in your campaign.

### OLIN GISIAE IN THE GAME

Because Olin Gisiae operate in relative isolation and seclusion, adding one to your game is simple. It’s entirely possible that characters with levels in this prestige class have always existed in the campaign world, but the PCs simply haven’t come across one before.

This prestige class appeals to PCs who like to know what mortals were not meant to know. If one of your PCs takes levels in the Olin Gisir class, be sure to give her an opportunity to use that knowledge from time to time, whether by allowing her to uncover some extra information about an adventure site, or by creating a full-blown adventure focused around slumbering horrors and ancient mysteries.

### ADAPTATION

Some Olin Gisiae range far beyond elf lands. If your campaign is set in an area far from the Elven Court and Evereska, it’s a good bet that any Olin Gisiae operating in the area are seeking out lost lore or trying to track down a foe from ancient times. In addition, one or two Olin Gisiae usually live with any sizable enclave of elves.

### ENCOUNTERS

PCs may encounter an Olin Gisir in the wilds, living in a small hut near the site of some ancient evil. Secret-keepers might also be encountered in inns or adventurers’ guilds, seeking to recruit adventurers as extra muscle to help secure some forgotten ruin.

**EL 11:** Meraera has spent many years studying ancient lore in and around Silverymoon. Upon hearing of a recently discovered tower in the ruins of Siluvanede, she hastened to the nearest adventurers guild in search of aid for an expedition to the ruins.

**Meraera:** Female sun elf wizard 7/Olin Gisir 4; CR 11; Medium humanoid; HD 11d4+11; hp 38; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed

16 against attacks made by evil outsiders); Base Atk +5; Grp +4; Atk or Full Atk +5 melee (1d6–1/18–20, masterwork rapier) or +8 ranged (1d8/×3, masterwork longbow); SQ ancient knowledge +2, elf traits, familiar, familiar benefits, low-light vision, secrets (fiend warding, sight of the hidden), *signs and portents*; AL CG; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +14 (+16 against enchantments; or Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +16 against attacks made by evil outsiders); Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 12, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +8, Concentration +15, Decipher Script +10, Heal +6, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +10, Knowledge (history) +17, Listen +9, Search +11, Spellcraft +20, Spot +9 (+12 in shadows); Alertness\*, Extend Spell<sup>B</sup>, Heighten Spell, Iron Will, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>, Spell Penetration.

**Languages:** Chondathan, Common, Elven, Illuskan, Sylvan.

**Ancient Knowledge (Ex):** Meraera has a +2 bonus on all Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (history), and Use Magic Device checks.

**Elf Traits:** Meraera has immunity to magic sleep effects. If she merely passes within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door, she is entitled to a Search check to notice it as if she were actively looking for it.

**Familiar:** Meraera’s familiar is a raven named Feor. The familiar uses the better of its own and Meraera’s base save bonuses. The creature’s abilities and characteristics are summarized below.

**Familiar Benefits:** Meraera gains special benefits from having a familiar. This creature grants Meraera a +3 bonus on Appraise checks.

**Alertness (Ex):** \*Feor grants his master Alertness as long as he is within 5 feet.

**Empathic Link (Su):** Meraera can communicate telepathically with her familiar at a distance of up to 1 mile. The master has the same connection to an item or a place that the familiar does.

**Share Spells (Su):** Meraera can have any spell she casts on herself also affect her familiar if the latter is within 5 feet at the time. She can also cast a spell with a target of “You” on her familiar.

**Signs and Portents (Sp):** Three times per day, Meraera can use *augury*, as the spell (caster level 11th).

**Wizard Spells Prepared** (caster level 11th): 0—*detect magic, light, mage hand, prestidigitation*; 1st—*comprehend languages, forcewave* (DC 16), *know protections, shield, summon monster I, true strike*; 2nd—*Aganazzar’s scorcher* (DC 17), *cat’s grace, detect thoughts* (DC 17), *see invisibility, summon swarm*; 3rd—*backblast, dispel magic, fly, protection from energy, suggestion* (DC 18); 4th—*arcane eye, fire shield, scrying* (DC 19), *stoneskin*; 5th—*cloudkill* (DC 20), *dismissal* (DC 20), *Sakkrtar’s triple strike*† (DC 20); 6th—*true seeing*.

**Spellbook:** as above plus 0—*acid splash, arcane mark, dancing lights, daze, detect poison, disrupt undead, flare, ghost sound, mending, message, open/close, ray of frost, read magic, resistance, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*detect secret doors, detect undead, Tenser’s floating disk*; 2nd—*locate object, magic mouth, shatter, summon monster II*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, hold person, Nezram’s amethyst aura†, tongues*; 4th—*detect scrying, locate*

*creature, polymorph other, remove curse, stoneskin*; 5th—*passwall, telekinesis, teleport*; 6th—*guards and wards, legend lore*.

† New spell described on page 30.

**Possessions:** *amulet of natural armor* +1, *bracers of armor* +2, *ring of protection* +1, masterwork rapier, masterwork longbow with 20 arrows, *headband of intellect* +2, *cloak of resistance* +2, *lens of detection, elixir of vision*, 3 *potions of cure light wounds*, scroll of *greater magic weapon*, 5 pp, 5 gp.

**Feor:** Raven familiar; CR —; Tiny magical beast; HD 11d8; hp 19; Init +2; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +5; Grp –8; Atk or Full Atk +9 melee (1d2–5, claws); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SQ deliver touch spells, improved evasion, low-light vision, speak with birds, speak with master; AL CG; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +11; Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 6.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +2, Concentration +14, Heal +7, Hide +10, Jump –17, Listen +6, Spot +6; Weapon Finesse.

**Language:** Elven.

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

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

**Speak with Birds (Ex):** Feor can speak with birds. Such communication is limited by the intelligence of the conversing creatures.

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

## sunmaster

*“The Netherese of old knew Amaunator, the great sun lord, whose light and order filled the world for an age. We know him now as Lathander. For centuries we have thought of Lathander as a god of morning, but his glory now ascends toward its noontide height. Just as the sun brightens while it climbs into the sky, so will Lathander’s glory and radiance grow as he resumes the glory and mastery that were his of old. All who worship him will see an end to this long night in which we live.”*

—Andar, Sunmaster

The sunmasters are members of a sect within the church of Lathander who believe that the Morninglord is the living reincarnation of Amaunator, the long-vanished sun god who stood high in the ancient Netherese pantheon. Sunmasters revere this ancient vision of Lathander as a deity of glory, light, and perfect order—a regal god who might one day lay claim to lordship over the Faerûnian pantheon. Through their deeds and faith, they hope to demonstrate that Lathander’s ascent is nearly complete, and that Amaunator’s long noontime reign is soon to begin.

Although the sunmasters have served Lathander loyally and well for fifteen centuries now, their doctrinal differences with the rest of the Morninglord’s clergy have caused discord and created schisms on more than one occasion. Most Lathanderites see



their deity as a good power—a god of renewal, hope, and rebirth. Sunmasters view Lathander (or Amaunator, as they often call him) as a deity that brings order to the world, just as the sun provides the regularity of day and night, season after season, year after year.

### BECOMING A SUNMASTER

Clerics, especially former Lathanderites, are best suited to take on the role of sunmaster. The most difficult and important step in entering this prestige class is turning aside from the accepted tenets of Lathander's faith by choosing the Servant of the Fallen feat, then devoting prayers and faith to Amaunator as an aspect of Lathander.

A small number of nonclerics who oppose darkness, chaos, and disorder (usually paladins and wizard/clerics) become sunmasters because they believe that Lathander will reward their faith with triumph over their shadowy adversaries.

As with clerics, sunmasters benefit from high scores in Wisdom and Charisma.

### ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

**Alignment:** Any lawful.

**Skills:** Knowledge (history) 8 ranks, Knowledge (geography) 4 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 4 ranks, Speak Language (Loross).

**Feats:** Servant of the Fallen (Amaunator) (see page 9).

**Spells:** Ability to cast 2nd-level divine spells.

**Domains:** Law, Sun.

**Patron Deity:** Amaunator.

**Special:** You must own a holy symbol of Amaunator, either personally recovered from a ruined temple of that deity or given to you by an existing sunmaster.

### CLASS FEATURES

Since sunmasters wield the unbridled power of the noonday sun, their abilities center around the properties of heat and light. The following are class features of the sunmaster prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** You gain no new proficiency with weapons, armor, or shields.

**Spellcasting:** At each sunmaster level, you gain new spells per day, and an increase in caster level (and spells known, if applicable) as if you had also gained a level in a divine spellcasting class to which you belonged before adding the prestige class level. You do not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained. If you had more than one divine spellcasting class before becoming a sunmaster, you must decide to which class to add each level for the purpose of determining spells per day, caster level, and spells known.

**Sun Spells:** You can prepare any Sun domain spell as if it were on your divine spell list. The spell uses a spell slot of a level equal to its level in the Sun domain list.

**Glaring Eyes (Sp):** Starting at 2nd level, your eyes glow with the brilliant orange color of the sun. You can produce a *searing light* effect from your eyes once per day (caster level equals your character level). Additionally, you can never be blinded or dazed by spells or effects with the light descriptor, or by natural light

of any kind. You can use *searing light* twice per day at 5th level and three times per day at 8th level.

**Resistance to Fire (Ex):** Your link to the sun gives you increasing resistance to its fire. At 3rd level, you gain resistance to fire 5. Your fire resistance increases to 10 at 6th level and to 15 at 9th level.

**Law Spells:** Beginning at 4th level, you can prepare any Law domain spell as if it were on your divine spell list. The spell uses a spell slot of a level equal to its level in the Law domain list.

**Planning Domain:** At 7th level, you gain access to the Planning Domain and acquire its granted ability (see *Player's Guide to Faerûn*). On any given day, you can choose spells from the Planning Domain or from one of the domains you chose as a 1st-level cleric to fill your domain spell slots. You do not gain additional domain spells each day, only a broader choice of domain spells at each spell level.

**Sunform (Sp):** Upon reaching 10th level, you gain the ability to become an insubstantial ball of bright, glowing light the size of a Medium creature. This effect is identical to that of the *gaseous form* spell, except as follows. In *sunform*, you radiate *daylight* as the spell, gain a fly speed of 120 feet (perfect), and have immunity to fire, light, and air effects. In addition, you gain a melee touch attack that deals 6d6 points of fire damage. You can remain in *sunform* for up to 10 rounds. *Sunform* is the equivalent of an 8th-level spell and is usable once per day.

### PLAYING A SUNMASTER

Like the morninglords of Lathander, you represent an elite sect of clerics and holy warriors. Your task is to demonstrate the superiority of Lathander's faith through your own actions, thereby hastening the day when he completes his millennia-long ascension and once again shines forth as the supreme lord over Faerûn's squabbling and fractious pantheon. Many of your fellow Lathanderites shrink from the grandeur of your vision for Amaunator's emergence from Lathander's faith, arguing that no one deity can know what is right for all creatures under the sun—but you know they are wrong. Only your bold action and glorious triumphs in the never-ending war against chaos and darkness will illuminate the truth of your belief for all to see.

The sun will rise tomorrow, as it does every day. This glowing orb is the absolute representation of your faith, and its supreme dependability is your guide. Be lawful. Know what is right, and support the right path in all your doings. Rid the world of darkness with the sun's perfect fire. You can expect trouble from rival sects within Lathander's faith and also from followers of Horus-Re, who mistakenly believe that their deity is Faerûn's only sun god.

As a sunmaster, you are still part of Lathander's church, and as such, you are loyal to both its precepts and its officials. As a new member, you can expect to receive plenty of advice on proper deportment and actions. Later on, you gain respect and admiration from your fellow sunmasters simply by virtue of your increasing power, which clearly demonstrates your deepening relationship with the sun. Since the hierarchy within your sect is based largely on merit, however, you can gain even more status by actively promoting its interests, achieving victories in the ongoing battle against chaos, and recruiting new members to

the cause. As you gain more status, junior members may begin coming to you for advice, and elder members may ask you to undertake special missions.

**Combat:** Your spells and abilities can banish darkness and restore order to chaos. You possess more offensive spell ability than most clerics because you can prepare spells from the Sun and Law domains as cleric spells. Your preferred mode of combat is to attack with spells such as *searing light* and *order's wrath*, smiting your foes with the pure power of the sun.

To use *searing light* most effectively, consider taking feats such as Precise Shot and Weapon Focus (ray). The former allows you to use *searing light* more readily against foes in melee combat with your allies, and the latter improves your chance to hit. If you take care to choose lawful allies, you can aim *order's wrath* nearly anywhere you wish without hurting your friends, because the spell doesn't harm lawful creatures.

When you reach the pinnacle of your power as a sunmaster, you receive the *sunform* ability, which makes you a formidable melee opponent against any foe that is susceptible to fire damage. However, your ability to cast spells is severely curtailed while you're using *sunform* unless you have the Still Spell, Silent Spell, and Eschew Materials feats.

**Advancement:** Your recruitment into the sunmasters sect was like a burst of brilliant sunlight. As you listened to the words of another sunmaster, the truth became dazzlingly clear. You joyfully undertook a quest to find a true holy symbol of Amaunator and were welcomed with open arms by your fellow sunmasters once you had succeeded.

As you attain higher levels in the prestige class, you take on responsibility for advancing those aspects of Lathander's worship that most directly reflect the glory of Amaunator. In particular, you must begin recruiting new followers and clerics for your order, lest Amaunator's worship die out again. The old temples of Amaunator were called courts, and each was headed by a high priest who held the title of Righteous Potentate. When you rule over your own army of the faithful, you can make that title your own.

Your abilities closely match those of most typical clerics, so any tool that would serve a cleric well should also aid you.

Feats such as Spell Penetration and Spell Focus can help you become a more effective spellcaster in combat, and feats such as Craft Wondrous Item and Craft Magic Arms and Armor allow you to create powerful tools for use in your crusade against the foes of order.

**Resources:** The Church of Lathander is widespread and powerful, and its members generally support your efforts. While many Lathanderites are uncomfortable with your "heretical" beliefs, they recognize that the sectarian differences within the faith are relatively minor compared with the need to curtail the abominable acts of Faerûn's many evil gods and their clergy. Unless you make a point of browbeating all the Lathanderites you meet about the inaccuracy of their beliefs, you can expect food, lodging, and shelter in almost any shrine or temple of Lathander.

Your fellow sunmasters are even more inclined to offer you help when needed than is the mainstream Church of Lathander. Other sunmasters are often willing to assist you in short missions, loan you useful magic items, or heal you when you cannot heal yourself, and they expect the

Illustration by Ralph Horsley



Andar, a sunmaster

TABLE I—8: THE SUNMASTER HIT DIE: d8

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Sun spells	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	Glaring eyes 1/day	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Resistance to fire 5	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Law spells	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Glaring eyes 2/day	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
6th	+4	+5	+2	+5	Resistance to fire 10	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
7th	+5	+5	+2	+5	Planning domain	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
8th	+6	+6	+2	+6	Glaring eyes 3/day	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
9th	+6	+6	+3	+6	Resistance to fire 15	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
10th	+7	+7	+3	+7	Sunform	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class

**Class Skills (2 + Int modifier per level):** Concentration, Craft (any), Decipher Script, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Knowledge (history), Knowledge (religion), Profession (any), Spellcraft.



same courtesy in return. You can also find allies in the Order of the Sun Soul, an organization of monks based in Waterdeep whose origins can be traced to the worship of ancient Amaunator.

### SUNMASTERS IN FAERÛN

No proof exists that Amaunator has returned from the dead except the words of the sunmasters. Lathander has not proclaimed himself the new incarnation of Amaunator, but neither has he denied it. The god is keeping his own counsel on the matter for now, although he has made it clear to both morninglords and sunmasters that he considers all who follow him true believers, thus heading off the worst of the sectarian infighting.

**Organization:** The sunmasters are more formally known as the Brotherhood of the Glorious Sun, a recognized knightly and cleric order within Lathander's faith. Chapter houses and shrines dedicated to the worship of Lathander's sun aspect are often entrusted to the keeping of the brotherhood. Thus, a sunmaster often reports to the ranking cleric of Lathander in the area, as well as a superior brother of the Glorious Sun who might be located in a different city.

A typical chapter house of the Glorious Sun is headed by a handful of sunmasters who are attached to a large temple of Lathander. A typical chapter consists of one to five sunmasters, plus two to five clerics and acolytes who have accepted Amaunator as their deity but have no levels in the prestige class yet, and two to ten fighters, paladins, or warriors who adhere to the sunmaster beliefs.

### NPC REACTIONS

Most non-Lathanderites view the sunmasters as simply one more faction within Lathander's church, hardly worth distinguishing from groups such as the morninglords or the Order of the Aster. Thus, a sunmaster can expect the same sort of reaction that any cleric of Lathander would receive from a given group or individual. Evil characters take a dim view of sunmasters, since they know that Lathander's clerics crusade against evil wherever they find it. Good folk are sometimes put off by the zeal of the sunmasters but generally admire the good works they accomplish.

### SUNMASTER LORE

Characters with Knowledge (religion) can research the sunmasters to learn more about them. When a character makes a skill check, read or paraphrase the following material, including the information from lower DCs.

**DC 10:** "The sunmasters are a particular sect or order within the Church of Lathander."

**DC 15:** "Sunmasters especially venerate Lathander's aspect as a deity of the sun and crusade fervently against creatures of evil and darkness. They wield powers of light and fire."

**DC 20:** "Sunmasters believe that Lathander is the incarnation or continuation of Amaunator, the old god of the sun, who was a powerful deity in the time of ancient Netheril. They also believe that Lathander's power is ascending, and that he will soon reincarnate himself as Amaunator, claiming the mantle of lordship over the rest of the gods. Their views are considered somewhat heretical by many other Lathanderites."

**DC 30:** Characters who achieve this level of success can learn important details about specific chapter houses or fellowships of sunmasters in your campaign.

### SUNMASTERS IN THE GAME

While sunmasters strongly lean toward lawful neutral as opposed to lawful good, they typically appear as allies rather than adversaries or rivals to good-aligned adventurers.

This prestige class appeals to players who like to play "offensive-minded" clerics—that is, divine spellcasters who use their spells to attack first and heal later. Because sunmasters are determined, confident, and sometimes overzealous in confronting evil, players who like to be out front and in charge should enjoy playing them.

### ADAPTATION

Sunmasters function openly wherever Lathander is venerated. They are often covertly active in places where churches of evil deities hold sway or in locales where Horus-Re worshipers wield secular influence. Their secret activities involve establishing and protecting groups of Lathander worshipers, confronting and eliminating rival clerics, and fighting the spread of chaos in any way they can.

### ENCOUNTERS

The PCs may encounter Andar the sunmaster in a large city, where he has organized a torchbearer service that enables citizens to move about at night without stumbling around in the dark. Andar's torchbearers are mostly orphans he has rescued from the streets.

**EL 8:** Andar occasionally receives word of suspicious activities and clandestine meetings from his torchbearers. When such reports indicate undead activity or crimes in the making, he sometimes seeks out adventurers to help him right the problem. In combat, Andar tries to stay out of melee range long enough to make the best use of his *beat metal* and *searing light* spells, as well as his *glaring eye* ability.

**Andar:** Male human cleric 5 of Amaunator/sunmaster 3; CR 8; Medium humanoid; HD 8d8+16; hp 52; Init +4; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +5; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+1, +1 *heavy mace*) or +6 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); SA *glaring eyes* 1/day, spells, sun spells, turn undead 4/day (+3, 2d6+3, 5th); SQ fire resistance 5; AL LG; SV Fort +10, Ref +3, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 12.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +9, Gather Information +4, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +5, Spot +5; Alertness, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Servant of the Fallen (Amaunator)†.

† New feat described on page 9.

**Language:** Common.

**Glaring Eyes (Sp):** Andar's eyes glow with the brilliant orange color of the sun. He can produce a *searing light* effect from his eyes once per day (+5 ranged touch; caster level 8th). He can never

be blinded or dazed by spells or effects with the light descriptor, or by natural light of any kind.

**Sun Spells:** Andar can prepare any Sun domain spell as if it were on his divine spell list. The spell uses a spell slot of a level equal to its level in the Sun domain list.

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (caster level 8th): 0—*create water, detect magic, light, mending, resistance, virtue*; 1st—*bless, command, endure elements, protection from chaos*<sup>D</sup>, *ray of resurgence*†, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*beat metal* (DC 15), *beat metal*<sup>D</sup> (DC 15), *bold person* (DC 15), *shatter* (DC 15), *silence* (DC 15); 3rd—*daylight, dispel magic, prayer, searing light* (+5 ranged touch), *searing light*<sup>D</sup> (+5 ranged touch); 4th—*aura of the sun*†, *fire shield, order's wrath*<sup>D</sup> (DC 17).

D: Domain spell. Domains: Law (cast law spells at +1 caster level), Sun (greater turning against undead 1/day).

† New spell described on page 33.

**Possessions:** Masterwork half-plate armor, +1 *heavy steel shield of blinding*, +1 *heavy mace*, masterwork light crossbow with 5 +1 *flaming crossbow bolts* and 15 crossbow bolts, *cloak of resistance* +1, holy symbol of Amaunator, 10 gp, 10 sp.

## Ancient spells

Many of Faerûn's fallen empires boasted magical knowledge far beyond that available to present-day spellcasters. Most of those ancient spells have been lost to the mists of time or are beyond the understanding of current spellcasters, but a number them still survive in the grimoires of spellcasters across Faerûn.

## Assassin spell

### 3RD-LEVEL ASSASSIN SPELL

**Ebon Ray of Doom:** Black energy prevents magical healing and special healing abilities from functioning.

## Bard spell

### 1ST-LEVEL BARD SPELL

**Ghost Pipes:** Causes an instrument to float above the ground and play itself.

## Cleric spells

### 1ST-LEVEL CLERIC SPELL

**Ray of Resurgence:** Yellow light restores 1 point per caster level (max 5 points) of Strength damage, negates penalties to Strength (up to 1d6+1 per caster level, max 1d6+5) and either converts exhaustion to fatigue or removes fatigue.

### 2ND-LEVEL CLERIC SPELL

**Tyche's Touch:** Confers a decreasing sacred bonus or penalty on the subject's next four saving throws.

### 3RD-LEVEL CLERIC SPELLS

**Know Bloodline:** Reveals target's type, race, subrace, and all subtypes possessed.

**Storm Shield:** Glowing sphere absorbs 20 points per caster level of electricity damage from effects that pass within 30 ft.

### 4TH-LEVEL CLERIC SPELL

**Aura of the Sun:** Fills an area with light that damages undead and hampers magical darkness.

### 6TH-LEVEL CLERIC SPELL

**Sun Scepter:** Scepter of light functions as a melee weapon with the axiomatic, disruption, and flaming burst special abilities.

### 7TH-LEVEL CLERIC SPELL

**Nar Fiendbond:** Grants the subject the half-fiend template.

## Druid spells

### 3RD-LEVEL DRUID SPELL

**Storm Shield:** Glowing sphere absorbs 20 points per caster level of electricity damage from effects that pass within 30 ft.

### 4TH-LEVEL DRUID SPELL

**Bloodbriars:** Wraps target in invisible briars that deal 1d8 points of damage per round if movement is attempted.

## Paladin spell

### 4TH-LEVEL PALADIN SPELL

**Aura of the Sun:** Fills an area with light that damages undead and hampers magical darkness.

## Sorcerer/wizard spells

### 2ND-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

**Evocation Ray of Resurgence:** Yellow light restores 1 point per caster level (max 5 points) of Strength damage, negates penalties to Strength (up to 1d6+1 per caster level, max 1d6+5) and either converts exhaustion to fatigue or removes fatigue.

**Theskyn's Hearty Heave:** Blast of force pushes away creatures surrounding you as though via a bull rush maneuver by a foe of Large size with a Strength score equal to 20 + your caster level (max 25).

**Toothed Tentacle:** Shadowy tentacle ending in three mouths (each AC 15, hp 10 + your caster level) projects from your hand. The mouths can strike foes within 10 feet of each other independently, dealing 2d6 points of damage each.



### 3RD-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

- Abjur **Backblast:** Grants fire resistance 10 and functions like *spell turning* with respect to spells with the fire descriptor that are targeted on you.
- Nezram's **Amethyst Aura:** Prevents poisons and diseases from affecting the subject.
- Trans **Clearstone:** Makes rock or stone transparent.

### 4TH-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

- Abjur **Nezram's Emerald Energy Shield:** Grants immunity to deafness effects and language-dependent, mind-affecting effects, plus sonic resistance 10 and a +4 bonus on saves against spells and effects with the sonic descriptor to which the subject isn't already immune.
- Evoc **Bloodbriars:** Wraps target in invisible briars that deal 1d8 points of damage per round if movement is attempted.
- Necro **Ebon Ray of Doom:** Black energy prevents magical healing and special healing abilities from functioning.

### 5TH-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

- Abjur **Nezram's Sapphire Screen of Shielding:** Moving shield of force grants +4 bonus to AC against ranged attacks and DR 10/magic against all other attacks.
- Conj **Mailed Might of the Magelords:** Field of force around subject grants +8 armor bonus, immunity to 2nd-level or lower force spells, and DR 5/magic.
- Trans **Sakkratar's Triple Strike:** Grants each subject two extra attacks with a held melee weapon at its highest base attack bonus; grants the keen and flaming burst abilities to melee weapons held by subjects.

### 6TH-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

- Conj **Shalantha's Delicate Disk:** Conjures disk that can store a single spell of up to 5th level and release it when broken.
- Evoc **Crushing Sphere:** Force globe traps and crushes subject for 3d6 points of nonlethal damage per round.
- Sandblast:** Cone of sand and wind deals 6d8 points of damage and blows away opponents.

### 7TH-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELL

- Trans **Nar Fiendbond:** Subject gains half-fiend template.

### 9TH-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELL

- Abjur **Srinsee's Spell Shift:** Instead of countering another's spell, you can apply a metamagic feat to it, manipulate one of its properties, or stun the caster.

## spell descriptions

The spells in this section are presented in alphabetical order.

### AURA OF THE SUN

Abjuration [Light]  
**Level:** Cleric 4, paladin 4  
**Components:** V, S, DF  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** 10 ft.  
**Area:** 10-ft.-radius emanation centered on you  
**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)  
**Saving Throw:** No  
**Spell Resistance:** None

By casting *aura of the sun*, you fill the area around you with warm, glowing light that eliminates natural shadows and hampers magical darkness. Any creature attempting to cast a spell from the shadow subschool or a spell with the darkness descriptor within an *aura of the sun* must succeed on a caster level check (DC 11 + your caster level), or the spell fails.

Areas of magical darkness originating from 3rd-level or lower spells and effects are temporarily suppressed when overlapping with an *aura of the sun*. Creatures that take penalties in bright light also take them while within an *aura of the sun*, and an undead creature takes 1d6 points of positive energy damage at the end of its turn every round that it spends within the spell's area. Furthermore, any creature attempting to hide within the aura takes a -4 penalty on Hide checks.

This effect is centered on you and moves with you. Anyone who enters the aura immediately becomes subject to its effect, but creatures that leave are no longer affected.

### BACKBLAST

Abjuration [Fire]  
**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 3  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Personal  
**Target:** You  
**Duration:** Until expended or 10 minutes/level (D)

Though this spell was originally created by the phaerimms, it has since been stolen by spellcasters of other races and can now be found in grimoires across Faerûn. *Backblast* protects you in the same manner as the *spell turning* spell, except that it turns only spells with the fire descriptor that are targeted on you. Effect and area spells are unaffected, as is any spell with a range of touch. The DM secretly rolls 1d4+2 to determine the total number of spell levels that can be turned. *Backblast* otherwise follows the rules for the *spell turning* spell.

In addition to the above, *backblast* grants you fire resistance 10. This effect persists until the end of the round in which the spell turning effect ends.

### BLOODBRIARS

Evocation  
**Level:** Druid 4, sorcerer/wizard 4  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Target:** 1 creature  
**Duration:** 1 minute/level (D)  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This spell, commonly used by the *armathors* of Myth Drannor in the apprehension of criminals, snares the target in a tangle of invisible, razor-sharp briars of mystical energy. The affected creature suffers no ill effects as long as it does not attempt to move, attack, cast a spell with material or somatic components, or perform any other action that requires movement. During any round in which the target moves in any fashion, however, it takes 1d8 points of damage (no save). Damage from the spell disrupts spellcasting; a subject that attempts to cast a spell with a material or somatic component must make a Concentration check (DC 10 + spell level + damage dealt) or lose the spell.

**Material Component:** A drop of blood.

### CLEARSTONE

Transmutation [Earth]  
**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 3  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Touch  
**Target:** Stone or stone object touched, up to 1 cu. ft./level  
**Duration:** 1 minute/level (D)  
**Saving Throw:** None  
**Spell Resistance:** No

You cause a rock or section of stone to become transparent. This spell affects naturally occurring stone, ore, gemstones in the rough, and even worked stone such as a statue or tunnel wall, but not worked metals, cut gems, or fabricated stone materials such as brick or concrete. Visibility through the affected stone is perfectly clear and limited only by the available light or by objects and creatures embedded in the stone (such as a creature using *meld into stone*). *Clearstone* grants line of sight, but not line of effect, through the affected stone. This spell does not change a stone's hardness or other qualities in any way.

*Clearstone* can be made permanent using *permanency* (minimum caster level 11th, 1,500 XP).

**Arcane Material Component:** A small, flat piece of glass.

### CRUSHING SPHERE

Evocation [Force]  
**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 6  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)  
**Effect:** 1-ft.-diameter/level sphere, centered around a creature  
**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Reflex negates  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This spell functions like *Otiluke's resilient sphere*, except that the sphere painfully constricts the target, hampering her movements and breathing. The target is entangled and takes 3d6 points of nonlethal damage per round as the *sphere* contracts. If the target is rendered unconscious, any remaining damage from the *crushing sphere* is lethal damage.

**Material Component:** An eggshell, which is crushed as the spell is cast.

### EBON RAY OF DOOM

Necromancy  
**Level:** Assassin 3, sorcerer/wizard 4  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 level)  
**Effect:** Ray  
**Duration:** 1 round/level  
**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial; see text  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

You fire a ray of black energy that drastically slows down the rate at which the subject can recover hit points. Any creature attempting to restore hit points to the subject by means of any sort of healing magic must succeed on a caster level check (DC 15 + your caster level), or the healing effect fails. A subject with fast healing or a regeneration ability must make a Fortitude save at the beginning of its turn each round. Failure indicates that the ability does not function in that round.

### GHOST PIPES

Transmutation  
**Level:** Bard 1  
**Components:** V, F  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Touch  
**Target:** One musical instrument  
**Duration:** 1 minute/level (D)  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates (object)  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes (object)

By means of this spell, you can cause one musical instrument you touch to float a few feet above the ground and play itself. The instrument must be intact and in playable condition (no missing strings, clogged mouthpieces, or other impediments to proper use). The instrument plays any tune you desire as though a skilled musician were playing it, regardless of whether you can play the instrument in question. If used in conjunction with your



A troll caught in a crushing sphere spell

Illustration by Francis Tsai



bardic music ability, the *ghost pipes* grant a +2 competence bonus on your Perform check.

*Focus:* The instrument to be played.

### KNOW BLOODLINE

Divination  
**Level:** Cleric 3  
**Components:** V, S, DF  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)  
**Target:** One creature  
**Duration:** Instantaneous  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Mulhorandi priests have used this spell for millennia to select humans of the purest Mulan bloodlines to follow the path of the glorious servant.

When you cast this spell, you learn the basic ancestry of the subject creature. The information revealed includes the subject's type, race, subrace, and all subtypes the creature possesses.

### MAILED MIGHT OF THE MAGELORDS

Conjuration (Creation) [Force]  
**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 5  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Touch  
**Target:** Creature touched  
**Duration:** 1 minute/level  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

You create a translucent, protective field of force (+8 armor bonus) around the subject. In addition, the subject becomes immune to 2nd-level or lower spells with the force descriptor and gains damage reduction 5/magic. Unlike mundane armor, the force armor created by *mailed might of the magelords* has no armor check penalty or arcane spell failure chance, and it mandates no speed reduction. Furthermore, since the armor is made of force, incorporeal creatures can't bypass it the way they do normal armor.

*Arcane Material Component:* A miniature adamantine shield worth at least 250 gp.

### NAR FIENDBOND

Transmutation  
**Level:** Cleric 7, sorcerer/wizard 7  
**Components:** V, S, M/DF, XP  
**Casting Time:** 1 hour  
**Range:** Touch  
**Target:** One humanoid with Int 4 or higher  
**Duration:** Instantaneous  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

You turn the subject into a half-fiend by imbuing it with the essence of the infernal planes. The subject can have no more character levels than you do, and it must either be willing to undergo the transformation or be restrained in some manner. Upon completion of the spell, the subject can attempt a Will save to avoid gaining the half-fiend template (see page 147 of the *Monster Manual*). In addition, the subject's type changes to outsider, and the moral component of its alignment changes to evil. For the purpose of this spell, treat the half-fiend template as an acquired template rather than an inherited one.

The newly created half-fiend also gains a +4 level adjustment, raising the XP required for it to achieve its next character level. For example, a 5th-level sorcerer who becomes a half-fiend by means of this spell becomes a 9th-level character who needs 45,000 XP to gain his sixth class level.

You cannot cast *Nar fiendbond* on yourself.

*Arcane Material Component:* Precious gems with a total value equal to the XP cost of the spell.

*XP Cost:* 500 XP per character level of the half-fiend created.

### NEZRAM'S AMETHYST AURA

Abjuration  
**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 3  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Touch  
**Target:** Creature touched  
**Duration:** 10 minutes/level (D)  
**Saving Throw:** None  
**Spell Resistance:** No

You surround the subject with a brilliant violet glow that grants temporary immunity to poisons and diseases. *Nezram's amethyst aura* absorbs all poisons and diseases that target the subject for the duration of the spell, regardless of how they are delivered. Any weapon or natural attack normally used to deliver a poison or disease (such as a mummy's touch or a snake's bite) still deals the normal amount of hit point damage, but the poison or disease is blocked. This spell does not reverse or prevent the effects of poison and disease in a subject already affected by one or both at the time of casting.

*Arcane Material Component:* A pinch of amethyst dust.

### NEZRAM'S EMERALD ENERGY SHIELD

Abjuration  
**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 4  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Touch  
**Target:** Creature touched  
**Duration:** 1 minute/level (D)  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

You coat the subject with protective energy of an emerald green hue. This *energy shield* does not affect the subject's movement, senses, or ability to cast spells. While surrounded by this energy, the subject is immune to any natural or magical effect that causes deafness and to all language-dependent, mind-affecting spells and effects. The subject also gains sonic resistance 10 and a +4 bonus on saves against all spells and effects with the sonic descriptor to which it has not already been rendered immune.

*Arcane Material Component:* A pinch of powdered emerald.

### NEZRAM'S SAPPHIRE SCREEN OF SHIELDING

Abjuration [Force]  
**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 5  
**Components:** V, S, F  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Personal  
**Target:** You  
**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)

You create a levitating, square screen of fluid blue force approximately 5 feet on a side and 1 inch thick. This screen responds immediately to spells and physical attacks that target you, moving with you and flowing freely around your body to protect you from specific attacks.

In addition to providing the effect of a *shield* spell, *Nezram's sapphire screen of shielding* also gives you damage reduction 10/magic.

*Arcane Focus:* A sapphire worth at least 250 gp.

### RAY OF RESURGENCE

Evocation  
**Level:** Cleric 1, sorcerer/wizard 2  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)  
**Target:** One creature  
**Duration:** Instantaneous  
**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (harmless)  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

A glowing beam of rejuvenating yellow light springs from your fingers, unerringly striking your target. A *ray of resurgence* has the following three effects on the target.

- Restores up to 1 point per caster level (maximum 5 points) of Strength damage.
- Negates any Strength penalties affecting the target, to a total of 1d6 +1 per caster level (maximum 1d6+5).
- Makes an exhausted target fatigued, or removes the fatigued condition from a target affected by it.

### SAKKRATAR'S TRIPLE STRIKE

Transmutation  
**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 5  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)  
**Target:** One creature/level, no two of which may be more than 30 ft. apart  
**Duration:** 1 round  
**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (harmless)  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

This spell, created by a coronal of Cormanthyr from days long past, imbues a number of targets with devastating speed in battle. Each subject of *Sakkratar's triple strike* can take two extra attacks when making a full attack action, provided that it attacks with a melee weapon it is holding. These extra attacks are made using the subject's full base attack bonus, plus any modifiers appropriate to the situation. In addition, each affected creature's melee weapon bursts into pure white flame, gaining the keen and flaming burst special abilities for the duration of the spell. This effect is not cumulative with similar effects, such as a *haste* spell or a weapon of speed, nor does it grant an extra action.

*Material Component:* A three-faceted prism.

### SANDBLAST

Evocation [Earth]  
**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 6  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** 60 ft.  
**Area:** Cone-shaped burst  
**Duration:** Instantaneous  
**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

A violent burst of sand and howling wind streams forth from your hand, extending outward in a cone. Every creature and object within the cone takes 6d8 points of damage and is subjected to winds of hurricane force that blow directly away from you. These winds blow away Medium or smaller creatures, knock down Large creatures, and check Huge or larger creatures. (See Table 3–24: Wind Effects, page 95 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.)

Any creature that succeeds on a Fortitude save takes half damage from the sandblast and ignores the wind effect.

*Material Component:* A handful of sand from the heart of a desert.

### SHALANTHA'S DELICATE DISK

Conjuration (Creation)  
**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 6  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Touch  
**Effect:** One disk  
**Duration:** Permanent until discharged (D)  
**Saving Throw:** See text  
**Spell Resistance:** See text

This spell conjures a small disk, about 1 foot in diameter and 1 inch thick, made of a material that resembles rose-tinted eggshell.



Once you summon a disk, a single spell of up to 5th level can be cast into it, either by you or by another spellcaster. If no spell is cast into the disk within 10 minutes of its creation, it vanishes into nothingness and the spell is wasted.

The disk stores an imbued spell indefinitely until it is shattered (a standard action requiring only 1 point of damage or a DC 5 Strength check). At that point, the spell immediately takes effect as if it had just been cast by the spellcaster who first placed it in the disk. Touch-range spells and spells that have specific targets (such as *cause critical wounds* or *expeditious retreat*) are targeted upon the creature or object that shattered the disk, while area and effect spells are triggered as though the broken disk were the spell's point of origin. For example, a stored *fireball* would detonate in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on the disk, whereas a *flame blade* would appear in the hand of the creature that shattered the disk. If the spell stored in the disk does not have a valid target (such as a disk imbued with *cause critical wounds* that is broken by a falling rock), the spell simply fails to manifest and is wasted.

**Material Component:** A golden egg worth 200 gp.

### SRINSHEE'S SPELL SHIFT

**Abjuration**  
**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 9  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Personal  
**Target:** You  
**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)

This potent spell opens your senses to the Weave, allowing you to perceive its very fabric as clearly as you might see the trees in a forest while standing in the heart of it. When a spell is cast, you can visually observe its effects on the Weave. Thanks to this heightened understanding, you can use the counterspell action to do much more than merely counter another caster's spell.

*Srinshee's spell shift* grants you a +4 insight bonus on Spellcraft checks made to identify spells for counterspelling. Furthermore, instead of simply negating the effect of a spell you successfully counter, you can choose from among the following options as long as *Srinshee's spell shift* lasts.

**Aid:** You can boost the effectiveness of an ally's spell by applying any one metamagic feat from the following list: Empower Spell, Enlarge Spell, Extend Spell, Maximize Spell, or Widen Spell. To use this option, you must expend a spell slot (or sacrifice a prepared spell) whose spell level equals or exceeds that of the ally's spell with the desired metamagic feat applied. For example, empowering an ally's *fireball* would require you to expend a 5th-level or higher spell slot.

**Manipulate:** You can seize control of the spell's range, area, or targets, as appropriate, and reshape these factors as you choose. For example, you could cause an enemy wizard's *fireball* to explode at his feet, or you could cause his *baste* spell to target your allies within the area he has specified. Only one property of the spell, chosen from among those that the caster can normally designate, can be manipulated in this manner. For example, you could not

choose the targets of a *sleep* spell because the targets affected are determined by the spell itself, not the caster.

**Backlash:** You counter the spell as normal, but your opponent must succeed on a Fortitude save or be stunned for 1d6 rounds.

### STORM SHIELD

**Abjuration**  
**Level:** Cleric 3, druid 3  
**Components:** V, S, DF  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)  
**Area:** 30-ft.-radius emanation  
**Duration:** 1 minute/level or until discharged (D)  
**Saving Throw:** See text  
**Spell Resistance:** See text

This spell creates a small, glowing sphere of amber light at a point you designate. Any effect that deals electricity damage (such as a *lightning bolt* or a blue dragon's breath weapon) that passes within 30 feet of the *storm shield* is attracted to it and strikes the shield instead of its intended target. In the case of area spells such as *lightning bolt*, this redirection occurs if any portion of the spell's area is within 30 feet of the *storm shield*. In such a case, the entire effect is drawn to the *storm shield*, and all creatures or objects that otherwise would have been in the spell's area remain unharmed.

The *storm shield* takes full damage (no saving throw) from any effect drawn into it. The shield can absorb up to 20 points of electricity damage per caster level before dissipating. Any remaining damage is applied to all creatures within 10 feet of the *storm shield's* position (Reflex half; spell resistance applies). For example, suppose a *storm shield* cast by a 5th-level cleric has already absorbed 78 points of electricity damage when it is struck by a *lightning bolt* that deals 45 points of damage. The first 22 points of damage is enough to destroy the *storm shield*, so every creature within 10 feet of it takes 23 points of electricity damage (or 11 with a successful save).

**Material Component:** A small chip of amber.

### SUN SCEPTER

**Conjuration (Creation)** [Lawful, Light]  
**Level:** Cleric 6  
**Components:** V, S, DF  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** 0 ft.  
**Effect:** Scepter of light  
**Duration:** 1 round/level [D]  
**Saving Throw:** None  
**Spell Resistance:** No

You conjure a radiant, macelike scepter of solid light, approximately 3 feet long and 1 inch in diameter, with a dazzling, spherical ball measuring 5 inches in diameter at one end. The *sun scepter* functions as a physical weapon that deals 2d6 points of bludgeoning damage and has the axiomatic, disruption, and flaming burst special abilities. You can strike with it as a melee

touch attack. The *sun scepter* lasts only as long as you hold it in your hand; it instantly fades away if you drop it or hand it off to an ally.

### THESKYN'S HEARTY HEAVE

**Evocation** [Force]  
**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 2  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** 10 ft.  
**Targets:** One creature/three levels  
**Duration:** Instantaneous  
**Saving Throw:** None  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Created by a court mage serving the Stag King of Athalantar, this spell provides you with a bit of breathing room when you are threatened by swarming foes. When you cast the spell, you project a blast of concentric force that pushes away creatures surrounding you. Each creature is affected as if it had been subjected to a bull rush maneuver by a foe of Large size with a Strength score equal to 20 + your caster level (maximum 25), and the attacker had moved with the target (though you need not move at all). Movement caused by this spell provokes attacks of opportunity, just as the movement resulting from a normal bull rush would. Creatures grappling you are not affected by this spell.

### TOOTHED TENTACLE

**Evocation**  
**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 2  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Personal  
**Effect:** 30-ft.-long tentacle extending from your hand  
**Duration:** Concentration, to a maximum of 1 round/level

This spell creates a shadowy tentacle of energy that extends 30 feet from your hand, splitting off into three smaller tentacles about 10 feet from its end. Each of these smaller tentacles ends in a fanged, slaving maw. All three of these mouths can be directed to attack as a full-round action, or one of them can attack as a standard action. You can direct the mouths to attack

separate targets as long as all targets are within 10 feet of each other. Each mouth strikes with an attack bonus equal to your caster level plus the modifier for the ability score that controls your spellcasting, and each deals 2d6 points of damage on a successful hit.

Because the mouths are tangible, they can be destroyed. Each has an AC of 15 and hit points equal to 10 + your caster level. If a mouth is destroyed, it fades away into nothingness, but the other mouths remain. If all the mouths are destroyed, the spell's duration ends. The main tentacle cannot be attacked.  
**Material Component:** Three hairs and a tooth.

### TYCHE'S TOUCH

**Abjuration**  
**Level:** Cleric 2  
**Components:** S, DF  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Touch  
**Target:** One living creature  
**Duration:** 24 hours or until discharged  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This spell confers either a protection or a curse (your choice at the time of casting) upon a single living creature. The effects of the two options are as follows.

**Protection:** The subject gains a +4 sacred bonus on the first saving throw made after the spell is cast, a +3 sacred bonus on the second saving throw, a +2 sacred bonus on the third, and a +1 sacred bonus on the fourth.

**Curse:** The subject takes a -4 penalty on the first saving throw made after the spell is cast, a -3 penalty on the second saving throw, a -2 penalty on the third, and a -1 penalty on the fourth.

*Tyche's touch* lasts for 24 hours or until its power is exhausted (after the fourth saving throw). Only one *Tyche's touch* spell can affect a given creature at one time. *Tyche's touch* spells automatically counter and dispel each other if cast on the same creature, regardless of how many saving throws the first casting of the spell has already affected. In recent years, both Beshaba and Tymora have been known to grant *Tyche's touch*.



Illustration by Jason Engle



# DREAMS OF THE PAST

## The ruins of the past

Some of the bold, young kingdoms of yesteryear disappeared into obscurity relatively quickly, leaving little behind to mark their passing. Others became mighty empires that lasted for centuries, and a fortunate few endured for millennia. Yet after their rise to power, even these fabled realms inevitably fell. Some kingdoms ended in cataclysmic destruction, while others slowly declined, either vanishing entirely or taking on less prominent roles in current-day Faerûn.

Though their specific creeds varied widely, most of Faerûn's truly great ancient civilizations built cultures rich in divine power, arcane lore, and military might. Today, the fractured secrets of those empires lie scattered throughout innumerable ruins and hidden places, waiting for someone who can piece together the fragments and learn the secrets they hold.

The key to making the past an essential part of the present is to make ancient civilizations relevant to the campaign's current crises and challenges. Clever adventurers often try to mine ruins for archaic magic and lore to defeat current-day threats, especially those that have their roots in centuries gone by.

## cities into dungeons

The cities, towers, and castles of Faerûn's past are the dungeons of today, and each has a unique origin that dictates what explorers can find there. For example, a flying Netherese city might have plunged into the Sea of Falling Stars and come to rest intact on the sea floor, where some sahuagin found it and made it their own. If a magelord's tower was shattered during a spectacular spell-battle, perhaps her vengeful ghost still haunts its ruins. Likewise, a keep abandoned after a long siege might now serve as a haven for a tribe of hobgoblins.

The following sections describe the kinds of events that have given rise to some of Faerûn's most interesting adventure sites.

### CONQUERED LANDS

Both the empty Imaskari cities of the Raurin Desert and the forsaken dwarven citadels of the North owe their current desolate

states to wars, invasions, and uprisings that took place long ago. In the wake of such bloody events, the inhabitants of the disputed areas were typically enslaved, slaughtered, or driven out, and entire cities and towns were reduced to smoking ruins. Realms such as Ammarindar and Eaclann in the eastern verge of the High Forest are good examples of conquered lands.

Stone buildings typically survive a city's destruction more or less intact, though their walls bear scorch marks from fire and scars of physical violence from weapons of war and spells. Large portions of conquered cities and entire castles are often left standing, though pillagers usually strip them of obvious valuables at the time of the attack. Looters sometimes overlook certain structures (such as warded towers and prisons), leaving a few secrets within.

### ABANDONED EMPIRES

Plague, loss of wealth, and diminished military might can all herald the fall of a great empire. Some realms struggling against such debilitating problems gradually diminish, only to disappear entirely over time. Others slowly decline but continue to exist, though they have been reduced to mere shadows of their former glory. A few, such as Mulhorand and Unther, rise and fall multiple times.

The best signs of an empire in decline are abandoned outposts located along its fringes. When a kingdom scales back its border defenses for lack of funding or soldiers, it leaves behind a string of abandoned keeps, watchtowers, outposts, and trading villages, most of which remain whole and intact, since destroying them gains attackers little. Few such buildings contain anything of value because the former residents emptied them before deserting them.

### CATACLYSMS AND FORCES OF NATURE

An empire or city destroyed by a cataclysmic geological event leaves few recognizable reminders of its former glory. Such events have created dozens of ruins and destroyed many others over the millennia. Faerûn has also been shaken by several magical cataclysms, the most notable of which was the catastrophic destruction of the Weave by Karsus—an event that sent dozens of flying Netherese cities crashing to the ground.

Cataclysmic events typically result in widespread death and the massive destruction of settled areas. Earthquakes have been known to swallow towers and huge sections of cities, thus creating instant underground ruins. Volcanic eruptions, avalanches, and mudslides can bury large areas in a matter of moments, preserving any items that weren't destroyed outright. Sandstorms and rising

## Twenty Ancient Adventure Ideas

You can use the ideas presented in the following list to design adventures and campaign themes around elements of the ancient past.

### d20 Adventure

- 1 Miners tunneling near a ruined keep discover a powerful lich's long-lost phylactery.
- 2 A merchant gives ancient coins as change, not realizing that they were minted by a lost empire. The merchant does not know the coins' origins and claims to have received them as payment for a prior transaction.
- 3 An old folk song contains clues to solving an archaic mystery.
- 4 Spellwards holding back a terrible evil have begun to decay. Adventurers must gather the parts of a fragmented artifact from locations throughout Faerûn and piece it back together to restore the failing wards.
- 5 A spellcaster's wild surge yanks an object or creature from the past and brings it into the present.
- 6 A mudslide, sandstorm, or earthquake unearths a buried ruin.
- 7 A merchant at a bazaar sells adventurers an old, worn-out item that turns out to be a powerful, ancient artifact.
- 8 *Invisibility* wards concealing an ancient, arcane tower fail, revealing its existence to surprised locals.
- 9 After an unusual storm, a mysterious artifact of legend is found floating in midair.

- 10 A character dreams of a long-dead ancestor who tells of an age-old blood oath that the dreamer is duty-bound to fulfill.
- 11 An adventurer learns that she is descended from an ancient royal line whose forgotten kingdom now lies in uncivilized lands.
- 12 Zealous worshipers of a long-dead god proclaim the return of their deity.
- 13 An ancient war-construct is reactivated and goes on a rampage.
- 14 The cure for a devastating magical plague lies with an imprisoned evil creature that offers to trade the item for his release.
- 15 An aging artifact in an old ruin makes its presence known via a sudden release of strange, magical energy.
- 16 Signs and portents from an ancient prophecy begin coming true.
- 17 An adventurer experiences repeated visions of a horrific event that occurred long ago.
- 18 A long-lived being who left Faerûn ages ago unexpectedly returns. He knows much ancient lore but threatens to cause severe harm because of his antiquated sensibilities and prejudices.
- 19 An ancient suit of armor, imbued with the mind of a legendary hero, has one last mission to fulfill. It attempts to possess the next person to wear it and finish what it started long ago.
- 20 A *portal* to another world opens, inviting an invasion similar to one that occurred ages ago when it first opened.



seas can flow over settled areas in a few short hours, creating water-filled ruins that are quite challenging to explore. Perhaps the rarest and most destructive catastrophic events of all are the meteors or comets that occasionally strike Toril, leaving behind only deep craters.

Since catastrophes strike with little warning, the ruins they produce are usually filled with the dead and their wealth. Most buildings caught in such an event are heavily damaged, buried, collapsed, or reduced to dust and rubble, and even those that remain standing can be potential death traps for explorers because of their unstable floors, walls, and ceilings. Structures with unusual or unique protections may escape the worst effects of a cataclysm, though gaining access to them may require excavation or teleportation magic. Explorers face extraordinary challenges when retrieving the treasures and magic embedded within such ruins.

BUILT UPON  
THE ASHES

Both survivors of cataclysms and conquerors who have razed enemy kingdoms often build new cities over the ruins of the old. For example, the village of Secomber is built atop the ruins of Hastarl, the capital of fallen Athalantar, while Waterdeep stands atop the ruins of Aelinthaldaar, the capital city of Illefarn. With the passing of years, knowledge of the old city beneath such a site fades until the citizens forget that they live above ancient ruins.

Ruins under existing settled areas present different problems for explorers than more remote ruins do. Typically, those wishing to excavate or explore within an existing city must first seek permission from the local ruler. Laws, religious customs, corrup-

tion, and the general attitude of the explorers can all play a part in the ruler's decision on such an issue, and he might insist on a share of any treasure recovered in exchange for permission to explore the ruins.

interesting sites

Many cities, keeps, and other ruins of fallen empires have long since been plundered, but more than a few have lain undisturbed since the demise of their creators. Such untouched caches of lore are doorways to the past, often filled with unknown treasures and unspeakable terrors.

The accessibility of any ruin depends largely on the condition of its structures. Some ancient buildings still stand strong, despite decades of exposure to the elements, but the ravages of war and the inexorable march of years have dangerously eroded others. Explorers seeking entry into seriously deteriorated or damaged ruins risk death via collapse or cave-in (see page 66 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), as well as the hidden dangers of the site itself.

Unoccupied ruins are desirable places for monsters to build lairs and for displaced tribes to make new homes. They also serve as excellent bases of operation and hideouts for outlaws and renegades.

CITIES AND TOWNS

The ruins of an ancient city can tell visitors much about the people who built it. In mighty keeps, elaborate temples, or even



Illustration by Ralph Horsley

how to use the random ruins tables

Tables 2-1 through 2-7, on the next few pages, provide a way for the DM to determine the occupants and physical features of a ruined site. To use the tables that are based on a d% roll (all of them except Table 2-4), make anywhere from one to six d% rolls, ignoring or rerolling duplicate results. The number of d% rolls you make can be randomly generated by rolling 1d6, or you can simply pick a number that suits your purposes.

For example, assume you want to use Table 2-3 to determine the recognizable features of a ruined castle or keep. You roll 1d6 and get a result of 4, so you next make four d% rolls. Those results are 24 (courtyard), 42 (meeting hall), 55 (magical defenses), and 79 (stable). Combining those results, you reveal to the players that standing before them is a ruined castle in which the courtyard, the meeting hall, and the stables are all relatively intact, and at least one of those areas has some form of magical protection still active.

TABLE 2-1: RUIN RESIDENTS

d%	Kind of Residents (Example)
01-15	Former inhabitants in undead form (shadows or wraiths)
16-20	Vermin, animals, or plants (dire bear)
21-25	Degenerate survivors of ancestors (skulk <sup>FF</sup> )
26-35	Slain plunderers in undead form (ghouls or vampires)
36-55	Solitary monster (dragon, lamia, or mantichore)
56-75	Tribe of giants, monstrous humanoids, or evil humanoids (gnolls or orcs)
76-85	Guardian (outsider or construct)
86-100	Humanoid band (adventurers, bandits, or patrol)

TABLE 2-2:  
FEATURES OF A RUINED CITY OR TOWN

d%	Feature (Example)
01-02	Armory
03-07	Barracks
08-12	Burial ground (graveyard or mausoleum)
13-15	Docks and ships
16-20	Fortifications (city walls or stockade)
21-22	Menagerie or zoo
23-25	Monument (statue or fountain)
26-30	Palace
31-35	Park
36-40	Public area (playhouse or arena)
41-60	Residence (hovel, house, or mansion)
61-63	School, college, or university
64-68	Sewer
69-78	Shop
79-83	Temple (shrine, cathedral, or sacred grove)
84-93	Warehouse
94-98	Watchtower
99-100	Wizard's tower

cobblestone streets, the mute stones bear witness to how the inhabitants once lived, worshiped, and defended themselves. Many of a fallen realm's greatest accomplishments and most dismal failures are also evident in their cities.

Much evidence of how a city once functioned can be gleaned from the layout of its ruins. The orderly nature of a well-planned city is evident in the remains of broad avenues, grand plazas, and impressive structures. The ruins of an unplanned city, on the other hand, offer a sprawling maze of winding streets, tightly packed structures, and rubble-strewn districts.

Most major cities share the same kinds of public areas, though their design tends to reflect the culture in which they were built.

CASTLES AND KEEPS

Perhaps the most prevalent ruined structure found in Toril, the ruined castle survives as a symbol of kingly ambition and lordship over a realm. The castles and keeps of Faerûn are usually fortified buildings with formidable physical defenses. Magical

TABLE 2-3: CASTLE AND KEEP FEATURES

d%	Feature (Example)
01-05	Armory
06-08	Arrow slit or murder holes
09-18	Barracks
19-23	Chapel
24-28	Courtyard
29-33	Dungeon
34-38	Gatehouse
39-53	Meeting hall
54-55	Magical defenses ( <i>nondetection</i> , <i>protection from energy</i> , or <i>dimensional anchor</i> )
56-60	Moat and/or drawbridge
61-70	Personal chambers
71-72	Pit trap
73-82	Stable
83-97	Tower
98-100	Vault

defenses may also be present if the castle was occupied by capable spellcasters.

Ruined strongholds usually occupy positions of strategic significance. As fortresses, they held garrisons of troops and armories filled with weapons, and they sometimes served as safe houses for magic artifacts and religious relics. Certain castles also gained fame or notoriety for housing military, religious, and monastic orders.

EXTRADIMENSIONAL SPACES

Spellcasters from various lost empires created permanent extradimensional spaces and demiplanes to serve as homes, sanctuaries, prisons, and storehouses, and many of them still exist today.

OUTPOSTS

The far-flung borders of ancient civilizations were generally marked with a series of outposts, which served as way stations,

TABLE 2-4:  
EXTRADIMENSIONAL SPACE FEATURES

d10	Feature
1	Entrance to extradimensional space is invisible.
2	Entrance to extradimensional space is located in an unusual place (underwater, suspended in midair, or in a town center)
3	Entry requires meeting certain conditions or possessing a special key (as with a <i>portal</i> ).
4	Demiplane is expanding into Faerûn.
5	No apparent exit exists from the extradimensional space.
6	Certain spells or schools of magic do not work in the extradimensional space.
7	Time functions differently in the extradimensional space.
8	Extreme environment (fire, ice, or water) exists on other side of the entry.
9	<i>Portal</i> seepage is present.
10	Entrance is a malfunctioning <i>portal</i> .



TABLE 2-5: TEMPLE FEATURES

d%	Feature (Example)
01-10	Altar
11-15	Archives (tomes describing ancient practices, godly histories, high priests, church schisms, or heresy)
16-25	Catacomb or crypt
26-30	Curse
31-35	Guardian (construct, outsider, or undead)
36-40	Idol or statue
41-45	Magical defenses ( <i>consecrated</i> or <i>desecrated</i> areas)
46-50	Monastic quarters
51-60	Mural, frieze, or bas-relief
61-75	Personal chambers
76-85	Refectory
86-90	Religious relic (prayer book or holy artifact)
91-95	Sacristy
96-100	Trap

defense posts, and trading areas. In unstable times, they could also serve as safe havens for important citizens and their wealth.

These outposts usually possessed defenses similar to those of castles and keeps. Their appearance often reflected the architecture prevalent in the distant empire with which they were affiliated, though they were usually constructed of local building materials.

Use Table 2-3 to randomly determine the surviving features of a ruined outpost.

TEMPLES

Faerûn's deities have a long and convoluted history, part of which can be gleaned from the contents of ruined and abandoned temples built by the citizens of past empires. Some of these temples mark the areas where gods that are now dead or forsaken were once worshiped; others show where (and when) new gods arose. A few of these ancient places of worship are among the earliest holy (or unholy) sites dedicated to deities that are still worshiped today.

Ancient temples can serve as repositories for divine relics, or house magic items and tomes that detail archaic rituals and prayers. Legends describing lost divine treasures may tempt the faithful to seek out old temples in hopes of discovering ancient knowledge about their gods, and explorers may uncover unknown aspects of existing deities by means of religious artifacts recovered from such places.

TOMBS AND BURIAL GROUNDS

Many cultures regard the interment of the dead as one of the most solemn and important duties of the living. Final resting places vary considerably with the cultures that created them, and the ancient burial places of lost civilizations can be found throughout Faerûn. Grand vaults, pyramids, mausoleums, and stone crypts house Faerûn's dead on the surface, and deep catacombs, dwarven crypts, and the bone pits of savage races house the bones of the ancients belowground.

Some of the more elaborate burial places (such as the mighty pyramids of the Mulhorandi) were built exclusively for emperors, archpriests, glorious servitors, and other individuals of equally high rank. Those buried in such magnificent graves are often

TABLE 2-6:

TOMB AND BURIAL GROUND FEATURES

d%	Feature (Example)
01-10	Barrow or burial mound
11-15	Curse
16-20	Funereal train (animals or servants killed and interred with the deceased)
21-30	Funereal wealth (gold and magic buried with the deceased)
31-40	Grave pit
41-50	Guardian (construct, outsider, or undead)
51-55	Idol or statue
56-60	Mausoleum
61-65	Mural, frieze, or bas-relief
66-75	Sarcophagus
76-80	Trap or lock, magical ( <i>glyph</i> or <i>symbol</i> )
81-90	Trap or lock, mechanical (collapsing ceilings, open pits, or poisoned darts)
91-100	Vault

accompanied by riches and magic items that they possessed in life, making such sites targets for thieves, historians, and adventurers of all sorts.

TOWERS

Ruined arcane towers are scattered across the entire length and breadth of Faerûn. Some are far from civilized areas; others stand in the middle of cities and towns. Be it a wizard's spire, a magical university, or a summoning chamber hidden deep beneath the earth, such a tower typically belonged to a mage of great power who used it as a home, library, and laboratory. Now abandoned, these arcane towers lure the curious with rumors of forgotten magical practices, mysterious spells, and items of great power.

Arcane towers provide a wealth of adventuring opportunities for those who seek magical power and lore, but experienced adventurers know better than to presume that the owner of an abandoned tower is dead. Extremely powerful wizards and sorcerers who travel to other planes or even other worlds may spend centuries at a time away from Toril but still fully intend

TABLE 2-7: TOWER FEATURES

d%	Feature (Example)
01-05	Conjuring chamber
06-15	Guardian (construct or outsider)
16-20	Illusion or illusory trap
21-30	Laboratory
31-40	Library
41-45	Magical effects ( <i>unseen servants</i> or <i>continual flame</i> )
46-50	Magical defenses ( <i>dimension lock</i> or <i>screen</i> )
51-60	Magic traps ( <i>guards</i> and <i>wards</i> )
61-65	Observatory
66-70	Menagerie
71-80	Personal chambers
81-90	<i>Portals</i> to other realms or planes
91-100	Servant quarters

to return. Furthermore, some towers that appear deserted are not truly abandoned at all—their ancient owners remain within as liches, demiliches<sup>EL</sup>, or spectral mages.

Arcane towers are rarely left unprotected. Some such structures have alarms that notify their masters in the event of an intrusion, and some can recall their owners from other dimensions should the need arise.

Ancient deities

Ancient ruins often house shrines, mausoleums, or temples dedicated to deities that either died long ago or are sleeping so deeply that they may as well be dead. But the death of a god takes a long time, and even a deity that has long since lost its mortal worshipers may persist as a universal principle or a symbol that still retains a tiny spark of divine power. Conversely, deities that are truly dead may still have worshipers who perform their rites and observe their holy days, thus keeping their cults alive.

In fact, clerics devoted to dead or dying gods exist in small numbers throughout Faerûn. As might be expected, deities that died fairly recently (such as Bhaal, Myrkul, and Moander) tend to have more worshipers than those that perished long ago (such as Auppenser).

Unlike the clerics of living deities, a cleric of a dead or dying god must take the Servant of the Fallen feat (see page 9) in order to obtain spells. This feat represents a special pact with the dead god or a strong devotion to his symbols and principles. In some cases, this feat can also grant a cleric the ability to petition spells from near-divinities—beings who almost became gods and were once worshiped as such.

In truth, serving a dead deity has few advantages, especially when so many active and living gods are available for worship. However, those few advantages can be significant ones. For example, the lack of an organized or recognized church can prove to be quite an advantage to an ambitious character with a strong personal agenda. After all, if you're the only cleric of Auppenser in the area, who's going to argue about whether your actions and words conform to the accepted beliefs and practices of the faith?

TABLE 2-8: ANCIENT DEITIES

Name	AL	Domains	Portfolios	Weapon
Amaunator	LN	Law, Nobility, Planning, Sun, Time	Bureaucracy, law, order, the sun	Light mace
Auppenser	N	Balance, Mentalism, Protection, Strength	Enlightenment, psionics, serenity	Kukri
Bhaal	LE	Death, Destruction, Evil, Retribution	Assassination, murder, violence	Dagger
Gilgeam	LE	Air, Strength, Tyranny, War	Battle, prowess, strength, Unther	Heavy mace
Ibrandul	CN	Cavern, Darkness, Scalykind, Travel	Caverns, dungeons, skulks	Greatclub
Leira	CN	Charm, Illusion, Spell, Trickery	Deception, illusion	Dagger
Moander	CE	Corruption*, Destruction, Evil, Slime	Decay, corruption, rot	Heavy mace
Myrkul	NE	Death, Evil, Suffering, Undeath	Corruption, the dead, death, old age	Scythe
Ramman	LN	Law, Planning, Protection, War	Duty, order, vigilance, war	Khopesh
Tchazzar	CE	Scalykind, Strength, War	Battle, Chessenta, strength, victory	Longsword

\*Domain described in *Book of Vile Darkness*.

In the end, devotion is not simply a matter of calculating the most advantageous path. The worship of a dead god may be entirely appropriate for a character who holds to that deity's tenets or hails from an area near the church's former power base.

Amaunator

A Netherese deity of order and the sun, Amaunator was also revered as the patron of law and time. The justice he dealt was always harsh but eminently fair. Amaunator was a careful and meticulous deity who made certain that every agreement was written down, contracted, signed, sealed, and witnessed.

When Netheril fell, Amaunator was largely abandoned by the common folk because they believed that he had done nothing to prevent the disaster. Some religious scholars insist that Amaunator died, but others (notably the sunmasters of Lathander's church) argue that he was reborn as Lathander. Still others believe he survives as the vengeful Bedine deity known as At'ar the Merciless.

Auppenser

The Master of the Invisible Art and the Lord of Reason, Auppenser was a deity of thought, reason, self-knowledge, and serenity. His worship reached his zenith in the days of Jhaamdath, the Twelve Cities of Swords. In this society, the great bladelords ruled as a psiocracy, and physical and mental self-knowledge were considered the highest virtues.

Auppenser was gravely weakened by the destruction of Jhaamdath, and his faith simply dwindled into nonexistence over the next few centuries. Of all the ancient gods, however, Auppenser alone still maintains a glimmer of awareness and a handful of devoted worshipers.

Bhaal

Bhaal, the god of assassins, murderers, and death by violence, was part of a triumvirate of surpassingly powerful mortals who challenged Jergal for mastery over death, evil, and murder. Jergal





Gilgamesh battles Tiamat

acquiesced, and his portfolios were divided among the three, with death going to Myrkul, evil to Bane, and murder to Bhaal.

Bhaal was a cruel god whose portfolio included assassination, murder, and all forms of death by violence. As fate would have it, however, the god of murder was himself murdered by Cyric during the Time of Troubles. But Bhaal left behind a small army of mortal descendants known as bhaalspawn, who now seek to claim the divine mantle that their progenitor once held.

## Gilgamesh

Supreme leader of the gods of Unther and deific ruler of that land for almost two thousand years, Gilgamesh was known for his jealousy, cruelty, and pride. He called himself the Father of Victory and claimed to rule over many of the lands surrounding Unther, even though these subject realms had long ago shaken off Unther's rule.

When the Time of Troubles came to an end, Gilgamesh was drastically reduced in power as punishment for centuries-long abuse of his worshipers. Soon thereafter, he was slain by Tiamat in a battle that devastated the city of Unthalass.

## Ibrandul

A Calishite deity of darkness, underground places, and stealth, Ibrandul was quite popular among adventurers. During the Time of Troubles, he was killed by Shar, who absorbed much of his portfolio. The Lady of Sorrows even masqueraded as Ibrandul for a time to conceal her dark deed.

## Leira

The Lady of Mists was the goddess of deception and illusion and the patroness of illusionists and liars. She was not widely worshiped except among practitioners of illusion magic, although many casual worshipers paid her homage to placate her before making important decisions and judgments. Leira perished shortly after the Time of Troubles, when Mask betrayed her to Cyric.

## Moander

An ancient god of rot, corruption, disease, and decay, Moander has been banished from Faerûn on more than one occasion. Though he was never widely worshiped, he commanded the allegiance of a number of small cults, ruling over his miserable followers as a cruel and petty tyrant. Moander was slain on his home plane by the human bard Finder Wyvernspur, who then seized his divine power.

Illustration by Dana Knutson

## Myrkul

Many centuries ago, a mortal named Myrkul and his two compatriots (Bhaal and Bane) rose to take Jergal's place in the Faerûnian pantheon. Also known as the Lord of Bones or the Lord of the Dead, Myrkul was a cold, malignant, and rational death god, and mortals feared him greatly. After he was destroyed atop Blackstaff Tower in Waterdeep during the Time of Troubles, Cyric briefly usurped his portfolio. Eventually, however, Kelemvor Lyonsbane wrested the rulership of the dead away from the Black Sun.

## Ramman

The onetime war deity of the Untheric pantheon and the chief rival of Gilgamesh, Ramman was a strong but fair champion who led Unther to its first great victories. Initially, he battled against the Imaskari—the hated overlords who had enslaved the Untheric people. Some time later, he fought furiously to defend Unther against the terrible invasions of the Orcgate Wars, in which several other members of the pantheon died. Ramman finally perished in the Time of Troubles, when he was slain by the vengeful deity Hoar.

## Tchazzar

The great warlord known as Tchazzar led the cities of Chessenta in rebellion against Unther more than four hundred years ago. After establishing Chessenta as an independent land and ruling it for many years, the mighty hero-king disappeared from the realm without a trace.

In truth, Tchazzar was a great red dragon who had hoped to achieve godhood by founding a temple and establishing a heroic myth to attract worshipers. To that end, he used shapechanging magic to take human form and become a hero in the eyes of Chessentans. Some time after he achieved his goal of attaining divinity, Tchazzar was devoured by Tiamat, but many Chessentans still revere the memory of the legendary warlord.

## Epic Magic

Faerûn's ancient realms are often associated with magic of astonishing power. Indeed, legend has it that the citizens of certain ancient magical kingdoms could create cities that flew through the air, hide entire forests from the sight of enemies, and unleash terrible catastrophes capable of reducing entire kingdoms to ruins. The legacies of such wizardry still exist today in several forms, including old elven *mythals* that support dozens of spells as well as great bindings and barriers that keep lost strongholds secure. Their power is also apparent in the vast wastelands that were great nations before ancient spells brought them low.

## Mystra's Ban and Epic Magic

All those who live by magic know that in ages long past, mages had access to spells of great power. In the aftermath of Netheril's fall, however, Mystra banned certain high-level spells that she deemed too powerful for mortals to wield responsibly. Thus,

current-day spellcasters no longer have access to true spells of 10th level and higher. Instead, access to epic magic comes via two feats—Improved Spellcasting Capacity and Epic Spellcasting—that function in very different ways.

The Improved Spellcasting Capacity feat grants spell slots above 9th, theoretically without limit. Before Mystra's ban, powerful mages could fill these spell slots either with true spells of 10th level or higher, or with 9th-level or lower spells fortified by various metamagic feats. After Mystra's ban, only the latter option remained available.

The Epic Spellcasting feat allows the development and casting of epic spells (spells requiring the use of the epic spell system presented in the *Epic Level Handbook*, cast through superior mastery of the Spellcraft skill). Mystra's ban has never applied to epic spells, even those that duplicate the effects of 10th-level and higher spells developed before the fall of Netheril.

Epic spells did exist during the days of Netheril, but the Netherese largely abandoned their development after the discovery of the *nether scrolls*. During the age of Netheril, epic spells were largely the province of the Fair Folk and were thus almost exclusively associated with elven high magic. The Netherese, for their part, preferred to develop and use 10th-level and higher spells.

## Epic Spell

The fact that spells such as *Ioulaum's longevity*, *Mythanthor's create mythal*, *Proctiv's move mountain*, and *Tolodine's killing wind* have existed as both high-level spells and epic spells invariably leads to some confusion among scholars of the Art. In the case of *Ioulaum's longevity*, the famed archwizard Ioulaum created a 10th-level version before the fall of Netheril and an epic spell version after Karsus's Folly. The latter was the version cast by Ioulaum's apprentice Tabra, who then destroyed all records she could find of it.

### IOULAUM'S LONGEVITY

Transmutation

**Spellcraft DC:** 152

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** 12,000 ft.

**Area:** 120-ft. radius

**Duration:** Special

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude half

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

**To Develop:** 1,368,000 gp; 27 days; 54,720 XP. Seeds: *destroy* (DC 29), *fortify* (DC 17). Factors: change from target to area (+10), change area to 20-ft. radius (+2), increase area by 3,600% (+144). Mitigating factors: 1-d6 backlash (–10), burn 4,000 XP (–40).

This spell deals 20d6 points of damage to every creature within its area. A living target that is reduced to –10 or fewer hit points (or a construct, object, or undead that is reduced to 0 hit points) is utterly destroyed as if disintegrated, leaving behind only a trace of fine dust. This spell also extends the caster's current age category by 1 year for every living creature it slays.



The spell's duration is instantaneous, but the age extension is permanent.

## epic spell seeds

Epic magic in Faerûn generally conforms to the rules described in the *Epic Level Handbook*. Two spell seeds common to some of Faerûn's greatest works of epic magic are presented here.

### SEED: MYTHAL

Evocation  
**Spellcraft DC:** 25  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 10 minutes  
**Range:** 30 ft.  
**Area:** 100-ft.-radius emanation  
**Duration:** Permanent  
**Saving Throw:** None  
**Spell Resistance:** No

You create a persistent magical field centered on the point you choose. You (or other casters cooperating with you) can then cast a number of other spells into this field, thereby either granting or denying access to them to creatures within the field. Effects you can include in your *mythal* fall into four categories: prevalent spells (always active), aointed spells (always denied to those within the field), vanguard spells (available on demand to those within the field), and prevalent powers (persistent effects that do not map to any particular spell). Your *mythal* can include up to one effect per caster level, but each component spell you cast into it affects the Spellcraft DC of your *raise mythal* spell (see *Mythals*, below).

Once raised, a *mythal* cannot be dispelled, disjoined, or suppressed by any nonepic spell. A character attempting to dispel your *mythal* with an epic spell (such as *superb dispelling*) must succeed on a caster level check (DC 21 + your caster level) to succeed. An *antimagic field* suppresses the portion of the *mythal* that it overlaps but otherwise does it no harm.

### SEED: SHADOW

Illusion (Shadow)  
**Spellcraft DC:** 23  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 1 minute  
**Range:** 0 feet

**Target:** One duplicated creature, object, or spell  
**Duration:** 1 hour  
**Saving Throw:** Will disbelief  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

You fashion a double of one creature, item, or spell entirely from shadows.

You can use this seed to duplicate any creature of CR 5 or lower. For each +1 you add to the creature's CR, the Spellcraft DC increases by 2. You specify the creature's type, subtype, gender, age, and appearance. The creature appears to be an average specimen of its kind and at all times remains under your absolute command. No telepathic link exists, so you must be able to exercise command over it in some other way to control it. The shadow creature cannot become more powerful by increasing its level, improving its abilities, or augmenting any other intrinsic features. If slain, it disappears, seeming to melt away into shadows.

A spell created with the shadow seed can also duplicate a specifically named, unique creature, but this usage increases the Spellcraft DC by 20. Such a duplicate is alive for the spell's duration and possesses the full hit points, knowledge (including class levels, skills, and speech), and personality of the original creature.

The *shadow* seed can also be used in spells to duplicate any nonmagical, unliving, unattended object up to 10 cubic feet in volume. You must succeed on an appropriate skill check to create a complex item (a Craft [armorsmithing] check to make plate mail, for example). You can create matter ranging in hardness and rarity from cloth all the way to gold or steel. A simple object (such as a knife, a saddle, a wooden box, or a rock) has a natural duration of 12 hours. For each additional cubic foot of matter created, the Spellcraft DC increases by 1. Attempting to use any shadow object as a material component or as a resource during epic spell development causes the spell to fail and the object to dissolve immediately.

An epic spell created with the *shadow* seed can duplicate spells of up to 1st level from a single school of magic. Each additional spell level beyond 1st increases the Spellcraft DC by 5, and each additional school of magic to be included adds 2 to the Spellcraft DC. Allowing the duplication of both arcane and divine spells adds 10 to the DC. If the spell to be duplicated has an XP cost, then the caster must pay that in addition to any XP required by the epic spell's casting.

Anyone physically interacting with a creature, object, or effect created via the *shadow* seed gains a Will save to disbelieve. A

## epic spellcasting classes

The following epic spellcasting classes have appeared in various FORGOTTEN REALMS sourcebooks without any specific mention of whether advancing in them increases the character's caster level.

**Elven High Mage:** The elven high mage prestige class appears in *Races of Faerûn*. Such a character's caster level

increases by 1 with each level of spell progression (that is, +1 per two levels).

**Netherese Arcanist:** This prestige class appears in *Player's Guide to Faerûn*. The Netherese arcanist's caster level increases by 1 with each level of the prestige class.

successful save allows recognition of the duplicate as an amalgam of shadows.

## mythals

Many of Faerûn's ancient places are protected by mighty artifices of epic magic known as *mythals*. Characters within the area of a *mythal* may gain the benefits of wondrous magical effects, such as the ability to fly at will, walk up sheer walls, invoke healing spells at will, or even banish demons with a single word. Conversely, a *mythal* might deny those within its confines access to entire schools or types of spells, or prevent teleportation, scrying, death magic, or healing.

The construction of a *mythal* should not be undertaken lightly—even a minor one requires an epic spell of some difficulty. But some of those who seek to understand and master the lore of fallen kingdoms know the secrets of *mythal*-raising and seek to use that long-forgotten knowledge.

While high-level spells capable of creating *mythals* may once have existed, most surviving *mythals*, near-*mythals*, and similar magical artifices were actually constructed with unique spells derived from the *mythal* spell seed. For example, the legendary mage Mythanthor used an epic spell he had researched to raise the *mythal* of Myth Drannor. *Mythals* of similar origin often bear some resemblance to each other and may share common conventions or features.

## what is a mythal?

Any permanent magical ward or field raised via epic magic can be considered a *mythal*. Some scholars draw distinctions between true *mythals*, wizard *mythals*, and near-*mythals*, but the differences among these effects are largely based on semantics and tradition. *Mythals* developed in accordance with the teachings of elven high magic may look different from wards or barriers based on other traditions, but they are functionally equivalent. The only real distinction is that the great elven *mythals* of old (true *mythals*) were the first ones raised in Faerûn. They were ambitious and enduring, and they often covered sizable areas.

*Mythals* still exist in a number of places. Those raised by elven high mages include Myth Drannor, Myth Glaurach, the Elven Court, Myth Adofhaer, Myth Dyraalis, Myth Nantar, Myth Ondath, Myth Rhynn, and Myth Unnohyr, as well as others now lost to history. *Mythals* such as those at Shoonach's Imperial Mount, Myth Iiscar, and Myth Lharast have also been crafted by non-elves using epic spells.

## Raising a mythal

A unique epic spell to raise a new *mythal* can be developed in much the same way as other epic spells (see the *Epic Level Handbook*). All *mythals* are permanent effects based on the *mythal* spell seed, and all provide magical benefits to some (or all) creatures within their bounds. Such spells are usually developed as

Illustration by Vince Locke



*The raising of a mythal*



rites requiring multiple casters, primarily because the Spellcraft DCs would otherwise be too high even for the most experienced spellcasters to reach.

To create a *mythal*, use the following procedure.

1. Begin with the *mythal* seed.
2. Choose the powers you want your *mythal* to have.
3. Calculate the component cost of each power.
4. Total the component costs and divide by 1,000. Add this value to the base Spellcraft DC of the *mythal* seed.
5. Add any the value of any epic spell factors (such as increased area) from Table 2–2 in the *Epic Level Handbook* that apply.
6. Determine which mitigating factors (from Table 2–3 in the *Epic Level Handbook*) your *raise mythal* spell will employ.
7. Obtain the approval of your DM.
8. Research your *raise mythal* spell.

### MYTHAL COMPONENTS

Each *mythal* is defined by the particular suite of powers it offers through its components and the effects it denies to those within its area, as follows.

**Prevalent Spells:** Prevalent spells are always in effect on creatures within the *mythal*. You must make all the decisions necessary for a prevalent spell upon creating your *mythal*, just as if you were creating a use-activated magic item. A spell with a duration of instantaneous cannot be used as a prevalent spell.

The cost of a prevalent spell varies with its normal duration. Since it is always in effect, a spell with a short duration costs more to make prevalent than one with a long duration.

**Renewable Spells:** A prevalent spell that would normally end after its capacity has been reached (such as *stoneskin*, *protection from energy*, or *spell turning*) can be designated as a renewable prevalent spell. Such a spell confers its benefits on any given user only once per 24 hours. When its effect is exhausted through whatever means are normal for the specific spell, it does not renew itself upon that subject until 24 hours after the first time its benefits are used (the first time that damage was negated by a *stoneskin* or *protection from energy*, for example). If the spell's benefits have not yet been exhausted by that time, the effect continues until it is exhausted and is then immediately renewed.

**Arointed Spells:** Arointed spells automatically fail when cast inside the *mythal* or targeted at creatures or objects within it. You can aroint a single spell or all spells that share a common factor, such as a descriptor, energy type, subschool, or school.

**Vanguard Spells:** A vanguard spell is activated with a command word as a standard action, just as if it were a magic item in the user's possession. Any creature within the *mythal* can activate a vanguard spell as often as desired.

You can reduce the cost of a vanguard spell component by making it available a limited number of times to each creature in any 24-hour period.

**Prevalent Powers:** Components not easily described by spells fall into three categories: minor (comparable to spells of 1st to 3rd level or minor magic items), medium (comparable to spells of 4th to 6th level or medium magic items), or major (comparable to spells of 7th to 9th level or major magic items).

TABLE 2–9: MYTHAL COMPONENT COSTS

Component	Component Cost
Prevalent spell base cost	Spell level × caster level × 100
Duration in rounds	Base cost × 4
Duration in minutes	Base cost × 2
Duration in 10 minutes	Base cost × 1.5
Renewable	Base cost × 1/2
Arointed spell	Spell level × minimum caster level × 50
Arointed energy type	10,000
Arointed descriptor or subschool	15,000
Arointed school	20,000
Vanguard spell, at will	Spell level × caster level × 100
Vanguard spell, 3/day	Spell level × caster level × 50
Vanguard spell, 1/day	Spell level × caster level × 25
Prevalent power, minor	5,000
Prevalent power, medium	20,000
Prevalent power, major	50,000

#### Modifiers to Component Cost

Keyed power	Component cost × 2
Spell trigger only	1/2 component cost
Limited area	1/2 component cost

A prevalent power is a good way to represent a spell that could not normally be made prevalent. For example, if you want your *mythal* to automatically use *dismissal* on every evil outsider that enters, you can describe the effect as a medium prevalent power. A *meteor swarm* produced whenever any evil dragon enters would count as a major prevalent power. Prevalent powers that continue to function round after round should be considerably more expensive than those powers that function only once upon entry.

**Keyed Powers:** Any component of a *mythal* can be keyed to specific creatures. For example, a prevalent *fly* spell can be made specific to elves, humanoids, or creatures carrying certain tokens. In the same manner, spells with certain descriptors (such as the death descriptor) can be arointed for particular categories (such as good-aligned dwarves), and vanguard spells can be made available only to creatures that undergo a process of attunement to the *mythal*.

You can key a *mythal* component by designating specific observable characteristics that bar or permit access to various effects, or by designating certain individuals present at the casting to be affected, or by designating a process by which a creature may at some future date gain access to *mythal* powers. For example, a creature might have to undergo a special rite, perform specific actions within the *mythal*, or the like. Keyed components are twice as expensive as unkeyed components.

**Spell Trigger:** You can reduce the component cost of any spell by making it accessible only to creatures capable of producing the effect with a spell trigger item.

**Limited Area:** If the effect is available only within a certain section of the *mythal* (25% or less of the total area), the cost is halved.

### CREATING THE RAISE MYTHAL SPELL

To create a specific *raise mythal* spell from the *mythal* seed and the components you have chosen, total the component costs of the effects you want the *mythal* to produce, as given on Table 2–9. The total Spellcraft DC modifier for your suite of *mythal* powers equals 25 + (total component cost divided by 1,000).

*Mythals* need not pay the ×5 modifier for a permanent duration, since the *mythal* seed already produces a permanent effect.

**Mitigating Factors:** *Mythals* with numerous components typically have very high Spellcraft DCs—often 300 or higher. However, *raise mythal* spells are almost always built with significant mitigating factors. *Mythals* often require a sizable expenditure of XP and the cooperation of numerous additional spellcasters, and many deal significant backlash damage. In addition, *mythals* often feature special mitigating factors not found in other epic spells, as given in Table 2–10. These mitigating factors are explained in detail below.

TABLE 2–10: SPECIAL MITIGATING FACTORS FOR MYTHALS

Mitigating Factor	Cost Adjustment
Caster dies (no resurrection possible)	–50
Capstone	–20
Corruptible (weakens over time)	× 3/4
Anchored	× 3/4

**Caster Dies:** The death of the caster may seem like an insuperable deterrent to the creation of a *mythal*, but many elven high mages are more than ready to go to Arvandor by the time they become capable of such magic. In elf society, sacrificing one's life to create a mighty work of the Art ranks among the most highly honored ways to leave the world.

**Capstone:** A *mythal* with a capstone possesses a critical physical component—a standing stone, a massive throne, a great tree, a beautiful fountain, or the like—that focuses and tethers the magic. Destroying the capstone destroys the *mythal*, so *mythal*-makers who use capstones always conceal them carefully and defend them with powerful magic.

**Corruptible:** The base duration of a corruptible *mythal* is one hundred years instead of permanent. The *mythal* does not

fail automatically after a hundred years have passed, but it must begin to make integrity checks once per year at that point. An integrity check is a Spellcraft check using the original caster's Spellcraft modifier at the time the *mythal* was raised (even if the original caster is no longer present or alive). The DC for the check varies with time and circumstances, but initially, it equals the *mythal*'s final Spellcraft DC (after mitigating factors have been applied) minus 20. For example, if a *mythal*'s Spellcraft DC was 46 after applying the mitigating factors, its initial integrity DC is 26. Thereafter, the DC of the integrity check increases by 1 per ten full years past one hundred, by 1 per previous failed integrity check, and by 2 per anchor-damaging event (if the *mythal* is both corruptible and anchored).

When a *mythal* fails an integrity check, roll d% and consult Table 2–11 to determine the effect.

The base duration of a corruptible *mythal* can be increased in increments of 100% (to two hundred years, three hundred years, or more) by applying the normal epic spell factor for increased duration, at a cost of +2 to the DC per iteration. This factor is applied after the 3/4 reduction to the DC for making the *mythal* corruptible in the first place.

Corruptible *mythals* are often maintained periodically through the use of epic *mythal* rejuvenation spells created specifically for that purpose. The base DC for the rejuvenation spell equals one-half that of the *raise mythal* spell that created the particular *mythal* before mitigating factors were applied, though it may also feature mitigating factors of its own.

If you want a *mythal* to last forever, don't make it corruptible; if you want a "quick and dirty" *mythal* that's easier to raise, or if you want to "stretch" to make your *mythal* as capable as possible, make it corruptible and plan on maintaining it once every century or two.

**Anchored:** An anchored *mythal* is reinforced by the shape and flow of the Weave in its immediate vicinity. Major changes to its physical, magical, or spiritual environment—for example, the destruction of a city, the burning of a forest, or the presence of a powerful and hostile outsider (one whose Hit Dice exceed the *mythal*'s caster level and whose alignment opposes that of the caster in any respect) for at least 24 hours—can damage the *mythal*. A *mythal* integrity check (see Corruptible, above) is made whenever such an anchor-damaging event takes place. See Table 2–11 for the effects of failure.

## the year of oaths forsaken

The year –626 DR, some two thousand years before the Year of Lightning Storms (1374 DR), was known as the Year of Oaths Forsaken. In this era, Faerûn was dominated by a number of mighty empires, almost all of which subsequently fell. During the Year of Oaths Forsaken, Netheril neared the peak of its power, Narfell and Raumathar battled for dominance in the cold lands around Lake Ashane, Jhaamdath expanded throughout the lands south of the Sea of Fallen Stars, and modern Calimshan was arising from the old realm of Coramshan. Great elven realms such as Cormanthyr, Eaelrann, and

Illefarn still held sway over large portions of the world, and the great dwarven kingdoms of Ammarindar and Delzoun still stood unbowed.

The following map offers a glimpse of Faerûn as it stood in the Year of Oaths Forsaken. Netheril's green fields had not yet been swallowed by the sands of Anauroch, the old forests of the North were larger than they are today, and Jhaamdath had not yet been drowned by the high magic of Nikerymath, but many other lands looked much the same as they do today.



THE YEAR OF OATHS FORSAKEN (-626 DR)





**TABLE 2-II: MYTHAL INTEGRITY FAILURE**

d%	Effect
01–30	No effect, but the integrity check counts as a failure.
31–65	Delete one component (randomly determined).
66–85	Replace one component of the <i>mythal</i> with another effect of the same school that is similar in theme or effect but at least one spell level lower.
86–95	Choose one of the <i>mythal</i> 's components at random. If the component is keyed, its key is replaced by one similar in theme or effect but more restrictive. (That is, a keyed component that previously worked for any elf might now work only for any elf wizard.) An unkeyed component acquires a key.
96–99	Replace the key for a randomly determined keyed component with a less restrictive key similar in theme or effect. (That is, a keyed component that previously worked for any elf might now work for any humanoid, or even any living creature.)
100	Replace one component with an unrelated one that is antithetical to the intent or purpose of the original.

## The wards of silverymoon

The wards of Silverymoon (see *Silver Marches*) is a fairly typical wizard *mythal* created in 843 DR by Elué Dualen (Alustriel Silverhand) and several other wizards acting together.

The details of the wards are given on the table below. Unless otherwise stated, all spells are cast at the minimum caster level necessary.

**TABLE 2-12: MYTHAL COMPONENTS FOR THE WARDS OF SILVERYMOON**

Component	Cost
<i>Aointed Spells</i>	
Spells with the death descriptor	15,000
Spells with the evil descriptor	15,000
Spells with the teleportation descriptor*	30,000
Conjuration (summoning) spells*	30,000
Evocation (fire) spells*	20,000
*Keyed component; a character in possession of a ward token can ignore this aointed effect and cast normally.	
<i>Prevalent Spells</i>	
<i>Antipathy</i> (against lawful evil, neutral evil, and chaotic evil creatures, keyed to demons, devils, drow, duergar, giants, goblinoids, mind flayers, orcs, and trolls)	72,000 (base 3 × 12,000, doubled for key)
<i>Detect scrying</i>	2,800
<i>Invisibility purge</i>	3,000 (base 1,500, doubled for duration factor)
<i>Death ward</i>	5,600 (base 2,800, doubled for duration factor)
<i>Protection from evil</i>	200 (base 100, doubled for duration factor)
<i>Zone of truth</i> (within Inner Ward only)	600 (base 600, doubled for duration factor and halved for limited area)

## Vanguard Spells

All the vanguard spells in this *mythal* are available only to designated ward initiates who have undergone the special rite of attunement. The costs given below have all been doubled because each component is keyed. Costs were then halved for spells that affect a limited area (the Inner Ward only).

<i>Air walk</i>	5,600
<i>Bless weapon</i> (CL 4th)	800
<i>Bull's strength</i>	1,200
<i>Cat's grace</i>	1,200
<i>Control water</i>	5,600
<i>Control winds</i>	9,000
<i>Cure moderate wounds</i> (within Inner Ward only)	600
<i>Discern lies</i>	5,600
<i>Dispel chaos</i>	9,000
<i>Dispel evil</i>	9,000
<i>Feather fall</i>	200
<i>Forcecage</i> (within Inner Ward only)	9,100
<i>Lesser ironguard</i>	9,000
<i>Magic missile</i> (CL 9th)	1,800
<i>Neutralize poison</i> (within Inner Ward only)	2,800
<i>Prismatic sphere</i> (within Inner Ward only)	15,300
<i>Quench</i>	5,600
<i>Remove curse</i> (CL 10th)	8,000
<i>Remove paralysis</i>	1,200
<i>Repulsion</i>	13,200
<i>Shield</i>	200
<i>Shocking grasp</i> (CL 5th)	1,000
<i>Silence</i>	1,200
<i>Tongues</i>	3,000

## Prevalent Power

Control of the Moonbridge	40,000 (20,000 base for medium power, doubled for keyed effect)
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The total cost for the components is 353,400. Dividing this value by 1,000 yields a Spellcraft DC modifier of +353. Adding this modifier to the base Spellcraft DC of 25 brings the DC to 378. The wards extend for 1,000 yards in all directions, increasing the area of the emanation from 100 feet to 3,000 feet and adding +116 to the DC. Thus, the total Spellcraft DC is 494.

Like most latter-day *mythals*, Silverymoon's wards are both anchored and corruptible, so the DC drops to 278 ( $3/4 \times 3/4 \times 494$ ). However, the increased duration factor was applied ten times, so that Silverymoon's wards would not begin to erode for one thousand years from the time they were raised. Adding  $+2 \times 10$  raises the DC to 298. This value means that creating this particular *raise mythal* spell requires the expenditure of 2,682,000 gp and 107,280 XP, plus 49 days of research.

The mitigating factors for Silverymoon's *mythal* include an expenditure of 10,000 XP (–100), plus the cooperation of three additional wizards casting 9th-level spells (–51), six additional wizards casting 6th-level spells (–66), and nine additional wizards casting 3rd-level spells (–45), plus 5d6 points of backlash damage (–5). Applying these factors gives a final Spellcraft DC of 31—an easily assured success for an epic-level wizard with the proper feats and magic items.



# THE CROWN WARS

In the dim mists of Faerûn's past, long before the rise of even the most ancient human or dwarven kingdoms, the elves founded mighty empires across the length and breadth of Faerûn. The greatest of these empires—Aryvandaar, Keltormir, Miyeritar, Illefarn, Ilythiir, and Shantel Othreier—coexisted peacefully for thousands of years before greed, envy, and pride brought them low. The series of vicious, bloody wars that destroyed the ancient realms of the elves has come to be known as the Crown Wars.

The Crown Wars consisted of five major campaigns—some of which happened concurrently—that eventually involved all the major elven civilizations. For three thousand years the elves fought one another, tearing down most of what they had spent millennia building and practicing fratricide on a scale unseen before or since. In fact, one elf subrace became so twisted by evil that its members were forever divorced from the light of day. These elves, now known as drow, live underground to this day, and their hatred for other elves remains as strong as it was in those ancient times.

Although time has wiped away many of the great citadels and fortresses built before and during the Crown Wars, a surprising number of them have survived—though not necessarily intact—due to magical preservation. A sense of awesome agelessness pervades the ruins from this era, and anyone who enters them knows instinctively that they are old beyond measure. Their architecture seems strange and almost alien—even to modern-day elves. Many of these ruins also harbor lethal magic traps capable of obliterating not only intruders, but also the ruins themselves and a sizable chunk of countryside surrounding them.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the ruins from this era serve as silent monuments to the tragic history of Faerûn's elves. Historians and philosophers debate whether the Crown Wars were the impetus for the many subsequent tragedies that befell the elves, or whether they were merely the earliest recorded example of that race's propensity for disaster. Elf PCs often feel a haunting sense of grief while exploring the ruins of

a Crown Wars fortress, as though the very stones were imbued with deep sorrow, and even non-elf characters may feel subdued or disquieted.

## History

Much of the written history of the Crown Wars was lost in the terrible battles that occurred at the close of the Fifth Campaign. Elf sages in Evermeet, Evereska, and a few other bastions of elven lore have charge of the few chronicles that remain.

Because the Crown Wars took place so long ago, the following timeline represents only a rough estimate of the dates that certain events occurred.

## Timeline

Year	Event
–30,000	The War of the Seldarine begins. Araushnee is cast down into the Demonweb Pits, where she becomes the demon-goddess Lolth. The solar Malkizid is branded and thrown down into the Nine Hells.
–18,000	Some Ilythiiri houses discover Ghaunadaur and begin venerating him in secret. In the centuries that follow, rival Ilythiiri houses turn to other dark deities, such as Lolth.
–17,600	The Sundering occurs, and Evermeet is created with elven high magic. The spell reaches both back and forward in the mists of time.
–17,100	The War of Three Leaves begins. Ilythiiri spies and assassins incite Syðrpiir, Thearnytaar, and Eiellûr into a three-sided conflict to prevent them from unifying into a single state.



- 15,300 The Vyshaan clan, under Coronal Ivósaar Vyshaan, takes power in Aryvandaar.
- 14,700 Citing familial connections between the ruling houses of Aryvandaar and Miyeritar, the Vyshaanti begin attempting to annex Miyeritar by peaceful means. Miyeritar resists.
- 13,900 Miyeritar reaches the height of its magical and cultural renaissance.
- 13,200 Aryvandaarans begin raiding along Miyeritar's borders and interfering with its trade routes.
- 12,000 The First Crown War begins. Aryvandaar invades Miyeritar and pressures Shantel Othreier to accept Aryvandaaran occupation or suffer the same fate.
- 11,800 Aryvandaaran forces occupy Miyeritar, though a number of dark and sylvan elf clans continue to resist. Many elves of Illefarn provide secret safe havens for Miyeritari.
- 11,700 The Second Crown War begins. Ilythiir launches surprise attacks against Orishaar, an ally of Aryvandaar.
- 11,600 The Ilythiiri burn Syðrpiir to the ground.
- 11,500 Thearnytaar and Eiellûr declare war on Ilythiir and attempt to prevent the Ilythiiri from advancing north. Lolth sends the balor lord Wendonai to seduce a high Ilythiiri clan into her service. The church of Lolth rises to prominence.
- 11,450 Thearnytaar and Eiellûr invade Ilythiir. More than half of their forces are slain by the corrupt, demon-granted magic of the dark elves.
- 11,400 Eiellûr is razed by Ilythiiri dark elves and traitorous wild elves.
- 11,300 Miyeritar is conquered by Aryvandaar, thus ending the First Crown War.
- 11,200 Thearnytaar falls to Ilythiiri forces utilizing *dominated* monsters and undead creatures. Ilythiir begins to skirmish with Keltormir.
- 10,900 Malkizid, the fallen solar, becomes the secret patron of the Vyshaan lords. The Third Crown War begins. Aryvandaar, now known as the Vyshaantar Empire, invades Shantel Othreier.
- 10,700 An orc horde falls upon the embattled armies of Aryvandaar and Shantel Othreier at the Battle of the Gods' Theater. Almost seventy thousand elves perish before Aryvandaar wins the day and occupies northern Shantel Othreier.
- 10,600 Shantel Othreier is conquered by the Vyshaantar Empire, ending the Third Crown War. Resistance movements spring up in Miyeritar and Shantel Othreier.
- 10,500 The Dark Disaster reduces Miyeritar to a dead wasteland. The Crown Wars halt for a time while the elves reassess what they have done.
- 10,450 The Fourth Crown War begins. The Ilythiiri openly begin worshiping evil gods such as Ghaunadaur and Lolth.
- 10,300 Keltormir withdraws its forces from eastern Keltormir, holding its line at Highlands' Edge.

- 10,270 With Keltormir's withdrawal, the Vyshaanti and Ilythiiri come into direct conflict for the first time.
- 10,110 Elf clerics and high mages in Illefarn begin a decades-long prayer for salvation.
- 10,100 Ilythiir destroys Shantel Othreier.
- 10,000 The Seldarine respond to the arcane and divine high magic of the elves by smiting the Ilythiiri. All dark elves are transformed into drow and driven underground, thus ending the Fourth Crown War. The Seldarine summon elves of all other clans and nations to the Elven Court to settle their differences and restore peace.
- 9900 The Vyshaantar Empire annexes Illefarn. Persecution of high mages and powerful clerics in Vyshaantar lands begins as the sun elves seek to eliminate any threats to their power.
- 9800 The Vyshaantar Empire occupies all the remaining elven realms on Faerûn and begins colonization of Evermeet.
- 9600 The first drow civilizations make their presence known by harassing their ancient enemies in the Vyshaantar Empire.
- 9200 The Fifth Crown War begins when the Vyshaantar Empire rebels against the proclamations of the Elven Court, which direct the elves of Aryvandaar to repudiate their Vyshaan rulers. Malkizid abandons House Vyshaan and retreats to the infernal planes.
- 9000 The Fifth Crown War ends with the utter defeat of the Vyshaantar Empire. The lands of Aryvandaar are largely abandoned for an age.

keepers of the past

In elven communities such as Evermeet, the Fortress Home of Evereska, and the remnants of the Elven Court in Cormanthyr, the most basic lore of the Crown Wars is easily accessible in the libraries and halls of learning. A great sage may know more specific details than those other lorekeepers can provide, such as the location of a specific city or fortress, but for the most part, any elf with an interest in history can learn about the Crown Wars with relative ease.

Difficulties often arise when members of other races seek this same knowledge. The Crown Wars era is quite possibly the single greatest shame in the history of the elf race, and the elves have no desire to share the details with outsiders. Especially in sun elf communities, non-elf researchers are frequently denied access to information about the Crown Wars. As a result, the majority of Faerûn's people believe that the Crown Wars were simply an internal struggle for supremacy among the elf subraces.

PCs wishing to research the Crown Wars are likely to encounter strong resistance unless everyone in the group is an elf. If a group that includes other races can demonstrate a pressing need for the information—such as an imminent threat to the elf race that might be averted by knowledge of the Crown Wars—the sages may be more lenient; otherwise, non-elf PCs must be creative in gaining the desired information. For example, a character who is well versed in history might

be able to recall enough details to piece together part of the story with a Knowledge (history) check (see Table 3–1: Crown Wars Information for DCs). Alternatively, a rogue might be able to steal a few tomes from an elven library, or a cleric might attempt to bypass the elves altogether by requesting the knowledge from her deity.

TABLE 3–1: CROWN WARS INFORMATION

Knowledge (History) DC*	Facts Discovered
5	Very basic information (The Crown Wars were ancient civil wars among the elves.)
10	Basic information (The dark elves were transformed into drow during the Crown Wars as punishment for their depravity.)
15	Uncommon but basic information (Aryvandaar, Keltormir, Miyeritar, Illefarn, Ilythiir, and Shantel Othreier were the major elven nations involved in the Crown Wars.)
20	Uncommon, obscure knowledge (Important coronals during the Crown Wars included Ivósaar Vyshaan, Geirildin, and Ynloeth.)
25	Rare information (The Dark Disaster was caused by the machinations of the Aryvandaaran high mages.)
30+	Extremely obscure information (The fallen solar Malkizid was the secret patron of the Vyshaan lords. The fiend Wendonai brought the Ilythiiri to the worship of Lolth.)

\*For non-elves, all DCs increase by at least 5.

songs and stories

Because the Crown Wars took place so long ago, only limited information is available about them today. The following tales are well known in elf society, and most elves have at least a basic knowledge of them. Members of other races or less educated elf subraces (such as wild elves or nomadic wood elves) know significantly less about the Crown Wars than the sun elves and moon elves do.

THE BEGINNING

The First Crown War began as a seemingly minor debate over territory and governance. Aryvandaaran historians had discovered a link between the family of their ruler, Coronal Ivósaar Vyshaan, and the Olrythii, the ruling house of Miyeritar. Always ambitious, the members of House Vyshaan saw this connection as the perfect excuse to claim rulership over Miyeritar. The dark elves and wood elves of Miyeritar, a staunchly independent lot, were not at all interested in being ruled by the haughty sun elves. After several centuries of negotiating, bickering, and feuding with the Olrythii, the Vyshaan ran out of patience, marshaled their armies, and marched on Miyeritar, intending to annex it by force since diplomacy had failed. Thus began the First Crown War.

After two centuries of fighting, Miyeritar was occupied by the sun elves of Aryvandaar, though several dark and sylvan elf clans continued to resist. The Vyshaanti did not bring Miyeritar fully under their control until approximately five centuries after the occupation. Meanwhile, supposedly in retaliation for Aryvandaar's aggression against the Miyeritari, the dark elves of Ilythiir rose up and attacked their nearest enemies in

Illustration by William O'Connor



A duel of the Crown Wars



the smaller kingdom of Orishaar. The stated premise for the conflict was weak, considering that the moon elves of Orishaar had no connection with Aryvandaar beyond a trade alliance, and the Ilythiiri had little to do with the beleaguered elves of Miyeritar. Though it was initially seen as a thinly veiled excuse for the Ilythiiri to seize some land from the moon elves, this offensive continued to gain momentum and eventually escalated to become the Second Crown War.

### THE SECOND CROWN WAR

From "The Saga of Woe," an ancient elven folk tale, author unknown:

*And when the folk of Ilythiir heard about the brutal attacks by the sun elves of Aryvandaar against their northern kinfolk, a shadow fell upon their hearts. The cunning dark elves claimed this shadow was the result of grief and woe, and so skilled was their artifice that all were tricked by it. When the Ilythiiri attacked Orishaar, the elves of all the empires believed that the grief-stricken dark elves were simply lashing out in vengeance on behalf of their cousins to the north.*

*But the shadow upon the hearts of the Ssri'Tel'Quessir stemmed not from grief, but from greed and envy. The shadow wove its insidious tendrils about them and whispered to them of wicked acts and fell deeds. To their own damnation, the Ilythiiri heeded the council of the shadow and were drawn by it into darkness.*

Purportedly, the Second Campaign was an attempt by the Ilythiiri to avenge their wronged cousins in Miyeritar, which boasted the only other major enclave of dark elves on Faerûn. Ilythiir's savage attack wiped out Thearnytaar, Eiellûr, Syðr-piir, and Orishaar, and the dark elves continued to conduct brutal raids against the elves of Keltormir for the next twelve hundred years.

It was during this campaign that the epithet *dbaerow* was first used to describe the dark elves of Ilythiir. Depending upon the intonation, inflection, and context, *dbaerow* could be translated as "face of shadow," "heart of night," "traitor," or a host of other, even less complimentary terms. One by one, the great Ilythiiri houses sought to gain the power to conquer their enemies from demonic patrons. Seeing an opportunity to subvert an entire subrace to evil, Lolth sent the balor Wendonai to Ilythiir. Wendonai successfully led House Sethomiir, the ruling house of the Ilythiiri, into darkness by favoring Geirildin, its coronal, with gifts of dark power. Other high Ilythiiri nobles sought similar patronage, some because they envied the coronal's newfound power, others because they were determined to carve out their own kingdoms from the wreckage of the neighboring elven states.

Guided by their demonic patrons, the Ilythiiri came to relish warfare and torture and despise elven ideals. Their previous justification for the war—avenging their northern brothers—began to ring hollow after centuries of bloodshed and butchery. Even the peaceful moon elves of Keltormir were increasingly horrified by their erstwhile brethren's actions and began to arm themselves for a retaliatory strike at Ilythiir.

### WENDONAI, BALOR SEDUCER

A rarity among his kind, the balor Wendonai prefers the subtle art of corruption to the simple joy of destruction. When the Ilythiiri first began to practice tainted magic and worship blasphemous gods, the Dark Seldarine of the Demonweb Pits dispatched Wendonai to answer the dark elves' summons. Wendonai took delight in showing the Ilythiiri the true nature of corruption. Though it would be entirely too simple to say that he was responsible for the fall of the Ilythiiri, his demonic influence is plain in the barbarous ferocity of the Ilythiiri's attacks on their neighbors and kin.

After the fall of the Ilythiiri, Wendonai acted as advisor, tutor, and occasionally consort to the Matron Mothers of the most powerful drow families. His greatest success resulted in the Dark Court Slaughter, an attack by duergar and drow against the Elven Court around the year -4400 DR. But his efforts to grow the Land under Shadow cost him the favor of Lolth in -2549 DR, since the Spider Queen detested the idea of drow returning to the Realms Above.

Thereafter, Wendonai allied himself with Eltab, Lord of the Hidden Layer, and served as his emissary to Faerûn for several centuries. Wendonai returned to Faerûn in -623 DR at the command of a Nar demonbinder<sup>Una</sup> but was subsequently banished from the continent for two thousand years by an epic spell cast by a cleric of Horus-Re. Now, with only three years left in his term of banishment, Wendonai looks forward to his glorious return, and he has already set plans in motion to exact revenge against the God-Kings of Mulhorand and their followers.

Wendonai is a unique balor who has taken levels in the fiend of corruption prestige class (see *Fiend Folio*). He possesses *charm monster* as a spell-like ability (usable at will) in addition to the normal spell-like abilities of a balor and a fiend of corruption.

**Wendonai:** Male balor fiend of corruption 6; CR 26; Large outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, tanar'ri); HD 20d8+240 plus 6d6+72; hp 423; Init +12; Spd 40 ft., fly 90 ft. (good); AC 36, touch 17, flat-footed 28; Base Atk +23; Grp +35; Atk +33 melee (1d10+11, slam) or +34 melee (2d6+13/17-20, +2 *keen vorpal longsword*); Full Atk +33 melee (1d10+11, 2 slams) or +34/+29/+24/+19 melee (2d6+13/17-20, +2 *keen vorpal longsword*) and +28/+23 melee (1d4+6 plus 1d6 fire plus entangle, +1 *flaming whip*); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft. (20 ft. with +1 *flaming whip*); SA death throes, entangle, spell-like abilities, *summon tanar'ri*, vorpal sword; SQ alternate form, damage reduction 15/cold iron and good, darkvision 60 ft., fiendish graft, fiend's favor, flaming body, *grant wish*, immunity to electricity, fire, and poison, mind shielding, resistance to acid 10 and cold 10, soul bargain, temptation, spell resistance 28, telepathy 100 ft., true seeing; AL CG; SV Fort +27, Ref +25, Will +25; Str 33, Dex 27, Con 35, Int 24, Wis 27, Cha 30.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +39, Concentration +38, Diplomacy +47, Disguise +39, Hide +30, Intimidate +37, Jump +15, Knowledge (arcana) +30, Knowledge (history) +30, Listen +45, Move Silently +31, Search +36, Sense Motive +37, Spellcraft +32,

Spot +45, Use Magic Device +33; Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Quickened Spell-Like Ability (*telekinesis*), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (longsword).

**Death Throes (Ex):** When killed, Wendonai explodes in a blinding flash of light that deals 100 points of damage to anything within 100 feet (Reflex DC 32 half). This explosion automatically destroys any weapons Wendonai is holding.

**Entangle (Ex):** Wendonai's +1 *flaming whip* entangles foes much like an attack with a net. The whip has 20 hit points and needs no folding. If it hits, the target and Wendonai immediately make opposed Strength checks; if Wendonai wins, he drags the target against his flaming body (see below). The target remains anchored against Wendonai's body until it escapes the whip.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—*blasphemy* (DC 27), *charm monster* (DC 24), *greater dispel magic*, *dominate monster* (DC 29), *insanity* (DC 27), *power word stun*, *telekinesis* (DC 25), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *unholy aura* (DC 28); 3/day—*major creation* (caster level 6th), *suggestion* (DC 25, caster level 6th); 1/day—*fire storm* (DC 27), *geas* (caster level 6th), *implosion* (DC 29), *mark of justice* (caster level 6th). Caster level 20th unless otherwise noted.

**Summon Tanar'ri (Sp):** Once per day, Wendonai can automatically summon 4d10 dretches, 1d4 hezrous, or one nalfeshnee, glabrezu, marilith, or balor. This ability is the equivalent of a 9th-level spell.

**Vorpal Sword (Su):** Wendonai carries a +2 *keen vorpal longsword* that looks like a wavy flame.

**Alternate Form (Su):** Wendonai can assume any humanoid form of Small to Large size as a standard action. This ability functions like the *polymorph* spell, except that it allows only humanoid forms.

**Grant Wish (Sp):** Once per day, Wendonai can grant a *wish* to a mortal (not an elemental, outsider, or nonliving creature).

**Fiendish Graft:** Once per month, Wendonai can bestow a fiendish graft; see Appendix 2 of the *Fiend Folio* for details.

**Fiend's Favor (Su):** Once per day, Wendonai can grant a touched creature a +3 bonus to one ability score that lasts for 24 hours. When the effect expires, the creature takes a -3 penalty to the same score for the next 24 hours.

**Flaming Body (Su):** Wendonai's body is wreathed in flame. Anyone grappling him takes 6d6 points of fire damage each round.

**Mind Shielding (Su):** Wendonai is immune to *detect thoughts*, *discern lies*, and any attempt to magically discern alignment.

**Soul Bargain (Su):** Wendonai can enter into a binding agreement with a mortal at the cost of the latter's soul.

**Temptation (Su):** Wendonai can offer a good creature the opportunity to change its alignment to evil. This ability works like the temptation function of the *atonement* spell.

**True Seeing (Su):** Wendonai has a continuous *true seeing* ability, as the spell (caster level 20th).

**Possessions:** +1 *flaming whip*.

### THE THIRD CROWN WAR:

#### THE DARK DISASTER

In about -10,900 DR, the fallen solar Malkizid became the secret patron of the Vyshaantar high mages and taught them many terrible secrets of high magic. While the Second Crown War continued to rage in the south, Aryvandaar (now known as the Vyshaantar Empire) attempted to annex the sun elf and moon elf kingdom of Shantel Othreier, thus beginning the Third Crown War.

The elves of Shantel Othreier resisted Aryvandaar's attacks for three centuries, but with the sudden, mysterious death of Ynloeth, their coronal, they finally surrendered and diplomatically joined the Vyshaantar Empire, thus ending the Third Crown War.

About a century thereafter, a horrid magical storm known as the Dark Disaster laid waste to Miyeritar. History (as written by the victors of the Third Crown War) says that Miyeritar's attempts to stop Aryvandaar's armies caused the Dark Disaster. In truth, the fell magic that produced it was called forth by Vyshaantar high mages and proceeded unopposed because a Vyshaantar assassination campaign had destroyed many of Miyeritar's high mages in the months before. The Dark Disaster hung over Miyeritar like a funeral shroud for months, and when its cloying mists and bloody rains finally dissipated, the once-proud forest had been reduced to a blasted, poisonous wasteland. Although many of Miyeritar's original inhabitants had fled long before the killing storm hit, innumerable innocents died horribly. Even today, the High Moor still stands desolate, its interior dotted with the ruins of the once-proud kingdom of Miyeritar. Only a few elves versed in history—mostly high mages and high priests—know that most of Miyeritar's surviving mages gave their lives in a now-lost ritual designed to preserve Miyeritar's legacy, in the hope that her light would someday rise again from the kingdom's ashes.

### THE FOURTH CROWN WAR: THE DESCENT

The destruction of Miyeritar enraged the Ilythiiri, who rightfully blamed Aryvandaar for the Dark Disaster. In the wake of the killing storm, the Ilythiiri turned their high magic fully to the pursuits of war, and the result was devastation on an unparalleled scale. Within four decades after the Dark Disaster, the Ilythiiri utterly destroyed the realm of Shantel Othreier—the closest outpost of Vyshaantar power. In the words of the *Song of the Sundered Crown*, Ilythiiri high mages "called stones from the sky," and "caused the earth to boil and the trees to scream." Refugees from the doomed kingdom of Shantel Othreier told tales of Ilythiiri atrocities that made the actions of the Aryvandaar for the past several centuries seem tame by comparison.

In the face of this savage assault, the remaining elven kingdoms gathered in a great conclave and made a decision that would haunt elvenkind forever—the Ilythiiri, or "*dbaerow*," would be cast out of Corellon's favor and divorced for all time from their brethren. The most powerful high mages and clerics of the Seldarine joined together to perform a ritual that altered the Ilythiiri's bodies to match the corruption of their souls.



Although the conclave had intended to punish only the Ilythiiri, the ritual altered all the dark elves of Faerûn except those who had already altered their own forms. The corrupted dark elves were then driven underground by the combined might of the united elven nations. This event, known as the Descent, mirrored the fall of Lolth and her offspring from the Seldarine and thus helped to seal the new elf subrace's loyalty to the Spider Queen. The word *dhaerow*—which once meant traitor—was likewise corrupted to “drow,” which became the name of the corrupted dark elves.

Why all dark elves, and not just the Ilythiiri, were transformed into drow remains one of the enduring mysteries of the Descent. Some of the more humble elf theologians believe it was an unintended consequence of the sort that always seems to occur when the Fair Folk overreach themselves in the application of high magic. In their eyes, the disastrous sundering of Evermeet from Faerûn, the Dark Disaster, and the destruction of Jhaamdath fall into that same category.

## THE FIFTH CROWN WAR:

### ARYVANDAAR'S FALL

The Fourth Crown War and the Descent that ended it were spiritually debilitating events that forced the surface elves into a tenuous peace. At the apparent insistence of Corellon Larethian himself, more than one hundred representatives were selected from each of the elf subraces except the drow. These elves, chosen from all stations and walks of life, were transported to a forest in the east that was far removed from conflicts, political and otherwise, so that they could debate the cause of their divisiveness and strife. This place, established in Corellon's name as a place of decision and judgment, became known as the Elven Court.

During this time of judgment, many elves displaced by the Crown Wars set off to search for the near-mythical realm of Evermeet, a land far away from the other elven kingdoms that remained untouched by the ravages of the Crown Wars. Answering a call from deep within their souls, they followed a trail into the west that they could sense but not see. Upon reaching the coast, they built ships and sailed them into the uncharted western seas, where they at last found Evermeet.

Much to their surprise, Evermeet had already been an elven homeland for quite some time. Not even the wild elves native to the island could say how long they had been here. Ultimately, the elves decided that the highest houses of Aryvandaar would settle the isle and do their best to “civilize” it until a coronal could arrive to claim governance over it.

Meanwhile, after nearly a millennium of debate, the elves of the Elven Court judged the sun elf clan of Vyshaan, the ruling house of Aryvandaar and the Vyshaantar Empire, to be the root cause of the strife and suffering of the Crown Wars. The punishment proposed for the Vyshaan was severe—they were to be stripped of their rulership and their nobility, and their lives would be declared forfeit for their crimes against elvenkind. But the spies that the Vyshaanti had planted among the representatives at the Elven

Court had forewarned them of the decision, allowing the clan to marshal its forces for active resistance.

The Fifth Crown War began as recklessly as the four before it had. At the behest of Malkizid, the mad king Giilvas Vyshaan ordered the murder of all the wizards and high mages who stood against him, counting on his high mage sons and brothers to protect the clan. The troops and supporters of the Vyshaan were quite loyal, but even they could not hope to stand against the combined power of all the other elves—especially with the power of Corellon Larethian's mandate behind them. Even Malkizid saw that victory for the Vyshaanti was impossible, so he returned to the Nine Hells, abandoning the sun elves to their fate. The Fifth Crown War lasted only two hundred years before the obvious madness of the Vyshaan lords compelled even their most ardent followers to abandon their cause. Without the support of their elf allies and their infernal patron, the elves of the Vyshaan clan were slowly but inexorably crushed by the allied forces of the remaining elven kingdoms. Rumors and dark tales tell of four “Sons of Vyshaan” who escaped the destruction of their clan and fled west to await a time when they could return to Faerûn in triumph, at the head of a new Vyshaantar Empire. Serious scholars and sages, however, usually dismiss such tales as pure fiction.

The Crown Wars finally drew to a close some three thousand years after the march of the Vyshaan clan first ignited the strife among the elven kingdoms. The elves of current-day Faerûn rarely speak of this time of madness even among themselves, let alone in the presence of non-elves. However, a few remnants of that period survive in the Elven language. To this day, *vyshaan* is a vile curse and an insult nearly as potent as calling an elf *dhaerow*.

## Important sites

Although the long march of years has buried the majority of the locations important to this period of history, a few scattered ruins remain, especially in the High Forest and on the High Moor—the sites of the former kingdoms of Aryvandaar and Miyeritar, respectively. Other sites may also remain, buried deep in forgotten forests and unexplored dales, perhaps magically preserved against decay.

Ruins from the Crown Wars era are treasure troves of vastly powerful artifacts and magic. This section presents overviews of several such sites, broken down by kingdom. The locations of these sites are deliberately imprecise so that DMs can drop them into convenient spots in their campaigns.

## Aryvandaar

The proud sun elf kingdom of Aryvandaar once stretched from the present bounds of the High Forest in the east to the banks of the River Dessarin. In the days of the Crown Wars, this whole region was solid forest.

Current-day historians portray the elves of Aryvandaar as a haughty lot who believed themselves superior to all other elves

and vastly superior to non-elves. The Vyshaan clan, Aryvandaar's ruling house, constructed many enormous fortresses and citadels for the war effort, as well as several cities so beautiful that even the most jaded and cynical elf would weep for joy at the sight of them. Their magic produced impossibly slender spires of stone and crystal, stonework so fine and intricate it resembled lace, and perfectly smooth, seamless construction. Many of these features are still visible in Aryvandaaran ruins.

## ARKÉRYM (GREAT SWORD)

This small outpost at the border between Aryvandaar and Miyeritar experienced rapid growth in the early years of the First Crown War because it served as one of the principal staging points for the invasion of Miyeritar. The preserving magics that had kept the citadel whole for centuries finally failed about five thousand years ago, and Arkérym is now little more than a tangled mess of collapsed walls and broken-topped towers. Based on the apparent age of the ruins, many sages mistakenly assume the town to be an outpost of Sharrven.

The Vyshaanti stripped many treasures from the site during their final stand in the Fifth Crown War, and other elves looted more of them after the eradication of the Vyshaan clan. Still others were claimed by the various monsters that laired in the ruins over the intervening millennia. However, a few chambers that were sealed with powerful magical traps (at least CR 16) still contain relics of the wars—mostly weapons, armor, and spellbooks. The ruins have been uninhabited since the last occupant (a beholder) was slain by a party of adventurers from Silverymoon.

## SHAALKAR MANOR

This site was named for Ealar Shaalkar, the elf explorer who discovered it. No record of its original name has ever been found. Historians believe that Shaalkar Manor was once the manor house of a particularly influential sun elf noble, though not a member of the Vyshaan clan.

The aboveground structure is gone except for a few low walls and the broken remnants of a path that might have once wound through a garden. The mausoleum on the grounds appears untouched by the ravages of time, and in fact it is less than a decade old. A group of Evereskan tomb guardians, upon hearing about the discovery of Shaalkar Manor, traveled to the site to see whether any tombs lay underground. They discovered the familial crypts but were unable to excavate more than one level because of certain strange magical wards and curses they could neither detect nor counter. After losing five of their number, the tomb guardians withdrew, constructed the mausoleum over the excavated shaft to shelter the dead, and promptly circulated orders to all the elven strongholds on Faerûn that this tomb was to be left strictly alone.

Recently, adventurers have begun to wonder why the tomb guardians would go to that much effort just to keep people away from a tiny familial crypt in the middle of nowhere. A few groups have ventured to the site to see whether more than just bizarre magical traps might be buried down there,

but none have succeeded in opening any more sections of the tombs to date.

## Illefarn

Illefarn prospered the longest of all the elven kingdoms of the Crown Wars era. A mighty nation that was said to rival Cormanthyr at its height, Illefarn controlled much of the Sword Coast during its heyday. About –1100 DR, the moon elf and sun elf citizens of Illefarn abandoned their kingdom and traveled west to Evermeet. Various ruins scattered up and down the Sword Coast give mute evidence of the scope of ancient Illefarn's rule, but they provide few clues about the lives of its people.

Much confusion surrounds the legacies of ancient Illefarn because two different realms actually bore that name. The second Illefarn was a weak alliance between the moon elves of the Ardeep and the shield dwarves of Dardath, formed at the Council of Illefarn in 342 DR. This second realm was a short-lived state that preceded the founding of Phalorm, the Realm of Three Crowns, and it bore little resemblance to the mighty elven realm of old.

## CRYPTS OF AELINTHALDAAR

Aelinthaldaar, the capital city of Illefarn, once stood where Waterdeep, the City of Splendors, stands today. Founded about –8,500 DR, the city was razed by high magic in –1100 DR by order of Illefarn's coronal, just before the citizens departed for Evermeet.

Because no ruins were left behind, little is known of this ancient city. The only traces of Aelinthaldaar that remain today are the crypts beneath Waterdeep's Pantheon Temple and a high magic effect that still persists within the city—and both are closely guarded secrets known only to the Fair Folk of Waterdeep. The crypts contain fell weapons captured from the armies of Aryvandaar, and the high magic ward prevents the city's plateau from collapsing or settling, thus keeping whole districts of the City of Splendors from sinking into Undermountain.

## SONG PATHS

Among Illefarn's enduring legacies are the song paths of its poet-mages. These individuals created vast *portal* networks linked to songs and poems of epic length. These networks could be activated by walking over certain enchanted stones while singing the songs used to create them. Many such song paths linked outposts and hidden glades in Illefarn's vast forests, and together they spanned most of the Sword Coast North.

Most of the song paths were disabled shortly before the Retreat to Evermeet, but at least one still remains because the elf noble who was to disenchant it could not bear to do so. Instead, he took with him all available copies of the poetic work that activated the *portal* system and separated it into smaller parts, so that no whole version of it remained in existence.

This song path, called Voices of the Lost after the song that activated it, lies along the River Delimbiyr. It connects



a spot near Daggerford, a hilltop near the confluence of the rivers Delimbiyr and Hark, a tiny island at the top of the Shining Falls, the ruin known as Elven Port, the headwaters of the Delimbiyr in the Talons, and a submerged rock in the shallows off the coast of the Lizard Marsh (which was part of the mainland when the song path was made).

## Ilythiir

Even the Vyshaanti were never as reviled by their fellow elves as the dark, monstrous Ilythiiri. The current-day drow bear their ancestors no great love, primarily because the Ilythiiri serve as reminders of just how far the dark elves have fallen. Because of the hatred that all other elves have borne the Ilythiiri through the millennia, fewer ruins remain from Ilythiir than from any other kingdom of the Crown Wars era. Most of those that have survived are twisted places of darkness and evil built shortly before the Descent. How these sites have survived to the present day remains a mystery, though some suggest that they were preserved by Lolth herself, or by one of the other drow gods with a perverse sense of humor.

### ATHAMAULT

#### (THE IRON PIT)

Built during the Second Crown War, the Iron Pit was one of the greatest Ilythiiri fortresses. A labyrinthine series of tunnels, dungeons, and catacombs near what is now the Lake of Steam, Athamault was one of the first subterranean structures that the dark elves built. Had the other elf subraces known about it at the time, they would have taken its existence as a sure sign of the Ilythiiri's descent into madness and evil.

In the underground alchemical laboratories of Athamault, the Ilythiiri created twisted monstrosities and researched unholy spells of such vile nature that even the drow of today hesitate to use them. The surface elves never found Athamault, and although the early drow carried off as many of its treasures as they could, many dark and powerful secrets still lie hidden in its forgotten vaults.

### CITADEL OF SLIME

Though its name conjures images of a fortified castle, the Citadel of Slime is actually nothing more than a fetid cave. Shaped by degenerate Ilythiiri into a form they believed suitable for a temple to Ghaunadar, the citadel was used for horrific ritual sacrifices of enemy captives during the Crown Wars.

Because of its isolated underground locale, this cave remains relatively well preserved, though it is still infested with slimes and oozes. In recent years, a cabal of heretical drow dedicated to the worship of Ghaunadar has taken up residence here. No known relics from the Crown Wars era remain in the citadel, but intrepid (and strong-stomached) adventurers might be able to seize the treasures brought here by its current inhabitants.

## Miyeritar

Quite a few ruins from the era of the Crown Wars have survived on the High Moor, thanks in part to the area's transformation into an all-but-uninhabitable wasteland. Its population of vicious monsters and the devastating effects of the Dark Disaster have ensured that most of those sites remain desolate, empty ruins of interest only to the most avid scholars. Nevertheless, a few sites still retain some vestige of their former power.

### KRAANFHAOR'S DOOR

Located about 100 miles due south of Secomber, this depression in the High Moor marks the former site of the Citadel of Kraanfhaor, one of Miyeritar's

greatest wizard schools. Today, all that remains of the citadel is a series of gulches and half-buried walls. A small cave on the western side of the dell leads into a cavern complex carved out by centuries of running water.

A remnant of Miyeritar still lingers here despite centuries of infrequent occupation by bugbears and leucrottas. Within the eastern portion of the cavern complex stands an ornately decorated stone door. The carving, done in the style of the Miyeritari, depicts several elf spellcasters working magic with dragons. Many have tried to uncover the secret of Kraanfhaor's Door, but no one has yet found a way to open it, and all at-



A wizard studies Kraanfhaor's Door

Illustration by Matt Cavotta & Steve Prescott

tempts to burrow into the chamber beyond it have failed. Some believe that the great library of Kraanfhaor may still stand behind this door, and finding it would unlock many secrets of elven high magic.

## Legacies of the Crown Wars

Though they are ancient history even to the elves, the Crown Wars left an indelible legacy on the face of Faerûn. They influenced every aspect of the continent's development, from its geography (via the destruction of Miyeritar and the subsequent creation of the High Moor) to the social (the Descent of the Ilythiiri and the birth of the drow). This section discusses ways that the DM can incorporate these legacies into the campaign using adventure seeds and some ancient, forgotten legacies of the Crown Wars.

## Adventure seeds

Apart from the obvious "explore the ancient ruins to find treasure" plotline, any number of ways exist to incorporate aspects of the Crown Wars into current-day campaigns. For example, an adventure can be set in some ancient ruins, or the history of these ancient elven conflicts can be woven into the campaign's overall plot.

### THE FOUR SONS

Pirates have been harassing elven ships traveling to and from Evermeet. This situation is unusual enough in and of itself, since pirates rarely attack elven vessels for fear they might be carrying high mages or other powerful spellcasters. Further examination of the circumstances reveals some even more unsettling information. The pirates have been sailing ships of elven make and flying flags bearing an unusual heraldic device that sages recognize as the emblem of the Vyshaantar Empire. Are these pirates the "four sons of Vyshaan" alluded to in the ancient elven legends and prophecies, or are they simply charlatans hoping to capitalize on superstition and fear?

### VENGEANCE FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE

Shortly before the fall of Shantar Othreier, a powerful moon elf high mage foresaw his nation's inevitable defeat and placed himself and his small force of soldiers into a state of mystical stasis that would last until he could rally the defenders of Shantar Othreier once again. But the spell went disastrously wrong. Although it did place the high mage and his forces in a deep slumber and tether their souls to their bodies, it did not halt the ravages of time. Now, after centuries of half-dead slumber, the high mage and his ghastly followers have arisen again, and they think the Crown Wars are still in progress.

*Creatures:* Use the statistics for wights from the *Monster Manual* for the undead soldiers. The high mage is a lich with

at least twenty-one wizard levels. If your PCs are not advanced enough to deal with such an epic threat, decrease his levels enough to make his CR appropriate and simply omit his high mage status from the description.

## Buried secrets

The saying "Some things are best left forgotten" is quite true in reference to remnants of the Crown Wars era. The following locations hold just a few of the forgotten secrets of the Crown Wars and the elves who fought them.

### ILYTHIIRI TEMPLE TO LOLTH

When the Ilythiiri first discovered and began to worship the Dark Seldarine, they did not fully understand their new deities. They knew that Lolth was a spider-goddess, but they were less clear about the nature of the other gods in their unholy pantheon. As a result, many of their early temples contained iconography and ritual rooms that modern drow would consider at best baffling and at worst blasphemous. Masked spiders cavorted with ooze monsters, while eight-limbed, undead elves wielding swords looked on. Gradually, as their high priests died horrible deaths at the hands of their offended gods, the early Lolth cults determined what forms of worship were acceptable, and the Ilythiiri religion took on the forms familiar to the drow of today. A few of the early temples of the Ilythiiri can be found in the Shaar, serving as homes for various arachnoid monsters.

### OCCUPATIONAL FORTS

A number of ancient forts in various states of decay dot the blasted landscape of the High Moor. Remnants of Aryvandaar's occupation, these small, heavily fortified complexes were placed in troublesome areas of Miyeritar so that Aryvandaaran forces could more easily deal with insurgents, rebels, and other disruptive elements.

Each occupational fort was a walled compound built of mortar and brick woven with various spell-resistance effects and strengthening magic. Within the walls were a barracks suitable for a company of sun elf soldiers, an eyrie for twelve griffons, and a small, separate tower for Aryvandaaran battle mages.

Clerics were stationed at each fort to supply the soldiers with food, drink, and healing, and the wizards used their divination magic to sniff out troublemakers before they could incite the local populace to rebellion. The system was surprisingly effective in that a relatively small body of soldiers could pacify large swaths of territory while the main force engaged the enemy's regular troops on the battlefield. Most of these occupational forts were razed during the Fifth Crown War and its aftermath, but several still survive, scattered across the High Moor. Most of them now serve as citadels and outposts for the monsters that have chosen them as lairs.



# GOD-KINGS OF THE EAST

Sages and bards throughout Faerûn tell fantastic stories of the first human empires, which arose in the far eastern lands uncounted ages ago. Between the dusty plains of the Raurin Desert and the icy northern reaches of the Great Glacier, five different human empires grew mighty under the direction of their godlike rulers. The people of these empires practiced slavery on a scale unknown to any race except the yuan-ti, committed arcane atrocities of great magnitude, and waged catastrophic wars in which great armies clashed and untold thousands died. Centuries of conflict, destruction, and imperial decline eventually wiped these empires from the face of Faerûn, leaving innumerable ruins across the eastern portion of the continent. A wealth of fabulous riches and forgotten lore is hidden within some of these shattered remnants of the past, awaiting discovery by the bold and adventurous.

The eastern empires of old were ruled by absolute tyrants with limitless ambition. The first of them was the human realm of Imaskar—a mysterious kingdom of power-mad artificers determined to achieve arcane supremacy. They used their magic to dominate others and even reached into other worlds to enslave the people there. Emboldened by their successes, the Imaskari wizards grew so arrogant and audacious that they dared to defy the gods—an act that led to their downfall. With the aid of their own deities, the slaves threw off the chains of their Imaskari masters and founded the twin dynasties of Mulhorand and Unther.

The northern empires of Narfell and Raumathar had far humbler beginnings. Warrior bands from both nations had once served as mercenaries in the armies of Unther and Mulhorand, and this association with the two southern empires sparked imperial desires in the Nar and Raumathari rulers. Numerous kingdoms in northern Faerûn were soon united under an evil

emperor beholden to fiendish lords, and the new empire, which was called Narfell, became a twisted land haunted by sinister demon-worshippers. The Raumvirans turned to arcane warfare, and its strength came from its warrior-wizards and their fell battle-magic. Raumathari mages created armies of constructs armed with weapons that were a fearsome blend of sword and sorcery and used them to conquer the surrounding territory. Throughout the ensuing centuries, Narfell and Raumathar warred ceaselessly over land and resources. The two empires remained bitter enemies and eventually began a war so utterly consuming that it resulted in their mutual annihilation.

## History

Historians point to eastern Faerûn's long history of divine intercession and cataclysmic wars as proof of an exotic past very different from that of the west. After all, it was in the east that gods first assumed mortal form and gigantic *portals* were opened to other worlds, bringing hundreds of thousands of alien orcs and humans to Faerûn.

Since the time when the first humans settled in the East, numerous kingdoms have arisen and fallen, and several ancient peoples have vanished. Of the five eastern empires, only the realms of Unther and Mulhorand still endure, and they are much reduced in power from their previous heights.

## Timeline

Year	Event
-8350	Imaskari tribes settle a vast, fertile plain in the area that will later become the Raurin Desert.
-8123	Imaskari artificers create the first permanent extradimensional space. Their fascination with such magic soon transforms Imaskari city design.
-7975	Inupras, the Imperial City of Imaskar, is founded. The first Imaskari emperor, Umyatin, assumes the title of lord artificer.
-6422	The Imaskari city of Solon is founded.
-4370	A suspicious plague decimates Imaskari cities.

- 4366 Imaskari artificers open twin *portals* to another world and magically abduct thousands of humans to serve as slaves. The artificers then erect a planar barrier to prevent contact between the slaves and their deities. Over time, the slaves intermarry with the Imaskari, and their descendants become a race in their own right that is later called the Mulan.
- 3891 Under orders from Lord Artificer Omanond, Imaskari artificers create the *Imaskarcana*—seven items in which the empire's immense magical lore is recorded for all eternity.
- 3234 The Imaskari outpost known as Metos is founded in the Methwood.
- 2489 The deities of the Imaskari slaves bypass the planar barrier by sending physical manifestations and incarnations of themselves to Toril via the Astral Plane. Their first divine minions are anointed, and the Imaskari slaves revolt against their masters.
- 2488 Horus slays Lord Artificer Yuvaraj, Emperor of Imaskar. Inupras falls, marking the end of the Imaskar Empire. The devastation wrought in the empire's fall turns the site into the Raurin Desert.
- 2487 The Imaskari's former slaves migrate westward to the shores of the Alamber Sea. Imaskari refugees flee to the Underdark, taking the *Third Imaskarcana* with them.
- 2481 Ilphemon, an Imaskari lord, founds the hidden city of Deep Imaskar in the Earthroot area of the Underdark.
- 2135 Some of the Imaskari's former slaves found the city of Skuld, which soon becomes the capital of a new nation called Mulhorand.
- 2087 Other former slaves of Imaskar build a city called Unthalass, which becomes the capital of a new nation called Unther.
- 1967 The first Mulhorand–Unther war begins.
- 1961 The leaders of Mulhorand and Unther agree on a common border—the River of Swords.
- 1500 Mulhorandi expansion results in the settlement of the Priador and annexation of Murghôm, the Plains of Purple Dust, and the Raurin Desert. Untheric expansion results in the settlement of the Wizards' Reach (see *Unapproachable East*) and much of the Eastern Shaar.
- 1482 Mulhorand conquers the eastern realm of Semphâr.
- 1250 Untheric expansion north from the Wizards' Reach meets with resistance from the star elves of Yuirwood. Similar expansion near the Great Rift generates conflict with the gold dwarves.
- 1124 The Mulhorandi outpost of Semkhrun is founded in Semphâr.
- 1081 The Mulhorandi wizard Thayd and his conspirators rebel against the empire and are defeated. Thayd is executed.
- 1075 The Orcgate Wars begin in the region that is now Thay. Renegade Mulhorandi wizards employ Imaskari *portal* magic to open planar gates to an orc world.

Illustration by Jason Engle



Tuvaraj, Lord Artificer of Imaskar, battles Horus in Inupras



	Mulhorand hires Nar, Raumathari, Rashemi, and Sossrim mercenaries to fight the orc invaders.	643
-1071	The orc god Gruumsh kills the Mulhorandi deity Ra in the first known deicide. The Untheric gods Inanna, Girru, Ki, Marduk, Nanna-Sin, Nergal, and Utu are also slain by orc deities.	677
-1069	The <i>Orcgate</i> is destroyed, and the invading orcs are defeated in the Priador.	679
-1050	Set murders Osiris.	
-1048	Isis resurrects Osiris. Horus-Re battles Set and becomes chief of the Mulhorandi pantheon. The First Mulhorand Empire ends.	722
-970	The Nentyarch of Tharos builds his capital at Dun-Tharos and forges the <i>Crown of Narfell</i> . He begins conquering the surrounding Nar kingdoms and uniting them under his rule.	731
-946	The nentyarch's armies destroy Shandaular, the capital of Ashanath. All the Nar kingdoms are united into an empire called Narfell.	823
-900	The Nar and Raumathari Empires rise to prominence. The Raumvirans establish Winterkeep.	922
-734	Gilgeam becomes god-king of Unther. The First Untheric Empire comes to an end.	
-623	<i>Year of Clipped Wings</i> : Narfell's attempt to invade Mulhorand and Unther by sea fails.	929
-425	<i>Year of Ancestral Voices</i> : Paladins of Osiris destroy the Mulhorandi city of Sekras.	976
-160	<i>Year of the Stone Giant</i> : Narfell and Raumathar begin their final war—a decade-long cataclysm that involves the summoning of demon lords and an avatar of Kossuth. A secret Raumathari sisterhood is formed to preserve Raumathar's lore.	1018
-135	<i>Year of Old Beginnings</i> : The Mulhorandi found Kensten (modern Bezantur) on the coast of Wizards' Reach.	1030
-82	<i>Year of Witches</i> : A clandestine order of masked witches emerges near Lake Tirulag and makes itself known to the folk of Rashemen.	1098
-75	<i>Year of the Leather Shield</i> : An alliance of witches and barbarians overthrows the demon lord Eltab and forms the nation of Rashemen.	1117
108	<i>Year of the Flood</i> : The Alamber River floods, devastating Unthalass.	1183
202	<i>Year of the Fanged Gauntlet</i> : Arkaiuns from Eltabranar invade Mulhorand and Unther and continue to raid cities and towns in both realms for the next two years.	1248
482	<i>Year of the Blighted Vine</i> : The northern cities of Delthuntle and Laothkund declare independence from Unther.	1280
504	<i>Year of the Eclipsed Heart</i> : Teth and Nethra declare independence from Unther. Unther begins a military campaign to reclaim its rebel cities.	1301
625	<i>Year of the Torrents</i> : The city of Escalant secedes from Unther.	1317
		1320
		1322
		1324

<i>Year of the Nesting Harpy</i> : The Mulhorandi wizard Nezram leaves his tower by the shores of Lake Azulduth to explore other worlds.	
<i>Year of Resonant Silence</i> : Gilgeam sends a naval armada to Aglarond to crush the rebellious cities of the Wizards' Reach. Terrible storms force the Untheric fleet to turn back.	
<i>Year of the Scarlet Sash</i> : Unther recognizes the sovereignty of the Wizards' Reach cities, and the Second Untheric Empire ends.	
<i>Year of the Last Hunt</i> : The Great Druid of Leth claims the ancient title of nentyarch and raises a tree-fortress over the tainted ruins of Dun-Tharos.	
<i>Year of Visions</i> : A second flood devastates Unthalass. Gilgeam claims the mountain stronghold of the slain brown dragon Vulpomyscan and renames it the Citadel of Black Ash.	
<i>Year of the Floating Petals</i> : Mourktar secedes from Unther.	
<i>Year of the Spouting Fish</i> : Red Wizards wrest the Priador from Mulhorand at the battle of Thazalhar and found the nation of Thay. Delhumide, the Mulhorandi imperial city, is razed by Red Wizards. The Second Mulhorandi Empire ends.	
<i>Year of Flashing Eyes</i> : Several Chessentan cities form an alliance under the leadership of the warlord Tchazzar and secede from Unther.	
<i>Year of Slaying Spells</i> : A Mulhorandi invasion of Thay is repelled.	
<i>Year of the Dracorage</i> : King Tchazzar of Chessenta dies in battle against sahuagin. His body is never found, so his people assume that he has ascended to godhood.	
<i>Year of Warlords</i> : The Zulkirs are established as the ruling body of Thay.	
<i>Year of the Rose</i> : A Thayan invasion of Mulhorand fails.	
<i>Year of the Twelverule</i> : Chessenta breaks up into squabbling city-states.	
<i>Year of the Grisly Ghosts</i> : Paladins of Osiris level the city of Sekras and clear Sebek's followers from the River of Swords.	
<i>Year of the Cockatrice</i> : Rehorusteb II becomes Pharaoh of Mulhorand.	
<i>Year of the Manticore</i> : Thay launches an invasion of Mulhorand and nearly overruns Sultim.	
<i>Year of the Trumpet</i> : A cult of Tiamat becomes active in Unther.	
<i>Year of the Wandering Wyrm</i> : The Dragon Plague of the Inner Sea takes a huge toll in Unther.	
<i>Year of the Watching Cold</i> : Akonhorus II becomes Pharaoh of Mulhorand.	
<i>Year of Lurking Death</i> : Alasklerbanbastos, the Great Bone Wyrm, emerges from the Riders to the Sky and begins a summer-long reign of terror in Chessenta.	
<i>Year of the Grimoire</i> : The Dragon Plague ends in Unther.	

1357	<i>Year of the Prince</i> : Horustep III takes the throne of Mulhorand at age 11.
1358	<i>Year of Shadows</i> : Tiamat slays Gilgeam, and Unthalass is heavily damaged during their battle. Assuran (Hoar) slays Ramman, bringing the Untheric pantheon to an end. Riots erupt throughout Unther, and the empire falls into chaos. Ao dissolves the Imaskari planar barrier, and the incarnations of Mulhorandi deities leave Toril to rejoin their divine essences.
1359	<i>Year of the Serpent</i> : The high priests of Gilgeam flee with Unther's military elite to the Citadel of Black Ash. Tuigan forces raze Citadel Rashemar.
1360	<i>Year of the Turret</i> : A volcanic eruption created by magic buries the Semphâri city of Solon under magma.
1365	<i>Year of the Sword</i> : Alasklerbanbastos and the young chromatic wyrms who follow him seize control of Threskel, Thamor, Mordulkin, Mount Thulbane, and the Watcher's Cape.
1369	<i>Year of the Gauntlet</i> : The island known as the Ship of the Gods explodes. Tidal waves swamp the Alaor and Bezantur, causing much destruction. Mulhorand briefly seizes the Alaor.
1370	<i>Year of the Tankard</i> : Thay retakes the Alaor and rebuilds its shipyards and settlements with the aid of epic magic.
1371	<i>Year of the Unstrung Harp</i> : Mulhorand invades Unther, beginning the Third Mulhorand Empire. The Rotting Man's army overruns Dun-Tharos, driving the nentyarch into exile at Yeshelmaar.
1372	<i>Year of Wild Magic</i> : Deep Imaskar ends millennia of isolation by sending explorers into the outside world. Volcanic eruptions in the Smoking Mountains bury the Citadel of Black Ash under lava.

keepers of the past

Histories of the ancient East exist in surprising abundance, primarily because Mulhorand and Unther have enjoyed such longevity. Though many Imaskari, Nar, and Raumathari records were lost in the cataclysms that ended those empires, Untheric and Mulhorandi scribes set down not only the histories of their own lands, but also the major events that took place in neighboring realms. These ancient texts are still preserved in temples and arcane towers throughout the Old Empires.

Of the two sources, the Mulhorandi records are significantly more accurate than the Untheric ones. During his many centuries of rule in Unthalass, Gilgeam the God-King often rewrote ancient histories to glorify his own role in events and to bury stories that conflicted with his own accounts.

PCs attempting to learn the history of the eastern empires can find a wealth of information, but as the level of detail increases, the source becomes important. A character who is well versed in history might be able to recall specific information with a Knowledge (history) check (see Table 4-1: Eastern Empires Information for DCs).

TABLE 4-1:  
EASTERN EMPIRES INFORMATION

Knowledge (History) DC*	Facts Discovered
5	Very basic information (Mulhorand and Unther date back almost three thousand years.)
10	Basic information (Narfell and Raumathar were great empires that coexisted with Mulhorand and Unther but fell long ago.)
15	Uncommon but basic information (The Mulan of Mulhorand and Unther are descended from slaves who overthrew Imaskar long ago. The Imaskari Empire was an ancient and powerful realm located where the Raurin Desert is now.)
20	Uncommon, obscure knowledge (The Nars were fiend-summoners. Many Untheric deities died battling an invasion of orcs and orc deities in the Orcgate Wars, which were fought where Thay now stands.)
25	Rare information (The character knows the location of specific Nar, Raumathari, or Imaskari cities and citadels.)
30+	Extremely obscure information (The character knows the burial places and approximate funereal wealth of one or more major Mulhorandi pharaohs.)

THE PURPLE LIBRARY

Ilphemon, the founder of the Underdark city of Deep Imaskar, ordered his people to compose a written history of Imaskar so that its rich history would never be forgotten. This tome is kept within the extradimensional vaults of Deep Imaskar's Purple Library, along with ancient artifacts and a great many arcane writings. The library is a sacred shrine dedicated to the ancient Imaskari.

THE STONE OF KEST

In the northern foothills of the Dragonsword Mountains stands a forgotten monument that was once known as the Stone of Kest. This obelisk stands better than 60 feet tall, and though it is somewhat weathered, the tale carved into its four surfaces is still legible. The Stone of Kest records the story of the Orcgate Wars—in particular, the roles of various Mulhorandi deities and the deaths of Untheric gods such as Nergal and Marduk. The stone is scribed in an archaic form of Mulhorandi rendered in hieroglyphs (Decipher Script DC 25).

songs and stories

The popular current-day myths about the eastern empires include stories of warring god-kings and foul demon-binders. These and many other tales have been passed down from bard to bard through the centuries.



### THE DIVINITY PLAYS

In Skuld, the Mulhorandi celebrate their gods, their history, and their culture on midsummer's day each year. The daylong celebration features church-organized plays that highlight the great events of the past. Each play begins at sunrise and is repeated over and over until the final performance at sunset.

Local bards and actors portray the gods respectfully, though their human qualities are highlighted. Horus-Re's peers often scoff at his rigid approach to life. The shortsighted plans of hot-headed Set always fail, yet somehow these failures end up helping Horus-Re. The Red Wizards are portrayed as bumbling brats, much to the amusement of the crowds.

In 1374 DR, a new work was added to the Divinity Plays. "The Taking of Unther" is a reenactment of the death of Gilgeam and the rescue of the Untheric people by the pharaoh's armies.

### THE FIREDAWN CYCLE

The Wychlaran of Rashemen keep alive an oral epic known as the Firedawn Cycle. This ancient tale describes Raumathar's dizzying rise to power, its lust for mechanical terrors, and its horrific, cataclysmic destruction at the hands of fiend-summoning sorcerers. Very few outside Rashemen have ever heard this epic song chanted in its full, eerie length, and the witches refuse to let it be written down.

## Important sites

The humans of the ancient East built mighty nations unlike those that existed anywhere else. The realms detailed here are ancient and exotic, and their histories span thousands of years.

## imaskar

The mysterious and mighty Imaskari Empire that dominated the central Hordelands some four thousand years ago began its rise to power in what is now the barren wasteland known as the Raurin Desert. At one time, the proud Imaskari claimed all the lands between the Methwood in the west and the distant Katakoros Mountains in the east. After the empire was overthrown, the surviving Imaskari hastily abandoned their cities. The Mulan slaves also left, primarily because they despised their former masters to such an extent that they rejected all things Imaskari.

The Imaskari built their cities and towns from a purple stone found naturally in the mountains surrounding the Raurin Desert. The extreme durability of this stone is the main reason that so many Imaskari ruins have survived to the present day. Such places are quite dangerous to explore, however, because of their many defenses. Most ruined Imaskari cities and artificer towers are protected by constructs (usually golems) dedicated to guarding against intrusion. In addition, the Imaskari's great distrust of priests and gods led the empire's artificers to erect clever spellwards and arcane traps that severely inhibited divine magic. Some of these wards punished spellcasters with a vicious

backlash of arcane energy proportionate to the amount of divine energy released.

*Portals* and extradimensional spaces were common means of transportation in the heyday of the empire, and many still exist within Imaskari ruins. Artificers also used *portals* to travel throughout their cities, and particularly wealthy ones even used them to move about within their homes. Most slaves were forbidden access to *portals*, so they had to navigate the cramped and narrow streets of Imaskari cities on foot. With the passage of years, most of these aging *portals* have become prone to malfunction and *portal* seepage (see page 60 of the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting* for information on malfunctioning *portals*.) The presence of numerous *portals* in a single location creates impediments for explorers, since each doorway may connect with some unknown destination. Worse still, decayed *portals* to the Elemental Planes that once provided the Imaskari with heat and water now threaten to flood the surrounding areas with fire, ice, or worse due to their seepage.

### BHALUIN

The drowned city of Bhaluin rests on a large island in Brightstar Lake, some 10 miles out from the shores of western Semphâr. Bhaluin was a northern port city of Imaskar and a military center for the empire. The armies stationed here served as the empire's vanguard against frequent dragon invasions from the north.

Many of Bhaluin's ruins extend into the lake and lie partially submerged under several feet of water. A well-preserved royal palace of rose-colored stone with seven slender minarets stands in the center of the ruined city.

Bhaluin is presently occupied by followers of the dead god Myrkul. Their leader is Viandos Rippek (NE male human cleric 9 of Myrkul/horned harbinger 4 [see *Faiths and Pantheons*]), an obsessed priest devoted to recovering Imaskari magic that was used against the Mulhorandi gods millennia ago. While the followers of Bhaluin comb the upper ruins of the city for such magic, a small army of Rippek's undead servants searches the underwater areas. Viandos hopes to discover an artifact or spell that could slay the current god of death—the hated Kelemvor.

### JORHAT CITADEL

High in the Jorhat Mountains northeast of the Raurin Desert stands the shattered Imaskari castle once known as Jorhat Citadel. Though centuries of harsh climate and neglect have now reduced many of its structures to crumbling piles of rubble, the ruins still suggest a strength unknown in most modern-day fortresses.

This stronghold was once a sprawling complex consisting of numerous terraces, stairs, tunnels, and overhangs where Imaskari armies kept watch on neighboring Kara-Tur. So effective was this fortress that it was among the last redoubts to stand against the Mulan rebellion. When the uprising reached its gates, the artificer Mardava unleashed a mighty spell to defend Jorhat against the Mulan slaves. The spell ended disastrously, killing both the attacking slaves and the citadel's defenders.

Furthermore, the energies unleashed transformed Mardava into an undead nightshade (CE female nightwalker), and she has prowled Jorhat's lower levels ever since.

### METOS

The fortress called Metos was the westernmost outpost of the Imaskari Empire. At the time of its construction in the Methwood, it was a sizable structure with enough extradimensional space to house five thousand soldiers. Imaskari artificers created numerous demiplanes containing gardens and hunting grounds to make the complex self-sufficient. Access to any portion of Metos required the correct *portal* key.

The fortress was abandoned when Lord Artificer Yuvaraj recalled his armies to fight the Mulan slaves. The Imaskari general stationed at Metos left the fortress virtually unmanned, confident that its complex *portal* defenses could thwart any intruders. Persistent legends claim that Turami refugees fleeing the Mulan slaves somehow gained entry to the Imaskari fortress and dwelled there for centuries before migrating westward to the lands now known as Unther, Chessenta, and Turmish.

### PALACE OF THE PURPLE EMPEROR

An uncharted stone spire towering above the dunes of the Raurin Desert marks the location of Inupras, Imaskar's imperial capital. The Palace of the Purple Emperor, near the city's heart, is the finest known example of the Imaskari artificers' skill with extradimensional space. The palace is ten times bigger on the inside than on the outside, and it contains hundreds of dimensional halls, vaults, and arcane chambers, including the Great Imperial Library.

During the slave revolt, the great battle for Inupras took place high above the Imperial Palace. Lord Artificer Yuvaraj, wielding a fabled tome of the *Imaskarcana*, rode his copper dragon mount into combat to join his artificers in a spectacular spell-battle against the god-kings Gilgeam and Anhur. The destructive arcane and divine energies released in that conflict razed the imperial city and transformed Raurin into a desert. The Palace of the Purple Emperor survived unscathed, presumably because it was protected by wards of epic magic. In the decade following the uprising, the sweeping sands of the Raurin Desert swallowed up the remains of Inupras as well as the emperor's wondrous palace.

### PLAINS OF PURPLE DUST

This northern region of the Raurin Desert is a vast wasteland of purple sand dunes, stony crags, and rocky badlands. The fine purple sand radiates faint magic—a lesser legacy of the magical energies released during the spell-battles that heralded the empire's fall. Dozens of ancient arcane towers made of purple stone lie hidden among massive sand hills and extinct volcanic cones, and spectral mages—the undead remains of Imaskari artificers—haunt the badlands. The area is also home to dangerous predators, most notably brown, blue, and brass dragons. Several oases dot the northern edge of this desolate region, providing water and refuge for passing caravans.

### RAUDOR

The ruined city of Raudor lies partially buried under fallen rock and desert sands on the western slopes of the Raurinshield Mountains. The historical records of the Deep Imaskari indicate that the *Fourth Imaskarcana* was lost here when the city fell.

For miles around the ruins, a stench of decay fills the air. The few tales that exist about Raudor speak of an overpowering evil presence that rules the slithering creatures living in the city's slave tunnels. In fact, a solitary mind flayer elder brain<sup>Und</sup> now resides in Raudor. Long ago, this creature absorbed the last mind flayers of the community, and it has begun to go mad from centuries of isolation. The elder brain is sterile and unable to produce tadpoles, but it is attended by three brain golems<sup>FF</sup> that hunt the mountains for goblins to drag back for their master's repasts.

### RAURIN, THE DUST DESERT

Once a lush vale, the area now known as the Raurin Desert was the birthplace of the Imaskari Empire. The majority of surviving Imaskari structures can be found within this vast expanse of purple dust.

Purple sand dunes topped with white salt caps extend in all directions. The titanic blocks of hardened lava that jut out of the sandy waste serve as enduring reminders of the destructive forces unleashed by the god-kings and artificers during the battles preceding Imaskar's fall. Untold numbers of forgotten Imaskari cities, strongholds, and tombs lie under the sands of Raurin, lost in memory to all but the citizens of Deep Imaskar.

The Dust Desert is home to a number of rogue efreet and djinn, most of which are the descendants of elementals enslaved by the Imaskari. Purple worms and dragons (primarily brown, blue, and copper) also dwell here, making their lairs under the dunes and in the ruins. In addition to the regular residents, Choun the Old (LN male human monk 5/Shou disciple<sup>Rac</sup> 4), a wandering monk from Kara-Tur, roams the Raurin Desert in his personal quest for enlightenment. He knows the locations but not the names of various ruins, though he does not bother to explore them.

### SOLON

The ruined city of Solon lies east of the Raurinshield Mountains on the northeastern edge of the Raurin Desert. Though Solon has been rebuilt twice over the centuries, it now lies in ruins once again. The cause of its most recent fall was a magically wrought eruption that covered the city with ash and magma a decade ago. Solon's ruler, Ambuchar Devayam (LE male human lich necromancer 18), apparently caused the disaster through the misuse of an Imaskari artifact. Survivors reported that just prior to the eruption, the necromancer had unearthed a mysterious shrine dedicated to the darker paraelemental and quasi-elemental forces of ice, ash, and vacuum. The shrine still remains, encased within a massive sphere of black stone.



## Mulhorand

The Empire of Mulhorand has risen and declined twice, and it now looks poised to begin a third imperial ascent. At its height, Mulhorand held a vast tract of land east of the Sea of Fallen Stars that stretched from Thay to distant Semphâr and included the Raurin Desert and much of the Eastern Shaar.

Forgotten prayer towers and burial pyramids, symbols of the empire's ancient divine dynasties, lie scattered throughout Mulhorand and its former domains. These ruins are decorated with stylized art depicting the gods engaged in erudite activities. The burial pyramids of prominent deities contain huge amounts of gold, ornate sarcophagi, and divinely powered burial goods. Such sites were typically protected by numerous traps and guarded by golems much larger than those seen elsewhere.

### DELHUMIDE

During Thay's rebellious break with its parent empire, fiends utterly razed the Mulhorandi provincial capital of Delhumide. The wrecked city is now a sprawling mass of debris and rubble in which no building stands more than one story high. Rumor holds that fiends from the Abyss and foul creatures of the Underdark dwell within a maze of tunnels beneath the old city. Despite these horrors, adventurers often visit Delhumide in search of its legendary gold and divine artifacts. Tharchion Invarri Metron (LE male human fighter 11), current ruler of the Thayan province of Delhumide, claims a share of any wealth recovered by adventurers who explore the shattered city.

### KEPETUR

The prayer tower of Kepetur is an abandoned obelisk in the southern Pyrados region of Thay. At the time of the Thayan rebellion, the Red Wizards claimed some of the Mulhorandi prayer towers in the disputed area and reduced the rest to rubble. In Kepetur, the priests and divine minions of Anhur managed to keep the Red Wizards at bay for several tendays, but the towers fell shortly after the arrival of the archfiend Eltab.



Illustration by Chris Hawkes

### Land of the Dead

Once he had gained control of Kepetur, Eltab opened a permanent gate to the Abyss, through which demons continue to enter Faerûn to this day. But the warding spells placed there by the Red Wizards prevent the scores of fiends in Kepetur from leaving the obelisk. Legend has it that Kepetur still contains many divine relics that its defenders hid before the arrival of Eltab.

### LAND OF THE DEAD

This holy vale at the edge of the Sword Mountains is the burial ground of the Mulhorandi god-kings. The valley holds dozens of sloped pyramids, ziggurats, and towering obelisks, each housing the remains of a Mulhorand deity's incarnation. All the tombs are elaborately decorated with divine scenes and hieroglyphic script. The most magnificent of all is a massive monument carved from an entire mountain—the tomb of Pharaoh Houserer II. God-kings were traditionally buried with incredible treasures, including magnificent gems, gold coins, and the personal belongings they wore in life. Lethal mechanical traps and gemstone golems<sup>Mon</sup> protect the dead inside their tombs while glorious servitors keep watch over the sacred valley of their gods.

### SEKRAS

This small city along the River of Swords served as a major worship center for Sebek, the much-reviled Mulhorandi deity of rivers. With the silent approval of Horus-Re, paladins of Osiris razed the city and dumped all the temple property into the river.

Since the destruction of Sekras, its ruins have been a breeding ground for werecrocodiles and sphinxes. Recently, however, the god Sebek has appointed Sipari (NE female human cleric 10 of Sebek/glorious servitor 3 of Sebek) as the secret guardian of Sekras. Since accepting this sacred charge, she has been recovering her god's relics from the river and slowly rebuilding the temple. She remains cautiously watchful for any sign of the paladins of Osiris.

### SEMKHRUN

The Oracle City of Semkhrun was founded more than twenty-five hundred years ago in the plains of southern Semphâr. The city eventually became a center for divination studies and grew famous for housing the Oracle of Fahzakhum, an artifact with the ability to foretell the future. Inquirers from as far away as Kara-Tur and Netheril sought out Semkhrun and heaped lavish sums of money upon the city priests in hopes of gaining access to the oracle. Renaming themselves the Masters of the Oracle, the greedy priests demanded tribute from all who would question the oracle. They used the gold offerings to build mighty palaces, obelisks, and burial pyramids in imitation of those constructed by the divine dynasties in Skuld.

Word of the priests' arrogance eventually reached the god-kings, who sent their armies to punish Semkhrun. All the Masters of the Oracle were put to the sword, and the blasphemous city's population was enslaved. Glorious servitors entombed Semkhrun under earth and sand, wiping it from the face of the land. The name Semkhrun was stricken from all maps and scrolls, so few records now bear its name. The final fate of the Oracle of Fahzakhum remains unknown, although rumors have linked the artifact to the wandering prophet known as Serkent of the Howling Gap (NG male human diviner 11).

## Narfell

The human empire known as Narfell once stretched from the Giantspire Mountains to Lake Ashane, encompassing southern lands that would eventually become Impiltur, the Great Dale, Thesk, and the northwestern portion of Thay. Few Nar keeps and even fewer Nar cities survived the cataclysmic war that destroyed the empire, and those that still exist are scattered throughout the lands that Narfell once held.

The typical Nar fortresses were squat buildings with numerous underground levels and rooms. Each fortress contained at least one conjuring chamber that was used to summon fiends. Nar sorcerers placed *glyphs* and wards throughout the underground levels to protect against uncontrolled fiends. The fortresses of Narfell's more powerful conjurers often contained *portals* leading to the Abyss and the Nine Hells. Many Nar ruins are still plagued with demons and devils that were summoned nearly twenty centuries ago.

### CITY OF WEeping GHOSTS

Along the shores of Lake Ashane in the Great Dale lie the ruins of the once proud Nar city known as Shandaular. Before the rise of Narfell, Shandaular was the capital of a minor Nar kingdom called Ashanath. When its leaders refused to join the new empire, the Nentyarch of Tharos destroyed the city. Today, the ruins are haunted by hundreds of wraiths and dread wraiths—the victims of the ancient nentyarch's merciless wrath.

### DUN-THAROS

Formerly the imperial capital of Narfell, Dun-Tharos is now a broken ruin deep in the heart of the Rawlinswood. During the empire's final days, Raumathari battle mages laid waste to Dun-Tharos, leaving only broken towers, wrecked temples, and rubble.

Dun-Tharos has been virtually unexplored since its fall. A powerful druid once took up residence here, claiming the title of nentyarch after the Nar lords of old. He grew a living fortress of trees over the ruins in an effort to cleanse the Rawlinswood of Narfell's foul taint. Recently, however, a mysterious being called the Rotting Man and his army of diseased creatures chased off the druid and took control of the ruins.

Now the remains of Dun-Tharos lie half buried under rotting masses of dead and dying trees. Adventurers seeking the treasure-filled vaults underneath Dun-Tharos must get past the mass of vegetation as well as the Rotting Man (see *Unapproachable East* for further information).

### FORTRESS OF THE HALF-DEMON

One of the few Nar ruins within the borders of Rashemen, this keep is located in the North Country, near Lake Ashane. The otherworldly stone used to construct the fort is credited with preventing its destruction at the hands of the Raumvirans. The stone of the fortress walls is icy cold to the touch and gives off a harmless, glowing, green vapor. A gigantic iron gate in the shape of a demonic face marks the entrance.

A hagspawned creature named Losk (CE male hagspawn<sup>Una</sup> fighter 4/wizard 9) has recently claimed the ancient keep. His gang of cutthroats and thieves is now searching the dungeons for anything of value.

### FORTRESS NARDER

The ruins of this fortress lie at the far eastern edge of the Forest of Lethyr. In the days of the empire, Fortress Narder served as a gathering point for Nar armies preparing to debark for Raumathar. When the conflict finally reached this area, however, an unknown Raumathari spell reduced Narder to a mass of broken stone.

A foul, twisted sickness now permeates the ruins of the ancient fortress, seeping from the dungeon to poison the surrounding water, soil, and air. With the aid of other druids, the former Nentyarch of Dun-Tharos has been working to cleanse the corruption, but progress has been slow because of frequent attacks from the hezrou demons that lurk in the depths of the fortress. The nentyarch fears that a source of evil power—most likely a transplanted chunk of the Abyss—lies at the heart of the fortress.



## JASTAATH CASTLE

These crumbling ruins are all that remain of an immense castle that was built high upon the western slopes of Mount Nar long before the rise of Narfell. Archaic texts refer to the priest-kings of Jastaath as the first Nars to parley with demons of the Abyss. Abandoned for unknown reasons, the castle has lain under an eternal blanket of snow and ice since the fall of Narfell.

Kryonar, the renegade white dracolich wyrm that lairs on Mount Nar near the frozen castle, considers any visitor to Jastaath a potential spy from the Cult of the Dragon. Kryonar's murderous nature and the castle's remote location have thus far discouraged explorers.

## VAL MURTHAG

Devastated by earth-shattering Raumathari battle-magic, the Nar fortress of Val Murthag was leveled during the final war between the two empires. Located on the western edge of the Great Dale, the castle at Val Murthag was Narfell's unholy spiritual center of demon worship. Crumbling walls of weathered stone are all that remain of the surface structure, but the deep vaults below the ruins house trapped demons, restless undead, stolen Raumathari treasures, and the secrets of a foul ritual once used to transform mortals into fiends.

For the past few weeks, a renegade Red Wizard and her imp familiar have been systematically exploring Val Murthag, hoping to unearth its demonic secrets. Branimern Rythil (LE female human conjurer 5/Red Wizard 3/Nar demonbinder<sup>Una</sup> 1) actively avoids strangers because she lives in constant fear of retribution from her former master—Nevron, the Thayan Zulkir of Conjurat.

## raumathar

Nestled in the northern reaches of eastern Faerûn, the Raumathari Empire quickly expanded to dominate the lands south of the Icerim Mountains and north of Lake Eltabbar in the land that is now Thay, including the western half of the Endless Wastes. Like its enemy Narfell, Raumathar was a short-lived empire that lasted fewer than nine hundred years. Its catastrophic end was so absolute that few traces of it survive.

A Raumathari ruin usually consists of several tall towers grouped together, all guarded by deadly battle-spells. Keeps and citadels were normally warded to prevent outsiders from entering, and dozens of intact spelltraps that target fiends are

embedded in the roofs and walls. As these arcane protections age and decay, they leak bizarre magical energies into the surrounding terrain, corrupting the nearby flora and fauna.

## ALMOREL

Settled more than fifteen centuries ago at the height of the Raumathari Empire, Almorel has outlasted its founders and become one of the major trading cities of the Endless Wastes. The city, which sits on the southern shore of the Lake of Mists, is a regular stop for caravans and

adventurers traveling the Golden Way. Far beneath Almorel lies an extensive system of ancient, underground tunnels and abandoned war-chambers. These rooms contain mechanical horrors that the Raumvirans constructed specifically to hunt down and trap the fiends of the Nars.

## BEACON CAIRN

Just east of the Sunrise Mountains, the ruins of Beacon Cairn mark the southernmost boundary of Rashemen. The town was originally founded by the Raumathari battlemage who created the magically illuminated pinnacle of rock from which the town takes its name. Some two thousand years ago, Beacon Cairn served as a hiding place for magic weapons of war.

After the Tuigan invasion, the Huhrong of Rashemen stationed a small garrison of warriors

here to keep watch over the horse riders of the Endless Wastes. Early in 1373, however, Beacon Cairn was attacked by an unknown enemy that flattened the town and slaughtered the inhabitants. The few stone buildings left standing display huge gouge marks—probably from the attacks of some gigantic, clawed creature. The Wychlaran suspect that the Red Wizards were ultimately responsible for the town's destruction.

## GAUROS

Several old Raumathari ruins dot this remote, mountainous section of Thay. Most notable among them is the Bronze Battletower built by the ancient Raumathari mage Vostas. Foreseeing her empire's impending doom, Vostas concealed her battletower with formidable warding spells that rendered it invisible and undetectable by magic. Vostas died when Raumathar fell, and



*Jastaath Castle on Mount Nar*

Illustration by Dana Knutson

the battletower has been passed down through her descendants. The current owner is Iarokhna Nuchlev (NE female human sorcerer 3/druid 3/durthan<sup>Una</sup> 2), a renegade Wychlaran. The epic spell that Vostas used to conceal the Bronze Battletower still functions, keeping Iarokhna and the Raumathari secrets in the tower well hidden.

## RING OF GRAY FLAMES

Along the border between Rashemen and the Endless Wastes stands a bizarre Raumathari ruin consisting of five cracked and broken towers arranged in a ring. Each tower is topped by a flickering crown of gray flame. Primarily because of the strange grinding noises that often emanate from at least two of the five towers, the so-called Ring of Gray Flames is blamed for the unusual constructs that roam the surrounding areas.

The original purpose of this ring is unknown, but it disrupts any divine magic cast within a 100-foot radius and makes summoning outsiders a dangerous business. (Anyone attempting to summon an outsider within 100 feet of the ring must succeed on a Spellcraft check [DC 15 + spell level] or be immolated in gray flames that deal 1d6 points of fire damage per level of the summoning spell attempted.)

## WINTERKEEP

Built on the western edge of the Endless Wastes along the Great Ice Sea, this ancient city was once the capital of the Raumathari Empire. Though its palaces were long ago destroyed by freezing cold, fire, and decay, its underground stone halls have survived mostly intact. Dozens of deep, twisting passageways and carefully hidden rooms give mute evidence of the strategic mindset for which the ancient Raumvirans were famous.

A single bheur hag<sup>Una</sup> and her orglash<sup>Una</sup> servants stalk the tunnels of Winterkeep every summer, but they leave when the first snow comes. Rumor has it that the Wychlaran know the safest way to this isolated ruin, but few are willing to make such a treacherous journey through the barren steppes of the Endless Wastes.

## unther

Once a mighty realm that claimed the lands south of the Sea of Fallen Stars as well as the southern half of the Aglarond Peninsula, Unther is now a much-diminished empire in danger of disappearing entirely. During its first imperial rise, Unther expanded into Chessenta, the Shaar, and parts of Dambrath and Estagund. In order to spread the Untheric religion to these new lands, the god-kings directed the construction of temples, ziggurats, and other religious monuments throughout the empire. With the death of the Untheric pantheon and the subsequent decline of the empire, these structures were largely abandoned. Like Mulhorandi religious sites, Untheric ruins are treasure troves of religious artifacts and wealth protected by huge constructs and traps that deliver deadly poisons.

## CITADEL OF BLACK ASH

More than six hundred years ago, the Untheric deity Gilgeam transformed an abandoned dragon lair on a southeastern slope

of the Smoking Mountains into his private stronghold. The Father of Victories called his new fortress the Citadel of Black Ash, after the swampy quagmire of volcanic ash surrounding the mountain's base.

When Gilgeam's loyal clerics and high champions were forced to flee the riots that followed their god-king's death, the citadel became their secret sanctuary. For years, the generals plotted their return to power while the priests prayed for the return of their god-king. Meanwhile, soldiers mined the mountain's tunnels extensively for gems to finance the upcoming war.

The efforts of Gilgeam's faithful ended in 1372, when volcanic activity covered the citadel in a superheated cloud of fiery ash, killing almost everyone inside. The structure is now almost completely buried in ash, which helps to protect the gemstones, weapons, and divine magic items that lie within its vaults. Dozens of huecuvas—the undead remains of Gilgeam's clerics—now haunt the place.

## GOD-TOMBS

When the gods of Unther died, they were entombed in flat-topped ziggurats far from civilized areas. Inanna, Girru, Ki, Marduk, Nanna-Sin, Nergal, Ramman, and Utu were all laid to rest in this manner, but Gilgeam's body was never recovered for burial.

Because the Untheric priests feared public disgrace if the slumber of their gods was disturbed, they filled the ziggurats with traps and other hazards to deter thievery. The sarcophagus of each dead god was placed deep within its ziggurat's mazelike system of rooms and passages. Mechanical traps, many containing virulent poison, were placed in halls and door locks. The traps were rigged so that either disabling or springing one would activate others, creating a cascade of deadly effects. Finally, Gargantuan stone golems were built into various chambers so as to appear part of the walls.

## GREAT BARROW

Just off the Great Road, near the southernmost portion of the Rawlinswood in the Great Dale, lies the Great Barrow, a massive burial mound ringed by numerous smaller mounds. The Great Barrow was built in the heady days of the First Untheric Empire as a tomb for the slain Untheric god Nergal. Gilgeam oversaw the god's lavish burial and sealed Nergal's still-living family and servants inside the lesser tombs surrounding that of the deity. Once all the tombs had been buried under earthen hills, Gilgeam slaughtered the builders, raised them as undead crypt things, and set them to guard Nergal and his family.

Travelers in the area of the Great Barrow often report encountering skeletal undead that choke and gasp as if desperately trying to breathe. Whether these creatures are Gilgeam's appointed crypt-things or the restless undead remnants of Nergal's family remains a mystery.

## UNTHALASS

The decrepit former capital of Unther has suffered terribly from natural disasters and centuries of neglect. Great floods have twice destroyed huge sections of Unthalass, submerging entire city blocks under mud and muck. Such damage was rarely repaired;



Gilgeam simply ordered new structures built over the old. The buried areas of Unthalass now form a sizable undercity, which is populated primarily by wererats and lamias.

The largest ruin in Unthalass is the Ziggurat of Eternal Victory—the glorious palace of the god-king Gilgeam. The palace once stood 300 feet high and boasted sixteen tiers of blue-enameled brick decorated with gold, silver, brass, and other precious metals. Beneath the ziggurat lay a labyrinthine complex of lower levels and tunnels in which the Gilgeamite priests ran Unther's bureaucracy.

Almost fifteen years ago, Gilgeam's titanic battle with Tiamat shattered the aboveground portion of the pyramid palace and scattered Gilgeam's faithful. The ziggurat has remained deserted ever since. Today, the palace ruins are patrolled by Mulhorandi soldiers who have orders to prevent any plundering of Gilgeam's fabled wealth. The general of Mulhorand's armies in Unthalass, Lord Khemenhet (LG human male paladin 8 of Horus-Re/glorious servitor 7 of Horus-Re) is preparing to excavate the Ziggurat of Eternal Victory. He seeks worthy volunteers among the glorious servitors of Mulhorand to enter the deadly pyramid and return its fabled treasures to the pharaoh.

## Legacies of the old empires

Innumerable relics of the past litter the lands of the East. The few adventure options described here merely scratch the surface of the campaign potential in these exotic lands.

### Adventure seeds

In kingdoms where gods lived among their people and demons were gladly welcomed as allies, the opportunities for exciting and unusual adventurers seem unlimited.

#### THE DEMON-BOND

Several persons reported missing in Thesk and the Great Dale have turned up months later with fiendish physical attributes. They have no memory of what befell them, but they are clearly no longer the humans and orcs they once were. As the news of these events has become public, panic has spread through both countries. Officials have placed the blame on an airborne plague, but the real culprit is Amurrul (CE male human wizard 13/Nar demonbinder<sup>Una</sup> 3), a demented wizard who has studied the dark sorcery of ancient Narfell (see page 71). Amurrul is now searching for stronger victims from which he can create even more powerful half-fiends.

#### THE GODSFLESH GOLEM

Dismayed over the destruction of the Untheric pantheon, Nidiba (LE female human cleric 13 of Gilgeam) has been laboring to construct a golem from the dead flesh of the old gods. Over the past ten years, she has broken into various god-tombs and burial pyramids to acquire the mummified remains of dead Untheric manifestations and the incarnations of Mulhorandi

deities. Nidiba believes that the "godsflesh" golem she is creating will possess the abilities of an avatar and be powerful enough to punish the offending Mulhorandi dynasty. Glorious servitors in Mulhorand are aware of the thefts from the tombs of their gods, but they have not linked these incidents to the grave-robbing in Unther.

## buried secrets

The evil mages of the Unapproachable East hid away some of their foulest creations in secret dungeons and towers that have now fallen into ruin. Many of these ancient hiding spots have gone unnoticed and undisturbed for centuries.

#### FORGOTTEN RAUMATHARI ARSENAL

Near the end of the war with Narfell, desperate Raumathari battlemages created prototype constructs with which to destroy their enemies. Unfortunately, the Raumvirans were destroyed before they could test their new constructs. Dozens of bizarre, golemlike machines and constructs with names such as Dreadnaught and Fiend-Render can be found in ruins throughout the ancient Raumathari lands.

#### IMASKARI TORTURE CHAMBERS

Scornful of gods yet also fearful of them, Imaskari artificers abducted untold numbers of priests, druids, shamans, and other divine spellcasters from across Faerûn and placed them in extradimensional prisons. Protected by wards and barriers that prevented the captives from communicating with their gods, the Imaskari artificers conducted cruel experiments to determine the nature of divine magic. The results of this research enabled the Imaskari to create a host of spells and magic items that targeted divine spellcasters, including the epic-level spell that sealed off Toril from the Mulhorandi gods.

The victims of Imaskari torture are long gone, but hundreds of ancient godly symbols and divine relics—some from gods long dead—lie forgotten in these torture chambers. A few of these items are artifacts that could bring about unimaginable disasters if they were to fall into the wrong hands.

## heirs to the empire

Empires such as Imaskar and Raumathar may be long gone, but their citizens' descendants still live in Faerûn today. Mulhorand and Unther still exist, but many descendants of their former citizens have broken away from their parent kingdoms.

#### CHESSENTA

The warring cities of this fractious land were founded by Untheri citizens during their empire's first rise to power. Plagued by the political and religious oppression of their tyrannical masters, the cities of Chessenta eventually broke away from their decrepit parent, forsaking the Untheric ways as well as the Untheric gods. But the influence of Unther is still visible in the many Untheric ruins—including temples, ziggurats, and abandoned fortresses—that still stand in many Chessentan cities.

#### DEEP IMASKAR

About four thousand years ago, a group of Imaskari survivors sought refuge in the Underdark from their wrathful ex-slaves. These refugees constructed a city called Deep Imaskar far beneath the Endless Wastes and employed epic magic to seal it off from the outside world. Now, after millennia of isolation, a few Deep Imaskari have begun to leave their great city and explore the world their ancestors abandoned. But most citizens of Deep Imaskar retain their desire for isolation, so the minds of these would-be explorers are wiped clean of any knowledge of their native city's existence when they leave its gates. Understandably, the Deep Imaskari harbor strong suspicions about any humans of Mulan descent.

#### MULHORAND

The lore of the ancient East is better preserved in Mulhorand than in any other area. An unbroken line of deific rulers stretches back almost three thousand years to the days when the Mulan slaves overthrew their Imaskari lords. The presence of the Mulhorandi deities as physical incarnations kept the empire's past alive for many years, and the glorious servitors have taken on the burden of preservation now that their deities' incarnations have been laid to rest. Because the Mulhorandi have always been exacting historians, temple libraries and mage towers throughout the empire are filled with precise accounts of the great events of old.

Now that the physical manifestations of the Mulhorandi deities are no more, humans have taken on the burden of ruling Mulhorand. The country remains an absolute theocracy, and its leaders have recently embarked on a new campaign to conquer Unther. The invasion of Unther marks a new age of divine imperialism that could spread the Mulhorandi faith far and wide, and perhaps even bring about a new golden age in an old empire. Mulhorandi clerics and champions have been directed to explore their nation's other neighbors and assess whether they too might benefit from joining the empire.

#### NARFELL

Little remains of the Empire of Narfell, but the Nar people live on as savage, horse-riding barbarians in the north. More than a dozen nomadic Nar tribes claim the frigid plains south of the Great Glacier and north of the Rawlinswood as their rightful ancestral lands.

The Nars retain little memory of their imperial past, and they preserve few of Narfell's ancient traditions. Unlike the Witches of Rashemen, who still hold many secrets of Raumathar's ancient magic, the Nars have forgotten the dark and terrible power that their forebears commanded fifteen centuries ago. In fact, the Nars regard those who open tombs and plunder ruins as dangerous fools who are all too likely to hurt other people with their reckless prying. Thus, the Nar tribes often go out of their way to drive off or kill any adventurers they catch exploring ancient Nar ruins.

#### SEMPHÂR AND MURGHÔM

The leaders of these semiautonomous protectorates of Mulhorand have grown fearful about the invasion of Unther and are

considering options for independence. The ruler of Semphâr, Caliph Abu Bakr (LN male human fighter 16), is still quietly pursuing his dream of establishing his own empire and hoping that he can find some ancient magic with which to defend his kingdom from the armies of Skuld. He recently dispatched an expedition to the buried city of Solon to search out an Imaskari temple known to contain four black artifacts of ancient Imaskari make.

#### THAY

The ruling class of Thay, like that of Mulhorand, is composed entirely of Mulan humans. In terms of its values and methods, however, Thay resembles ancient Imaskar more than it does ancient Mulhorand. Like the Imaskari Empire, Thay is a land in which wizards rule supreme, and gods and divine magic are regarded with some suspicion. In the four centuries since Thay's successful rebellion against Mulhorand, the Red Wizards have expanded their domains from the fertile plateau of Thay to the Priador, the mouth of the Lapendrar, the Wizards' Reach, the borderlands of Thesk, and the slopes of the Sunrise Mountains. Although the Red Wizards have not managed to subdue Aglarond or Rashemen, Thay dominates the eastern shores of the Sea of the Fallen Stars, posing an ever-present threat whose true power has not yet been measured.

#### UNTHER

The ancient nation of Unther appears to be facing its doom at last. In less than one year, Mulhorand has succeeded in conquering the majority of Unther's holdings, leaving only a remnant of land around the old city of Messemparr. Chaos and disorder now reign throughout the nation of Unther.

The only obstacles in the path of further Mulhorandi conquests are the various warlords who bicker and feud constantly over land. Some of these are Untheric nobles, others are Gilgeamite clerics who have sworn their previous allegiance, and still others are nothing more than local bandit lords. Mulhorand could crush any one of these groups with ease, but it lacks the military strength to crush them all at once.

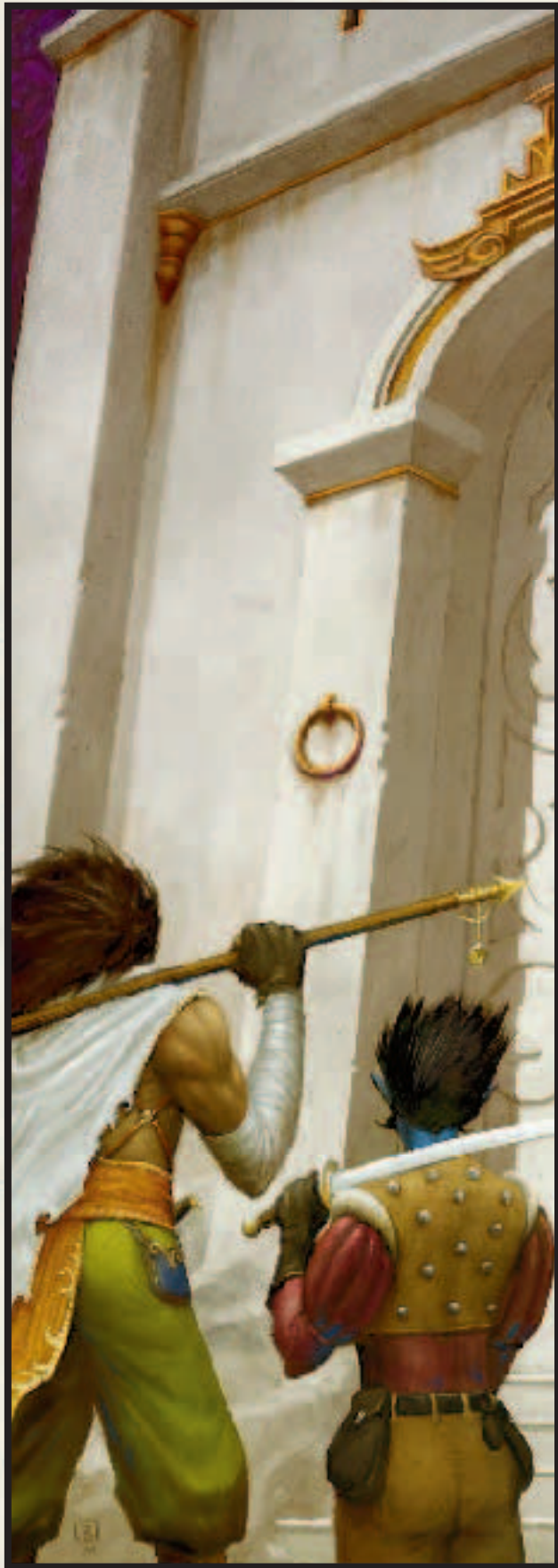
The leaders of Unther, such as they are, are divided into three broad factions. The first consists of Untheri who seek peace with Mulhorand and are willing to become vassals of the pharaoh in exchange for the power to crush their rivals. In the second faction are those who favor the surviving nobles of Unther as leaders and regard an Untheric king—even one who once served Gilgeam—as preferable to either chaos or conquest. The third faction, which is popular among the disaffected common folk, is composed of true revolutionaries who would sweep away all vestiges of the old order, and throw the Mulhorandi out as well.

To complicate matters further, the Red Wizards of Thay have decided that Mulhorand can't be allowed to conquer all of Unther uncontested. They have been offering covert support to the surviving nobles in the first two factions, but not the third, since they have no use for revolutionaries of any sort.

#### WITCHES OF RASHEMEN

The Witches of Rashemen (or Wychlaran) are members of an ancient order of female spellcasters that emerged shortly after





Sonjar's Tower

the fall of Raumathar. The witches merged the spell strategies and battle-magic of the Raumathari wizards with a magic closely tied to spirits and the land. This unique combination of arcane energies has thwarted many Thayan invasions and gained the respect of neighboring kingdoms. The witches guard their secrets closely and never disclose them—even under torture. Recently, a renegade sect of Wychlaran known as the durthans<sup>Una</sup> has been gathering ancient Raumathari battle-magic for its own purposes.

Adventure site:  
sonjar's tower

In the shadows of the Giant's Belt Mountains, half buried under the purple sands of the Raurin Desert, lies an abandoned arcane tower dating back to the downfall of ancient Imaskar. This tower once belonged to the artificer Sonjar, a senior wizard in service to the lord artificer during the empire's final days.

This adventure is suitable for 11th-level characters.

background

Sonjar's tower was built inside a gigantic geode—a naturally formed, hollow, egg-shaped stone lined with crystals. From the outside, it looks like just another outcropping of stone—a rounded crag that rises about 50 feet above the desert floor. The interior resembles a great cavern whose walls are lined with amethyst crystals. The geode has no physical entrance, but a *portal* on its outer surface permits access. Within the geode, Sonjar's windowless tower rises 60 feet above the floor.

Durdyn, a drow sellsword, has recently taken over the tower. He and his band of mercenaries (known as Durdyn's Devils) were hired by House Vrasl of Undrek-thoz, which is located in the eastern Underdark. Their mission is to investigate legends that ancient humans of the Raurin Desert possessed magic capable of thwarting the gods. With such magic, the matron mothers hope to uncover the reason for Lolth's silence at last.

the earth node

Sonjar was initially attracted to this geode by the concentration of earth power that it embodies. A class 1 earth node extends 160 feet from the exterior of the geode, a class 2 node extends 80 feet from its exterior, and its entire interior is a class 3 earth node. (See *Underdark* for more information on earth nodes.)

Any creature that comes within 190 feet of the geode's exterior can attempt a DC 20 Intelligence check to sense the concentration of earth power around the geode. A spellcaster who is aware of the earth node can attempt to add its power to his spells. With a successful Spellcraft check, he can increase his effective caster level by an amount equal to the value of the layer in which he currently stands. The DC for the check is 10 in the class 1 section (+1 increase), 15 in the class 2 section (+2 increase), or 20 in the class 3 section (+3 increase). A character with the Node Magic feat can also access the earth node's granted spells, as given on Table 4–2, below.

Illustration by Brian Despain

TABLE 4–2:  
EARTH NODE GRANTED SPELLS

Spell Level	Spell
1st	True strike
2nd	Barkskin
3rd	Meld into stone

tower features

Sonjar's tower served as his home, retreat, and laboratory. The marble floors, magnificent pillow-seats, and beautifully painted wall frescoes are now badly worn, but they still give the tower an air of elegance. The ceilings radiate a soft light equivalent to twilight, which allows low-light vision to function normally. Permanent *unseen servants* have kept the tower's interior clean for the past four thousand years.

Neither the geode nor the tower has any doors. Interior rooms are either linked by open archways or sealed by blank stone *portals* activated by touch. Some of these *portals* have decayed over time, resulting in seepage and malfunctions. Use

the Portal Malfunction table on page 61 of the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting* to determine the precise effects.

The geode's walls are natural stone, and the tower walls are magically treated superior masonry. The plaza outside the tower is covered with flagstones, but the stone floors inside it are smooth. (See Dungeon Terrain, page 59 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, for the effects of these attributes.)

keyed areas

The following areas are keyed to the map of Sonjar's Tower.

1. GEODE ENTRANCE

*This odd rock formation looks like an immense, egg-shaped mass of rough, purple stone protruding nearly 50 feet above the sand. A broad, shallow trench in the sand to one side of the stone mass reveals a dark archway inside a semicircular carving in the rock, about 10 feet below the level of the sand. Beyond the archway is a cavern of beautiful amethyst crystal in which stands a windowless tower. The cavern is dimly illuminated with a strange purple light.*





The archway holds a functioning *portal* programmed to grant entrance only to living creatures. This feature protects the interior of the geode from sand and weather. The *portal* is transparent so that viewers can see their destination (the geode plaza; see area 2).

Recent sandstorms revealed the top of the geode to Shianax, Durdyn's brown dragon ally, who dug a path in the sand to the 20-foot-diameter, semicircular entrance.

## 2. GEODE PLAZA

The crystalline walls and ceiling of this unusual cavern radiate a sparkling display of soft light and color that bathes the interior in gentle twilight. An aged plaza of purple-gray stone extends in all directions to the cavern walls. Nearby stands a curiously angular, windowless tower that is nearly tall enough to touch the cavern ceiling. A stone archway in its base appears to offer the only access. To the left of the tower stands a small stone building, and to the right are three tear-shaped pools. The cavern's left wall is lined with metallic doorways built into the crystal.

The plaza offers the tower's residents a pleasant spot for contemplation.

**Creatures:** Durdyn's mercenaries occasionally stroll around the plaza or step outside the geode altogether. The dragon Shianax also passes through this area a couple of times a day, emerging from area 11 to exit the geode and hunt in the desert nearby.

**Mercenaries:** Arrak and Rayeth (see area 13).

**Shianax:** See area 11 for statistics.

## 3. TOWER ENTRANCE

The odd tower stands about 60 feet tall. Except for a 10-foot-wide archway filled with blank stone at the base, it has no windows, doors, or other exterior features. Some flowing script graces the keystone of the arch.

The stone arch is the entrance to the tower, but it contains no door or portcullis. The arch is a *portal* that conveys anyone touching it to some point within. A user who speaks a destination (one, two, three, or exit) aloud in Roushoum, the ancient language of the Imaskari, is conveyed to area 12, 14, 19, or back to area 3, respectively. The *portal* understands no other languages. If no destination is specified in that language, the user is transported to the waiting room (area 12). This variable *portal* is marked with a "V" at each destination, since it can be used in the same way from any floor of the tower.

The Roushoum runes (Decipher Script DC 30) read: "Sonjar, Artificer, Master of the Amethyst Tower."

## 4. POOLS

These three teardrop-shaped pools were built of ceramic tiles, some of which have cracked with age. The water inside is muddy but appears drinkable.

Sonjar's slaves once drew their water from these pools. Fresh water trickles into the bottom of each one from a miniature *portal* to the Elemental Plane of Water.

## 5. SLAVE BARRACKS (EL 11)

These four iron-framed doorways have no doors. Each of the first three has a pile of dust in front of it, and only the crystal wall of the cavern can be seen beyond it. A glance through the fourth doorway reveals a dull gray room in which four strange, misty humanoid figures drift, seemingly frozen.

These four doorways once led to extradimensional spaces that were used as slave barracks. The entrance to each room was a *portal* with an iron-rimmed frame built into the wall of the geode. The magic sustaining three of the barracks has collapsed, depositing their dusty contents in front of the entrances.

### 5A. INHABITED BARRACKS

The surviving entrance (area 5a) leads to an intact barracks room. The furniture, clothing, and personal possessions of the slaves in this chamber have long since turned to dust.

The *portal* is unkeyed for entry but keyed for exit. Furthermore, it allows those outside the space to see in, but those inside see only a gray wall when they look at the exit.

Any creature that enters the slave barracks cannot exit unless it has access to a spell such as *phase door* or *teleport*, or someone on the outside calls its name. A successful DC 20 Spellcraft check reveals that a specific key is needed to free a person trapped in the barracks, but it does not reveal the key's nature.

**Creatures:** Four thousand years ago, at the time of the slave uprising, a Mulan overseer named Imket (see area 6), who was loyal to Sonjar, forced a handful of slaves into their barracks (area 5a) before returning to his own quarters. Trapped in their room when Sonjar died, the four slaves perished of starvation, only to rise later as spectres. They ceased moving long ago and look like floating statues to outside observers. Durdyn ordered his crew not to disturb them, since they didn't seem capable of escaping on their own.

**Spectres (4):** hp 32 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 232.

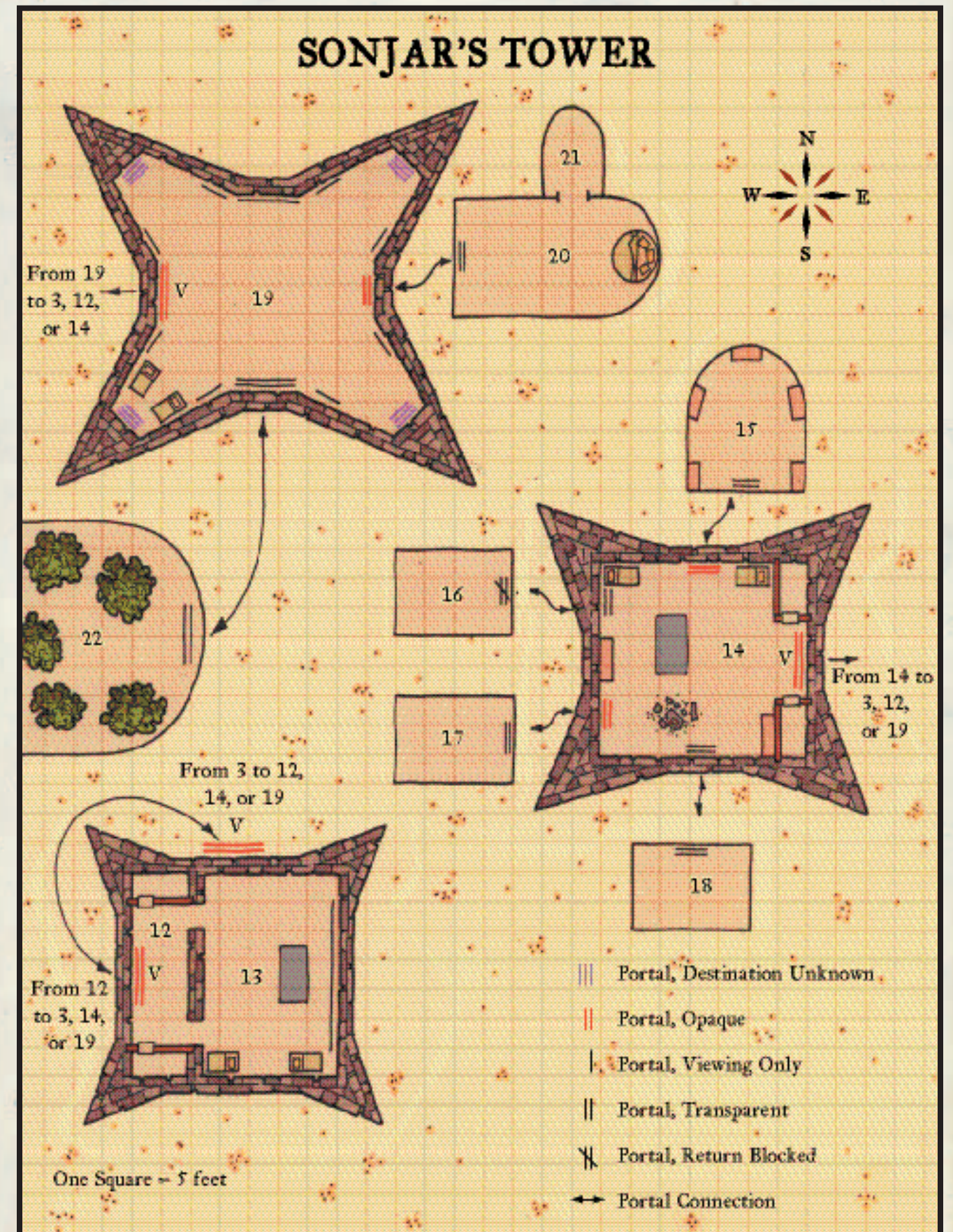
**Tactics:** The spectres have never had the opportunity to touch living flesh, and they are eager to do so. Thus, they attack any living creature that enters the barracks.

**Development:** If all the characters become stuck in the slave barracks with no means of egress, a group of NPC adventurers eventually happens by and notices their predicament. The PCs can't talk through the *portal*, but one of the NPCs could safely enter, speak to the trapped PCs long enough to learn their names, then be retrieved by another NPC outside.

## 6. OVERSEERS' BARRACKS (EL 11)

The floor of this plain gray stone chamber is covered with a few inches of dust. A trembling human with pale, cracked skin and studded leather armor leans against the wall. He stares vacantly at the ceiling, seemingly unaware that he is being watched. Clutched in his fist is a whip of black leather.

Similar in function to the slave barracks, this extradimensional room once housed Sonjar's overseers. Unlike the slaves, the overseers were free to come and go from their quarters during daylight hours. To enter or exit the room from sunrise to sunset,





a character need only touch the *portal*. During the night, the *portal* allows only entry.

**Creature:** The pitiful creature in this room was Imket, Sonjar's favorite slave. In life, Imket was a capable hunter and a cruel overseer. During the uprising, he grew fearful of angering his master and forcibly returned a handful of slaves (see area 5a) to their barracks. Sonjar never returned to the tower, and Imket survived for years as the geode's sole occupant. Years later, he finally died alone, still believing that his wrathful master was punishing him by cursing him and imprisoning him here. At odd intervals, Imket exits the room and wanders the geode, but sometimes tendays or months pass between his forays. He has not emerged since Durdyn's Devils moved into the geode.

**Imket:** Male human curst fighter 10; CR 11; Medium undead (augmented humanoid); HD 10d12; hp 66; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +10; Grp +13; Atk +13 melee (1d4+4, slam) or +19 melee (1d8+8, +3 *scourge*); Full Atk +13 melee (1d4+4, slam) or +19/+14 melee (1d8+8, +3 *scourge*); SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 1, immunity to cold and fire, spell resistance 22, turning immunity, undead traits, unkillable; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 18, Con —, Int 8, Wis 4, Cha 13.

**Skills and Feats:** Intimidate +13, Jump +15, Listen —3, Search —1, Spot —3, Survival —2; Combat Reflexes<sup>B</sup>, Dodge<sup>B</sup>, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*scourge*)<sup>B</sup>, Greater Weapon Focus (*scourge*), Mobility<sup>B</sup>, Power Attack<sup>B</sup>, Spring Attack, Track, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (*scourge*), Weapon Specialization (*scourge*).

**Languages:** Mulhorandi, Roushoum.

**Fast Healing (Ex):** Imket regains 1 hit point per round as long as he has at least 1 hit point remaining.

**Turning Immunity (Ex):** Imket cannot be turned, rebuked, destroyed, or commanded.

**Undead Traits:** Imket is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. He is not subject to extra damage from critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage to his physical ability scores, ability drain, energy drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or death from massive damage. He cannot be *raised*, and *resurrection* works only if he is willing. He has darkvision out to 60 feet.

**Ungillable (Ex):** The only ways to destroy Imket permanently are to destroy his body (by total immersion in acid, or a *disintegrate* or *undeath to death* spell, for example) or remove the curse that keeps him from dying. The caster of the *remove curse* spell must succeed on a DC 20 caster level check to successfully remove the curse.

**Possessions:** +2 studded leather armor, +3 *scourge*, gloves of Dexterity +2.

## 7. KITCHEN

Scalding steam billows out of this iron-framed archway, obstructing any view of what lies inside.

This extradimensional space once served as the kitchen. In this chamber, slaves prepared the foods brought back by Sonjar's hunting parties.

A metal table, a glazed ceramic sink, and a cooking hearth stained with soot are the only items left intact. The sink is equipped with a spigot-shaped *portal* that connects to the Elemental Plane of Water. In like manner, the hearth is connected to the Elemental Plane of Fire. Both *portals* were left open by the slave chef when he fled to join the uprising. The ceaseless mixing of water and fire has filled the kitchen with clouds of heated steam, which escape through the doorway. (See page 303 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for the effects of extreme heat.)

A tiny, circular hole on the floor in the northern corner is another *portal* that was used for trash disposal. Tiny or smaller objects and creatures placed upon it are automatically transported to the refuse pit (area 9). The excess water falling from the sink also drains out through this *portal*.

The table is also a *portal*. On a verbal command, it immediately transports any inanimate objects upon it to the dining table in the grand hall (area 13). The slaves delivered Sonjar's meals to him in this manner.

## 8. LARDER

Meat brought back by Sonjar's hunting parties was cured and stored in this extradimensional larder. All foodstuffs kept in here have long since crumbled into dust.

## 9. REFUSE PIT (EL 4)

To one side of the stone plaza is a rusted iron trapdoor. Faint streamers of mist seep up around its edges.

This 5-foot-by-5-foot iron trapdoor is about 1/2 inch thick. It covers the opening to a pit 15 feet deep and 10 feet in diameter. The floor of the pit is flooded to a depth of 4 feet.

With the arrival of Durdyn and his followers, the ancient gray ooze that lives in the pit became active after a long dormant period.

**Iron Trapdoor:** 1/2 in. thick, hardness 10, hp 20, Strength DC 23 to lift.

**Gray Ooze (1):** hp 31; see *Monster Manual*, page 202.

## 10. AIR PORTALS

The walls of the geode are dotted with small, one-way *portals* leading to and from the Elemental Plane of Air. Only a handful of them still function, bringing fresh air (and sometimes lesser elementals) into the geode and returning the stale air whence it came. The winds rushing through these damaged *portals* sound vaguely like the wails of a keening spirit (see *City of the Spider Queen*), though they cause no ill effects.

## 11. MONSTER KENNEL (EL 11)

This stone building has a wide archway with no door. Slitlike sofits pierce the upper walls, creating a row of small, high windows along the sides.

Once the kennel where Sonjar kept his prized monsters, this building is now home to a temperamental brown dragon named Shianax.

**Creature:** The dragon is serving as a desert guide for Durdyn's Devils. Durdyn pays for her service with gold and gems.

**Shianax:** Female young adult brown dragon<sup>Mon</sup>; CR 11; Huge dragon (earth); HD 18d12+90; hp 207; Init +4; Spd 60 ft., burrow 60 ft.; AC 23, touch 8, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +18; Grp +34; Atk +24 melee (2d8+8, bite); Full Atk +24 melee (2d8+8, bite) and +22 melee (2d6+4, 2 claws) and +22 melee (1d8+4, 2 wings) and +22 melee (2d6+12, tail slap); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft. (15 ft. with bite); SA breath weapon, crush 2d8+12, frightful presence, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ blindsight 60 ft., damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 120 ft., immunity to acid, keen senses, low-light vision, spell resistance 20, tremorsense 500 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +16, Ref +11, Will +14; Str 27, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 16.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +13, Concentration +20, Diplomacy +18, Escape Artist +15, Hide —4, Intimidate +16, Jump +20, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (geography) +24, Listen +24, Move Silently +11, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +9, Spot +19; Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Improved Natural Attack (claw), Improved Sunder, Multiattack, Power Attack.

**Languages:** Common, Draconic, Roushoum, Semphâri.

**Breath Weapon (Su):** 100-ft. line, 10d6 acid, Reflex DC 24.

**Crush (Ex):** Area 15 ft. by 15 ft.; Small or smaller opponents take 2d8+12 points of bludgeoning damage, and must succeed on a DC 24 Reflex save or be pinned.

**Frightful Presence (Ex):** 150-ft. radius, HD 17 or fewer, Will DC 22 negates.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 1/day—create water (caster level 5th).

**Sorcerer Spells Known** (caster level 3rd): 0—*daze*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *read magic*; 1st—*magic missile*, *shield*, *silent image* (DC 14).

**Tactics:** Shianax attempts to parley with newcomers to ascertain their motives. Intruders who might be allies are ushered into the grand hall for a meeting with Durdyn. If a party of adventurers seems hostile but easily intimidated, Shianax tries to chase them out of the geode before calling for reinforcements. The dragon flees from intruders who pose a serious threat.

**Treasure:** Most of Shianax's personal treasure is in her lair, which is a rocky crag a day's march away. She keeps the gold and gems that Durdyn has paid her beneath a loose flagstone in the back of the kennel (Search DC 15). The hoard includes 1,150 gp, 35 pp, five tourmalines (50 gp each), a fine peridot (200 gp), and two rubies (400 gp each).

## 12. WAITING HALL

Faded frescoes of ancient human spellcasters decorate the 12-foot-high walls of this hall. A pile of splinters and frayed fabric that might once have been an upholstered chair lies on the floor by the western wall. A door to either side of the foyer and two archways provide egress.

This hall originally served as a waiting room for those seeking audience with Sonjar. One of the two doors leads to a cloakroom, the other to a washroom. The archways lead east into a larger room beyond.

The *portal* here functions like the one described in area 3. If no destination is designated, it conveys the user to area 3.

## 13. GRAND HALL (EL 11)

This magnificent chamber has a 20-foot-high, domed ceiling. The stone walls and the dome are painted with images of stern-faced men and women holding various icons, including a map, a large egg, a silver rod, and a ball of light. The room is furnished with a single granite-topped dining table and a few piles of dust that might once have been other tables or chairs. In the east wall is a large window that looks out on a vast glacial landscape, as if the tower were perched on the side of a mountain.

The east wall is a transparent *portal* that displays one of several specific scenic locales, as directed by its user. The *portal* permits neither creatures nor objects to pass through; its sole purpose is aesthetic.

Durdyn has figured out how to change the view that the *portal* displays, but he mistakenly believes that it has other functions he has not yet discovered.

**Creatures:** At least two of Durdyn's followers—usually Arrak Abaeir and Rayeth à el Kapyn—are on guard in this room at any time. Arrak serves as Durdyn's right hand and keeps an eye on the activities of his other followers. Rayeth is a half-drow recruited from the streets of Undrek-thoz. An outcast and an orphan, he impressed Durdyn not only with his exceptional fighting skills but also with his open disdain of the ruling drow matriarchy.

**Arrak Abaeir:** Male drow rogue 9; CR 10; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 9d6+27; hp 58; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +6; Grp +6; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1/19–20, *sword of subtlety*) or +13 ranged (1d4+2/19–20, +2 *hand crossbow*); Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6+1/19–20, *sword of subtlety*) or +13/+8 ranged (1d4+2/19–20, +2 *hand crossbow*); SA sneak attack +5d6, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, evasion, improved uncanny dodge, light blindness, spell resistance 20, trap sense +3, trapfinding, uncanny dodge; AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +3 (+5 against spells and spell-like abilities); Str 10, Dex 19, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 14.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +18, Climb +5, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +8, Escape Artist +16, Gather Information +11, Hide +11, Jump +2, Listen +2, Move Silently +16, Open Lock +11, Search +9, Spot +8, Tumble +15, Use Magic Device +14, Use Rope +10; Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Reload, Weapon Focus (hand crossbow).

**Languages:** Common, Draconic, Elven, Roushoum, Undercommon.

**Sneak Attack (Ex):** Arrak deals an extra 5d6 points of damage on any successful attack against flat-footed or flanked targets, or against a target that has been denied its Dexterity bonus for any reason. This damage also applies to ranged attacks



against targets up to 30 feet away. Creatures with concealment, creatures without discernible anatomies, and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are all immune to sneak attacks. He can choose to deliver nonlethal damage with his sneak attack, but only when using a weapon designed for that purpose, such as a sap (blackjack).

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 1/day—*dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire*. Caster level 9th.

**Elf Traits:** Arrak has immunity to magic sleep effects. If he merely passes within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door, he is entitled to a Search check to notice it as if he were actively looking for it.

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

**Improved Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** Arrak cannot be flanked and can be sneak attacked only by a character who has at least thirteen levels of rogue.

**Light Blindness (Ex):** Abrupt exposure to bright light blinds Arrak for 1 round. He is dazzled for as long as he remains in the affected area.

**Trapfinding (Ex):** Arrak can find, disarm, or bypass traps with a DC of 20 or higher. He can use the Search skill to find, and the Disable Device skill to disarm, magic traps (DC 25 + the level of the spell used to create it). If his Disable Device result exceeds the trap's DC by 10 or more, he discovers how to bypass the trap without triggering or disarming it.

**Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** Arrak retains his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class even when flat-footed or targeted by an unseen foe (he still loses his Dexterity bonus if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

**Possessions:** *bracers of armor +4, sword of subtlety, +2 hand crossbow with 25 bolts, potion of invisibility, potion of cure moderate wounds, 10 doses of drow knockout poison.*

**Rayeth à el Kapyn:** Male half-drow fighter 8; CR 9; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 8d10; hp 44; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +8; Grp +11; Atk +15 melee (2d4+8, +2 *spiked chain*) or +12 melee (1d6+5/18–20, +1 *scimitar*); Full Atk +15/+10 melee (2d4+8, +2 *spiked chain*) or +12/+7 melee (1d6+5/18–20, +1 *scimitar*); SQ darkvision 60 ft., half-drow traits; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +3 (+5 against enchantments); Str 17, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 8.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +10, Diplomacy +1, Gather Information +1, Hide +4, Jump +5, Listen +4, Search +4, Spot +4; Combat Reflexes<sup>B</sup>, Dodge<sup>B</sup>, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain)<sup>B</sup>, Greater Weapon Focus (spiked chain), Improved Initiative<sup>B</sup>, Mobility<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Focus (spiked chain), Weapon Specialization (spiked chain).

**Languages:** Common, Elven, Undercommon.

**Half-Drow Traits:** Rayeth has immunity to magic sleep effects. For all effects related to race, a half-drow is considered a drow.

**Possessions:** +2 *chainmail, +2 spiked chain, +1 scimitar, potion of haste, ring of antivenom.*

**Tactics:** Anyone entering the tower without Shianax as an escort is assumed to be hostile and attacked by Rayeth and Arrak. The two mercenaries coordinate their attacks, trying to take down the opponents that resemble fighters first. Arrak shoots as many of his poison-tipped arrows as possible before engaging in melee. Rayeth trips foes with his spiked chain, leaving them vulnerable to sneak attacks from Arrak.

## 14. ARTIFICE CHAMBER

*A stone table occupies the center of this room. In the southwest corner, a massive black iron oven lies on its side. On the walls are four blank archways similar to the one at the base of the tower. Several shelves lining the south wall hold tarnished religious symbols, empty bottles, and notes written in ancient script.*

This chamber once served as Sonjar's laboratory, torture chamber, and workshop. He conducted experiments, interrogations, and other arcane investigations on creatures secured to his table.

The archways are all *portals*. The one on the east wall functions like the *portal* at the base of the tower (area 3), except that it allows travel to the tower's other floors. If no destination is given, it transports the user to area 3.

The *portals* connecting with areas 15 and 17 are opaque from this side, but those leading to areas 16 and 18 are transparent so that characters in this room can see beyond them. The *portal* from area 15 is transparent from the other side, so the two drow in that chamber can see intruders and prepare for combat.

## 15. LIBRARY (EL 12)

*Rows of shelves made of softly glowing magical force line the walls of this chamber. On the shelves are hundreds of crumbling scrolls, pieces of yellowed parchment, and leather-bound tomes.*

Sonjar's library contains books penned by numerous Imaskari artificers throughout the empire's history. These aged works are very brittle, and most crumble to dust if touched.

Karu'shon, a senior mage of House Vrasl, was assigned to accompany Durdyn and oversee the activities of his band. The wizard spends a significant amount of his time casting *amanuensis*<sup>Mag</sup> to copy the information from this library for his matron. He is always accompanied by his drow sister Xi'an, an arachnomancer<sup>Und</sup> who has long been considered the black sheep of House Vrasl because of her decision to study arcane magic. During Lolth's silence, she has positioned herself to seize control of House Vrasl upon returning home.

If either Karu'shon or Xi'an observes intruders in the artificer room (area 20), both prepare for battle. Karu'shon casts *deeper darkness*, then begins casting offensive spells. Xi'an uses her *spiderform* ability to become a Large monstrous spider, then grapples an opponent to deliver her strength-sapping, poisonous touch.

**Karu'shon Vrasl:** Male drow wizard 9; CR 10; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 9d4+18; hp 40; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +4; Grp +3; Atk or Full Atk

+5 melee (1d4+1/19–20, +2 *dagger*) or +7 ranged (1d4+1/19–20, +1 *hand crossbow*); SA spell-like abilities, spells; SQ darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, familiar, familiar benefits, light blindness, spell resistance 20; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +7 (+9 against spells and spell-like abilities); Str 8, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 12, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +14, Decipher Script +12, Gather Information +2, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (Earthroot local) +17, Knowledge (history) +15, Listen +5, Search +7, Spellcraft +18, Spot +5; Alertness\*, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell<sup>B</sup>, Extend Spell, Highborn Drow<sup>Rac</sup>, Rapid Reload, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>.

**Languages:** Common, Draconic, Elven, Roushoum, Undercommon.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 1/day—*dancing lights, darkness, detect good, detect magic, faerie fire, levitate*. Caster level 9th.

**Elf Traits:** Karu'shon has immunity to magic sleep effects. If he merely passes within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door, he is entitled to a Search check to notice it as if he were actively looking for it.

**Familiar:** Karu'shon's familiar is a toad named Ku'rup. The familiar uses the better of his own and Karu'shon's base save bonuses. The creature's abilities and characteristics are summarized below.

**Familiar Benefits:** Karu'shon gains special benefits from having a familiar. This creature grants Karu'shon 3 hit points.

**Alertness (Ex):** \*Kuru'rup grants his master Alertness as long as he is within 5 feet.

**Empathic Link (Su):** Karu'shon can communicate telepathically with his familiar at a distance of up to 1 mile. The master has the same connection to an item or a place that the familiar does.

**Share Spells (Su):** Karu'shon can have any spell he casts on himself also affect his familiar if the latter is within 5 feet at the time. He can also cast a spell with a target of "You" on his familiar.

**Light Blindness (Ex):** Abrupt exposure to bright light blinds Karu'shon for 1 round. He is dazzled for as long as he remains in the affected area.

**Wizard Spells Prepared** (caster level 9th): 0—*detect magic, electric jolt*<sup>Mag</sup>, *read magic* (2); 1st—*comprehend languages, mage armor, magic missile* (2), *obscuring mist, spirit worm*<sup>Mag</sup> (DC 16); 2nd—*glitterdust* (DC 17), *invisibility* (2), *mirror image, scorching ray* (+6 ranged touch); 3rd—*deeper darkvision*, *empowered magic missile, flame arrow, fly*; 4th—*extended amanuensis*<sup>Mag</sup> (2), *portal view*<sup>Und</sup>; 5th—*teleport, wall of force*.

**Spellbook:** as above plus 0—*acid splash, arcane mark, dancing lights, daze, detect poison, disrupt undead, flare, ghost sound, light, mage hand, mending, message, resistance, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*true strike*; 2nd—*summon monster II*; 3rd—*amanuensis*<sup>Mag</sup>, *lightning bolt, vampiric touch*.

**Possessions:** *bracers of armor +2, ring of protection +2, +1 hand crossbow, +2 dagger, Vrasl house insignia (blur 1/day), potion of cure serious wounds, 30 gp.*

**Ku'rup:** Toad familiar; CR —; Diminutive magical beast; HD 9d8; hp 20; Init +1; Spd 5 ft.; AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +4; Grp –13; Atk or Full Atk —; Space/Reach 1 ft./0 ft.; SQ amphibious, deliver touch spells, improved evasion, low-light vision, speak with amphibians, speak with master; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 1, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 4.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +12, Hide +21, Intimidate +2, Listen +6, Spot +6; Alertness.

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

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

**Speak with Amphibians (Ex):** Ku'rup can speak with amphibians. Such communication is limited by the intelligence of the conversing creatures.

**Speak with Master (Ex):** Ku'rup can communicate verbally with Karu'shon. Other creatures do not understand the communication without magical help.

**Skills:** Ku'rup has a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks.

**Xi'an Vrasl:** Female drow fighter 2/sorcerer 4/arachnomancer<sup>Und</sup> 4; CR 11; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 2d10+2 plus 4d4+4 plus 4d6+4; hp 45; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +7; Grp +13; Atk +9 melee touch (poison, poison touch) or +9 melee (1d3+2 plus poison, unarmed strike); Full Atk +9 melee touch (poison, poison touch) or +9/+4 melee (1d3+2 plus poison, unarmed strike); SA poison touch, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, light blindness, speak with spiders, spell resistance 21, spiderform; AL CE; SV Fort +6 (+10 against poison), Ref +7, Will +5 (+7 against spells and spell-like abilities); Str 15, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 17.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +5, Concentration +12, Intimidate +6, Jump +7, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +2, Search +2, Spellcraft +3, Spot +2; Augment Summoning, Highborn Drow<sup>Rac</sup>, Improved Grapple, Improved Levitation<sup>Und</sup>, Improved Unarmed Strike, Spell Focus (conjunction).

**Languages:** Elven, Undercommon.

**Poison Touch (Ex):** As a free action, Xi'an can secrete poison that she can deliver by touch (contact, Fort DC 14, 1d4 Str).

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 1/day—*dancing lights, darkness, detect good, detect magic, faerie fire, levitate*. Caster level 10th.

**Elf Traits:** Xi'an has immunity to magic sleep effects. If she merely passes within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door, she is entitled to a Search check to notice it as if she were actively looking for it.

**Light Blindness (Ex):** Abrupt exposure to bright light blinds Xi'an for 1 round. She is dazzled for as long as she remains in the affected area.

**Speak with Spiders (Su):** Xi'an can communicate with any spider or arachnid as a free action.

**Spiderform (Su):** Xi'an can transform herself into a Small, Medium, or Large monstrous spider three times per day. This ability functions like *polymorph*, except that the duration is 40



minutes. Resuming normal form requires a standard action but does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

*Sorcerer Spells Known* (caster level 7th); 0—*acid splash*, *daze*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *read magic*, *stick*<sup>Und</sup> (DC 13), *touch of fatigue* (+9 melee touch; DC 13); 1st—*corrosive grasp*<sup>Mag</sup>, *ice dagger*<sup>Mag</sup> (DC 14), *spider climb*, *summon Small monstrous spider*<sup>Und</sup>, *true strike*; 2nd—*spiderskin*<sup>Und</sup> (DC 16), *summon swarm*, *web* (DC 16); 3rd—*Mesti's acid breath*<sup>Mag</sup> (DC 17), *summon Large monstrous spider*<sup>Und</sup>.

*Possessions*: ring of protection +3, *Vrasl house insignia* (cloak of dark power\* 1/day), minor cloak of displacement, ring of freedom of movement, 200 gp.

## 16. PRISON

Beyond this doorway is a bleak, gray stone chamber. Wrought iron manacles and bone fragments peek through the heavy layer of dust on the floor.

Sonjar kept the priests he had kidnapped in this prison when he was not experimenting on them. The entrance and exit function just like those of the slave barracks (area 5). The dust and

bone fragments on the floor are the remains of a Netherese priest of Moander.

## 17. STOREHOUSE

This extradimensional space is lined with shelves full of empty glass jars. A small rod of iron and three bronze figurines are hidden among the jars (Search DC 10).

## 18. FORGE ROOM

Beyond this doorway lies an empty chamber built of featureless gray stone. The air seems to waver and flicker from time to time, and when it does, the room beyond slowly twists and warps.

The magic supporting this empty extradimensional space has decayed significantly, causing it to blink in and out of existence. The iron forge that once occupied it was dumped onto the floor of the laboratory (area 14) when the room first blinked out.

The magic of the room continues to function intermittently. Anyone inside it when the magic fails falls into the lab, taking 1d6 points of damage. The room reappears in 1d8 rounds and

# nezram the world-walker

Nezram, a Mulhorandi wizard known as the World-Walker, has returned to Faerûn after an absence of nearly seven hundred years. Though he is a master of transportation magic, *portals*, and planewalking, the World-Walker is perhaps best known for his love of gem-based magic.

Rumors of a flying Netherese city and a surviving colony of his people's ancient enemies drew Nezram back to Faerûn. The World-Walker is concerned that a heretofore unknown Imaskari realm could pose a threat to his beloved empire.

Upon his return, Nezram found his old tower in ruins and his spellbook missing. With the assistance of his living descendants, the Nezramites, the great wizard is presently building a new tower in the town of Nezas on the eastern slopes of Mulhorand's Sword Mountains. He has recently learned that his spellbook, *Unique Mageries*, now belongs to Maeve of Starmantle (CN female half-drow wizard 13/archmage 3), daughter of the late Quarra of Cathtyr, but he has not yet decided how to retrieve it.

The World-Walker's fascination with gems is evident from the half-dozen unique gem-based spells he developed. Embedded in his robes are nearly a dozen magically attuned gems that require only his willing touch to activate.

**Nezram**: Male human (Mulan) wizard 22; CR 22; Medium humanoid; HD 22d4+88; hp 143; Init +9; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +11; Grp +13; Atk +17 melee (1d4+6/19–20, +4 greater dispelling dagger); Full Atk +17/+12 melee (1d4+6/19–20, +4 greater dispelling dagger); SQ familiar, familiar benefits, spell resistance 20; AL LN;

SV Fort +15, Ref +16, Will +20; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 18, Int 24, Wis 17, Cha 13.

*Skills and Feats*: Concentration +29, Craft (gemcutting) +27, Decipher Script +32, Hide +10, Knowledge (arcana) +32, Knowledge (history) +24, Knowledge (religion) +24, Knowledge (the planes) +31, Listen +5, Search +12, Spellcraft +36, Spot +10, Alertness\*, Attune Gem<sup>B</sup>, Craft Wondrous Item<sup>B</sup>, Greater Spell Penetration, Heighten Spell<sup>B</sup>, Improved Counterspell, Improved Initiative, Improved Spell Capacity (10th-level), Magical Artisan (Attune Gem), Quicken Spell<sup>B</sup>, Reactive Counterspell\*, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>, Signature Spell (*Nezram's sapphire screen of shielding*†), Spell Mastery (*disintegrate*, *dispel magic*, *fireball*, *Nezram's amethyst aura*†, *Nezram's emerald energy screen*†, *Nezram's sapphire screen of shielding*†), Spell Penetration.

† New spell described in Chapter 1.

*Languages*: Chessentan, Common, Draconic, Durpari, Goblin, Mulhorandi, Untheric.

*Familiar*: Nezram's familiar is a rat named Nezlitz. The familiar uses the better of its own and Nezram's base save bonuses. The creature's abilities and characteristics are summarized below.

*Familiar Benefits*: Nezram gains special benefits from having a familiar. This creature grants Nezram a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves.

Alertness (Ex): \*Nezlitz grants its master Alertness as long as he is within 5 feet.

Empathic Link (Su): Nezram can communicate telepathically with his familiar at a distance of up to 1 mile. The master

lasts for 3d4 rounds before blinking out and starting the process over again.

## 19. CHAMBER OF EARTHSTARS (EL 4)

This chamber appears to have no ceiling. Numerous trophies—including a beholder skull, a huge dinosaur bone, a complete elf skeleton, and the preserved head of some angelic creature—hang on the walls.

This chamber was Sonjar's trophy room. Each of the four alcoves contains a transparent *portal* that leads to a destination in some other part of the lost Imaskari Empire.

On the west wall is a *portal* that connects with areas 14, 12, and 3, and it works like the *portal* described in area 3. If no destination is specified, the user is transported to area 3.

On the east wall is a *portal* that connects with Sonjar's chambers (area 20). This one is opaque on this side but transparent on the other. Durdyn uses it to spot anyone poking around in this chamber so that he can ready himself for combat.

Several floor-to-ceiling viewing portals are interspersed around the perimeter of this chamber.

has the same connection to an item or a place that the familiar does.

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

Scry on Familiar (Sp): Nezram can scry on his familiar as if casting the spell *scrying* once per day.

*Wizard Spells Prepared* (caster level 22nd): 0—*detect magic*, *light*, *read magic* (2); 1st—*comprehend languages*, *grease*, *hold portal*, *identify*, *magic missile*, *mount*; 2nd—*daze monster* (DC 19), *detect thoughts* (DC 19), *gust of wind* (DC 19), *invisibility*, *protection from arrows*, *scorching ray* (+15 ranged touch); 3rd—*analyze portal*, *dispel magic* (2), *displacement*, *fly*, *Nezram's amethyst aura*†, 4th—*dimension door*, *dimensional anchor*, *greater invisibility*, *Nezram's emerald energy screen*†, *scrying* (DC 21); 5th—*cone of cold* (DC 22), *Nezram's sapphire screen of shielding*†, *passwall*, *prying eyes*, *wall of force*; 6th—*analyze dweomer*, *disintegrate* (DC 23), *greater dispel magic*, *repulsion* (DC 23), *true seeing*; 7th—*greater arcane sight*, *gemjump*<sup>Mag</sup>, *ruby ray of reversal*<sup>Mag</sup>, *greater teleport*, *teleport object*; 8th—*dimensional lock*, *maze*, *mind blank* (DC 25), *prismatic wall* (DC 25); 9th—*etherealness*, *gate*, *power word kill*, *wish*.

† New spell described in Chapter 1.

*Possessions*: bracers of armor +6, +4 greater dispelling dagger<sup>PG</sup>, gloves of Dexterity +4, attuned gems (*antimagic field*, *darkvision*, *feather fall*, *fly*, *mind blank*, *protection from spells*, *shapechange*, *spell turning*, *greater teleport*, *water breathing*, *wind walk*), ring of evasion, ring of mind shielding, scarab of protection, cloak of resistance +4.

**Trap**: Each trophy in this chamber is trapped with a single *glyph of warding* that activates when touched.

**Glyph of Warding (Blast)**: CR 4; spell, spell trigger, no reset; spell effect (*glyph of warding* [blast], 10th-level cleric, 5d8 electricity, Ref DC 14 half); multiple targets (all targets within 5 ft.); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

**Development**: A member of Durdyn's Devils passed through a corner *portal* in this room some time ago and never returned. Durdyn is considering whether to go after the lost sellsword or hire adventurers to rescue him.

## 20. SONJAR'S CHAMBERS (EL 13)

The ceiling of this luxurious bedchamber is 15 feet high, and the walls are decorated with frescoes reminiscent of the four elements. On the floor along the north wall is a line of decayed and frayed silken floor pillows that once formed a sprawling bed. An aged desk and a chair lie in pieces in the southern portion of the room. Several doorways appear to lead nowhere.

The *portal* on the south wall allows travel to the tower's other floors. It is otherwise identical to the *portals* in areas 3 and 20.

**Nezlitz**: Rat familiar; CR —; Tiny magical beast; HD 22d8; hp 71; Init +2; Spd 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.; AC 25, touch 14, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +11; Grp +0; Atk or Full Atk +15 melee (1d3–4, bite); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SQ deliver touch spells, improved evasion, low-light vision, scent, speak with master, speak with rodents, spell resistance 27; AL CN; SV Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +14; Str 2, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 2.

*Skills and Feats*: Balance +14, Climb +14, Concentration +25, Craft (gemcutting) +23, Hide +23, Move Silently +10, Search +8, Spot +6, Swim +14; Familiar Spell (*disintegrate*)<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Finesse.

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

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

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

*Speak with Rodents* (Ex): Nezlitz can speak with rodents. Such communication is limited by the intelligence of the conversing creatures.

*Skills*: Nezlitz has a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus on Balance, Climb, and Swim checks. It uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength modifier for Climb and Swim checks. It can always choose to take 10 on a Climb or Swim check, even if rushed or threatened. It can use the run action while swimming, provided he swims in a straight line.



**Creature:** Durdyn spends much of his time in this room planning out the next move for his band.

**Durdyn:** Male drow fighter 12; CR 13; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 12d10+12; hp 78; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +12; Grp +14; Atk +19 melee (2d6+10/17-20, +3 *anarchic greatsword*); Full Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (2d6+10/17-20, +3 *anarchic greatsword*); SA spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 120 ft., elf traits, spell resistance 23; AL CN; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +5 (+7 against spells and spell-like abilities); Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 16.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +12, Jump +12, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Ride +6, Search +2, Sense Motive +3, Spot +3; Cleave<sup>B</sup>, Combat Reflexes<sup>B</sup>, Daylight Adaptation<sup>PG</sup>, Exotic Armor Proficiency (spidersilk armor)<sup>Und</sup>, Greater Weapon Focus (greatsword), Greater Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (greatsword)<sup>B</sup>, Improved Sunder<sup>B</sup>, Power Attack<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Focus (greatsword)<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Specialization (greatsword)<sup>B</sup>.

**Languages:** Elven, Undercommon.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 1/day—*dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire*. Caster level 12th.

**Elf Traits:** Durdyn has immunity to magic sleep effects. If he merely passes within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door, he is entitled to a Search check to notice it as if he were actively looking for it.

**Possessions:** +4 spidersilk armor<sup>Und</sup>, +3 *anarchic greatsword*, ring of antivenom, potion of haste, potion of cure critical wounds, potion of endurance, 400 gp.

**Tactics:** If unescorted intruders appear in his chamber, Durdyn attacks. If seriously threatened, he escapes through the portal or to the Orchard Demiplane (area 22), where he joins forces with Ewa.

## 21. BATH

The main feature of this marble-lined room is an immense ceramic tub that contains a *portal* to the Elemental Plane of Water. A shelf on the wall holds several decayed bags of dust that were once bath herbs. The small latrine in the corner contains a *portal* that connects with the refuse pit (area 9).

## 22. ORCHARD DEMIPLANE (EL 8)

*Beyond this doorway lies an otherworldly, sunlit orchard beneath a cloudless, bright blue sky. Rows upon rows of trees laden with apples, pears, and other fruits extend far off into the distance.*

Sonjar created a circular demiplane nearly a mile in diameter in which he planted hundreds of fruit trees. The orchard hums

with the sound of bees and is perpetually warm and fragrant. Because no predators exist here, the bees have proliferated throughout the demiplane. The orchard is also home to a tiefling named Ewa.

**Creature:** A refugee from Thay, Ewa fled into the Underdark before joining Durdyn's Devils. When not meditating under a tree, she gathers fruit and honey for Durdyn and his band.

**Ewa:** Female tiefling monk 6/monk of the long death<sup>PG</sup> 2; CR 8; Medium outsider (native); HD 8d8; hp 36; Init +2; Spd 50 ft., fly 50 ft. (average); AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +5; Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d10+2, unarmed strike); Full Atk +6/+6 melee (1d10+2, unarmed strike with flurry of blows); SA *ki* strike (magic), spell-like abilities; SQ *darkness*, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, macabre shroud, poison use, purity of body, resistance to cold 5, electricity 5, and fire 5, slow fall 30 ft., still mind; AL LN; SV Fort +5 (+6 against death effects), Ref +10 (+11 against death effects), Will +10 (+11 against death effects, +12 against enchantment spells and effects); Str 15, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +4, Balance +6, Bluff +3, Concentration +2, Craft (alchemy) +7, Craft (poisonmaking) +9, Escape Artist +7, Heal +5, Hide +12, Jump +6, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Move Silently +10, Spot +9, Tumble +7; Deflect Arrows<sup>B</sup>, Fiendish Bloodline<sup>Rac</sup>, Hover, Improved Trip<sup>B</sup>, Improved Unarmed Strike<sup>B</sup>, Outsider Wings<sup>Rac</sup>, Stunning Fist<sup>B</sup>.

**Languages:** Common, Infernal, Mulhorandi, Rashemi.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 3/day—*protection from good*; 1/day—*bane* (DC 11). Caster level 8th.

**Darkness (Sp):** Ewa can use *darkness* once per day (caster level 8th).

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

**Macabre Shroud (Ex):** The DC of any Gather Information, bardic knowledge, or similar check made to learn about Ewa increases by 2.

**Poison Use:** Ewa is skilled in the use of poison and never risks accidentally poisoning herself when applying poison to a weapon.

**Purity of Body (Ex):** Ewa is immune to all normal diseases. Magical and supernatural diseases still affect her.

**Slow Fall (Ex):** When within arm's reach of a wall, Ewa can use it to slow her descent while falling. Ewa takes damage as if the fall were 30 feet shorter than it actually is.

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

**Tactics:** If approached, Ewa takes to the air and applies poison to her hands, then engages her foes in combat with unarmed attacks.



# REALMS OF THE HIGH FOREST

In far older days, when the High Forest spanned much of the land from the River Dessarin to the Graypeaks, numerous elven and dwarven realms rose to prominence. Dwarven kingdoms grew mighty by working metal and stone, while elves nurtured great civilizations. For many ages these realms flourished, enduring repeated invasions by orcs, wars among the elves, and incursions from the Underdark. Ultimately, however, all of these civilizations were doomed to fall.

A single act of fiendish summoning that took place nearly five hundred years ago led to a demonic conflagration that devoured the elven kingdoms of the High Forest and neighboring Ammarindar, leaving the North forever changed. The High Forest and its mountains reverted to a savage and lush wilderness in which lost wonders from these bygone civilizations lie concealed.

The High Forest is littered with the ruins of the three elven civilizations that succeeded ancient Aryvandaar. Here in the deep woods, far removed from the more famous ruins of Cormanthyr, lie the age-old remains of great woodland societies that once dwelled under the trees. The graceful architecture of these forgotten elven cities is still amazingly well preserved. Delicate spires, beautiful towers, and ancient temples offer fantastic places for adventurers, antiquarians, and treasure seekers to explore. The magic of the *mythals* that protect these places has diminished greatly with the elves' departure from the High Forest, but these ancient defenses still embody considerable power.

In the mountains north and east of the High Forest, the shield dwarves of old carved out two magnificent realms. Within the Graypeaks, the Nether Mountains, the Rauvin Mountains, and the Ice Mountains lie the ruins of many great dwarfholds from this period. Most of the grand halls, labyrinthine mines, and massive foundries of these realms still stand whole and intact—a testament to the durability of dwarven stonecraft.

## History

The last chapter in the history of the High Forest elves began nearly ten thousand years ago, when some sun elves returned to the forest and founded the nation of Siluvanede amid the ruins of Aryvandaar.

The moon elves who arrived soon after founded the hidden kingdom of Sharrven in the woodland areas to the south. The last and mightiest of the elven realms that rose in the High Forest was Eaclann, a powerful kingdom of moon elves and wood elves that was said to rival the legendary Cormanthyr in spirit and lore.

Meanwhile, in the mountain peaks and deepest caverns, the shield dwarves were carving out two mighty nations. Delzoun, the great Northkingdom, rose as a chain of impregnable citadel fortresses throughout the Nether and Rauvin mountains. Ammarindar, on the other hand, was a secret dwarven realm rich in arcane lore and metalcraft.

In recent times, interest in the High Forest has begun to revive. The elves have returned to their ancient haunts, and a new realm known as the Silver Marches has emerged from the lands of old Delzoun. Reclamation of long-lost ancestral lands is the new watchword for the civilized realms of the North, and for now these efforts appear promising.

## Timeline

Year	Event
–9000	The Fifth Crown War ends. The elves of Aryvandaar abandon the High Forest.
–8400	A few sun elves return to found Siluvanede in the northwestern reaches of the High Forest.
–7600	Moon elves and a few sun elves disaffected with Siluvanede's growing elitism found Sharrven in the southern reaches of the High Forest.
–5300	The elves of Siluvanede erect a <i>mythal</i> in the city of Adofhaeranede and rename it Myth Adofhaer.
–5000	Survivors of House Dlardrageth, a clan of demon-blooded sun elves, flee from Arcorar to Siluvanede.



–4800 The Dlardrageths subvert several powerful Siluvaneden sun elf houses and, by encouraging demon-elf cross-breeding, create the fey’ri. The fey’ri houses conceal their secret heritage and come to wield great power in Siluvanede.

–4700 Nobles of Sharrven who seek to restrict the ambitious Siluvaneden found the kingdom of Eaclann.

–4550 The elven tree city of Teuveamanthaar is founded on the present-day site of Talltrees and named the capital of Eaclann.

–4500 High mages from Arcorar track House Dlardrageth to a secret lair beneath Ascal’s Horn. With the aid of Eaclanni forces, they slay several of the Dlardrageths. Other Siluvaneden houses under Dlardrageth influence retaliate, beginning the Seven Citadels’ War. Sarya Dlardrageth and her sons are captured, but the fey’ri-led Siluvaneden fight on.

–4440 Eaclann presses Siluvanede. The Siluvaneden open several of Aryvandaar’s ancient citadels and equip their warriors with Vyshaantar weapons. This tactic draws Sharrven into the war.

–4300 The Seven Citadels’ War ends, and Eaclann forcibly annexes Siluvanede. Upon discovering the deceit of the fey’ri, untainted Siluvaneden high mages place the city of Myth Adofhaer in magical stasis, effectively fleeing to the far future to escape association with the fey’ri houses. Most of the surviving fey’ri warriors are imprisoned in Nar Kerymhoarth (the Nameless Dungeon), but some avoid capture and eventually spawn long-lived houses of daemonfey that successfully conceal their nature.

–4100 Shield dwarves settle the Graypeak Mountains.

–3900 Delzoun, the great Northkingdom of the dwarves, is founded.

–3843 The drow city of Ched Nasad is founded, beginning of centuries of strife between the drow and the dwarves of Ammarindar.

–3830 The elves of Eaclann teach magic to the humans of Netheril.

–3416 The Lowroad, an underground trade route linking Delzoun to Netherese towns, is completed.

–3373 King Azkuldar of Ammarindar initiates trade relations with the magic-wielding humans of Netheril.

–2770 The fey’ri who survived the fall of Siluvanede covertly unleash monster hordes in the southern High Forest. The creatures destroy Sharrven before aid can arrive. King Connar IV of Ammarindar then vanquishes many of the creatures, including the red wyrm Rithaerosurffel, the Bane of Sharrven.

–1900 Citadel Felbarr is completed.

–897 King Olaurin, greatest hero-king of Ammarindar, is slain by the deep dragon Erthungaron.

–550 *Tear of Glistening Dust:* King Azkuldar III of Ammarindar secretly creates the Xothol, an arcane college charged with guarding against the increasingly antagonistic Netherese.

–500 *Tear of the Running Unicorns:* Citadel Sundbarr is completed.

–372 *Tear of Owl’s Watching:* The elves of Eaclann found Ascalhorn.

–339 *Tear of Sundered Webs:* Netheril, the Empire of Magic, falls. The body of the momentary god Karsus falls to earth in the eastern region of the High Forest.

–335 *Tear of Seven Spirits:* The Illuskan arcanist Maerin Immar commissions Fardelver and other dwarf artisans from Delzoun to build Gauntlgrym.

–334 *Tear of Three Seas’ Rage:* The dwarves build Besendar’s Blockhouse on the site that will become current-day Everlund.

–333 *Tear of Humbling Havens:* Ascalhorn and Citadel Sundbarr accept human refugees from Netheril. As the Narrow Sea dries up, the dwarves begin the slow abandonment of Ascore.

–286 *Tear of Foul Awakenings:* The Xothol is closed.

–272 *Tear of the Songstones:* Citadel Adbar is completed.

–111 *Tear of Terrible Anger:* Delzoun is devastated by countless orc assaults that also destroy other kingdoms of the North. The elves of Iliyanbruen, Rilithar, and Eaclann unite to shatter the strength of the orcs and halt their rampage into the High Forest and Dessarin Valley.

–104 *Tear of the Star Stallion:* The dwarves abandon Besendar’s Blockhouse.

–100 *Tear of the Black Unicorn:* The underground realm of Delzoun falls to Underdark creatures. The dwarves’ surface citadels survive the attack and remain in dwarf hands.

1 *Tear of Sunrise:* The dwarves of Ammarindar complete Citadel Yaunoroth.

273 *Tear of the Delighted Dwarves:* Three dwarf clans from Ammarindar and Citadel Felbarr migrate together to Myth Drannor.

329 *Tear of the Closed Scroll:* Orcs sack the surface fortress of Citadel Sundbarr.

515 *Tear of the Frivolous Exchange:* Humans from Ascalhorn resettle Besander’s Blockhouse and rename it Everlund.

590 *Tear of the Turning Leaf:* Elf and human wizards from Ascalhorn, Eaclann, Evereska, Silverymoon, and Myth Drannor raise a wizard *mythal* over the Eaclanni city of Glaurachyndaar, thereby establishing Myth Glaurach.

714 *Tear of Doom:* Myth Drannor falls.

820 *Tear of the Roving Tyrant:* The arcanist Wulgreth summons the first devils to Ascalhorn.

864 *Tear of the Broken Branch:* Orcs of the Nethertusk Horde overrun Myth Glaurach.

880 *Tear of Unfettered Secrets:* Human wizards, influenced by the fey’ri, summon the first demons to Ascalhorn.

882 *Tear of the Curse:* Demons and devils battle in Ascalhorn. The triumphant demons stream forth, bringing about the fall of Eaclann and Ammarindar. The dwarves allow human refugees to settle in the surface strongholds of Citadel Sundbarr.

886 *Tear of the Fell Firebreak:* Harpers place wards around Hellgate Keep to prevent demons from using their gate abilities.

890 *Tear of the Burning Tree:* The demons beneath Hellgate Keep begin tunneling to bypass the Harpers’ wards.

912 *Tear of the Sudden Journey:* Demons tunneling from under Hellgate Keep reach the Nether Mountains.

1104 *Tear of the Dark Dawn:* Citadel Felbarr is attacked by an orc horde led by the orc chieftain Obould, who defeats the warriors of Silverymoon at the Battle of Many Arrows. The fortress falls into orc hands and is known thereafter as the Citadel of Many Arrows.

1221 *Tear of the Frozen Flower:* Demons tunnel from Hellgate Keep to the abandoned tunnels of fallen Ammarindar.

1230 *Tear of the Long Watch:* The orcs breach Silverymoon and enter the city but are repelled by Harpers and elves.

1356 *Tear of the Wyrms:* Demons tunnel from Hellgate Keep to the Nameless Dungeon.

1367 *Tear of the Shield:* With the aid of knights from Silverymoon, the dwarves retake Citadel Felbarr.

1369 *Tear of the Gauntlet:* The Harpers destroy Hellgate Keep. The surviving daemonfey of House Dlardrageth are freed after millennia of imprisonment. The High Forest expands under the direction of Turlang the Treant.

1371 *Tear of the Unstrung Harp:* The Silver Marches is established. Forces from the Scourged Legion secure Northpeak.

1372 *Tear of Wild Magic:* Daemonfey occupy Myth Glaurach. City of Shade appears.

1373 *Tear of the Rogue Dragons:* Under Kaanyr Vhok the Sceptered One, the Scourged Legion battles the drow of Menzoberranzan.

1374 *Tear of the Lightning Storms:* The daemonfey Sarya Dlardrageth frees the fey’ri imprisoned within the Nameless Dungeon. Her army of orcs, ogres, and fey’ri is defeated by the elves of the High Forest and forces from Evereska, Evermeet, and Silverymoon.



Wulgreth consorts with an imp during his summoning spree

THE HARPERS

The centuries-old organization known as the Harpers has long been a force for political stability and social justice in the North. Those Who Harp place great value on the past and seek to preserve it in song and tale so that others may appreciate the vital lessons that history provides. Such knowledge becomes particularly relevant when past events violently intrude upon the present.

Izai Thunnvangan (CG female wood elf ranger 9/Harper agent 2) knows more about the ancient Eaclanni elves than any other Harper. She has devoted her life to the Harper cause and is perhaps the most senior Harper currently active in the High Forest. Izai has recently been monitoring the Old Road in the eastern part of the forest, looking for clues that might explain the recent disappearance of several elves in that area.

songs and stories

Some information, however, requires more than a trip to a tavern. The Sorrowwood, a mysterious ring of trees located deep within the High Forest, provides mystic visions of the past to those who seek knowledge. Alternatively, characters can seek out a dwarf who can sing the Dirge of Delzoun, an epic song taught only to dwarf bards.

THE DIRGE OF DELZOUN

Only a handful of dwarf bards from the North know this grim ballad, and it has never been translated into any language other than Dwarven. Only a few humans and elves have ever been privileged to hear the entire song, which takes nearly 30 hours to sing.

The Dirge of Delzoun recounts the story of the northern shield dwarves, from the rise of their mighty cities to their settlement of land within the Silver Marches. Woven throughout the lengthy dirge are stories of Delzoun’s greatest heroes, deadliest

keepers of the past

The history of the High Forest is rich with tales of heroic wars and battles, of love gained, and of kingdoms lost. Because such stories are still popular, characters can learn much about the lost elven and dwarven kingdoms of the North simply by listening to the tales and songs in public houses. Since the fall of the High Forest kingdoms happened relatively recently by dwarf and elf reckoning, the information in these tales is still relatively accurate.



enemies, fiercest battles, and lost treasures—the likes of which have never been seen since.

Ollyn Grimtongue (NG male shield dwarf bard 13) of Citadel Felbarr has been named dirgekeeper by King Emerus Warcrown. This semiofficial title designates Ollyn as the sole dwarf who may add new lines to the epic story of the Northkingdom. Dwarf bards wishing to learn the dirge must demonstrate both knowledge and skill (12 ranks each in Knowledge [history] and Perform [sing]) before Ollyn consents to teach it to them.

### THE SORROWWOOD

Hidden in the dense woods of Unicorn Run, this small copse of magic oaks was planted by the ancient elves of Aryvandaar. The leaves of these trees change color like those of normal oaks but never fall from the branches. They simply turn from summer green to autumn shades of red and gold to winter brown, then back again to green in the spring.

The Sorrowwood serves as a living recorder of elven history. These trees, whose roots are said to touch the roots of every other tree in the High Forest, hold a history of the elves that goes back more than ten thousand years.

The elves of Sharrven named this grove the Sorrowwood because the history it related was full of sadness, death, and war. The Sorrowwood is not an oracle and does not give answers to questions asked. Rather, those who go there seeking knowledge are drawn into an incredibly lifelike vision in which they must interact with spectral representations of people, places, and events from long ago. So vivid are these images that those awakening from the vision often find themselves clutching an ancient relic or bleeding from a wound.

## Important sites

The High Forest, the Nether Mountains, and the Graypeaks contain some of the most interesting sites in all of Faerûn. Most of the dungeons in this region are not only difficult to reach but also extremely dangerous to visit. Ancient magical forces, fiendish warlords, and weird weather phenomena are only a few of the terrors that await explorers here.

## Ammarindar

Ammarindar, the southerly sister realm of Delzoun, once spanned the entire Graypeak range as well as the vast region under Delimbiyr Vale to the edge of the High Forest. The shield dwarves of this kingdom settled primarily in the central Graypeaks, but they also established a large mining colony in the mountains north of High Gap.

Ammarindar was a relatively minor realm compared to Delzoun or Shanatar, but what it lacked in influence and size, it more than made up in wealth. The dwarves of Ammarindar mined vast amounts of adamantine ore from beneath the Graypeaks and crafted the metal into legendary suits of armor that brought great prosperity to Ammarindar. Because the kingdom was not subject to the devastating orc attacks that perpetually threatened dwarf kingdoms in the north and south, it grew steadily in prosperity.

Ammarindar stood strong through the rise and fall of many neighboring kingdoms, including Netheril and Sharrven, only to fall at last before an onslaught of demons. Because the end came with little warning, the dwarves fleeing the murderous hordes from Ascalhorn were forced to leave behind most of their belongings, including their precious gold and gems. Thus, caches of hastily buried treasure and dwarven heirlooms still lie scattered throughout the tunnels and halls beneath the Graypeaks.

The citizens of Ammarindar chose hollowed areas of tremendous size to house their communities so that they would have plenty of room for buildings and roads. Most of Ammarindar's structures are roughly spherical in shape, and each appears to flow from the surrounding stone. Protected from the outside elements and unoccupied until recently, the ruins of Ammarindar have survived more or less intact through the centuries. The gracefully arching tunnels and halls of the capital city and the surrounding clanholds reveal a great deal about how the dwarves of old Ammarindar lived.

Reaching the ruins of Ammarindar may prove challenging for surface dwellers. The stone giants in the Graypeaks have taken to throwing interlopers off the mountains into the valleys below, and goblins from Dekanter infest the southern slopes. The presence of the goblins draws blue dragons that lair on the mountaintops down lower in search of easy prey. Visitors who use the demon-dug tunnels underneath the mountains to reach to Ammarindar risk encountering patrols of the Scourged Legion.

### CITADEL YAUNOROTH

Citadel Yaunoroth was constructed in response to growing concerns about the orc invasions that were plaguing the dwarves of the North. The fortress served as Ammarindar's southern bastion, and it was never attacked until the hordes of Ascalhorn stormed the kingdom.

One of the key battles for Ammarindar occurred at Citadel Yaunoroth. The defenders, led by Princess Olmma, the sister of Queen Helmma, were clearly overmatched, but their sacrifice bought precious time for the dwarves fleeing south to reach safety.

The ruins of this rounded dwarfhold, built into the mountainside overlooking Bleached Bones Pass, incorporate miles of curved, dwarf-sized tunnels that extend throughout the lower Graypeaks. A single, rough-hewn tunnel of goblin make connects the lower reaches of Yaunoroth with the mines of Dekanter.

Many ghosts and other undead creatures still haunt Yaunoroth, walking the tunnels and calling out for their long-dead kin. The spirit of Princess Olmma (LN female shield dwarf ghost fighter 6) still commands these troops and can muster them to fight if needed.

### NORTHPEAK

North and west of High Gap is a small group of well-tunneled mountains collectively called Northpeak, in which Ammarindar's most active mining complex was located. Rich in adamantine ore, the mines of Northpeak furnished the raw materials for the dwarf-crafted armor worn by the elite forces of Eaerlann, Netheril, and Illefarn. Now Northpeak serves as a war camp for a garrison of the fiendish Scourged Legion—the formidable army of tanarukks<sup>Mon</sup>, orcs, and other demonkin led by the

half-demon Kaanyr Vhok (CE male human half-fiend fighter 7/rogue 2/wizard 6).

The garrison is commanded by Vhok's lieutenant, Trawg (CE male tanarukk fighter 6/sorcerer 2), who is busy securing Northpeak while his master wages war on the drow of Menzoberranzan. Trawg has been growing more and more frustrated because the orogs<sup>Rac</sup> from Splendarmornn have been conducting increasingly frequent raids on the camp. The fact that only tanarukks have been slain in these attacks has caused Trawg to wonder about the orogs' motives. Since all his efforts to ally with them have failed, Trawg is now committed to enslaving the orogs as punishment for their attacks on the Scourged Legion.

### ROYAL CAVERNS OF SPLENDARRMORNN

Shining Mountain, the westernmost summit of the Graypeaks, was the site of Ammarindar's royal capital. Through centuries of digging and stone shaping, the dwarves hollowed out much of the mountain, creating a tremendous central vault surrounded by several immense caverns. The vast halls of Ammarindar were linked together by a lattice of sweeping tunnels. Gently arching stone paths bridged the different levels of the city's open spaces, creating a magnificent stone web of roadways.

The centerpiece of Splendarmornn was the legendary Adamantine Palace, a castle constructed entirely of the black metal for which it was named. Most of its interior walls and ceilings were decorated with engraved images inlaid with precious metals and set with gemstones. Though most of the gold, silver, and gems have been stripped away from the engravings, enough still remains to show the vast wealth commanded by the dwarves who lived here.

The sole outside entrance to the Royal Caverns lies behind the Shining Falls, high above the Delimbiyr River. The city's great adamantine gates still lie where they fell five hundred years ago. The invaders left little of the city's portable wealth behind—in fact, the Harpers warn that adventurers seeking the ancient treasures of Ammarindar would have better luck searching the ruins of Hellgate Keep.

Splendarmornn has recently become home to nearly two hundred orogs from the Lowerdark. Their leader, Ufarskaddun (LE male orog fighter 13), discovered the ruins two years ago while seeking out a base from which to invade the surface lands. Since they took over the site, the orogs have been busy

ridding the ruins of undead and fiendish residents in preparation for increasing the size of their army. But Ufarskaddun may have to put his plans of conquest on hold for a short time, because he is now faced with an unforeseen dilemma. His patrols have captured a few tanarukks<sup>Mon</sup> in the tunnels outside Splendarmornn. Ufarskaddun has declared these demonic orcs abominations and ordered them destroyed, but he foresees a time in the near future when he will have to lead a crusade against these fiend-tainted aberrations. But since the orog leader's forces are far inferior to those of the Scourged Legion, he must bide his time while encouraging other orog tribes from the Underdark to join him.

### XOTHOL

This dwarven college of magic was founded nearly two thousand years ago by King Azkuldar III. Xothol was to be Ammarindar's secret weapon should the Netherese ever turn a conquering eye on the shield dwarves. The college was carefully tucked away beneath the southwestern Graypeaks, and its existence was kept secret from most of Ammarindar's population.

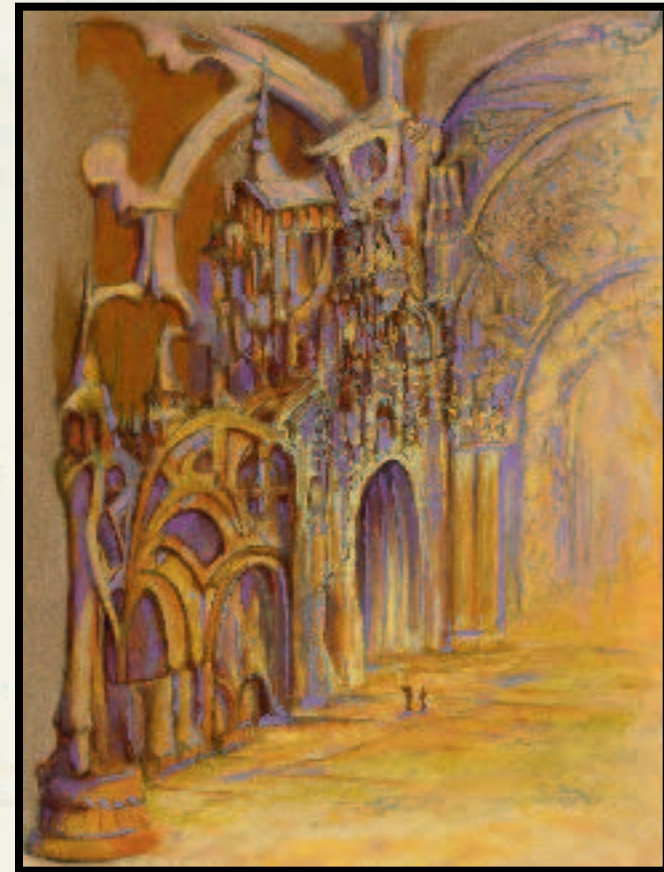
The dwarf wizards of Xothol developed new spells and new methods of spell preparation, all of which were designed to thwart the Netherese arcanists. After Netheril's fall, however, support for Xothol waned. King Tormalk eventually closed the college and ordered it magically sequestered until a time when

Ammarindar needed its protection again. The collected lore of Xothol remains untouched to this day.

## delzoun

Many ages ago, Delzoun was a proud and powerful kingdom that maintained prosperous trade relations with the mighty nations of Eaerlann, Netheril, and Illefarn. At its height, the great Northkingdom of the shield dwarves extended southward from the Ice Mountains to encompass both the Rauvin and the Nether Mountains.

Much like their kinfolk in Ammarindar to the south, the dwarves of Delzoun were highly regarded by their allies and trading partners for their skill with metalworking and stonemasonry. The Netherese placed great value on these traditional dwarven skills and readily traded their gold and arcane lore for Delzoun's gems, ironwork, and weapons.



*Splendarmornn, the capital of fallen Ammarindar*

Illustration by Dana Knutson



Beginning about sixteen hundred years ago, successive incursions by foes from the Underdark and frequent orc raids forced the Northkingdom into a steady retreat. On the terrible day in the Year of the Black Unicorn (–100 DR) when Delzoun finally fell, only Citadels Adbarr, Felbarr, Sundbarr, and a few other surface dwarfholds survived.

The surface lands now known as Old Delzoun are dotted with shattered roads, crumbling outposts, and razed villages that once bore names such as Osstkar and Meruindelve. Thieving bands of outlaws and orc raiders prowl these broken lands hunting for easy prey. The dwarves have stepped up patrols in the area, but they are still too infrequent to offer travelers any real protection.

## Athalantar

Founded in 183 DR by Uthgrael Aumar, the so-called Stag King, Athalantar was located just south of what is now the High Forest. The Stag King carved out his nation amid savage trolls and hobgoblins, mistrustful elves, and dwarves who cared little for the lives of surface dwellers. Uthgrael, a former adventurer, used his natural leadership ability to unite the leaderless farming communities along the Delimbiyr River into a prosperous kingdom of farmers, hunters, and soldiers. The young kingdom of Athalantar seemed destined for greatness and prosperity in a time of collapsing empires—until the Stag King died in 216 DR.

When their father perished in battle against an enormous horde of orcs, the seven princes of Athalantar fell to bickering over the throne, and their conflict soon escalated into outright warfare. Ultimately, the king's eldest son, Belaur Aumar, seized the throne in 218 DR with the aid of the mightiest mages of the realm. But unlike his wise, politically astute father, Belaur was a slow-witted dullard who was easily manipulated by his newfound "friends." The very mages whose power had secured him the throne quickly became the true rulers of Athalantar, and King Belaur was reduced to a mere puppet. The common folk of Athalantar feared and hated these "magelords," especially Undarl, the so-called Mage Royal.

By 224 DR, five of Belaur's brothers had either vanished or died (by Belaur's order or as a result of their own scheming), and the last was dwelling in faraway Calimshan. Only one Aumar other than the king remained in Athalantar—the young Elminster, who had survived the destruction of his home village and the murder of his parents by Undarl. While Undarl and the puppet king Belaur tightened their grip on the kingdom, Elminster went into hiding under a variety of aliases, all the while studying magic and formulating a plan for revenge.

In 240 DR, Elminster returned to the capital city of Hastarl at the age of 28 and enacted his plan for revenge. He shattered the rule of the magelords and slew both King Belaur and the Mage Royal Undarl, revealing the latter as a yuan-ti. (Even that identity was only a mask, however, because Undarl

The dwarves of Delzoun preferred function over form in their architecture, primarily because frequent orc raids left little time for ornamental design. In the aboveground portion of their empire, the shield dwarves constructed sturdy fortresses whose outer walls were built of thick stone reinforced with skeletons of iron beams. In the belowground portion of the realm, the major halls and entrances to the underground tunnel maze known as the Fardrimm were equipped with strong defenses, including reinforced walls, ironbound gates, and spiked pit traps. The shattered gates, breached walls, and smashed defenses that now litter Delzoun's broken lands offer mute evidence of the centuries of relentless enemy attacks that finally brought the great dwarven empire low.

was actually one of the dreaded malaugrym from the Plane of Shadow.) By his authority as the last prince of Athalantar, Elminster then crowned the outlaw knight Helm Stoneblade the new king of Athalantar. With his homeland in good hands, Elminster, now a Chosen of Mystra, departed for the city of Cormanthor. Sadly, Athalantar survived for only a little more than a century thereafter. In 342 DR, a marauding orc horde wiped out the entire kingdom.

Today, only the elven histories from the early days of Myth Drannor and a few confused legends in Secomber include the story of Athalantar. Elminster is the ultimate source of information on the Kingdom of the Stag, but the Sage of Shadowdale remains notoriously close-mouthed about his own past.

## HASTARL

Athalantar's capital and only true city was Hastarl. Though it was as crowded and filthy as any other city on Faerûn, its residents were quite proud of it and firmly believed that it would one day be a pinnacle of human culture and learning. The rule of the magelords largely quashed that dream, and the destruction of the kingdom in 342 DR snuffed it out completely. Later, the town of Secomber, which was built over the ruins of Hastarl, became a base of operations for many modern adventurers in the Western Heartlands.

## UNDARL'S TOWER

Along the north bank of the Delimbiyr River, just a few miles west of Hastarl, the crumbling ruins of Undarl's tower thrust up from a rocky outcropping like a broken tusk. Most of the tower's aboveground living areas have been destroyed by more than a thousand years of exposure to the elements, but the malaugrym's basement laboratory still exists, hidden beneath a secret trapdoor and protected by powerful preserving magic. In addition to spellbooks, arcane research equipment, and magic items, the lab also contains a leaky *portal* to the Plane of Shadow that has been allowing shadow creatures to slip forth into the surrounding area for centuries.

## ASCORE

In the time of the Netherese Empire, Ascore was a bustling dwarven port city on the northwestern shores of the Narrow Sea. Trade goods from Netheril and beyond flowed ceaselessly into Delzoun via the stone docks of this eastern gateway to the realm and an underground highway called the Lowroad.

The fall of Netheril and the disappearance of the Narrow Sea marked the end of this port. Today Ascore is a lonely, windswept ruin on the edge of the Anauroch Desert. Bizarre stone ships lie half buried under the sand where the docks once were.

The ruins of Ascore are most notable for thirteen pyramids of unknown origin. These structures are made of an unusual red stone not unlike the bleeding stone of Karse. A Shadovar expedition from the City of Shade has been studying these red pyramids for the past year.

## FARDRIMM

Most of this sprawling maze of underground tunnels lies below the broken surface lands now known as Old Delzoun. At the height of the Northkingdom's strength, Fardrimm was a hidden highway that linked all the great dwarfholds with Delzoun's other holdings. But the tunnels were difficult to keep clear, and Underdark invaders had seized control of much of the Fardrimm long before the end of Delzoun in –100 DR.

The Fardrimm remains an impressive system of broad tunnels, although much of it is controlled by creatures of the Underdark. Drow refugees from Ched Nasad and chitine hunters from Yathchol have taken advantage of the dwarves' long absence by constructing their own tunnels to link up with the Fardrimm. But the dwarves' influence is still obvious from the old dwarf-delves, strongholds, hidden armories, great temples, and depleted mines that are scattered throughout the tunnels of the Fardrimm.

Dwarf patrols from Citadels Adbarr, Felbarr, and Sundbarr keep watch over the portions of the Fardrimm that surround their fortresses, but they have made no effort to recover control over the entire tunnel system. The wealthy and idealistic merchant Rurik Silverhilt (CG male shield dwarf fighter 6), however, believes that the Fardrimm may once again become a safe underground highway in the sole possession of the dwarves. Rurik pays handsomely for any aid in clearing out the tunnels between Adbarr and Felbarr, and he has already sealed off a handful of monster tunnels around Citadel Adbarr. Much remains to be done before he can realize his dream, but the eager Rurik sees much profit in this venture. Several returning caravans have already boasted of heavy profits from trade with races of the Underdark.

## GHAURIN'S HOLD

The ruins of this four-thousand-year-old stone manor belonged to the heroic dwarf warrior Ghaurin, the greatest son of the ancient Stoneheart clan. The few remaining stones of the manor known as Ghaurin's Hold sit by the Fork—the juncture where Adbarr Road and Fork Road meet in Old Delzoun.

During millennia of adventuring, the Stoneheart clan had collected innumerable souvenirs, which it displayed in its ancestral mansion. Eventually, the hold became a sort of historical museum where travelers could go to see the legendary swords,

axes, and armor worn and wielded by dwarves and their enemies throughout time.

In 882 DR, when fiends from Ascalhorn were devouring so much of the North, the Stoneheart clan stood firm and repelled the first demon onslaught. But the second demon assault was much more severe, and dwarves fell by the score. When his entire clan lay dead around him and all seemed lost, Ghaurin called upon Moradin to preserve his ancestral home from the fiendish despoilers. Seemingly in answer to his prayer, a sudden earthquake collapsed the surface portion of the great mansion, crushing the invaders and sealing off the caverns below. Trapped below the rubble, Ghaurin was transformed into a sentient stone golem. In this new form, he closed off all the tunnels connecting his mansion to the Fardrimm. Since then, Ghaurin has tirelessly patrolled the myriad tunnels and cellars of his ancestral home, keeping them safe from intruders.

## THE LOWROAD

This forgotten stretch of natural and carved tunnels once served as an underground trade route linking the citadels of Delzoun with the port city of Ascore and its primary trading partner, Netheril. In Old Delzoun, its course loosely corresponds with the River Redrun and the Fork Road, running through the heart of the Fardrimm all the way to Felbarr. The Lowroad's destinations in ancient Netheril now lie beneath the sands of the Anauroch.

In its heyday, the Lowroad was lined with dozens of fortified and gated way stations, any of which could close the tunnel in times of danger. When Netheril fell, the fearful dwarves of Ascore sealed off the portion of the Lowroad leading east. The undead spirits of trapped Netherese and dwarf merchants who died alongside their caravans now roam the Lowroad east of Ascore.

## Eaerlann

Eaerlann, the predominant elven kingdom of the High Forest, endured for nearly six thousand years. The wood elves and moon elves who made up its populace dwelled in woodland cities and towns of fabulous beauty throughout the northern and eastern portions of the High Forest.

While Eaerlann was still a young realm, its leaders noted Siluvanede's gradual slide toward evil and decided to take decisive action to prevent the Siluvaneden from repeating the errors of their arrogant ancestors in Aryvandaar. With Sharrven as an ally, the Eaerlanni forcibly subdued the realm of Siluvanede, ushering in a five-thousand-year period of peace and prosperity.

In the waning years of Eaerlann, its population began to dwindle as its residents left for Evermeet or joined the newer realms appearing along the Sword Coast. Thus weakened, Eaerlann was unable to mount any effective defense against the demons of Hellgate Keep that emerged from Ascalhorn in 882 DR, and the realm quickly fell before their onslaught.

Most travelers seeking the known Eaerlanni ruins go by way of the Old Road, an ancient boulevard of cracked and broken cobblestones that connects Elven Port, Mhilmniir, and the Nameless Dungeon. West of Mhilmniir, forest undergrowth has largely swallowed up the Old Road, though the portions



that occasionally peek through the roots and shrubs can guide travelers to other sites along its path.

Many Eaerlanni cities consisted of hollowed-out trees and platforms connected by dozens of slender rope bridges. Each major settlement held at least one tree-temple dedicated to the elven gods. Most of these cities have long since succumbed to the forces of time and nature, but a few traces of some remain.

### MYTH GLAURACH

This fabled, *mythal*-cloaked city was built upon the nameless ruins of an ancient Aryvandaaran city located amid the rushing waters and deep-forested hills of the Talons, at the headwaters of the Delimbiyr. Myth Glaurach was a gleaming garden city of ornate manors, climbing terraces, and soaring, white-domed towers, but its legendary *mythal* did not protect it from the ravaging orc horde that sacked it in 864 DR.

In 1372 DR, Countess Sarya Dlardrageth arrived in the ruins of Myth Glaurach with her fey'ri forces and began a meticulous study of the *mythal*. In the early months of 1374 DR, the daemonfey sorceress succeeded in corrupting the *mythal*, perverting many of its ancient wards and using its power to summon and bind large numbers of fiends to her service. Sarya's army marched against the elves of Evereska and the High Forest and wrought great destruction until a host assembled in Evermeet by Lord Seiveril Miritar halted her forces and drove her back. The sun elf mage Araevin Teshurr of Evermeet managed to remove Sarya's corruption from the *mythal* and alter it to prevent future tampering by fiends. The daemonfey abandoned Myth Glaurach shortly after Sarya's defeat.

Presently, most of Evermeet's host is still encamped in the ruins of Myth Glaurach, and Lord Seiveril Miritar has dispatched numerous search parties and patrols to search out Sarya's new hiding place. The elves have not yet charted the destinations of the numerous *portals* they have found buried in the tunnels below the grand mage's former palace.

## The mythal of glaurachyndaar

Although Myth Glaurach's *mythal* was significantly damaged by the corrupting spells of the daemonfey sorceress Sarya Dlardrageth, Araevin Teshurr has successfully restored most of its original strength and purpose.

The *mythal* aroints the casting of several types of spells, makes several other spells prevalent, and vanguards a small number of other spells (see *Mythals*, page 45). Most of the vanguard spells are usable only by individuals who have successfully undergone a ritual to attune themselves to the *mythal*.

The *mythal* of Myth Glaurach aroints spells of the conjuration (summoning) subschool and spells with the death, evil, fire, and acid descriptors. The following spells are prevalent throughout the *mythal*: *antipathy* (to all evil-aligned demons, devils, dragons, drow, duergar, goblinoids, orcs, and trolls), *death ward*, *detect scrying*, and *protection from evil*.

The Outer Ward of the *mythal* formerly barred all fiends and all beings who had ever eaten elf, dwarf, or human flesh

### MHILAMNIIR

This Eaerlanni city once boasted numerous temples dedicated to the Seldarine. In fact, Mhilamniir was the seat of power for Eaerlann's elf clergy before the demonic hordes struck. The ravaged city was largely reduced to rubble by the demons of Hellgate Keep, and its ruins are now entirely covered over by thick moss and tangles of ivy.

The largest surviving building in Mhilamniir is a great temple to Corellon that stands in a grove near the city center. For more than six hundred years, the very old female green dragon Chloracridara and her brood have made their home beneath the temple's shattered dome. A bizarre woodsman (NE male half-green-dragon/wood half-elf ranger 5/sorcerer 2) who claims kinship with the dragon offers travelers the opportunity to question his all-knowing mother, provided they can meet her price.

### HELLGATE DELL

Ascalhorn was established atop Ascal's Horn in the northeastern corner of the High Forest to defend Eaerlann's frontier. After the fall of Netheril, the Eaerlanni conceded the stronghold to Netherese refugees, a decision which proved costly centuries later. A Netherese wizard named Wulgreth began summoning devils to the city in 820 DR to win an advantage over his rivals. In desperation, other wizards heeded the whispers of fey'ri agents and began summoning demons in 880 DR. In the Year of the Curse (882 DR), the summoned demons wiped out the summoned devils and then seized the city. Shortly thereafter, the demonic horde swept down Delimbiyr Vale and overran both Eaerlann and Ammarindar.

Five years ago, the Harpers razed the ruins of Ascalhorn (also known as Hellgate Keep). The great treant Turlang claimed stewardship over Hellgate Dell and extended the borders of the High Forest to envelop its ruins. Vigilant treants now stand guard over the site to keep explorers from entering and fiends from

from entering the city. This particular ward was the first one that Sarya disabled, and it has not been restored.

The Inner Ward covers the entire city and its outer wall plus a vertical distance of 100 feet into the air above and the ground below. In this portion of the *mythal*, *calm animal* is a prevalent spell, and another prevalent component regulates the growth of plants in the city to prevent Myth Glaurach from becoming completely overgrown.

Any character wishing to attune herself to the *mythal* must spend 10 days researching a special rite and make a DC 20 Spellcraft check to master it, then perform the rite, which requires 24 hours and an expenditure of 2,000 XP. Any character attuned to the *mythal* can use the following vanguard spells: *banishment*, *discern lies*, *feather fall*, *freedom of movement*, *make whole*, *quench*, *remove curse*, *remove disease*, *remove fear*, *remove paralysis*, *sending*, and *tongues*.

leaving. But the Harpers only contained the evil under Hellgate Dell; they did not eradicate it. This fact makes Turlang feel that he is watching over a festering wound that could erupt again at any time.

### ONTHRILAENTHOR

Carved out of the eastern Star Mounts by the dwarves of Ammarindar for their elf allies, the ancient mines of Onthrilaenthor have not been used since the fall of Eaerlann. Two hidden entrances to Onthrilaenthor exist—one on the gnarled badlands near the southeastern base of the Star Mounts, and the other on the northern slopes, just north of the Heart Blood River.

The mines of Onthrilaenthor encompass miles of tunnels, spiral stairs, storage chambers, and vertical shafts that reach upward into the peak of the most southern Star Mount. The presence of stables and openings to the sky within that peak suggest that the Eaerlanni at one time employed aerial mounts.

Fierce winds pour through these openings and rush through the mines' shafts and tunnels. Walking against the wind is extremely difficult, and most conversations carried on at a volume below a yell are drowned out by the roaring winds.

The mines were home to a flock of harpies for a decade. These creatures were routed by an adult deep dragon<sup>Mon</sup> named Onskarrarrd, who had abandoned his lair near Ched Nasad after the catastrophe that threw that entire region into chaos.

### TURNSTONE PASS

Not all ruins are buildings or tombs. Turnstone Pass was once a vital surface trade route between Ascalhorn and the dwarven city of Sundbarr. Now, however, this long-neglected road has fallen into disrepair. Along the length of Turnstone Pass, hidden evils have taken up residence in the crumbling way stations that once provided shelter and water for merchant caravans and travelers. In the Year of the Boot (1343 DR), the Moonlight Men, led by Mintiper Moonsilver, destroyed the Nethertide Horde in the pass before it could threaten Everlund or Silverymoon.

Turnstone Pass has little traffic these days. Those that dare walk along it risk attacks by thieves at best or predatory demons at worst. Turlang, the treant guardian of Hellgate Dell, has buried the portion of the pass that lies within the High Forest, hoping to create an effective deterrent for anyone seeking Hellgate Keep.

## sharrven

The ancient elven realm of Sharrven was founded by moon elves along with a few sun elves who rejected the elitism and insufferable arrogance of the Siluvaneden nobles. Sharrven's end came a few centuries after it had joined forces with Eaerlann to defeat Siluvanede in the Seven Citadels' War. Without warning, mysterious *portals* created by fey'ri survivors of Siluvanede opened simultaneously throughout the kingdom, releasing a torrent of rampaging monsters. Sharrven's survivors fled to Eaerlann and Evereska, leaving their former realm vacant but for a few settlements and outposts.

Today, little remains of Sharrven because the creatures that slaughtered the elves also demolished most of their settled areas.

Most of the surviving structures are topped with tremendous stone perches—reminders of the time when elf warriors rode silver and gold dragons into battle. The only fortress still standing is a tower known as Farsilver that is highly reminiscent of the buildings in Silverymoon. This structure is protected by magical wards of the sort that the moon elves commonly placed on their buildings.

To this day, travelers in the southern region of the High Forest are likely to encounter a bizarre variety of terrain and unusual creatures. Many of these beasts can trace their lineage to the fall of Sharrven.

### FARSILVER

The ancient fortress of Farsilver is an ivy-clad stone tower in the southeastern portion of the High Forest, due north of Loudwater. This rare remnant of Sharrven was a southerly outpost of the realm.

The magical wards inside Farsilver dim any light sources and prevent magical darkness from functioning. Each of the gemstone windows in the tower's top floor functions like a *crystal ball* with *detect thoughts*, except that the user's scrying is limited to the direction the particular window is facing. Under a full moon, the tower's main entrance becomes a *portal* to the ruined Sharrven city of Lhuve.

Farsilver has become the base of operations for two members of the Eldreth Veluuthra, a fanatical elf supremacist group dedicated to the eradication of humans. Fairra Waevyrn (NE female sun elf fighter 8) and Urrinnar Mithanai (CE male sun elf wizard 7) ambush lone merchant wagons traveling to Loudwater. Neither elf has any compunction about slaying humans or those who accompany them, so a raid typically includes at least one murder. After a successful raid, the elves burn the wagons and leave the bodies of their victims to rot.

### NITHRITHVINAЕ'S TOMB

About 40 miles due east of the Stronghold of the Nine lies the only known burial ground for the noble houses of Sharrven. A single statue, now weathered beyond recognition, marks the entrance to this underground tomb. Beyond it lies a massive labyrinth of rough-hewn catacombs that extends deep under the earth. Winding passages, each leading to a separate crypt designated for a specific noble household, branch off in dozens of different directions. Each family crypt is an elaborate vault containing one or more stone mausoleums. Several of these crypts are guarded by baelnorn<sup>Mon</sup> spellcasters—usually members of the crypt's noble house who accepted unlfe to stand guard over the dead and protect their families' secrets.

When Sharrven was a living realm, its leaders frequently came to the tombs to ask respected baelnorns for advice and magical aid. But the elf liches have had few visitors for the past four thousand years, except for the occasional tomb robber. The Caerilcarn, a group of elves that proclaims itself the vanguard of a new Eaerlann, has recently contacted the most senior baelnorn, Alarendi Eveningshine (CG female moon elf baelnorn wizard 17/archmage 2). Alarendi is currently considering the group's request for assistance in taking back the High Forest for the elves.



## siluvanede

This kingdom of sun elves was the first elven realm established in the High Forest after the Crown Wars. Siluvanede occupied the northwestern High Forest, which also included the Silverwood at the time. The Siluvaneden favored long, graceful, stone structures and bright colors, so they filled their cities with tall towers and slender spires built of brightly colored stone and brick. Magnificent manors lined every street, and every boulevard ended in a park garden where artisans came to create works of art from stone, wood, and magic.

But beneath Siluvanede's beauty lay a growing cancer—namely, a tendency to embrace the dark ways. In the early days of Siluvanede, the memories of the Elven Court's decree against the Vyshaanti and the Descent of the Drow were still fresh in the minds of many sun elves, so the citizens of the new kingdom were more than a little fearful of the Seldarine. In response to those fears, temples were outlawed in the new kingdom, and priests were persecuted and driven out. The godless nature of Siluvanede later contributed to House Dlardrageth's success in subverting the Siluvaneden houses to their own dark cause. As more and more Siluvaneden fell in with the plots of House Dlardrageth, an increasing number of them chose to follow the dark path laid out by their Vyshaan forebears.

### LOTHEN, CITY OF THE SILVER SPIRES

This magnificent city of silvery stone once marked the southern border of Siluvanede. Before Eaclann annexed it, Lothen was a center of studies for the Siluvaneden. The rampaging hordes from Hellgate Keep never reached the City of Silver Spires, so Lothen was spared from the devastation wrought by the demons elsewhere in the High Forest.

Today, Lothen's slender stone towers still stand strong, but the great city is populated by orcs from the Tanglethorn, Sharpspike, and Horned Lord tribes. Orc druids have converted several of the old elven temples into temples of Malar, and the forest around Lothen is filled with beasts of Malar that serve as spies and sentries for their orc druid masters.

Far below Lothen lies a stronghold of House Dlardrageth, which occupies several long-forgotten conjuring chambers. When Sarya and her sons were freed from their prison beneath Hellgate Keep five years ago, they settled into this underground space so that they could covertly seek out the descendants of their fey'ri servitors and locate the sites where other fey'ri were imprisoned. When the Dlardrageths occupied Myth Glaurach last year, they largely abandoned their first refuge here.

### THE NAMELESS DUNGEON

During the Crown Wars, the elves of Aryvandaar built a citadel known as Nar Kerymhoarth in the northeastern region of the High Forest to serve as an armory for their war magic. When the empire dissolved, the armory was abandoned.

Five thousand years ago, a group of rebellious sun elves influenced by House Dlardrageth claimed the old armory and restocked it with magic created by the elves of the ancient Vyshaantar Empire. Years later, in the closing campaigns of the Seven Citadels' War, the army of Eaclann defeated more

than two thousand fey'ri warriors of House Dlardrageth and House Vyshaan and imprisoned them in magical stasis in the belowground levels of the armory. The imprisoned fey'ri were soon forgotten by their jailors, and their prison, which was known as the Nameless Dungeon, became a place of intrigue for adventurers.

After the fall of Eaclann, the wood elf patrols that guarded this part of the High Forest successfully barred access to the Nameless Dungeon for a time. In 1369 DR, a contingent of orcs and tanarukks from the Scourged Legion seized the dungeon, only to be driven off by a tribe of dark nags and other scalykind from the Slitherswamp. These monsters, which had traveled to the dungeon through a *portal*, settled in and made the place their lair.

In early 1374 DR, the daemonfey Sarya released powerful magic from the *Gatekeeper's Crystal* to free the imprisoned fey'ri. The resulting explosion wrecked the upper levels of the keep and killed many of its naga and yuan-ti residents, trapping the rest in the lower levels of Nar Kerymhoarth.

### TELARDON, THE CITY OF EMERALD SPIRES

Telardon was constructed on the western edge of the Silverwood, overlooking the Evermoors, in the days when those regions were part of the High Forest. The City of Emerald Spires was well known in Siluvanede and beyond for the unusual magical artifacts created by its wizards.

During the Seven Citadels' War, the combined might of Eaclann and Sharrven reduced Telardon to rubble. In their haste to level the city, however, the Eaclanni overlooked dozens of underground chambers and libraries in which a few rebellious sun elves had been practicing their fiendish arts.

Now only a few crumbling piles of green stone mark the spot where the great emerald towers of Siluvanede once stood, but hundreds of sun elf magic items remain buried beneath the ground. Centuries of disuse have caused the magic of these ancient artifacts to decay, and their mingled energies have become a corrupting force that transforms animals, humanoids, and even fey in the area into plantlike monsters known as greenbound creatures (see the greenbound creature template, page 73). Dozens of trolls that have succumbed to this greenbinding effect now dwell within Teladorn's ruins.

## Legacies of the high forest

The collected stories of the elven and dwarven kingdoms that once occupied the High Forest form a complicated tapestry of heroic battles, devastating betrayals, demonic intervention, and powerful high magic. These and many other past events have left their mark on the landscape of the North.

## Adventure seeds

The High Forest offers an excellent starting point for adventurers blessed with the pioneering spirit. The unique history of this wild woodland coupled with the lawless frontier nature of the Silver



Illustration by Francis Tsai

Sarya Dlardrageth frees the fey'ri imprisoned within the Nameless Dungeon

Marches provides a solid balance of past and present forces on which to build adventures.

### THE FORGOTTEN MYTHAL

The Eaclanni hid away many items of power and imprisoned many evil creatures before their kingdom fell, and most of these acts have long since been forgotten. But the recent release of the imprisoned fey'ri from the Nameless Dungeon has generated much interest in unearthing other Eaclanni secrets.

In particular, several old songs in Elven mention the *mythal*-cloaked, Siluvaneden city of Myth Adofhaer, which the Eaclanni sent away from Faerûn some six thousand years ago. Rumor holds that an old tome explaining the causes of Myth Adofhaer's exile and specifying the conditions necessary for its return has recently been found in a ruined library of Eaclann. The organization known as Eldreth Veluuthra is very interested in a city of sun elves who might share its members' contempt for the diminution of elven power over the centuries, and its agents are furiously searching for the missing tome.

### HIGHWAYS FROM HELLGATE

Centuries ago, the demons under Hellgate Keep dug an extensive network of tunnels under the lands surrounding the High Forest. A few of these passages connected with the Fardrimm, and others reached as far as the Nether Mountains and Northpeak.

An opportunistic demon by the name of Scauont (CE male bar-Igura<sup>BV</sup>) now uses these tunnels to travel about the area undetected. He has recently taken to visiting a distant village, cruelly murdering a few of its citizens, then escaping through the tunnel system before his crimes are discovered. Three towns—Jalanthar in Rauvin Vale, Newfort in Sundabar Vale, and Quaevarr in the Moonwood—have been terrorized in the past week alone. All the demon's victims died the same way—painful torture by slow evisceration. The authorities in the Silver Marches are baffled because no one has seen the perpetrator, and no one knows about the tunnels that crisscross the area.

### THE PLUNDER OF HELLGATE KEEP

The demons that poured forth from Hellgate Keep five hundred years ago returned from their rampage laden with spoils from Eaclann, Delzoun, and Ammarindar. Many priceless heirlooms and unique treasures vanished into the dark pit of Hellgate Keep to become playthings for the fiends.

When Ammarindar and Eaclann fell to the demons, the Harpers compiled the following lists of wondrous items that they knew had been lost to Hellgate Keep.

**Ammarindar:** *Aoxar's helm*<sup>T</sup>, *Captain Aerad's shield*<sup>PG</sup>, *Craemmol's hammer*<sup>PG</sup>, *dragonsheart armor of King Connar the IV*<sup>PG</sup>, *glove of Taarnabm the Vigilant*<sup>PG</sup>, *lashing sword of Samos*



the *Skullreaver*<sup>PG</sup>, *pegasus helm of Kloeth Ironstar*<sup>PG</sup>, *Twinblades Alight*<sup>PG</sup>, and *Tyranny's Knell*<sup>PG</sup>.

**Eaerlann:** *Cheldaorn katar*<sup>PG</sup>, *Dragontear Crown of Shbarvent*, *golden orb of Siluvanede*<sup>†</sup>, *Nychyaella's healing spear*<sup>PG</sup>, *shattering swords of Coronal Ynloeth*<sup>PG</sup>, *Shroud-crown*<sup>PG</sup>, *lesser staff of Silverymoon*<sup>†</sup>, *Tasmia's heart*<sup>PG</sup>, *thyrsus of the druid*<sup>†</sup>, and *Ynloeth's bracer*<sup>PG</sup>.

† New item described in Chapter 10.

Very few of these items have been recovered, despite many attempts by dwarves and elves of noble houses. In fact, many demons have used pieces of this ancient booty to lure highborn elves and dwarves into traps. Treasure seekers hoping to wrest this ancient wealth from the demons must first get past Turlang and his treants (see *Hellgate Dell*, page 90).

## VOLCANIC COUNTDOWN

A recent series of minor earthquakes in Silverymoon Pass generated a massive rockslide that exposed an ancient fortress of Delzoun on the slopes of the Nether Mountains. Both King Emerus Warcrown of Citadel Felbarr and Helm Dwarf-Friend, Master of Sundabar, have claimed sovereignty over this fortress and sent garrisons to secure the site. Adventurers, thieves, and bandits from all over the North are racing to the fortress in hopes of gaining dwarven treasure, but aftershocks continue to rock the pass, making travel difficult.

Unbeknownst to those arriving at the fortress, the earthquakes have been squeezing magma from a deep volcanic rift. With each new tremor, the magma pushes higher, threatening to burst up through the mountain and swallow the fortress with all its ancient treasures. Adventurers who reach the site find themselves in a race against time to salvage any of the dwarven treasure.

## Heirs of the high forest

The legacies of Eaerlann, Ammarindor, and the demonic forces that destroyed them still endure. Their descendants take the forms of wood elf villages in the High Forest, the new Silver Marches realm, and the demon-led hordes of orcs that still frequent the area.

### THE CAERILCARN

For many years, some of the elves in the High Forest and the Silver Marches have dreamed of raising a new Eaerlann. A number of wood elf elders and moon elf nobles who share this dream have formed the Caerilcarn, or Council of the Wood. The Caerilcarn has never claimed to represent all the elves in the region—not all wood elf clans or villages even bother to send representatives, and not all moon elf houses feel that cleansing Delimbiyr Vale or the important sites of Eaerlann is a reasonable and necessary goal. In practice, the council offers the elves of the region a forum in which to discuss issues of mutual concern and pass along news of events in different parts of the forest. Through the efforts of the Caerilcarn, the ruins of the Eaerlanni site known as Talltrees have been resettled, and new settlements, including Reitheillaethor and Nordahaeril, have been founded.

In the wake of the recent daemonfey-led invasion of the High Forest, the Caerilcarn has suddenly become much more

important. Wood elf leaders on the council cooperated with each other to evacuate villages and clans in the path of the orc and demon onslaught and organized a westward flight to the Lost Peaks. There, the elf leaders successfully massed an army of wood elves, and moon elves from Silverymoon and Everlund joined the Argent Legion forces that marched to their aid. Now, with the army of Evermeet occupying the ruins of Myth Glaurach, the dream of a restored Eaerlann does not seem so distant after all.

Morgwais, the Lady of the Wood, is generally recognized as the council's leader—at least as wood elves reckon such matters. Another important voice is that of Yrind Morninglight (LG male wood elf fighter 9), who foresees a return to greatness for the elves of the North. Yrind is the spokesman for those council members who favor formally refounding Eaerlann and binding the wood elf tribes and moon elf clans together as a living, breathing elven realm.

### HOUSE DLARDRAGETH

The members of House Dlardrageth are the fiendish descendants of a proud, noble sun elf house whose members chose to mingle their blood with that of demons. After their armies were defeated at the gates of Evereska, before the Lost Peaks, and on the Lonely Moor, these daemonfey abandoned their stronghold at Myth Glaurach as well as many of their other safe houses, including the one they had established under the ancient Siluvaneden city of Lothen (see page 92). But despite the losses they suffered in Sarya Dlardrageth's war against Evereska and the High Forest, the daemonfey are far stronger than they have been in millennia now that the thousands of fey'ri warriors recently freed from the Nameless Dungeon have swelled their ranks.

Fey'ri spies and agents still haunt various secret places in and around the High Forest, but the main body of the daemonfey army—more than a thousand veterans of the Seven Citadels' War—escaped destruction at the Lonely Moor and fled to parts unknown. Though they are relatively few in number, these ancient fey'ri warriors are skilled in magic and swordplay, blessed with the demonic heritage of the daemonfey, and absolutely loyal to Sarya Dlardrageth.

### THE SILVER MARCHES

This new realm is a patchwork of human, elven, and dwarven lands scattered throughout the Rauvin and Sundabar Vales. Many citizens of the Silver Marches are descended from the inhabitants of Eaerlann, Delzoun, and Netheril.

The Silver Marches already counts many of Delzoun's former holdings—most notably Sundabar, Citadel Adbar, and the recently reclaimed Citadel Felbarr—as members of its federation. Even more dwarfholds are expected to seek membership as the dwarves continue to take back their ancestral lands.

Many of the elves now living in Everlund and Silverymoon are the children or grandchildren of Eaerlanni who fled north and west to escape the fall of their kingdom in 882 DR. In fact, a handful of the older elves in the Silver Marches were actually present during the fall of Eaerlann and remember that event all too well.



# FALLEN NETHERIL

Netheril, the Empire of Magic, straddled northern Faerûn some two thousand years ago, encompassing what is now the Great Desert of Anauroch and its surrounding wilderness. The Netherese are perhaps most famous for the arrogance of their arcanists, who carved off mountaintops, raised them up into the sky, and built floating cities atop them. Their incredible mastery of the Art came to an abrupt end when the hubris of Karsus, greatest of the archwizards, caused almost all these flying cities to fall.

Few people realize, however, that Netheril's true legacy is the diaspora of the Art that occurred after the empire's fall. While the life-draining spells of the phaerimms were turning the lands of Netheril into desert, many Netherese fled to other lands, bringing with them a culture of magecraft and a hunger to recapture the glory they had lost.

## High and Low Netheril

From the moment that the first floating city ascended into the sky and set off across Faerûn, Netheril was effectively divided into two countries, each with its own separate history and culture. High Netheril consisted of the floating cities occupied by the archwizards and their servants, and Low Netheril encompassed the demesnes of the lesser arcanists, the towns of the Free Folk, and the barbarian tribes that roamed the northern and southwestern plains.

The fall of High Netheril was one of the most dramatic moments in Faerûn's history. Karsus, the greatest of Netheril's arcanists, challenged Mystryl, the goddess of magic, to an arcane duel for supremacy. The ensuing battle nearly destroyed the Weave and caused the sky cities of the archwizards to plummet back to earth.

The fall of Low Netheril was much more gradual. The Netherese slowly abandoned the heartlands of the realm and spread west, south, and east into the border areas that were once wilderness. During this migration, the Empire of Magic gradually fragmented. In fact, the distinction between Low Netheril and

the Netherese survivor states that followed is more the conceit of modern sages than a true fulcrum of history.

The roots of Netheril's geographic, cultural, and magical division lie in the emergence of the *mythallar*—the greatest invention of the archwizards and the chief reason that their legacy did not endure. Powered by the Weave itself, a *mythallar* allowed a Netherese arcanist<sup>PG</sup> to create powerful magic items without expending personal energy. As long as the items created with a *mythallar's* power remained within a few miles of it, they were as permanent as any normal magic item. When removed from the *mythallar's* area, however, these quasi-magic items rapidly became inert. Two decades later, Ioulaum employed his own *mythallar* to even more dramatic effect. After casting a powerful spell to shear off a mountain peak, he fashioned the mountaintop into a quasi-magic item, suspending it point-down in the air, and set a *mythallar* atop it. On the flat side of the peak, now facing upward, he constructed a city, and highborn Netherese flocked there to live among the clouds.

The impact of Ioulaum's invention was twofold. Every elite arcanist began striving to construct her own *mythallar*, and thereby her own floating city. The result was immediate and persistent. Highborn Netherese, archwizards (thereafter defined as individuals who ruled floating cities), and their attendants and apprentices migrated wholesale to the floating cities in the clouds. While they continued to craft new spells, their production of true magic items dropped to almost zero, since they could always "bring the city with them" to power their quasi-magic items.

Meanwhile, Netherese commoners and less powerful arcanists who were not yet capable of creating *mythallars* continued to dwell in cities and keeps on the ground. Although *mythallars* sufficed for getting around in the towns of Low Netheril, travel outside these settlements continued to require the difficult but regular



production of permanent magic items. Research into powerful new spells dropped to almost zero in Low Netheril because most of the arcanists who were capable of such craftings had migrated to the floating cities in the sky.

The language of High Netheril was Loross, while the tongue of Low Netheril and the subsequent “survivor states” was Netherese. Both of these languages were scribed in the runes of dragons. The living language closest to both of these tongues is Halruaan, although Illuskan, Tethyrian, Chondathan, and Damaran all bear traces of Netherese linguistic influence, and small pockets of Netherese and Loross speakers survive. Written examples of Loross are found primarily in the lost tomes of the archwizards, which are recovered occasionally from the ruins of the shattered sky cities and the tombs of arcanists who died before the Fall of High Netheril. The walls of Low Netheril’s ruins, most of which are now covered by the sands of Anauroch, bear many Netherese phrases, and Netherese command words are often inscribed on magic items constructed by the archwizards.

Today, bards speak frequently of High Netheril, thanks to none too subtle patronage from the Churches of Azuth and Mystra. Their cautionary tales and songs describe the hubris of the greatest archwizards and their all-too-literal fall. Those who seek the legacies of the Empire of Magic, however, find that little other than the spells of the archwizards survived the fall of High Netheril. Most Netherese ruins and magic items date back to Low Netheril and the Netherese Diaspora.

History

The history of Netheril is a long and rich one. Thanks to excellent magically preserved Netherese records, written accounts from the Netherese Diaspora, and the fact that more than a few Netherese citizens are still alive today, historians have a fairly complete knowledge of Netheril’s history.

Timeline

Netheril’s history is often broken into eight eras or ages, although some scholars do not count the last of these (the Diaspora) as an age of Netheril.

Year	Event
<b>The First Age (–3859 to –3534)</b>	
–3859	Several villages on the shore of the Narrow Sea combine for mutual protection, forming the Alliance of Seventon, which later becomes Netheril.
–3845	The Eaerlanni elves begin discreetly observing Netheril.
–3839	The elves of Eaerlann begin trading with outlying Netherese settlements.
–3830	The Eaerlanni elves initiate a formal dialogue with humans of Netheril and begin instructing promising Netherese students in the Art. Netheril’s first arcanist (wizard) is Therion of Gers.



Ioulaum destroys an orc horde at the Plain of Standing Stones

- 3655 Orcs pour forth from the Spine of the World, but the elves of Illefarn and Eaerlann turn them back with help from the fledgling Netherese Empire and the Rengarath barbarians. The tribal lands of the Rengarath are absorbed into Netheril, although the barbarians remain largely autonomous.
- 3649 The Netherese begin to enslave the rock gnomes living in the hills nearby.
- 3552 The Netherese found Runlatha, a port on the Narrow Sea.

The Nether Age (–3533 to –3316)

- 3533 The *nether scrolls* are discovered amid the ruins of Aryvandaar. The Netherese abandon the magic they learned from the Eaerlanni in favor of the scrolls’ greater power.
- 3520 The elves of the North begin helping gnome slaves escape from their Netherese captors and move south and east across Faerûn.
- 3458 The Netherese discover the shield dwarves of Delzoun.
- 3419 The Netherese set up a trade route known as the Lowroad that leads through the safest sections of the Underdark to connect with the dwarven port city of Ascore.
- 3392 Netherese arcanists overrun Thaeravel, Land of Alabaster Towers. In the process, they rip many new spells from the minds of Thaeravelian sorcerers.

The Mythallar Era (–3315 DR to –2759 DR)

- 3315 Ioulaum is born.
- 3150 The Trail of Mists is established to speed the escape of gnome slaves from Netheril.
- 3145 Ioulaum leads the Netherese against a horde of orcs gathering near the southern edge of the Plain of Standing Stones. The resulting extermination of the orcs allows Netheril to expand unchecked both south and west.
- 3095 The Fair Folk of Cormanthyr steal one set of the *nether scrolls* and hide it away in the depths of Windsong Tower. One of the thieves, a gnome elf-friend named Rilmohx Sha’Quesir, steals a glance at one of the *nether scrolls* and is rewarded with a deep understanding of how to cast illusion spells. This knowledge spreads quickly through the gnome community.
- 3014 Ioulaum creates the first *mythallar*.
- 3011 Ioulaum creates the first *mythallar*-powered magic item.
- c. –3000 Humans of Ruathym found the settlement of Illusk at the mouth of the River Mirar, displacing the local Ice Hunter tribes.
- 2954 Ioulaum creates the enclave of Xinlenal, Netheril’s first floating city. The empire splits into Low and High Netheril.

The Silver Age (–2758 to –2208)

- 2758 The Netherese establish the mines of Dekanter. Netheril’s government evolves into a council called the

- High Mages of Netheril, which includes the leading arcanists of Low and High Netheril.
- 2436 An unknown thief returns seven of Netheril’s remaining *nether scrolls* to the ancient ruins of the Iqua Tel-Quesir (Creator Races). Three of the *nether scrolls* are placed in the Hall of Mists beneath the Grandfather Tree of the High Forest, and two other scrolls are placed in the Crypt of Hssthak, which later becomes part of western Anauroch. The location of the other two scrolls remains unknown.
- 2387 Netheril releases all its gnome slaves.
- 2375 At the urging of Arthindol the Terraseer, Netherese scouts begin exploring the area that will later become the Sword Coast North.
- 2368 The Terraseer establishes Quesseer north of the Sword Mountains. The settlement becomes a trademeet for Netherese expatriates, the elves of Illefarn, the seafarers of Illusk, the nomadic Ice Hunters, and the dwarves of fallen Haunghdannar.

The Golden Age (–2207 to –1206)

- 2207 Jeriah the Chronomancer is born.
- 2103 A vast orc horde from the Spine of the World attacks Illusk. Despite the efforts of a cadre of Netherese arcanists led by the Chronomancer, Illusk falls to the orcs.
- 2095 Jeriah dies, and Quesseer is abandoned.
- 1896 Twenty-four of the remaining *nether scrolls* are stolen.
- 1715 Tzindylspar, City of Rubies, is founded by the dwarves of Delzoun and some Netherese emigrants.
- c. –1770 The Netherese begin to explore the Inner Sea. They establish three crystal-domed, subsea colonies—Cuulmath, Werapan, and Quelauvis—on the continental shelf off the land that will become Sembia. The colonies are collectively called Deep Netheril.
- 1660 Because the Deep Netherese have enslaved all the Serôsians (primarily locathahs) who wandered near their holdings, the high mages of Aryselmalyr decide to destroy Deep Netheril. They transform the crystal domes into a substance that burns in water, and the subsequent explosions create Saerloon Bay and Selgaunt Bay.
- 1658 The mines of Dekanter play out and are abandoned. Within a few years, Netherese arcanists begin using them to test their latest workings of the Art.
- 1657 The enclave of Maunator (Sunrest) disintegrates in an accident caused by poorly executed spell research.
- 1471 The floating enclave of Thultanthar (the modern City of Shade) is created.
- 1428 The Cajaan Dynasty of Calimshan falls to the eye tyrants of the Alimir Hive. Trade between Tzindylspar and Calimshan collapses almost overnight.
- 1427 Ynamalik Nadim and a small army of monsters from Calimshan invade Tzindylspar. The City of Rubies falls within a tenday.
- 1382 The Barbarian Schism occurs when the Angardt tribe learns sorcery.
- 1375 Angardt barbarians splinter off from the magic-fearing Rengarath tribe.



Age of Discovery (–1205 DR to –697 DR)

- 1205 A *chardalyn* mine is discovered in the Plain of Standing Stones in central Low Netheril.
- 1114 The High Netherese begin experimenting with travel to other worlds.
- 1064 The Netherese make first contact with the illithids.
- 1014 The Netherese refocus their efforts on exploring Faerûn when travel to other worlds is found to be both dangerous and unprofitable.
- 800 Netherese arcanists establish the Sargauth demesne in Undermountain.

Shadowed Age (–696 DR to –340 DR)

- 696 *Tear of Great Rains*: Karsus is born.
- 681 *Tear of Nightmares*: Netherese arcanists emigrate to the Demiplane of Nightmares. The magical energies of that nightmarish realm transform their descendants into an assortment of horribly twisted creatures known as the Night Parade.
- 669 *Tear of Summer Frosts*: Karsus creates the enclave of Eileanar.
- 665 *Tear of Crumbling Ruins*: A powerful earthquake rocks the Nether Mountains, causing the lost city of Tzindylspar to collapse. The City of Rubies vanishes into myth.
- 664 *Tear of Turning Tides*: The remaining *nether scrolls* are stolen en route to Eileanar.
- 628 *Tear of Empty Crowns*: The dwarves of Clan Ironshield abandon the settlement of Andalbruin for the higher, more defensible Settlestone.
- 626 *Tear of Oaths Forsaken*: A group of outcast Netherese wizards known as the Selskar Order builds a school of wizardry called the Tower of the Star in the ruins of Andalbruin.
- 585 *Tear of Rumbling Earth*: The troll warlord Harska Thaug gathers a horde of trolls and orcs, which he leads south from the Spine of the World to assault the elven realm of Rilithar. The horde attacks the Tower of the Star. The defenders summon the slaad lord Bazim-Gorag, known as the Firebringer, who destroys the horde.
- 584 *Tear of Pyramids*: Harska Thaug gathers another horde and overruns the Tower of the Star, bringing an end to the Selskar Order.
- 553 *Tear of Plentiful Wine*: Netherese arcanists discover the Shadow Plane.
- 461 *Tear of Bold Pioneers*: The phaerimms begin casting the spells that eventually lead to the creation of the Anauroch Desert and abandonment of Low Netheril.
- c. –450 Large-scale Netherese migration into the Savage Frontier begins when the effects of the *lifedrain* dweomers cast by the phaerimms become apparent.
- 427 *Tear of Breaking Storms*: The spells of the phaerimms bring down the floating cities of Lhaoda and Tith Tilendrothael. The other Netherese enclaves set up wards against this form of attack.

- 425 *Tear of Ancestral Voices*: Netherese settlers refound Illusk as a magocracy. The ruling group of arcanists, known as the Grand Cabal, names Fynran the Flamelord as high arcanist and ruler.
- 408 *Tear of Sleeping Dragons*: Karsus discovers *heavy magic*. In the process of experimenting with it, he slays Wulgreth of Netheril, a renegade arcanist, and transforms him into a lich.
- 371 *Tear of Bruins*: Although he has already survived for centuries, Ioulaum embraces lichdom and establishes a heavily fortified lair in the Northdark.
- 354 *Tear of Many Maws*: The arcanist Melathlar flees Netheril and travels to Illusk. Fearing phaerimm assaults, he sacrifices his life to power a mighty work of the Art that raises a great stone tower, walls, and powerful spellwards around this fledgling settlement. The first recorded clash between the sharns and the phaerimms occurs.
- 351 *Tear of Dark Roads*: As the life-draining spells of the phaerimms rapidly despoil central Netheril, several Netherese arcanists abandon their demesnes and begin searching for a place to build a city in the Underdark, beneath the western wilderness. Civil unrest rises in many of Low Netheril's cities.
- c. –350 The Netherese migration to Illusk reaches its peak as settlers from many towns in Low Netheril travel west to escape the depredations of the phaerimms.
- 349 *Tear of Bold Poachers*: The Netherese wizard Saldrinar destroys Kisonraathiisar, the topaz dragon ruler of Westgate, and becomes the city's first human king.
- 345 *Tear of Good Courage*: Arthindol the Terraseer appears for the final time. Upon arriving in the enclave of Karsus, he warns that the goddess Mystryl is about to face her greatest challenge—one that could alter the Netherese perception of magic for all time.

The Diaspora (–339 to 1371)

- 339 *Tear of Sundered Webs*: Ioulaum abandons his floating city for his lair in the depths of the Northdark. Civil unrest peaks in Low and High Netheril. Karsus casts *Karsus's avatar*, and floating cities plummet to the ground across Faerûn. The Sargauth demense collapses. Mystryl sacrifices herself to save magic on Faerûn and is reincarnated as the first Mystra. She saves three of the floating cities—Anauria, Asram, and Hlondath—from destruction. The survivors found three Netherese survivor states of the same names. Refugees found Philock in the middle Underdark beneath the Wood of Sharp Teeth. Meanwhile, the archwizard Raumark leads a flight of Netherese *skyships* south to settle the Halruaan basin.
- 338 *Tear of Guttering Torches*: The Bey of Runlatha and the dwarves of Ascore lead Netherese refugees from Runlatha to safety through the underground passage known as the Lowroad. The refugees migrate farther westward, hoping to found a new realm to the west of Delzoun.

- 335 *Tear of Seven Spirits*: The arcanist Maerin of Illusk commissions Immarr Fardelver and many other artisans of Delzoun to begin construction of the great subterranean city of Gauntlgrym in the Craggs, to the east of Illusk.
- 334 *Tear of Three Seas' Rage*: A group of Netherese arcanists establishes the city of Helbrester in the Nelanthar Isles.
- 333 *Tear of Humbling Havens*: The dwarves of Citadel Sundbarr give the human survivors of Netheril temporary refuge. The elves of Eaclann allow other Netherese refugees to settle in Ascalhorn.
- 330 *Tear of Empty Quests*: The Bey of Runlatha dies near Delzoun's western border while battling the nalfeshnee Zukothoth. The Runlathan refugees fragment into loosely allied family groups and revert to a primitive way of life. These groups become the precursors of the Uthgardt tribes of the modern era.
- 325 *Tear of Crown Hatred*: Netherese wanderers found the settlement of Hartsvale in the Ice Mountains to the east of the Coldwood.
- 321 *Tear of Hollow Hills*: The dwarves of Delzoun complete construction of Gauntlgrym. The arcanist Maerin of Illusk welcomes a diverse new citizenry that includes humans from Illusk, Netherese refugees from Northreach and Sundabar, and dwarves of Clan Goldspire from Delzoun.
- 298 *Tear of Nine Watchers*: The Cult of Karsus founds Karse in the depths of the High Forest.
- 286 *Tear of Foul Awakenings*: Bitter disputes among the inhabitants of Karse eventually lead to the destruction and abandonment of the city. Wulgreth of Netheril, a Netherese lich arcanist, takes up residence in the ruins.
- 267 *Tear of Crumbling Caverns*: A powerful earthquake severs the link between Tzindylspar and the surface and opens new passages into the Fardrimm.
- 111 *Tear of Terrible Anger*: The entire North erupts as great orc hordes stream south from the Spine of the World and the Ice Mountains in an event known as the Orc Marches. The marauding orcs lay waste to all in their path, including Illusk and Gauntlgrym. Most of Illusk's population escapes by sea or by magic. The elves of Iliyanbruen, Rilithar, Siluvanede, and Eaclann unite to shatter the strength of the orcs.
- 108 *Tear of Wands*: Illusk attracts many humans displaced by the Orc Marches and is swiftly rebuilt. Its ruling magocracy, the Grand Cabal, returns to power.
- 54 *Tear of Tomes*: Tethyrian pirates under the command of Black Alaric of Clan Fyrson attempt to seize Helbrester but are driven off. The Sunset Towers area becomes a neutral meeting ground for pirates and merchants alike.
- 33 *Tear of the Harpist's Delight*: Asram is devastated by a plague sent by Talona to gain more worshipers.
- 8 *Tear of Wraths*: The lichs Thakloamur and Mingaudorr destroy Helbrester with arcane magic. The ruins

- are sacked by the outlawed Tethyrian Clan Fyrson and pirates based elsewhere in the Nelanther.
- 10 *Tear of Dreams*: The Netheril region becomes known as the Great Desert of Anauroch.
- 95 *Tear of the Reluctant Hero*: Uthgar, a Ruathym Northman, leads a reaver fleet against Illusk and sacks the city. The Grand Cabal takes refuge in the Host Tower of the Arcane. Most of its members are slain by the berserker assaults of Uthgar's troops, who ignore heavy losses to put all the wizards to the sword. Other cabal members flee to magical safeholds or seal themselves in impenetrable chambers. The Illuskans burn the raiders' ships and eventually drive the weakened reavers from the city.
- 96 *Tear of the Mournful Harp*: The warrior Stefan Black-spear proclaims himself Highlord of Illusk and takes control of the leaderless city. Fearful that the Grand Cabal might return to challenge his tenuous authority, Highlord Black-spear exiles all wizards from Illusk and forbids any citizen to approach the "evil" Host Tower of the Arcane. Subsequent generations shun this tower, believing it to be inhabited by fell and terrible creatures.
- c. 100 The followers of Uthgar join with other nomadic humans who are descended from the group of Netherese who followed the Bey of Runlatha and scattered across the North after his death.
- 111 *Tear of Fallen Guards*: Anauria falls to an orc horde, though its forces destroy the horde in the process. Orc numbers are reduced for centuries in this area.
- 173 *Tear of Screaming Sharn*: Several Halruaan wizard lords who follow Leira grow dissatisfied with the stranglehold that worshipers of Mystra and Azuth have over the Council of Elders. They depart Halruaa in *skyships* and eventually settle the isle of Nimbral.
- 199 *Tear of the Cold Enchanter*: Hlondath initiates the Crown against the Scepter Wars against Cormanthyr.
- 308 *Tear of Promise*: The Crown against the Scepter Wars end in victory for Cormanthyr.
- 329 *Tear of the Closed Scroll*: Hlondath is abandoned when the encroachment of Anauroch begins to destroy its fields. Its inhabitants migrate east to the Moonsea and south into the Dalelands. The Anauroch Desert ceases to spread when the sharns finally defeat the phaerimms. Ioulaum is apparently slain by a cabal of illithiliches. In revenge, his apprentice Tabra slaughters the illithids of Ellyn'taal.
- 620 *Tear of the Mountain Crypts*: A third earthquake rocks the ruins of Tzindylspar, killing most of its monstrous inhabitants.
- 806 *Tear of the Warrior's Rest*: Laeral, Witch-Queen of the North, establishes the realm of Stornanter. Realizing the strategic importance of ruined Illusk, she oversees the rebuilding and resettling of this city. After exploring the Host Tower of the Arcane and encountering the lich survivors of the Grand Cabal, Laeral erects magical barriers around the structure to bar entry.



- 882 *Tear of the Curse*: Ascalhorn falls after wizards summon demons to battle devils.
- 883 *Tear of the Giant's Oath*: Wulgreth of Ascalhorn flees Hellgate Keep and takes refuge in the ruined city of Karse. While attempting to tap the immortal power of the dead god Karsus, he is slain by his servant Jhingleshod. The magical energies unleashed upon his death create the Dire Wood and transform Wulgreth of Ascalhorn into a lich.
- 1311 *Tear of the Fist*: The mage Arklem Greeth comes to Luskan and bypasses the magical wards that Laeral Silverhand placed around the Host Tower of the Arcane. With the aid of the Old Ones, a group of powerful lichs who were once members of Illusk's legendary Grand Cabal, he forms the Brotherhood of the Arcane.
- 1344 *Tear of Moonfall*: Mintiper Moonsilver reportedly scatters the three *nether scrolls* from the Hall of Mists to other locations.

**The Rise of Netheril Anew (1372 onward)**  
1372 *Tear of Wild Magic*: Thultanthar, the City of Shade, returns to the skies of Faerûn.

keepers of the past

The greatest storehouses of Netheril's lost lore lie in the heart of Mount Talath in Halruaa. The Library of Raumark holds countless texts brought to Halruaa by Netherese fleeing the Karsus's Folly, and the Library of Shadows holds countless texts preserved by the Shadovar during their sojourn into the Plane of Shadow. Candlekeep also holds many volumes collected from the Netherese Diaspora into the North and the Western Heartlands, and the keepers of these books make them far more accessible than the librarians of Mount Talath or the Shadovar of Thultanthar make theirs.

Most learned folk of Faerûn know at least the basics of Netheril's history, and the lands bordering Anauroch are home to numerous sages who have more than a passing interest in

Netherese esoterica. Many sages in Candlekeep, Evereska, Halruaa, Nimbral, Silvermoon, and Suzail have made the study of Netherese history and archaeology their primary focus, and they frequently engage in extensive debate over the minutiae of Netherese life.

Any PC or NPC who is well versed in history can recall specific information with a Knowledge (history) check (see Table 6-1: Netheril Information for DCs).

Information about Netheril and its fall can also be gained from the living and undead beings who experienced it firsthand. Known Netherese lichs include Aumvor the Undying, several members of the Grand Cabal who dwell in the Host Tower of the Arcane and the ruins of Illusk, and the legendary Larloch of Warlock's Crypt (detailed in *Lords of Darkness*). High Prince Telamont Tanthul (see *Lords of Darkness*), ruler of Thultanthar, is also old enough to remember old Netheril, though he embraced the shadow world instead of undeath. These individuals do not welcome inquiries into the mysteries of Netheril, but the following survivors of its fall can sometimes be persuaded to provide firsthand recollections.

GHOST SORCERESS OF SPELLGARD

Atop a serpentine rock ridge that marks the border between the Fallen Lands and the sands of Anauroch stands the crumbling ruin of a once-grand castle that was known as Saharelgard when the High Mages of Netheril ruled the Empire of Magic. Thieves long ago stripped the castle of its wealth, mighty items of magic, furnishings, and luxuries. Thanks to the damp air, thick mats of moss, mold, and fungi have obscured its fine halls.

Lady Saharel, the Sorceress of Saharelgard, was once a leading member of the High Mages of Netheril. She survived the fall of the Empire of Magic as an archlich<sup>Mon</sup> and lived on in the ruins of her castle, which was renamed Spellgard, for centuries thereafter.

Each archlich has a passion—one to which she devotes her life, her love, and all the power of her Art. Lady Saharel's passion was Elminster Aumar. During the Time of Troubles, she defended the Sage of Shadowdale by slaying Manshoon and lost her own

unlife in the process. Manshoon returned almost immediately by means of his *stasis clone* spell and, because her task was not done, Lady Saharel returned as a ghost (CG female human ghost wizard 20/archmage 5/Netherese arcanist<sup>PG</sup> 5). She cannot be laid to rest permanently until Manshoon of the Zhentarim and all his clones and incarnations are well and truly dead.

Since the Time of Troubles, Lady Saharel has manifested to anyone who restores a piece of her castle to its former state. In such an encounter, she willingly answers three questions about Low Netheril before vanishing anew. But the lady cannot be pushed; she turns on anyone who joins her on the Ethereal Plane with a savagery laced with madness, then uses her spells to depart quickly.

MORASHA OF THE LONELY MOOR

In the heart of the Lonely Moor stands a ruined castle of black basalt that belongs to the lich known as Aumvor the Undying. Within it dwells his great-grandniece Morasha (LE female Netherese human necromancer 5/cleric 5 of Jergal/mystic theurge 8). Morasha was a low-ranking arcanist during the Shadowed Age of Low Netheril, and though she is quite mad, she does remember a great deal about that period. She does not part with information easily, but she can often be persuaded to answer questions in exchange for dark secrets of necromancy that she does not yet know. She is already quite conversant in the dark arts and is willing to sink to any depth of depravity, so information of interest to her is likely to be both unutterably vile and extremely obscure.

ORACLE OF ELLYN'TAAL

The legendary inventor of the *mythallar* was one of the few sorcerer-kings who neither perished in the fall of Netheril nor fled to Halruaa. Thanks to his crafting of the lost epic spell *Ioulaum's longevity* (see page 43), Ioulaum of Seventon lived for centuries, throughout most of the Netherese era. When the phaerimms arrived, however, he soon realized that their *lifedrain* spells were causing his life-sustaining magic to fail. Foreseeing the doom of Netheril, he embraced lichdom and established a lair in the depths of the Northdark.

In -339 DR, Ioulaum disappeared from Netheril. Because the archwizard had been an immensely popular figure and something of a folk hero, the news of his disappearance touched off a panic among the populace. The High Mages of Netheril grew fearful of a popular revolt, and Karsus was moved to cast *Karsus's avatar*, the spell that finally doomed the Empire of Magic.

After the fall, Ioulaum quietly continued to choose apprentices from among the most promising Netherese refugees. Curiously, he also accepted apprentices from the nearby mind flayer city of Ellyn'taal, and his illithid students, who called themselves the Alhoon, are believed to have been the first illithiliches. Ioulaum's intentions became clear when he created an undead elder brain from the minds of his illithid students and then merged his own sentience into it. Most of his illithilich apprentices were destroyed in this arcane ritual, but a few escaped and spread the secret of illithilich creation to mind flayer communities throughout the Realms Below.

Ioulaum's last human apprentice, Tabra (NG female human wizard 18/archmage 5), witnessed the rite and thought her master had been destroyed in a battle with his own students. In revenge, she slaughtered the last few of Ellyn'taal's mind flayers by casting *Ioulaum's longevity* on herself in the midst of the community. She then destroyed all records of the spell (except her own and those that Ioulaum himself had secretly hidden away) and fled to the surface.

Thanks to many subsequent castings of that epic spell, Tabra still lives today. Until recently, she operated a rooming house and festhall called Bargewright Inn and often worked with the Harpers. Most of the locals suspected that she was a gold dragon in disguise, thanks to her apparent longevity and infrequent casting of *shapechange* to assume the form of a dragon. Recently, however, she was captured by the Shadovar and brought back to the City of Shade. Her present circumstances are unknown, but if she yields to the persuasions of the Shadovar, the princes of Shade may gain some important clues about Ioulaum's last known location and circumstances.

Ioulaum survives today in the form of an undead elder brain<sup>Und</sup> (LN elder brain lich wizard 31/archmage 5/Netherese arcanist<sup>PG</sup> 5). Now known as the Oracle of Ellyn'taal, he lairs



Lady Saharel of Spellgard

Illustration by Jason Engle

TABLE 6-1: NETHERIL INFORMATION

Knowledge (History) DC*	Facts Discovered
5	Extremely common knowledge (Netheril was located in the area that is now the Anauroch Desert.)
10	Common knowledge (The creation of the Anauroch caused Low Netheril's decline, and the hubris of Karsus caused High Netheril's fall.)
15	Uncommon but basic knowledge (Ioulaum was the famed Netherese archwizard who created the first flying city. Aumvor the Undying and Larloch are Netherese lichs. Karsus was the Netherese archwizard who challenged Mysteryl and brought about High Netheril's fall.)
20	Uncommon, obscure knowledge ( <i>Karsus's avatar</i> failed because Karsus wasn't prepared to repair and control the Weave once he seized control of it from Mysteryl. The life-draining spells of the phaerimms were partially responsible for the decline of Low Netheril.)
25	Rare knowledge (Tzindylspar was founded by the dwarves of Delzoun and some Netherese emigrants. Morasha is a mad necromancer who lives on the Lonely Moor.)
30+	Extremely obscure knowledge (In an abandoned illithid city lies the Oracle of Ellyn'taal, where knowledge of ancient Netheril can be gained for a terrible price. Arthindol the Terraseer may have spent many centuries dwelling in depths of Oreme.)



in the depths of the abandoned mind flayer city, surrounded by echoing chambers carved with alien illithid sculptures. Because staying overlong in these strangely preserved, empty halls results in a strange form of madness (a lethal form of cackle fever and mindfire that invariably ends in death), only Ioulaum's undead servitors and the ghosts of the mind flayers slain by Tabra remain here with him.

The few intrepid explorers who have chanced upon the Oracle of Ellyn'taal have gained bits of arcane knowledge dating back to the height of Netheril from their meetings with it. Thus far, no one suspects that this "oracle" was once the legendary Ioulaum, but word of its existence has begun to spread in whispers across the North. Ioulaum extracts a terrible price for the information he provides—the voluntary, permanent loss of some fraction of the questioner's sanity (permanent loss of 1d4 points of Wisdom) or the complete knowledge of a new epic spell (which is then forever lost to the questioner).

### THE SHACKLED SCRIBE OF LARLOCH

The lich known as Rhaugilath the Ageless (LG male human archlich<sup>Mon</sup> wizard 22/archmage 5/Netherese arcanist<sup>PG</sup> 2) ruled the floating city of Orbedal before the fall of High Netheril. When Orbedal crashed to earth near the mouth of the Winding Water, Rhaugilath (still "alive" thanks to his phylactery) was trapped beneath its rubble.

In the months following the fall, Rhaugilath's archrival Larloch found the ruins of Orbedal and claimed them for his own. He built his crypt (now known as Warlock's Crypt) from the shattered spires of Orbedal, then began exploring the rest of the ruins in earnest. Many years later, his delvings reached the pocket in which Rhaugilath was trapped. The two battled fiercely, but at last Larloch prevailed and bound Rhaugilath to his will.

Rhaugilath was but the first of sixty lichs who serve the legendary master of Warlock's Crypt today. Larloch's favorite captive spends the majority of his time recording the history of Netheril, and his as yet incomplete multivolume opus, titled *Of the Fall of Netheril*, continues to expand. After Larloch reviews the finished chapters, they are sent to Candlekeep for archiving. It is unlikely that the work will ever be completed, however, since Rhaugilath considers the full story of the Netherese Diaspora and the subsequent rebirth of Netheril (an event that is still unfolding) to be integral components of his treatise.

From time to time, Larloch permits Rhaugilath access to one of two spells—either *dream* or *nightmare*, depending on his whim. The lich-king of fallen Orbedal uses these rare rewards to reach out to individuals he has scried and bequeath a small fragment of Netherese lore to them. Rumor has it that those who receive such bequests can faintly hear the forlorn sighs of Rhaugilath and the dry chuckle of Larloch before their visions fade.

### THE TERRASEER

Long before the rise of Netheril, the sarrukh empire known as Isstosseffifil dominated the Anauroch basin. In its heyday, Isstosseffifil encompassed the eastern shores of the old Narrow Sea as well as the fertile lands that stretched from the Saiyad-dar to the High Ice, and from the water's edge to the Plain of Standing Stones.

Today, the shrunken remnants of this once-great empire include only the buried city called Oreme and whatever caverns its remaining inhabitants can hold against the might of the phaerimms. The sixty sarrukh lichs of Oreme take turns ruling their tiny realm, each emerging from hibernation to take the throne for four years, then returning to somnolence in the Crypt of Dreaming Lizards when the next lich awakens.

Unbeknownst to the Netherese, the archwizard known as Arthindol the Terraseer was actually a sarrukh lich from ancient Isstosseffifil who adopted the guise of a human arcanist during his turns on the throne of Oreme. By making periodic visits to Netheril, he sought to further the study of the Art among the Netherese and shape the evolution of their history. In this manner, he hoped to cultivate new forms of magic that might enable the sarrukh to defeat the phaerimms once and for all.

It is unclear whether the Terraseer considers his "Netherese experiment" a success or a disaster, but he has not emerged from Oreme since Karsus's Folly. Since he is currently midway through his latest four-year reign, anyone who locates the crypts of Oreme and enters in peace can ask to speak with him. If a visitor treats the asabis that guard Oreme with respect and shows real promise as a student of the Art, Arthindol (N male sarrukh lich wizard 25/archmage 5) might acquiesce to a bold request for information about Netheril in exchange for some new arcane lore that the sarrukh can use against the phaerimms. Then again, he might simply slaughter such impertinent questioners.

## songs and stories

The following section details the history of Netheril, from its initial evolution to its ultimate fall and the rise of the survivor states from its ashes.

### THE FIRST AGE

Netheril's history began nearly five thousand years ago on the shores of the Narrow Sea, which was swallowed up by the High Ice centuries ago. Seven fishing villages—Fenwick, Gers, Gilan, Gustaf, Moran, Nauseef, and Janick—joined together for mutual defense and beneficial trade. They christened their tiny new realm the Alliance of Seventon, in honor of the seven villages. In the calendar of the Dalereckoning, this historic event occurred in the year –3859, but the calendar of Netheril marks the founding of Seventon as the beginning of the year 1 NY (Netheril Years).

Nether the Elder, Shaman-King of Gers, emerged as the leader of Seventon's ruling council and renamed the land Netheril (Nether's Land). In time, he became a tyrant concerned only with power and position. After murdering all his rivals, he was assassinated by his son, Alandril Nether the Younger, who succeeded him as the first king of Netheril. However, a ruling council of appointed representatives served as a check on the power of Nether the Younger, and their power increased with each of his successors.

During this period, the Netherese began to study the Art under the tutelage of several moon elf ambassadors from Eaclann. The elves saw promise in the fledgling realm of Netheril and sought to nurture it as an ally against the ever-present danger of the orcs and their destructive hordes. Another who recognized the

potential of the Netherese was the mysterious wizard known as the Terraseer, who appeared centuries after the arrival of the Fair Folk and began to instruct certain Netherese arcanists in other forms of magic either unknown to or rejected by the elves.

### THE NETHER AGE

The Nether Age began with the discovery of the *nether scrolls* amid the ruins of Aryvandaar. A Netherese arcanist descended from Therion of Gers discovered two sets of golden scrolls in the ancient cellars of the fortress now known as the Citadel of Mists. At the time of his discovery, the arcanist was an apprentice studying in Glaurachyndaar (later known as Myth Glaurach), the City of Scrolls. During his tenure in Eaclann, he secretly explored many Vyshaantar ruins with the aid of a serpentskin tome given to him in confidence by the mysterious Terraseer.

With the discovery of the *nether scrolls*, the Netherese began a long period of magical experimentation and research that advanced their understanding of the Weave and its applications by leaps and bounds. In the process, the Netherese abandoned many of the guiding principles taught to them by the Eaclanni elves, and relations between the two kingdoms soured. However, the Netherese found new allies in the Stout Folk of Delzoun, and trade began to flow along the Narrow Sea between Netheril and the dwarven port of Ascore.

Toward the end of this age, one set of *nether scrolls* was stolen, despite the great precautions that the leading Netherese arcanists of the day took to secure them. Unbeknownst to the Netherese, the thieves were acting on behalf of the high mages of Cormanthyr. Alarmed by reports from their Eaclanni brethren to the west and by the rapidity with which the Netherese had mastered the Art, the high mages sought to study the texts that had brought about such dramatic advances before Netheril could threaten Cormanthyr. The elves hid the scrolls in the depths of Windsong Tower in Cormanthor (later Myth Drannor) and gave them the form of the *Quess Ar Teranthvar* (Golden Grove of Hidden Knowledge), a golden beech tree.

### THE MYTHALLAR AGE

After the Nether Age, the focus of Netherese magic changed yet again with the rise of an arcanist named Ioulaum, whose power eclipsed that of all who came before him and, some would say, all who have come since. Over the course of his long lifetime, Ioulaum performed many amazing deeds and made dozens of miraculous discoveries, but his most significant contribution was the invention of the *mythallar*. This single arcane advancement enabled both the relatively cheap production of quasi-magic items and the creation of Netheril's floating cities. Once the Netherese mastered the use of the *mythallar*, enclave after enclave rose up into the sky, dividing the Empire of Magic into Low and High Netheril.

### THE SILVER AGE

During the Silver Age, the Netherese began to look beyond the borders of the Anauroch basin. Driven in part by the need for raw materials, the High Mages of Netheril established the mines of Dekanter to furnish them with rare metals. The High Mages of Netheril established numerous outposts during this period,

both to spy on the empire's neighbors and to facilitate trade with them. Other arcanists set out on their own, seeking isolation in which to pursue their studies.

### THE GOLDEN AGE

Though the distinction between the Silver Age and the Golden Age is a largely arbitrary one, most sages agree that Netheril's Golden Age began with the birth of the Chronomancer. By this time, dozens of floating cities were soaring above Netheril's loosely defined borders, and the Empire of Magic had reached the height of its power.

### AGE OF DISCOVERY

The Age of Discovery began when a *chardalyn*<sup>LD</sup> mine was found in Low Netheril. After this discovery, the Netherese aborted their research into the mysteries of gem magic and focused their efforts on further development of the "magic without sacrifice" concept ushered in by the invention of the *mythallar*.

Travel and exploration were the passions of the period. The Netherese floating cities moved beyond the immediate border areas of Low Netheril and began ranging over all Faerûn. The archwizards also developed an interest in exploring other worlds and created many planar *portals* for this purpose.

### THE SHADOWED AGE AND THE

#### NETHERESE DIASPORA

The birth of Karsus marks the beginning of the Shadowed Age in virtually all histories of Netheril. A genius of Ioulaum's caliber, he quickly mastered even the most complex magic of the time. After building his own enclave, Karsus began experimenting with *heavy magic*. Later, he nurtured the shadowy studies of Telamont Tanthul, who would subsequently become ruler of Thultanthar. When Ioulaum vanished, Karsus made the fateful move for which he is best known—he cast a spell called *Karsus's avatar*, which created a link between him and Mystryl and wrested control of the Weave from her. This event, later known as Karsus's Folly, was the direct cause of High Netheril's fall.

As Karsus's body swelled with divine power, his mind filled with unimaginable knowledge, including a dreadful understanding of the mistake he had just made—he had stolen divinity from the one being who knew the Weave well enough to constantly repair the damage done to it by the magic-hungry Netherese and phaerimms. To save the Weave before the damage became irreparable, Mystryl sacrificed herself. Her death negated magic throughout Faerûn, sending the flying cities crashing to the ground, and also severed her link to Karsus, petrifying his body. Almost immediately, the goddess of magic was reincarnated as Mystra, and she recreated the Weave in time to save the three cities of High Netheril that had not yet hit the ground. The new Weave had stricter spellcasting requirements that prevented the excesses of the Netherese.

Of equal import during this era was the emergence of the phaerimms—strange, subterranean sorcerers whose life-draining spells were slowly transforming fertile Low Netheril into the Great Sand Sea. The environmental changes they induced precipitated the greatest migration of humanity that had ever



occurred in western Faerûn. For nearly two centuries, the Netherese migrated west, south, and east, founding new realms and merging with other groups to form new ethnicities. By the time the sharns<sup>Mon</sup> finally succeeded in containing the phaerimms, Netheril was already lost to the sands of history.

## Important sites

The great human empire called Netheril began as the Alliance of Seventon, a cluster of villages on the southeastern shore of the Narrow Sea, beneath the region now known as the eastern High Ice. At its height, Low Netheril occupied the entirety of the area that the Fair Folk called the Anauroch basin. High Netheril encompassed all the Netherese floating enclaves, which roamed throughout Faerûn and even beyond. In fact, the wanderings of the High Netherese were constrained only by the existence of certain powerful empires, such as Calimshan, Cormanthyr, Delzoun, Illefarn, Jhaamdath, Mulhorand, Narfell, Raumathar, and Unther, that possessed the magical prowess to project their military might into the skies.

A disproportionate number of the surviving Netherese ruins are from Low Netheril, primarily because most of High Netheril's floating cities were shattered beyond recognition when they fell. Most of Low Netheril's ruins are outposts and tombs that were constructed before Karsus's Folly and settlements that Netherese refugees built after the fall.

Likewise, more Low Netherese artifacts have been found in the North and the Western Heartlands than in the area that was Low Netheril, thanks to the encroachment of the High Ice, the blowing sands of southern Anauroch, and the magic-draining capabilities of the phaerimms. Most surviving magic items of Netherese manufacture are not quasi-magic items dependent on *mythallars*, since the emigrants and refugees prudently left those behind.

## The lost kingdoms

After Karsus's Folly, the floating cities of Asram, Anauria, and Hlondath (also known as the Three Realms), settled slowly down to earth along Netheril's southeastern frontier, saved by the grace of Mystra. The survivors of these enclaves built realms of the same names in the remaining fertile lands between the spreading sands of Anauroch and the region now known as the Desertsmouth Mountains. Although popular lore holds that Netheril fell by the hand of Karsus, many scholars consider the Lost Kingdoms to be the last age of Low Netheril.

### ANAURIA

The richest of the Lost Kingdoms was Anauria—a human-ruled land of humans, elves, and half-elves. The Anaurian nobles hunted boar, stags, and monstrous game while the farmers produced food for the Three Realms and enough spare grain to sell to all the lands about the Inner Sea. Anauria fell to a horde of orcs in 111 DR, but its inhabitants fought with such fury that the ranks of the victors were as badly depleted as those of the vanquished. The ruins of Anauria still bear the heraldic marks of its noble

houses: Maluradek (human), Nemrin (human), Nyntynel (elven), Olyrnn (elven), and Thardresk (human, royal).

The ruins of Amazandar, Anauria's capital, lie due west of Rausrawna (known to Anaurians as Mount Shaddath), the westernmost peak of the Desertsmouth Mountains. All that now remains of the so-called City of Gems are a few half-buried ruins shattered by the might of the orcs, plus the deep mining shafts beneath the city that give access to still-rich veins of gemstones. Today, Amazandar's gem mines are home to the phaerimms and their minions, including legions of beholder-led orcs twisted by the fell spells of the phaerimms. The undercroft of a ruined temple of Jergal reportedly contains the fabulous tomb of King Thausimbel the Wise and his daughter, Queen Shaddara the Fair. In truth, it contains a *portal* leading to the Dungeon of Swords in the Serpent Hills (see *Serpent Kingdoms*). This *portal* is actually the keystone of a *portal* network of Anaurian tombs.

The ruins of Anauril, the City of Swords, lie north and east of Amazandar and due west of the Twisted Tower of Shadowdale. These ruins are in far better condition than the remains of the City of Gems because the tide of orcs finally crested on the blades of Anauria's defenders at Anauril. The City of Swords was named for the fine steel blades manufactured there, many of which were magically enhanced by the wizards of houses Nyntynel and Olyrnn. An impressive number of these magic swords are still within the ruins, but they are wielded by the legion of swordwraiths<sup>FF</sup> that still defends Anauril's sand-covered walls.

The shattered remnants of Helvara, the main agricultural and fishing center of the realm, are located on the southern shore of Lake Miir, hard by the flanks of the Desertsmouth Mountains. Two fortresses—Tower Hlithal and Tower Ramanath—have also survived more or less intact. The troops that manned these structures once guarded Anauria against the goblins of Araugul (Goblinmount) to the far south and Orlath Wood to the west, the nomadic orc hordes from the mountains to the east, the brigands and monsters from the Hunters' Hills to the south, and occasional outlaw raiders from Asram to the north.

### ASRAM

Asram was the second richest of the Lost Kingdoms. Its citizens organized regular expeditions into the Great Sand Sea to bring back the lost magic of Netheril as well as its precious metals (gold, zinc, and copper). In Asram, the Art was widely employed to meet everyday needs, and the worst excesses of High Netheril's jaded nobles were practiced at all levels of society. Asram was eventually destroyed by a plague that Talona unleashed during a deific battle with her rival, Kipyutto. Because the plague still clings to these ruins, they remain largely untouched.

The remnants of Phelajarama, Asram's capital, lie due west of the headwaters of the River Tesh, in the southern reaches of At'ar's Looking Glass. Although gold-leafed statues of serpents and other treasures still lie within the scorched husks of its ancient villas, the City of the Serpent now stands largely silent and abandoned, guarded by the threat of Talona's touch. From time to time, however, the Shadovar come here to experiment with new workings of the Art, and they delight in demonstrating their spells on uninvited guests.

In Orolin, the City of Magicians, villas and orchards once clustered around a circular city core that featured canals, parks, and a fortress. More than a decade ago, during battles between the Bedine and the Zhentarim, the canals were poisoned and the crenellated rampart-walls of the fortress were breached in many locations. Today, a crumbling fortress surrounded by several acres of ruined buildings stands in a broad, grassy valley overlooked by ridges. Four canals divide the city's remains into quarters, and a fifth canal encircles the whole ruin. At the center of the fortress, an artesian well still bubbles to the surface within an impressive fountain. The Zhent dead still roam these ruins as a ravaging pack of ghouls under the control of a small band of Talontar blightlords, who journeyed here after receiving visions from Talona heralding the imminent outbreak of another great plague. Bedine legends speak of a fine treasure buried in Orofin (as the ruins are now known), but so far little has been recovered.

Other ruins of Asram include the city of Ulshantir, noted for its coppersmiths and fine brass goods, and the port city of Miirsar, whose people once harvested blue-scaled brench and spicy crabfin from the waters of Lake Miir.

### HLONDATH

Northerly Hlondath was a land of loggers and herders who tended sheep, goats, and rothé. Hlundites made sturdy wagons, fine furniture, and paper, and they also shipped raw lumber to other lands. Hlondath initiated a series of conflicts against the Fair Folk of Cormanthyr in hopes of stealing some greater magic from them. Instead, these so-called Crown against the Scepter Wars cost the Hlundites much blood and treasure and brought them no usable returns. Hlondath finally collapsed as the spreading sands of Anauroch consumed its fields, driving the people eastward into the Moonsea and Dalelands regions.

The capital city of Mhaelos now lies beneath the drifting sands of the northeastern Sword, to the north and west of the mines of Tethyamar. According to Zhentarim spies in the region, bands of bladesingers from Evermeet have made repeated forays to the site. Such activity suggests that the Hlundites stole some item of value from Cormanthyr that remains lost to this day.

The fortified city of Rulvadar, which stood just west of the Border Forest, served as a bastion of might against marauding ogres, orcs, and goblinoids of the Moonsea North. From this refuge, companies of spearmen made repeated forays into the area now known as the Border Forest. Like its sister city Mhaelos, Rulvadar is now buried beneath the Great Sand Sea. The Zhentarim have partially excavated the central fortress, and from time to time they post garrisons within this lonely ruin. Such duties were considered one of the Zhentarim's harshest forms of punishment until the recent discovery of a cache of enspelled, gem-encrusted circlets dating back to the waning days of the Crown against the Scepter Wars.

### INDEPENDENT CITIES

Port Miir was a city of moneylenders and caravan-masters on the eastern shore of Lake Miir at the western terminus of Berothir's Trail, which led west to the Twisted Tower of Shadowdale. The city was ruled by a loose band of wizards who struggled to control the rampant thievery. An earthquake buried the trail and the city

long after the latter was abandoned, leaving only isolated ruins scattered along the western edge of the Desertsmouth Mountains. These ruins are home to orcs or worse, and their treasures have long since been plundered.

Oum was a crossroads town that straddled the border of Hlondath and Asram. Its people included booksellers, sages, and proud crafters who made mirrors and glass windows, fine clothing, jewelry, lamps, pottery, and ironware. Today the town is all but gone, and its largely wooden buildings have vanished. However, those who know where to dig occasionally find valuable trinkets that can be sold in Cormyr and Sembia, and at least one tome of lost Netherese lore has been recovered here.

## Low Netheril

At its height, Low Netheril was a land of small towns, scattered enclaves, and nomadic barbarian tribes. It was surrounded by beast-roamed forests and linked to other realms by flying steeds and *fly* spells rather than roads.

The landbound enclaves of Low Netheril, known as demesnes, were ruled from mighty towers by lesser arcanists who had not yet mastered the techniques of creating High Netheril's great floating cities. Each demesne exhibited magical conditions (such as green meadows, deep forest, badlands, altered gravity, and unusual weather) tailored to the ruler's latest whim.

Members of the Netherese underclass, known as the Free Folk, dwelt in tree towns like those of the Eaerlanni elves. Over the years, the Free Folk began to resent the tyrannical arcanists, who regarded them as mere cattle and considered them suitable only for labor and experimentation. They looked to their deities to lead them to a shining freedom somewhere out of reach of the archwizards.

The Rengarath and Angardt barbarian tribes roamed the area north of the Narrow Sea and the western plains formed from the seabed of the Old Narrow Sea. The Rengarath were deeply suspicious of magic, and their presence helped to deter the Netherese from settling the northern shores of the Narrow Sea. The Angardt tribe was originally a Rengarath clan until its members willingly embraced sorcery, causing a civil war that eventually divided the tribe.

The passage of time and the scouring sands of Anauroch have left few ruins in Low Netheril proper. Most of those that remain, including Hlaungadath (detailed in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting*), Rasilith, Runlatha, and Spellgard (page 100), are buried beneath the drifting sands or encased in the High Ice. Some are guarded by minions of the phaerimms, and a few are still inhabited. Travelers across the Great Sand Sea often encounter odd magical effects, and some manage to recover a trinket or minor magic item, but for the most part, the Empire of Magic has vanished.

### MINES OF DEKANTER

During the Silver Age, the Netherese established the mines of Dekanter on the eastern slopes of the Graypeak Mountains. These mines provided gold, iron, mercury, silver, and platinum to meet the ever-growing demand for such metals in Netheril. Late in the Golden Age, the mines played out, but instead of abandoning



them, Netherese arcanists converted them into laboratories for experimentation in the Art.

Today, the mining complex is an extensive, crumbling ruin surrounded by low hills (talus piles from the mines). Its inhabitants include the Dekanter subrace of goblins (see *Monstrous Compendium: Monsters of Faerûn*), some gargoyles, and a mysterious illithilich<sup>Mon</sup> known only as the Beast Lord (LE mind flayer lich wizard 15). The mines are laden with the dangerous legacies of untested Netherese spellcasting, but rumor holds that their tunnels still harbor a few valuable treasures.

### RASILITH

The ancient city of Rasilith served as the capital of ancient Thaeravel, the Land of Alabaster Towers, for centuries before the Alliance of Seventon was founded. While Netheril expanded south and west, the sorcerers of Thaeravel grew old and decadent, withdrawing into their towers to further their studies of the Art.

At the end of the Nether Age, the arcanists of Netheril, armed with newfound knowledge gleaned from the *nether scrolls*, overran the Land of Alabaster Towers. The attackers ripped many spells previously unknown to them from the minds of captive Thaeravelian sorcerers, reducing them to gibbering husks. The fate of those who fled is unknown, although some speculate that they transformed themselves into phaerimms and eventually had their revenge.

The only known trace of lost Thaeravel is the legendary Floating Tower, the home and later the tomb of Ondil of the Many Spells. Ondil fled the fall of Rasilith to the area that would later

become Athalantar. Centuries ago, his tower was plundered by the Bright Blades adventuring band (including a young Elminster Aumar). Today, nothing is left of the tower except a few twinkling motes of magic dancing in the vale north of Secomber where it once stood.

After the fall of Thaeravel, Rasilith became an important garrison city in southern Netheril. Arcanists eager to acquire new knowledge of the Art from Thaeravel's ancient runes descended on the city in droves. Rasilith gradually faded in importance during the Mythallar Era and was one of the first cities abandoned to the phaerimms during the Shadowed Age.

Today, this ancient city lies half buried in the depths of the Quarter of Emptiness, encircled by walls of thick, gray stone. Inside the walls, alabaster towers ring a central fortress of later construction. In the courtyard of the fortress is a well that leads down to a warren of caverns ruled by the phaerimms and guarded by their asabi<sup>SK</sup> servitors. Any surviving remnants of Thaeravelian lore are probably in the hands of the elder phaerimms in that settlement.

### RUNLATHA

Runlatha (or Northreach, in the Loross tongue), was founded during Netheril's First Age and became a thriving port once trade relations had been established with the dwarves of Ascore. After the mines of Dekanter were established, Runlatha gradually reverted to a backwater town. During the Age of Discovery, it was ruled by a cruel arcanist who delighted in imprisoning and torturing exotic creatures from other lands and planes.

Illustration by Vince Locke



Exploring the mines of Dekanter

Runlatha's ruler died during the fall of High Netheril. Shortly thereafter, a charismatic warrior known as the Bey of Runlatha assembled a host of Free Folk from the surrounding lands and led them west to Ascore by way of the Lowroad with the aid of some dwarf rangers. From there, the Runlathan refugees marched slowly westward across the Northkingdom, hoping to found a new realm in lands as yet unclaimed.

The bey and his dream died on the western border of Delzoun. Three former prisoners of Runlatha's late ruler—a nalfeshnee named Zukothoth, a rakshasa named Ickshar, and a mind flayer named X'ss'a of Ellyn'taal—tracked the refugees down. Driven nearly mad by the torture they had endured and lacking a better target on which to vent their fury, they attacked the bey and his followers. Though he died in that battle, the bey managed to collapse a cavern on his attackers. Zukothoth was "killed" and returned to the Abyss, but Ickshar and X'ss'a were trapped in *stasis* by an arcanist ally and buried in the subsequent cave-in.

After the bey's death, his followers scattered and reverted to a primitive way of life. Among the Uthgardt tribes, who trace their ancestry back to the Runlathan refugees and some Illuskan reavers driven inland, the bey is remembered in myths as Beorunna ("Berun" in the Illuskan tongue), the father of Uthgar.

The remains of Runlatha are buried beneath the High Ice and no longer accessible, but the ancient city's legacy lives on in many of the prized Uthgardt magic weapons that have been handed down from generation to generation. Ickshar and X'ss'a remain trapped in the depths of their subterranean cavern, which now lies beneath the Uthgardt ancestor mound known as Beorunna's Well. Buried with them is a vast fortune in Netherese treasures, as well a wide variety of slimes, jellies, molds, and insectoid creatures.

## netherese colonies

Netherese arcanists first began exploring the lands to the west of Eaerlann at the urging of the Terraseer, who sought to establish a spy outpost from which he could observe the Fair Folk of Illefarn. Although the first such colony lasted only two hundred sixty-five years, its unintended success as a trademeet inspired the founding of other sites, such as Tzindylspar, the Selskar Order's Tower of the Star (see *Dungeon* #101), and magocratic Illusk (see page 144). Although some scholars include such colonies within greater Low Netheril, all were constructed before Karsus's Folly and yet independent of the High Mages of Netheril. Thus, they were part of neither Low Netheril nor the postfall Netherese Diaspora.

### OLD OWL WELL

North of the Sword Mountains, along the remnants of the trade route that once linked the dwarven port city of Barrhindlun with Delzoun, lie the ruins of a Netherese outpost built at the direction of the Terraseer. The mysterious arcanist convinced the High Mages of Netheril to build a spy outpost at that spot so that they could observe events in Illefarn.

Unbeknownst to the Netherese, the Terraseer had a hidden agenda. Beneath the site, a large supply of *chardalyns*<sup>LD</sup> lay in an ancient vault that the sarrukh had built in the waning days

of Isstosseffil. But the captive deepspawn that guarded the vault performed their task all too well—the constant stream of magical beasts they disgorged made the region too dangerous to settle. So the Terraseer sought an empire with enough might to overcome the dangers and recover the *chardalyns*.

At great military cost, the Netherese destroyed wave upon wave of magical beasts and eventually succeeded in establishing the outpost, which they named Quesseer. Netherese scouts then tracked the remaining magical beasts back to their caverns, defeated the deepspawn therein, and recovered an unimaginable supply of *chardalyns*. This "chance" discovery in turn led to a great deal of research into gem magic (see *Magic of Faerûn*), which may have been the Terraseer's intent all along.

Thanks to the great battles necessary to secure the site, however, the elves of Illefarn were well aware of the outpost by the time it was finally established. Since its original purpose had been compromised and it lay in unclaimed wilderness at the nexus of several diverse communities, Quesseer instead became a trademeet for Netherese expatriates, Illuskan seafarers, Ice Hunter tribesmen, Illefarni elves, and the isolated shield dwarf clans of fallen Haungdhannar. The outpost was notable for its elaborately constructed well, which still delivers bountiful, clean, fresh water, and for the large number of magical beasts (primarily owlbeasts) that continued to plague the surrounding region.

Less than three centuries after its construction, Quesseer was abandoned when Illusk fell to a great orc horde. Since then, Old Owl Well, as the outpost's well is called, has served as an excellent water source for passing caravans. Various monsters, humanoid tribes, and power groups have claimed Quesseer as a lair, but the traders in the region always hire mercenary companies to drive out the usurpers. The most recent occupant was an orc tribe that heeded the visions of its shaman and marched on Triboar, only to be consumed by Claugiylamatar, the ancient green dragon of the Kryptgarden Forest.

Since the destruction of the orcs, Old Owl Well has once again been open to passing merchants and adventurers. The underground caverns from which it draws its water may contain still more vaults of the sarrukh<sup>SK</sup>, as yet undiscovered, though those too might contain deepspawn guardians (see page 166).

### TZINDYLSPAR

In the western Nether Mountains, just north of Silverymoon Pass and northeast of Silverymoon, lie the buried remnants of Tzindylspar, the legendary City of Rubies founded by Netherese emigrants and the Stout Folk of Old Delzoun. The inhabitants of Tzindylspar grew wealthy mining a rich vein of ruby beneath the city. They traded their raw and cut gems with the far-off kingdom of Calimshan via a *portal* created by an enterprising Netherese arcanist. During the Cajaan Dynasty, a steady stream of rubies flowed south through the *portal*. The Calishites used the stones as currency, and ruby jewelry (especially pectorals) from Tzindylspar quickly became the rage among the Calishite elite. Since few people from Calimshan were willing to visit the frigid northern city, most Calishite noble houses dispatched halfling trade representatives to Tzindylspar to manage their affairs.

The fall of the Cajaan Dynasty to the beholders of the Alimir Hive precipitated a sudden collapse in Tzindylspar's ruby trade.



One of the last Calishites to visit the City of Rubies was Ynamalik Nadim yn Rahimat el Cajaan, a powerful sorcerer-prince who suspected that Tzindylspar's rich vein of ruby encompassed an earth node. Seeking a new base of power beyond the reach of the eye tyrants, Ynamalik Nadim and several members of his family returned to the City of Rubies the following year, bringing a small army through the *portal* with them. Unprepared for an attack by their erstwhile trading partners, the defenders of Tzindylspar were no match for the invading Calishites, and within a tenday all the city's residents had been either slaughtered or enslaved.

At Nadim's direction, the Calishites transformed the earth node into a shrine of the dao (see *Manual of the Planes*) like those that were prevalent during the Vahlen and Erehnir dynasties, when genie worship was common. Nadim planned to summon an army from the Elemental Plane of Earth and use it to overthrow the beholders. But Nadim died of heartstop, and his followers lacked the magical expertise to open a permanent *portal* to an elemental plane without him. Since Nadim had sealed the *portal* back to Calimshan with a *gate seal* spell, most of his followers took their chances in the northern wilderness.

Almost eight centuries later, an earthquake buried the remains of Tzindylspar, erasing it from the surface of Faerûn. Four hundred years after that, a second powerful earthquake shook the northwestern Nether Mountains, collapsing Tzindylspar's connection with the surface and opening new underground caverns that linked its lower mines with the Fardrimm. Over time, a steady trickle of monsters from the Realms Below wandered up into the city and established lairs therein. Eventually, a small band of mind flayers of the Tamer creed claimed the ruins of Tzindylspar and built a settlement in which they could conduct breeding experiments.

In centuries that followed, the illithids of Tzindylspar grew in strength and number and bred all sorts of monstrous thralls. The desirable ones were fed to captive deepspawn for perfect replication, while the rejects were consumed by the mind flayers. The illithids' plan for regional conquest faltered when a third powerful earthquake shook the region, destroying much of the city and killing most of its inhabitants. The tremor also damaged the *portal* linking Tzindylspar with Calimshan, causing it to malfunction. However, at least one deepspawn and one illithid survived the quake. The mind flayer eventually transformed itself into an illithilich and became consumed with the study of node magic. It has spent the last few decades exploring the subterranean reaches of the Fardrimm and only rarely returns to its lair.

In the Year of the Ruby Pendant (845 DR), a shield dwarf prospector of the Fardrimm returned to Silverymoon bearing a ruby-encrusted pectoral fashioned in the style of Calimshan's Second Age. He spoke of a ruined city buried in the heart of a mountain overrun with monsters. But before he could lead a return expedition, the dwarf was decapitated in his sleep, and the pectoral was stolen. Intrigued, scholars of the Lady's College unearthed ancient accounts referring to the Ruby City of Tzindylspar, but a subsequent wave of explorers failed to discover any trace of the lost city on the surface, thanks to the destructive effects of the earthquakes. In the centuries since, a few intrepid

adventurers have sought to rediscover the dwarf's trail through the Fardrimm to the lower mines of Tzindylspar, and from there to the city. As yet, however, none who have sought the passage have returned.

## shattered cities

At its height, High Netheril boasted fifty-four floating cities, nearly all of which were destroyed by Karsus's folly. A few, however, met their ends in other ways. Aquessir (Shadowtop Borough) fell three years before Karsus's Folly when its *mythal-lar* failed, and ill-planned spell research obliterated Maunator (Sunrest) during the Golden Age. The spells of the phaerimms brought down Lhaoda and Tith Tilendrothael. Cities shattered in the Fall of High Netheril included Akintaer (Quagmire), Delia, Doubloon, Eileanar (enclave of Karsus), Farenwey (Yeoman's Loft), Jethaere, Jiksidur, Jockteleg, Lathery, Nhalloth, Orbedal (Sanctuary), Palter, Phylornel (Buoyance), Sakkors, Spiel, Xinlenal (enclave of Ioulaum), and many others whose names have been lost to history. Of all the cities destroyed by Karsus's Folly, the remains of only three—Jiksidur, Nhalloth, and Sakkors—have been located and identified. A fourth may lie in the depths of the Korinn Archipelago, and a fifth is said to be in the northwestern reaches of Anauroch.

### JIKSIDUR

At the time Karsus cast his fateful spell, the enclave of Jiksidur was high above eastern Faerûn spying on the empires of Narfell and Raumathar. Larloch, Sorcerer-King of Jiksidur, was warned by contingency magic that the enclave's doom was imminent, so he abandoned it on dragonback just before its fall. As a consequence of that action, the city turned upside down during its descent and was crushed under its own bulk upon impact. Agents of the Nentyarch of Narfell tunneled into the sheared-off peak shortly after its fall to salvage what treasures they could find.

The remnants of Jiksidur now form the mountain known as Hark's Finger, which rises incongruously from the plains of Narfell. Some of Jiksidur's treasures now lie in the tombs of Narfell's demonbinders, and Larloch managed to recover others through barter with Szass Tam, the Thayan Zulkir of Necromancy, by giving him two artifacts (the *Death Moon Orb* and *Thakorsil's Seat*) in return. Many of Jiksidur's treasures, however, still lie buried beneath the mountain's roots.

### NHALLOTH

The enclave of Nhalloth lies under nearly 200 feet of water in the Sea of Fallen Stars. Its resting place is about 19 miles northwest of Thonn's Fist (also called Vosos), the northernmost large island of the archipelago that lies off the southern coast of the Altumbel Peninsula. Nearly nine hundred years old as a floating city at the time of Karsus's Folly, Nhalloth has been underwater for more than seventeen centuries. It was discovered by surface dwellers in the Year of the Creeping Fang (1305 DR). Since then, innumerable treasure seekers have scoured it, but few have come away with more than awe at the architecture that remains intact despite the fall and the sea's erosion.

### SAKKORS

The enclave of Sakkors, already some eighteen centuries old at the time of the fall, tumbled from a height of hundreds of feet into the Sea of Fallen Stars just south of the modern-day site of Urmlaspyr. It continued its rapid plunge on an angle, striking the edge of the continental slope and rolling into the Plains of Duna, where it crushed three small sea elf and merfolk colonies as well as its own surface architecture. It finally came to a halt with a great impact about 90 miles south and 630 feet below sea level.

Sakkors is now little more than a pile of rubble honeycombed with dangerous magical effects that have been corrupted by time and the sea. Hundreds of quasi-magic items and a few artifacts are buried beneath silt and rubble along Sakkor's 15-mile-long path. After sixteen hundred years in the water, however, very little remains recognizable, and still less remains usable.

## surviving cities

Two floating cities of High Netheril survived Karsus's Folly by escaping to other planes.

### SELÛNARRA

Selûnarra (Opus in the Loross tongue) escaped destruction by the grace of the Moonmaiden, who transferred the enclave and its entire population to the Gates of the Moon (see *Player's Guide to Faerûn*). Today, Selûnarra continues to float in that plane's moonlit sky, untouched by the passage of time. The Selûnarrans of the current era are aasimar descended from the rescued Netherese and Selûne's servitors. A few Selûnarrans have visited Faerûn, but they are considered nonnative outsiders when resident on Abeir-Toril.

### THULTANTHAR

Thultanthar (Shade in the Loross tongue) escaped into the Plane of Shadow, where its inhabitants battled the malaugrym and other horrors of that shadowy world for generations before returning to Faerûn in the Year of Wild Magic (1372 DR). The City of Shade, as it is now known, and its inhabitants are further detailed in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting, Lords of Darkness*, and *Player's Guide to Faerûn*.

## western diaspora

The *lifedrain* spells of the phaerimms coupled with the literal fall of High Netheril precipitated one of the greatest migrations of humanity that has ever occurred in western Faerûn. From –461 DR to –333 DR, Netherese refugees moved west and southwest into the lands now known as the Silver Marches, the Backlands, and Sunset Vale. Those who followed the northern mountain passes were welcomed by the shield dwarves of Citadel Sundbarr (see *Silver Marches*) and the Fair Folk of Eaerlann. In time, the elven city of Ascalhorn was given over to the Netherese refugees on the condition that they help defend Eaerlann and forswear the use of their forebears' most dangerous arcane practices.

Those few who had embraced Karsus as a savior were persecuted for their beliefs. They made their way to his petrified corpse in the High Forest and built the city of Karse at its foot.

The survivors who migrated down the twin waterways now known as the Winding Water and the River Reaching merged with Calishites, Chondathans, and Talfir to form fledgling realms such as the Duchy of Indoria, which was located in the region now known as the Fields of the Dead. Some migrated to planned subterranean cities such as Gauntlgrym (see page 143) and the Netherese Caverns of Philock (see *Underdark*), while others used the Art to craft new cities, such as Helbrester.

### HELBRESTER (THE SUNSET TOWERS)

This fortified city of linked towers rose like a hand reaching for the stars from a low-lying island just east of the site of Irphong. Its famed towers were great cylinders built of green-hued local island stone by a small group of refugees from Low Netheril. They chose to settle in the Nelanther Isles because weakened Calishite control over the region allowed them to establish an independent realm fairly close to many population centers.

The city consisted of towers built so close together, and linked on so many levels, that only seabirds and creeping beasts could use the spaces between. Great domed crystal ceilings were raised over many towers to allow light into the gardenlike interiors of large halls, but the smaller rooms and passages existed in almost perpetual gloom, illuminated by floating driftglobes.

The founders of Helbrester used magic to prolong their lives and became known as elders. Preferring to spend their time in arcane studies, they favored a policy of isolation from the world. Though the elders constructed a number of *portals* to the mainland, they used them only to magically abduct beasts they wanted to dine on or steal items they wanted to possess.

As time passed, the original elders died or withdrew into seclusion, acquiring an "age-crazed" reputation among their descendants. Meanwhile, Helbrester's population swelled with their offspring and the children of their unions with abducted mainland folk. These new Helbrestans began to trade with other realms and set up their city as a reprovisioning and repair port for ships plying the Sword Coast. When pirates sought to seize control of Helbrester, the elders blasted the intruders and their ships with powerful spells, winning Helbrester a "touch-it-not" reputation.

Mainlanders seeking freedom from various forms of oppression sailed to the Sunset Towers in hopes of settling there and were usually accepted. The city slowly grew into a neutral-ground port used by pirates and merchant shippers alike, though many coastal Tethyrians considered it a pirate power waiting to erupt. Helbrester was governed by the Lords and Ladies—the heads of twelve of its most senior families, including Arathtaea, Hal-lowhand, Iyrimsar, and Kolthund.

Unbeknownst to the Helbrestans, two elders named Thakloamur and Mingaudorr, who had retired from public life many years before, were still lurking in hidden, spell-guarded rooms and passages. Eventually, they attained two different and imperfect forms of lichdom. Both forms of undeath required the lichs to subsume energy (life essence for Thakloamur, and spell power for Mingaudorr) from time to time, or crumble away. So Thakloamur became a kidnapper and murderer, and Mingaudorr a thief of magic. The two managed to elude detection for some years by preying almost exclusively on visiting outlanders, although dark



rumors began to circulate in the city. Then one fateful day, they met and began to feud in earnest.

Towers came crashing down as one lich or the other sought to destroy his rival. The bewildered Helbrekans raced through the rubble with drawn swords seeking the source of the threat but were powerless to stop the destruction. At last, when the entire southern end of Helbrester collapsed, Mingaudorr was thrown down and buried in the rubble.

Pirates promptly came plundering, and the few Helbrekans who survived their raids fled the city forever. The pirates who sought to claim the remaining towers as strongholds were slain by the stalking Thakloamur, and when a pirate fleet gathered to hunt down this mysterious slayer, the lich's spells blasted entire ships to tumbling embers.

The tremors caused by this battle freed Mingaudorr, who worked a titanic spell that destroyed not only his foe, but also the very island upon which Helbrester stood, plus all that was left of the city and Mingaudorr himself. The riven island was hurled into the skies, and Helbrester was no more.

Some believe that Thakloamur, Mingaudorr, or both survived that final battle in some way. Their opinions are supported by the fact that from time to time, along the coasts of Amn and Tethyr, mysterious *portals* open without warning to take beings and objects to some unknown elsewhere. On the other hand, these spells could be the work of Helbrekan descendants, or even folk who gained such spells from other refugees of old Netheril.

Today, nothing but jagged shoal rocks and tumbled stones lie off Irphong where the proud towers of Helbrester once rose. The treasures of Netheril that once bedecked these proud halls were looted long ago and now lie in pirate caches and noble vaults throughout Tethyr, Amn, and the Nelanther.

### KARSE

In the years immediately following Karsus's Folly, a cult arose in Karsus's honor. Its members believed that the very act that had caused the empire's collapse had also transformed Karsus into a being both human and divine, and that his divinity still persisted. They predicted that Karsus would be reborn to lead humankind into a new age of magic that would be built on the ashes of the old but tempered with experience.

Though the Cult of Karsus attracted a good number of adherents, its enemies outnumbered them considerably. Eventually, religious persecution drove the cultists to build a holy city in the depths of the High Forest. They founded the city of Karse at the base of a tall butte of red stone, which they believed to be the remnants of the Momentary God's physical form.

Long before casting his fateful spell, Karsus had experimented with a discovery he called *heavy magic* and, in the process, inadvertently turned another arcanist named Wulgreth into a lich. Wulgreth of Netheril never forgave Karsus, and after his rival's death, he exacted his somewhat petty revenge by secretly fomenting divisions within the Cult of Karse. Because of his machinations, the city of Karse was torn apart by religious strife a little more than a decade after its founding, and the cult disintegrated. Wulgreth of Netheril then moved into the city's ruins to ensure that no one would ever rebuild it. In time, he became a demilich<sup>EL</sup>.

More than a thousand years later, an Ascalhi wizard, by chance named Wulgreth as well, trafficked with devils in defiance of the ancient pact his forebears had made with the Eaelranni elves to abandon the dark arts of the Netherese. Thanks to the devils who did his bidding, Wulgreth of Ascalhorn bested his rivals for six decades, and they eventually began to traffic with demons in their own defense. The demons they summoned did their jobs far too well—not only did they destroy the devils, but they also conquered all of Ascalhorn, then overran Eaelrann and Ammarindar, destroying both kingdoms.

Wulgreth of Ascalhorn fled the destruction, accompanied only by Jingleshod the Iron Axeman, his man-at-arms. When Jingleshod realized that Wulgreth intended to exact his revenge against the demons by raising an army of undead from the ruins of Karse, the Iron Axeman finally found the courage to slay his master. Unfortunately, he did so while Wulgreth was casting his epic spell. The arcane energies that the archwizard had been molding at the moment of his death were released, transforming him into a lich and the region surrounding the ruins of Karse into the Dire Wood.

Today, Wulgreth of Netheril is finally dead—destroyed by the magic of Galaeron Nihmedu, an elf shadow adept. But Wul-



Mingaudorr claims another victim

Illustration by Chris Hawkes

greth of Ascalhorn (LE male human lich wizard 20/archmage 3/Netherese arcanist<sup>PG</sup> 5) lives on because his phylactery is the *Karsestone*, which is now in the hands of the goddess Shar. The Dire Wood and its attendant wizard weather cannot be destroyed, and Jingleshod (NG male iron half-golem/half-human fighter 10) cannot die until Wulgreth is slain. The ruined city of Karse is likely to remain a festering sore in the heart of the High Forest for generations to come.

## Legacies of Netheril

The Empire of Magic left behind a legacy of awesome magic and hidden secrets. Its people migrated to many other lands, and their descendants still thrive throughout Faerûn. The buried ruins of Netheril's fallen cities, arcanist laboratories, and long-forgotten outposts provide ample opportunities for adventurers to test their mettle, and forgotten monsters and *portals* to perilous planes threaten Faerûn with destruction every day.

This section offers a selection of adventure hooks involving Netheril, nations and peoples that claim Netherese heritage, and horrible arcane secrets.

### Adventure seeds

Virtually any adventure involving epic magic from the ancient past can use Netheril as a backdrop. The sheer power of the Netherese arcanists and their general lack of concern for the consequences of their magic ensure that plenty of world-threatening artifacts exist for enterprising adventurers to recover, destroy, or keep from the hands of villains.

#### RED TIGER TOTEM

Ranjar Redclaw (CN male human barbarian 5), a warrior of the Red Tiger tribe, has received a series of visions while attempting to commune with his tribe's totem spirit at Beorunna's Well. He now believes that a living incarnation of the Red Tiger totem is trapped in the depths of the well, but he has been unable to convince the tribe's shaman, Aedelthrang the Black (CE male human cleric 9 of Uthgar), of the veracity of his vision. Barred from recruiting other members of his tribe for this "foolhardy chase" and disdaining the help of the Black Lions, who have strayed far from traditional ways, Ranjar is now seeking a band of brave adventurers to help him liberate the trapped spirit.

The truth of the matter is rather more sordid. After spending centuries locked in *temporal stasis*, the mind flayer X'ss'a of Ellyn'taal has managed to extend his consciousness enough to project an image of his companion, the rakshasa known as Ickshar, to the misguided Ranjar. But while the tiger-headed Ickshar might resemble the Red Tiger beast totem, he is more apt to serve Malar than Uthgar. If freed, Ickshar and X'ss'a might well ally with the Red Tigers, or even seize control of the tribe and forge it into a potent threat in the northern reaches of the Silver Marches. An adventurer who manages to communicate with the bey's ghost (CG male human ghost fighter 10/wizard 5/eldritch knight 5) might learn enough to avoid the mind flayer's gambit and leave the mind flayer and the rakshasa trapped within their eternal stasis.

### WAXING OF THE MOON

Kyriani Agrivar (N female half-drow wizard 12) owns a tavern called Selûne's Smile in Waterdeep's Dock Ward. She inherited her business from an avatar of the Moonmaiden who lived in Waterdeep up until the Time of Troubles. During her days as an adventurer, Kyriani and her companions (most of whom are now busy with the reclamation of Tethyr) acquired an artifact known as the *Eye of Selûne* that can open and close temporary *portals* of arbitrary diameter to other planes. Not realizing what they had found, they placed the artifact upon a high shelf and largely forgot about it.

After receiving a vision from Selûne, Kyriani approaches a band of adventurers allied with (or at least friendly to) the Church of Selûne and asks them to take up a quest in the name of the Moonmaiden. If they agree, she tells them to take the artifact to "Elah'zad, the House of the Moon" and "perform the Ritual of the Waxing from the center of the alabaster palace there." Kyriani knows nothing about such a place or ritual, but a bit of research reveals that Elah'zad lies in the Hills of Scent in the heart of the Sword of Anauroch, near the City of Shade. Further delving reveals that the Ritual of the Waxing can be performed by any follower of Selûne on the night following the new moon.

Unbeknownst to Kyriani or the adventurers, this task is but the latest move in the endless chess match between Selûne and her archrival Shar. If the adventurers reach Elah'zad despite attacks by agents of the Shadovar and clerics of the Dark Lady and then correctly perform the required ritual, a temporary *portal* to the Gates of the Moon opens in the sky above the temple. Then, to the amazement or horror of all who watch, the ancient Netherese floating city of Selûnnara returns to Faerûn to wage war against the Shadovar of Thultanthar.

### Buried secrets

All civilizations leave behind secrets and mysteries when they pass into the mists of history, and Netheril was no exception.

#### NETHERESE ARTIFACTS

The lesser arcanists of Low Netheril crafted both quasi-magic items powered by nearby *mythallars* and true magic items that they could employ beyond their demesnes. The latter items, which were generally not rechargeable, often took the form of crowns (known as archyres), gems (*chardalyns*<sup>LD</sup> and gems magicked with the aid of the Attune Gem feat; see *Magic of Faerûn*), scepters (charged devices of middling power compared to wands or staffs; see the Craft Scepter feat, page 8), and shatter-rings (treat as an alternate form of wand).

Very few Netherese runes, sigils, and symbols have survived to the present day because almost all involved movement (animated signs) or metamorphosis (one sign turns into another while operating). Modern-day Faerûnians examining such devices usually find only a lifeless frozen image from either "end" of the operation.

#### NETHERESE MANTLES

Netherese arcanists favored a type of magic item almost unknown today. Introduced to the Netherese by the Fair Folk of Eaelrann



and Cormanthyr, Netherese mantles were personal magical shields constructed through repeated applications of the Craft Contingent Spell feat (see *Unapproachable East*). A typical Netherese mantle included spells such as *endure elements*, *feather fall*, *greater mage hand*, *lesser globe of invulnerability*, *lesser ironguard*<sup>Mag</sup>, *mage hand*, *protection from arrows*, *protection from energy*, and/or *unseen servant*. Some more powerful mantles include spells such as *globe of invulnerability*, *greater ironguard*<sup>Mag</sup>, and *spell turning*.

While such mantles can still be crafted today, no one has duplicated the ability of the archwizards to create a “wardrobe” of differing mantles. For example, a particular Netherese archwizard might “wear” a battle mantle, an everyday mantle, an exploration mantle, and so on, exchanging them as needed.

Unlike most magic items, a mantle cannot be found in a monster’s treasure hoard or in the depths of a ruin. Only a few masters of the Art have revived the ancient practice of mantle construction. However, an unusually large number of Netherese survived the fall of Netheril by embracing lichdom or shadow, lingering on as ghosts, or casting life-sustaining magic. Thus, adventurers could encounter a foe sporting a spell mantle and be ill prepared for his magical versatility.

## Heirs to the empire

Although most of High Netheril’s citizens died when their floating cities crashed, many of Low Netheril’s people survived and went on to found new realms outside the reach of the *lifedrain* spells of the phaerimms. When those realms also failed, the heirs of Netheril scattered farther. Some settled new lands of their own, and others melded with existing human settlements.

### EMPIRE OF SHADOWS

With the exception of the enclave called Selûnarra, which was saved by the grace of Selûne, Thultanthar (the City of Shade) is the only known Netherese enclave anywhere in the Faerûnian cosmology. Although its citizens have been warped and altered by their long exile on the Plane of Shadow, and their shadow magic seems strange and alien, they are still the closest link to Netheril on Faerûn. Unfortunately for scholars everywhere, the Shadovar are notoriously secretive and arrogant. They believe

that their knowledge of Netheril should be kept secret until they rule supreme over a new Netherese Empire.

### FLIGHT OF RAUMARK

The inhabitants of Halruaa (see *Shining South*) and Nimbral are direct descendants of the Netherese, though they also have a trace of Lapalian ancestry. After the Fall of Netheril, some Netherese sought to rebuild, so they founded Anauria, Asram, and Hlondath. Others desired a new home far from the depredations of the phaerimms and Karsus’s Folly. To that end, Raumark, the Archwizard of Hlondath, led a great migration of *skyships* to the Halruaan basin in the southern reaches of Faerûn, where he and his people founded a new nation. Several centuries later, a group of dissatisfied Halruaans broke away and founded the island realm of Nimbral. Although both realms have preserved many of Netheril’s traditions and arcane practices, each has also evolved its own unique traditions.

### NETHERESE PUREBLOODS

Aside from the inhabitants of Thultanthar, three small groups of pureblooded Netherese still exist. The Marsh Drovers of the Farsea Marshes are thought to be Anaurians who were never absorbed by the Chondathan inhabitants of Cormyr. The Tunlar barbarians of the Plains of Tun are believed to be descendants of the Angardt barbarians of southwestern Netheril who have chosen to retain their ancient traditions of sorcery. Finally, the nomadic barbarians of the Ride, just north of the Moonsea, are believed to be descendants of the Rengarath barbarians of northern Netheril (also cousins of the Low Netherese) who retain their hostility to magic.

### UTHGARDT BARBARIANS

These proud, fierce barbarians of the North are descended from Illuskan seafarers driven inland and Netherese survivors from Runlatha. No evidence exists that all the Uthgardt barbarians were related to the Netherese, but a few links remain—a tendency toward black hair in some families, or a few ceremonial words that resemble Netherese phrases, and the like. Of all the Uthgardt tribes, the Tree Ghost tribe has the most Netherese blood, while the Red Tigers have the least.

## spell mantles

Spell mantles are created by using the Spell Mantle feat, described below. A contingent spell is an effect that activates upon the caster when certain conditions are met. The only difference between a contingent spell and a mantled spell is that the user can also trigger the latter voluntarily as a standard action, even if the triggering conditions are not met. In this case, the mantled spell functions like a spell-like ability.

### SPELL MANTLE

You can create a mantle from the contingent spells you carry.

**Prerequisites:** Craft Contingent Spell<sup>Uma</sup>, Knowledge (arcana) 5 ranks, Knowledge (history) 2 ranks.

**Benefit:** You can use a standard action to activate a particular contingent spell you carry as a spell-like ability, even if the conditions specified for its activation have not been met.

**Normal:** When you create a contingent spell, you must specify a condition or event that will trigger the effect, much like the *contingency* spell.



# THE IMPERIAL SOUTH

The vast southwestern region of Faerûn is a diverse land of geographical extremes. Sweeping plains and towering mountains border deep forests or hug the sea along lengthy coastlines. The area boasts sun-scorched desert, vast savannahs, dark and tangled woodlands, and trackless, monster-infested mountains. These exceedingly ancient lands were first settled by the elves of the long-lost Crown Wars kingdoms, then later colonized by djinn and efreet, and finally settled by humans. This chapter focuses on the human kingdoms that arose thousands of years after older realms such as Keltormir and Ilythiir had fallen.

The humans who inhabited these ancient realms were sinister, grasping, and ambitious. Over the course of centuries, the armies of Coramshan, the Shoon Empire, and Jhaamdath massacred nearly all the genies and elves of the south and drove out most of the shield dwarves and halflings. The forces of Coramshan and Mir (forebears of modern Calimshan) destroyed the genies of the Calim Caliphates and Memnonnar. Calimshan in turn overran High Shanatar, driving the Stout Folk back into the Underdark. The rulers of the Shoon Imperium massacred the elves of the southern forests during expansions to the north, east, and south. Only the Fair Folk of the Wealdath and Shilmista survived their reign. In their rush to build a mighty armada that could dominate the Sea of Fallen Stars, the leaders of Jhaamdath struggled mightily to wrest control of the Chondalwood from the elves, but in the end, the high mages of Nikerymath had the last word.

## History

From of the mists of ages long forgotten, human, dwarven, and elven kingdoms arose throughout the south of Faerûn. As in so many other regions, humans became dominant and gradually supplanted the older races. The history of these human civilizations is fraught with murderous dynasties, powerful elemental forces, elven high magic, and genocidal warfare.

## Timeline

Year	Event
-11,000	Taark Shanat the Crusader and his eight sons lead a great exodus of dwarves from Bhaerynden to a new kingdom in the west. These emigrants become known as shield dwarves and establish the underground realm of Shanatar beneath present-day Amn, Tethyr, Calimshan, and the Lake of Steam.
-10,800	The followers of Shanat are attacked by the mysterious inhabitants of Rringlor Noroth. The Stout Folk prevail after Taark slays the four blue dragons that claimed the Rift of Dhalnadar. The <i>Wyrmskull Throne</i> is formed. Taark Shanat renames the wyrms' lair Brightaxe Hall and founds the kingdom of Alatorin.
-10,500	The eight sons of Shanat set off to found their own kingdoms nearby. Because each son claims a different child of Moradin as a patron deity, each subkingdom becomes closely linked with the church of a particular god or goddess.
-9600	The drow city of Guallidurth is founded. The first drow civilizations rise in the Underdark.
-9000	The subkingdoms of Shanatar battle each other in a bid to extend their borders. This series of conflicts is known as the Spawn Wars because the dwarves make extensive use of deepspawn legions.
-8800	After a severe drought, an attack by a flight of red dragons on the great elven forest of Keltormir sparks a terrible fire that destroys thousands of miles of woodlands.
-8170	Drow from Guallidurth attack Alatorin, beginning the First Spider War.



- 8150 The First Spider War ends with the capture of Brightaxe Hall by drow forces. The kingdom of Alatorin falls.
- 8145 The eight reigning kings of Shanatar forge an armistice and turn their armies against the drow in the Second Spider War.
- 8137 The dwarves drive the drow from the caverns of Alatorin. The eight kings of Shanatar pledge on the *Wyrmskull Throne* that they will never again fight one another. The subkingdoms of Shanatar are united under the rule of the king of Ultoksamrin.
- 8100 The mind flayers of Oryndoll attack the eastern kingdoms of Shanatar, beginning the Mindstalker Wars.
- 8080 Shanatar beats back the mind flayers and discovers that the illithids have enslaved Clan Duergar of Barakuir.
- 7800 A noble djinni named Calim arrives in Faerûn and founds the Calim Empire on the present-day site of Calimport.
- 7790 Calimport falls to a flight of dragons. In retaliation, Calim attacks the wyrms in their lairs, driving them north from the Marching Mountains.
- 7717 The reigning ataman of the Great Dismal Delve (a dao lord) establishes a *portal* between his holdings on the Elemental Plane of Earth and a cavern complex beneath what is now the occupied town of Kzelter.
- 7700 Rogue marids from the Calim Empire enter Selmalyr (undersea Vilhon Reach), sparking war with the sea elves. The marids and their jann spread into Serôs, where they ally with the other aquatic races. Because these new Marid States are located in deep water beneath the Hmur Plateau, their residents face no direct elven retribution for their expansionist activities.
- 7690 Calim negotiates the borders of his empire with the elves and dwarves and finally claims the lands south of the River Agis.
- 7687 The noble marid Ajhuu establishes a kingdom within the lands claimed by the Calim Empire. The armies of Calim and Ajhuu battle for sovereignty of the region south of the Marching Mountains in a conflict called the Steam Wars.
- 7684 Calim sinks the marid city of Ajhuutal into the Shining Sea.
- 6800 An efreeti named Memnon arrives in Faerûn and founds the country of Memnonnar north of the River Agis.
- 6500 Elf refugees from Syðrpiir found Nikerymath in the Chondalwood, beginning with the city of Rucien Xan. The armies of Memnon and Calim battle each other, beginning a 400-year-long war known as the Era of Skyfire.
- 6150 The drow of Guallidurth invade Alatorin, beginning the Third Spider War.
- 6120 The dwarves abandon Alatorin to the drow, thereby ending the Third Spider War.
- 6100 The Era of Skyfire ends when the high magic of the elves forcibly disembody Calim and Memnon and binds their elemental essences to the sky and earth, respectively.
- The ongoing struggles of the two noble genies create the Calim Desert.
- 6095 The Shanataran dwarves ally with Calishite humans against the remaining genies.
- 6060 Humans and dwarves oust the last genies from Calim's realm. The humans found Coramshan on the site and rebuild the cities of Calimport and Keltar.
- 5960 Dwarves found the realm of High Shanatar.
- 5800 The nation of Jhaamdath is born when human settlements north of the Chondalwood unite under the Dath Dynasty and its greatest psionic warrior, Jhaam.
- 5750 Jhaamdath's psionic leaders found Dhinnilith, the First City of the Sword.
- 5600 Porrenath is founded, becoming the Second City of the Sword.
- 5500 Jhouram the Port City becomes the Third City of the Sword.
- 5425 Gharrent and Golmuth are founded as the Fourth and Fifth Cities of the Sword.
- 5400 On the slopes of Mount Kellarak, dwarves kill some human tomb robbers, including the heir to the throne of Coramshan. This incident precipitates three millennia of war between the dwarves and the humans of Coramshan.
- 5360 The dwarves of High Shanatar battle the giants of Nedeheim in a conflict called the Giant Wars. During this sixty-year period, more than half of the giant population south of the Cloud Peaks is exterminated, and the realm of Nedeheim is reduced to scattered clanholds.
- 5330 The Murabir (warlord-ruler) of Coramshan seizes much of southern High Shanatar (including Iltakar, home to the modern-day ruins of Shoonach), while dwarf armies battle giants to the north. Lirremar (present-day Hlondeth) becomes Jhaamdath's Sixth City of the Sword.
- 5300 The First Age of Calimshan begins. The land is divided into two realms, Mir and Coramshan.
- 5270 In alliance with Coramshan, Mir begins wars of conquest to the east.
- 5250 The twin cities of Tuoxent and Hollinth become Jhaamdath's Seventh and Eighth Cities of the Sword.
- 5100 Mir cements control of all lands south of the River Ith and begins founding fortress-cities on the northern shore of the Lake of Steam.
- 5032 The armies of Mir and Jhaamdath clash for the first time in the Mir-Jhaamdath War. Mir is dealt a crushing blow.
- 5007 Coramshan and Mir unite in the face of the threat from Jhaamdath.
- 5005 Coramshan and Jhaamdath declare a truce, and both nations abandon their claims to the Lake of Steam. Mir and Coramshan combine to form Calimshan.
- 4850 Jhirrent is founded, becoming the Ninth City of the Sword.
- 4620 Inixrien becomes the Tenth City of the Sword.

- 4470 Corrant is founded, becoming Jhaamdath's Eleventh City of the Sword.
- 4230 Mirrindith the Last becomes the Twelfth City of the Sword.
- 4000 The duergar rebel against their illithid masters and eventually free themselves from the mind flayers' dominion. They carve out their own holdings in the northern Underdark beneath the Orsraun Mountains and in isolated caverns deep beneath the Great Glacier.
- 2600 The last forces of High Shanatar fall to Calimshan along the banks of the Sulduskoon River. Fleeing dwarves seal the entrances to Deep Shanatar.
- 2391 Streaking meteors are seen over the Lake of Steam. Zokir, City of Orbs, is founded beneath the Alimir Mountains.
- 2381 Beholders plague Jhaamdathan and Calishite colonies around the Alimir Mountains.
- 1900 The Third Age of Calimshan begins. The empire now includes Coramshan, Mir, Tethyr, and Iltkazar.
- 1850 Under the leadership of their greatest queen, Duerra, the gray dwarves of Underspires launch attacks against the drow of Undraeth, the illithids of Oryndoll, and eventually the remnants of Deep Shanatar.
- 1838 Ylveraasahlisar, the Rose Dragon, conquers Calimshan.
- 1800 In a series of conflicts called the Kin Clashes, the descendants of Clan Duergar invade the realms of Ultoksamrin and Holorarar in Deep Shanatar, and others soon follow. Only Iltkazar survives the gray dwarf invasion. Duerra is rewarded with divine ascension. Dunspeirrin, City of Sunken Spires, soon falls into a centuries-long decline.
- 1726 Calishite nobles slay Ylveraasahlisar.
- 1700 Calishite nobles begin hunting elves for sport.
- 1428 Beholders from the Alimir Mountains conquer Calimshan and Iltkazar.
- 1402 Calimshan is freed, and the beholders are expelled from the nation.
- 1280 Resurgent beholders attack Calimshan along the Alimir Peninsula.
- 1080 The beholders are pushed back to the Lake of Steam. Calimshan's rule extends as far east as Mintar.
- 1050 For nearly four hundred years, Calimshan's armies slowly drive the eye tyrants back into the Underdark.
- 900 The Fourth Age of Calimshan begins with the military in control of the empire.
- 790 The Night Wars begin with the first drow attacks on Calimshan's borders.
- 680 *Tear of Creeping Thieves*: Calimshan colonizes the Lake of Steam.
- 670 *Tear of Unfurled Sails*: For three hundred years, increasing numbers of slaves escape from Calimshan and Tethyr.
- 650 *Tear of Flames Rising*: Iltkazar becomes independent when Calishite power begins to wane in the face of drow attacks.
- 530 *Tear of Meager Means*: The Night Wars end.
- 450 *Tear of Dwarves' Descent*: Calimshan loses control of the Lake of Steam and the Shining Sea.
- 400 *Tear of Gilded Sky*: Calishites begin settling land around the Deepwash.
- 387 *Tear of Shattered Walls*: Tethyrian clans sack Calishite-controlled Zazesspur.
- 307 *Tear of Illuminated Vellum*: Tethyrian clans conquer the city of Myratma and rename it Artrimmar.
- 293 *Tear of the Tyrant Hawks*: Calimaronn falls to Tethyrian barbarians, who rename it Ithmong.
- 288 *Tear of Eight Lightnings*: Calimshan accedes independence to Tethyr.
- 276 *Tear of Overflowing Casks*: A bloody coup in Jhaamdath replaces the psiocracy of bladelds with a militant emperor, who commands the building of a great navy on the Inner Sea. Jhaamdathan loggers come into conflict with the elves of the Chondalwood. Over the next twenty years, Jhaamdathan forces hunt down and slaughter the elves.
- 255 *Tear of Furious Waves*: A tidal wave created by elven high magic destroys Jhaamdath.
- 230 *Tear of Loss*: Calimshan retakes Calimaronn (Ithmong) and Myratma (Artrimmar).
- 221 *Tear of Shambling Shadows*: Along with their elf allies, the forces of Tethyr retake Ithmong and slay all Calishites.
- 212 *Tear of High Thrones*: Myratma falls to Tethyrian barbarian clans.
- 170 *Tear of Many Eyes*: The Eye Tyrant Wars begin.
- 166 *Tear of Seven Loves Lost*: The Eye Tyrant Wars end.
- 160 *Tear of the Stone Giant*: The Dodking refounds Nedeheim.
- 5 *Tear of Feuds*: Tethyr falls under the control of Calimshan's syl-pasha.
- 27 *Tear of Shadowed Blades*: The Sixth Age of Calimshan, also called the Age of Shoon, begins.
- 66 *Tear of the Spellbound Heir*: Mith Barak the Clanless claims the throne of Iltkazar, the last remaining kingdom of Shanatar.
- 144 *Tear of the Fear and Flame*: Chondath is founded on the ruins of Jhaamdath.
- 376 *Tear of the Leaping Hare*: The Shoon Imperium extends Calimshan's borders to the High Moor but is beaten back through Amn and Tethyr—all the way to Valashar—by the forces of Cormyr.
- 450 *Tear of the Corrie Fist*: The assassination of Qysar Amahl Shoon VII at the hands of Prince Strohm of Tethyr ends the Age of Shoon.
- 864 *Tear of the Broken Branch*: The lich Rysellan secretly founds the Twisted Rune in Calimport.
- 900 *Tear of the Thirsty Sword*: Civil war breaks out in Chondath.
- 1018 *Tear of the Dracorage*: The blue dragon Sapphiraktar destroys Calimport and Keltar.



- 1235 *Tear of the Black Horde:* A devastating invasion of orcs from the north takes the human lands of Amn, Tethyr, and Calimshan by surprise.
- 1354 *Tear of the Bow:* The Cowled Wizards of Amn discover the *Wyrmskull Throne*.
- 1360 *Tear of the Turret:* Pirates in the Bay of Skulls discover the *Wyrmskull Throne* of Shanatar in the sheltering lee of Hook Isle; then it is once again lost to the world.
- 1369 *Tear of the Gauntlet:* A large group of crusading gold dwarves leaves the Great Rift to reclaim the lost caverns of Deep Shanatar. The duergar of Dunspeirrin march on Deep Shanatar as well. The War of Gold and Gloom soon rages between the two armies of the Stout Folk.

## keepers of the past

Numerous libraries, colleges, and monasteries throughout the south preserve the ancient history of these exotic lands. Most of these institutions are located in Calimshan's coastal cities and in remote mountainous regions. A few are administered by enigmatic loremasters who pursue agendas that go beyond simply recording the past.

### EARTHVULT

When Shanatar was yet young under the mountains, its mages asked Diuthaizos, a learned dao from the Elemental Plane of Earth, to be their great lorekeeper. The dao acquiesced and has been the forgotten custodian of Shanatar's history for nearly thirteen thousand years now.

The story of all Shanatar, High and Deep, is carved in Terran on the walls of the Earthvault, a vast cylindrical cavern under the Marching Mountains. The text is a continuous spiral that begins at the vault's lowest point and has been slowly winding upward as the history of the dwarves unfolds. Diuthaizos has only lately recorded the history of Itkazar and the recent battles between the duergar and the gold dwarves.

Only dwarves are permitted to enter the Earthvault, although Diuthaizos accepts generous bribes to admit nondwarves. The dao is quite content with his tasks, since the work is easy and his enslaved duergar have built him an impressive hall. These slaves have also enriched their genie master with gems and gold pilfered from various Underdark ruins.

### THE FIRESTORM CABAL

The air and fire genasi of this secret order claim ancestral ties to the age-old elemental dynasties founded by Calim and Memnon. In a hidden keep on Calimshan's southwestern coast, the Firestorm Cabal maintains meticulous records of Calishite and Tethyr-ian families with elemental bloodlines. Taken all together, the thousands of scrolls in their library form a detailed history of the genie-founded land, with descriptions of the dynasties, their laws, and the major events of Calimshan and Tethyr throughout the past nine thousand years.

At present, the Firestorm Cabal has fewer than two dozen members, but it accepts genasi from either Calimshan or Tethyr as initiates. Recently, the members have been hotly debating the

prospect of freeing their imprisoned grandsires. Some dream of great rewards from the noble genies, while others fear a backlash against geniekind not seen since the days of Coramshan.

The cabal is ruled by a Council of Five whose foremost members are Arhapan (LN male air genasi fighter 9) and Suilizon (LE female fire genasi wizard 10). Despite differences of opinion within the group, their belief in the superiority of all genasi ensures continued cooperation among the members. This "genasi first" policy has led to the recent admittance of the cabal's first water genasi, Ahamuor (NE female water genasi cleric 6 of Istishia), who can trace her bloodline to the noble marid Ajhuu.

### MONASTERY OF ST. FANAL

Founded nearly fourteen centuries ago by a priest of Ilmater, the Monastery of St. Fanal is dedicated to the principle that knowledge of the past can alleviate the sufferings of the present. This center for scholarly learning, art, and historical knowledge is located in the hills just west of the Alimir Mountains, on the Pevadaas Trail. Saint Fanal made it his cause to learn, teach, and preserve history for all. The priest believed that making knowledge available to the oppressed could expand their capabilities and thus give them opportunities not normally open to them.

The monastery trains scribes to be objective in both observation and investigation. Its library holds a number of historical tomes penned since 132 DR that detail the human kingdoms surrounding the Lake of Steam—namely the Border Kingdoms, the Shaar, and Calimshan—from the Age of Shoon onward.

Brother Bedon (LG male human cleric 7 of Ilmater/monk 3), the head of the monastery, has established a policy that no one seeking knowledge can be denied. He sees his work as a tool to end regional strife and makes a concerted effort to assist all visitors committed to good and peace.

## songs and stories

Ten thousand years of human civilization have led to the creation of a number of immortal legends and tales in the south. From the royal courtyards of Calimport to the street stages of Tethyr, actors, bards, and minstrels sing and act out the legends from which the area's heritage is woven. Most of these stories serve to entertain; others contain clues to ancient mysteries still unsolved.

### THE CALEPH AUGURIES

Ul'sahab, the fabled city of seers, is located on Mount Abbalayat, an isolated peak along the western ridge of the Marching Mountains. This sprawling collection of squat, unadorned stone buildings and mazelike streets is ringed with high walls that ward off mountain snows and deadly downdrafts. Travel to Ul'sahab requires careful navigation through areas of treacherous mountain passes, icy badlands, and wind-blasted cliffs.

The city is home to the Abbalayar, the famed arcane prophets of Calimshan. Some insist that the seers are neither human nor genasi, but a new race of humankind. Whatever their nature, devout prophets of the Abbalayar claim to have received visions

concerning every major and minor event in Faerûn for many centuries.

Every twenty years, gifted members of the Abbalayar are dispatched throughout Faerûn to share their prophecies. The last group left Ul'sahab in 1355 DR.

### THE FOUNDING STORIES

The children of Calimshan learn much of their nation's history from the Founding Stories, a collection of hundreds of local fables, myths, and legends. The stories center around the misadventures of Calishite men and women who were forced to deal with deceptive genies, foreign traders, and monstrous creatures. The people of Calimshan take great pride in the Founding Stories, and many believe that at least a kernel of truth anchors each fable.

More than a century ago, the great Calimshan ruler Kamar'yn Saban el Djenispool ordered a tome of the Founding Stories printed for each household in Calimshan. Hundreds of these illustrated, leather-bound books can still be found in Calimshan's cities and towns.

## important sites

The mysterious ruins of the South beckon to many adventurers, but the difficult climate and dangerous creatures discourage many groups. The forests and mountains are home to hostile dragons, dwarves, elves, and giants, all of which recall the cruelties that Calimshan, Jhaamdath, and their successors have visited on their neighbors over the centuries. Tribes of giants, orcs, and goblin kin dwell throughout the sparsely settled wilderness, making travel through such areas especially dangerous.

## coramshan

The human kingdom of Coramshan emerged from Calim's former empire following a bloody purge of ruling genies. Named after the warrior-hero Coram, the new kingdom became the first human-ruled realm in the south of Faerûn. Coramshan encompassed all the lands south of the River Agis and the Marching Mountains, between the coasts of the Shining Sea and the Sea of Swords. At that time, the Calim Desert was much smaller, and most of Coramshan was a fertile plain. Today, little is known of the ancient empire except for tales of old genie magic and near-mythical dynasties.

### CALIM SEE

The bakkals (priestly rulers) of Coramshan and the caliphs of Calimshan were buried in Calim's See, a cluster of great mausoleums built into the northern Marching Mountains. Dozens of passages in this ancient burial ground lead to great underground crypts that bear the names of famous Calishite dynasties. The bakkals believed that a rich burial ensured a better position in the afterlife, so nearly all the rulers buried here took copious amounts of gold and gems with them into their graves.

All the mausoleums are heavily warded with spelltraps and inhabited by genies bound to protect the deceased for all eternity. The people of both Coramshan and Calimshan buried their dead in Calim See until the end of Calimshan's Seventh Age, when battling genies caused an avalanche of rock that buried the main entrance.

### DARK CALIMPORT

Deep beneath Calimport lies a dark city made up of innumerable levels of wells, sewers, tombs, caverns, and cellars. Centuries of war, dragon attacks, and devastation have added layer upon layer to this strange collection of ruins. Known as Dark Calimport (or Muzhahajaarnadah), this undercity traces its origins back to Coramshan, whose crumbling basements and sewers form the undercity's foundation.

Thieves and assassins hide out in the upper levels of Dark Calimport, conducting dark bazaars to trade foul magic, forbidden lore, and illicit secrets. Kobolds, skulks<sup>FF</sup>, and feral vermin roam the middle and lower levels, and rumor holds that a *gate* to Ithal Pass lies somewhere within a middle level.

In the deepest level of Dark Calimport stands a many-pillared temple of dark blue stone that was once dedicated to Tyche but has been corrupted to the service of Shar. The Temple of Old Night, as it is now called, is Shar's greatest stronghold, and her clerics claim absolute dominion over the lowest third of Dark Calimport. Irtemara el Eradsari (NE female human cleric 9 of Shar/nightcloak<sup>FP</sup> 8) is high priestess of the temple.

### DASHADJEN

This military fortress-city in the Calim Desert housed Calim's armies until Coramshan seized it after the Era of Skyfire. Centuries of conflict between the disembodied spirits of Calim and Memnon have reduced the once-formidable fortress to sand and fractured chunks of stone.

Illustration by Matt Cavotta & Steve Prescott



*An assassin of Dark Calimport*



A single shrine, the Altar of Air, that stands in the middle of the fortress has so far been spared the genies' wrath. Built by lesser djinn in the early years of Coramshan, it honors the imprisoned genie lord Calim and contains an impressive array of elemental magic and treasure for him to reclaim upon his release.

El Sadhara (LE female mummy cleric 14 of Akadi), an undead priestess who has mistaken Calim's presence for a manifestation of her airy god, now guards the long-forgotten shrine.

### THE NECROPOLISES OF NYKKAR

Throughout the long history of Coramshan and Calimshan, the necropar (clerics of the dead) prepared the dead for afterlife in the sacred necropolises of Nykkar. The bakkals and nobles were entombed in Calim See, while commoners were buried under these necropolises.

**First Necropolis:** This collection of ruined buildings sits on a wind-blasted plateau in the hills west of the Marching Mountains. Crumbling walls and fallen roofs are all that remain of ancient preparation chambers, laboratories, temples, and libraries, but dozens of scattered stairwells still give access to the underground tombs. Dirt and debris carried by the constant winds have scoured the ruins, eroding away the stone signs and statues that once graced its buildings.

A strange magic residue on the plateau bestows the benefits of the Empower Spell feat on spells from the school of necromancy, though they do not require higher spell slots or longer casting times. Azzami (LN male djinni fighter 5), the guardian of Nykkar, prevents the ogre tribes dwelling in the mountains and valleys around the First Necropolis from plundering the tombs.

**Second Necropolis:** Four decaying temples dedicated to the elements still stand in the City of Sorrow, which rests in the hills just south of the central Marching Mountains. The Second Necropolis served as both preparation place and burial ground for hundreds of thousands of deceased Calishites from Calimshan's Second Age until the Age of Shoon. The crypts below the second necropolis are more grand and opulent than those of the first, featuring immense mausoleums and family crypts guarded by elaborate traps that combine spells with physical perils. Nizzem (LN male djinni rogue 5), the twin of Azzami, guards the City of Sorrow.

**Third Necropolis:** The Isle of Memory, which lies off the southern shore of Calimshan near the mouth of the River of Ice, is the only one of the three necropolises that is currently active. Its purpose is the same as that of the others—to prepare the rulers and nobles of Calimshan for the afterlife and inter them.

Yazind (LN female human cleric 7 of Kelemvor) is the senior necropar on the Isle of Memory. In an edifice called the Seven-Skulled Tower, she maintains a library of the dead in which the names of all those buried in Calim See and the three necropolises are recorded. Yazind also records tomb desecrations, undead risings, and grave thefts in any of the necropolises. As an ardent worshiper of Kelemvor, Yazind frequently hires trustworthy adventurers to bring peace to restless spirits that she finds in the older necropolises.

## High shanatar

At its height, the kingdom of High Shanatar stretched from the River Agis and the Marching Mountains to the Troll Mountains, and from the western coast to the Alamir Mountains. The kingdom included cities both atop and beneath the ruined cities of Memnonnar, as well as isolated dwarfholds carved into the mountains to the north.

During the 3,360 years that High Shanatar lasted, the Stout Folk rarely knew peace. Wars against the First Kingdom of Mir and the giants of Nedeheim greatly weakened the dwarf kingdom, and centuries of persecution by the rulers of Calimshan drove it into a long, inexorable decline. A few citizens of High Shanatar eventually fled underground to Deep Shanatar or voyaged north to found other realms, such as Oghrann, Ammarindar, Delzoun, and Haunghdannar.

Most of High Shanatar's surviving ruins share traits typical of shield dwarf realms—great square chambers, vaulted ceilings, and vast halls, some measuring as much as a mile long. Invariably, such ruins are protected by deadly mechanical traps, golems, and magical rooms that are actually constructs.

### FORTRESS OF THE WAILING DWARF

Fortress Kuldervon is the proper name of a memorial citadel built nearly seven thousand years ago in the Troll Mountains to honor the dwarf hero Karlyn Kuldervon. Carved into the western mountainside of Mount Batyr is an image of a tremendous dwarf. Wind flowing into its hollow ears and eyes rushes out its mouth, producing an eerie cacophony of cries that echoes throughout the valley below. Behind the graven dwarf lies an entire dwarven city that was abandoned when the rest of High Shanatar fell. The exiled hunched giant Managg (CE male maur<sup>Und</sup> giant barbarian 3) rules over half a dozen troll tribes dwelling within Fortress Kuldervon.

### THE GREAT SPANS

The most visible ruins of High Shanatar are its rune-covered bridges, which span rivers and valleys all over southwestern Faerûn. These great stone bridges are adorned with ancient runes that serve as maps to the fallen holds of High Shanatar.

In the Omlaranding Mountains is a great span infested with displacer beasts and wyverns. Known as Borthun's Walk, it leads to a forgotten keep built by Clan Diamondblade. Along Eshpurta Road just east of the Amnite city of Keczulla stand twin bridges built by the dwarves of the subkingdom Korolnor. Clan Kuldervon Bridge (called the Axe Bridge by Amnites) spans the Vudlur River. The Karlyn Bridge (called the Star Bridge by the Amnites), which spans the Splendarrillur River, was part of a dwarf-built road that led to the Fortress of the Wailing Dwarf.

### NEMESSOR TUNNEL

Naturally formed passages lead from surface caves on Nemessor Island to the ruins of an abandoned mining colony below. The great hall and several side chambers are filled with piles of broken stone—the remains of the structures that once housed the colony. Scattered about the chambers is a variety of aged and rusted mining equipment of dwarven make.

Beyond the ruined hall, a partially collapsed tunnel leads east under the Sea of Swords, then branches out into a network of subterranean highways that passes under Zazesspur, Shoonach, and the Starspire Mountains. The tunnel and its side chambers are choked with deadly plants—notably shriekers, sporebats<sup>FF</sup>, udoroots<sup>XP</sup>, violet fungi, and yellow musk creepers<sup>FF</sup>. For centuries, several tribes of xenophobic myconids<sup>MM2</sup> have rooted here, cultivating the aggressive plants to defend their kingdom.

### RRINNOROTH

This dwarven ghost town sits on a plateau on a southwestern mountain in the Kuldin Peaks. Rrinnoth was built as an outpost to protect High Shanatar from the goblin raiders in the valleys below. A major tunnel below the site leads down to the ruins of Drakkalor, an abandoned city of Deep Shanatar now inhabited by a confederation of skulks.

An ancient red dragon named Charvekannathor the Scarlet has laired in Rrinnoth for more than eight hundred years. Over the centuries, he has stripped the cavernous dwarfhold of every valuable and set up explosive traps and teleportation wards to protect his lair and treasure hoard. Charvekannathor takes flight several times a month to hunt prey in the nearby valleys.

### SWORDSMERE

Inside Mount Sklagarra in the western part of the Troll Mountains, an abandoned complex of dwarf-carved caverns surrounds a subterranean lake full of carnivorous, sightless fish. On a lone island in the center of the lake sits an elegant manor called Herald's Hall that serves as the secret headquarters of the Heralds, a renegade group of Harpers. The manor contains innumerable artifacts, spellbooks, and weapons that have made history in the past few centuries.

The Heralds sealed off the passages leading from Swordsmere to Deep Shanatar to ensure their privacy, leaving no external entrances. Thus, the complex is accessible only by *portals* from Athkatla, Baldur's Gate, Beregost, Eshpurta, and Murann. Dozens of runic guardians and shield guardians patrol the tunnels and caverns, and even the area under the lake. They recognize only Herald members and have orders to contain and imprison all others.

## Memnonnar

More than nine thousand years ago, the noble efreeti Memnon founded a kingdom on a narrow strip of land along the Sea of Swords. Memnonnar, as it was named, was bounded by the Sulduskoon River in the north and the River Agis in the south. Its cities were filled with towers, temples, and citadels of scarlet brick topped by domes and minarets inlaid with brass, much like the buildings in the fabled City of Brass on the Elemental Plane of Fire. The streets teemed with human, genasi, and efreet citizens, while slaves toiled underground, mining gems and precious metal for their fiery lords.

After Memnon's imprisonment by elven magic, the surviving efreet foresaw their doom and hid their genie lore and magic from the humans. Shortly thereafter, the forces of Coramshan drove off and slew Memnon's genies and razed most of his cities. Dwarves

out of High Shanatar settled in the abandoned cities, only to be expelled later by furious Calishites who would brook no dwarves within their lands. During the ensuing centuries, the Calishites resettled many of the ancient efreet cities and built new ones over the ruins of the old. Thus, most of Memnonnar's surviving ruins represent a mix of dwarven, efreet, and human architecture.

### MEMNONNAR

Memnon led his Army of Fire to Faerûn through the *portal* known as the Great Brass Gate and founded the city of Memnonnar around it. Now, thousands of years later, half of Memnon's once-great efreet metropolis lies in ruins. The surviving half, now the Calishite city of Memnon, lies just across the Agis River.

The fact that the brick ruins of Memnonnar are hot to the touch is a smoldering reminder that an open *portal* to the Elemental Plane of Fire that lies below them. Hidden under the smoking rubble are luxurious palace rooms, lost chambers filled with arcane treasures, and vaults overflowing with rubies and genie gold. Armed garrisons from Fort Agis make annual forays to these ruins to hunt elementals and seek treasure.

The mine tunnels below the ruins, where the walls are so hot that they glow, are home to fire elementals, mephits, salamanders, and various other heat-loving creatures.

Deep below the center of the original city lies the Great Brass Gate—a massive brass ring about 100 feet in diameter that hovers vertically above the dungeon floor. The gate is a two-way *portal* to the Elemental Plane of Fire, and the hellish conditions around it have been created by *portal* seepage. The passages and caverns nearest the gate are filled with smoky, unbreathable air, and any creature within 50 feet of it takes 2d6 points of fire damage every round.

The Great Brass Gate has been guarded since the fall of the city by a bodyguard of Memnon who was tasked to serve until death. Ufbrann (LE male efreeti fighter 4) allows only creatures with fiery bloodlines (such as fire genasi or characters with the Bloodline of Fire feat) to pass through the gate.

### MYRATMA

The ruins of this ancient efreet settlement lie beneath the fortified Tethyrian city bearing the same name. The dwarves of High Shanatar removed the brass fixtures that had adorned the original city and dismantled its buildings to line their newly built tunnels and halls with scarlet brick.

A vengeful undead guardian named Kalloch (LE female human mummy sorcerer 9) has lived in Myratma's tunnels since the fall of the city. Over the centuries, she has amassed a mighty army of undead, recruiting her soldiers from the Tethyrian graveyards that connect to her tunnels. Flameskulls (see page 171), ghouls, ghosts, and worse now clog Myratma's ancient tunnels, waiting for Kalloch's order to feast on the citizenry above.

## Jhaamdath

The empire of Jhaamdath originated north of the Nikerymath Forest (now the Chondalwood) as a confederation of twelve cities that shared strong interests in military expansion and mercantile trade. Jhaamdath's people were renowned for their



swordsmanship, a fact that earned the confederation the name Twelve Cities of the Sword.

Jhaamdath was originally governed by a psiocracy—a ruling body of powerful psions and psychic warriors known as bladelords who were drawn from prominent noble families. In –276 DR, a military coup dissolved the bladelord psiocracy and installed a powerful metamind (see *Expanded Psionics Handbook*) as emperor.

Imperial Jhaamdath expanded rapidly west and south. Its leaders also turned a covetous eye on the Sea of Fallen Stars and began to build a great naval armada in preparation for conquering the inland sea. The need for wood to build their ships turned the people of Jhaamdath into terrible despoilers of nearby woodlands. Jhaamdathan forces mercilessly slaughtered the elves of Nikerymath when the latter fought to defend their forest home, but still Jhaamdath sought more wood. In desperation, the elves of the Chondalwood used elven high magic to call forth a tremendous tidal wave from the Sea of Fallen Stars and send it crashing over Jhaamdath, drowning all twelve of its great cities.

The tidal wave expanded Jhaamdath Bay and reshaped it into the Vilhon Reach of today. A few isolated towers and keeps that survived the great wave later sank underwater because of the changed seascape. The only Jhaamdathan sites that entirely escaped the catastrophe were graveyards and outposts far from the submerged cities and the ruins of Lirremar, now buried beneath the city of Hlondeth.

Today, the sea basin floor under the Vilhon Reach (called Selmal Basin) is littered with the rubble of Jhaamdath's twelve cities. Psionic energy leaking from the dozens of famed psionic swords and artifacts that now lie beneath stones, sea plants, and sand has perverted many of the local sea creatures into phrenic monsters (see *Expanded Psionics Handbook*). The structures that sank intact are now occupied by koalinths, sea hags, and scraggs. The dangers inherent to underwater adventuring have thus far prevented most land dwellers from exploring this sea basin.

### DHINNILITH

No underwater explorer has yet located the ruins of Dhinnilith, Jhaamdath's imperial city, but legends persist that it somehow survived the ancient catastrophe. On a moonless night every few years, a phantom city of stone slowly appears in the air just above the waters of the Vilhon Reach. At sunrise, the city fades away to whatever nether dimension spawned it. Sages are at a loss to explain the city's strange appearances, the last of which occurred in the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR).

The phantom city is deserted except for a cloudlike undead creature formed from the psychic residue of the city's sudden demise. This tormented creature is a caller in darkness (see *Expanded Psionics Handbook*) of unusual size and power (22 Hit Dice). Its form shows thousands of human faces, all screaming out silently in terror and pain.

No one has yet explored this ghost city, or even determined whether its streets are substantial enough to be walked upon.

### DORDRIEN

After the fall of the Twelve Cities of the Sword, a Jhaamdathan noble named Dordrien led a band of survivors north across the Sea of Fallen Stars and founded a town on the site that would

later become Daggerdale. On the western slopes of the Dagger Hills, he raised a sizable keep to guard the small Jhaamdathan enclave, which endured for more than a century before orc raids caused its decline.

Few traces remain today of the human settlement that preceded Daggerdale. However, the crumbling foundations of Dordrien Keep are still visible on a barren hilltop, and the crypts of the Dordrien family can be found 2 miles to the north of that ruin.

The Crypts of Dordrien are built into the limestone caverns beneath Dagger Hills. Natural tunnels in the caves lead to a drow outpost called Szith Morcane in the Upper Underdark. Drow refugees from the recently destroyed city of Maerimydra had been using the crypts as a staging ground for surface raids until adventurers hired by Randal Morn, ruler of Daggerdale, ended that effort. The crypts are now home to numerous undead Jhaamdathan royalty, plus a nest of bebiliths summoned by the drow wizard Solom Ned'razak, Archmage of Szith Morcane (CE male drow wizard 13/archmage 2). Irritated by constant interruptions from the surface, Solom plans to create a magical barrier in the crypts to permanently separate his outpost from the surface world.

### JHOURAM

Built on a hilly region just 10 miles south of the Silvanus' Eyes islands in Jhaamdath Bay, this port city was well known for its robust trade with the coastal kingdoms surrounding the Sea of Fallen Stars. When the elf-wrought disaster struck, Jhouram's hills dispersed the main force of the tidal wave, preserving many of the buildings behind them. The sections of the city that survived the disaster later sank, though they remained mostly intact.

The gray-stoned rotundas, colonnaded halls, and domed palaces that made up Jhouram's center are now grown over with barnacles and ropy sea plants. Marintagh (CE female sea hag sorcerer 10) and a pair of green hags rule over a tribe of kapoacinths from the palace of the city's bladelord. The sea hag's minions have recovered a wealth of psionic weapons, gold, and gems from the port city's vaults and armory.

## shoon imperium

In the Sixth Age of Calimshan, the Shoon Dynasty established its brutal rule over the empire. During the next four centuries, the Shoon Imperium also gained control of lands from the River Chionthar to Tashalar, and from the Trackless Sea to the Landrise. The dynasty of Shoon spanned a mere fourteen rulers, and all its emperors were talented spellcasters and arcane researchers who delighted in creating magic items and spells.

Four centuries of unbridled Shoon expansionism demanded construction on an unheard-of scale. Dozens of thick-walled fort-towers and watchtowers were built to secure newly conquered lands, and numerous extravagant palaces were built of colorful brick to house the ever-traveling royal court. In secret, the Shoon emperors ordered the creation of subterranean chambers in which they could conduct life-prolonging experiments in absolute privacy.

The notoriously cruel Shoon rulers oversaw the massive slaughter of dwarves, gnomes, and elves in neighboring realms and conducted bizarre experiments on captured unicorns, dragons, and fey, hoping to wring the secrets of eternal youth from their captives. During this time, wild elves were eradicated from the Snakewood, and most of the elves in the Wealdath and the Forest of Mir were slaughtered. Nor were the merciless Shoon above killing Calishites—their violent purges slew millions of citizens and reduced huge sections of Shoon cities to dust and rubble. The rulers' overly cruel nature and great ambitions ultimately caused its enemies to unite and bring down the empire, destroying the Shoon dynasty and burning down its infamous imperial city.

### SHOONACH

In the Shoon dynasty's last days, Shoonach, the imperial capital, was razed by the forces of King Strohm of Tethyr and a silver dragon descended from Rhimnasarl, the great wyrm slain by Qysar Shoon IV. Now the former seat of the evil Shoon Imperium is a sprawling, ruined metropolis alongside the River Agis. Miles of crumbling stone buildings and paved streets radiate outward from the remains of the imperial center. Dozens of undead beings and monstrous tribes dwell within these ruins, prevented from escaping by ancient magical wards set by Shoon's emperors.

The ruins of Shoonach consist of more than a half-dozen identifiable districts, all of which lie within its great outer walls. The fields in the city's western, central, and southeastern areas (once called Fedhiyajar, or Grain Towns) now grow wild wheat,

tendriculoses, and other carnivorous plants. Only shattered barracks, smithies, and training arenas now remain in the district of Itakar (once called the Warrior's City) in the northern part of Shoonach. This district is home to fifty gnolls who follow Bhurkh (LE male gnoll fighter 6), a charismatic leader seeking to conquer the ruins. Just west of the Imperial City district was Mamlukkar, the Slave Village. Massive walls were erected around this district after Shoonach fell, presumably to stave off some magical disease that had swept the area. The moans of plague-rotted undead can be heard day and night from inside the walled area.

The Imperial City district, built around the great hill known as the Imperial Mount, lies at the heart of the ruins. In this section are the burnt shells of the imperium's once lavish temples, palaces, official buildings, and residences. Undead from this area constantly attack the tribes of lamias, gnolls, and goblins that live in Shoonach's other districts. An extensive undercity below Imperial Mount serves as an outpost for a small garrison of drow that has already recovered a wealth of magic items.

In the eastern section of Shoonach is Debukker, the Town of Tombs—a wide-open expanse of broken boulevards and crumbling statues. Dozens of tunnel entrances in this area lead underground to opulent crypts and tombs in which mortuary paintings and carved reliefs portray the grandiose lives of long-dead viziers and calephs. Below the tomb city lies the hidden lair of Qysar Shoon VII (NE male human demilich<sup>EL</sup> necromancer 31/archmage 5)—perhaps the last survivor of the Shoon Dynasty. After centuries of lichdom, Shoon VII became a demilich and was somehow imprisoned within the Tome of the Unicorn. Freed just before the Fall of the Gods,

Illustration by Ralph Horsley



The ruins of Shoonach



Shoon swapped bodies with Zallanora Argentresses (N female moon elf wizard 3) while attempting to drain her soul, thanks to the magical chaos of the Time of Troubles. Zallanora is now imprisoned in the Tome of the Unicorn in his stead.

The Shoon qysars protected their cities with *mythal*-like magic wards and spell effects that still prevent undead from entering or leaving the city. Fire spells cast anywhere in Shoonach are treated as if affected by the Maximize Spell feat, although they do not require higher spell slots or longer casting times. Teleportation magic and spells with the air or cold descriptor are impeded, requiring a Spellcraft check (DC 15 + spell level) to cast. A -4 penalty applies to attack rolls and damage rolls with all projectile weapons.

## Tethir

The Forest of Wealdath (once called Tethir) is a woodland of great mystery and intrigue. Using high magic developed ages ago by the elves of ancient Keltormir, the Fair Folk of the forest imprisoned two godlike genies of Calimshan. But humans fearful of high magic began to persecute the elves of Keltormir's fragmented forests. The ensuing centuries of warfare with Calimshan reduced the elf population of Tethir to nearly nothing, leaving dozens of abandoned villages and towns throughout the Forest of Wealdath.

The ruins of Tethir, like the elven villages of today, are hidden high in the treetops of the forest. Sculpted by a mysterious life-magic that the native elves still practice, the ancient villages of Tethir are composed of magically shaped trees linked by bridges molded from vines and branches. Few walking upon the forest's trails realize that they are traveling under a lost elf enclave, since the individual dwellings are concealed in hollowed treetops and on disguised platforms.

Many of these abandoned elven villages still endure, although the passage of time has rendered them unrecognizable. Centuries of unchecked tree growth have concealed many of the older dwellings, and most have sustained some damage from lightning, wind, fire, and blight. Explorers skilled in the ways of the forest know that elven ruins and lore can be found as easily in a fallen tree trunk as in an ancient city high in the treetops.

### MYTH RHYNN

The abandoned, *mythal*-cloaked city of Myth Rhynn lies deep in the Wealdath within a densely forested area known as Mytharan Woods, which is home to gnolls, lycanthropes, dragons, and spiders of all kinds. Myth Rhynn was built by the elves of Keltormir—the ancestors of the Fair Folk who presently dwell within the Forest of Wealdath.

Myth Rhynn once served as an elven burial ground, with each tree marking the entrance to an underground crypt. The dead of ancient Keltormir rest in the lower tombs, and the elves interred after Keltormir's fall occupy the upper tombs.

The ancient *mythal* aroints all necromantic magic, including any effect that would animate or raise the dead. These archaic wards once prevented dragons and humans from entering the city as well, but the *mythal* has decayed considerably with the passage of time, and now anyone can enter. The corruption has

also created a *plant growth* effect, and dozens of stone tombs have been cracked open by monstrous tree roots and vines.

A human lich named Mallin (LE male human lich evoker 14) has claimed the tombs of Myth Rhynn for his lair. His decayed physical form makes him appear to be nothing more than a disembodied collection of flying bones. Mallin despises the wild elves of Wealdath, but he chooses not to leave the protection of the corrupted *mythal* when dealing with the Fair Folk.

### TALLTREES

This abandoned village of nearly two dozen trees lies in the south central region of the Wealdath. Talltrees was once a center of healing and learning for the elves of Tethir, but now it serves as a resting place for elf sentinels patrolling the forest. Four disguised tree trunks house the only forest-floor entrances to the village above. The lowest dwellings of Talltrees are 30 feet off the ground, and most of the homes are hidden even higher in the forest canopy. The village's aged branch-bridges no longer support the weight of a Medium humanoid, so travel through the treetops is quite treacherous.

During the Age of Shoon, the Fair Folk grew to fear the magic of the Shoon wizards, so they made secret forays into Shoonach towers and libraries to steal arcane items that might be used against them. They concealed their loot (including Calishite staffs, war-wands, protective rings, and elemental spellbooks) within deep tree roots, trunk-towers, and extradimensional vaults in Talltrees, then set lethal traps and druidic wards to protect it.

Talltrees is presently under the protection of Irindriaul Greenleaves (NG female wild elf druid 11). The self-appointed curator of Talltrees, she considers it her duty to prevent anyone from plundering the abandoned city.

## Legacies of the past

The empires of Calimshan, Jhaamdath, Tethir, and Shanatar have left their marks forever upon the face of Faerûn in the form of ruins, artifacts, and legends. Many hidden treasures from these empires still lie forgotten in ruins, and many imprisoned creatures from these ancient days await release.

## Adventure seeds

Most adventures in the ruins of the ancient South require perilous journeys through exotic lands that are very different from the Western Heartlands or cities of the Sword Coast. Rumors of old dwarven ruins, strange elven villages, and hidden dynastic vaults can entice adventurers from anywhere in Faerûn to seek out their share of strange high magic, curious psionic blades, and fabulous riches.

### CLAIMANT TO THE THRONE

In the Year of the Tankard (1370 DR), shield dwarves from clan Ghalmrin recovered the *Wyrmskull Throne* and hid it in their dwarfhold deep within the Starspire Mountains. The clan has direct blood ties to the old kings of Shanatar, but it lacks the support needed to rule because its numbers are too few. Thus, Clan Ghalmrin has offered the *Wyrmskull Throne* to the first

### Sunken Ahjuutal



Illustration by Ralph Horsley

dwarf who proves he is worthy to rule and promises to restore the ancient kingdom of Shanatar. Dozens of hopeful aspirants from gold, shield, and even gray dwarf clans have flocked to meet the current throne-keeper, Bapar Ghalmrin (NG male shield dwarf fighter 7) and prove their worthiness—usually through impressive displays of gold, military might, and physical prowess. Clan Ghalmrin's bold call to action may just be powerful enough to bring about a great change for all dwarves in the South.

### SUNKEN AHJUUTAL

Fishermen in the Shining Sea have recently located the drowned city of Ahjuutal some 30 miles south of Almraiven. Much of the ancient city appears intact and relatively close to the surface, although the buildings are overgrown with kelp and encrusted with coral growths. The discovery of the long-lost city has sparked great interest throughout Calimshan. Adventurers, thieves, and sages are seeking brave ship captains to ferry them to the ruined marid city, which predates even Coramshan. Viziers and advisors to the caliph caution that the discovery of Ahjuutal after so many centuries may be a sign that the noble marid Ajhuu (or one of his kin) has returned to claim what once belonged to him.

### SWORDWRAITHS OF JHAAMDATH

Thousands of Jhaamdathan warriors drowned the night their empire fell, but death did not still their sword arms, and they rose again as undead swordwraiths<sup>FF</sup>. In recent weeks, they have begun to trudge out of the waters of the Vilhon Reach

at sundown. Marching singly or in pairs, they visit death upon nearby coastal cities, seeking out elves in preference to other targets when possible.

For the past year, the number of swordwraith attacks has been steadily growing, giving rise to panic in the coastal cities of the Vilhon Reach. No cause has yet been pinpointed for the rising undead rampage, and most agree that only someone brave or foolhardy enough to plunge deep into the bay waters can discover the cause of these assaults.

## Buried secrets

In addition to the constant threat posed by raiders, dragons, and goblin in the Imperial South and the Vilhon Reach, insidious perils with dire histories await discovery in some of Faerûn's less accessible areas.

### THE CALIM DESERT

When the minds of the disembodied genie lords Calim and Memnon battle each other, the Calim Desert rages with fiery sandstorms. Over the centuries, their innumerable conflicts have transformed the region's previously fertile plains into scarred wastelands of burnt sands and broken stone. The nomads of the Calim Desert often refer to the genies' warring presences as Calim's Breath, the Scorching, Memnon's Crackle, or the Firewinds.



Elven wards prevent the two genie lords from leaving the Calim Desert or entering any city within its boundaries. Neither genie can form a physical body and so cannot be harmed in any way. Both use illusions to communicate with others, since they have no actual voices.

Calim's disembodied presence fills the air above the desert and makes his presence known with wind. The noble djinni has the following spell-like abilities: 3/day—*gust of wind* (DC 19), *major image* (DC 20), *wind wall*; 1/day—*control weather*, *whirlwind* (DC 25). Caster level 17th.

Memnon is bound to the earth of the desert. A sharp increase in temperature or a slowly moving sand dune indicates his presence. The noble efreeti can use the following spell-like abilities: 3/day—*major image* (DC 19), *wall of fire*, *wall of stone*; 1/day—*incendiary cloud* (DC 24), *earthquake* (DC 24). Caster level 17th.

The blasted sands of the Calim Desert also hide the ruins of various forgotten cities and old forts. Travelers in this parched land must take care to avoid the nomadic raiders and purple worms that make the desert their home.

### THE CALIMEMNON CRYSTAL

This crystal is the greatest legacy of the elves of Tethir and Mir. Grown with the aid of high magic, the diamondlike gem contains the trapped physical forms of the genies Calim and Memnon, as well as more than one hundred of their genie servants.

The *Calimemnon Crystal* floats within another construct of elven high magic—the *Spinning Keep of Sir'wadjen*. This bizarre structure is a rounded tower that hovers above the Calim Desert. Numerous spellwards around it prevent access by sending intruders to the far ends of Faerûn, and dozens of air elementals patrol the halls of the chilly keep. The chamber containing the crystal is freezing cold and illuminated only by the soft light of the crystal itself. If the disembodied mind of either genie were to bypass the Spinning Keep's wards and touch the crystal, it would be reunited with its physical form and gain the powers of all the other genies in the gem.

The ancient baelnorn Pharos (N male moon elf baelnorn wizard 24) cast the high magic that created the crystal prison and the keep, and he has stood guard over both for nearly nine thousand years. He has placed illusions of the crystal throughout the keep to mislead gem-seekers and set traps to warn him of their presence.

### THE SLUMBER OF THE WIND

During Coramshan's bloody purge of geniekind, Calim's generals placed their leader's queen and twin sons in *temporal stasis* and hid them in an extradimensional space in the Forest of Mir. Like *Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion*, the palace is invisible on the outside and spacious on the inside. In addition to the three genies, the palace holds most of Calim's art, riches, and magic treasures. The ancient crystal dragon<sup>MM2</sup> Klaruutur and several vassal djinn loyal to Calim tend to the sleeping royal family and await their lord's release.

## Heirs to the Empire

Of the Imperial South's many civilizations, only Calimshan has endured until the present day. The southern kingdoms of the elves and dwarves fared far worse, leaving behind only scattered remnants of their previous civilizations.

### CALIMSHAN

Calimshan is the oldest of all human civilizations still in existence, and it remains the foremost power in southwestern Faerûn. The Calishites are renowned for their love of luxury, wealth, and impressive titles, and their cities are famous for exotic bazaars, debauched harems, and murderous thieves guilds. The current ruler of Calimshan, Syl-Pasha Pesarkhal, seeks to continue this period of peace by forging alliances with neighboring kingdoms.

### ELVES OF WEALDATH

The once numerous Fair Folk of Tethir have been reduced to two elf tribes. Under the dark foliage of the Forest of Tethyr, the elves of Elmanesse and Suldusk dwell among the mysterious ruins of their ancestors. Treepel Rhothomir (N male wild elf cleric 11 of Rillifane), a somber elflord from the hidden forest village of Suldanesse, rules both tribes jointly. Bowlord Allain Kevanarial (NG male wild elf ranger 4/sorcerer 3/arcane archer 3), the spokesperson for the Elmanesse, patrols the northern and central regions of the Wealdath and is the forest's finest archer. Scoutlord Mirthal Aendryr (N male wild elf fighter 10/rogue 10) patrols the more dangerous eastern portions of the woods where the Suldusk elves dwell.

Both the Bowlord and the Scoutlord forbid logging within the forest—a policy that threatens the fragile peace between the elves and the Tethyrian humans. The wild elves remain suspicious of any humans and are skeptical of any overtures from the lords of Tethyr.

The Eldreth Veluuthra is not active in the Wealdath, but the organization would have no shortage of members should it ever seek to recruit here. Many wild elves view the high magic that imprisoned Calim and Memnon with great scorn because it freed the humans of Calimshan to begin their war of persecution against the elves. In fact, these elves would prefer to see the high magic undone, in the hope that the freed genies might once again enslave their former human subjects.

### ILTKAZAR, THE MITHRAL KINGDOM

Bereft of its sister kingdoms for almost thirteen centuries, the Mithral Kingdom of Iltkazar survives as the last dwarf kingdom of Shanatar. King Mith Barak (LG male great wyrm silver dragon) rules the Mithral Kingdom in the illusory guise of a shield dwarf.

An ancient library in Iltkazar preserves much lore from the lost kingdoms of High Shanatar and Deep Shanatar as runes engraved on countless mithral plates. Few nondwarves are permitted to view these archives, which hold much of Shanatar's lost lore. (See *Underdark* for more about Iltkazar.)



# THE DREAM OF CORMANTHYR

While Netheril climbed to its zenith in what is now the Anauroch Desert, the greatest elven civilization Faerûn has ever known arose in the Great Forest to the east. The empire of Cormanthyr stretched from the Stormhorns to the Dragon Reach. Its capital was Myth Drannor, the City of Song, which produced marvels of magic, art, and poetry.

In many ways, the passing of Cormanthyr represented the end of elven civilization in Faerûn. Never again would a grand empire of the elves rise on the mainland. The pockets of elven power that still exist today—Evereska, Evermeet, and the forests of Tethyr—are but shadows of Cormanthyr's grandeur.

Compared with the elven civilizations of the Crown Wars era, Cormanthyr fell comparatively recently. Many of its ruins still stand in the depths of the forest known as Cormanthor, and numerous inhabitants of Myth Drannor are still alive in one form or another. Elminster of Shadowdale and Khelben "Blackstaff" Arunsun, both of whom were heavily involved in the city's politics, are still important personages in Faerûn, and many of the demons and devils involved in the sack of the city still brood in their foul lairs in the Abyss and the Nine Hells.

Infernal influence was a strong factor in the fall of Cormanthyr. Other empires were brought down by civil war, internal politics, or strange, monstrous foes, but Cormanthyr's fall was largely the handiwork of fiendish forces. Powerful fiends of all evil alignments still inhabit Cormanthyr's ruins along with their lesser servitors and lackeys, and Myth Drannor fairly teems with the inhabitants of the Lower Planes. Fiend-infested Cormanthyr ruins are an excellent way to bring an element of supernatural terror (or just good old-fashioned demon-stomping) into your campaign.

## History

The history of Cormanthyr stretches from approximately -4000 DR until the Fall of Myth Drannor in 714 DR, which is appropriately called the Year of Doom. General information is easy to come by, since many records, journals, and chronicles tell of

Cormanthyr and the Fall of Myth Drannor. The elves doubtless have even more information, but they do not share it lightly with other races.

## Timeline

Year	Event
-4000	Coronal Kahvoerm Irithyl becomes the ruler of Sembholme, Jhyrennstar, and the Elven Court, which unite into Cormanthyr.
-3983	The city of Cormanthor is founded with the summoning of the Rule Tower.
-3095	High mages from Cormanthyr steal one set of the <i>nether scrolls</i> and hide them away for safekeeping.
-2900	Coronal Kahvoerm dies, and Coronal Sakrattars Irithyl becomes the new ruler of Cormanthyr.
-2600	Drow from Maerimydra begin construction of the Twisted Tower.
-2549	The Twisted Tower is completed, despite repeated attempts by the Fair Folk to halt its construction. The drow begin to build up their presence there.
-2439	Drow use dark magic to burn an enormous swath of the southern Rystall Wood in an attack known as the Spiderfires. The magical fires sever the woodlands surrounding the Twisted Tower from the rest of Rystall Wood and widen the cleared lands between those areas and Cormanthyr.
-2200	The Guardian Paramours, lovers banned by their families from seeing each other, become the first baelnorns sworn to the coronal and Cormanthyr.
-1950	Coronal Sakrattars sacrifices himself in battle against the drow dwelling in Uvaeren and the Twisted Tower.



	The <i>Crownblade</i> chooses Coronal Sinaht Irithyl as the third Coronal of Cormanthyr.	–249	<i>Tear of Silver Wings</i> : Audark’s warriors slay Venominhandar’s mate, mistakenly believing her to be the one and only Venom. In revenge, Venominhandar slays Audark’s entire army, and the valley is thereafter known as the Vale of Lost Voices.
–1535	Ylraphon is established among the eastern woods across the River Lis.	–223	<i>Tear of Burning Briars</i> : Eltargrim Irithyl becomes the sixth Coronal of Cormanthyr.
–1400	Coronal Faahresc of Rystall Wood initiates a series of raids on the Twisted Tower and the Underdark caverns held by the drow.	–206	<i>Tear of Elfsorrows</i> : Jassin Aunglor slays Venominhandar and himself by collapsing the wyrm’s cavernous lair on top of them both.
–1354	The combined forces of Rystall Wood and Cormanthyr rout the majority of the drow from the region of Rystall, the ruins of Uvaeren, and the crag known as Old Skull. They fail to take the Twisted Tower, and many drow manage to escape.	–205	<i>Tear of Good Hunting</i> : Iliphar Nelnuve becomes ruler of the colony forests in the Forest Country (Cormyr) when he bests the black dragon Thauglorimorgorus. Orc hordes engulf Rystall Wood.
–1338	Coronal Miiirphys Irithyl, a priest of Sehanine Moonbow, becomes the fourth Coronal of Cormanthyr.	c. –200	Chondathan emigrants, ancestors of the Dalesmen, settle in the southern reaches of Cormanthor (modern-day Sembia).
–1293	The Crescent Court, Cormanthor’s temple to the elven goddess of the moon, is constructed.	–75	<i>Tear of Leather Shields</i> : Teshar is founded in the cleared lands between Cormanthyr and Rystall Wood.
–1200	Netherese arcanists summon three powerful nycaloths (each a servitor of Malkizid, the Branded King) to test the defenses of Cormanthyr. The <i>Khovanilessa</i> , or Trio Nefarious, causes much destruction before elven high mages finally manage to imprison its members with epic magic.	–64	<i>Tear of Gleaming Frost</i> : Rystall Wood falls to giants and orcs. Some survivors remain in Yrlaancel, the City of Peace; others migrate to Cormanthyr.
–982	Venominhandar, an ancient green dragon, settles in the Tangled Vale (now the Vale of Lost Voices) with his mate. Both become known as Venom, since no one realizes that two great dragons live in the southern woods. Over the course of nearly six centuries, the dragons extend their demesne to encompass the woodlands stretching from the River Verire (the Ashaba) to the Old Elven Court.	–9	<i>Tear of Fell Traitors</i> : A wizards’ cabal called the Circle of Flames forms in the city of Cormanthor.
–800	Connak becomes Coronal of Rystall Wood. Synnorha Durothil becomes a baelnorn to guard the Library of the Durothils.	1	<i>Tear of Sunrise</i> : The Standing Stone is raised by the elves of Cormanthyr and the Dalesmen, ratifying the Dales Compact and starting the Dalereckoning calendar.
–791	Tannivh Irithyl becomes the fifth Coronal of Cormanthyr.	20	<i>Tear of the Fallen Fury</i> : The human Calendar of Harptos adopts the elven holiday of <i>Cinnaelos Cor</i> (The Day of Corellon’s Peace) and renames it Shieldmeet. The new holiday is celebrated every four years.
c. –750	Drow raids on Cormanthyr and Rystall Wood begin in earnest. The Twisted Tower expands twice during the next few decades.	26	<i>Tear of Opening Doors</i> : House Obarskyr founds the human realm of Cormyr with the permission of the Fair Folk of the Forest Country.
–722	Ylraphon falls to orcs in the summer, two seasons after drow raiders severely weaken its defenses.	68	<i>Tear of the Echoing Chasm</i> : Saeval Ammath is born into House Ammath of Cormanthyr.
–612	<i>Tear of Sudden Mourning</i> : Eltargrim Irithyl, seventh son of Coronal Tannivh, is born in Semberholme.	75	<i>Tear of Clinging Death</i> : The god Moander hurls his forces and the “creeping evil” against the elven city of Tsornyl, blighting much of the surrounding woods. The high mages of Cormanthyr use their magic to sever the creeping evil from Moander and imprison the corruption at Tsornyl, thus weakening the Darkbringer’s presence in Toril.
–470	<i>Tear of Perdition’s Flame</i> : Cormanthyr and Rystall Wood form an alliance against the drow of the Twisted Tower. The Shadow Wars begin.	101	<i>Tear of the Smiling Moon</i> : Josidiah Starym is born to the sun elf House Starym.
–331	<i>Tear of Shadows Fleeting</i> : The Twisted Tower falls to the forces of Cormanthyr and Rystall Wood and their good-aligned dark elf allies. The nigh-impregnable fortress is rededicated as a temple to Eilistraee. The fleeing drow make off with the <i>Warblade</i> and the body of its wielder, Lord Orym Hawkson.	132	<i>Tear of Thirteen Prides Lost</i> : The wizards of the Circle of Flames begin to record the <i>Scrolls Ardentym</i> .
–310	<i>Tear of Glassbarks</i> : Coronal Tannivh allows small groups of reformed, surface-acclimated drow to settle in the remote forest east of Cormanthor.	146	<i>Tear of the Risen Towers</i> : Aravae Irithyl, grandniece of Coronal Eltargrim, is born. Her mother dies in childbirth, making Aravae the only Irithyl heir.
–291	<i>Tear of Setting Suns</i> : General Halflar Audark and a small company of elves begin hunting the green dragon known as Venom, slaying many lesser wyrms and beasts in the process.	163	<i>Tear of the Screeching Vole</i> : Elmwood is established on the shores of the River Lis and the Dragon Sea.
		171	<i>Tear of Unkind Weapons</i> : The elves of Cormanthyr complete a two-year siege of the sole surviving temple to Moander in the northern forest, at the site of present-day Yulash. After destroying the temple, the coronal and high mages of Cormanthyr use high magic to banish the Jawed God from Faerûn. Moander remains a lurking

	evil, trapped beneath the ruins, until the Year of Shadows (1358 DR).	330	<i>Tear of Roused Giants</i> : Arun Maerdrym, the first half-elf born to a senior noble house of Myth Drannor, is accepted by the family’s patriarch.
194	<i>Tear of Coiling Smoke</i> : The good dark elves who tend the temple to Eilistraee are slaughtered by a new infestation of drow from below. The Twisted Tower is restored as a drow military garrison.	331	<i>Tear of the Cold Clashes</i> : Orcs from Vastar attack eastern Cormanthyr and occupy land east of the Old Elven Court.
199	<i>Tear of the Cold Enchanter</i> : Hlondath initiates the Crown against the Scepter Wars, preventing Cormanthyr’s armies from focusing on the drow.	335	<i>Tear of Seven Stones</i> : The orcs east of the Old Elven Court massacre one thousand soldiers of Cormanthyr in an attack known as the Darkwoods Massacre. The mysterious circumstances surrounding the incident are later revealed to be incompetence and bigotry among the officer corps.
220	<i>Tear of the Sword Violets</i> : Coronal Eltargrim opens the forests of Cormanthor to non-elves, extending particular welcome to druids, great wizards, and craftworkers who can add to the glory of Cormanthyr.	339	<i>Tear of the Vanished Foe</i> : Elf and human forces rout the orcs from eastern Cormanthyr. Velar, a hero of the conflict, founds Velarsdale (now known as Harrowdale) with the aid of his followers.
241	<i>Tear of the Hippogriff’s Folly</i> : Elminster Aumar, Prince of Athalantar, enters the city of Cormanthor.	346	<i>Tear of Blushing Stars</i> : Saeval Ammath returns to Myth Drannor from the Desertsouth Mountains with a red dragon egg.
261	<i>Tear of Soaring Stars</i> : With the raising of its <i>mythal</i> , Cormanthor becomes the unified city of Myth Drannor and is opened to all non-elves.	348	<i>Tear of the Dagger</i> : Saeval Ammath secretly hatches Garnetallisar, a red dragon.
262	<i>Tear of Pages Perilous</i> : Five major houses—Bharaclaiev, Hyshaanth, Rhaevaern, Starym, and Tellynnan—plus several minor families and numerous individuals quit Myth Drannor for purely elven holdings in Cormanthyr and elsewhere.	351	<i>Tear of the Dancing Deer</i> : An influx of Hlondathan refugees causes Yrlaancel to grow substantially. The city becomes known as Ondathel, Eldath’s City of Peace.
266	<i>Tear of the Unspoken Name</i> : A number of murders in eastern Myth Drannor turn many immigrants against each other. The culprit turns out to be a bigoted servant of House Ammath.	358	<i>Tear of the Battle Talons</i> : Saeval Ammath’s red dragon is proven humble and trustworthy and granted leave to dwell within Myth Drannor by Coronal Eltargrim, despite wards preventing chromatic dragons from entering the city’s <i>mythal</i> .
273	<i>Tear of the Delighted Dwarves</i> : Three small dwarf clans from Ammarindar and Citadel Felbarr arrive at Myth Drannor.	379	<i>Tear of Seven Stars</i> : The Seven Wizards establish the first school of wizardry open to all races of Myth Drannor.
284	<i>Tear of Fallen Flagons</i> : Thousands of halflings migrate to Myth Drannor from Meiritin and Tethyr.	386	<i>Tear of Dawn Moons</i> : Arun Maerdrym, called Half-Elven by the nobles, joins the Harpers at Twilight.
292	<i>Tear of Frostfires</i> : The first settlement of gnomes arrives in Myth Drannor.	398	<i>Tear of the Warning Ghost</i> : Seven evil dragons attack Myth Drannor and are driven off at the cost of many lives.
307	<i>Tear of Sundered Sails</i> : The <i>Akh Velabr</i> (the army of Cormanthyr) opens its ranks to non-elves.	414	<i>Tear of Omen Stars</i> : Arun Maerdrym fathers an unnamed human son who will in time become the legendary Khelben “Blackstaff” Arunsun.
308	<i>Tear of Promise</i> : Cormanthyr threatens Hlondath with destruction unless its forces cease hostilities. The intermittent Crown against the Scepter Wars come to a close.	449	<i>Tear of Killing Ice</i> : Arun’s son leaves Myth Drannor to bring the teachings of the City of Song to other lands.
324	<i>Tear of Freedom’s Friends</i> : Dathlue Mistwinter, the Lady Steel, forms the Harpers at Twilight in secrecy.	462	<i>Tear of the Empty Helm</i> : To allay the fears of his nobles, Coronal Eltargrim orders a halt to the construction of
329	<i>Tear of the Closed Scroll</i> : Hlondath succumbs to the relentless creep of the Great Desert of Anauroch.		

naming notes

Elf naming conventions can be a bit confusing because many names sound alike. The primary terms used in this chapter are defined below.

**Cormanthyr** is the name of the predominantly elven empire that arose in the forest of Cormanthor in –4000 DR. Cormanthyr is pronounced *kor-man-THEER*.

**Cormanthor** is the name of the forest in which the Cormanthyr Empire was located, and also the name of the empire’s capital before the raising of its *mythal*. As the name of the forest, the term is pronounced *kor-manth-OR*, and as the name of the city, it is pronounced *kor-MANTH-or*.

**Myth Drannor** is the name given to Cormanthor (the city) after its *mythal* was raised.



new homes within Myth Drannor and curbs the immigration of non-elves.

479 *Tear of Forests'frost:* Teshar falls.

500 *Tear of the Flame Tongue:* Josidiah Starym launches an expedition to recover the lost *Warblade* from the drow. He temporarily seizes the Twisted Tower in hopes of proving his worth to marry Aravae Irithyl.

503 *Tear of the Galloping Gorgon:* Coronal Eltargrim appoints the first two halfling *armathors* of Myth Drannor in recognition of their bravery in destroying a cult of Moander-worshippers.

512 *Tear of the Wyvernfall:* Orcs out of Vastar threaten Cormanthyr with war.

519 *Tear of the Phoenix:* Sammkol Thistlestar, one of the halfling *armathors* of Myth Drannor, is assassinated at the behest of House Selorn.

523 *Tear of Trials Arcane:* Younger members of the Starym clan return to Myth Drannor, claiming lordship of the clan and its moonblade. After a secret trek to Moander's ruined temple, Lord Illitran Starym corrupts the *Starym moonblade* and manages to wield it in a false show of loyalty to Myth Drannor.

536 *Tear of the Laughing Lich:* Alokkaire the Wizard-King founds Hlontar amid the ruins of Teshar.

555 *Tear of Dances Perilous:* Ondathel's high mages raise a *mythal* over their city and rename it Myth Ondath.

569 *Tear of Tumbled Bones:* Hlontar falls.

610 *Tear of the Spellfire:* Vastar falls to the Stout Folk of the Vast, who found the kingdom of Roldilar.

619 *Tear of Orcsfall:* Orcs of the Thunder Peaks swarm into western Cormanthyr and the Dales, but combined human and elf forces manage to turn them back at Tilver's Gap.

632 *Tear of Burning Skies:* The Ice Queen's army, led by the lich Vrandak the Burnished, lays siege to Myth Ondath.

633 *Tear of Chasms:* Myth Ondath is destroyed, *mythal* and all, by the Ice Queen's use of the artifact known as the *Gatekeeper's Crystal*.

649 *Tear of the Bloody Crown:* Roldilar falls to orcs in a bloody conflict known as the Battle of Deepfires. Some dwarf refugees flee to Myth Drannor.

656 *Tear of Peaceful Seas:* The Circle of Flames completes the *Scrolls Ardentym*.

661 *Tear of the Bloody Tusk:* Coronal Eltargrim passes on to Arvandor. The high mages of Cormanthyr order the Mourning Days to begin.

664 *Tear of the Falling Petals:* Aravae Irithyl, heir to Coronal Eltargrim, is found mysteriously dead the morning after Shieldmeet. The Mourning Days are continued.

666 *Tear of Stern Judgment:* The Mourning Days over the deaths of Coronal Eltargrim and Aravae end, prompting a ceremony to choose the next coronal. Forty elves are slain and the Rule Tower is destroyed before the Srinshree takes the *Crownblade* and disappears from Cormanthyr.

667 *Tear of Austere Ceremonies:* The Council of Twelve begins ruling Cormanthyr in the absence of a coronal.

670 *Tear of the Many Floods:* The Vault of Ages, where the elves had stored many of the oldest and greatest treasures of Cormanthyr, is found empty. Drow occupy the forest surrounding the ruined temple of Moander. After twenty months of warfare, the Fair Folk drive them back into the Underdark.

672 *Tear of the Angry Caverns:* Many dwarves of Myth Drannor migrate north to the southern shore of the Moonsea, where they reoccupy the western mines of Sarphil.

673 *Tear of the Covenant:* Hillsafar (modern-day Hillsfar) is founded.

674 *Tear of the Nomad:* Josidiah Starym returns to Myth Drannor bearing not the expected *Warblade*, but the lost *Artblade*. He is named commander of the *Akb Faer*.

679 *Tear of the Scarlet Sash:* Hillsafar is nearly destroyed by an eruption of monsters from the Beast Marches to the west.

684 *Tear of the Sundered Crypt:* Dwarves of the Tarynstone Clan are exiled for tunneling deep below Myth Drannor, an act forbidden by the city's laws.

690 *Tear of the Clashing Blades:* The Incanistaeum, school of the Seven Wizards, is disbanded by the last of their number.

694 *Tear of the Ominous Oracle:* Darcassan, the diviner of Windsong Tower, reveals the first portents of the fall of Myth Drannor, but the Elders of the Tower keep the information secret. The Circle of Flames and the mages of Windsong Tower quietly begin transporting spellbooks and magic items to safety beyond the city.

708 *Tear of Bound Evils:* Garnetallisar inadvertently fulfills the condition that frees the Trio Nefarious from its magical prison.

711 *Tear of Despairing Elves:* The Weeping War begins when the Trio Nefarious and its Army of Darkness invade northern Cormanthyr.

712 *Tear of the Lost Lance:* The Army of Darkness destroys the Harpers at Twilight. Garnet the red dragon attacks the Army of Darkness with some success but vanishes in the midst of the battle.

713 *Tear of the Firedrake:* Cormanthyr's forces slay two members of the Trio Nefarious. Myth Drannor's citizens begin to evacuate the city. The Twisted Tower falls once again to the drow, marking the refounding of the Lands under Shadow in western Cormanthor.

714 *Tear of Doom:* Myth Drannor falls to the Army of Darkness, although Captain Fflar Starbrow Melruth slays the last member of the Trio Nefarious. The Elven Court once again becomes the seat of elven power in Cormanthyr, and the nation is barred to non-elves.

720 *Tear of the Dawn Rose:* Elventree is established so that Cormanthyr can continue to trade with non-elves.

1344 *Tear of Moonfall:* The elders of the Elven Court order the Retreat. Most moon elves and sun elves depart for Evermeet.

1370 *Tear of the Tankard:* The drow return to Cormanthyr in large numbers.

keepers of the past

Most modern-day sages and historians have access to the surviving records of Cormanthyr's history. Copious and largely complete annals of Cormanthyr's history can be found in any major library, especially in areas with large elf populations (such as Evermeet, Evereska, or Silverymoon). The elves have kept certain secrets—such as the ultimate fate of the *nether scrolls*—from the historians of other races, but most of Cormanthyr's history is readily accessible to the average PC with a little bit of dedicated research and a Knowledge (history) check (see Table 8–1: Cormanthyr Information for DCs).

songs and stories

The history of Cormanthyr begins with the six elven nations that combined to form the empire.

KINGDOMS TO EMPIRE

After the vicious fighting of the Crown Wars, the Elven Court became the first permanent settlement in the Arcorar (the forest that would later become Cormanthor). Though never heavily populated, the Elven Court was nevertheless an important seat of elven power in mainland Faerûn.

Meanwhile, far to the northwest of the Elven Court, the sylvan elf civilization of Rystall Wood was a wild, carefree realm in what is now the Border Forest. Though Rystall Wood survived for many centuries, little physical evidence of its existence remains, since the sylvan elves built few permanent structures.

At the heart of the Great Forest, the citizens of the predominantly sun elf settlement known as Jhyrennstar used powerful magic to grow the trees to phenomenal heights. To the southwest, refugees from Aryvandaar founded the nation of Uvaeren.

Other elven settlements at that time included Yrlaancel, a small city-state near the border of Rystall Wood, and Semberholme, a refuge for the mothers, children, and elderly of the Elven Court. From these six lands, the great empire of Cormanthyr was born.

WAR AND PEACE

Throughout the millennia following the Crown Wars, the six realms of Arcorar flourished and grew, despite intermittent attacks by goblins, orcs, and drow. Jhyrennstar's wizards and druids

TABLE 8–1: CORMANTHYR INFORMATION

Knowledge (History) DC*	Facts Discovered
5	Extremely common knowledge (Myth Drannor was a legendary city where all races lived together in harmony.)
10	Common knowledge (The Coronals of Cormanthyr were rulers chosen by the <i>Crownblade</i> .)
15	Uncommon but basic knowledge (The Twisted Tower was built by the drow, then taken by the combined forces of Cormanthyr and Rystall Wood and turned into a temple to Eilistraee, then retaken by the drow, then seized by Josidiah Starym, then taken once again by the drow.)
20	Uncommon, obscure knowledge (The character can identify the tomb of a mid-level noble of Myth Drannor.)
25	Rare knowledge (The three nycaloths <sup>MM3</sup> known as the Trio Nefarious were freed by the summoning of a gnoll shaman after their prison was weakened by the flight of the red dragon Garnet over the throne of Cormanthyr.)
30+	Extremely obscure knowledge (Windsong Tower's "Golden Grove of Hidden Knowledge" is actually the stolen, transmuted <i>nether scrolls</i> .)

nurtured the trees in their realm to incredible size. The elves of Uvaeren constructed libraries of legendary beauty and complexity, storing information not just in books, but also in intricate magical constructs, ornate mosaics, and crystal chimes that conveyed information through music. The elves of the Elven Court made their first contact with the dwarves during this time, and after a few brief skirmishes over logging rights in the Great Forest, the two races struck an alliance.

The first disaster was a catastrophe known as the Twelve Nights of Fire. A falling star struck Arcorar, obliterating Uvaeren and slaying most of its inhabitants, including the coronal and nearly all the members of the noble houses. The meteor strike touched off fires that destroyed a vast swath of forest, cutting off Rystall Wood from the rest of the Cormanthor. Most of the survivors migrated to Semberholme or Jhyrennstar.

The next major threat to the realms of Arcorar came from belowground. Hordes of drow and duergar boiled up out of their Underdark tunnels and struck the heart of the Elven Court. Because tradition demanded that the elves and their dwarf allies set aside their weapons here, more than thirty clans of elves and dwarves lost their leaders in the initial assault. The denizens of the Underdark conquered the dwarven realm of Sarphil and razed and despoiled the Elven Court.

While the drow gloated in their caverns, Rystall Wood declared itself wholly independent of the rest of Arcorar, and the rest of the elves struggled to find common purpose. Unity seemed the only answer, but it remained an elusive goal. Finally, Coronal Oacenth of Jhyenstarr intoned a prophecy as he lay dying of illness. "If we are to survive as the People," he said, "one coronal must vow to unify the tribes of this great land. One coronal must unify sun and moon, sky and sea, and tree, root, and earth, that all may achieve a long-lasting peace and strength in unity."

At the dying coronal's behest, the young nobles who sought to succeed him competed in a number of tests to determine their worthiness. The high mages who had survived the massacre at the Elven Court crafted three mighty artifacts known as the elfblades. Kahvoerm Irithyl drew the *Crownblade* during a grand high magic ceremony, thus becoming the first Coronal of the United Lands of Arcorar, which he renamed Cormanthor. Upon the death of Coronal Oacenth, Coronal Kahvoerm declared the lands of Cormanthor to be a single, united kingdom, and a single, united people. He then spent fifteen years wandering the forest



before plunging the *Crownblade* into a hillock revealed to him in a vision. The magic of the sword summoned forth a tall, white tower, which he named the Rule Tower. This edifice became the center of the great city of Cormanthor.

### AGE OF STRIFE

The next three thousand years brought Cormanthyr rapid expansion as well as strife and struggle. Orc raids from Vastar posed a constant threat, as did the reemergence of the drow of Maerimydra and the meteoric rise of Netheril. When the Eaerlanni elves began secretly smuggling gnome slaves out of Netheril, Cormanthyr's people aided the refugees in their flight.

The Fair Folk were concerned enough to risk open war with Netheril by stealing one set of the *nether scrolls*, but the Netherese never discovered the identity of the thieves. The *Kbovaniessa* (Trio Nefarious), three nycaloths<sup>MM3</sup> summoned by Netherese arcanists, rampaged through Cormanthyr during this period as well and were imprisoned by elven high magic. Rystall Wood fell to orcs and giants, in part because of the isolationist tendencies of the sylvan elves and their refusal to ally with the humans of Hlondath and Asram.

### THE AGE OF ALLIANCE

Coronal Eltargrim, seeing the losses that the good people of Faerûn had suffered because of their refusal to band together, became determined to prevent a similar fate from befalling Cormanthyr. Despite strong opposition from the nobility, he summoned the leaders of the human tribes dwelling in the Dalelands to Cormanthor. After a solid year of discussion and negotiation, the elves and the humans forged an alliance—the famous Dale Compact. This agreement promised peace and friendship between the humans and the elves and granted the Dalesmen the right to dwell in the cleared land around Cormanthor, provided that they cut only deadwood and bramble from the forest.

The forging of the Dale Compact and the raising of the Standing Stone occurred on Midwinter's Night that same year, marking the start of the Dalereckoning calendar. Twenty years later, the elven holiday of *Cinnaelos Cor* (Day of Corellon's Peace) was added to the Calendar of Harptos as Shieldmeet.

Coronal Eltargrim spent a great deal of time contemplating the oath demanded of future coronals by the dying Coronal Oacenth—particularly the promise to “unify the tribes of this great land.” After due consideration, he came to the controversial conclusion that Oacenth had intended that phrase to include non-elves. He began fulfillment of this vow by opening Cormanthyr's borders to a few select non-elf wizards, druids, and settlers. Soon thereafter, Elminster Aumar, Prince of Athalantar, arrived wearing the *telkiira* (see page 155) of the noble House Alastrarra, which had been granted to him by its dying lord. The return of this item marked the next step in welcoming other races to Cormanthyr.

Elminster's mission was one of learning, but many elves could not abide a human wearing a “stolen” *telkiira* into the city. Despite Coronal Eltargrim's declaration that the mage was *Sba-quessir* (an elf friend), many saw him as a portent of doom. Elminster was drawn into the politics of the noble houses, many of which sought a pawn to block Eltargrim's plan for the unification of the races. Thanks to the young mage's cleverness and Mystra's guidance, however, their plans to stop the integration of Cormanthyr failed.

When the elven high mage Mythanthor raised a *mythal* over the city, Eltargrim renamed the city Myth Drannor and opened it to all the good folk of Faerûn. A few elf nobles chose to leave the city rather than share it with “lesser” races, but many more remained, eager to see the result of Eltargrim's grand experiment.

### THE GLORY OF MYTH DRANNOR

In the centuries that followed, Myth Drannor's defenders overcame racial tensions, orc attacks, and a resurgent Cult of Moander. Demron created his six *baneblades* during this period, and the sun elf Saeval Ammath returned from an expedition into the western mountains bearing a red dragon egg. The subsequent hatching of Garnetallisar and his growth into an honorable being was a wonderful breakthrough, but his presence would eventually lead to fulfillment of the conditions needed to release the Trio Nefarious. Josidiah Starym descended into the Underdark to recover the *Warblade* and prove his worth to the coronal, whose heir he wished to marry.

### THE DECLINE

By the time Coronal Eltargrim died, Cormanthyr had reached the apex of its power and glory. Sister-cities were established throughout the forest of Cormanthor and even in distant locales elsewhere in Faerûn. Eltargrim passed on to Arvandor by a conscious act of will at the Midsummer Festival, feeling that at long last his work was done. The dream of Cormanthyr was a reality, and all the tribes of the Great Forest lived and worked in harmony. But before the required mourning period had passed, Eltargrim's heir, Aravae Irithyl, was murdered. The culprit was Illitrin Starym, who feared that Aravae's beloved would return and displace him as head of House Starym. Illitrin's treachery was never discovered.

After Aravae's murder, the noble houses pushed to end the Mourning Days and choose a successor immediately. But the moon elf wizard known as the Srinshree, now the de facto regent of Cormanthyr, held firm to Aravae's wishes, primarily because preparing the high magic necessary for the succession ceremony would take at least the remaining year and a half of the Mourning Days.

For the first time in Cormanthyr's history, the succession was open to any noble or commoner. Finally, when the time arrived for the Claiming Ceremony, no sun elf survived the touch of the *Crownblade*. When the other races demanded their chances to try the sword, many of the sun elf houses resorted to assassinations and open violence against any they perceived as potential candidates. Coronal Oacenth's dream crumbled along with the Rule Tower, which was shattered by elven battle-magic.

Finally, at dusk on the sixth day after Midsummer, the Srinshree spoke to all the people of Myth Drannor. In a voice heavy with grief, she told the people of Cormanthyr that they had forgotten the dream of Coronal Oacenth and the reality that Coronal Eltargrim had made of it. She then announced her intent to draw the *Crownblade* herself and, to the amazement of many, she succeeded. The sun elves who had fought so bitterly to keep the office of coronal in the hands of their own kin reacted violently to her success and launched potent magical attacks at her, which failed utterly.

Finally, with tears of grief for the divisions that had sundered Cormanthyr, the Srinshree announced that she would not be coronal—and that no coronal would rule until the tribes of the Great

Forest were truly united and the dream of Cormanthyr realized in the hearts of all its citizens. As her last acts in Myth Drannor, the Srinshree rebuilt the Rule Tower and, through an impressive display of high magic, created an even more massive Diamond Tower to serve as the symbol of a unified Cormanthyr. After urging her people one last time to keep working toward a truly unified land of elves and non-elves and promising to return when that hope was realized, the Srinshree vanished from the face of Faerûn along with the *Crownblade* and the Diamond Tower. None of them have been seen since.

### THE FALL

With the loss of Coronal Eltargrim, Aravae Irithyl, the Srinshree, and the *Crownblade*, the true fall of Myth Drannor began. A representative body called the Council of Twelve assumed leadership of Cormanthyr, but its members were prone to infighting and petty politicking. Cormanthyr rapidly became more like a loosely allied confederation of city-states than a single, cohesive nation. To further compound the city's troubles, the colonial expansion that had spawned cities such as Silvermoon began to draw many of the best and brightest mages and craft-workers away from Myth Drannor, causing a gradual stagnation of the art and magic that had always been its hallmarks.

Perhaps most significantly, the interracial respect and friendship for which Myth Drannor had been justly famous began to erode shortly after the coronal's death. Several of the city's noble houses migrated to purely elven enclaves, and humans and dwarves purchased their vacant villas. This trend caused other elf clans to fear that non-elves were grabbing up all the land in Myth Drannor, so they too departed. Thus, the exodus of the elves soon created a domino effect that weakened the City of Song considerably.

In the decades following the tragic Claiming Ceremony, the City of Song (and indeed, all Cormanthyr) split into numerous political factions, forming an intricate and deadly web of intrigue that rivaled any drow court. The noble houses began to vie with one another for power and influence. Without the Srinshree's guidance, the court mages fragmented to pursue separate agendas. Several of the more senior mages split off to form a group called the Eternal Srinnaala, which was dedicated to pursuing the wishes the Srinshree had expressed before she vanished. The commerce guilds also began to squabble among themselves. Surprisingly, the city's priests came together as one. Whether they venerated Corellon, Moradin, Yondalla, Garl Glittergold, or one of the countless human

deities, the clerics shepherded the city as best they could through the troubled years.

The *Akh Velabr* was built up heavily, and its soldiers were trained to near perfection in anticipation of a civil war between the fractious power groups within the city. That war never occurred, but the threat of it left the army well prepared for the Army of Darkness.

### THE WEeping WAR

Despite all its internal strife, Myth Drannor might eventually have found peace again had the Trio Nefarious not returned. The three nycaloths—Aulmpiter, Gaulguth, and Malimshaer—had brooded in their mystical prison for nearly two millennia, plotting their revenge. Finally, the flight of the red dragon Garnet over the throne of the coronal fulfilled a condition of their release, and a gnoll shaman of the Moonsea was able to summon them forth. As soon as they were freed, the three fiends put their plans into motion. Ruthlessly establishing themselves as the leaders of dozens of barbaric humanoid tribes, they used a combination of magic, brute force, and sheer terror to organize the disparate tribes of orcs, goblins, ogres, bugbears, and other monsters into a single cohesive army, which the elves would later dub the Army of Darkness.

While the Trio Nefarious was assembling its army, the people of Cormanthyr were busy dealing with other dangers. After many centuries of relative inactivity, the drow had gone on the warpath once again and retaken the Twisted Tower from the worshipers of Eilistraee. Over the next several years, they harried the northwestern reaches of Cormanthyr and even struck into Cormyr and the Dalelands occasionally. Although it was never clear whether the drow had predicted or known about the Army of Darkness, they were in an excellent position to exploit the coming war for their own benefit.

The Weeping War, as the elves called the campaign that led to the fall of Myth Drannor, began in the Year of Despairing Elves (711 DR). In its opening gambit, called the Northern Massacres, the Army of Darkness invaded Cormanthyr's northern reaches. A reversal of fortune occurred over the next two years, when the forces of Cormanthyr managed to slay two of the nycaloths that commanded the Army of Darkness and reclaim the Elven Court. But while these valiant acts bought the citizens of Myth Drannor time to evacuate the city, the beleaguered forces of the *Akh Velabr*



Illustration by Brian Despain

The departure of the Srinshree



were in no position to drive the Army of Darkness back because, thanks to drow intervention, Cormanthyr could receive no aid from its allies in Evereska, Evermeet, and Silvermoon.

The Weeping War ended in the Year of Doom (714 DR) with the Siege of Shadows, in which the Army of Darkness laid siege to the city proper. Myth Drannor was finally taken and sacked, although Aulmpiter, the last of the three nycaloth lords, died at the hands of Captain Fflar Starbrow Melruth.

With the destruction of the Trio Nefarious, the Army of Darkness lost its direction and leadership. Many of the humanoids dispersed and made their way back to their homelands; others made new lairs in the ruins of Myth Drannor.

The capital of Cormanthyr was moved back to its ancient seat at the Elven Court, but the great elven kingdom never again reached its previous height. Because many of the nobles still blamed non-elves for the fall of the empire, humans, dwarves, and members of other races were no longer welcome in Cormanthyr. A trading village called Elventree was established to allow necessary commerce, but Coronal Oacenth's dream of unity was over. After centuries of decline, the elders of the Elven Court began the Retreat, leaving Cormanthor a virtually uninhabited forest within three decades.

Today, surface-dwelling drow—largely worshipers of Vhaeraun and other drow deities exiled by the priestesses of Lolth—have claimed a large section of land in Cormanthyr, including a section of the Elven Court.

*Fflar challenges the nycaloth Aulmpiter at the fall of Myth Drannor*

## important sites

At its height, the empire of Cormanthyr stretched from the Stormhorns and the Desertsouth Mountains to the Dragon Reach, and from the Moonsea in the north to the Sea of Fallen Stars. Although much of its land was unsettled wilderness, the city of Myth Drannor was by no means its only important site.

## the elven court

Established after the Crown Wars as a place of judgment against the mad Vyshaan lords of Aryvandaar, the Elven Court remained a destination for religious pilgrimages up until the founding of Cormanthyr. Because the drow had destroyed or desecrated much of the Elven Court in the Dark Court Massacre, the elves let it lie ruined for many long centuries. Near the close of the Weeping Wars, when Myth Drannor's impending fall became apparent, the elves mounted a campaign to reclaim the Elven Court.

After the Weeping War, the Elven Court became the de facto center of elven government in the forest of Cormanthor. But when the Retreat began, the Fair Folk dismantled most of the realm's grandest structures, removed its most powerful artifacts, and abandoned it once again, leaving it open for anyone to claim.

Today the Elven Court consists of a few widely scattered tree homes linked by miniature *portals*. The newly arrived Cormanthor drow have claimed much of its area, but they have been careful not to stray too far into the old buildings or burial grounds, since they know that many powerful defensive magics are still in effect.

Illustration by William O'Connor

## Myth Drannor

Called the City of Song, the City of Spells, the City of Brotherhood, and a thousand other fanciful names, the fabled city of Myth Drannor was the epitome of beauty. Its graceful, slender towers were built of wood and stone, and arcane towers in the shapes of giant animals, cresting waves, and even more exotic images dotted the city. The few buildings that were actually "grown" using elven rituals had an organic beauty unmatched in Faerûn.

Since its fall, Myth Drannor has become more famous as a deadly dungeon than as a place of beauty and learning. The city's catacombs are home to several wyrms, plus devils summoned by the Church of Bane, a few phaerimms that survived the Shadovar hunting parties, cabals of alhoons, and the Cult of the Dark Naga. Even the baelnorns that protect a few sites within the ruins assume that any interloper is a grave-robbing defiler. The most deadly danger, however, often comes from other adventuring groups. Many raiders travel to Myth Drannor every year seeking magic and vast riches, and few of them are scrupulous enough to leave another band to its own devices.

## semlerholme

Semberholme was founded on the shores of Lake Sember as a sanctuary and refuge for the women, children, and infirm immediately after the Descent of the Drow. The site was chosen partly because the forest here was thick enough to obstruct the movements

of enemies both on the ground and in the air, but an even more important consideration was the network of limestone caves beneath the entire area. These caverns were both large and numerous, with entrances that were nearly impossible to find. Whenever an enemy threatened Semberholme, entire communities could simply vanish into these caves in an eyeblink and outlast their attackers.

Although Semberholme was also abandoned during the Retreat, a few of the surrounding villages still exist, and a small number of Fair Folk dwell in Deepingdale. So far, the region has been mostly free of harassment from the Cormanthor drow, but once the drow properly establish a foothold in the region, these settlements may become targets.

## vale of lost voices

This holy burial site was created on the spot where the true Venom ambushed and slew those who had killed his mate. The few members of the sylvan elf clan Audark who survived this massacre became baelnorns so that they could watch over and protect their fallen kinfolk. Over the centuries, other elves also began to use the Vale as a burial site for honored warriors.

The Vale of Lost Voices remains a sacred place to this day, despite the fact that Rauthauvyr's Road cuts straight through it. Sun elf mausoleums of stone and gold stand beside subtle moon elf tombs and nearly invisible sylvan elf graves. Travelers other than elves are advised to stay on the road, lest they draw the wrath of the baelnorn guardians. Even elf pilgrims come alone, never

Illustration by Jason Engle



*Adventurers dare the streets of Myth Drannor*



in groups, because the Vale of Lost Voices is considered a place of solitude and quiet reflection. Not surprisingly, the Cormanthor drow have given the place a wide berth.

## Legacies of cormanthyr

Cormanthyr's demise left behind many legacies. Some are widely known, and others are secrets even to the most learned sages of Faerûn. The seeds of adventure are abundant in the ruins of Myth Drannor and the Elven Court, and even the largely benevolent elves buried secrets that are best left forgotten.

### Adventure seeds

Myth Drannor is quite possibly the single biggest adventure site in Faerûn. An enormous, ruined city filled with deadly traps, deadlier monsters, and vast piles of treasure to be won is like a beacon

to adventurers everywhere. Adventures centered on reclaiming past glories or preventing ancient evils from breaking free of the protective magic that has held them in check make for exciting games that invoke the feel of Cormanthyr.

#### GLORIOUS RECLAMATION

Incensed by the blasphemous presence of drow in the Elven Court, three elves—a bladesinger<sup>Rac</sup>, a cleric of Corellon, and a ranger of Shevarash—have begun traveling from one settlement to another, gathering followers to cleanse the ancient site of its dark elf menace. Most of these followers are not seasoned warriors—they are idealistic young recruits entirely unsuited to facing a drow raiding party. The PCs must determine the true intentions of these three crusaders and decide what, if anything, to do about the situation.

#### RETURN OF THE ELFBLADES

A young elf warrior has recently surfaced in Evereska wielding a sword that he claims is the *Warblade*—one of the fabled lost elf-blades of Cormanthyr. The blade seems to display powers consistent

with those recorded for the *Warblade*, but several wizards who had questioned the sword's nature have been murdered. A cloud of suspicion has fallen on the young warrior, who still protests his innocence. The PCs must find a way to test the veracity of his claims before mob justice threatens an elf who might be the true heir of the Arms-Major of Cormanthyr.

### buried secrets

Even the elves have skeletons in their closets. Despite the wonders and glories of Cormanthyr, the elves would rather that certain remnants of the empire were forgotten and left to lie in peace.

#### THE ELFBLADES

The elfblades are without a doubt the greatest treasures of Cormanthyr. These three powerful artifacts not only granted their wielders considerable power, but also selected the ruler of Cormanthyr, the arms-major, and the spell-major. Any humanoid (not necessarily an elf) who could successfully draw one of the three blades from

its scabbard was deemed worthy for the office with which it was associated, but all three imposed disastrous consequences on unworthy candidates who attempted to draw them. The *Crownblade*, for example, consumed the rejected candidate utterly in a gout of arcane fire.

Of all the relics of Cormanthyr, the elfblades are the ones that the elves would most dearly love to regain. The bearer of the *Warblade* could muster an army with ease, while the possessor of the *Artblade* could gain access to any magical library in Faerûn as an honored guest. But the return of any of these weapons is unlikely in the extreme. Sages correctly suspect that the *Crownblade* waits with the Srinshée in Arvandor for the coming of a coronal who can reforge Cormanthyr and create the unity of which Coronals Oacanth and Eltargrim once dreamed. The *Warblade* lies in the Underdark, hidden in a secret vault beneath the temple to Lolth in the ruins of Maerimydra. The *Artblade* vanished along with the last spell-major, Josidiah Starym, at the Battle of Stars Shining near the end of the Weeping War.

## the mines of tethyamar

In the Year of Adamantine Ore (–149 DR), shield dwarf prospectors discovered rich veins of adamantite and iron in the Tethyamar caverns beneath the northwestern slopes of the Teshan Mountains (now the Desertsouth Mountains), high above the fields of Hlondath. The dwarves sent word back to the Stout Folk of fallen Oghrann, who had been gradually migrating north and east along the Storm Horns for centuries, harried by the goblin worg-riders of Hlundadim. Upon hearing of these rich deposits, numerous clans decided to migrate north and settle the caverns of Tethyamar.

Roryn, blood of Thordbard, of the Iron House of Oghrann founded the kingdom of Tethyamar in the Year of Depths Unknown (–145 DR). The Stout Folk constructed a subterranean city at the heart of the mines and built up a rich trade with the surrounding realms of Asram, Cormanthyr, Hlondath, the Cloudlands of Avaeraether, and Anuria (whose famed weaponsmiths forged most of their swords from Tethyamaran steel). For two generations the Stout Folk battled orcs, ogres, and hobgoblins, slowly carving out their kingdom with bloodied axes and sharpened pickaxes.

Tethyamar fell at least once during this period. In the Year of Hostile Hails (–88 DR), it was overrun by orcs of the Dragonspine Mountains, who had also conquered Swordcrag, a mining village of Tarkhaldale. Although the dwarves reclaimed their mines within two years, Tarkhaldale collapsed in the Year of Dashed Dreams (–87 DR). In the wake of this near-defeat, the richest mining clans of Tethyamar funded the construction of the Hlundite fortress-city of Rulvadar to defend the kingdom against the depredations of the orcs.

Despite its early trials, Tethyamar prospered in the centuries that followed. The dwarves traded ore and forged goods with the folk of Cormyr, Myth Drannor, Northkeep, Teshar, Hlontar,

and Merrydale. The founding of Flostren's Hold at the mouth of the River Tesh in the Year of Stagnant Water (747 DR) opened new markets for the Stout Folk, but that event also planted the seeds of Tethyamar's final fall.

After a consortium of Sembian merchants known as the Twelve Lords purchased the hold the following year, large volumes of Tethyamaran ore and wares destined for southern markets began to flow down the River Tesh. In the Year of Strife (753 DR), Flostren's Hold was renamed Zhentil Keep after Zhentar the wizard, who had died defending the community.

Over time, the Lords of Zhentil Keep came to covet such wealth for their own. Backed by a brotherhood of wizards known as the Zhentarim, they established a series of mines in the Dragonspine Mountains to the north, but the production from these mines never came close to that of Tethyamar's. As frustrations rose in Zhentil Keep, the Zhentarim sent troops to skirmish with Tethyamaran patrols along the banks of the River Tesh, hoping to extract trade concessions from the dwarves.

In the Year of Spreading Spring (1038 DR), the sands of Anauroch began to spread southward once again. In the decades that followed, the humanoids of the Goblin Marches grew increasingly short of resources and banded together in hopes of conquering the rich, human-held territories to the west and east. In the Year of Slaughter (1090 DR), a great host of goblins marched west and encountered a vast alliance of human armies. The resulting epic conflict was later dubbed the Battle of Bones. A smaller host of goblins, orcs, ogres, and giants marched east toward the sparsely populated northern Dalelands and the rich cities of the Moonsea. Although popular legends claim that the wizard Ashaba manifested as a great wall of water and turned aside the invaders, the truth is far more mundane. In secret negotiations, the Zhentarim prevailed

upon the humanoid shamans to march their forces north into the Desertsouth Mountains and lay siege to the rich mines of Tethyamar.

The Stout Folk held out for fourteen years, only to fall in the Year of the Dark Dawn (1104 DR) to a legion of blood-thirsty barghests and demons summoned by the circle magic of orc adepts backed by an archmage who claimed to be Great Hulundadim reborn. Although the Zhentarim had hoped to rule the mines of Tethyamar after defeating the Stout Folk, the arrival of the barghest pack made such endeavors nigh impossible. The barghests' progeny—tieflings of mixed goblin, orc, and barghest blood known as worghests—claimed dominion and have ruled the ever-feuding tribes of Tethyamar without interruption ever since.

In the Year of the Arch (1353 DR), Randal Morn slew Malyk, the Zhent puppet in Daggerdale, freeing much of the dale from the Zhentarim's yoke. By the following year, emissaries of Manshoon had forged an alliance with the humanoid rulers of Tethyamar with the express purpose of overrunning Daggerdale from the west. Fate intervened in the Year of the Harp (1355 DR), when Manshoon saw an opening to seize the Citadel of the Raven, which was manned by the allied cities of the Moonsea. At Manshoon's behest, the armies of Tethyamar, backed by hosts of Zhentarim-summoned devils, marched on the ancient fortress. When the forces of the citadel sallied forth against the approaching horde, the Zhentarim treacherously slew the remaining defenders and claimed the fortress for their own. After routing the suddenly exposed human army, the Tethyamaran forces returned home, enriched by Zhent gold and plunder seized from the field of battle.

Today, many of Tethyamar's Stout Folk still wander rootless, dreaming of the day when they can take back their home. From time to time, some return to reclaim the ranges and caverns that their people once held, but such expeditions

invariably end in defeat. The last one, mounted in the Year of the Harp (1355 DR) during the attack on the Citadel of the Raven, came closest to succeeding, since most of Tethyamar's warriors were away at the time. Though the expedition ended in failure after the unexpectedly quick return of the humanoid army, it did have one lucky, unintended consequence. The rulers of Tethyamar have since refused to honor their original pledge to the Zhentarim to overrun Daggerdale, correctly fearing that the Stout Folk have been awaiting just such an opportunity to reclaim their ancestral halls. This situation has in turn prompted the Zhentarim to recall most of the magelings they had placed at the disposal of Tethyamar's worghest rulers, thus rendering the alliance largely toothless and leaving Daggerdale unbowed.

Another expedition ended in failure in the Year of the Wave (1364 DR), when Borlin, blood of Ghellin, of the Iron House mustered a small army of Stout Folk and marched north to storm the mines. The Mithral Legion successfully stormed one of the gates of Tethyamar, only to run afoul of an orc-crafted *portal* that deposited them in the depths of the mines. One by one the dwarves died while battling their way back to the surface. The last to fall was Borlin himself, who died within sight of the great doors of Tethyamar.

Ghellin, the last king of Tethyamar, died of old age in the Year of the Gauntlet (1369 DR), still dreaming of retaking his lost realm. Leadership of the Iron House passed to his twin sons, Tasster and Teszter, born of the Thunder Blessing, who had inherited their father's dream of reclaiming Tethyamar.

The mines of Tethyamar still exist, and they remain in excellent repair except for temples to Moradin and other such structures that have been deliberately despoiled. If the monsters that lair in their tunnels could be routed, Tethyamar could easily become an operating mine and stronghold again within a few years.



# THE OLD NORTH

## History

For the most part, the history of the North chronicles the halting spread of humankind in the face of relentless humanoid hordes and rampaging wyrms. When the Fair Folk retreated from Illefarn, humans claimed their lands and forged kingdoms of their own. From these evolved great city-states such as Waterdeep, Neverwinter, and Luskan.

## Timeline

Year	Event
–23,600	Moon elves from Shantel Othreier found Ardeep.
–22,900	The elven kingdom of Illefarn is founded, and wood elves join their moon elf cousins in Ardeep.
–10,600	Aryvandaar conquers Shantel Othreier. Only Ardeep, a vassal realm of Shantel Othreier, continues to resist the Vyshaan.
–10,500	Aryvandaar finally conquers the elven realm of Ardeep. The Vyshaanti slay two of its rulers—Ilitharath and his grandson Tarosspur—in the hundred years it takes to bring Ardeep under their control.
–9900	Aryvandaar annexes Illefarn and Neverwinter Wood, its colony in the Llewyrwood. Elves of both lands flee to the remnants of Shantel Othreier.
–9000	Illefarn emerges intact from the Crown Wars and joins with Ardeep, now that Shantel Othreier is no more.
–8500	Aelinthaldaar, capital of Illefarn, is founded on the future site of Waterdeep.
–4974	Haunghdannar is founded.
–4819	Gharraghar is founded near modern Mirabar.
–4420	Besilmer, a pale shadow of High Shanatar, is founded.
–3611	Gharraghaur falls.
–3389	Haunghdannar falls.
–3100	Human seafarers from the west settle Ruathym.
–3000	Humans of Ruathym found Illusk at the mouth of the River Mirar, displacing the local Ice Hunter tribes.
–2103	Illusk falls to orc hordes from the Spine of the World, despite aid from Netherese arcanists.

## THE OLD NORTH

–2100	Survivors of Illusk travel to Icewind Dale, where their descendants become the Reghedmen.
–1288	The Melairkyn dwarves discover mithral under Mount Waterdeep. They begin construction of Melairbode (Undermountain) with the permission of the elves of Aelinthaldaar.
–1100	Illefarn's last coronal, Syglaeth Audark, commands a Retreat to Evermeet. The remnants of the empire fragment into the independent elven realms of Ardeep, Iliyanbruen (in Neverwinter Wood) and Rilithar (in Westwood and Kryptgarden Forest). Aelinthaldaar, the capital of Illefarn, is razed by high magic. By year's end, human tribes are using the site because of its excellent deepwater harbor.
–425	<i>Year of Ancestral Voices:</i> Netherese refugees refound Illusk and establish a magocracy of arcanists called the Grand Cabal to govern it.
–395	<i>Year of Ashen Faces:</i> Queen Laranla Fildaerae the Night Flame, ruler of Ardeep, is slain in orc raids. Her grandniece Imdalace succeeds her.
–354	<i>Year of Many Maws:</i> The arcanist Melathlar raises the Host Tower in Illusk to protect the settlement against pursuing phaerimms.
–335	<i>Year of Seven Spirits:</i> The arcanist Maerin of Illusk commissions the dwarves of Delzoun to construct the subterranean city of Gauntlgrym in the Craggs, east of Illusk.
–321	<i>Year of Hollow Hills:</i> Gauntlgrym is completed and settled by Illuskans, Netherese refugees, and dwarves from Delzoun.
–206	<i>Year of Elfsorrows:</i> The last Coronal of Illefarn is murdered by raiders from Jhachalkyn, a drow city deep beneath the southeastern Neverwinter Woods.
–111	<i>Year of Terrible Anger:</i> Orc hordes from the Spine of the World and the Ice Mountains ravage Illusk and Gauntlgrym in a series of attacks known as the Orc Marches. Elf armies of Eaerlann, Iliyanbruen, and Rilithar finally halt the orc rampage.
–108	<i>Year of Wands:</i> Humans displaced by the Orc Marches rebuild and resettle Illusk. The city again operates as a magocracy under the Grand Cabal.
–50	<i>Year of the Phandar:</i> Ruathen settlers found the city of Tavaray at the mouth of the River Delimbiyr.
–15	<i>Year of the Embrace:</i> Gripped by the imperial urge, the leaders of Illusk expand their nation southward and eastward.
–12	<i>Year of Laughing Lovers:</i> The elves of Iliyanbruen resist further Illuskan expansion in the south.
–10	<i>Year of Burning Glades:</i> Led by Lord Halueth Never, the elves defeat Illusk, although skirmishing persists.
–4	<i>Year of Pacts:</i> The elves of Iliyanbruen and the humans of Illusk make peace, setting the River Mirar as the boundary between their kingdoms.
4	<i>Year of the Slaked Blade:</i> Laranla Imdalace of Ardeep disappears. Rulership of the kingdom passes to her kinswoman Embrae Aloeavan.

64	<i>Year of Gleaming Frost:</i> Northmen begin settling the Twilit Land—the coastal area between present-day Neverwinter and Waterdeep.
75	<i>Year of Clinging Death:</i> Rilithar is finally abandoned because of the encroachment of human settlers and the unceasing orc and troll raids from the Sword Mountains.
87	<i>Year of the Hoar Frost:</i> Eigersstor (Neverwinter) is founded.
95	<i>Year of the Reluctant Hero:</i> Ruathens led by Uthgar Gardolfsson sack Illusk. The Grand Cabal retreats to the Host Tower, abandoning the city to the raiders. The Illuskans eventually burn the invaders' ships and drive Uthgar and his followers into the interior.
96	<i>Year of the Mournful Harp:</i> Stefan Blackspear becomes Highlord of Illusk and exiles wizards from his nation.
127	<i>Year of the Defiant Stone:</i> Grath Erlkar, a Northman raider and explorer, founds Grath's Hold (later known as Port Llast).
133	<i>Year of the Arduous Journey:</i> The Barony of the Steeping Falls is founded by Artor Morlin, the Baron of Blood, an outlaw hailing from the lands of the Shoon.
141	<i>Year of the Impenetrable Mystery:</i> Gauntlgrym is resettled with aid from Highlord Narandos of Illusk.
146	<i>Year of Risen Towers:</i> Elemlar is founded by settlers from Tavaray, north of the River Delimbiyr and east of Ardeep. Uth Myrmoran, an exiled lord of Tavaray, erects the Uthtower west of the Sword Mountains and founds the realm of the same name.
149	<i>Year of the Dwarf:</i> Dwarves of Ammarindar led by Iirikos Stoneshoulder build a stone bridge across the River Shining at the site of present-day Loudwater.
152	<i>Year of the Severed Hand:</i> The orcs of the Severed Hand tribe capture Illusk and rename it Argrock.
153	<i>Year of the Wolfstone:</i> Illithids from the Underdark and their lycanthropic thralls conquer Gauntlgrym. A few survivors escape and are taken in by the Gray Wolf tribe.
175	<i>Year of the Black Boats:</i> The orcs of the Severed Hand sack Port Llast (formerly Grath's Hold). Much of the city's population travels south to Eigersstor and safety.
177	<i>Year of the Troublesome Vixen:</i> The elves of Iliyanbruen destroy the orcs of the Severed Hand and Argrock, though the effort costs much of their strength. Within three years, Iliyanbruen is no more. Many of its moon elf inhabitants travel west to Evermeet or south to Ardeep, leaving only scattered wood elf settlements and the abandoned capital city of Sharandar.
183	<i>Year of the Murmuring Dead:</i> Uthgrael Aumar, the Stag King, founds Athalantar.
191	<i>Year of the Broken Lands:</i> The realm of Yarlith is formed north of Uthtower and south of Eigersstor to prevent dynastic squabbling between the twin heirs to the throne of Uthtower.
c. 200	Settlers from Elemlar, Athalantar, Uthtower, and Yarlith establish a series of frontier holds known as the



- Mlembryn lands in the region straddling the River Dessarin.
- 205 *Year of the Greengrass:* Settlers from Uthtower, Yarlith, and the Mlembryn lands recolonize Illusk. Taman Steeldrake becomes Grand Prince of Illusk.
- 216 *Year of the Battle Horns:* The North erupts in battle as many orc bands vie for supremacy, and countless thousands of goblinkind perish. Upon the death of the Stag King, his five sons, known thereafter as the Warring Princes of Athalantar, begin open battle for the throne.
- 218 *Year of the Dancing Lights:* Prince Belaur proclaims himself King of Athalantar and takes the throne with the aid of hired wizards. The new king names all his wizard allies lords of the realm. These cruel, avaricious wizards soon become known as magelords.
- 232 *Year of the Leaping Centaur:* Several rock gnome and deep gnome clans build the underground city of Dolblunde under the leadership of Olbrent Handstone.
- 292 *Year of Frostfires:* Aloevar, Laranla (ruler) of Ardeep, embraces the service of both Mystra and Sehanine and is made a Chosen of Mystra.
- 302 *Year of the Deep Bay:* Tavaray is abandoned as the surrounding marsh rapidly expands, prompting a wave of migration northward along the coast and eastward up the lower Delimbiyr Vale.
- 306 *Year of the Fanged Horde:* The forces of Illusk and Neverwinter (formerly Eigersstor) repel the Thousand Fangs orc horde with the aid of a mercenary army.
- 308 *Year of Promise:* Aloevar of Ardeep descends into madness and death as the silver fire of Mystra consumes her. Ruardh Lightshiver becomes Laranlor (ruler) of Ardeep.
- 342 *Year of Cantobele Stalking:* Athalantar falls to an orc horde from the High Moor. The orcs are in turn destroyed by an unlikely alliance of moon elves from Ardeep and dwarves from Dardath. The last Council of Illefarn is called, and the long-fragmented realm of Illefarn is officially dissolved. The remaining wood elves of Iliyanbruen and many wood elves from Rilithar finally join the Retreat. Ardeep and Dardath form an alliance also known as Illefarn.
- 403 *Year of the Black Dagger:* The Barony of the Steeping Falls crumbles. Tales tell of terrible beasts, undead, and other evil creatures that lurk in the ruins, causing the inhabitants of the nearby regions to avoid the site of Morlin Castle.
- 511 *Year of the Fortress Scoured:* Eleubar falls to an orc horde, but the capital city of Delimbiyr and the lands surrounding it survive because the horde founders on the House of Stone.
- 514 *Year of the Elk:* The aged Bellabar Huntinghorn leads many halflings of Mieritin to escape persecution at the hands of the Duke of Cortryn, ruler of the lands east of Amn. The refugees join others of their race.
- 516 *Year of the Haunting Hawk:* Halflings from Delimbiyr Vale and humans from Delimbiyr establish

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Secomber on the ruins of Hastarl, the fallen capital of Athalantar.

*Year of Trials Arcane:* The elves of Ardeep, the dwarves of Dardath, and several neighboring human, gnome, and halfling settlements unite to form the kingdom of Phalorm, also known as the Realm of Three Crowns.

*Year of the Burning Sky:* Phalorm's armies slaughter the Howltusk orc horde at the House of Stone, but the human King Javilarhh "the Dark" Snowsword is slain.

*Year of the Melding:* An army of hobgoblins devastates the dwarven Duchy of Hunnabar, which is centered above the underground city of Kanaglym near present-day Dragonspear Castle. Phalorm's armies destroy the hobgoblins, but the elf king, Ruardh Lightshiver, is slain.

*Year of the Pernicious Hauberk:* The armies of Phalorm defend the neighboring realm of Yarlith from attacks by orcs led by the frost giant Horthgar.

*Year of the Cultured Rake:* Torghatar, Phalorm's dwarf king, falls to duergar assassins near present-day Ironford.

*Year of the Supreme Duelist:* Troll forces attack southwestern Phalorm. The dwarves abandon the Duchy of Hunnabar and relocate to the northern Duchy of Dardath.

*Year of the Immured Imp:* The armies of Phalorm drive off an orc horde that is besieging Secomber. Ellatharion, Phalorm's elf king, leads an army of elves and halflings into the High Forest in pursuit of the orcs, and neither king nor army returns.

*Year of the Normiir:* The rampaging orcs of the Everhorde erupt from the Spine of the World, engulfing the North in war. Illusk and Yarlith are left in ruins, but the Host Tower survives. Neverwinter survives, thanks to the aid of Palarandusk the Sun Dragon.

*Year of the Fester's Smile:* The armies of Phalorm and their allies in the North crush the Everhorde south of Triboar, but their victory comes at the cost of many lives. The casualties include Lathlaeril "Leafspear," the elf king.

*Year of the Shattered Scepter:* Two orc hordes attack Phalorm, a realm that has already been gravely weakened by the Everhorde. The dwarf king Oskilar of Phalorm dies in battle with the second horde, and Dolblunde is sacked and pillaged. Phalorm's northern armies, still mopping up the remnants of the Everhorde, move south to defend the realm but are driven into Uthtower.

*Year of the Lamia's Kiss:* In response to Uthtower's call for aid, the lich Iniarv floods the land, drowning the armies of Uthtower, Phalorm, and the orcs to form the Mere of Dead Men. The orcs flee into the Sword Mountains, and Phalorm collapses when its Fair Folk abandon Faerûn for Evermeet. Ardeep remains an elven realm in name only.

*Year of the Ensozeled Kings:* Delimbiyr, the human kingdom of Phalorm, claims all the lands of that realm

and establishes a new alliance with gnomes and halflings of the area. The new realm is called the Kingdom of Man.

626 *Year of the Eagle and Falcon:* Prince Ereskas of Amn founds the settlement of Mirabar over the ancient dwarven capital of Gharraghaur.

631 *Year of the Lone Lark:* An old black dragon named Chardansearavitiol seizes the crumbling ruins of the Uthtower for his lair. He soon holds sway over the Mere of Dead Men and much of the surrounding environs.

673 *Year of the Covenant:* An alliance of mages called the Covenant is founded to promote peace among the human kingdoms of the North and prepare them for future conflicts with the orcs.

697 *Year of the Triton's Horn:* Worshipers of Shar riot throughout the Sword Coast as the machinations of Lalondra, the Dark Mother, sweep away the power of the Dark Goddess clergy overnight. King Davyd of the Kingdom of Man dies in the tumult without an heir, and several kingdoms—including Calandor, Scathril, and Loravatha—break away.

698 *Year of the Voracious Vole:* The gnome city of Dolblunde is finally abandoned after a bloody assault by priests and followers of Urdlen.

702 *Year of the Clutching Death:* Orc raiders from the High Forest inflict heavy losses on the splinter kingdoms of

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Delimbiyr that were formerly part of the Kingdom of Man. Many of these lesser realms are destroyed before the armies of the Duke of Calandor finally defeat the orcs.

*Year of Watchful Eyes:* The mages of the Covenant begin to secretly manipulate and influence the Uthgardt tribes of the North through their Art. By season's end, the tribes stand united against the goblinkind of the Savage Frontier.

*Year of Doom:* During the Battle of Two Gates' Fall in the Weeping War, the city of Delimbiyr and much of the southern Delimbiyr are devastated by a magical explosion resulting from the destruction of the Warrior's Gate—a *portal* in Myth Drannor. Many of Delimbiyr's remaining splinter kingdoms sink into decline.

*Year of Hungry Jaws:* The Uthgardt begin hunting down and slaying orc chieftains, killing a score of them over the next five years. Their action prevents the formation of another orc horde.

*Year of the Twisted Horn:* Several Uthgardt tribes destroy the Twisted Horn orc horde when it masses at the headwaters of the Surbrin.

*Year of the Splendid Stag:* Raulbaera, the Maiden King, a descendant of Ulbaerag Bloodhand, claims the lands

Illustration by Vince Locke



Elves of Illefarn use high magic to raze Aelintbaldar



	near present-day Amphail and establishes a settlement there, which she names Rowan Hold.	940	<i>Year of Cold Claws:</i> King Rauragh of Uruth Ukrypt plans to bring orc bands through the subterranean routes of the Underdark and then sweep on to Waterdeep. But Palarandusk the Sun Dragon destroys the orc horde before it can properly form.
753	<i>Year of Strife:</i> The Goblin Wars begin when goblin hordes streaming out of the Valley of Khedrun overrun and plunder Mirabar. The goblins are eventually defeated by the might of several Uthgardt tribes and the efforts of the Covenant.	942	<i>Year of the Circling Vulture:</i> Drow raiders plunder cities along the Sword Coast, enslaving many humans of the Dessarin Valley. The small realms of Harpshield and Talmost, which border the Ardeep Forest west of the ruins of Delimbiyran, are ravaged and burned.
775	<i>Year of the Bloody Stone:</i> The Uthgardt alliance defeats an ogre-led army of orcs and goblins that emerges from the Evermoors. The warriors of the Elk Tribe fall almost to a man in the defense of Flintrock. On the verge of extinction, these once-proud people become little better than bandits.	945	<i>Year of the Foolish Bridegroom:</i> Tyndal, now a rich merchant and a hero among the people, marries the Duke of Calandor's only child and heir, Eleesa.
797–802	The Uthgardt Alliance, backed by the hidden hand of the Covenant, fades away as the tribes begin to feel the loss of their warriors.	947	<i>Year of the Advancing Wind:</i> The realm of Calandor is ravaged by the battle between the silver dragon Teskulladar "Manytalons" and the white dragon Cortulorrulagalargath. In his death throes, the great white wyrm falls from the sky onto the remnants of Delimbiyran, slaying the Duke of Calandor and his retinue. Tyndal, his son-in-law, is proclaimed duke and relocates the ducal seat to the site of the old Barony of the Steeping Falls. Construction of Castle Daggerford atop the ruined remnants of Morlin Castle begins immediately.
806	<i>Year of the Warrior's Rest:</i> The realm of Stornanter is established with Laeral the Witch-Queen as its ruler. Laeral casts spells upon the Host Tower, trapping many lichs of the Grand Cabal within it.		
812	<i>Year of the Gem Dragons:</i> Illusk and its defenses are rebuilt. Trade from the mines of Mirabar brings prosperity to Illusk and Stornanter.		
841	<i>Year of the Hunted Elk:</i> Stornanter collapses after Laeral abandons it.	951	<i>Year of the Empty Hourglass:</i> Phandalin, an important farming center located southwest of Old Owl Well, falls to the orcs of Uruth Ukrypt.
842	<i>Year of the Maverick:</i> Duke Daragos Wolfstar of Stornanter becomes Lord of Illusk.		
882	<i>Year of the Curse:</i> Moon elf refugees from Eaelrann resettle Ardeep and rebuild the realm. A brief alliance with the humans dwelling along the Delimbiyr and the dwarves of the Forlorn Hills founders because of lingering suspicions about the role of humans in the fall of Ascalhorn. Like Phalorm, this alliance is dubbed the Fallen Kingdom, much to the confusion of later historians.	955	<i>Year of the Telltale Candle:</i> The mages of the Covenant gather a great, armed host from the human settlements of the North to confront an orc horde massing in the Spine of the World. In a move known as the Orcgates Affair, the Red Wizards of Thay magically transport the horde far to the south by means of great <i>portals</i> . While the North is spared much devastation, the failure of the orcs to appear deals a significant blow to the influence and prestige of the Covenant.
922	<i>Year of the Spouting Fish:</i> The great black wyrm Charansearavitril becomes a dracolich.	957	<i>Year of the Entombed Poet:</i> Illusk repels attacks by Uthgardt barbarians.
927	<i>Year of the Red Rain:</i> The wrath of the orc god Yurtrus falls upon the Sword Mountains, causing the Blood Plagues. An orc shaman named Wund unites the tribes under the leadership of the chieftain Uruth, establishing the orc realm of Uruth Ukrypt.	976	<i>Year of the Slaying Spells:</i> Upon discovering that the Red Wizards of Thay are responsible for the Orcgates Affair, the Covenant begins to work subtly against the evil mages.
928	<i>Year of the Hurlled Axe:</i> The Lord of Calandor attempts to reestablish the Kingdom of Man and have himself crowned King of Delimbiyran, but he fails.	1018	<i>Year of the Dracorage:</i> The green dragon Claugiyliamatar and the black dragon Shammagar plunder the orcs' amassed wealth at Uruth Ukrypt and destroy their food sources.
931	<i>Year of the Penitent Rogue:</i> While traveling north with a merchant caravan hailing from Baldur's Gate, Tyndal, the son of a merchant commoner, slays a group of lizardfolk near the site of ruined Morlin Castle.	1023	<i>Year of the Pirate's Trove:</i> Grand Prince Galnorn of Illusk fails to conquer Mirabar.
934	<i>Year of the Fell Wizardry:</i> The orcs of Uruth Ukrypt eradicate the gnome settlements in the Sword Mountains and the surrounding foothills.	1024	<i>Year of Lathander's Light:</i> Uruth Ukrypt releases the Broken Bone orc horde, which emerges from the Sword Mountains bent on destroying Waterdeep. The attacks of the dragon Lhammaruntosz, known as the Claws of the Coast, substantially weaken the horde, allowing the armies of Waterdeep to prevail.
936	<i>Year of the Sky Raiders:</i> Led by Wund, the orcs of Uruth Ukrypt stream out of the Sword Mountains and attack Nimoar's Hold, bringing an end to several small human realms clustered in the Dessarin Valley. Many refugees flee to the safety of Nimoar's Hold. The orcs are defeated by Nimoar's followers in the Orcfastings War.	1026	<i>Year of Crimson Magics:</i> Lauroun, Warlord of Waterdeep, dies when the orcs besiege the city. After the siege is broken, her successor Raurlor destroys the

	Black Claw orc horde at Stump Bog, shattering the strength of Uruth Ukrypt and sending it into its final decline.	1290	<i>Year of the Whelm:</i> The famed warrior Elfrin builds and fortifies a small keep along the High Road west of present-day Kheldell. He then proclaims himself ruler and "king" of all lands within a day's ride of his holding.
1042	<i>Year of the Reaching Beacon:</i> Longsaddle is founded by the fiercely independent Shardra Harpell, an escaped Calishite slave turned mage.	1294	<i>Year of the Deep Moon:</i> Throgh, son of Thaurrog, is slain by human adventurers out of Waterdeep. They in turn are attacked by wyverns, which thereafter claim Thaurrog's Keep for their lair.
1046	<i>Year of the Lion's Heart:</i> An Illuskan garrison sent to the Ice Lakes to rid the area of kobolds but is forced to retreat.	1301	<i>Year of the Trumpet:</i> Sponsored by merchant interests in Waterdeep and Neverwinter, a mercenary army rides against orc-ridden Illusk.
1063	<i>Year of the Deluded Tyrant:</i> Ilyykur, one of the Four Founders of the Covenant, is slain in a great spell-battle with the archlich Ruelve, a senior Covenant member who has gone insane.	1302	<i>Year of the Broken Helm:</i> Illusk is retaken and rebuilt with aid from Neverwinter, then renamed Luskan. Duergar under Illusk retreat to the Underdark.
1064	<i>Year of the Stranger:</i> The wizard Melaeth Ashstaff of Neverwinter slays a doppelganger posing as Grand Prince Galnorn, the age-old ruler of Illusk. Corigan Avelton of the fallen realm of Stornanter becomes Lord of Illusk.	1303	<i>Year of the Evening Sun:</i> The green dragon Claugiyliamatar establishes her lair in the Deeping Cave in the depths of the Kryptgarden Forest.
1081	<i>Year of the Disastrous Bauble:</i> The Red Wizards of Thay slay Aganzazzar, another one of the Four Founders of the Covenant, in their assault on the School of Wizardry in Neverwinter. By year's end, the two groups are engaged in a titanic wizardwar.	1305	<i>Year of the Creeping Fang:</i> Claugiyliamatar destroys the small realm of Elfrin after its king and namesake dies of fever.
1100	<i>Year of the Bloodrose:</i> The moon elves of Loudwater and the surrounding environs withdraw to Evereska to escape the increasing human presence.	1307	<i>Year of the Mace:</i> Algraetha the Enchantress slaughters the resident wyverns of Thaurrog's Keep and rebuilds the settlement, which becomes known as Nesmé.
1101	<i>Year of the Maelstrom:</i> Presper and Grimwald, the surviving members of the Four Founders of the Covenant, leave Faerûn through a series of <i>portals</i> , drawing as many Red Wizards as possible after them into a series of magic traps and ambushes. The remaining Covenant members go underground, and the arrogant Red Wizards believe they have shattered the cabal of mages.	1310	<i>Year of Storms:</i> A vast pirate fleet from the Nelanther attacks and conquers Luskan. The leaders of the pirate fleet (Taerl, Baram, Kurth, Suljack, and Rethnor) declare themselves the new rulers of the city, each taking the title of high captain.
1150	<i>Year of the Scourge:</i> Ibun Rensha of Calimshan and a group of family members lead a force of mercenary warriors and take control of Loudwater, laying claim to much of Delimbiyr Vale.	1311	<i>Year of the Fist:</i> The mage Arklem Greeth comes to Luskan and bypasses the ancient magical wards that Laeral Silverhand placed around the Host Tower of the Arcane. He forms the Brotherhood of the Arcane with the aid of the Old Ones—powerful lichs who were once members of the legendary Grand Cabal of Illusk. Arklem names himself Archmage Arcane of the Brotherhood.
1202	<i>Year of the Dragon Altar:</i> The dracolich Chardansearavitril's physical form crumbles into dust from the baleful influence of the god Myrkul. Followers of Myrkul travel to the Mere of Dead Men to see this supposed miracle of their god, and the Ebondeath Sect slowly forms.	1315	<i>Year of Spilled Blood:</i> Nanathlor Greysword, a native of Nimbral, becomes the green regent. He attempts to overthrow the rule of Pasuuk Rensha and free Loudwater, thus beginning the War of the Returned Regent.
1235	<i>Year of the Black Horde:</i> The largest orc horde in history masses in the North and besieges countless settlements, including Illusk, Waterdeep, and Silvermoon.	1317	<i>Year of the Wandering Wyrms:</i> Nanathlor Greysword becomes ruler of Loudwater after defeating Pasuuk Rensha and his followers at the battle of Tanglefork.
1244	<i>Year of the Dark Dawn:</i> After a nine-year siege, Illusk falls to the orcs of the Bloody Tusks Tribe.	1325	<i>Year of the Great Harvests:</i> The Lord's Alliance is established.
1253	<i>Year of Beckoning Death:</i> The dracolich Daurgothoth, also called the Creeping Doom, claims the abandoned subterranean city of Dolblunde for his lair.	1344	<i>Year of the Moonfall:</i> The last moon elves of Ardeep abandon their forest home to heed the call of the Retreat.
1269	<i>Year of the Moat:</i> The half-orc bandit lord Thaurrog builds Thaurrog's Keep on the site of what is now Nesmé.	1354	<i>Year of the Bow:</i> The High Captains of Luskan come fully under the sway of the Arcane Brotherhood, cementing its secret rule over the city.
1276	<i>Year of the Crumbling Keep:</i> Duergar from Gracklstugh establish an outpost beneath Illusk to probe the underground defenses of Mirabar.	1357	<i>Year of the Prince:</i> Gauntlgrym is rediscovered. Luskan's ships attack Ruathym, plundering much of the island and sinking its fleet. Luskan's forces establish a presence there, subjugate the local population, and take control of Ruathym's shipping.



1358 *Tear of Shadows*: Time of Troubles begins. The Lords' Alliance expels Luskan's forces from Ruathym by applying combined diplomatic and military pressure. Luskan and the allied island realms of the Trackless Sea join to form the Captain's Confederation. The Ebondeth Sect in the Mere of Dead Men collapses when Myrkul is destroyed.

## keepers of the past

Much of the North's written history has been destroyed in war or burnt in fires set by plundering orcs. Much of the information in the libraries of recordkeepers and loremasters today is secondhand knowledge, since few documents written by historians of the earlier kingdoms still exist. This scarcity of firsthand accounts means that any original documents found by adventurers are highly prized indeed.

### THE BIRTHRIGHT MERCHANT

The Birthright Merchant is an entrepreneurial, outspoken woman known to her customers simply as Kayt (NG female aasimar diviner 9). Kayt operates her business out of Mirabar, employing a team of historically minded spellcasters who are dedicated to unearthing the secrets of the past. She charges her diviners and investigative scouts to identify recovered heirlooms, trace bloodlines, ascertain land rights, and track down heirs. Through their efforts, they have been able to resolve many discrepancies and reunite countless heirs with lost lands and property. The aasimar also employs a conjurer who can summon the outsider and elemental ancestors of her planetouched clients from their home planes. Kayt's fees are high, but so are the stakes—her clients can learn whether they come from royalty or are related to heroes of olden days.

### THE HERALD'S HOLDFAST

About 30 miles west of Silverymoon, along the River Rauvin, is an ancient, spellguarded citadel called the Herald's Holdfast. This squat, moss-covered tower of gray stone is one of five mysterious offices operated by the Herald's. Inside the place is a massive library of heraldry in which the lineage of prominent humans, elves, dwarves, halflings, gnomes, giants, and even orcs and goblinkind has been recorded for the past eight hundred years. Its most notable section is the Chamber of Man, a library in which the histories of dozens of human kingdoms are recorded.

Old Night Shalara Swordhigh (CG female human bard 7/ranger 4) is currently in charge of the Holdfast. Her assistant, Ollarent Hillgreen (LG male halfling diviner 7/loremaster 2) is the senior sage and keeper of the Library of Man. The great sage protects his library the way a dragon guards its hoard, refusing to part with secrets for any amount of coin. Only at the direction of Shalara does Ollorinth trade information, and then only in return for a much-desired relic or historic tome.

## songs and stories

The epic tales of the old North are filled with warring dragons, orc invasions, heroic defenders, and legends of fantastic treasures.

The sheer volume of tales involving the North's heroes, villains, and kingdoms helps to explain why bards are more numerous here than nearly anywhere else in Faerûn.

### MINTIPER MOONSILVER

Ballads and poems composed by the legendary bard Mintiper Moonsilver (CN moon half-elf male fighter 5/rogue 5/bard 9) about his adventures can be enjoyed anywhere from Luskan to Myratma. The Lonely Harpist is still active in Faerûn and can be heard singing in drinking halls and taverns along the entire length of the Sword Coast. His collected works are kept in a chapbook in the Vault of the Sages in Silverymoon. This small tome is a compilation of Mintiper's odes, poems, and tales, many of which contain references to lost ruins and magic treasures scattered across western Faerûn.

### THE REGHED SAGA

The barbaric Reghedmen of Icewind Dale, descended from ancient Illuskans, perform the history of their proud people as an eerie chant and dance known as the Reghed Saga. Tribal leaders claim that this saga is the truth as told by their forefathers since the first warrior. The great majority of the Reghed Saga speaks of tribal wars and dead heroes, but the oldest parts describe the founding of Old Illusk, its great kings, and how its own civilized arrogance brought it to an end. Because custom dictates that only tribal leaders can perform the saga and only members of the tribe can witness it, few strangers have ever seen it.

## important sites

The ruins of countless kingdoms litter Faerûn, but such remnants are more prevalent in the North than anywhere else. Because the lands of the Savage Frontier and the Sword Coast have always been rich in resources and yet particularly hostile to civilization, kingdoms have risen and fallen here with disturbing regularity. Crowns, scepters, signet rings, and thrones grace many treasure hoards in the North, since petty lords and princelings seeking kingdoms to call their own often demanded regalia befitting their newly gained status.

## Ardeep

The elven realm of Ardeep, also known as the Realm of the Deepening Moon, has a history that stretches back thousands of years. Ruled by the coronals of Shantel Othreier, Aryvandaar, and Illefarn at various times, Ardeep emerged as an independent realm in its own right after the razing of Aelinthaldar. Ardeep later allied with the dwarves of Dardath, the humans of Delimbiyr, the gnomes of Dolblunde, and the halflings of Secomber to form Phalorm, the Realm of Three Crowns. But after the fall of Phalorm, most of Ardeep's moon elves retreated to Evermeet, leaving the forest abandoned for centuries. During this period, heavy logging reduced the forest to the size it is today. Moon elf refugees from Eaclann eventually reconstituted the realm, but Ardeep never regained its former splendor.

Ardeep's borders varied nearly as much as its rulers did, but they generally encompassed the forested lands north of the River

Delimbiyr, between the areas now known as the Forlorn Hills and the Sword Coast. Most folk of modern-day Faerûn believe that the elves inhabited only the area currently covered by the Ardeep Forest, but in truth the Realm of the Deepening Moon occupied at least three times that much territory. Thus, the ruins of Ardeep can be found not only in the depths of Ardeep Forest, but also in the surrounding countryside.

Ardeep Forest is a thick woodland of tall blueleaf, duskwood, and weirwood trees. Its verges are deceptively pleasant, with sun-dappled paths roamed by foraging deer. Farther into the forest, the terrain is broken by ridges and breakneck gullies cloaked in thick vines and shrubbery and concealed by mist. Wild boars roam through ruins hidden beneath the forest loam, and faintly glowing mushrooms provide dim spots of ghostly illumination.

The Fair Folk call Ardeep the Faraway Forest because of its distance from Evermeet. Outlaws and a few lonely elves dwell in its depths, and many elves and half-elves who live in Waterdeep come to Ardeep from time to time to revisit the green silences of unspoiled woodlands. Three small glades near the northwestern edge of the forest are traditional meeting spots for young lovers whose families are actively hostile to their matches. Harpers also meet in Ardeep from time to time, and rangers patrol the edges of the wood to ensure that neither large predatory beasts nor brigands settle here.

### DANCING DELL

Soft moss, short grasses, and ferns cloak this smooth bowl and the raised ring of earth that surrounds it. In the middle of the bowl stands the Ladystone, a finger of rock touched by Eilistraee and sacred to her. The Ladystone's powers guard the dell and can strike at intruders as commanded by the goddess or her priestesses. The origin of the Ladystone is unknown, but it is believed to date back to the earliest settlements in Ardeep.

Qilué Veladorn of the Seven Sisters sometimes leads worship services here, and Eilistraee herself has manifested in Dancing Dell on more than one occasion.

### GREEN GLADE

This ring of elm trees lies in the southeastern reaches of the Ardeep Forest. Fern thickets cloak its approaches, and no trail—no matter how well cleared—survives for more than one night in its vicinity.

Perpetual spring has reigned within this circle of trees for centuries, and the entire glade is under a permanent *ballow* effect. These features have been attributed to a wide range of deities over the years, but they are in fact the effects of a minor *mythal*. The *mythal* also enhances minor healing effects cast within its boundaries. (Specifically, the Empower Spell feat is automatically applied to all conjuration [healing] spells cast within the circle.) Finally, any nonmagical wood—no matter how old—brought into the Green Glade begins to spout and grow, even if it has been cut, stained, polished, fashioned into furniture, or damaged by fire.

### HOUSE OF LONG SILENCES

A façade of pale white stone separates the echoing halls of this ancient, ruined manor from the surrounding stands of cedars

and blueleafs. The House of Long Silences encompasses a nexus of two-way *portals*, including links to an abandoned watchtower in the eastern reaches of the Trollbark Forest, the undercroft of the Temple of Labelas in the ruined city of Mhiilamniir, and a subterranean grotto beneath the Snakewood. In addition, a one-way *portal* from Evermeet exits in the neighboring woods. Lord Elorfindar Flosin (NG male sun elf fighter 1/wizard 5/eldritch knight 10), whose estate encompasses the lands between Daggerford and Ardeep Forest, has created a web of warding spells in the manor and the surrounding woodlands that alerts him to intrusions.

### RELURAUN'S TOMB

In a clearing at the heart of Ardeep Forest lies the vault of a fallen elf warrior named Reluraun (male CE moon elf ghost fighter 12), whose spirit was twisted into a mad, undead creature by evil magic during his final battle. Reluraun appears as two disembodied eyes and a pair of skeletal arms and hands that wield Reluraun's Hoarcut, a +3 *icy burst longsword*. Reluraun's tomb is guarded by no less than three baelnorns (LG moon elf baelnorn wizard 13), and his coffin floats alone in a domed, underground vault. An extremely lifelike effigy of the warrior clutches Wyrmheart, a +2 *dragon bane longsword*.

## gauntlgrym

South of Mirabar, next to the Valley of Khedrun, the ruins of an ancient subterranean city lie beneath the Crag. Built ages ago by the dwarves of Delzoun for the humans of Illusk, Gauntlgrym once boasted a population of more than thirty thousand dwarves and humans. Although technically an independent kingdom, it remained a vassal realm of Illusk until the latter's fall.

Today, Gauntlgrym is a dismal collection of lightless tunnels and damp halls in which only monsters dwell. Its peaktop ventilation shaft descends more than a dozen levels to hundreds of chambers and halls. In times past, this shaft was the lair of the adult red dragon Abbenevaustour, a cruel wyrm with a peculiar pendant for illithid flesh.

Until a few years ago, the city's lower levels were infested with mind flayers. A bizarre illithid breeding experiment yielded a highly prolific race of half-illithid derro about ten years ago, and these fast-reproducing "illithiderro" (also called madminds) outnumbered the mind flayers within just a few years. Craving their freedom, they rebelled, hunting down and slaughtering their former masters and claiming their realm. Since then, the madminds have been spreading through the lower levels of Gauntlgrym like a plague. However, they have yet to reach the uppermost portion of the city, which is currently home to the Hargrath, a company of bugbears, goblins, and leucrotas<sup>Mon</sup> led by Yorthon (CE male baphitaur<sup>Und</sup> fighter 8).

A single tunnel in Gauntlgrym's lowest section leads down to Nuur Throth, an earth node imbued with elemental magic. (See *Underdark* for more information on earth nodes.) Tunnels from the northern part of the city connect to the Great Worm Cavern, an ancient burial mound in the Frost Hills far to the north.



## old illusk

Founded by ancient Northmen from the western island of Ruathym, Illusk was razed and rebuilt numerous times. Its people faced great difficulties in expanding their civilization beyond the original city, primarily because orcs, giants, and other predatory creatures threatened them on every side. No wooden structures of old Illusk survived the ravages of time, war, and fire.

The original founders of Illusk favored rune magic, and they employed runes, glyphs, symbols, and similar magic to protect their fortresses, homes, and tombs. The Netherese refugees who resettled Illusk adopted and refined the use of rune magic, combining it with the potent personal defenses of their spell mantles to forge a web of spells that provided protection against the ever-present dangers of the North. Illuskan tombs from this later period contain many Netherese spellbooks, scepters, and other items that the refugees brought with them from Netheril.

### HOST TOWER OF THE ARCANES

This ancient multispired tower was erected more than seventeen centuries ago to protect Illusk from phaerimms that might pursue fleeing Netherese to their new home. Though the tower has now become the home of the Arcane Brotherhood, it has changed little since the days when the Grand Cabal met here. The Host Tower contains many *portals* that lead to other planes, including a demiplane "shadow" of the tower itself.

Laeral of the Seven Sisters imprisoned many of the Netherese liches and demiliches<sup>EL</sup> of the Grand Cabal in the tower's shadow demiplane, from which they spent centuries trying to escape. Others fled to the ruins of Illusk and took up residence in its ancient underground tombs. Many of the wards imprisoning the Old Ones have been sundered, but some remain in place, since even the leaders of the Arcane Brotherhood do not dare release all these malignant masters of the Art.

### RUINS OF ILLUSK

The ruins of the original city of Illusk are nestled within the city of Luskan, on the south shore of the Mirar River. Crumbled fortifications, shattered towers, toppled statues, and cracked tomb entrances overgrown with creepers and vines cover an area equal to several city blocks. The stone walls around the ruins do little to protect the inhabitants of Luskan from the dangerous undead dwelling in the ancient graves belowground and the vermin that occupy the remains of the surface structures.

Dozens of Netherese arcanists who fled their homeland lived, died, and were buried with their magic in Illusk. Today, the wealthy townsfolk of Luskan continue to bury their dead in mausoleums on the south end of the ruins amid crumbling vaults and moldering tombs. Runic guardians and archaic spellwards guard the ancient burial chambers and tunnels underneath the mausoleums.

## phalorm

At the Council of Axe and Arrow, the moon elves of Ardeep, the shield dwarves of Dardath, the rock gnomes of Dolblunde, the

halflings of Secomber, and the humans of Delimbiyran agreed to unite, forging a new kingdom called Phalorm, or the Realm of Three Crowns. Phalorm lasted less than a century before it fell to successive waves of orc and goblinoid attacks.

In the waning years of Phalorm, the elves, weary of warring with the orcs, withdrew from Phalorm and left for Evermeet. The dwarf population, by then greatly reduced, retreated to defensive holdings deep beneath the Dark Hills (now known as the Forlorn Hills) or journeyed east to join Ammarindar.

### DELIMBIYRAN

The Kingdom of Man arose quickly after the fall of Phalorm, primarily because the humans of the region had outgrown any need for an alliance with other peoples. Claiming all the territories that had once been part of Phalorm, King Javilarhh II built a new kingdom called Delimbiyran. Most of its populace was human, but the gnomes and halflings of the region who chose to remain within the alliance and submit to the new king's rule were welcomed as well.

To address the orc problem, the king constructed a chain of border castles along the eastern fringe of the High Moor to keep the orcs of that area in check. Over the next fifty years, during a period known as the Endless Battle, the humans of Delimbiyran Vale launched repeated military incursions into the southern High Moor and Sword Mountains to slaughter the orcs where they lived.

Disaster then struck the young kingdom. In the process of transforming herself into a lich, Dark Mother Lalondra Worul, the reigning high priestess of Shar, brought death to all the True Servants of Shar, whose continued health she had bound to her own. Lalondra's disappearance and the wholesale demise of the Mistress of the Night's senior clergy shattered the power of Shar's church, inciting its undisciplined underlings to riot in cities along the Sword Coast. King Davyd ordered his troops to clamp down on the violence, prompting a Sharran fanatic to martyr himself by assassinating Delimbiyran's monarch.

The king's death and the absence of a legitimate heir plunged the Kingdom of Man into an ill-timed civil war. In the following year, orc raiders from the High Forest overran many of the newly proclaimed splinter kingdoms of Delimbiyran, sweeping them away in an orgy of fire and slaughter. The Duke of Calandor (secretly backed by the mages who would later form the Covenant) forged an alliance among the warring lordlings, and their combined forces eventually defeated the orcs. This brief cooperation largely ended the warring among the splinter kingdoms, but the Kingdom of Man was no more.

### DELIMBIYRAN, THE SHINING CITY

The city of Delimbiyran survived only a few decades after the collapse of the Kingdom of Man. In 714 DR, a battle between fiends and the elf and dwarf defenders of distant Myth Drannor ended abruptly with the violent destruction of the Warrior's Gate. The resultant explosion extended through the *portal* and out the Gate of Songs, which lay in the royal stronghold at the heart of Delimbiyran. These uncontrolled magical energies incinerated much of the Shining City and devastated the surrounding region as well. Only a handful of artifacts from

the once-thriving human civilizations of the lower Delimbiyran river valley survive today.

### LAUGHING HOLLOW

South of the Delimbiyran River, just inside the northwestern edge of the Misty Forest, lies an old dwarven quarry called Laughing Hollow. Numerous entrances lead from this quarry to a dwarfhold under Mount Illefarn.

Perpetual twilight reigns in the forested area within a 1-mile radius of the hollow, regardless of the time of day. Melandrach, the mysterious, self-proclaimed King of the Woods (N male wild elf fighter 7/druid 10) watches over this darkened section of the forest. Few dare visit here, since the tales maintain that Melandrach takes a dim view of those who would disturb the peace of his realm.

### MOUNT ILLEFARN

Under the hills east of Daggerford are the ruins of a sprawling dwarfhold that encompassed a labyrinth of living quarters, halls, workshops, mines, secret doors, and tunnels. The dwarves left behind a number of magic items that manipulate earth and water when this dwarfhold was abandoned.

The upper levels of the complex have been reclaimed by the dwarves of Clan Ironeater. The lower levels are home to tribes of goblins, orcs, ogres, and trolls that follow an undead necromancer named Kelthas the Dread (CE male human mohrg necromancer 10). After his death at the hands of adventurers more than a decade ago, Kelthas returned to plague the dwarves as a mohrg. He and his followers worship Myrkul in a profaned shrine of Moradin that has been rededicated to the dead god.

Illustration by Chris Hawkes



*A battle in the House of Stone*

The mechanical pumps that the ancient dwarves built to empty water from the lower sections of the mines long ago ceased functioning, so the lowest sections of the mine tunnels are filled with freezing cold, fouled water.

### STONETURN, THE HOUSE OF STONE

Along the eastern edge of Ardeep Forest stand the ruins of an immense square tower built by the dwarves and elves of Illefarn. The structure remains largely intact, though ancient spell-battles coupled with many years of neglect have caused numerous roof collapses and pits. The hundreds of rooms, atriums, halls, and temples that make up the House of Stone are all pieced together in a seemingly haphazard manner and protected by bizarre traps of dwarven make. At the heart of the structure is Stoneturn Well, an ancient water source that draws from the Underdark lake of Asmaeringol. The connection also allows Underdark monsters and water elementals into the ruins.

Local folklore maintains that the House of Stone contains a freakish silver forest and many other metallic wonders that seem to have no purpose. Legends also tell of gold, gems, and a great dwarven armory protected by all manner of traps, hidden doors, magical wards, and the undead remains of slain dwarf warriors.

The moon elves of Ardeep stopped guarding these ruins years ago, so adventurers have begun trying to brave the dangers of the House of Stone. Arallia Silverbow (N female moon elf rogue 5), apprentice to Elaith Craulnobar, has been studying the ruins for the past few months, probing tunnels and disabling traps as she works her way to the tower's center section.



## Legacies of the old north

Most citizens of the cities in the North are blissfully unaware of the long and tortured history of their realm. Waterdeep, Luskan, Secomber, Neverwinter, Daggerford, and many other settlements are successors of the elven, dwarven and human kingdoms of old. The northern settlements with the most diverse populations (typically dwarf, elf, gnome, halfling, half-elf, half-orc and human citizens) have inherited many of the same problems faced by their ancestors.

No great empires arose to rule for millennia in the North. Instead, an untold number of abandoned elven villages, destroyed human towns, and fallen dwarven kingdoms have left behind crypts, tombs, mines, and towers, most of which have never appeared on any map. Many of these ruined places contain secrets and hidden terrors that have never seen the light of day.

## Adventure site: keep on the frontier

Grimmantle Keep sits on a hill in a central region of the Crag, along the western slopes that overlook the River Mirar. Gaucelm Gonfrey, the undead Thief-King of Grimmantle, rules a dangerous gang of thieves, murderers, and other outlaws while plotting the rebirth of the kingdom he swore to win in life.

## background

The frontier kingdom of Grimmantle was founded by humans in the eastern Crag in 272 DR, during a long respite from orc attacks. In 304 DR, Lord Gonfrey usurped the throne after murdering the aged king, but he ruled for only one year before he in turn was murdered by an assassin's poisoned arrow. The people of Grimmantle buried their hated "thief-king" far beneath the Crag. Two years later, Grimmantle was swept away by the Thousand Fangs orc horde on its way to Neverwinter and Illusk.

Gonfrey slumbered in death for centuries, but his story was not over. In the months preceding the Time of Troubles, the death-god Myrkul chose to bestow the gift of undeath upon Gonfrey and convert him into a death knight<sup>MM2</sup>. Whatever plans Myrkul had for his new servant were forever lost when the god himself perished in Waterdeep. Gonfrey wandered the North for years, then finally returned home to the ruins of Grimmantle.

Since moving back into his old keep, Gonfrey has assembled a small band of humans that he hopes will become the foundation of a new kingdom. With the aid of illusions from Quaerel Nhommingtun, his "court mage," Gonfrey hides his undead nature from the others, even going so far as to dine with them on occasion.

## keep features

The keep still bears many scars of ancient orc attacks, including gouged walls, shattered rooftops, and broken gates and doors.

Gonfrey's on-duty guards are positioned as noted, but those off duty can be found in any public area on the keep's grounds.

## keyed Areas

The following areas are keyed to the map of Grimmantle Keep.

### 1. OUTER AREA

*The aged stone wall around this neglected keep stands about 20 feet high. The place has obviously been attacked many times in the distant past, judging by the gouges and thick cracks that spread like spiderwebs through its walls. The crumbling battlements have left chunks of fallen stone and mortar at the base of the keep, and weeds grow in the open area where its great gates once stood.*

### 2. ENTRANCE PATH (EL 7 or 9)

*This paved path of cracked stone leads through the open, arched gateway to a pair of barricaded doors—obviously the keep's main entrance. Thorny patches of brambles, nettles, and weeds grow on either side of the path. On the far eastern and western sides of the inner wall, stone staircases lead up to a 5-foot-wide rampart walkway.*

The keep's ironbound, wooden entrance doors are barricaded from the inside.

**Barricaded Doors:** 1-1/2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 30 each; break DC 22.

**Creatures:** Four thugs stand guard on the path just inside the gate area during the day. They are not particularly alert, and one or two are usually sleeping.

**Guards (4):** Male and female human rogue 1/fighter 2; CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6 plus 2d10; hp 14; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk or Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+1/19–20, masterwork short sword) or +6 ranged (1d8+1/×3, masterwork composite longbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +4, Bluff +4, Climb +4, Escape Artist +7, Forgery +4, Gather Information +4, Hide +7, Intimidate +4, Jump +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +7, Search +6, Sense Motive +4, Spot +4, Tumble +7; Combat Reflexes<sup>B</sup>, Dodge<sup>B</sup>, Rapid Reload, Thug, Weapon Focus (short sword).

**Languages:** Chondathan, Common, Illuskan, Orc.

**Sneak Attack (Ex):** A guard deals an extra 1d6 points of damage on any successful attack against flat-footed or flanked targets, or against a target that has been denied its Dexterity bonus for any reason. This damage also applies to ranged attacks against targets up to 30 feet away. Creatures with concealment, creatures without discernible anatomies, and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are all immune to sneak attacks. A guard can choose to deliver nonlethal damage with his sneak attack, but only when using a weapon designed for that purpose, such as a sap (blackjack).

**Trapfinding (Ex):** A guard can find, disarm, or bypass traps with a DC of 20 or higher. He can use the Search skill to find, and the Disable Device skill to disarm, magic traps (DC 25 + the level of the spell used to create it). If his Disable Device result



exceeds the trap's DC by 10 or more, he discovers how to bypass the trap without triggering or disarming it.

**Possessions:** +1 studded leather armor, masterwork short sword, masterwork composite longbow (+1 Str bonus) with 20 arrows, *potion of blur*, *potion of cure light wounds*, horn, 5 gp.

**Tactics:** The guards immediately challenge anyone approaching the keep through by way of the entrance path, demanding to know their business at Grimmantle Keep. Traders and caravans with goods to sell are welcomed; all others are asked to surrender their weapons before entering. If asked, the guards name Lord Gonfrey as master of the keep. A significant bribe (10 gp for each guard) allows visitors to keep their weapons and gains them an escort to Lord Gonfrey.

Should a brawl begin, the four guards work together to take down the biggest opponent who seems to be a fighter-type. They use their crossbows first if they have ample time to fire unhindered before engaging in melee. As soon as one guard falls, the remaining ones blow their horns to call for assistance. Four more guards arrive 5 rounds thereafter.

### 3. MAIN ENTRY

*This keep's entrance room has 15-foot-high walls that show war damage similar to that of the walls outside. The floor is a mess of mud and broken flagstones. The three entryways that lead*

*out of the room appear to have had doors at one time, but they have none now.*

If the guards escorted the PCs here, one goes to tell Gonfrey that he has visitors, and the rest remain with the characters.

### 4. GARBAGE MIDDEN (EL 7)

*Heaps of rotting garbage and offal cover the floor of this dank, dark chamber, and the air reeks with the stench. Four arrow slits, each 2 feet high by 6 inches wide, line the room's southern wall. The squeaks of vermin emanate from somewhere under the garbage.*

The residents of the keep dump their garbage here.

**Creatures:** A pack of osquips lairs here, feeding on the nightly deliveries of garbage.

**Osquips (7):** CR 1; Small magical beast; HD 1d10+4; hp 9; Init +1; Spd 40 ft., burrow 5 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp -1; Atk or Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+3, bite); SQ darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +3, Hide +10, Listen +6, Move Silently +6; Weapon Focus (bite).

**Tactics:** The osquips are fiercely protective of their territory and attack the first character who enters the room.



## 5. GUARDPOST (EL 7 OR 9)

Four arrow slits in the south wall of this room allow easy defense of this portion of the keep. A log serves as a communal chair for guards, and a ladder on the north wall leads to a trapdoor in the ceiling.

Gonfrey has guards on duty here around the clock.

**Creatures:** This area is manned by four guards during the day and four allips by night.

**Guards (4):** See area 2 for statistics.

**Allips (4):** hp 26 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 10.

**Tactics:** The guards demand that visitors identify themselves and state their business. Unless they are expected, visitors who arrive at night are told to leave the area and return in the morning when the guards "can have a better look" at them. The regular guards can be bribed to open the barricaded doors to the keep, but the allips cannot.

The guards fire their bows on anyone wandering the grounds or attempting to open the barricaded doors. The allips use their babble special attack, then sally forth to attack the intruders.

If combat breaks out here, the guards sound the alarm immediately. Three rounds later, four guards arrive from area 7. Wrinth (see area 6) immediately reports the attack to Gonfrey in area 10.

A night battle with the allips draws attention from area 7 in 1d4 rounds. Upon arrival, the guards hold back until the allips are defeated.

**Development:** At night, the guards sleep in area 9. During the day, the allips join Gonfrey in area 10.

## 6. GREAT HALL (EL 10 OR 12)

This chamber served as the throne room and audience chamber of the keep. Read or paraphrase the following aloud, adjusting as needed to account for Wrinth's presence or absence.

*The walls of this great stone hall are 20 feet high. Remnants of murals on the walls indicate the former elegance of the place. A 10-foot-diameter hole in ceiling reveals that the corresponding opening in the slate roof has been poorly thatched over.*

The king's original throne is gone, and Gonfrey has commissioned Wrinth, a man as skilled at woodworking as he is at murder, to carve a new one.

**Creatures:** If no alarm has sounded, Wrinth is busily carving the throne, assisted by two guardsmen, when the characters arrive. Otherwise, he is preparing to meet the intruders, as noted in the Tactics section below.

**Wrinth:** Male human rogue 5/assassin 4; CR 9; Medium humanoid; HD 9d6+18; hp 49; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +6; Grp +7; Atk +9 melee (1d4+2/17–20, +1 keen dagger) or +11 ranged (1d4+1/19–20, +1 hand crossbow); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d4+2/17–20, +1 keen dagger) or +11/+6 ranged (1d4+1/19–20, +1 hand crossbow); SA death attack, sneak attack +5d6, spells; SQ evasion, improved uncanny dodge, poison resistance, poison use, trap sense +1, trapfinding, uncanny dodge; AL LE; SV Fort +4 (+6 against poison), Ref +12, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 14.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +5, Balance +6, Bluff +12, Craft (woodworking) +11, Decipher Script +9, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +7, Escape Artist +16, Forgery +11, Hide +16, Intimidate +14, Jump +3, Move Silently +16, Profession (woodcutter) +8, Sense Motive +7, Spot +9, Tumble +16, Use Rope +9; Combat Expertise, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Reload, Still Spell, Weapon Focus (dagger).

**Languages:** Chondathan, Common; Dwarven, Illuskan, Orc.

**Death Attack (Ex):** If Wrinth studies his victim for 3 rounds and then makes a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, the sneak attack can also either paralyze or kill the target (Wrinth's choice). If the victim fails a DC 17 Fortitude save against the kill effect, she dies. If the save fails against the paralysis effect, the victim is helpless and unable to act for 1d6+4 rounds. If the saving throw succeeds, the attack is just a normal sneak attack. Once Wrinth has completed the 3 rounds of study, he must make the death attack within the next 3 rounds.

**Sneak Attack (Ex):** Wrinth deals an extra 5d6 points of damage on any successful attack against flat-footed or flanked targets, or against a target that has been denied its Dexterity bonus for any reason. This damage also applies to ranged attacks against targets up to 30 feet away. Creatures with concealment, creatures without discernible anatomies, and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are all immune to sneak attacks. Wrinth can choose to deliver nonlethal damage with his sneak attack, but only when using a weapon designed for that purpose, such as a sap (blackjack).

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

**Improved Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** Wrinth cannot be flanked and can only be sneak attacked by a character who has at least thirteen levels of rogue.

**Poison Use:** Wrinth is skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning himself when applying poison to a weapon.

**Trapfinding (Ex):** Wrinth can find, disarm, or bypass traps with a DC of 20 or higher. He can use the Search skill to find, and the Disable Device skill to disarm, magic traps (DC 25 + the level of the spell used to create it). If his Disable Device result exceeds the trap's DC by 10 or more, he discovers how to bypass the trap without triggering or disarming it.

**Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** Wrinth retains his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class even when flat-footed or targeted by an unseen foe (he still loses his Dexterity bonus if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

**Assassin Spells Known** (4/2 per day; caster level 4th): 1st—*disguise self*, *jump*, *sleep* (DC 13), *true strike*; 2nd—*invisibility*, *spider climb*, *undetectable alignment*.

**Possessions:** +1 studded leather armor, +1 keen dagger, +1 hand crossbow with 10 bolts, 3 doses of wyvern poison (injury DC 17, initial 2d6 Con, secondary 2d6 Con), 50 gp.

**Guards (2):** See area 2 for statistics.

**Tactics:** As soon as he hears an alarm, Wrinth casts *spider climb* and *invisibility* on himself, runs to warn Lord Gonfrey in area 10, then returns to this chamber, where he uses *spider climb* to take up a high position on the far wall, out of reach of any swords. He shoots poisoned crossbow bolts at any spellcasters while his assistants engage the intruders in melee.

The sounds of combat in this chamber can easily be overheard (Listen DC 10) by anyone in areas 7, 9, 10 and 11. Four guards arrive to join combat 5 rounds after a fight begins.

## 7. DINING HALL/KITCHEN (EL 7 OR 10)

*A long, rough-hewn wooden table lines the length of the northern wall. A half dozen skinned rabbits lie on the table next to a pile of turnips and dried herbs. Barrels of ale and water sit under the table. The room also contains three small square tables and numerous benches.*

When this room functioned as the library of Grimmantle, it contained tax ledgers, birth records, and other documents of state. Now the guards use it to prepare and consume meals. The guards clean and prepare food on a long table along the northern wall, then cook it in a large stone fireplace that serves as a makeshift oven. Meat stews or roasts are the centerpieces of most meals.

**Creatures:** Four guards are normally in this chamber preparing meals or feasting on stew and ale.

**Guards (4):** See area 2 for statistics.

**Tactics:** The guards are not expecting a fight in this room. While drawing their weapons, they overturn tables, kick benches into the characters' paths, and cause as much commotion as possible so as to alert the keep to the presence of intruders.

A loud fight in this room (Listen DC 10) brings Wrinth and his two assistants from area 6 in 5 rounds if they have not already been dealt with.

## 8. ARMORY

*Rows of heavy crossbows hang from every wall in this large chamber. On the floor are bolts, arrows, blades, armor, and a couple of wooden shields.*

This secured area holds the keep's current arsenal. Gonfrey's guards took most of this equipment in raids on merchant wagons traveling to Mirabar. The death knight hopes to equip an army with his ever-growing cache.

**Wooden Door:** 1-1/2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 15; break DC 18; Open Locks DC 20.

**Treasure:** The chamber contains 20 heavy crossbows with 400 bolts, +1 chainmail, 5 suits of leather armor, 2 suits of studded leather armor, 8 daggers, a *dagger of frost*, 3 longswords, 50 darts, and 2 wooden shields.

## 9. BARRACKS (EL 7 OR 9)

*Two dozen crudely made wooden beds with straw mattresses line the east and west walls of this chamber. Fires blaze in the two fireplaces on the south wall.*

This area is the guards' barracks.

**Creatures:** At any time, four to eight guards are resting here.

**Guards (4 to 8):** See area 2 for statistics.

## 10. CHAMBER OF THE THIEF-KING (EL 12)

*The walls of this opulent chamber are adorned with draperies and tapestries depicting knights in battle. In the center of the room stands a huge, square bed dressed with fine sheets and a heavy blanket. An ornately carved wooden desk with matching chair and a sizable wardrobe complete the furnishings.*

Gonfrey has spared no expense in fitting out his chamber with the royal trappings that he enjoyed in life. His wardrobe is filled with finery purchased in Neverwinter.

**Creature:** Gonfrey spends most of his time in this chamber, emerging only to dine with his troops and to help repel intruders. Although the death knight does not require rest, he maintains the façade of sleeping here each night. He uses his *ring of disguise self* to appear as a living human whenever he expects to encounter his troops.

**Gaucelm Gonfrey:** Male human death knight<sup>MM2</sup> fighter 9; CR 12; Medium undead (augmented humanoid); HD 9d12; hp 58; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +9; Grp +16; Atk +16 melee touch (1d8+3 plus 1 Con [Will DC 17 negates Con damage and halves normal damage], touch) or +20 melee (1d10+14/17–20, +2 bastard sword); Full Atk +16 melee touch (1d8+3 plus 1 Con [Will DC 17 negates Con damage and halves normal damage], touch) or +20/+15 melee (1d10+14/17–20, +2 bastard sword); SA abyssal blast; SQ damage

reduction 15/magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to cold, electricity, and polymorph, spell resistance 20, summon mount, turning immunity, undead followers, undead traits; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 25, Dex 16, Con –, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 17.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +14, Diplomacy +8, Handle Animal +11, Intimidate +11, Jump +14, Ride +11, Sense Motive +6; Cleave<sup>B</sup>, Combat Expertise<sup>B</sup>, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword)<sup>B</sup>, Great Cleave<sup>B</sup>, Greater Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Improved Critical (bastard sword), Leadership, Power Attack<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword).

**Languages:** Common, Illuskan; Elven, Orc.

**Abyssal Blast (Su):** Once per day, Gaucelm can produce a 20-foot-radius ball of eldritch fire. This attack has a range of 760 feet and deals 9d6 points of damage (half fire and half divine; Reflex DC 17 half against fire damage only).

**Summon Mount (Su):** Gonfrey can summon a single fiendish mount with up to 4 HD to serve as his mount. His last mount was slain, and he cannot summon another for 6 more months.

Illustration by William O'Connor



Gaucelm  
Gonfrey, Lord of  
Grimmantle Keep



**Turning Immunity (Ex):** Gonfrey cannot be turned, but he can be banished to the Nine Hells by use of a *holy word* spell.

**Undead Followers:** Gonfrey can attract 18 HD of lesser undead followers (ghouls, ghosts, medium skeletons, wights or zombies) within a 200-mile radius. He suppresses this ability most of the time because he prefers the company of the living over the dead.

**Undead Traits:** Gonfrey is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. He is not subject to extra damage from critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage to his physical ability scores, ability drain, energy drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or death from massive damage. He cannot be raised, and resurrection works only if he is willing. He has darkvision out to 60 feet.

**Possessions:** +2 breastplate, +2 bastard sword, gauntlets of ogre power, ring of disguise self, 900 gp.

**Tactics:** Gonfrey is fearless in battle. When he spies intruders, he wades into combat immediately, swinging his sword. Because he prefers to keep his undead status a secret, does not use his abyssal blast unless it appears that he is losing the fight.

## 11. MAGE CHAMBER (EL 10)

*This sumptuous bedchamber is furnished with a plush carpet, a finely carved chair, an ornate dressing table, and an elegant bed.*

Wrinth (see area 6) built all the furniture in this room.

**Trap:** The trapped stone door to this room prevents visitors from surprising Quaerel.

**Stone Door:** 6 in. thick, hardness 8, hp 90; break DC 26.

**Alarm Trap:** CR 2; magic device; location trigger; spell effect (alarm [mental], 1st-level wizard); Search DC 26, Disable Device DC 26.

**Creature:** Quaerel Nhommingtun, the “court mage” of Grimmantle, occupies this chamber. The sorcerer has pledged her loyalty to Gonfrey but sees him as the means to an end—namely wealth and power. Once she has surpassed him in strength and skill, she plans to slay him and assume control over the keep. Meanwhile, her illusion spells help Gonfrey conceal his undead status from the others.

**Quaerel Nhommingtun:** Female human sorcerer 10; CR 10; Medium humanoid; HD 10d4; hp 25; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +5; Grp +6; Atk or Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+2/19–20, +1 dagger); SQ familiar, familiar benefits; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 20.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +18, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +6, Intimidate +7, Listen +6, Spellcraft +12, Spot +3; Alertness\*, Arcane Preparation, Greater Spell Focus (illusion), Improved Initiative, Maximize Spell, Spell Focus (illusion).

**Languages:** Chondathan, Common, Dwarven, Elven, Illuskan, Orc.

**Familiar:** Quaerel’s familiar is a bat named Ipspho. The familiar uses the better of her own and Quaerel’s base save bonuses. The creature’s abilities and characteristics are summarized below.

**Familiar Benefits:** Quaerel gains special benefits from having a familiar. This creature grants Quaerel a +3 bonus on Listen checks.

**Alertness (Ex):** \*Ipspho grants her master Alertness as long as she is within 5 feet.

**Empathic Link (Su):** Quaerel can communicate telepathically with her familiar at a distance of up to 1 mile. The master has the same connection to an item or a place that the familiar does.

**Share Spells (Su):** Quaerel can have any spell she casts on herself also affect her familiar if the latter is within 5 feet at the time. She can also cast a spell with a target of “You” on her familiar.

**Sorcerer Spells Known** (6/8/7/7/6/4 per day; caster level 10th): 0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *electric jolt*<sup>Mag</sup>, *ghost sound* (DC 17), *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *read magic*, *stick*<sup>Und</sup>; 1st—*grease*, *know protections*, *magic missile*, *sleep* (DC 16), *true strike*; 2nd—*claws of darkness* (DC 19), *Gedlee’s electric loop*<sup>Mag</sup> (DC 17), *minor image* (DC 19), *mirror image*; 3rd—*displacement*, *haste*, *major image* (DC 20); 4th—*phantasmal killer* (DC 21), *shadow conjuration* (DC 21); 5th—*seeming* (DC 22).

**Possessions:** bracers of armor +2, amulet of natural armor +2, +1 dagger, 2 potions of cure serious wounds, 100 gp.

**Ipspho:** Bat familiar; CR —; Diminutive magical beast; HD 10d8; hp 13; Init +2; Spd 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +5; Grp –12; Atk or Full Atk —; Space/Reach 1 ft./0 ft.; SQ blindsense 20 ft., deliver touch spells, improved evasion, low-light vision, speak with bats, speak with master; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 4.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +10, Concentration +12, Disguise –2, Hide +18, Listen +8, Move Silently +6, Spot +8; Alertness.

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

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

**Speak with Bats (Ex):** Ipspho can speak with bats and dire bats. Such communication is limited by the intelligence of the conversing creatures.

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

**Skills:** \*Ipspho has a +4 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks. She loses these bonuses if her blindsense is negated.

**Tactics:** Quaerel attempts to bully or bargain her way out of a fight if she is surprised by powerful intruders. She is not willing to die for Gonfrey, nor is she above selling him out or revealing his undead status to escape death. If forced to fight, she casts *displacement* on herself, then resorts to her shadow magic spells.

**Treasure:** Under the bed are three chests containing clothes, maps, and books. The sorcerer keeps no treasure here.

## concluding the Adventure

Once Gonfrey is slain, any surviving guards from his band disperse. If both Quaerel and Wrinth survive, they team up and begin concocting their own plans to raid ruins in the North, hoping to set themselves up as bandit lords.



# ARTIFACTS OF THE PAST

Many of Faerûn's lost empires boasted magic of world-shaking power. Many of the more dangerous artifacts from this period were destroyed or buried long ago. Occasionally, however, one of these ancient relics resurfaces in the treasure hoard of some fearsome monster or in the hands of a powerful NPC with links to the ancient past.

Though less powerful than the grand artifacts created by the mages of old, many of these ancient magic items are potent tools in their own right. Some were quite common at the height of the empires that spawned them, but others were rare or unique even then. All are quite rare now, and many historians and sages would pay dearly to examine them.

## Magic Item Descriptions

The following magic items were conceived and created by citizens of Faerûn's lost kingdoms.

### weapons

Weapons of various sorts are perhaps the most common devices found among the ruins of lost empires. The wizards and clerics of these long-dead kingdoms produced any number of simple +1 or +2 weapons and suits of armor, many of which are still in use. A few of the special abilities popular in olden times, however, are quite rare now.

#### MAGIC WEAPON SPECIAL ABILITY

##### DESCRIPTIONS

Two special abilities not often seen in current-day Faerûn are described below. A weapon with a special ability must have at least a +1 enhancement bonus.

TABLE 10—I:

#### MAGIC/PSIONIC WEAPON SPECIAL ABILITIES

Special Ability	Base Price Modifier
Powerleech	+8,000 gp
Sending	+4 bonus*

\*Add to enhancement bonus on Table 7–9: Weapons, page 222 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, to determine total market price.

**Powerleech:** The powerleech special ability can be added only to melee weapons. A weapon with this ability drains psychic energy from the creature struck and transfers it to the wielder, thereby producing the following effects.

- Any creature that has a psionic power point reserve loses 1 power point when struck with a powerleech weapon, just as if it had expended that amount to manifest a psionic power. The creature can regain the power point normally when it rests or by any other normal means of regaining power points.
- A wielder who has a power point reserve gains 1 power point upon striking a creature that has a power point reserve, psi-like abilities, or spell-like abilities that are described as psionic in origin. Power points gained by the use of a powerleech weapon can restore expended power points but cannot increase the wielder's current power point score above its normal maximum.
- A wielder who does not have a power point reserve gains nothing from the strike, although he can still drain power points from creatures that do possess power point reserves.



Powerleech weapons were popular among the bladelords of ancient Jhaamdath, many of whom were potent psychic warriors and psions.

Moderate psychometabolism; ML 6th; Craft Psionic Arms and Armor; Price +8,000 gp.

**Sending:** A weapon with this ability transports any creature it strikes to a place of the wielder's choosing on a roll of natural 20, followed by a successful roll to confirm the critical hit. The wielder must select the opponent's destination as a free action when the confirmation roll is made. The selected location must be a place that the wielder has personally visited or seen, and it must be on the same plane as the wielder is at the time. If no location is indicated, the opponent is not transported. This ability otherwise functions like the *teleport* spell.

Strong conjuration; CL 17th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *teleportation circle*; Price +4 bonus.

### SPECIFIC WEAPONS

The most famous magic weapons of old have specific origins and unique powers.

TABLE IO-2: SPECIFIC WEAPONS

Specific Weapon	Market Price
<i>Delimbiyra's shining bow</i>	6,800 gp
<i>Armathor's sling stones</i> (50)	12,305 gp
<i>Nimblestep</i>	18,310 gp
<i>Spear of Morgur</i>	52,305 gp

**Armathor's Sling Stones:** These +1 *sling bullets* were crafted especially for Sammkol Thistlestar, one of the only two half-ling *armathors* of Myth Drannor. Each stone produces a *slow* effect (Will DC 14 negates) on any creature it strikes, so that a half-ling's shorter legs will not prove disadvantageous when chasing down a malefactor. At least two hundred *armathor's sling stones* were created before Sammkol's murder in 519 DR. These items are usually found in groups of fifty.

Faint transmutation; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *slow*; Price 12,305 gp for 50 stones; Cost 6,305 gp + 480 XP for 50 stones.

**Delimbiyra's Shining Bow:** Crafted of phandar wood before the fall of Eaerlann, this +1 *composite longbow* (+4 Str bonus) glows with a silvery light equivalent to that of a torch. Arrows shot from this longbow become silvered weapons in flight, and any creature struck by one is subject to the effects of a silver-hued *faerie fire* spell. The weapon has never been recovered from fallen Myth Glaurach, and legend asserts that it still lies within the City of Scrolls.

Faint evocation; CL 4th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *faerie fire*; Price 6,800 gp; Cost 3,800 gp + 240 XP.

**Nimblestep:** A small number of these psionically empowered +1 *short swords* were retrieved from the basin floor of the Vilhon Reach by the traveling merchant Vodarn (CN male water genasi rogue 7), who sells recovered sunken treasures in markets throughout the Dragon Reach. The genasi claims the blades originated from the ruins of the drowned Jhaamdathan city known as Corrant.

A psionic character wielding a *nimblestep* can take a move action instead of a full-round action to become psionically focused. A psionic wielder also gains Up the Walls as a bonus feat, but only so long as he carries the weapon in his hand. In addition, a psionically focused wielder of a *nimblestep* can expend his psionic focus to gain a +10 bonus on a single Jump check.

Moderate psychometabolism; ML 5th; Craft Psionic Arms and Armor, Psionic Meditation, Up the Walls; Price: 18,310 gp; Cost 9,310 gp + 720 XP.

**Spear of Morgur:** Plundered from Illusk by Uthgar Gardolfsson's raiders, this duskwood lance is tipped with a spearhead fashioned from dragon bone and bathed in rose-hued flames. Upon its owner's death, it passed on to one of Uthgar's twelve sons, eventually becoming the traditional weapon of the leader of the Red Pony tribe. The *spear of Morgur* was lost when a Red Pony chieftain ventured into the Underdark by way of a passage beneath the One Stone ancestor mound.

The *spear of Morgur* is a +1 *brilliant energy longspear*. In addition, any creature touched by it is bathed in rose-hued *faerie fire* for 1 round.

Strong transmutation; CL 16th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *continual flame*, *faerie fire*, *gaseous form*; Price 52,305 gp; Cost 26,305 gp + 2,080 XP.

### RINGS

The magic rings crafted by ancient mages and clerics have proved fully as durable as their weapons. In fact, many common rings, such as *rings of protection* or *invisibility*, are quite old, dating back hundreds of years. A few rings, however, have remained lost to the ages.

TABLE IO-3: RINGS

Ring	Market Price
<i>Fiendring</i>	30,000 gp
<i>Creation</i>	33,000 gp
<i>Whispered thoughts</i>	50,000 gp

### RING DESCRIPTIONS

The following rings appear only rarely in monster treasure hoards, lost tombs, or other hidden locations.

**Ring of Creation:** This elegant double band of platinum looks like two intertwining tongues of flame. Its wearer can use *minor creation* three times per day and *major creation* once per day. Each of these functions requires a different command word.

Moderate conjuration; CL 9th; Forge Ring, *minor creation*, *major creation*; Price 33,000 gp.

**Fiendring:** Fiendrings appear as small, rusty bands of jagged iron. Once per day, the wearer of a *fiendring* can take the form of any fiendish creature, demon, or devil that can be summoned by a *summon monster I, II, III, or IV* spell. Only one form can be assumed with each use, but the wearer gains all the assumed form's extraordinary, spell-like, and supernatural abilities. The wearer's type changes to outsider,

rendering him vulnerable to spells and effects that affect evil outsiders. Effects that would otherwise banish the wearer to another plane instead end the effect immediately, leaving the wearer staggered for 1 round. Otherwise, the transformation lasts 12 minutes.

Nar demonbinders<sup>Una</sup> forged dozens of these bizarre rings so that they could take on the shapes of fiendish beings. Some used their *fiendrings* to fight alongside their summoned demons; others used them to assume a more durable form in order to mate with fiends they had summoned.

Moderate transmutation; CL 12th; Forge Ring, *fiendform*<sup>PG</sup>; Price 30,000 gp.

### Ring of Whispered Thoughts

A *ring of whispered thoughts* enables its wearer to haunt opponents from afar. The wearer can use *whispering wind* three times per day, *suggestion* once per day, and *mass suggestion* once per week. Either of the *suggestion* effects can be used in conjunction with the *whispering wind* function if desired. In such a case, the *mass suggestion* effect targets all creatures in the area of the *whispering wind*, whereas the *suggestion* effect targets one randomly determined creature in the *whispering wind's* area.

Moderate enchantment; CL 11th; Forge Ring, *whispering wind*, *mass suggestion*; Price 50,000 gp.

### scepters

A scepter is a slender device that looks much like a rod or a wand. Scepters are generally more powerful than wands but easier to make than staves.

A scepter can hold one or two spells of up to 7th level. When calling forth the desired effect, the wielder uses the caster level (minimum 6th) and the save DC set by the scepter's maker.

**Physical Description:** Scepters are usually forged from bronze, iron, silver, or another metal and adorned with enameling or inlaid precious gems. A scepter measures about 2 feet in length and weighs 2 to 3 pounds. It has a decorative head in the shape of a dragon's talon, a mounted crystal, a clenched fist, or some similarly rounded object. A typical scepter has 10 hit points, hardness 8, and a break DC of 24.

**Activation:** Scepters use the spell trigger activation method, so casting a spell from a scepter is usually a standard action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. To activate a scepter, the wielder must hold it forth or brandish it in one hand.

**Charges:** A scepter has 50 charges upon creation. Each spell effect it contains can be used as many times as desired, up to the limit of the charges remaining in the scepter. A scepter that contains two spells, however, may require a different number of charges to produce each of its effects. A spell of 1st through 4th level drains 1 charge per use, while a spell of 5th through 7th level drains 2 charges per use.

### SPECIFIC SCEPTERS

Because a scepter can combine two wildly different spell effects, most bear little resemblance to one another. However, two particular kinds of scepters were often forged in ancient lands: the Netherese blast scepter and the silver ankh of Ra.

TABLE IO-4:

### SCEPTERS

Scepter	Market Price
<i>Silver ankh of Ra</i>	33,750 gp
<i>Netherese blast scepter</i>	48,000 gp

**Netherese Blast Scepter:** Relatively short and thick-handled, a *blast scepter* contains an empowered *lightning bolt* (caster level 10th, 2 charges) that deals 15d6 points of electricity damage and a maximized *shocking grasp* (caster level 7th, 1 charge) that deals 30 points of electricity damage.

Moderate evocation; CL 10th; Craft Scepter (see page 8), *lightning bolt*, *shocking grasp*; Price 48,000 gp.

**Silver Ankh of Ra:** Shaped like a loop-headed cross, the *silver ankh* was common in ancient Mulhorand. To use it,

the wielder must grasp the loop and point the base of the cross toward the target. A *silver ankh* contains the spells *searing light* and *cure serious wounds* (both caster level 10th, 1 charge).

Faint evocation and conjuration; CL 10th; Craft Scepter (see page 8), *searing light*, *cure serious wounds*; Price 33,750 gp.

### staves

Unlike rings and wondrous items, staves are somewhat uncommon among the treasures of fallen lands. Because these potent weapons are often used extensively by owners in distress, most have few or no charges by the time the owner falls. Thus, staves found in the ruins of Faerûn's lost kingdoms rarely have more than a handful of charges remaining.

Illustration by Matt Cavotta & Steve Prescott





## STAFF DESCRIPTIONS

Though they are of ancient make, the following staffs may still be found in various parts of Faerûn.

TABLE IO—5: STAFFS

Staff	Market Price
<i>Thysrus of the druid</i>	53,000 gp
<i>Lesser staff of Silverymoon</i>	70,000 gp

**Lesser Staff of Silverymoon:** Alustriel of Silverymoon created fewer than a dozen of these staffs. Each is made of rich weirwood chased with heavy silver inlays and crowned with a softly glowing moonstone. At least one *lesser staff of Silverymoon* lies in the ruins of Hellgate Keep; most of the others are in the hands of spellcasters trusted by the Lady of Silverymoon or in her own vaults. Alustriel sometimes entrusts a staff to a worthy hero with a good heart as well as a strong desire to aid the cause of the Silver Marches.

A *lesser staff of Silverymoon* allows use of the following spells.

- *Arcane sight* (1 charge)
- *Fly* (1 charge)
- *Dimension door* (2 charges)
- *Minor globe of invulnerability* (2 charges)
- *Animate object* (3 charges)
- *Chain lightning* (3 charges)
- *Hold monster* (3 charges)
- *Passwall* (3 charges)
- *Wall of force* (3 charges)
- *Forcecage* (4 charges)

Strong evocation; CL 15th; Craft Staff, *animate object*, *arcane sight*, *chain lightning*, *dimension door*, *fly*, *forcecage*, *hold monster*, *minor globe of invulnerability*, *passwall*, *wall of force*; Price 70,000 gp.

**Thysrus of the Druid:** The wood elf druid Craenoth Driel of Eaerlann crafted the first known *thysrus* more than six hundred years ago. The great druid was slaughtered while defending the High Forest against tanarukk forces from Hellgate Keep. His *thysrus* was carried back to that foul rift as part of the war spoils of the demon lords, but its current location is unknown.

Several of Craenoth's bereaved acolytes created their own versions of this staff to honor their slain master. Dozens of variants now exist and can be found in the hands of capable druids as far north as Lurkwood and as far east as the forests of Cormanthor.

A typical *thysrus of the druid* appears as a gnarled staff carved from a single piece of oak, duskwood, or weirwood, with a large pine cone mounted securely upon its top. Its shaft is wrapped in coils of leafy vines that remain green all year round.

The *thysrus of the druid* allows the use of the following spells.

- *Plant growth* (1 charge)
- *Speak with plants* (1 charge)
- *Animate plants* (2 charges)
- *Thorn spray*<sup>PG</sup> (2 charges)
- *Control plants* (3 charges)

Strong varied; CL 15th; Craft Staff, *animate plants*, *control plants*, *plant growth*, *speak with plants*, *thorn spray*; Price 53,000 gp.

## wondrous items

Many ancient empires, such as Netheril and Cormanthyr, were famed for the variety and inventiveness of their magic items. Many of their more fragile or expendable magic items crumbled to dust after a few decades, but others have proven quite durable.

TABLE IO—6: WONDROUS ITEMS

Item	Market Price
<i>Harness of armor +1</i>	1,500 gp
<i>Harness of armor +2</i>	6,000 gp
<i>Giiraegisir</i> (1/day)	10,800 gp
<i>Harness of armor +3</i>	12,500 gp
<i>Aoxar's helm</i>	15,400 gp
<i>Giiraegisir</i> (3/day)	21,600 gp
<i>Harness of armor +4</i>	24,000 gp
<i>Golden orb of Siluvanede</i>	30,600 gp
<i>Harness of armor +5</i>	37,500 gp
<i>Battlecloak of Vycaena</i>	38,000 gp
<i>Harness of armor +6</i>	54,000 gp
<i>Harness of armor +7</i>	73,500 gp
<i>Orb of tempests</i>	85,000 gp
<i>Harness of armor +8</i>	96,000 gp
<i>Chylnoth's coronet</i>	100,000 gp
<i>Telkiira</i>	100,000 gp

## WONDROUS ITEM DESCRIPTIONS

The wondrous items of ancient Faerûn were crafted for a variety of purposes. The original purpose of each item is given in its description below, along with its abilities.

**Aoxar's Helm:** Aoxar, the great dwarf hero of Ammarindar, crafted this open-faced, metal helmet to identify compatriots in dire need on the battlefield so that he could come to their aid. It also enabled him to pass along the dying wishes of the fallen to their families.

The wearer of *Aoxar's helm* can use *deathwatch* at will and *speak with dead* once per day.

Faint necromancy; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item; *deathwatch*, *speak with dead*; Price 15,400 gp; Weight 3 lb.

**Battlecloak of Vycaena:** This voluminous, emerald-green cloak is trimmed with an intricate design done in gold thread. Each of its two clasps is a golden disk engraved with the crest of a long-extinct Calishite noble family and set with a small emerald.

A *battlecloak of Vycaena* grants its wearer a +4 armor bonus to Armor Class and a +1 resistance bonus on all saving

throws, but its most spectacular power comes from its clasps. On command, each clasp can store one item in the same manner as a *glove of storing*. By touching the clasps (a free action), the wearer can call the items to her hands instantly.

Faint transmutation; CL 8th; Craft Wondrous Item, *mage armor*, *resistance*, *shrink item*; Price 38,000 gp.

**Chylnoth's Coronet:** Created in the early days of Cormanthyr by an aquatic elf wizard as a gift for his moon elf lover, this narrow circlet of silver is studded with small aquamarines. Mounted at the center is a tiny platinum sea cat with a mane of pure gold.

*Chylnoth's coronet* functions as a *helm of underwater action* and allows the wearer to use *freedom of movement* for up to 1 hour per day, though this time need not be used consecutively. In addition, the sea cat figurine animates on command as though it were a *figurine of wondrous power*. The sea cat (page 220 of the *Monster Manual*) can be summoned twice a week and remains for up to 6 hours per use.

Moderate transmutation; CL 11th; Craft Wondrous Item, *animate object*, *freedom of movement*, *water breathing*; Price 100,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

**Giiraegisir:** These ivory cameos were popular among the wealthy citizens of Myth Drannor at the city's height. *Giiraegisirs* vary considerably in appearance based on the house of the original owner and the aesthetics of the creator. Each is basically an oval, ivory cameo with a metal pin on the back to secure it to the wearer's clothing. The ivory surface is engraved with some sign or glyph (a house insignia, a portrait of a loved one, or the like), and hidden within the setting (Search DC 20) is a small compartment that can hold an item of up to 2 cubic inches in size.

The cameo is affixed to the setting via a small, sliding track. Pulling the ivory cameo down on its track (a free action) grants the wearer a +5 deflection bonus to AC for 1 minute. This ability can be used once per day for the typical *giiraegisir*, but a few have a superior version of the effect that allows three uses per day of this function.

Moderate abjuration; CL 10th; Craft Wondrous Item, *shield of faith*; Price 10,800 gp (1/day) or 21,600 gp (3/day).

**Golden Orb of Siluvanede:** During the heady days of Siluvanede, sun elves from the greater noble houses crafted arcane orbs that offered protection against an enemy's initial magical assault. These items, called *golden orbs of Siluvanede*, could be carried by their owners or suspended from delicate chains and worn like pendants. Some were even enspelled to float around their owners in a manner similar to that of *ioun stones*.

Each orb is a 1-inch-diameter sphere of purest gold imprinted with the house symbol of a noble Siluvaneden family. These orbs were so expensive to make that each noble house possessed only one, which was traditionally carried by its eldest member.

A *golden orb of Siluvanede* contains a Siluvaneden abjuration spell very similar to *Elminster's effulgent epuration*<sup>PG</sup>. The protection offered is continuous, although the orb can absorb and negate only one spell or spell-like ability that targets its owner each day. The wearer can choose whether or not to let the orb absorb a particular effect, although he gains no special

knowledge or insight that allows him to identify an incoming spell before making this decision.

When Eaerlann and Sharrven conquered Siluvanede, most of the golden orbs were confiscated and placed within secure vaults. Many of the newly released Siluvanedenn fey'ri now seek to reclaim their stolen ancestral treasures.

Strong abjuration; CL 17th; Craft Wondrous Item, *Elminster's effulgent epuration*; Price 30,600 gp.

**Harness of Armor:** Created by wizards from the sweltering desert land of Calimshan, these simple crossed baldrics of leather and chainmail provide all the benefits of wearing armor with none of the problems that a metal shell can cause in the scorching sun. A *harness of armor* functions like *bracers of armor* but occupies the same space on the body as a vest, thus freeing the wearer to use other types of magic bracers.

Moderate conjuration; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *mage armor*, creator's caster level must be at least two times the bonus placed in the harness; Price 1,500 gp (+1), 6,000 gp (+2), 12,500 gp (+3), 24,000 gp (+4), 37,500 gp (+5), 54,000 gp (+6), 73,500 gp (+7), 96,000 gp (+8); Weight 1 lb.

**Orb of Tempests:** An *orb of tempests* is a scrying device made from a crystal sphere about 6 inches in diameter. It functions like a *crystal ball* (see page 253 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), allowing the use of the spell *scrying* (Will DC 16 negates). In addition, the viewer can produce a *control weather* effect once per day. This effect is centered on the person or locale the viewer can see in the crystal ball at the time this ability is invoked.

The art of making an *orb of tempests* was a closely held secret of the Illuskan wizards, so only a handful of the devices exist today. An *orb of tempests* is an especially potent defensive tool for the defenders of a port city, since the owner can detect hostile fleets long before they approach and sink them in a fierce gale that seems to spring from nowhere.

Strong transmutation; CL 13th; Craft Wondrous Item, *scrying*, *control weather*; Price 85,000 gp.

**Telkiira:** *Telkiiras* are powerful lore-gems worn by the leaders of the mightiest elf clans. Each *telkiira* holds the knowledge, skills, and sometimes even a fragment of personality from each of the elves who previously wore it. Only a few of these devices survived the destruction of Myth Drannor and the other fallen elven realms, and most of those that remain are jealously guarded by their houses. At least a few have made their way into the hands of other creatures over the millennia.

When placed on the forehead of an elf, a *telkiira* confers the following benefits.

- The wearer gains a +4 insight bonus on Will saves.
- The wearer gains a +4 enhancement bonus to Intelligence.
- A *telkiira* contains 10 ranks in each of four different Intelligence-, Wisdom-, or Charisma-based skills. Among the most common skills available from a *telkiira* are Decipher Script, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (history), and Spellcraft. When making a check involving one of the *telkiira's* skills, the wearer can use either the device's ranks in that skill or his own, whichever is higher. He uses his own ability modifier for any skill check using the *telkiira's* ranks.



- A *telkiira* functions as a spellbook that can hold up to 200 pages of spells. A wizard can “write” a spell into a *telkiira* without paying the usual material cost of 25 gp per page, although he still must take the normal time to do so. A *telkiira* is fully erasable, so its owner can remove spells and replace them with new ones as he sees fit.
- A *telkiira* can hold up to ten distinct memories, each up to 1 hour in length, with perfect clarity. A wearer who accesses one of these memories experiences it as if she were the person who recorded it. Writing a memory requires 1 full round, regardless of its length. *Telkiiras* often hold important or treasured memories of their previous owners.

Only an elf or a creature with elf blood (a half-elf, for example) can wear a *telkiira* safely. Any other creature that places the gem on its forehead gains two negative levels and cannot use any of its abilities. These negative levels remain as long as the *telkiira* is worn and disappear as soon as it is removed.

*Telkiiras* are often locked to prevent unauthorized elves from enjoying their full benefits. An elf wearing a locked *telkiira* gains none of the benefits described above except the bonuses to Intelligence and on Will saves. Any member of the house, clan, or family that owns a given *telkiira* can lock or unlock it as a free action. Any other wearer can attempt a Use Magic Device check or Charisma check (DC 20 for either) to open a locked *telkiira*. Failure means the wearer must wait until he attains his next level before trying again.

Strong transmutation; CL 20th; Craft Wondrous Item, *fox's cunning*, *protection from spells*, *limited wish*, *vision*, creator must be an elf; Price 100,000 gp; Cost 50,000 gp + 4,100 XP.

## Artifacts

Because many of the past's most enduring treasures surpass any normal magic, they fall into the categories of minor and major artifacts. Faerûn's ancient cultures produced countless artifacts and relics, most of which are securely locked away by vigilant owners or buried in places so forgotten or inaccessible that no one could reach them without undertaking an adventure of truly epic scope.

### Minor Artifacts

Faerûn's ancient cultures were filled with magic of great power, so minor artifacts were much more common than they are in the current day.

#### ARTIFACT DESCRIPTIONS

Some of the most famous artifacts from Faerûn's ancient lands are described below.

**Mythallar:** A *mythallar* is usually a large, polished crystal as tall as a man, though it may take other forms as well. Like a *mythal*, a *mythallar* creates a city-sized envelope of pure magical energy. Unlike a *mythal*, however, a *mythallar* always incorporates a major special ability that permits the creation and use of quasi-magic items.

Quasi-magic items function exactly like normal magic items within the bounds of a *mythallar* but become inert when taken beyond its borders. The Netherese arcanists who first discovered and used *mythallars* viewed this restriction as a fair tradeoff, since the creation cost of any quasi-magic item, no matter how powerful, included no XP component. (The XP cost of spells with such components, however, still had to be paid.) This lack of an XP cost opened up item creation to even low-level spellcasters and made the creation of vastly powerful, near-artifact items such as floating mountaintop enclaves feasible. Without *mythallars*, Netheril would never have reached the zenith of magical power that it achieved.

Overwhelming transmutation; CL 30th; Weight 500 lb.

**Nether Scrolls:** Two sets of *nether scrolls* exist, each consisting of fifty individual scrolls. One complete set lies in the depths of Windsong Tower in the ruins of Myth Drannor, where it takes the form of a golden beech tree known as the *Quess Ar Teranthvar* (Golden Grove of Hidden Knowledge). The other set has been broken up and mostly lost. At least until the Year of the Moonfall (1344 DR), three scrolls from this latter set lay in the Hall of Mists beneath the Grandfather Tree of the High Forest. Two others are in the Crypt of Hssthak, which now lies beneath the sands of western Anauroch. A few of the remaining scrolls have been destroyed, and the location and current state of those that remain are unknown.

Each scroll is an 8-inch-by-10-inch sheet of thin, rolled gold as flexible as paper. Silvery magical writing crawls across its surface, appearing almost alive. The scroll's small size belies the staggering amount of information it holds. As soon as one “page” of text has been read, the writing swims and moves about the sheet, reforming into the next page of text. All in all, it takes approximately one month of dedicated study to review a single *nether scroll*.

The *nether scrolls* form the foundation of modern magical theory on Faerûn. Virtually every mage who has mastered any portion of the Art since the rise of Netheril received her knowledge, albeit indirectly, from the *nether scrolls*. Consequently, much of the information contained in these scrolls is now considered common knowledge in Faerûn's magical community. Nevertheless, the *nether scrolls* still contain a wealth of information that is useful to any student of the Art.

Reading even one *nether scroll* offers considerable insight into the Art. Any character studying one immediately gains one level in an arcane spellcasting class of her choice. (That is, her experience point total is set to the midpoint for her new level.)

The *nether scrolls* are divided into five chapters, each covering a different aspect of the Art. A character who manages to read all ten scrolls that make up a chapter gains an additional benefit whose nature depends on the topic studied. The chapters of the *nether scrolls* and the benefits they provide are detailed below.

**Arcanus Fundare** (Foundations of Magic): +30 inherent bonus on Spellcraft checks; +1 to save DCs for all arcane spells.

**Magicus Creare** (Spells of Creation): Three bonus item creation feats; XP cost of any magic item created drops to 75% of normal.

**Maiores Creare** (Major Creations): Craft Construct (see page 303 of the *Monster Manual*) as a bonus feat; any golem or other construct created has maximum hit points.

**Planus Mechanus** (Studies of the Planes): Use *plane shift* as the spell once per day; ignore any hostile or debilitating planar environmental effects.

**Ars Factum** (Of the Creation of Artifacts): Unknown. Reputedly, this chapter of the *nether scrolls* taught the reader how to create artifacts. However, an additional key of some kind is needed to unlock this set of scrolls, and the spellcasters of Windsong Tower never discovered it.

The benefit gained by studying a particular chapter applies only to the character's arcane spellcasting class. For example, if a 15th-level cleric/5th-level wizard studied the *Maiores Creare* scrolls and attempted to create a golem with divine magic, the golem would not have maximum hit points.

Overwhelming transmutation; CL 40th; Weight 1 lb. (per scroll)

## Major Artifacts

The ancient cultures of Faerûn produced many major artifacts, but only a few have reappeared in the modern day.

#### ARTIFACT

#### DESCRIPTIONS

The following unique items are major artifacts.

**Dragontear Crown of Sharrven:** The *Dragontear Crown of Sharrven* is a delicate diadem made of thin mithral chains adorned with tiny diamonds. A large king's tear containing the image of a majestic silver dragon hangs from the center, where it can grace the wearer's brow.

The *Dragontear Crown of Sharrven* has the properties of a *greenstone amulet*, and it protects the wearer as a *mind blank* spell. The wearer also gains a +4 sacred bonus on saving throws against necromancy effects or any effect that would transport her to another locale or dimension. If such an effect normally does not allow a saving throw (the *maze* spell, for example), the wearer can attempt a DC 20 Will save to negate the effect. Finally, the *Dragontear Crown of Sharrven* renders the wearer

immune to magical and nonmagical fear and enables her to speak, understand, and write Draconic.

**Elfblades of Cormanthyr:** These three legendary swords were forged thousands of years ago when the great empire of Cormanthyr was founded. One of them was forged for the coronal (ruler) of Cormanthyr, one for the arms-major (the chief warrior of the empire), and the third for the spell-major (the empire's chief wizard). All three swords have since been lost—two around the time of Myth

Drannor's fall, and the third many centuries before. Restoring even one of the elfblades to the elves, let alone all three, would earn an adventurer the everlasting friendship and thanks of the residents of the Elven Court—particularly now that the drow have invaded the very heart of Cormanthor.

All three elfblades insist upon choosing their own wielders. Each has its own criteria for making the choice and punishes unworthy candidates in its own way, but to wield any elfblade, a character must be of good alignment and at least 15th level.

A character wishing to become the wielder of an elfblade must grasp the hilt with the firm intent of bonding with the weapon and draw it from its sheath. Whether successful or not, the attempt costs 2,500 XP. Each weapon's description suggests some guidelines on which it bases its acceptance or rejection of a candidate, but the final decision belongs to the DM. A character deemed unworthy to wield an elfblade is subjected to that weapon's unique form of punishment, as given in its description below.

Upon acceptance by an elfblade, the character becomes attuned to it and can summon it to his hand

as a free action, as long as it is somewhere on the same plane. Once an elfblade has bonded with a character, it remains bound until the character's death, or until he commits some grievous sin against either his alignment or the elf people. In such a case, the blade punishes him as though he had failed to bond with it in the first place unless he makes an immediate effort to atone for his sin.

Each of the elfblades shares several properties in common with the others and also has its own set of unique abilities usable only by its chosen wielder. All are +4 *holy keen longswords*, and

Illustration by Vince Locke



*The elfblades of Cormanthyr: the Crownblade, the Warblade, and the Artblade*



all retard the aging process so that the wielder ages only 1 year for every 2 years that pass while he possesses the elfblade.

*Arcor Kerym, the Crownblade:* Also called the *Ruler's Blade*, this sword appears to be made of raw iron and has a pitted and craggy surface. From afar, it looks like a longsword carved from stone. An ancient Elven crown rune is stamped in gold at the seat of the blade, just above the quillions. *Arcor Kerym* glows with golden light that crackles along its surface like an arc of lightning.

The *Crownblade* was last seen in 666 DR, when the Srinshree vanished with it after using its potent magic to rebuild the Rule Tower. Scholars believe that the *Crownblade* was aware of the city's impending fall, so it removed itself and the Srinshree from Faerûn to ensure that it would not fall into the hands of the Army of Darkness. If this theory is correct, Arvandor seems a likely resting place for *Arcor Kerym*.

In addition to the standard powers of an elfblade, the *Crownblade* allows its wielder to access the mystical knowledge of three elven high mages, as stored in the three gems that decorate its crossguards and pommel. This influx of knowledge grants the wielder a +10 bonus on all Knowledge (arcana) and Spellcraft checks and a +5 bonus on all other Knowledge checks. In addition, by speaking a command word, the wielder of *Arcor Kerym* can use *heal* as the spell three times per day, or *discern lies* as the spell at will.

*Arcor Kerym* is the strictest of the elfblades when it comes to evaluating a prospective wielder. The candidate must be of lawful good alignment and must have the good of Cormanthyr and the elf people as his highest priority. In addition, a character who seeks to wield the *Crownblade* should have high ranks in Diplomacy, Sense Motive, and other social interaction skills.

The penalty for an unworthy character who attempts to bond with *Arcor Kerym* is as straightforward as it is final—he is consumed by golden fire, which burns him away to nothingness in 1 round (Fort DC 23 partial; success means the subject takes 40d6 points of damage instead). A character found unworthy and subsequently brought back from the dead still loses the 2,500 XP for attempting the attuning ritual.

Overwhelming evocation; CL 25th; Weight 4 lb.

*Aryvelabr Kerym, the Warblade:* The blade of this longsword shines like polished silver, remaining perfectly reflective no matter what punishments it endures. Blue and silver flames lick incessantly along the blade, quillions, and pommel, and they harmlessly surround the wielder's hands whenever the blade is drawn. At the seat of the blade is an Elven rune meaning "weapon," which is commonly used as a sword mark.

When Lord Orym Hawksong fell in battle at the siege of the Twisted Tower in the Year of Shadows Fleeting (–331 DR), the *Warblade* sprang up and defended him fiercely for a time. Eventually, however, the drow managed to paralyze the blade by magic, and both the great hero and his arcane sword were lost in the darkness beneath the Twisted Tower. In the centuries since, hundreds of elves have sought *Aryvelabr Kerym*, but no one has found it.

In addition to the standard powers of an elfblade, the *Warblade* enables its wielder to conjure a *blade barrier*, as the spell, once per day. In addition, the wielder can utilize *bull's strength* as the spell three times per day and *detect evil* and *detect good* as the spells at will.

To wield the *Warblade*, a character must be of chaotic good alignment. In addition, the blade seeks a wielder with martial skill (that is, a base attack bonus of at least +12), a high Charisma, and leadership ability. If the *Warblade* deems an elf who attempts the attuning ritual unworthy, it turns in his hand, making a single attack (+29 melee, damage 1d8+11/17–20). If the would-be wielder is not an elf or half-elf, or has an evil alignment, the *Warblade* attacks furiously for 2d6 rounds (+29/+24/+19/+14 melee, damage 1d8+11/17–20). Magical healing of the wounds inflicted on an unworthy candidate is possible only with a successful DC 25 caster level check.

Overwhelming evocation; CL 25th; Weight 4 lb.

*Aryfaern Kerym, the Artblade:* This longsword appears to have been forged from solid darkness. Its blade is a void of nonreflective blackness that feels as solid as stone yet as slick as oil. Along the razor-sharp, beveled edge of the blade glows a thin, crimson line of energy that encloses the darkness—the source of the elfblade's magical light. When drawn, the *Artblade* crackles like lightning breaking across a metal shield, and when swung, it emits a sharp, buzzing sound similar to that of an angry bee (though the wielder can mute this latter sound if desired). When struck against objects or weapons, the blade's clash is utterly silent, no matter how much strength powers the blow. Embossed in glowing crimson on the base of the dark blade is an Elven rune often used to signify a work of high magic.

The *Artblade* was lost at the Battle of Stars Shining in 714 DR, when Spell-Major Josidiah Starym sacrificed himself to break the army of yugoloths storming the school of magic in the city of Myth Drannor. With his forces overwhelmed and nearly defeated, the spell-major cast a spell of terrible power that consumed most of the yugoloths and much of the school in a pure white flame. When the flames died, no trace of the spell-major or his sword remained. Some sages believe that both were transported to Dweomerheart or Arvandor, but no evidence exists to support these theories.

In addition to the standard abilities of an elfblade, the *Artblade* allows its user to cast any spell using the sword's power rather than the traditional spellcasting methods. Any spell the wielder casts while wielding the *Artblade* automatically gains the benefits of the Silent Spell, Still Spell, and Eschew Materials feats with no increase to the spell level or casting time. In addition, the wielder's effective caster level increases by 1 for evocation spells. The *Artblade's* wielder can also use *greater dispel magic* as the spell three times per day and *detect magic* as the spell at will.

The *Artblade* requires its wielder to be neutral good in alignment and able to cast 8th-level arcane spells. In addition, it desires a wielder with a passion for magic and a selfless love of Cormanthyr and the elf people. A candidate deemed unworthy by the *Artblade* becomes temporarily divorced from the Weave

and unable to cast spells of any sort for 1d6 years (Will DC 23 half). A Shadow Weave user who attempts to attune to the blade instantly becomes the target of a *disintegrate* spell (caster level 25th; DC 40).

Overwhelming evocation; CL 25th; Weight 4 lb.

**The Imaskarcana:** The seven diverse artifacts collectively known as the *Imaskarcana* were the mightiest of the magic weapons and devices created by the ancient Imaskari. Two of these items—the first and the fifth—reportedly lie buried in the ruins of Inupras, the capital city of the Imaskari Empire.

*First Imaskarcana:* Crafted by an ancient Lord Artificer of Inupras more than nine thousand years ago, the *First Imaskarcana* is a crudely wrought, crenellated crown forged from a strange, lavender-tinted metal. Though it was created for humans to wear, it also fits snugly when placed on the heads of other Medium humanoids. A blue-black star sapphire about 3 inches in diameter rests squarely at the front of the crown.

The *First Imaskarcana* quickly became a symbol of the supreme authority wielded by the Imaskari emperors. Lord Artificer Yuvaraj was wearing it when he perished in battle against the manifested god Horus. The artifact is believed to lie deep under the sands in the ruins of Inupras, not far from the imperial palace.

Anyone who wears the *First Imaskarcana* gains spell resistance 30 and is protected by a *spell turning* effect that can turn 10 levels of divine magic in a 24-hour period. Once it has reached its capacity, the *First Imaskarcana* cannot turn spells again for 24 hours.

The *First Imaskarcana* also holds the collected knowledge of the empire's lord artificers and can answer many questions concerning Imaskari customs, politics, and magic. It does not engage in conversation, however, and offers only the briefest answers to direct questions (+20 bonus on Knowledge [history] checks regarding Imaskar only).

In addition, any wearer of the crown can use the following spell-like abilities: 3/day—*antimagic aura*<sup>Mag</sup>, *improved blink*<sup>Una</sup>, *legend lore* (Imaskari items only), *greater teleport*, *true seeing*; 1/day—*gate*. Caster level 18th.

The crown's spell resistance and spell turning abilities are always active, except as noted above. Any other power must be commanded to function as a standard action. The crown responds only to commands spoken in Roushoum, the ancient language of Imaskar. If a command is issued in any other language, the wearer instantly becomes the target of a *feeblemind* effect (Will DC 20 negates).

Overwhelming varies; CL 18th; Weight 3 lb.

*Fifth Imaskarcana:* Forged some eight thousand five hundred years ago, this scepter was traditionally carried into battle by the High General of Imaskar's armies. The final bearer of the *Fifth Imaskarcana* was Lord Dimarond, the last general of Imaskar, who fell outside Inupras before an enraged throng led by glorious servitors.

The *Fifth Imaskarcana* is a pitted, battered-looking scepter about 2 feet long and 2 inches in diameter. A crudely cut amethyst the size of a human fist crowns its bronze haft.

The *Fifth Imaskarcana* contains the entire military history of Imaskar from –7500

DR onward. It telepathically answers any questions posed about that subject to the best of its ability (+20 bonus on Knowledge (history) checks regarding Imaskar's military history).

Anyone who wields the *Fifth Imaskarcana* gains spell resistance 26 and can use the following spell-like abilities: 3/day—*charm person*, *crushing despair*, *confusion*, *daze monster*, *mind fog*; 1/day—*binding*, *demand*, *geas*, *mass*

*hold monster*, *power word stun*. Caster level 18th.

The scepter's spell resistance is always active. Any other power must be commanded to function as a standard action. Like the *First Imaskarcana*, the scepter responds only to commands spoken in Roushoum, the ancient language of Imaskar. If a command is issued in any other language, the wielder instantly becomes the target of a *disintegrate* effect (Fort DC 19 partial; self only; items carried are unaffected).

Overwhelming enchantment; CL 18th; Weight 4 lb.

Illustration by Jason Engle



The First and Fifth Imaskarcana



# MONSTERS OF THE ANCIENT LANDS

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he ruins of Faerûn's fallen empires are home to uncounted numbers of monsters. Characters who dare to explore the ruins of the past must face ancient undead, predatory vermin, mysterious constructs, terrifying monstrosities, and demons summoned and bound to guard long-abandoned strongholds.

This chapter presents a number of monsters commonly encountered in or around the ruins and desolate regions left behind when empires crumble into sand.

## Arachnids, giant

Giant arachnids are related to the monstrous spiders and scorpions described in the *Monster Manual*. Though they are neither as widespread nor as prone to species and size variations as their more common cousins, giant arachnids are frequently encountered in and near drow settlements in the Underdark, where they are occasionally tamed and used as beasts of burden and war. Though scorpions are not considered spiderkind, giant whip spiders, giant whip scorpions, and giant sun spiders do fall into that category. All three are particularly susceptible to many forms of drow magic.

### combat

All three giant arachnids fight by grabbing opponents and then squeezing and biting them to death. They have the following special abilities in common.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, a giant arachnid must hit an opponent that is at least one size category smaller than itself with a claw attack.

**Squeeze (Ex):** A giant arachnid that gets a hold on an opponent of its own size category or smaller automatically deals damage with both claws and can make a bite attack at its highest attack bonus.

**Vermin Traits:** A giant arachnid is immune to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects). It also has darkvision out to 60 feet.

**Skills:** A giant arachnid receives a +4 racial bonus on Climb, Hide, and Spot checks.

### giant whip scorpion

**Large Vermin**

**Hit Dice:** 4d8+8 (26 hp)

**Initiative:** +1

**Speed:** 50 ft. (10 squares)

**Armor Class:** 18 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +8 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 17

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +3/+9

**Attack:** Claw +4 melee (1d6+2)

**Full Attack:** 2 claws +4 melee (1d6+2) and bite –1 melee (1d8+1)

**Space/Reach:** 10 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Improved grab, squeeze, poison spray

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to poison, vermin traits

**Saves:** Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2

**Skills:** Climb +6, Hide +1, Spot +4

**Feats:** —

**Environment:** Any land and underground

**Organization:** Solitary or pair

**Challenge Rating:** 2

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Always neutral

**Advancement:** 5–12 HD (Large)

**Level Adjustment:** —



Illustration by Richard Sardinha

### Giant arachnids

*About the size of an ogre, this spider has a long, flat body and six spindly legs. Two more legs held close to the creature's mouth end in spiny pincers. Two long, whiplike appendages emerge from its body just behind its pincer-legs, and a third stretches up from the rear of its abdomen.*

A giant whip scorpion measures between 8 and 12 feet long and weighs about 500 pounds. It is sometimes called a monstrous uropygid, or occasionally a giant vinegaroon because of its acidic spray.

### COMBAT

Like other giant arachnids, giant whip scorpions attack with their pincers, squeezing and biting any opponents they can grab. They use their poison spray to escape danger.

**Poison Spray (Ex):** Three times per day, a giant whip scorpion can discharge a 20-foot-diameter spread of noxious vapor centered on itself. This cloud functions as an inhaled poison (Fortitude DC 14; initial and secondary damage 1d4 Dex). The save DC is Constitution-based.

### giant whip spider

**Medium Vermin**

**Hit Dice:** 2d8+4 (13 hp)

**Initiative:** +2

**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares)

**Armor Class:** 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +1/+2

**Attack:** Claw +2 melee (1d4+1)

**Full Attack:** 2 claws +2 melee (1d4+1) and bite –3 melee (1d6)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Improved grab, squeeze

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to poison, vermin traits

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 13, Dex 14, Con 14, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2

**Skills:** Climb +5, Hide +6, Spot +4

**Feats:** —

**Environment:** Any land and underground

**Organization:** Solitary, pair, or pack (3–5)

**Challenge Rating:** 1

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Always neutral

**Advancement:** 3–6 HD (Medium)

**Level Adjustment:** —

*This human-sized, spiderlike creature has a long, flat body and six spindly legs. Two more legs held close to its mouth end in spiny pincers. Two long, whiplike appendages emerge from the creature's body just behind its pincer-legs.*

A giant whip spider measures between 6 and 8 feet long and weighs about 200 pounds. Despite the impressive appearance of



its whiplike appendages, they are simple feelers that the creature uses to probe into fissures and other areas it can't see.

Sages sometimes refer to giant whip spiders as monstrous amblypygids, but this term is not commonly used.

COMBAT

A giant whip spider tries to grab prey in its pincers and hold it close to its mouth to feed.

giant sun spider

**Large Vermin**  
**Hit Dice:** 6d8+12 (39 hp)  
**Initiative:** +2  
**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares)  
**Armor Class:** 16 (–1 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 14  
**Base Attack/Grapple:** +4/+11  
**Attack:** Bite +6 melee (2d6+3)  
**Full Attack:** Bite +6 melee (2d6+3) and 2 claws +1 melee (1d4+1)  
**Space/Reach:** 10 ft./5 ft.  
**Special Attacks:** Improved grab, squeeze  
**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., vermin traits  
**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +2  
**Abilities:** Str 17, Dex 15, Con 14, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2  
**Skills:** Climb +7, Hide +2, Spot +4  
**Feats:** —  
**Environment:** Any land and underground  
**Organization:** Solitary, pair, or pack (3–5)  
**Challenge Rating:** 2  
**Treasure:** None  
**Alignment:** Always neutral  
**Advancement:** 7–9 HD (Large); 10–18 HD (Huge)  
**Level Adjustment:** —

*Though it resembles a spider, this creature is the size of a rhinoceros and the color of a camel. Its segmented, hairy body sprouts ten legs. The two front legs are thicker than the rest and end in small pincers. The head is dominated by two gigantic mandibles, and two bulging, black eyes gaze malevolently outward.*

Giant sun spiders can most easily be distinguished from Large monstrous spiders by their coloration, which ranges from brown to yellow. A giant sun spider is about 10 feet in diameter and weighs approximately 250 pounds.

Sages call these creatures monstrous solifugids or monstrous solpugids. Less educated people sometimes call them giant camel spiders or giant false spiders.

COMBAT

Because they lack the developed pincers of the other giant arachnids, giant sun spiders have weaker claw attacks, though they still use their grasping claws in the same manner. A giant sun spider's fearsome bite makes up for its underdeveloped pincers.

Baneguard

*A skeleton clutches a longsword tightly in one bony hand.*

The clerics of Bane first developed the method of creating baneguards and kept it secret for many years, but the technique has long since spread to other evil faiths. The Thayan branch of Bane's church is especially fond of creating baneguards, and these creatures serve as temple guardians in Thayan trading enclaves throughout Faerûn. Because they are also quite popular among the followers of Velsharoon, demigod of liches, baneguards are found in great numbers in Skull Gorge and the Battle of Bones, at the southwestern tip of Anauroch.

baneguard

Baneguards look exactly like ordinary animated skeletons. Only their magical powers set them apart from their lesser cousins. A cleric of at least 14th level can create a baneguard using the *create undead* spell.

COMBAT

Baneguards are silent but intelligent servants of evil masters. These vile undead are capable of independent, reasoned, malevolent behavior. They can fight with any weapon or strike with their hands.

**Magic Missile (Sp):** 1/3 rounds.

Caster level 4th.

**Blink (Sp):** 1/10 minutes. Caster level 4th.

**Undead Traits:** A baneguard is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to extra damage from critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage to its physical ability scores, ability drain, energy drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or death from massive damage. It cannot be raised, and *resurrection* works only if it is willing. It has darkvision out to 60 feet.

direguard

A Thayan improvement on the original baneguard, the direguard has both a more sinister appearance and greater magical power than its lesser cousin. A direguard is surrounded by a shadowy,

BANEGUARD

	Baneguard Medium Undead	Direguard Medium Undead
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	4d12 (26 hp)	6d12 (39 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+0	+0
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft. (6 squares)	30 ft. (6 squares)
<b>Armor Class:</b>	13 (+3 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 13	16 (+3 deflection, +3 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 16
<b>Base Attack/Grapple:</b>	+2/+5	+3/+7
<b>Attack:</b>	Claw +5 melee (1d4+3) or longsword +5 melee (1d8+3/19–20)	Claw +7 melee (1d4+4) or masterwork longsword +8 melee (1d8+6/19–20)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	2 claws +5 melee (1d4+3) or longsword +5 melee (1d8+3/19–20) and claw +0 melee (1d4+1)	2 claws +7 melee (1d4+4) or masterwork longsword +8 melee (1d8+4/19–20) and claw +2 melee (1d4+2)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft./5 ft.
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	<i>Magic missile</i>	<i>Magic missile</i>
<b>Special Defenses:</b>	<i>Blink</i> , damage reduction 5/bludgeoning, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to cold, undead traits	<i>Blink</i> , damage reduction 5/bludgeoning, darkvision 60 ft., force armor, immunity to cold, see invisibility, undead traits
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +5	Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +6
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 16, Dex 11, Con —, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 13	Str 18, Dex 11, Con —, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 13
<b>Skills:</b>	Hide +4, Listen +5, Move Silently +4, Search +4, Spot +5	Hide +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Search +8, Spot +8
<b>Feats:</b>	Blind-Fight, Combat Casting	Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Power Attack
<b>Environment:</b>	Any land and underground	Any land and underground
<b>Organization:</b>	Solitary, pair, or squad (3–10)	Solitary, pair, or squad (3–10)
<b>Challenge Rating:</b>	2	3
<b>Treasure:</b>	Standard	Standard
<b>Alignment:</b>	Always neutral evil	Always neutral evil
<b>Advancement:</b>	—	—
<b>Level Adjustment:</b>	+3	+3

translucent field of force resembling black armor and red flames smoldering in its eye sockets.

A cleric of at least 16th level can create a direguard using the *create undead* spell.

COMBAT

Like a baneguard, a direguard can fight with any weapon or strike with its hands.

**Magic Missile (Sp):** 1/3 rounds. Caster level 6th.

**Blink (Sp):** 1/10 minutes. Caster level 6th.

**Force Armor (Ex):** The shadowy, translucent field of force surrounding a dire guard grants it a +3 deflection bonus to AC.

**See Invisibility (Su):** A direguard can see invisible and ethereal creatures and objects as though it were constantly under the effect of a *see invisibility* spell.

**Undead Traits:** A direguard is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to extra damage from critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage to its physical ability scores, ability drain, energy drain, fatigue,

exhaustion, or death from massive damage. It cannot be raised, and *resurrection* works only if it is willing. It has darkvision out to 60 feet.

crawling claw

**Tiny Construct (Swarm)**

**Hit Dice:** 5d10 (27 hp)

**Initiative:** +0

**Speed:** 20 ft. (4 squares)

**Armor Class:** 14 (+2 size, +2 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +3/—

**Attack:** Swarm (1d6)

**Full Attack:** Swarm (1d6)

**Space/Reach:** 10 ft./0 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Distraction, smite fallen

**Special Qualities:** Blindsight 60 ft., construct traits, sightless, swarm traits

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +1, Will –2

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 5, Cha 1

**Skills:** —

Illustration by Jim Paeelec

Baneguard and direguard



**Feats:** —  
**Environment:** Underground  
**Organization:** Solitary, pair, or applause (3–4 swarms)  
**Challenge Rating:** 2  
**Treasure:** None  
**Alignment:** Always neutral  
**Advancement:** —  
**Level Adjustment:** —

*A scrabbling swarm of human-looking hands skitters on fingertips toward its prey.*

Adventurers destroy these miniature menaces by the dozen, all the while praying, “Let this never be me.”

Crawling claws are the amputated hands of Medium and Small humanoids given artificial life by arcane magic. They have two major advantages over undead and magic servitors of larger size: They are easy to smuggle and easy to hide. Furthermore, at least for most necromancers, the materials to construct them are near at hand.

These creatures propel themselves either by walking on their fingers or via aberrant muscle spasms that can propel them through the air up to 6 feet high. They magically “see” and “hear” as if they had the sensory organs of the humanoids they used to belong to, but their senses are dull. Crawling claws are generally too stupid to be assigned unsupervised tasks more complicated than guard duty.

## combat

Crawling claws attack in a swarm, taking advantage of their small size to gang up on a single opponent rather than trying to fight multiple foes at the same time.

**Distraction (Ex):** Any living creature vulnerable to the swarm’s damage that begins its turn with a swarm in its square is nauseated for 1 round; a DC 12 Fortitude save negates the effect. Even with a successful save, spellcasting or concentrating on spells within the area of a swarm requires a Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level). Using skills requiring patience and concentration requires a DC 20 Concentration check. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Smite Fallen (Ex):** A swarm of crawling claws deals double damage against prone combatants.

**Construct Traits:** A crawling claw has immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to extra damage from critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or energy drain. It cannot heal damage but can be repaired. It has darkvision out to 60 feet and low-light vision.

**Sightless (Ex):** Crawling claws are immune to gaze attacks, visual effects, illusions, and other attack forms that rely on sight.

**Swarm Traits:** A swarm has no clear front or back and no discernible anatomy, so it is not subject to extra damage from critical hits or flanking. A swarm of crawling claws takes half damage from piercing or slashing weapons.

Reducing a swarm to 0 or fewer hit points causes it to break up, though damage taken until that point does not degrade its ability to attack or resist attack. Swarms are never staggered or reduced to a dying state by damage. Also, they cannot be tripped, grappled, or bull rushed, and they cannot grapple an opponent.

A swarm is immune to any spell or effect that targets a specific number of creatures (including single-target spells such as *disintegrate*). A swarm takes half again as much damage (+50%) from spells or effects that affect an area, such as many evocation spells or grenadelike weapons.

## creation

A swarm of crawling claws is created from the hands of three hundred Medium or Small humanoids. No assembly is required, but the hands must be treated with unguents worth 250 gp. In addition to the hands, creating a crawling claw swarm requires casting a spell with the evil descriptor.

CL 7th; Craft Construct, *animate dead*, *cat’s grace*, *lesser geas*, caster must be at least 7th level; Price 18,000 gp; Cost 9,250 gp + 710 XP.



*Crawling claw*

Illustration by Thomas M. Baxa

## curst

Cursts are undead humanoids trapped under a curse that will not let them die. They are created when an evil spellcaster casts *bestow curse* on a dying subject, then uses *create undead* or *create greater undead* to grant the victim undeath.

The skin of a curst pales to an eerie white pallor. The whites of its eyes turn black and the color of the iris deepens, so that its eyes become small pools of glinting darkness. Cursts favor dark-colored clothing and wear cloaks and hoods to disguise their undead status while walking among the living. They prefer darkness to light and tend not to speak unless absolutely necessary.

A curst is not controlled by its creator, and it seldom chooses to serve any master who does not offer an escape from its undead condition. In addition, the transformation into an undead being causes some cursts to go slightly mad, reducing their effectiveness as servitors. A *remove curse* effect destroys a curst, causing it to crumble into dust.

A curst speaks whatever languages it knew in life.

## sample curst

*This white-skinned warrior has tortured eyes that reflect the pain of his terrible undead existence. He wears a heavy black cloak over his leather armor and carries an ancient bastard sword in his hands.*

This example curst uses a 5th-level human fighter as the base creature. Its ability scores before its transformation were Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

### Curst 5th-Level Human

**Fighter**  
**Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid)**  
**Hit Dice:** 5d12 (32 hp)  
**Initiative:** +5  
**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)  
**Armor Class:** 17 (+1 Dex, +3 masterwork studded leather armor, +3 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 16  
**Base Attack/Grapple:** +5/+9  
**Attack:** Slam +9 melee (1d4+6) or masterwork bastard sword +11 melee (1d10+8/19–20)  
**Full Attack:** Slam +9 melee (1d4+6) or masterwork bastard sword +11 melee (1d10+8/19–20)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.  
**Special Qualities:** Fast healing 1, immunity to cold and fire, spell resistance 17, turning immunity, unkillable, undead traits  
**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +2, Will –1  
**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 13, Con —, Int 6, Wis 6, Cha 6  
**Skills:** Climb +10, Listen +1, Ride +7, Spot +1  
**Feats:** Dodge<sup>B</sup>, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative<sup>B</sup>, Mobility<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword)  
**Environment:** Any  
**Organization:** Solitary  
**Challenge Rating:** 6  
**Treasure:** Standard  
**Alignment:** Always chaotic neutral  
**Advancement:** By character class  
**Level Adjustment:** +3

## COMBAT

The curst fights recklessly, knowing that even if it is carved to pieces, it will simply rise again in a matter of hours or days.

It often moves past a foe to reach another enemy, counting on its Mobility feat to protect it against any attacks of opportunity that its movement provokes.

**Unkillable (Ex):** The DC for the caster level check for the *remove curse* spell to lay this curst to rest is 15.

## creating a curst

“Curst” is an acquired template that can be added to any humanoid creature (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

A curst uses all the base creature’s statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

**Size and Type:** The creature’s type changes to undead (augmented humanoid). Do not recalculate the creature’s base attack bonus, base saves, or skill points. Size is unchanged.

**Hit Dice:** All current and future Hit Dice become d12s.



*Curst*

Illustration by Wayne Reynolds



**Armor Class:** The curst's natural armor bonus improves by 3 over that of the base creature.

**Attack:** A curst retains all the attacks of the base creature and also gains a slam attack if it didn't already have one. If the base creature can use weapons, the curst retains this ability. A curst fighting without weapons uses either its slam attack or its primary natural weapon (if it has any) when making an attack action. When it has a weapon, it usually uses that instead.

**Full Attack:** A curst fighting without weapons uses either its slam attack (see above) or its natural weapons (if it has any). If armed with a weapon, it usually uses the weapon as its primary attack along with a slam or other natural weapon as a natural secondary attack.

**Damage:** A curst has a slam attack. If the base creature does not have this attack form, use the appropriate damage value from the table below according to the curst's size. A creature that has other kinds of natural weapons retains its old damage values or uses the appropriate value from the table below, whichever is better.

Size	Base Damage
Small	1d3
Medium	1d4
Large	1d6

**Special Qualities:** A curst retains all the special qualities of the base creature and gains those described below.

**Fast Healing (Ex):** A curst heals 1 point of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 or fewer hit points, it falls to the ground paralyzed, and its fast healing stops. After 1 hour, the curst makes a DC 20 level check. If the check succeeds, the curst regains 1 hit point, its fast healing resumes, and it is no longer paralyzed. If the check fails, the curst must make another check at the same DC 24 hours later, and every 24 hours thereafter until it succeeds and begins to recover hit points again. Thus, even a dismembered curst eventually recovers from its injuries.

**Immunity to Cold and Fire (Ex):** A curst takes no damage from cold or fire attacks.

**Madness (Ex):** A curst whose Wisdom score is 1 or 2 is afflicted with bouts of madness. In combat, it has a 5% chance each round to behave erratically. On any round when this occurs, the curst takes no action.

**Spell Resistance (Ex):** A curst has spell resistance equal to 12 + its character level.

**Turning Immunity (Ex):** Cursts cannot be turned, rebuked, destroyed, or commanded.

**Unkillable (Ex):** Only two ways exist to destroy a curst permanently. One is to destroy its body (by total immersion in acid, or a *disintegrate* or *undeath to death* spell, for example). The other is to remove the curse that keeps it from dying. The caster of the *remove curse* spell must succeed on a caster level check (DC 10 + the curst's HD) to successfully remove the curse.

**Abilities:** Change from the base creature as follows: Str +2, Int -4 (minimum 3), Wis -6 (minimum 1), Cha -2 (minimum

1). As an undead creature, a curst has no Constitution score. A curst whose Wisdom score is reduced to 1 or 2 gains the madness special quality (see above).

**Skills:** Same as the base creature. Do not reduce existing skill ranks because of the drop in Intelligence, but apply the new Intelligence modifier normally to any Intelligence-based skill checks and to the number of skill points gained when the curst gains new levels.

**Organization:** Solitary.

**Challenge Rating:** Same as the base creature +1.

**Alignment:** Often chaotic (any).

**Advancement:** By character class.

**Level Adjustment:** +3.

## Deepspawn

**Huge Aberration**

**Hit Dice:** 14d8+98 (161 hp)

**Initiative:** +1

**Speed:** 20 ft. (4 squares), swim 20 ft.

**Armor Class:** 18 (-2 size, +1 Dex, +9 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 17

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +10/+27

**Attack:** +1 *battleaxe* +18 melee (1d8+10/×3) or bite +17 melee (2d6+4)

**Full Attack:** +1 *battleaxe* +16/+11 melee (1d8+10/×3) and 2 morningstars +15 melee (1d8+4) and 3 bites +15 melee (2d6+4)

**Space/Reach:** 15 ft./20 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Constrict 2d6+13, improved grab, spell-like abilities

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to poison, spawn, spell resistance 23

**Saves:** Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +12

**Abilities:** Str 29, Dex 13, Con 24, Int 17, Wis 16, Cha 10

**Skills:** Craft (trapmaking) +20, Diplomacy +2, Hide +10, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +10, Listen +20, Sense Motive +13, Spot +20, Survival +3 (underground +5), Swim +17

**Feats:** Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Multiattack, Multiweapon Fighting, Power Attack

**Environment:** Underground

**Organization:** Solitary or brood (1 plus 3–6 spawn)

**Challenge Rating:** 10

**Treasure:** Double standard

**Alignment:** Usually chaotic evil

**Advancement:** 15–27 HD (Huge); 28–42 HD (Gargantuan)

*A bloated, spherical abomination slithers along on six thick tentacles. Its surface is dotted with dozens of staring yellow eyes. Three of its tentacles grip weapons usually wielded by humanoids, while the other three end in eyeless jaws that snap and slaver.*

The deepspawn is a horror of the Underdark—a subterranean monstrosity that routinely spawns many other varieties of monsters. A single deepspawn can make a vast area dangerous even for alert, well-armed adventurers.

A deepspawn appears to be a rough, rubbery sphere about 15 feet in diameter. Its hide is mottled with purple and brown,



Illustration by Rafa Garres

Deepspawn

and it has six large, strong tentacles up to 20 feet long. Three of these arms are dexterous enough to wield weapons favored by humanoids (such as axes or maces), and the other three end in toothy jaws. Dozens of long, retractable eyestalks cover the creature's body. A deepspawn weighs about 28,000 pounds.

Deepspawn speak Aquan, Common, Draconic, Giant, and Undercommon. They use their tentacle-mouths for speech, and their voices sound like horrible, high-pitched piping.

## combat

Deepspawn are voracious creatures that crave intelligent prey. Despite their bulk and bizarre appearance, they are highly intelligent and patient opponents. They frequently dispatch their spawned minions to lure new victims to their lairs with promises of wealth and magic.

A deepspawn usually wields three weapons sized for Medium creatures in its manipulative tentacles and bites with the jaws on its feeding tentacles. The deepspawn described in the statistics block above is armed with a +1 *battleaxe* and two morningstars, but other deepspawn may possess other weapons. A deepspawn is proficient with all simple and martial weapons.

An opponent can attack a deepspawn's tentacles as if they were weapons (see Sunder in Chapter 8 of the *Player's Hand-*

*book*). Each of a deepspawn's tentacles has 20 hit points. If the deepspawn is currently grappling an opponent with the tentacle under attack, it usually uses another limb to make its attack of opportunity. Severing a deepspawn's tentacle deals 10 points of damage to the creature. A deepspawn regrows any severed tentacles in 1d10+10 days.

Deepspawn often fight from the cover of foul pools or mounds of slippery, shifting coins.

**Constrict (Ex):** A deepspawn deals automatic bite damage with a successful grapple check. An arm that is currently being used to constrict an opponent cannot also make bite attacks.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, the deepspawn must hit with a bite attack. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—*detect thoughts*, *water breathing* (self only); 3/day—*hold monster* (DC 15); 1/day—*heal* (self only). The save DCs are Charisma-based.

**Spawn (Ex):** A deepspawn is usually encountered with one to three of its spawn—monsters of CR 4 to 6. Spawn are fanatically loyal to the deepspawn that spawned them and willingly fight to the death to defend it. To determine what kind of spawn accompanies any given deepspawn, roll d% and consult Table 11–1.



TABLE II—I: DEEPSPAWN SPAWN

d%	Spawn
01–15	Displacer beast (CR 4)
16–30	Minotaur (CR 4)
31–40	Manticore (CR 5)
41–50	Troll (CR 5)
51–60	Digester (CR 6)
61–70	Ettin (CR 6)
71–100	NPC adventurer, level 1d3+3 (see page 110 of the <i>Dungeon Master's Guide</i> )

A deepspawn can spawn only creatures identical to those it has physically consumed. Each spawn possesses even the learned abilities (such as class level, skills, and spells known) of the original but retains only dim memories of its former life. Only Large or smaller corporeal, living creatures native to the Material Plane can be spawned. After spawning, a deepspawn must wait 4d6 days before doing so again.

## demon, ghour

**Huge Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar)**

**Hit Dice:** 12d8+96 (150 hp)

**Initiative:** –1

**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares)

**Armor Class:** 25 (–2 size, –1 Dex, +18 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 25

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +12/+31

**Attack:** Horn +21 melee (1d8+11)

**Full Attack:** 2 horns +21 melee (1d8+11/×4) and 2 claws +16 melee (2d6+5)

**Space/Reach:** 15 ft./15 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Breath weapon, roar, spell-like abilities

**Special Qualities:** Damage reduction 15/good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to poison and electricity, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, scent, spell resistance 25, telepathy 100 ft.

**Saves:** Fort +16, Ref +7, Will +9

**Abilities:** Str 32, Dex 8, Con 26, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 15

**Skills:** Bluff +17, Climb +26, Concentration +23, Diplomacy +19, Disguise +4 (+6 acting), Hide +6, Intimidate +4, Jump +30, Listen +16, Move Silently +14, Spot +16, Survival +16

**Feats:** Awesome Blow, Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Track

**Environment:** The Abyss

**Organization:** Solitary or gang (1 plus 6–9 hill giants, 5–8 ogres, or 2–8 minotaurs)

**Challenge Rating:** 12

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Always chaotic evil

**Advancement:** 13–18 HD (Huge); 19–27 HD (Gargantuan); 28–36 HD (Colossal)

**Level Adjustment:** —

*Somewhere between an ogre and a minotaur in appearance, this 20-foot-tall creature would tower over either one. Its hide is thick and hairy, its features bestial, and its body powerfully muscled. Two enormous horns jut from its skull, and its feet are massive hooves. A choking aura of evil surrounds it.*

The monstrous demons known as ghouls serve the Abyssal lord Baphomet and work their master's will among the minotaurs, ogres, and renegade giants that serve him. Ghouls can be found among any group of chaotic evil giants, ogres, or minotaurs. These creatures view a ghoul's presence as a sign of Baphomet's great pleasure.

Ghouls speak Abyssal and Giant.

## combat

A ghoul charges into combat like a rampaging elephant, pummeling opponents with its fists and goring with its horns. Whenever possible, a ghoul likes to enter combat with a roar, a blast of its breath weapon, or both.

**Breath Weapon (Su):** Once per minute, a ghoul can breathe a cloud of noxious gas 10 feet wide, 10 feet high, and 30 feet long. Each

creature caught within this cloud must make a DC 24 Reflex save or take 1d6 points of Strength damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Roar (Su):** Once per day, a ghoul can emit an earsplitting roar. Every creature within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 18 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1d4 rounds by this sonic attack. Any creature within 10 feet of the ghoul must also succeed on a DC 18 Fortitude save or be deafened for 2d10 minutes. Both save DCs are Charisma-based.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—*blasphemy* (DC 19), *chaos hammer* (DC 16), *deeper darkness*, *desecrate*, *detect good*, *detect magic*, *dispel good* (DC 17), *magic circle against good* (DC 15), *greater teleport* (DC 19), *unboly blight* (DC 16); 3/day—*confusion* (DC 16), *fear* (DC 16), *maze* (DC 20), *righteous might*. Caster level 14th.

**Telepathy (Su):** A ghoul can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.



Ghour demon

Illustration by Carl Frank

## dread

**Small Undead**

**Hit Dice:** 3d12 (19 hp)

**Initiative:** +3

**Speed:** Fly 40 ft. (good) (8 squares)

**Armor Class:** 16 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 13

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +1/–2

**Attack:** Longsword +3 melee (1d8+1/19–20) or claw +3 melee (1d3+1)

**Full Attack:** Longsword +3 melee (1d8+1/19–20) or 2 claws +3 melee (1d3+1)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Frightful presence

**Special Qualities:** Damage reduction 5/bludgeoning, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to cold, undead traits, weapon use

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 16, Con —, Int —, Wis 12, Cha 1

**Skills:** Listen +5, Spot +5

**Feats:** —

**Environment:** Any

**Organization:** Solitary, pair, or gang (3–4)

**Challenge Rating:** 2

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Always neutral evil

**Advancement:** 4 HD (Small); 5–6 HD (Medium)

*A skeletal pair of arms hovers in the air, both hands gripping a rusty old longsword. The arms move together and strike as if they were the limbs of a human-sized skeleton.*

A dread is a pair of animated skeletal arms created for use as an undead guardian. Like a skeleton, it is a mindless automaton that obeys the commands of its master, but it also carries an aura of supernatural terror. Each of a dread's arms is 2 to 4 feet long and weighs 10 to 40 pounds.

Dreads do only what they are ordered to do, but they can accept reasonably complex commands based on observable characteristics such as race, equipment, spoken passwords, or specific actions. For example, a dread might be ordered to attack all intruders except elves and creatures displaying a certain token. These dreads are often incorporated into complex trap designs.

A dread can be created with an *animate dead* spell, but in addition to all the normal requirements of the spell, the caster must provide a zendalure gemstone worth at least 1,000 gp.

## combat

Dreads attack relentlessly as ordered by their creator. The necromantic magic used in their creation surrounds them with an aura of supernatural fear.

**Frightful Presence (Su):** Any creature with 2 or fewer HD within 30 feet of a dread must succeed on a DC 12 Will save or become shaken for 2d6 rounds. A creature that is already shaken (by the frightful presence of a second dread, for example) becomes frightened instead. If the creature is already frightened, the dread's frightful presence produces no further effect. A successful save renders the creature immune to that dread's frightful presence for 24 hours. Frightful presence is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Wisdom-based.

**Undead Traits:** A dread is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to extra damage from critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage to its physical ability scores, ability drain, energy drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or death from massive damage. It cannot be raised, and resurrection works only if it is willing. It has darkvision out to 60 feet.

**Weapon Use (Ex):** A Medium dread can use weapons sized for Medium creatures with no penalty, since its arms are roughly the same size as those of a Medium humanoid.

**Skills:** A dread has a +4 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

## dread warrior

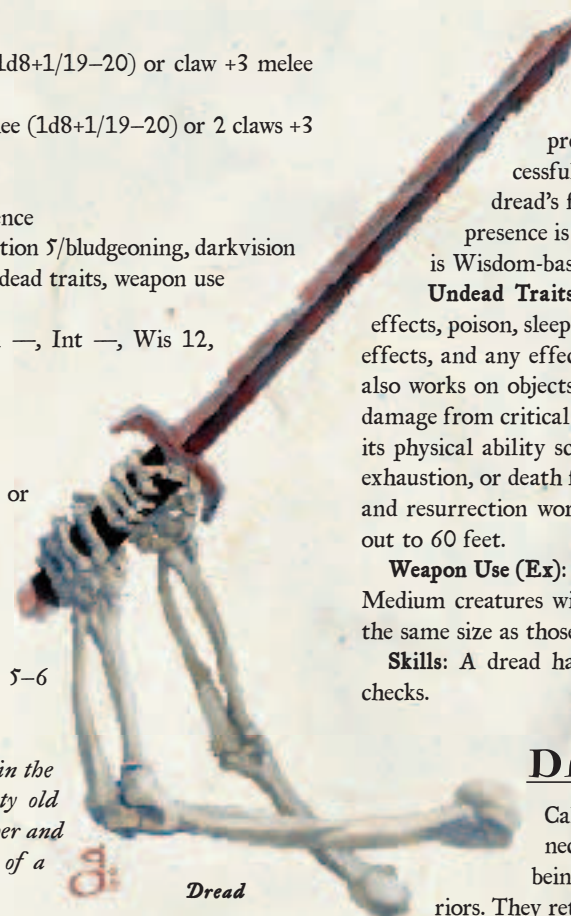
Called forth to serve in undeath through foul necromantic magic, dread warriors are undead beings created from the corpses of skilled warriors. They retain many of the martial skills and talents they possessed in life but are compelled to serve their creators with unquestioning obedience. Dread warriors are created with the spell *animate dread warrior*.<sup>Una</sup>

A dread warrior looks more or less like it did in life, although it still bears the ghastly wounds that killed it, and its eyes glow with a feral yellow light. Its skin tends to shrivel and darken, falling in on its sunken flesh to give it a gaunt, withered appearance. A dread warrior usually carries the arms and armor it favored before its death and transformation.

A dread warrior speaks whatever languages it knew in life.

## sample dread warrior

*An armored warrior limps closer, a battleaxe gripped in its hands. No human could live with the wounds the creature bears, but its eyes burn yellow with hate, and the shriveled flesh of its face twists into an evil snarl.*



Dread

Illustration by Randy Gallegos



This example uses a 4th-level human warrior as the base creature.

#### Dread Warrior Human Warrior 4

Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid)

Hit Dice: 4d12+3 (29 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 20 ft. in banded mail (4 squares); base 30 ft.

Armor Class: 18 (+6 banded mail, +2 heavy steel shield), touch 10, flat-footed 18

Base Attack/Grapple: +4/+7

Attack: Masterwork battleaxe +9 melee (1d8+3/×3)

Full Attack: Masterwork battleaxe +9 melee (1d8+3/×3)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., undead traits

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 11, Con —, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 6

Skills: Climb +6, Jump +5, Spot +8

Feats: Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (battleaxe)

Environment: Any land

Organization: Solitary or company (3–12)

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: —

### COMBAT

Dread warriors are not always reliable servants because complicated orders tend to confuse them. Orders with twelve or fewer words cause no problems, but a dread warrior has a cumulative 5% chance per word after the twelfth to misinterpret the entire set of instructions. A dread warrior that fails to understand its orders functions as if confused (see the *confusion* spell in the *Player's Handbook*). Roll randomly to determine what action it takes in response to the command that triggered its confusion.

Dread warriors fight with the arms and armor they used in life.

**Undead Traits:** A dread warrior is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to extra damage from critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage to its physical ability scores, ability drain, energy drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or death from massive damage. It cannot be raised, and resurrection works only if it is willing. It has darkvision out to 60 feet.

**Skills:** A dread warrior gains a +4 racial bonus on Climb, Jump, and Spot checks.

### creating a dread warrior

“Dread warrior” is a template that can be added to any humanoid creature with at least 3 character levels (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

A dread warrior uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Illustration by Marko Djordjevic



Dread warrior

**Size and Type:** The creature's type changes to undead. Do not recalculate the creature's base attack bonus, base saves, or skill points. Size is unchanged.

**Hit Dice:** All current and future Hit Dice become d12s.

**Armor Class:** Same as the base creature with the appropriate armor type.

**Abilities:** Change from the base creature as follows: Str +4, Int –6 (minimum 3), Cha –4 (minimum 3). As an undead creature, a dread warrior has no Constitution score.

**Skills:** Same as the base creature, except that a dread warrior gains a +4 racial bonus on Climb, Jump, and Spot checks.

**Feats:** Same as the base creature, except that the dread warrior cannot use any feats for which it no longer qualifies.

**Environment:** Any.

**Organization:** Solitary or company (3–12).

**Challenge Rating:** Same as base creature.

**Treasure:** None.

**Alignment:** Always neutral evil.

**Advancement:** —

## flameskull

Tiny Undead

Hit Dice: 4d12 (26 hp)

Initiative: +8

Speed: Fly 50 ft. (good) (10 squares)

Armor Class: 19 (+2 size, +4 Dex, +3 natural), touch 16, flat-footed 15

Base Attack/Grapple: +2/–10

Attack: Fire ray +8 ranged touch (1d8 fire)

Full Attack: 2 fire rays +8 ranged touch (1d8 fire)

Space/Reach: 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.

Special Attacks: Fire ray, spell-like abilities

**Special Qualities:** Damage reduction 5/bludgeoning, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 2, immunity to cold, fire, and electricity, rejuvenation, spell resistance 19, turn resistance +4, undead traits

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +5

Abilities: Str 3, Dex 18, Con —, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 14

Skills: Concentration +9, Hide +19, Listen +10, Spot +10

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary or company (3–12)

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always lawful evil

Advancement: 5–8 HD (Tiny)

*A human skull wreathed in evil green flame hovers in the air. Emerald gleams of malice dance in its eye sockets.*

Flameskulls are undead guardians created from the fresh skulls of humanoid spellcasters. Deathless, intelligent, and vigilant, these creatures are often found guarding hidden hoards and secret chambers centuries after the clerics or wizards who created them have died.

A flameskull resembles a human skull, complete with jawbone, surrounded by eerie green flames. Its fiery aura illuminates an area as well as a torch does, but the flameskull can voluntarily reduce its radiance to a barely visible, pale green flicker when it wishes to do so. Sometimes strange, sinister runes are etched into its bony surface.

A flameskull can be created from the corpse of a humanoid spellcaster by means of a *create undead* spell (caster level 14th).

Flameskulls speak Common, Draconic, Infernal, and one or two ancient languages no longer in common use, such as Loross or Thorass.

### combat

Flameskulls are resistant to many types of magic but vulnerable to melee and missile attacks. They go to great lengths to stay out of sword's reach and tend to attack intruders with their fire rays and spells from a safe elevation. If need be, however, they can be fearless combatants, since they know that they are likely to rejuvenate in a few days even if smashed to bits.

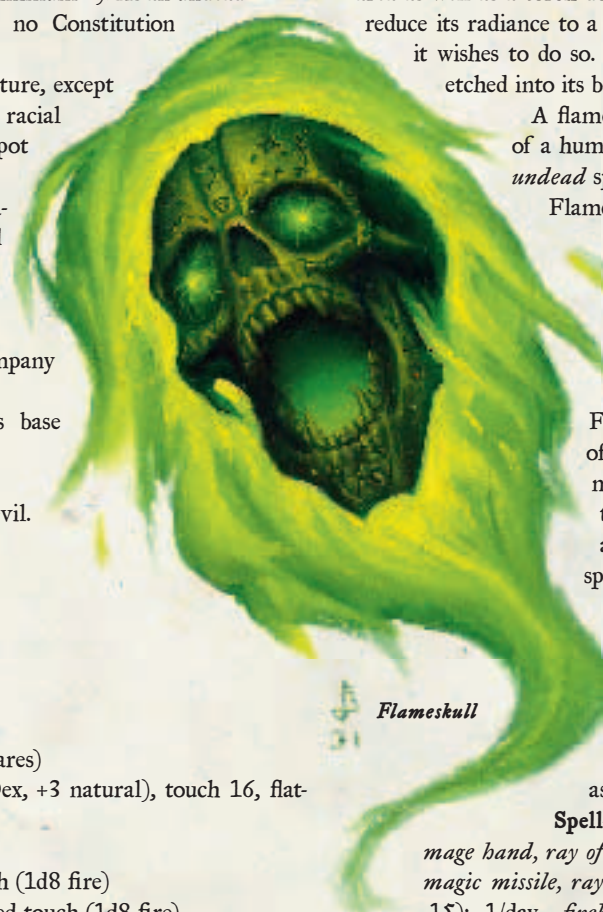
**Fire Ray (Su):** Range 20 feet. A flameskull can shoot two fire rays as a standard action.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—*detect magic*, *mage hand*, *ray of frost* (+8 ranged touch); 3/day—*blur*, *magic missile*, *ray of exhaustion* (+8 ranged touch; DC 15); 1/day—*fireball* (DC 15), *mirror image*. Caster level 4th.

**Fast Healing (Ex):** A flameskull heals 2 points of damage each round, so long as it has at least 1 hit point remaining.

**Rejuvenation (Su):** A destroyed flameskull rejuvenates at its full normal hit points in 1 hour, even if smashed to pieces. To prevent rejuvenation, its remains must be sprinkled with a vial of holy water or subjected to a *dispel magic*, *dispel evil*, or *remove curse* spell. The flameskull's caster level is 14th for the purpose of a dispel check.

**Undead Traits:** A flameskull is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to extra damage from critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage to its physical ability scores, ability drain, energy drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or death from massive damage. It cannot be raised, and resurrection works only if it is willing. It has darkvision out to 60 feet.



Flameskull





Foulwing

## foulwing

**Huge Aberration**  
**Hit Dice:** 6d8+30 (57 hp)  
**Initiative:** +1  
**Speed:** 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 30 ft. (poor)  
**Armor Class:** 17 (–2 size, +1 Dex, +8 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 16  
**Base Attack/Grapple:** +4/+20  
**Attack:** Bite +10 melee (1d8+8)  
**Full Attack:** 3 bites +10 melee (1d8+8) and 2 claws +5 melee (2d4+4)  
**Space/Reach:** 15 ft./10 ft.  
**Special Attacks:** Blood drain, breath weapon, crush 2d8+12  
**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft.  
**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +5  
**Abilities:** Str 27, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 5  
**Skills:** Climb +20, Spot +8  
**Feats:** Flyby Attack, Skill Focus (Spot), Wingover  
**Environment:** Any land and underground  
**Organization:** Solitary, pair, flock (3–5)  
**Challenge Rating:** 5  
**Treasure:** None  
**Alignment:** Usually neutral evil  
**Advancement:** 7–16 HD (Huge); 17–18 HD (Gargantuan)  
**Level Adjustment:** —

*This creature's squat posture and bloated body suggest the shape of an enormous, winged toad, about 20 feet long and 8 feet high at the shoulder. Its skin is black and covered with wriggling growths shaped like small horns. Red eyes gleam malevolently from its long, narrow, multi-jawed face.*

A foulwing is a grotesquely misshapen predator that loves nothing more than tearing flesh from bone with its three toothy jaws.

A foulwing's toadlike body is about 20 feet long and 8 feet high at the shoulder, and the creature weighs about 8,000 pounds. Its black skin is covered with wriggling growths shaped like small horns. The foulwing's legs end in rubbery fingers useful for clinging to uneven surfaces but ineffectual in combat, and its black, leathery wings are tipped with sharp claws. The creature's long, narrow head ends in a snout with a single nostril surrounded by three needle-toothed jaws. Its red eyes are faceted like gemstones and glow with a pale red light.

Foulwings communicate with each other via harsh croakings that are only slightly more sophisticated than animal calls. These sounds can convey identities, basic emotions and urges, and also warnings.

## combat

Foulwings hunt from the air, hurling their massive bodies onto potential prey and tearing with their jaws while battering at their victims with the claws on their wings. Drow and other evil humanoids frequently tame and ride foulwings as war steeds.

**Blood Drain (Ex):** A foulwing can use its three long, tubelike tongues to drain blood from an opponent that it has pinned with its crush attack. With a successful grapple check, it deals 1d4 points of Constitution damage.

**Breath Weapon (Su):** A foulwing's breath weapon is a 30-foot cone of acidic gas that burns opponents' eyes and exposed skin. Each creature within the cone must make a successful DC 18 Reflex save or be blinded and stunned for 1 round.

**Crush (Ex):** Area 15 ft. by 15 ft.; Small or smaller opponents take 2d8+12 points of bludgeoning damage, and must succeed on a DC 18 Reflex save or be pinned.

**Skills:** A foulwing receives a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks.

## gorynych

**Huge Dragon**  
**Hit Dice:** 16d12+64 (168 hp)  
**Initiative:** +0  
**Speed:** 60 ft. (12 squares), fly 120 ft. (clumsy)  
**Armor Class:** 27 (–2 size, +19 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 27  
**Base Attack/Grapple:** +16/+33  
**Attack:** Bite +23 melee (2d8+9)

Illustration by Richard Sarrinba

**Full Attack:** 3 bites +23 melee (2d8+9) and 2 claws +21 melee (2d6+4) and 6 tail whips (1d4+4)

**Space/Reach:** 15 ft./10 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Improved grab, rake 2d8+4, rend 4d8+13, tail wrap

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to paralysis and sleep effects, low-light vision, scent

**Saves:** Fort +16, Ref +10, Will +14

**Abilities:** Str 28, Dex 11, Con 18, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 13

**Skills:** Diplomacy +3, Hide +11, Intimidate +20, Jump +28, Listen +27, Sense Motive +12, Spot +27, Survival +11

**Feats:** Alertness, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Multiattack, Track

**Environment:** Temperate mountains

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** 12

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Usually chaotic evil

**Advancement:** 17–32 HD (Huge); 33–48 HD (Gargantuan)

*A huge, three-headed monster soars above on vast batlike wings. Its heads are vaguely wolflike in appearance, snapping and hissing on long, serpentine necks. Its supple torso is covered with fine, blue-green scales and ends in three tails, each of which branches again into two long, whiplike limbs that coil and writhe behind its body.*

The gorynych is a ferocious, dragonlike monster that eats almost anything short of a true dragon that crosses its path. Despite its bestial appearance, the gorynych is quite cunning. It has been known to feign retreat in order to lure opponents into its lair, or to allow humanoids to escape its attacks so that it can follow them back to their homes and villages.

A gorynych's dragonlike body measures almost 40 feet from snout to tail. Each of its three heads is supported by a long, draconic neck, and its three tails branch into a multitude of long, thin whips. Only the six largest of these whips are significant in combat, though a gorynych can have as many as twelve altogether. The creature weighs between 8 and 10 tons.

A gorynych speaks Common, Draconic, and Orc.

## combat

A gorynych lacks the breath weapon and powerful spellcasting abilities of a true dragon, though its uncommon ferocity and cunning in melee make up for this deficiency. One of its favorite tactics is to swoop down on a group of travelers, seize one with a tail whip in a flyby attack, and carry off its hapless victim. The gorynych is large enough to accept the normal –20



Gorynych

penalty for attempting to grapple an opponent without being grappled itself.

An opponent can attack a gorynych's tails as if they were weapons (see Sunder, page 158 of the *Player's Handbook*). Each tail whip has 10 hit points. If a gorynych is currently grappling an opponent with the tail under attack, it usually uses another limb to make its attack of opportunity. Severing a gorynych's tail deals 5 points of damage to the creature. A gorynych regrows severed tails in 1d10+10 days.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, a gorynych must hit an opponent one or more size categories smaller than itself with a tail whip attack. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and uses its tail wrap attack. Against human-sized opponents, a gorynych usually chooses to grapple only with its tail to avoid being grappled itself, thereby reducing its grapple bonus to +13.

**Rake (Ex):** If a gorynych hits a grappled foe with all three bite attacks, it can rake with its claws. Attack bonus +23 melee, damage 2d8+4.

**Rend (Ex):** If a gorynych hits with two bite attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the victim apart like a wishbone. This attack automatically deals an extra 4d8+13 points of damage.

**Tail Wrap (Ex):** After a successful grab, a gorynych can attempt to wrap its opponent with some or all of its remaining tail whips with a single grapple check. Each tail whip beyond the first reduces the penalty for grappling without being grappled by –4. Thus, a gorynych with three tail whips wrapped around a foe has a grapple modifier

of +21 (+33, –20 for choosing not to be grappled, +8 for two extra tail whips).

**Skills:** Because of its multiple heads and keen senses, a gorynych has a +4 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

## greenbound creature

In the crumbling Siluvanedenn ruins of Telardon, powerful and ancient magical energies seep from an unknown number of buried arcane treasures. These energies transform hapless creatures nearby into plantlike beings of great strength.

A greenbound creature looks much like it did before transformation, although certain changes are apparent. The creature's flesh has been replaced by pulpy wood and thickly corded creepers, and tiny branches stick out from its torso, arms, and legs. Any feathers, hair, or fur it once had have been replaced by some combination of green vines, moss, flowers, and leaves.



Greenbound creatures speak any languages they knew before transformation, although their voices are now deep and gravelly.

sample greenbound creature

This giant-sized, bipedal plant has long arms that look like knotted, knobby tree branches, and its legs end in three toelike roots. Dozens of leafy twigs and thorns adorn its face, arms, legs, and torso.

This example uses a troll as the base creature.

**Greenbound Troll**  
**Large Plant (Augmented Giant)**  
**Hit Dice:** 6d8+48 (75 hp)  
**Initiative:** +3  
**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)  
**Armor Class:** 23 (–1 size, +3 Dex, +11 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 20  
**Base Attack/Grapple:** +4/+21  
**Attack:** Claw +12 melee (1d6+9)  
**Full Attack:** 2 claws +12 melee (1d6+9) and bite +7 melee (1d6+4) or slam +12 melee (1d6+9) and bite +7 melee (1d4+4)  
**Space/Reach:** 10 ft./10 ft.  
**Special Attacks:** Rend 2d6+13, spell-like abilities  
**Special Qualities:** Damage reduction 10/magic and slashing, darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 3, grapple bonus, low-light vision, plant traits, regeneration 5, resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10, scent, tremorsense 60 ft.  
**Saves:** Fort +13, Ref +5, Will +3  
**Abilities:** Str 29, Dex 16, Con 27, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 10  
**Skills:** Hide –1 (+15 in forested areas\*), Listen +5, Move Silently +3 (+19 in forested areas\*), Spot +6  
**Feats:** Alertness, Iron Will, Track  
**Environment:** Any forests  
**Organization:** Solitary, pair, or gang (3–4)  
**Challenge Rating:** 7  
**Treasure:** Standard  
**Alignment:** Usually chaotic evil  
**Advancement:** By character class  
**Level Adjustment:** +5

COMBAT

Greenbound trolls fight with no fear of death. They often fill an area with entangling plants and vines before jumping into physical combat.

**Rend (Ex):** If a greenbound troll hits with both claw attacks, it latches onto the opponent’s body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an additional 2d6+13 points of damage.

**Regeneration (Ex):** Fire and acid deal normal damage to a greenbound troll. If it loses a limb or body part, the lost portion regrows in 3d6 minutes. The creature can reattach the severed member instantly by holding it to the stump.

creating a greenbound creature

“Greenbound creature” is an acquired template that can be added to any animal, fey, giant, humanoid, monstrous humanoid, or vermin (hereafter referred to as the base creature).

A greenbound creature uses all the base creature’s statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

**Size and Type:** The creature’s type changes to plant with the appropriate augmented subtype. Do not recalculate base attack bonus, base saves, or skill points. Size is unchanged.

**Hit Dice:** Change all current Hit Dice to d8s.

**Armor Class:** A greenbound creature’s natural armor bonus improves by 6 over that of the base creature.

**Attack:** A greenbound creature retains all the attacks of the base creature and also gains a slam attack if it didn’t already have one. If the base creature can use weapons, the greenbound creature retains this ability. A greenbound

creature fighting without weapons uses either its slam attack or its primary natural weapons (if it has any). A greenbound creature armed with a weapon uses either its slam attack or a weapon, as it desires.

**Full Attack:** A greenbound creature fighting with out weapons uses either its slam attack (see above) or its natural weapons (if it has any). If armed with a weapon, it usually uses the weapon as its primary attack along with a slam or other natural weapon as a natural secondary attack.

**Damage:** A greenbound creature has a slam attack. If the base creature does not have this attack form, use the appropriate damage value from the table below according to the greenbound creature’s size. A creature that has other kinds of natural weapons retains its old damage values or uses the appropriate values from the table below, whichever is better.

Size	Base Damage
Fine	1
Diminutive	1d2
Tiny	1d3
Small	1d4
Medium	1d6
Large	1d8
Huge	2d6
Gargantuan	2d8
Colossal	4d6

**Special Attacks:** A greenbound creature retains all the special attacks of the base creature and gains those described below.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—*entangle*, *pass without trace*, *speak with plants*; 1/day—*wall of thorns*. Caster level equals greenbound creature’s character level; save DC 10 + spell level + greenbound creature’s Charisma modifier.

**Special Qualities:** A greenbound creature retains all the special qualities of the base creature and gains those described below.

**Damage Reduction (Ex):** A greenbound creature has damage reduction 10/magic and slashing. A greenbound creature’s natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

**Fast Healing (Ex):** A greenbound creature heals 3 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 or fewer hit points in combat, it is slain.

**Grapple Bonus (Ex):** The thorny hooks on a greenbound creature’s hands and feet grant it a +4 bonus on grapple checks.

**Resistance to Cold and Electricity (Ex):** A greenbound creature gains resistance 10 to cold and electricity.

**Tremorsense (Ex):** Greenbound creatures can automatically sense the location of anything within 60 feet that is in contact with the ground.

**Abilities:** Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +6, Dex +2, Con +4, Cha +4.

**Skills:** \*A greenbound creature gains a +16 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks made in forested areas.

**Environment:** Any forests.

**Organization:** Same as the base creature.

**Challenge Rating:** Same as the base creature +2.

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Same as the base creature.

**Advancement:** By character class or as base creature.

**Level Adjustment:** Same as the base creature +8.

helmed horror

An intimidating figure dressed in ancient, tarnished plate stands guard, a flaming sword clutched in its armored gauntlets. A strange, purple radiance gleams from the joints in its armor.

Helmed horrors and battle horrors are deadly, self-willed magical constructs that appear to be nothing more than empty, animated suits of full plate armor. They are absolutely remorseless and tireless in discharging their duties.

helmed horror

Helmed horrors are usually encountered carrying out the duties assigned to them by their creators. Because these constructs are free-willed and intelligent, they are perfectly capable of reexamining their programming. A simple command such as “Remain here and destroy all intruders” leaves little room for interpretation, so they do not often abandon such tasks.

Helmed horrors whose last orders are invalidated by some means may wander abroad, pursuing mysterious goals that somehow reflect their last orders. For example, a helmed horror that fails to prevent thieves from plundering a vault it is assigned to guard might assign itself the mission of retrieving all treasure that has been removed from that vault.

A helmed horror looks like a humanoid figure between 5 and 7 feet tall, wearing a suit of full plate armor. On some helmed horrors, the armor appears exceedingly old; on others, it is shiny and well kept. Magical purple light sometimes flares through the joints of the armor.

A helmed horror does not speak, but it understands Common and one of its creator’s languages.

Illustration by Beet

Illustration by Francis Tsai

Greenbound troll

Helmed horror



	Helmed Horror	Battle Horror
	Medium Construct	Medium Construct
Hit Dice:	13d10+23 (94 hp)	20d10+20 (130 hp)
Initiative:	+6	+6
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares), air walk 30 ft.	40 ft. (8 squares), air walk 40 ft.
Armor Class:	26 (+2 Dex, +3 deflection, +11 [+3 full plate armor]), touch 15, flat-footed 24	28 (+2 Dex, +3 deflection, +13 [+5 full plate armor]), touch 15, flat-footed 26
Base Attack/Grapple:	+9/+14	+15/+23
Attack:	Masterwork greatsword +16 melee (2d6+7/17–20) or heavy crossbow +11 ranged (1d10/19–20)	Masterwork greatsword +25 melee (2d6+12/17–20) or heavy crossbow +17 ranged (1d10/19–20)
Full Attack:	Masterwork greatsword +16/+11 melee (2d6+7/17–20) or heavy crossbow +11 ranged (1d10/19–20)	Masterwork greatsword +25/+20/+15 melee (2d6+12/17–20) or heavy crossbow +17 ranged (1d10/19–20)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	—	Spell-like abilities
Special Qualities:	Air walk, construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to <i>magic missile</i> , rapid repair, see invisible, spell immunities, weapon power	Air walk, construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to <i>magic missile</i> , rapid repair, see invisible, spell immunities, weapon power
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +7	Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +11
Abilities:	Str 20, Dex 15, Con —, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 16	Str 26, Dex 15, Con —, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 16
Skills:	Diplomacy +5, Listen +15, Search +13, Sense Motive +15, Spot +15, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks)	Diplomacy +5, Listen +20, Search +18, Sense Motive +20, Spot +21, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks)
Feats:	Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatsword)	Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatsword)
Environment:	Any	Any
Organization:	Solitary	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	8	12
Treasure:	1/10 coins; standard goods; standard items	1/10 coins; standard goods; standard items
Alignment:	Usually neutral	Usually lawful evil
Advancement:	14–19 HD (Medium)	21–30 HD (Medium)
Level Adjustment:	+3	+4

COMBAT

Helmed horrors fight intelligently, opening with missile fire at soft targets and using air walk to outmaneuver landbound opponents. They do not necessarily fight to the death because they often deem it better to survive and continue with their designated tasks. If fleeing would destroy any chance of fulfilling their missions, however, they are quite willing to sacrifice themselves.

When a helmed horror is destroyed, its armor dissolves into slag.

**Air Walk (Su):** Helmed horrors can move through the air as if affected by an *air walk* spell (caster level 13th).

**Construct Traits:** A helmed horror has immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms,

patterns, and morale effects), and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to extra damage from critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or energy drain. It cannot heal damage, but it can be repaired. It has darkvision out to 60 feet and low-light vision.

**Rapid Repair (Ex):** A helmed horror that rests for 1 full hour repairs 1 point of damage, so long as it has at least 1 hit point remaining. Rapid repair does not allow a helmed horror to regrow or reattach lost body parts.

**See Invisible (Su):** A helmed horror sees invisible creatures and objects as if affected by a *see invisibility* spell.

**Spell Immunities (Ex):** A helmed horror is immune to *magic missile*. In addition, its maker can give it immunity to three other

spells chosen at the moment of its creation. Typical immunities are *fireball*, *lightning bolt*, and *ice storm*.

**Weapon Power (Su):** The magic that creates a helmed horror often endows it with the ability to imbue a melee weapon it is holding with a magical power. The effect comes from the helmed horror, not from the weapon, and can be called forth as a free action. Roll 1d10 and consult the following table to determine the special ability granted. These abilities function as described in Chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

d10 Roll	Ability
1–3	None
4	Flaming
5	Flaming burst
6	Frost
7	Shock
8	Shocking burst
9	Speed
10	Thundering

CONSTRUCTION

A helmed horror is built from a suit of masterwork full plate armor. After procuring the armor, the creator must animate it via an extended magical ritual that requires a specially prepared laboratory or workroom that is similar to an alchemist's laboratory and costs 500 gp to establish. The ritual also gives the armor a +3 enhancement bonus. A helmed horror with more than 13 Hit Dice can be created, but each additional Hit Die adds +5,000 gp to the price.

Strong transmutation; CL 15th; Craft Construct (see *Monster Manual*), Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *air walk* or *fly*, *limited wish*, *spell turning*; Price 75,000 gp; Cost 39,150 gp.

battle horror

This malevolent construct is made by binding an evil elemental spirit into a helmed horror during its creation. Battle horrors look much like helmed horrors and are sometimes employed for similar tasks, but they more often function as roaming assassins and war machines assigned to slay their masters' enemies.

COMBAT

In addition to the special attacks and special qualities of a standard helmed horror, a battle horror has the following special attack.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—*magic missile*; 3/day—*blink*; 1/day—*dimension door*. Caster level 7th.

CONSTRUCTION

A battle horror is created in much the same manner as a helmed horror, except that the armor acquires a +5 enhancement bonus. A battle horror with more than 20 Hit Dice can be created, but each additional Hit Die adds +8,000 gp to the price.

Strong transmutation; CL 18th; Craft Construct (see *Monster Manual*), Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *air walk* or *fly*, *blink*, *dimension door*, *limited wish*, *magic missile*, *spell turning*; Price 150,000 gp; Cost 76,650 gp.



Ixzan

IXZAN

Medium Aberration (Aquatic)

Hit Dice: 6d8+12 (39 hp)

Initiative: +2

Speed: 10 ft. (2 squares), swim 40 ft.

Armor Class: 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14

Base Attack/Grapple: +4/+7

Attack: Tail sting +8 melee (1d10+3 plus poison)

Full Attack: Tail sting +8 melee (1d10+3 plus poison) and bite +2 melee (1d8+1)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft. (10 ft. with tail sting)

Special Attacks: Poison, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Amphibious, damage reduction 10/magic and slashing, darkvision 120 ft., illusion resistance, spell resistance 16

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +6

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 15

Skills: Hide +12\*, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +3, Listen +6, Spot +6, Swim +11, Tumble +5

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Weapon Focus (tail sting)

Environment: Underground aquatic

Organization: Solitary, pair, or pod (3–12)

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Usually chaotic evil

Advancement: 7–8 HD (Medium); 9–15 HD (Large)

Level Adjustment: +2



*At first glance, the creature resembles a manta ray, but closer inspection reveals a far more deadly creature. A wickedly barbed tail with a stinger like a scorpion's lashes around behind the creature, and a mouth full of sharp, bony plates gapes below four yellow eyes that gleam intelligently.*

Ixzans are weirdly mutated cousins of the ixitxachtli (detailed in *Monster Manual II*) that are specifically adapted to live in the waters of the Underdark. Larger than their marine cousins, izxans possess innate spell-like abilities that help them survive in the deadly environment they share with aboleths and kuo-toas. They can also move overland, and they sometimes levitate to cavern ceilings and hide in hopes of ambushing prey. Ixzans speak Undercommon and Aquan.

## combat

Ixzans are quite accomplished at hiding and enjoy using abilities such as *darkness* and *levitate* to avoid notice. The creature's long, barbed tail drips with deadly poison, and it also possess a number of useful offensive spell-like abilities.

**Poison (Ex):** Injury, Fortitude DC 14, initial damage 1d4 Con, secondary damage 2d4 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—*control water*, *darkness*, *levitate*; 1/day—*charm monster* (DC 16), *cure moderate wounds* (DC 14), *fly*, *haste*, *inflict serious wounds* (DC 15), *invisibility*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *slow* (DC 15). Caster level 6th.

**Illusion Resistance:** An ixzan gains a +4 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions.

**Skills:** An ixzan receives a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks. \*When the creature is in water, this bonus increases to +8.

## Lycanthrope

Lycanthropes are humanoids or giants that can transform themselves into animals. Lycanthropy, the condition responsible for this ability, can be spread like a disease. When a lycanthrope wounds a normal humanoid or giant in battle but does not kill it, the victim may contract lycanthropy. Such a creature is called an afflicted lycanthrope. Humanoids or giants that are born with the ability to assume animal form are known as natural lycanthropes.

In its natural form, a lycanthrope looks like any other member of its race, though natural lycanthropes and those that have been afflicted with lycanthropy for a long time tend to have features reminiscent of their animal forms, such as shaggy hair, pointed teeth, or long, strong fingers. In animal form, a lycanthrope resembles a powerful version of the normal animal, but on close inspection, its eyes show a faint spark of unnatural intelligence, and they often glow red in the dark.

Evil lycanthropes often hide among normal folk and emerge in animal form at night (especially under the full moon) to spread terror and bloodshed. Good lycanthropes tend to be reclusive individuals who are uncomfortable with large numbers of people. They often live alone in wilderness areas, far from villages and towns.

## combat

A lycanthrope in its humanoid or giant form uses whatever tactics and weapons its people favor, though it tends to be slightly more aggressive than its fellow creatures. It possesses the senses of an animal, including scent and low-light vision where appropriate. A lycanthrope has a deep empathy for animals of its animal kind and can communicate with them, regardless of its form. An afflicted lycanthrope damaged in combat may be overwhelmed by rage and change to its animal form involuntarily.

A lycanthrope in animal form fights like the animal it resembles, although its bite attack carries the terrible disease of lycanthropy. The creature is preternaturally cunning and strong, and it damage reduction makes it difficult to damage with mundane weapons.

Finally, a natural lycanthrope (or an afflicted lycanthrope that has become aware of its condition) can assume a hybrid form that is a mix of its humanoid and animal forms. A hybrid has prehensile hands and can use weapons, but it can also attack with its teeth and claws. A hybrid can spread lycanthropy with its bite just as a lycanthrope in animal form can.

## lycanthrope, drow werebat

Drow werebats in humanoid form tend to be dark-eyed, shy, and elusive. They often have pug noses and sharp teeth, and they tend to avoid bright light and favor rare meat.

### COMBAT

A drow werebat uses its flying ability to maximum advantage, swooping down to attack unsuspecting prey and then flying out of range.

**Curse of Lycanthropy (Su):** Any humanoid or giant hit by the bite attack of a drow werebat in animal or hybrid form must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or contract lycanthropy.

**Poison (Ex):** An opponent hit by a drow werebat's poisoned weapon must succeed on a DC 13 Fortitude save or fall unconscious. After 1 minute, the subject must succeed on another DC 13 Fortitude save or remain unconscious for 2d4 hours. A typical drow werebat carries 1d4–1 doses of drow knockout poison. Drow typically coat their arrows and crossbow bolts with this poison, but it can also be applied to a melee weapon. Drow have no special ability to apply poison safely, and since the effect of this poison is not magical, drow and other elves are susceptible to it.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 1/day—*dancing lights*, *darkness*, *faerie fire*. Caster level equals drow werebat's class levels.

**Alternate Form (Su):** A drow werebat can assume the form of a dire bat or a bat-drow hybrid.

**Bat Empathy (Ex):** A drow werebat can communicate with bats and dire bats. It gains a +4 racial bonus on Charisma-based checks made against such creatures.

**Blindsight (Ex):** A drow werebat uses echolocation to pinpoint creatures within 40 feet. Opponents still have total concealment against the drow werebat unless it can actually see them.

**Light Blindness:** Abrupt exposure to bright light (such as sunlight or a *daylight* spell) blinds drow werebats in drow form

### LYCANTHROPE, DROW WEREBAT

	Drow Form Medium Humanoid (Elf, Shapechanger)	Bat Form Large Humanoid (Elf, Shapechanger)	Hybrid Form Large Humanoid (Elf, Shapechanger)
Hit Dice:	1d8 plus 4d8+12 (34 hp)	1d8 plus 4d8+12 (34 hp)	1d8 plus 4d8+12 (34 hp)
Initiative:	+1	+7	+7
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares)	20 ft. (4 squares), fly 40 ft. (good)	30 ft. (6 squares)
Armor Class:	18 (+1 Dex, +2 natural, +4 chain shirt, +1 light steel shield), touch 11, flat-footed 17	23 (–1 size, +7 Dex, +7 natural), touch 16, flat-footed 16	23 (–1 size, +7 Dex, +7 natural), touch 16, flat-footed 16
Base Attack/Grapple:	+4/+5	+4/+12	+4/+12
Attack:	Rapier +6 melee (1d6+1/18–20) or hand crossbow +5 ranged (1d4/19–20)	Bite +7 melee (1d8+6)	Claw +7 melee (1d6+4)
Full Attack:	Rapier +6 melee (1d6+1/18–20) or hand crossbow +5 ranged (1d4/19–20)	Bite +7 melee (1d8+6)	2 claws +7 melee (1d6+4) and bite +2 melee (1d8+2)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.	10 ft./5 ft.	10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Poison, spell-like abilities	Curse of lycanthropy, spell-like abilities	Curse of lycanthropy, spell-like abilities
Special Qualities:	Alternate form, bat empathy, light blindness, low-light vision, resistance, scent, spell resistance 12	Alternate form, bat empathy, blindsense 40 ft., damage reduction 10/silver, low-light vision, resistance, scent, spell resistance 12	Alternate form, bat empathy, blindsense 40 ft., damage reduction 10/silver, low-light vision, resistance, scent, spell resistance 12
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +4	Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +4	Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +4
Abilities:	Str 13, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 10	Str 19, Dex 25, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 10	Str 19, Dex 25, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 10
Skills:	Hide +5, Listen +7, Move Silently +3, Search +5, Spot +9	Hide +10, Listen +11*, Move Silently +12, Search +5, Spot +13*	Hide +10, Listen +11*, Move Silently +12, Search +5, Spot +13*
Feats:	Alertness <sup>B</sup> , Stealthy, Weapon Focus (rapier)	Alertness <sup>B</sup> , Stealthy, Weapon Focus (rapier)	Alertness <sup>B</sup> , Stealthy, Weapon Focus (rapier)
Environment:	Underground		
Organization:	Solitary, pair, or colony (2–4 plus 2–4 dire bats)		
Challenge Rating:	4		
Treasure:	Standard		
Alignment:	Always neutral evil		
Advancement:	By character class		
Level Adjustment:	+3		

for 1 round. On subsequent rounds, they are dazzled as long as they remain in the affected area.

**Resistance:** A drow werebat gains a +2 racial bonus on Will saves against spells and spell-like abilities.

**Skills:** A drow werebat in hybrid or bat form has a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Listen checks. These bonuses are lost if its blindsense is negated.

The drow werebat presented here is a 1st-level drow warrior and natural lycanthrope with the following base ability scores: Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

## lycanthrope, werecat

In humanoid or giant form, werecats are lithe, slender, sensuous, and somewhat hedonistic. In cat form, they resemble ocelots or other small wildcats.

### COMBAT

A werecat generally uses its cat form for stealthy purposes, such as seeking out cults of Shar and Loviatar. It then hunts down



LYCANTHROPE, WERECAT

	Human Form Medium Humanoid (Human, Shapechanger)	Cat Form Small Humanoid (Human, Shapechanger)	Hybrid Form Medium Humanoid (Human, Shapechanger)
Hit Dice:	3d8+6 plus 1d8+3 (30 hp)	3d8+6 plus 1d8+3 (30 hp)	3d8+6 plus 1d8+3 (30 hp)
Initiative:	−1	+2	+2
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares) in full plate armor; base 30 ft.	40 ft. (8 squares)	30 ft. (6 squares)
Armor Class:	21 (−1 Dex, +2 natural, +8 full plate armor, +2 heavy shield), touch 9, flat-footed 21	15 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +2 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 13	16 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, +2 heavy shield), touch 9, flat-footed 21
Base Attack/Grapple:	+2/+3	+2/−3	+2/+1
Attack:	Claw bracer +3 melee (1d4+1/19–20) or light crossbow +3 ranged (1d8/19–20)	Bite +5 melee (1d4–1)	Claw +4 melee (1d4–1) or light crossbow +4 ranged (1d8/19–20)
Full Attack:	Claw bracer +3 melee (1d4+1/19–20) or light crossbow +3 ranged (1d8/19–20)	Bite +5 melee (1d4–1) and 2 claws +0 melee (1d3–1)	Claw +4 melee (1d4–1) or light crossbow +4 ranged (1d8/19–20)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Spells, turn undead 4/day	Pounce, spells, turn undead 4/day	Spells, turn undead 4/day
Special Qualities:	Alternate form, cat empathy, low-light vision, scent	Alternate form, cat empathy, low-light vision, scent	Alternate form, cat empathy, low-light vision, scent
Saves:	Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +7	Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +7	Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +7
Abilities:	Str 13, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 12	Str 9, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 12	Str 9, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 12
Skills:	Balance +8, Concentration +8, Hide +8, Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Spellcraft +6, Spot +6	Balance +10, Concentration +8, Hide +10, Knowledge (religion)+6, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Spot +6	Balance +10, Concentration +8, Hide +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Spellcraft +6, Spot +6
Feats:	Alertness <sup>B</sup> , Extra Turning, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Finesse <sup>B</sup>	Alertness <sup>B</sup> , Extra Turning, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Finesse <sup>B</sup>	Alertness <sup>B</sup> , Extra Turning, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Finesse <sup>B</sup>
Environment:	Temperate and warm deserts and plains		
Organization:	Solitary, pair, or pride (3–8)		
Challenge Rating:	4		
Treasure:	Standard		
Alignment:	Always chaotic good		
Advancement:	By character class		
Level Adjustment:	+3		

its enemies in a form more suitable for combat—generally its hybrid form.

**Curse of Lycanthropy (Su):** Any humanoid or giant hit by the bite attack of a werecat in animal or hybrid form must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or contract lycanthropy.

**Pounce (Ex):** If a werecat in cat form charges a foe, it can make a full attack, even though it has moved.

**Spells:** As a 3rd-level cleric of Sharess, the sample werecat detailed above can cast divine spells, including spells from the Charm and Trickery domains.

*Typical Cleric Spells Prepared* (caster level 3rd): 0—*detect magic, light, resistance, virtue*; 1st—*bless, charm person*<sup>D</sup> (DC 15), *divine favor, shield of faith*; 2nd—*invisibility*<sup>D</sup>, *silence* (DC 16), *undetactable alignment*.

D: Domain spell. Domains: Charm (+4 bonus to Charisma for 1 minute 1/day) and Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, Hide are class skills).

**Alternate Form (Su):** A werecat can assume the form of a lynx-sized housecat or a cat–human hybrid.

**Cat Empathy (Ex):** A werecat can communicate with cats, leopards, lions, tigers, and dire cats of all sorts. It gains a +4 racial bonus on Charisma-based checks against such creatures.

**Skills:** A werecat in animal or hybrid form receives a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus on Balance checks. It uses its Dexterity modifier for Climb checks.

LYCANTHROPE, WERECROCODILE

	Human Form Medium Humanoid (Human, Shapechanger)	Crocodile Form Medium Humanoid (Human, Shapechanger)	Hybrid Form Medium Humanoid (Human, Shapechanger)
Hit Dice:	1d8+1 plus 3d8+12 (30 hp)	1d8+1 plus 3d8+12 (30 hp)	1d8+1 plus 3d8+12 (30 hp)
Initiative:	+0	+1	+1
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares) in scale mail; base 30 ft.	20 ft. (4 squares), swim 30 ft.	30 ft. (6 squares)
Armor Class:	18 (+2 natural, +4 scale mail, +2 heavy shield), touch 10, flat-footed 18	17 (+1 Dex, +6 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 16	17 (+1 Dex, +6 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 16
Base Attack/Grapple:	+3/+4	+3/+8	+3/+8
Attack:	Heavy pick +5 melee (1d6+1/×4) or light crossbow +3 ranged (1d8/19–20)	Bite +8 melee (1d8+7) or tail slap +8 melee (1d12+7)	Heavy pick +8 melee (1d6+5/×4)
Full Attack:	Heavy pick +5 melee (1d6+1/×4) or light crossbow +3 ranged (1d8/19–20)	Bite +8 melee (1d8+7) or tail slap +8 melee (1d12+7)	Heavy pick +8 melee (1d6+5/×4) and bite +3 melee (1d8+2)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	None	Curse of lycanthropy, improved grab	Curse of lycanthropy
Special Qualities:	Alternate form, crocodile empathy, low-light vision, scent	Alternate form, crocodile empathy, damage reduction 10/silver, hold breath, low-light vision, scent	Alternate form, crocodile empathy, damage reduction 10/silver, hold breath, low-light vision, scent
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +1	Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +1	Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8	Str 21, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8	Str 21, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8
Skills:	Hide +0, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +9	Hide +7*, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +15	Hide +7*, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +15
Feats:	Alertness <sup>B</sup> , Power Attack, Skill Focus (Hide)	Alertness <sup>B</sup> , Power Attack, Skill Focus (Hide)	Alertness <sup>B</sup> , Power Attack, Skill Focus (Hide)
Environment:	Warm marshes		
Organization:	Solitary, pair, or colony (3–4 plus 3–6 crocodiles)		
Challenge Rating:	3		
Treasure:	Standard		
Alignment:	Always neutral evil		
Advancement:	By character class		
Level Adjustment:	+3		

The werecat presented here is a 3rd-level human cleric of Sharess and a natural lycanthrope with the following base ability scores: Str 13, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 12.

lycanthrope, werecrocodile

In humanoid or giant form, a werecrocodile is tall and thin with sharp features, a long nose and chin, and a thin face with a noticeable overbite. In its crocodile form, it has a long, powerful, scaly body.



LYCANTHROPE, WERESHARK

	Human Form Medium Humanoid (Human, Shapechanger)	Shark Form Large Humanoid (Human, Shapechanger)	Hybrid Form Large Humanoid (Human, Shapechanger)
Hit Dice:	1d8+1 plus 7d8+14 (50 hp)	1d8+1 plus 7d8+14 (50 hp)	1d8+1 plus 7d8+14 (50 hp)
Initiative:	+4	+6	+6
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares)	Swim 60 ft. (12 squares)	Swim 60 ft. (12 squares)
Armor Class:	16 (+2 natural, +3 studded leather, +1 light wooden shield), touch 10, flat-footed 16	17 (–1 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 15	17 (–1 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 15
Base Attack/Grapple:	+6/+7	+6/+14	+6/+14
Attack:	Scimitar +7 melee (1d6+1/18–20) or light crossbow +3 ranged (1d8/19–20)	Bite +9 melee (1d8+6)	Claw +9 melee (1d6+4)
Full Attack:	Scimitar +7 melee (1d6+1/18–20) or light crossbow +3 ranged (1d8/19–20)	Bite +9 melee (1d8+6)	2 claws +9 melee (1d6+4) and bite +4 melee (1d8+2)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.	10 ft./5 ft.	10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	None	Curse of lycanthropy	Curse of lycanthropy
Special Qualities:	Alternate form, blindsight 30 ft., low-light vision, scent, shark empathy	Alternate form, blindsight 30 ft., damage reduction 10/silver, keen scent, low-light vision, shark empathy	Alternate form, blindsense 30 ft., damage reduction 10/silver, keen scent, low- light vision, shark empathy
Saves:	Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +2	Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +2	Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8	Str 19, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8	Str 19, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8
Skills:	Listen +6, Profession (sailor) +6, Spot +7, Swim +2	Listen +6, Profession (sailor) +6, Spot +7, Swim +17	Listen +6, Profession (sailor) +6, Spot +7, Swim +17
Feats:	Alertness <sup>B</sup> , Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative	Alertness <sup>B</sup> , Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative	Alertness <sup>B</sup> , Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative
Environment:	Warm aquatic		
Organization:	Solitary, pair, school (3–5), or pack (2–5 plus 3–6 large sharks)		
Challenge Rating:	4		
Treasure:	Standard		
Alignment:	Always neutral evil		
Advancement:	By character class		
Level Adjustment:	+3		

COMBAT

A werecrocodile prefers to catch potential enemies unaware by assuming its humanoid or giant form and posing as a harmless commoner. It then changes to crocodile form and attacks as soon as its prey comes within range.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, a werecrocodile in animal form must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If the werecrocodile wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold on the opponent with its mouth, drags it into deep water, and attempts to pin it to the bottom.

**Alternate Form (Su):** A werecrocodile can assume the form of a crocodile or a crocodile-human hybrid.

**Crocodile Empathy (Ex):** A werecrocodile can communicate with crocodiles and giant crocodiles. It gains a +4 racial bonus on Charisma-based checks against such creatures.

**Curse of Lycanthropy (Su):** Any humanoid or giant hit by the bite attack of a werecrocodile in animal or hybrid form must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or contract lycanthropy.

**Hold Breath (Ex):** A werecrocodile can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to 4 × its Constitution score before it risks drowning.



Illustration by Richard Sardinha

Wereshark, werewolf, werebat, werecrocodile

**Skills:** A werecrocodile in animal or hybrid form has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

\*A werecrocodile in animal or hybrid form gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks when in the water. A werecrocodile in animal form can lie in the water with only its eyes and nostrils showing, gaining a +10 cover bonus on Hide checks.

The werecrocodile described above is a 1st-level human warrior and natural lycanthrope with the following base ability scores: Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

lycanthrope, wereshark

Weresharks are huge, muscular brutes in humanoid or giant form. When transformed into animals, they take the form of great white sharks.

COMBAT

In humanoid or giant form, a wereshark loves to fight hand-to-hand, and it particularly enjoys grappling its foes. It uses its shark form to escape when a combat gets out of control. Underwater, a wereshark usually attacks from below, savagely biting at its prey's legs.

**Curse of Lycanthropy (Su):** Any humanoid or giant hit by the bite attack of a wereshark in animal or hybrid form must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or contract lycanthropy.

**Alternate Form (Su):** A wereshark can assume the form of a large shark or a shark-human hybrid.

**Blindsight (Ex):** While underwater, a wereshark can locate other underwater creatures within a 30-foot radius.

**Keen Scent (Ex):** A wereshark notices creatures by scent in a 180-foot radius and detects blood in the water at ranges of up to 1 mile.

**Shark Empathy (Ex):** A wereshark can communicate with sharks and dire sharks. It gains a +4 racial bonus on Charisma-based checks against such creatures.

**Skills:** A wereshark in animal or hybrid form has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

The wereshark presented here is a 1st-level human warrior and natural lycanthrope with the following base ability scores: Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.



## metalmaster

### Large Magical Beast

**Hit Dice:** 6d10+27 (60 hp)

**Initiative:** +2

**Speed:** 20 ft. (4 squares)

**Armor Class:** 14 (–1 size, –2 Dex, +7 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 14

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +6/+14

**Attack:** Bite +9 melee (2d6+6)

**Full Attack:** Bite +9 melee (2d6+6)

**Space/Reach:** 10 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attack:** Attraction, magnetism, metal storm, repelling aura, telekinesis

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 90 ft., detect metal, fast healing 1

**Saves:** Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 19, Dex 6, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 11

**Skills:** Listen +7, Spot +8

**Feats:** Alertness, Improved Initiative, Toughness

**Environment:** Underground

**Organization:** Solitary, pair, or gang (3–4)

**Challenge Rating:** 5

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Usually chaotic evil

**Advancement:** 7–12 HD (Large); 13–18 HD (Huge)

*This strange creature resembles a slug the size of a draft horse. Its glistening skin is a mottled purple color, and a round mouth full of jagged teeth gapes beneath its four stalked eyes. Broken shards of metal cling to its body, and bits of rusty, metallic debris skitter along the ground beside it as it moves.*

Also known as a sword slug, the metalmaster is a strange, underground predator with dangerous magnetic powers and a penchant for humanoid flesh.

A metalmaster is about 15 feet long and more than 2 feet thick in the middle of its body. It weighs about 2,000 pounds.

Metalmasters speak Undercommon, although they are not brilliant conversationalists.

## combat

The primary weapon of a metalmaster is its magnetism. It prefers to use its telekinesis ability on troublesome individuals or likely prey, and it may use its attraction ability to drag several foes within range of its metal storm.

**Detect Metal (Ex):** A metalmaster automatically senses the presence of any metal (minimum 1 pound) within 60 feet. The

exact location is not revealed, but the metalmaster can take a move action to note the direction in which the metal lies. When it comes within 5 feet of metal, the creature knows its location.

**Fast Healing (Ex):** A metalmaster heals 1 point of damage each round, so long as it has at least 1 hit point remaining.

**Magnetism (Su):** A metalmaster can create magical fields of magnetic energy. Once per round as a free action, it can create one of the following effects (caster level 12th). The save DCs for these abilities are Charisma-based, and its magnetism has an effective Strength score of 25.

A metalmaster's magnetism affects only metallic creatures, creatures wearing metal armor, or creatures carrying metal weapons or shields. Creatures carrying metal objects can simply drop them to avoid the effect. The metalmaster's magnetism affects the dropped objects just as it would any other unattended item.

Each of these abilities functions continuously until the metalmaster's next turn unless otherwise noted. Any creature that enters the area of the magnetism is subject to its effects.

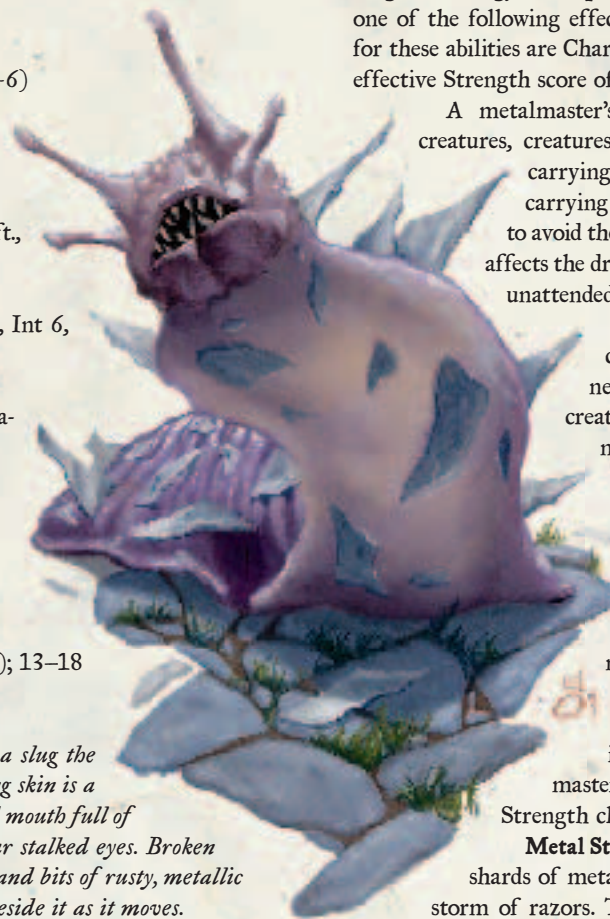
**Attraction (Su):** All metallic creatures and objects within 60 feet of the metalmaster are entangled and dragged closer to it. This ability functions like a bull rush (check modifier +11), except that it does not provoke attacks of opportunity, and targets that lose the opposed check move toward the metalmaster instead of away from it. The metalmaster does not move if it loses the opposed Strength check.

**Metal Storm (Su):** A metalmaster can turn the shards of metal clinging to its body into a whirling storm of razors. This effect reduces its natural armor bonus by 4, but each other creature within 20 feet takes 4d6 points of slashing damage (Reflex DC 20 half). This effect lasts for 12 rounds.

**Repelling Aura (Su):** All metallic creatures and objects within 60 feet of the metalmaster are pushed backward. This ability functions like attraction (see above), except that the affected creatures are not entangled, and they move away from the metalmaster rather than toward it. While using this ability, the metalmaster gains a +8 deflection bonus to AC against attacks by weapons that have metal components.

**Telekinesis (Su):** A metalmaster can affect one creature or object within 60 feet as if using a *telekinesis* spell (DC 14). Its effective Strength is 25 (+7 bonus) for the purpose of any opposed checks required in conjunction with this ability. If the metalmaster chooses the violent thrust function of the *telekinesis* spell, the effects are resolved immediately and do not last beyond its turn.

Illustration by Randy Gallegos



Metalmaster

## nightshade, nighthaunt

### Medium Undead

**Hit Dice:** 12d12+24 (102 hp)

**Initiative:** +8

**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares), fly 60 ft. (good)

**Armor Class:** 28 (+8 Dex, +10 natural), touch 18, flat-footed 20

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +6/+12

**Attack:** Claw +14 melee (1d6+6)

**Full Attack:** 2 claws +14 melee (1d6+6) and bite +12 melee (1d6+3) and tail whip +12 melee (2d4+3)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Desecrating aura, energy drain, improved grab, spell-like abilities, summon undead

**Special Qualities:** Aversion to daylight, damage reduction 15/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to cold, spell resistance 24, telepathy 100 ft., undead traits

**Saves:** Fort +6, Ref +12, Will +12

**Abilities:** Str 23, Dex 27, Con —, Int 16, Wis 18, Cha 16

**Skills:** Balance +10, Concentration +18, Hide +23, Jump +8, Listen +19, Move Silently +23, Spellcraft +18, Spot +19, Tumble +23

**Feats:** Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse

**Environment:** Plane of Shadow

**Organization:** Solitary, pair, fright (3–4), or terror (8–16)

**Challenge Rating:** 12

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Always chaotic evil

**Advancement:** 13–17 HD (Medium); 18–24 HD (Large)

*A supernatural aura of dread hangs thickly in the air around this malignant black figure. It looks something like a gargoyle, with large shadowy wings, curling horns, and a lashing tail, but its body appears to be sculpted from purest night, and its face is blank except for the pale, lifeless orbs of its eyes.*

Malicious, sinister creatures of unliving darkness, nighthaunts are the smallest and weakest of the nightshades. Because nighthaunts delight in the destruction of the good and the innocent, they are inexorably drawn to places of evil power and defiled goodness, such as desecrated temples or emptied graveyards.

Nighthaunts speak whatever languages they knew in life.

## combat

Nighthaunts are terrifying foes, with numerous dark powers at their beck and call. By pressing its blank face to its victim's, a nighthaunt can drain the life energy on which it feeds.

Nighthaunts often use deeper darkness and invisibility to divide and confuse their enemies, then swoop close to grapple spellcaster with their icy talons and drain their life forces. Nighthaunts prefer to harass well-organized or strong opponents from a distance, using their spell-like abilities to wear down their victims before closing for melee.

**Aversion to Daylight (Ex):** Nighthaunts are creatures of utter darkness that loathe all light. If exposed to natural daylight (not merely a *daylight* spell), a nighthaunt takes a –4 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks.

**Desecrating Aura (Su):** A nighthaunt radiates an aura of utter desecration, imbuing its surroundings with negative energy to a radius of 20 feet. This ability works much like a *desecrate* spell, except that the nightshade's body is treated as the shrine of an evil power. Every undead creature within 20 feet of it (including the nightshade itself) gains a +2 profane bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws, as well as +2 hit points per Hit Die. (The Hit Dice, attack, and save entries given above already include these bonuses.) Furthermore, any Charisma check made to turn undead within this area takes a –6 penalty.

The nighthaunt's desecrating aura cannot be dispelled except with a *dispel evil* spell or similar effect. The nightshade can recreate its desecrating aura as a free action on its next turn if it is successfully dispelled. The desecrating aura is suppressed if a nighthaunt enters a *consecrated* or *hallowed* area, but its presence suppresses that effect as long as the nighthaunt remains in the area.

**Energy Drain (Su):** If a nighthaunt wins a grapple check against a living creature, the latter gains two negative levels. The DC for the Fortitude save to remove a negative level is 19, and the save DC is Charisma-based.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, a nighthaunt must hit a Large or smaller creature with both of its claw attacks. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can use its energy drain attack.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—*deeper darkness*, *detect magic*, *see invisibility*, *unholy blight* (DC 17); 3/day—*contagion* (DC 17), *greater dispel magic*, *haste*, *invisibility*; 1/day—*bold monster* (DC



Nighthaunt

Illustration by Rick Sardinha



18), *finger of death* (DC 20), *ice storm*, *plane shift* (DC 20). Caster level 12th.

**Summon Undead (Su):** Once per night, a nighthaunt can summon its choice of the following groups of undead creatures: 3–6 shadows, 2–4 wraiths, or 1 greater shadow. The undead arrive in 1d10 rounds and serve for 1 hour or until released.

**Telepathy (Su):** A nighthaunt can communicate with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

**Undead Traits:** A nighthaunt is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to extra damage from critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage to its physical ability scores, ability drain, energy drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or death from massive damage. It cannot be raised, and resurrection works only if it is willing. It has darkvision out to 60 feet.

## Nishruu

**Large Outsider**  
(Chaotic)

**Hit Dice:** 9d8+30  
(70 hp)

**Initiative:** +4

**Speed:** Fly 20 ft. (perfect) (4 squares)

**Armor Class:** 9 (–1 size), touch 9, flat-footed 9

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +9/—

**Attack:** Swarm of bites 2d6

**Full Attack:** Swarm of bites 2d6

**Space/Reach:** 10 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Absorb magic, distraction, swarm of bites

**Special Defenses:** Charge magic, damage reduction 10/magic, gaseous form, immune to mind-affecting effects, resistance to cold 10, vulnerabilities

**Saves:** Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +10

**Abilities:** Str —, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 13

**Skills:** Concentration +15, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (the planes) +13, Listen +16, Move Silently +12, Search +13, Spellcraft +15, Spot +16

**Feats:** Alertness, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Toughness

**Environment:** Any land

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** 6

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Usually chaotic neutral

**Advancement:** 10–15 HD (Large); 16–27 HD (Huge)

**Level Adjustment:** —

*Hundreds of grasping hands, probing eyes, and gaping, hungry mouths churn within a great sphere of red mist. Lurid, red light glows and pulses within it.*

Because these weird, misty creatures from another plane eat magic, they can wreak havoc with spellcasters and magic items. Nishruus were first encountered in the Moonshae Isles, but they can be found anywhere that magic is practiced. They constitute a persistent nuisance in the magic-forging workshops of Thayan enclaves. In the Old Empires of Mulhorand, Unther, and Ches-senta, the nishruu is known as a hakeashar.

Nishruus may have their own alien language, but all attempts to communicate with them thus far have failed.

## combat

To attack, a nishruu moves into an opponent's space, thereby provoking an attack of opportunity. Since its form is mostly gaseous, it can occupy the same space as a creature of any size. A nishruu can move through squares occupied by enemies and vice versa without impediment, although doing so provokes attacks of opportunity. The hundreds of toothy mouths that make up a nishruu's body are solid enough to deliver bite attacks, which function like the attacks of a swarm. Characters engulfed by a nishruu can hit it automatically with melee attacks.

**Absorb Magic (Su):** Nishruus feed on magic.

They absorb any magical energy that comes in contact with their bodies, including spells targeted on them, magic items they envelop, and even spellcasters engulfed within their misty forms. This unusual diet has the following effects.

- If a nishruu is the target of a spell that deals hit point damage, it absorbs the spell and permanently gains hit points equal to the damage it would otherwise have dealt. The only exceptions are cold and fire spells, which deal damage (reduced, in the case of cold spells) and then dissipate after 1 round.
- If a nishruu is the target of a nondamaging spell, it absorbs the spell and gains 1 hit point per spell level.
- If a magic item that has charges is in contact with a nishruu, the creature drains 1d4 charges upon initial contact and a like amount every other round thereafter.

Illustration by Jeremy Jarvis

Nishruu

## phaerimm

**Aberration**

**Environment:** Underground

**Organization:** Hatchling, juvenile, and young adult: solitary or clutch (2–5); adult, mature adult, elder, and revered elder: solitary, pair, or hive (3–6 plus 2–8 offspring)

**Challenge Rating:** Hatchling 1; juvenile 5; young adult 9; adult 12; mature adult 15; elder 18; revered elder 21

**Treasure:** Double standard

**Alignment:** Usually neutral evil

**Advancement:** Hatchling 2–3 HD; juvenile 5–6 HD; young adult 8–9 HD; adult 11–12 HD; mature adult 14–15 HD; elder 17–18 HD; revered elder 20+ HD

**Level Adjustment:** Hatchling +2, juvenile +3, young adult +4, adult +5, mature adult +6, others —

*An immense, conical creature floats in the air ahead. The ovoid disk at its top is actually an immense, toothed maw, and its four arms are clawed. The other end of its body is tipped with a single, razor-sharp stinger.*

Phaerimms are evil magicians who would gladly erase all other beings from existence. The fact that they have not yet done so is probably attributable to the fact that they would lack serviceable slaves to torture for sport if they did.

Millennia ago, the phaerimms plotted to destroy all life in Faerûn. They succeeded in toppling the mighty Empire of Magic and devastating the area now known as the Anauroch Desert, but they were foiled by the intervention of the elder sharns<sup>Mon</sup>, which imprisoned most of them in a magic field beneath Anauroch. Some of the phaerimms that escaped imprisonment now live in the ruins of Myth Drannor, squandering their power on internal political squabbles. Others have conquered the beholder city of Ooltul and are attempting to break through the sharns' barrier to free their fellows.

A phaerimm has a conical body shaped something like a windsock. Its ovoid head disk contains an immense, toothed maw and is surrounded by four clawed arms. The rest of the phaerimm's long, sinuous body tapers down to a lethal stinger. At hatching, a phaerimm is only a foot or two long, but it can grow as large as 30 feet in old age.

A phaerimm's innate magical ability develops with age. A hatchling casts spells as a 1st-level sorcerer, while a centuries-old revered elder is a 19th-level caster.

Phaerimms communicate with one another by varying the wind speed around their bodies and with other creatures by means of telepathy. They understand Common and several other languages.

## combat

If phaerimms were less evil, they would be more alien and difficult to understand, but their overwhelming drive toward inflicting pain makes them somewhat predictable. They can be dangerous combatants, but they view purely physical combat as a sign of weakness. Because a phaerimm that uses its stinger

- If a nishruu is in contact with a magic item that does not have charges, the effects of the item are negated for as long as it remains in contact with the nishruu and for 1d4 rounds afterward.
- If a character enveloped within a nishruu attempts to use a temporary item such as a potion or scroll, the effect does not initiate until 1d4 rounds after the user leaves the nishruu's body.
- Artifacts do not operate while in contact with a nishruu and for 1 round thereafter.
- A spellcaster (arcane or divine) loses one prepared spell or spell slot, determined randomly, upon initial contact with a nishruu. Each round thereafter that two remain in contact, the spellcaster loses one additional randomly selected spell. Each time she loses a spell in this manner, she must make a DC 15 Will save or suffer the effects of a *feeblemind* spell. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Distraction (Ex):** Any living creature vulnerable to a swarm attack that begins its turn with a nishruu in its square is nauseated for 1 round (DC 17 Fortitude save negates). The save DC is Constitution-based. Spellcasting or concentrating on spells while in contact with a nishruu requires a Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level). Likewise, using any skill that involves patience and concentration requires a DC 20 Concentration check.

**Swarm of Bites (Ex):** Like a swarm, a nishruu doesn't make standard melee attacks. Instead, it deals automatic damage to any creature whose space it occupies at the end of its move, with no attack roll needed. This attack is not subject to a miss chance for concealment or cover. A nishruu does not threaten creatures in its square, nor can it make attacks of opportunity with its swarm of bites attack. However, it distracts foes whose squares it occupies, as described above.

**Gaseous Form (Ex):** Since its body is composed of mist, a nishruu can pass through small holes or narrow openings. It also has damage reduction 10/magic and immunity to poison and is not subject to extra damage from critical hits. Though a nishruu is vulnerable to cold- and fire-based attacks, such effects cannot form inside its gaseous body.

**Immune to Mental Influence (Ex):** Nishruus are completely unaffected by mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, and morale effects).

**Vulnerability (Su):** A *rod of absorption* or *ring of spell turning* brought into contact with a nishruu has a 5% chance of destroying it immediately. The creature is absorbed with no harm to the item, though its color changes to a dusky red. If the item does not absorb the nishruu, it is negated in the same manner as other magic items.

Salt is poisonous to a nishruu, and a handful of thrown salt deals 2d10 points of damage to the creature.

**Charge Magic (Su):** When a nishruu is slain, its body dissipates and drifts away. Any charged magic item in contact with it when it dies gains an 1d6 additional charges. The enhancement bonus of a magic weapon that strikes the killing blow against a nishruu increases by 1 for 1d6 days.



or weapons to defend itself is assumed to have insufficient magical abilities, phaerimms make physical attacks only as a last resort—even at younger ages when they lack powerful magic. Young phaerimms sometimes stoop to using masterwork swords, and they suffer no disgrace for doing so as long as they use *Tenser's floating disk* to carry the weapons whenever they are out of combat.

As spellcasters, phaerimms favor charm, command, and illusion effects over damage-producing spells, but they are not shy about using a *fireball* if necessary. Powerful elder phaerimms often have *charmed* or *dominated* beings fighting for them. In fact, phaerimms sometimes pick fights simply so that they can force their enemies to hack apart their own friends. Phaerimms also enjoy summoning outsiders, but they are generally too proud to use low-level summoning spells to call up common animals and other minor creatures.

**Claws:** A phaerimm has the number of primary claw attacks shown on Table 11–2. Each deals the indicated damage plus the phaerimm's Strength bonus.

**Bite:** A phaerimm has one secondary bite attack that deals the indicated damage plus 1/2 the phaerimm's Strength bonus (round down). Because the bite is a secondary attack, a –5 penalty applies to the attack roll. (Many phaerimms choose the Multiattack feat to lessen this penalty to –2.)

**Stinger:** A phaerimm has one secondary stinger attack that deals the indicated damage plus 1/2 the phaerimm's Strength bonus (round down). A young adult or older phaerimm delivers poison with its stinger attack, and an adult or older phaerimm can use it to implant eggs (see Implant, below). Because the stinger is a secondary attack, a –5 penalty applies to the attack roll. (Many phaerimms choose the Multiattack feat to lessen this penalty to –2.)

**Implant (Ex):** As a standard action, an adult or older phaerimm can use its stinger to lay eggs inside a paralyzed crea-

ture. The young emerge about 90 days later, literally devouring the host from inside. A *remove disease* spell rids a victim of the eggs, as does a successful DC 20 Heal check made by a character with ranks that skill. If the check fails, the healer can try again, but each attempt (successful or not) deals 1d4 points of damage to the patient.

**Poison (Su):** Stinger, DC 15 Fortitude save; initial damage paralysis for 2d4 rounds, secondary damage paralysis for 1d3 hours. Paralyzed creatures levitate, helpless, a few feet off the ground.

**Spells:** A phaerimm casts arcane spells as a sorcerer (caster level equals phaerimm's character level). Phaerimms use their sorcerer spells as if they were spell-like abilities, so they require no verbal, somatic, or material components.

**Damage Reduction (Ex):** A phaerimm gains increasing damage reduction as it grows older, as given on Table 11–4.

**Detect Magic (Sp):** Beginning as a hatchling, a phaerimm can use *detect magic* at will (caster level equals phaerimm's character level).

**Flight (Ex):** Because a phaerimm's body is naturally buoyant, it can fly at a speed of 30 feet. This buoyancy also grants the creature a permanent *feather fall* effect (as the spell) with personal range.

**Full Vision (Ex):** As it ages, a phaerimm's natural ability to detect magic expands. A juvenile phaerimm can see invisible or ethereal creatures to a range of 120 feet, as though constantly under the effect of a *see invisibility* spell. An adult phaerimm can see magical auras to a range of 120 feet, as though constantly under the effect of an *arcane sight* spell. An

elder phaerimm sees as though constantly under the effect of a *true seeing* spell.

**Immunities (Ex):** A phaerimm is immune to *polymorph* and petrification effects.

**Spell Resistance (Ex):** A phaerimm is resistant to spells from hatching onward (see Table 11–4 for details).

TABLE II–2: PHAERIMM SPACE/REACH, ATTACKS, AND DAMAGE

Size	Space/Reach	Claws	Bite	Stinger
Tiny	2-1/2 ft./0 ft.	2 (1d2 each)	—	—
Small	5 ft./5 ft. (0 ft. with bite)	2 (1d3 each)	1d6	—
Medium	5 ft./5 ft. (0 ft. with bite)	4 (1d4 each)	1d8	1d6 plus poison
Large	10 ft./10 ft. (5 ft. with bite)	4 (1d6 each)	2d6	1d8 plus poison and implant
Huge	15 ft./15 ft. (5 ft. with bite)	6 (1d8 each)	2d8	2d6 plus poison and implant



Illustration by Thomas M. Baxa

TABLE II–3: PHAERIMMS BY AGE

Age	Size	Hit Dice (hp)	Str	Dex	Con	Int	Wis	Cha	Base Attack/ Grapple	Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Poison DC
Hatchling	T	1d8 (4)	4	17	10	11	12	13	+0/–11	–1	+0	+3	+3	—
Juvenile	S	4d8 (18)	8	15	10	13	14	15	+3/–2	+3	+1	+3	+6	—
Young Adult	M	7d8+7 (38)	12	13	12	15	16	17	+5/+6	+6	+3	+3	+8	14
Adult	L	10d8+10 (55)	16	11	12	17	18	19	+7/+14	+9	+4	+3	+11	16
Mature Adult	L	13d8+26 (84)	18	11	14	17	20	21	+9/+17	+12	+6	+4	+13	18
Elder	L	16d8+32 (104)	20	11	14	19	20	23	+12/+21	+16	+7	+5	+15	20
Revered Elder	H	19d8+57 (142)	22	9	16	21	22	25	+14/+28	+18	+9	+5	+17	22

TABLE II–4: PHAERIMM ABILITIES BY AGE

Age	Initiative	Armor Class	Special Abilities	Caster Level	SR
Hatchling	+3	17 (+2 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 14	Detect magic, immunity to polymorph and petrification	1st	11
Juvenile	+2	19 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 17	Full vision ( <i>see invisibility</i> ), telepathy 100 ft.	4th	14
Young Adult	+1	21 (+1 Dex, +10 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 20	Poison	7th	17
Adult	+0	23 (–1 size, +14 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 23	Implant, full vision ( <i>arcane sight</i> )	10th	20
Mature Adult	+0	27 (–1 size, +18 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 27	Damage reduction 10/magic	13th	23
Elder	+0	31 (–1 size, +22 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 31	Full vision ( <i>true seeing</i> )	16th	26
Revered Elder	–1	33 (–2 size, –1 Dex, +26 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 33	Damage reduction 15/magic and silver	19th	29

**Telepathy (Ex):** A juvenile or older phaerimm can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

phaerimm characters

A phaerimm's favored class is sorcerer. Its sorcerer levels stack with its base spellcasting ability for the purpose of determining spells known, spells per day, and other effects dependent on caster level. A phaerimm character cannot gain a familiar unless it takes at least one level in a class that grants the ability to summon one, but thereafter its levels in that class stack with its effective racial caster levels to determine the familiar's abilities.

tomb tapper

**Huge Construct**  
**Hit Dice:** 16d10+40 (128 hp)  
**Initiative:** +0  
**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares), burrow 10 ft.  
**Armor Class:** 25 (–2 size, +2 Dex, +15 natural) touch 10, flat-footed 23  
**Base Attack/Grapple:** +12/+30  
**Attack:** Adamantine +1 *throwing returning maul* +22 melee (3d8+16/19–20/×3) or slam +20 melee (2d6+10) or

adamantine +1 *throwing returning maul* +14 ranged (3d8+16/19–20/×3)

**Full Attack:** Adamantine +1 *throwing returning maul* +22/+17/+12 melee (3d8+16/19–20/×3) and bite +15 melee (2d8+5) or 2 slams +20 melee (2d6+10) and bite +15 melee (2d8+5) or adamantine +1 *throwing returning maul* +14 ranged (3d8+16/19–20/×3)

**Space/Reach:** 15 ft./15 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Maul, spell-like abilities

**Special Qualities:** Blindsight 120 ft., blindness immunities, construct traits, damage reduction 10/adamantine, immunity to fire, repair, resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10, telepathy 100 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +7

**Abilities:** Str 30, Dex 14, Con —, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 16

**Skills:** Appraise +14, Listen +16, Search +18, Spot +16, Survival +16 (+18 following tracks)

**Feats:** Cleave, Improved Critical (maul), Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (maul)

**Environment:** Underground

**Organization:** Solitary, pair, team (3–4), or dig (10–20)

**Challenge Rating:** 13

**Treasure:** Double items, maul

**Alignment:** Always neutral

**Advancement:** 17–32 HD (Huge)





Tomb tapper

*This ebon giant stands more than 15 feet tall. Its face is a blank, smooth oval, and its body is smooth and featureless except for an enormous maw that gapes in the center of its torso. It wears no armor or clothing but carries a huge, two-handed hammer.*

Tomb tappers, also called thaalud, are ancient constructs first created many centuries ago by the mighty arcanists of Netheril. Designed to be tireless weapons in the arcanists' battles against the phaerimms, the tomb tappers became an independent race of intelligent constructs after Netheril's fall. Now they roam the deep places of the world, seeking magic.

A tomb tapper is a faceless being made of enchanted rock and iron. It stands about 16 feet tall and weighs about 16,000 pounds. Each one carries an enormous maul.

Thaalud are driven by their ancient imperatives to hoard magic, and they often tunnel into forgotten crypts to pillage their treasures—hence their common name. Nor are these creatures above robbing adventurers of their magic items. Thaалud revere magic to the point that they usually conceal their prizes in hidden vaults instead of making use of them.

A tomb tapper can burrow through solid stone with its iron-hard talons and rock-shredding maw. A tomb tapper does not leave a usable tunnel, but its passage creates a cylindrical area of pulverized stone 10 feet in diameter. Other creatures that can't burrow through rock can still burrow through the tomb tapper's

rubble, and anyone willing to dig can shovel out enough rubble to make a passage.

Tomb tappers understand Common, Netherese, and Undercommon, but they do not speak. They can communicate with others using telepathy, but they rarely say more than "Drop your magic items and run away."

## combat

Tomb tappers make good use of their tremorsense and burrowing abilities to approach potential enemies from all angles, often emerging from the rock in unexpected places.

**Blindsight (Ex):** A tomb tapper can ascertain all foes within 120 feet as a sighted creature would. Beyond that range, it treats all foes as having total concealment. Negating a tomb tapper's sense of hearing (for example, by using a *silence* spell) negates this ability.

**Blindness Immunities (Ex):** Because it is sightless, a tomb tapper is immune to gaze attacks, visual effects, illusions, and other attack forms that rely on sight.

**Construct Traits:** A tomb tapper has immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to extra damage from critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or energy drain. It cannot heal damage, but can be repaired. It has darkvision out to 60 feet and low-light vision.

**Maul:** Each tomb tapper is created with an adamantine +1 maul sized for it. In the hands of a tomb tapper, the weapon gains the throwing and returning special abilities. A thaalud that loses its maul searches tirelessly for it. If a maul is destroyed, the thaalud that created it can make a new one from 100 pounds of adamantine after one year.

**Repair (Su):** A *stone shape* effect repairs damage equal to 1d8 + caster level if used on a tomb tapper. The creature can use its own spell-like abilities to repair itself.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—*detect magic*; 7/day—*stone shape*; 3/day—*spike stones* (DC 17). Caster level 8th.

**Telepathy (Su):** A tomb tapper can communicate with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

**Tremorsense (Ex):** Tomb tappers can automatically sense the location of anything within 60 feet that is in contact with the ground.

## construction

While the secrets of thaalud construction have long been lost to the world at large, the tomb tappers know the secret of making more of their kind. They usually choose to replace destroyed individuals, but they never increase their total number.

Five thaalud cooperating with each other can fashion a new tomb tapper in 100 days. The exact requirements of the ritual are not known, but the tomb tappers must fashion the new individual's body from stone, iron, and at least 10,000 gp worth of adamantine.

Illustration by Rafa Carras

## Tressym

**Tiny Magical Beast**

**Hit Dice:** 1/2 d10 (2 hp)

**Initiative:** +2

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 50 ft. (good)

**Armor Class:** 14 (+2 size, +2 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 12

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +0/−12

**Attack:** Claw +4 melee (1d2−4)

**Full Attack:** 2 claws +4 melee (1d2−4) and bite −1 melee (1d3−4)

**Space/Reach:** 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.

**Special Attacks:** —

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, immunity to poison, scent

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 13

**Skills:** Balance +12, Climb +4,

Hide +16 (+20 in tall grass

or trees in leaf\*), Listen +3,

Move Silently +8, Spot +2

Illustration by Beet

**Feats:** Weapon Finesse

**Environment:** Any temperate or warm land

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** 1/4

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Usually chaotic good

**Advancement:** —

**Level Adjustment:** +0 (cohort)

*This creature appears to be a winged cat about the size of a housecat. Its feathered, leathery wings have a 3-foot wingspan.*

Tressyms are highly intelligent, though they do not speak human languages. Good-aligned wizards frequently seek them as familiars.

## combat

Tressyms are shy and skittish, and they tend to avoid combat with anything larger than themselves—usually by flying away. They avoid large flying opponents by going to ground and trying to find a small crevice or hole to hide in.

**Skills:** A tressym receives a +8 racial bonus on Balance checks and a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. It uses its Dexterity modifier for Climb checks.

\*In areas of tall grass or trees in leaf, the tressym's Hide bonus rises to +8.



Tressym

## velvet worm, giant

**Huge Vermin**

**Hit Dice:** 10d8+30 (75 hp)

**Initiative:** +0

**Speed:** 20 ft. (4 squares), climb 10 ft.

**Armor Class:** 13 (−2 size, +5 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 13

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +7/+21

**Attack:** Bite +11 melee (1d8+9 plus poison) or glue strand +5 ranged touch (entangle)

**Full Attack:** Bite +11 melee (1d8+9 plus poison) or 2 glue strands +5 ranged touch (entangle)

**Space/Reach:** 15 ft./10 ft.



**Special Attacks:** Glue strand, poison

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense, vermin traits

**Saves:** Fort +10, Ref +3, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 22, Dex 11, Con 16, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 2

**Skills:** Climb +14, Listen +4, Spot +4

**Feats:** —

**Environment:** Warm marshes

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** 5

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Always neutral

**Advancement:** 11–20 HD (Huge); 21–30 HD (Gargantuan)

*This massive, wormlike creature marches slowly on twenty stubby, paired legs. Its skin is bright green with blue stripes and mauve patches. Two hornlike antennae jut from the top of its head, above its clacking mandibles.*

The giant velvet worm is an enormous version of an invertebrate similar to a caterpillar. It shoots sticky strands of quick-hardening glue from its large, mobile antennae to immobilize its prey.

A giant velvet worm is about 30 feet long and weighs roughly 8,000 pounds.

## combat

The giant velvet worm is too slow to catch most prey, so it traps its victims with strands of glue and then closes in to devour its victims.

**Glue Strand (Ex):** A giant velvet worm can shoot a stream of quick-drying glue up to 100 feet. Any creature struck by a glue strand is entangled for 2d4 rounds and must make a DC 18 Reflex save or be stuck to the ground, unable to move. Even on a successful save, it can move at only half speed. A winged flying creature is not stuck to the ground, but it must make a DC 15 Reflex save or fall to the ground and be stuck there by the glue.

A creature stuck to the ground by the giant velvet worm's glue can break free with a successful DC 18 Strength check, or by dealing 10 points of damage to the strand with a slashing weapon. A creature trying to scrape glue off itself, or a creature assisting another creature to do so, need not make an attack roll; hitting the glue is automatic. For each hit, the attacking creature makes a damage roll. Once free, however, the creature is still entangled until the glue wears off.

The velvet worm often continues to throw glue strands onto creatures that are already stuck in order to prevent escape. Each additional strand that hits the target increases the DC of the Strength check to break free by 2 and adds 10 hit points to the gluey mass and 2 rounds to the duration of the victim's entanglement.

**Poison (Ex):** Bite, Fortitude DC 18, initial and secondary damage 1d4 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Tremorsense (Ex):** A giant velvet worm can locate any creature within 60 feet that is in contact with the ground.

**Vermin Traits:** A giant velvet worm is immune to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects). It also has darkvision out to 60 feet.

**Skills:** A giant velvet worm has a +4 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.



*Giant velvet worm*

Illustration by Ben Thompson



# EXPLORE THE ECHOES OF A VANISHED TIME

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# SECRETS OF IMASKAR

*An Adventure for four  
6th-level player characters*

## preparation

**L**ost Empires of Faerûn details the ancient past of the FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting—its magic, its greatness, and its failures. The book also offers invaluable tips for making a campaign world's past relevant to current events.

*Secrets of Imaskar* is a short D&D adventure for four 6th-level player characters (PCs). This short adventure uses feats, spells, monsters, and historical elements from ancient Imaskar. The action takes place in far eastern Mulhorand, at the edge of the Raurin Desert. In other campaign worlds, this adventure can be placed any place where the ruins of an ancient empire might be found. As always, feel free to adapt the material presented here as you see fit to make it work with your campaign.

You (the DM) need the D&D core rulebooks—the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*—as well as the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting* and *Lost Empires of Faerûn*—to run this adventure. The information presented here utilizes the D&D v.3.5 rules.

To get started, print out the adventure, including the map. Read through the scenario at least once to familiarize yourself with the situation, threats, and major NPCs (particularly their motivations). Text that appears in shaded boxes is player information that you can read aloud or paraphrase for the players at the proper times. Monster and NPC statistics are provided with each encounter, either in abbreviated form or as references to the appropriate pages in *Monster Manual* or *Lost Empires of Faerûn*.

Some material used in this adventure comes from *Complete Warrior* and *Magic of Faerûn*. If you don't have the book in question, replace the element with a similar one from a book you do have.

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## Adventure Background

Mulhorandi and Imaskari ruins dot the landscape in and around the area known as the Raurin Desert, which was once the seat of the mighty Imaskar Empire. One such ruin, the fort of Maskana, lies on the southern edge of the Plains of Purple Dust, a little closer to the Dragonsword Mountains than to the Giant's Belt. This Mulhorandi fortress was built just before the fall of the Imaskar Empire, to guard the Mulhorandi against incursions by their former masters. Eventually the danger of such attacks passed, and the fortress fell into disuse and then ruin. Over the centuries, the ruined fortress has been thoroughly explored by adventurers, scholars, and looters, who ferreted out whatever secrets it may once have held. Now the site is nothing more than a curiosity to most.

But one secret of Maskana remains undiscovered. The Mulhorandi ruin was built atop an older Imaskari fortress that had fallen into disuse centuries earlier. The ancient Mulhorandi wanted to keep track of this location because it contained a number of permanent extradimensional spaces that they hoped to utilize someday. But in the chaos of the uprising, the old ruins were forgotten.

The ruin is decorated with Mulhorandi pictographs in an almost aggressive way, as if the people who built it wanted to leave no room for Imaskari influence. One of these drawings, however, contains an oddity that has gone undiscovered until recently. An explorer named Jarval Keth recognized one of the symbols, which had always been assumed to be Mulhorandi, as the work of the Imaskari. Excitedly, he returned to Gheldaneth to investigate further. There he ran afoul of Tyaral, a cleric of the dead god Bhaal, who sought a source of power to help revive his deity. Upon hearing of the ancient Imaskari image, Tyaral captured Jarval Keth and tortured him until he revealed all he knew. Then Tyaral set off for the ruin to investigate the explorer's story.

Unbeknownst to Tyaral, Jarval Keth has escaped confinement, stowed away on a ship sailing west, and made his way to the area where the heroes are resting between adventures. Upon noticing that he was gone, Sithena Tinzon, Tyaral's chief inquisitor and torturer, immediately set off in pursuit with three minions. Through her powers of persuasion, she learned which ship Keth had boarded. By hiring a faster one, she reached Keth's destination ahead of him. Now she lies in wait to kill Keth as soon as he surfaces.

## Adventure synopsis

Just as Jarval Keth makes contact with the PCs, forces loyal to Tyaral attack the explorer. Whether he dies in the encounter or not, Keth passes on a clue about his find. If the PCs wish to investigate, they must travel east to Mulhorand and investigate the strange pictograph that Keth described. At Maskana, they find the secret door into the older Imaskari ruin, fight several ancient creatures, and confront Tyaral just as he unearths an ancient Imaskari artifact that has lain hidden for centuries.

## Adventure Hooks

As DM, you know best how to involve your PCs in an adventure. Though this one comes to the PCs in the person of Jarval Keth, you can use one of the following suggestions to draw them into the action.

- The PCs have heard rumors of ancient Imaskari magic buried beneath the sands of the Raurin Desert.
- Jarval Keth is a distant relative of a PC and charges the group with uncovering the truth of his find.
- An old enemy of Tyaral hires the PCs to investigate his activities.

## Beginning the Adventure

*Secrets of Imaskar* begins as an event-based scenario and ends with the exploration of a keyed site. The adventure begins wherever the PCs are currently based. The events proceed more smoothly if they are near the Sea of Fallen Stars, but you can make the necessary adaptations for any area of Faerûn.

## A. Death in a faraway Land (EL 7)

Sithena Tinzon finds Jarval Keth as soon as he encounters the PCs. Ideally, this encounter should take place at night on the docks or in an alley.

The night is dark, and Selûne's face is hidden behind clouds, casting the narrow streets of the port district into deep shadow. Suddenly, a man stumbles forward out of the night. He is still some distance away when four humanoid figures move toward him in a menacing manner. The man starts to run, and the terror on his face becomes clearer as he moves closer. "The purple fort in the east hides the secrets of Imaskar's past glories behind the crescent and the fox," he gasps. "Don't let them succeed. . . ." Before the man can utter another word, his attackers are upon him.

The villains attack as soon as Keth utters the word "succeed."

**Creatures:** Sithena Tinzon and her three minions are all Mulhorandi (Mulan) humans, as is Jarval Keth.

Sithena is proud and cruel. She started life in the streets and doesn't want to return there. In her youth, she embraced the worship of Bhaal to ensure that she could treat others with the same cruelty that she herself had been treated. She earnestly desires not to fail Tyaral—not because she is afraid of him, but because she wants to advance in power, and he is her means to that goal.

Because of the torture he has endured at Sithena's hands, Jarval Keth is mentally deranged and unable to communicate coherently. He goes off on tangents easily, forgets important points, and speaks in vague phrases. Only a *beal* spell can restore his sanity at this point.



➤ **Jarval Keth:** Male human (Mulan) expert 4; CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 4d6-4; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk or Full Atk +3 melee (1d3, unarmed strike); AL LG; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 13.

**Skills and Feats:** Decipher Script +10, Gather Information +4, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +10, Knowledge (geography) +10, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (Mulhorand local) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Search +12, Survival +9; Great Fortitude, Investigator, Track.

**Possessions:** None of value.

➤ **Sithena Tinzon:** Female human (Mulan) rogue 2/cleric 4 of Bhaal; CR 6; Medium humanoid; HD 2d6 plus 4d8; hp 25; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +4; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+1, masterwork heavy mace) or +6 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA rebuke undead 6/day, (+3, 2d6+7, 4th), sneak attack +1d6; SQ trapfinding; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +7; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 16.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance -1, Bluff +10, Diplomacy +16, Heal +6, Intimidate +14, Jump -14, Knowledge (Mulhorand local) +6, Knowledge (religion) +5, Search +6, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7, Tumble +2\*, Use Magic Device +8, Use Rope +7; Improved Initiative, Persuasive, Servant of the Fallen\*\*, Spell Focus (divination).

\* Cannot tumble in her armor.

\*\*New feat from *Lost Empires of Faerûn*.

**Sneak Attack (Ex):** Sithena deals 1d6 extra points of damage on any successful attack against flat-footed or flanked targets, or against a target that has been denied its Dexterity bonus for any reason. This damage also applies to ranged attacks against targets up to 30 feet away. Creatures with concealment, creatures without discernible anatomies, and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are all immune to sneak attacks. Sithena may choose to deliver nonlethal damage with her sneak attack, but only when using a weapon designed for that purpose, such as a sap (blackjack).

**Trapfinding (Ex):** Sithena can find, disarm, or bypass traps with a DC of 20 or higher. She can use the Search skill to find, and the Disable Device skill to disarm, magic traps (DC 25 + the level of the spell used to create it). If her Disable Device result exceeds the trap's DC by 10 or more, she discovers how to bypass the trap without triggering or disarming it.

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (caster level 4th): 0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *detect magic*, *light*, *resistance*; 1st—*command* (DC 13), *cure light wounds*, *doom* (DC 13), *faith healing* (*Magic of Faerûn*), *inflict light wounds*<sup>D</sup> (DC 13); 2nd—*cure moderate wounds*, *death knell*<sup>D</sup> (DC 14), *sound burst* (DC 14), *zone of truth* (DC 14).

D: Domain spell. Deity: Bhaal. Domains: Death (death touch 1/day, damage 4d6), Destruction (smite 1/day, +4 on attack, extra +4 damage).

**Possessions:** +1 full plate armor, masterwork heavy mace, light crossbow with 20 bolts, *cloak of resistance* +1, *wand of cure light wounds*, *wand of ray of resurgence*<sup>MF</sup>, silver holy symbol of Bhaal, religious robes, 104 gp.

➤ **Thugs (3):** Male or female human (Mulan) warrior 2; CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+4; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk or Full Atk +5 melee (2d4+3/18-20, masterwork falchion) or +3 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +2, Intimidate +2, Jump -10, Ride +6, Swim -3; Dodge, Lightning Reflexes.

**Possessions:** +1 breastplate, masterwork light shield, masterwork falchion, light crossbow with 10 bolts, travel clothes, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*.

**Tactics:** Sithena Tinzon and her minions reach the PCs just after Keth blurts out his garbled message, and they attack him

immediately. They have no reason to attack the PCs unless they try to intervene. Sithena uses *death knell* on Keth as soon as he falls unconscious.

**Development:** If Keth dies, Tinzon tries to cut off his head, intending to take it back to Mulhorand with her. If the PCs manage to slay the attackers, they can easily discern that all four are Mulhorandi by searching their personal possessions. If Keth survives this encounter and his sanity is restored, he can reveal the information he knows (see Adventure Background), and he asks the PCs to accompany him to the ruins and help him explore his new find.

**Troubleshooting:** If your PCs are not interested in going to Mulhorand to investigate this lead, Tyral soon discovers what happened to Sithena. He decides to make an example of those who slew his trusted lieutenant, so he sends wave after wave of attackers to kill the PCs. If you choose this method, you may have to alter the end of the adventure a bit by giving Tyral a fortified position and some minions at the ruins of Maskana.

## B. finding the path

The PCs' trip to Mulhorand proceeds without incident provided that Sithena Tinzon is dead. If she escaped, she attacks them again—either on the way or upon their arrival, as you choose.

Jarval Keth did not tell the PCs where to start their search; he described only their final goal. Since the central section of Mulhorand is sparsely populated with rural folk, the characters' best chance of learning any helpful information in his absence is in one of the coastal cities. The most likely choices are Skuld and Gheldaneth, but the PCs might also want to visit Neldorid.

In any of these cities, the PCs can learn about the general history of the region (as described in *Lost Empires of Faerûn*) and the locations of known ruins. Plenty of records exist on both topics, so finding the locations of the six known ruined forts in the Plains of Purple Dust region (and of at least fifteen other suspected ruin sites) is an easy task (Gather Information DC 10). Acquiring any other information requires considerable digging. Anyone the PCs ask about such an issue directs them to the Great University at Gheldaneth (see encounter C).

## C. the great university at gheldaneth

The best source of information about Maskana is Gheldaneth, where Jarval Keth performed his research before he was abducted. Gheldaneth is the site of the Great University, which houses detailed historical records and other materials relating to ancient Mulhorand. It was here that Jarval Keth performed his follow-up research after finding the Imaskari image.

PCs who manage to talk to someone at the university about Keth (Diplomacy DC 20 because they are not members) discover that he was interested in specific Imaskari images and was poring over old records of them before he disappeared. If they request the materials that he was studying and peruse them carefully (Search DC 15), they can find the ancient Imaskari representations of crescent moons and foxes, and even compare them to Mulhorandi images of the same subjects. The Imaskari and Mulhorandi representations are very



similar, but slight differences make them distinct from one another. Careful perusal of these records combined with knowledge of the area (Gather Information or Knowledge [Mulhorand local] DC 18) also reveals which ruin Keth must have visited most recently.

## D. The Mean Drunk (EL 5)

Mulhorand is a class-based society, and tensions flare readily between people of different social standing. Adventurers rank near the bottom, at about the same level as grave robbers, and the bureaucrats tend to treat them accordingly. While the PCs are in a tavern one night, they are accosted by a drunken bureaucrat who wants to vent some aggression he has built up over family problems.

Upon entering the establishment, the PCs see a group of bureaucrats drinking liberally, as if in celebration. They don't want company—especially that of adventurers and foreigners—so they rudely rebuff any PCs who try to join them. As the evening progresses, the bureaucrats become more and more drunk, and their mood slowly changes from happy to angry. Read or paraphrase the following aloud when the confrontation occurs, adapting the text as needed if the PCs actually hail from Mulhorand.

"Grave-robbing foreigners, that's what you are!" says one of the drunken men in a loud voice. "You heard me! My slave is better than you are, you filthy outlander!" Three other men gather behind the speaker, but whether they intend to support him or restrain him is not clear.

The speaker, Anheris, is angry and frustrated with life. Because of his dour mood, he is determined to provoke a fight, even though he knows he's likely to spend the night in jail for it. Once combat begins, Anheris's three companions join in on his side.

**Creatures:** Anheris and his friends are normal Mulan humans. Anheris is a bureaucrat in the temple of Anhur, and the family troubles he is having right now have put him in a bad mood. He doesn't hate the PCs specifically; they are just convenient targets for his wrath.

➤ **Anheris:** Male human (Mulan) expert 3; CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 3d6+3; hp 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk or Full Atk +2 melee (1d3, unarmed strike); AL LG; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 8.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +2 (+4 when appraising woodworking), Bluff +5, Craft (woodworking) +11, Diplomacy +9, Intimidate +1, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (Mulhorand local) +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +7, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7; Dodge, Improved Unarmed Strike, Skill Focus (Craft [woodworking]).

**Possessions:** None of importance.

➤ **Anheris's Friends (3):** Male and female human (Mulan) expert 2; CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d6+2; hp 9; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk or Full Atk +1 melee (1d3, unarmed strike); AL LG; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +6 (+8 when appraising woodworking), Bluff +5, Craft (woodworking) +9, Diplomacy +2, Intimidate +2, Jump +5, Knowledge (Mulhorand local) +6, Listen +8, Search +6, Spot +8; Alertness, Skill Focus (Craft [woodworking]).

**Possessions:** None of importance.

**Development:** If this encounter takes place in Gheldaneth, Anheris has information of value to the PCs. Should they win the battle without killing the woodworker, they can interrogate him.

A good line of questioning coupled with a DC 20 Intimidate check or a DC 15 Diplomacy check reveals that Anheris saw Jarval Keth hanging around the temples trying to talk with the priests. He doesn't know the subject of these discussions, but he's sure the man was up to no good. In addition, on the day that Keth disappeared, Anheris saw him in the company of a man who had a very pale, almost skull-like face. Jarval seemed uncomfortable in the man's company, but he didn't call for any help.

Asking about Keth at the temples he visited produces no new information. The priests know only that Keth was interested in Imaskari religious imagery, and they didn't have any samples available. They all recommended that he try the Great University.

## E. Guide Through the Wilderness

When the PCs are ready to travel into the desert in search of the ruin that Keth visited, they may want to hire a guide to lead them. They don't really need one, but if they have not traveled in this region before, they may want to take the precaution of hiring one, since getting lost in this country is quite dangerous. Most guides won't venture into the Plains of Purple Dust at all, but a DC 15 Diplomacy or Gather Information check produces the name of a man who is willing to take them there.

**Creatures:** Museris, a guide who regularly braves the Plains of Purple Dust, is a normal human (Mulan) male. Though he is the son of a soldier, he chose not to enter the army himself because he disagreed with the pharaoh's plans for expansion. Instead, he traveled north to Aglarond, where he learned about the wilderness. After returning to Mulhorand, he spent years learning how to survive in the dusty deserts of his homeland, and now he makes his living exploring ruins and ancient sites where others fear to tread and guiding clients through places of danger. He charges 100 gp per week, plus expenses.

Museris is practical and competent, but he always thinks he is right and tends to belittle the opinions of others—until they are proven right. He is not afraid of traveling into the desert, but he has explored the ruin that the PCs are interested in and is sure that nothing of interest remains there.

If the PCs are attacked while in the company of their guide, Museris fights beside them until his life is really threatened. At that point, he retreats, but he won't leave the PCs to die.

➤ **Museris:** Male human (Mulan) ranger 4; CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d8+8; hp 30; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +3 melee (1d8+1/18–20, Large masterwork scimitar) and +4 melee (1d6/19–20, masterwork short sword) or +6 ranged (1d8+1/×3, composite longbow [+1 Str bonus]); SQ animal companion (light horse), favored enemy humans +2, wild empathy +3; AL CG; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 8.

**Skills and Feats:** Hide +8, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (nature) +9, Listen +7, Move Silently +8, Spot +7, Survival +10; Endurance<sup>B</sup>, Monkey Grip<sup>\*</sup>, Skill Focus (Survival), Track<sup>B</sup>, Two-Weapon Fighting<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

<sup>\*</sup>Feat from Complete Warrior.

**Animal Companion (Ex):** Museris has a light horse as an animal companion. The companion's abilities and characteristics are summarized on page 273 of the *Monster Manual*.

**Animal Companion Benefits (Ex):** Museris and his horse enjoy the link and share spells special qualities.



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

**Share Spells (Ex):** Museris may have any spell he casts on himself also affect his animal companion if the latter is within 5 feet at the time. He may also cast a spell with a target of "You" on his animal companion.

**Favored Enemy (Ex):** Museris gains a +2 bonus on his Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against humans. He gains the same bonus on weapon damage.

**Possessions:** +1 chain shirt, masterwork falchion, masterwork short sword, composite longbow (+1 Str bonus) with 20 arrows, wand of cure light wounds (31 charges), wand of endure elements (24 charges), two weeks' rations for self and horse, tent, cooking equipment, maps of Mulhorand.

## f. The Ruins, Top Level

The trip to the ruins can be without incident, or you can present the PCs with random desert and plains encounters along the way.

The ruin known as Maskana was once a Mulhorandi outpost built into the side of a flat hill at the edge of the Plains of Purple Dust. An Imaskari fortress once covered the whole hilltop, but the Mulhorandi destroyed it early in their uprising, tearing it down to the very ground. The former slaves then built their own fortress against the side of the hill, facing east toward the Imaskari capital city. The reason for its placement was twofold: to guard against the Imaskari, and to block access to the hidden sublevel of the ruined Imaskari fortress. One of the fort's towers rose above the hilltop, providing a good view of the surrounding area. Eventually, this fortress fell into disuse, and the Plains of Purple Dust wore it away to ruin.

### walls

Crumbling walls no more than 3 feet high mark where Maskana's outer walls once stood. Hewn purple stones from these walls have fallen into the central courtyard, where they now lie half-buried in the dust. The interior structures, built in haste from wood rather than stone, have disintegrated completely.

The only wall that now stands more than 3 feet high is the back one, which is braced against the hillside. All of the interior wall surfaces are covered with faded religious and cultural imagery common to the Mulhorandi of ancient times. These symbols are all recognized as Mulhorandi today, even though many of them have several variants. (For example, at least four fox depictions, each a little different from the others, decorate the walls, and all are thought to be Mulhorandi.) A successful DC 30 Search check (or DC 20 for PCs who have spent time researching symbols at the Great University) is required to locate the Imaskari fox-and-crescent image that Jarval Keth found. A character can take 20 on these checks, but doing so requires an hour of searching rather than the usual 2 minutes because of the chaotic nature of the ruins. The symbol in question is on the back wall among various Mulhorandi symbols placed here to ward against threats from the old Imaskari ruins within the hill. The Imaskari symbol stands for the Artificers' Guild and marks the secret door leading into the hill (encounter F1).

Nothing else of interest remains in the ruins of the Mulhorandi fortress, since they were explored and looted long ago.

## f1. The secret way into old Imaskar

The secret door into the Imaskari sublevel is marked on the map. The Search DC to locate it is 30 for a character who has already found the Imaskari image or 40 for one who has not.

A character who has found the secret door must make a DC 25 Search check to locate the opening mechanism because fallen stones have concealed the trigger stone from view. The DC is 40 for a character who doesn't know the secret door is there. Taking 20 on this check also requires a full hour.

## f2. The desert creature (EL 6)

While the PCs are searching the ruins, some creatures of the ancient desert enter the area in search of food.

**Creatures:** The four giant whip scorpions that have come here to hunt are covered in purple dust, so they look like bizarre, purple scorpions. These creatures live in colonies in the Plains of Purple Dust, where they harry travelers and serve as snacks for the dragons dwelling there.

➤ **Giant Whip Scorpions (4):** hp 30 each; see *Lost Empires of Faerûn*, page 160.

**Tactics:** The giant whip scorpions attack immediately because they are hungry. Like any other mindless creatures, they simply attack anything that appears edible until it is dead, and then they eat it if no other obvious dangers are threatening them. They may attempt to drag a dead PC into the desert where they can consume the corpse in peace, since they have no reason to fight all the PCs once they have secured a meal.

## g. The Ruins, Lower Level

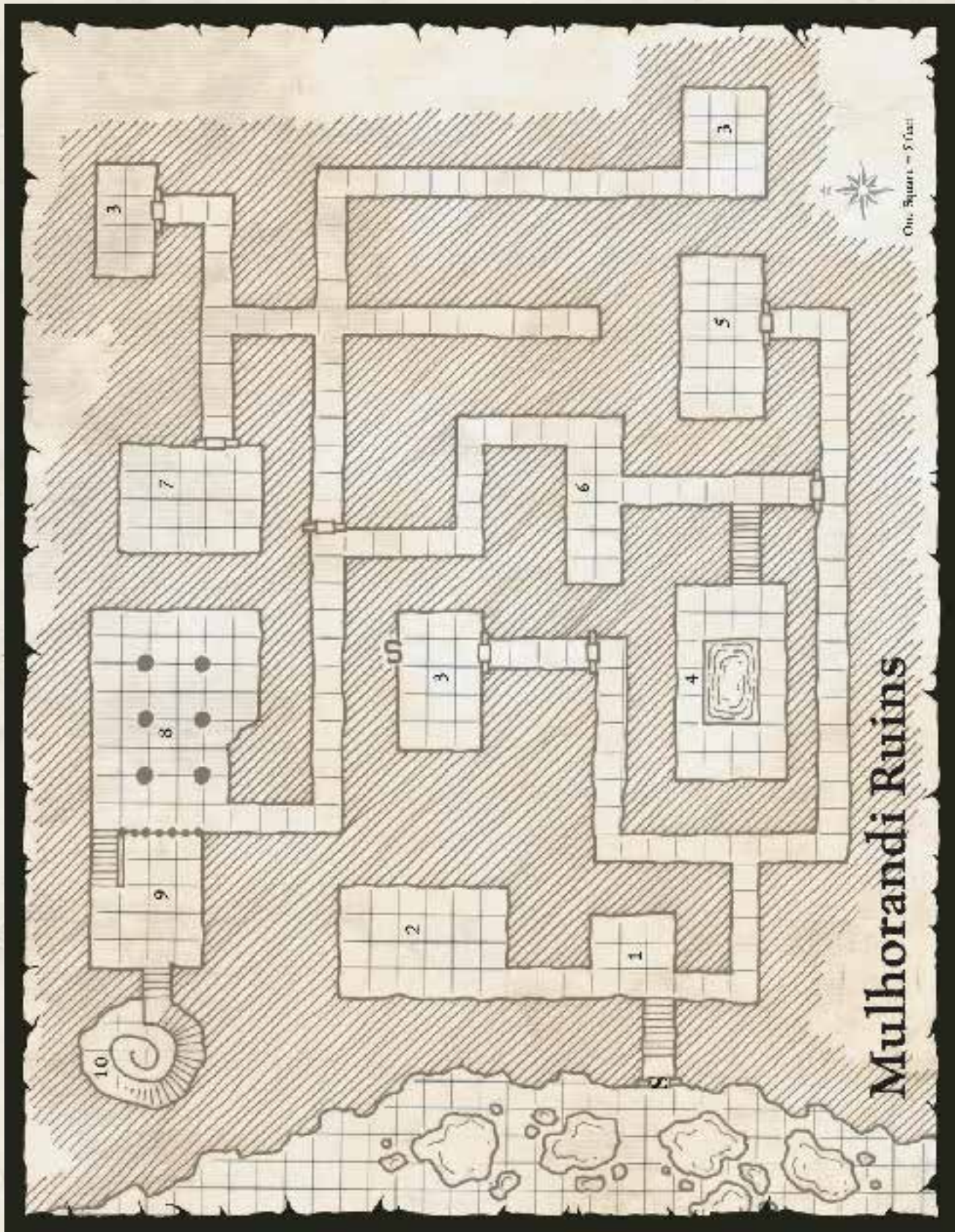
The secret door opens on a hallway leading into darkness. This section of the ruins appears much older than the surface structures and is in fact about 3,500 years old. The walls are built of purple stones hewn in the same manner as those in other Imaskari ruins, and they are in excellent condition because they have been spared the rigors of weather for all these centuries. The corridor is unlit, and the temperature is a constant 51 degrees Fahrenheit. All spaces within this underground complex are 10 feet high unless otherwise specified in a particular area description.

This sublevel once lay beneath an Imaskari fortress atop the hill. The belowground portion was an Imaskari research facility where artificers investigated the abilities of unusual creatures. These researchers made use of several permanent extradimensional spaces within the normally constructed rooms. Thus, some of the rooms in the complex are larger than they appear and radiate strong transmutation magic.

## g1. storage

Mounted on stands in this chamber are four suits of banded armor and five suits of splint mail that belonged to the defenders of the fortress that once stood above these ruins. The armor is in good







condition without a speck of rust, but it is not of any special quality. A historian might pay double the book value for these pieces because of their age and origin.

## G2. Barracks

On the map, this room appears to measure 20 feet by 30 feet, but in fact it is 70 feet by 120 feet. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs enter.

More than fifty bunk beds, all in perfect condition, fill the chamber, aligned in perfect rows. A trunk stands at the foot of each bed.

This area once served as the barracks for the fortress's troops. All the trunks are empty.

## G3. The eternal guardians (EL 8)

All areas marked 3 on the map have the same general description, regardless of their shapes. These rooms served as personal quarters for various Imaskari artificers, but their former occupants cleaned them out long ago. Only the comfortable beds remain, and those have decayed with age.

The Imaskari had plans to return to the fortress as soon as the slave uprising was put down, so they set some guardians in these rooms to protect them from unwanted intruders before abandoning the place. Unfortunately, the original occupants never got the chance to return.

**Creatures:** Each of these rooms is now home to a helmed horror.

➔ **Helmed Horrors (3):** hp 94 each; see *Lost Empires of Faerûn*, page 172.

**Tactics:** The helmed horrors have been programmed to attack anyone they see who does not bear the emblem of the Imaskari artificers. All such emblems that were known to exist were destroyed after the uprising, and none are left within these ruins.

## G4. crawling pool (EL 4)

The artificers who worked here and the soldiers who guarded them used this room as a communal bathing pool. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs enter.

A pool of water occupies the center of this chamber. In the far corners lie a couple of skeletons that are missing their hands.

The skeletons are the remains of slaves who revolted and were killed.

The pool is 3 feet deep. Anyone who looks into its clear water sees immediately that it is full of hands.

**Creatures:** The hands are actually crawling claws that were dumped here when their masters left.

➔ **Crawling Claw Swarms (2):** hp 30 each; see *Lost Empires of Faerûn*, page 163.

**Tactics:** The swarms jump out of the water and attack anyone within 3 feet of the water's edge.

## G5. Empty Room

This room is completely empty. Evidently, the Imaskari artificers did not want to leave any clues as to its true purpose. The room

actually measures 40 feet by 90 feet, rather than the dimensions shown on the map. The door is in the center of the wall.

## G6. sliding wall trap (EL 6)

This wide hallway was designed as a trap to slow down invaders and keep them from reaching the main laboratory until the artificers could cast their preparation spells.

**Trap:** Whenever three creatures enter the hallway, extra wall sections slide down and close off the two exits. Then the two walls farthest apart (the east and west walls) begin to slide toward each other at a rate of 5 feet per round. The trap can be bypassed easily by allowing only one or two people in the hallway at a time. All the walls are made of purple stone.

➔ **Compacting Room Trap:** CR 6; mechanical; proximity trigger; automatic reset; walls move together (12d6, crush); multiple targets (all targets in the room); never miss; Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 22. *Market Price:* 23,400 gp.

➔ **Moving Walls:** 5 ft. thick, hardness 8, hp 270.

➔ **Blocking Walls:** 6 in. thick, hardness 8, hp 90.

## G7. Lounge

This room was once a lounge and study area for the artificers, but it is mostly empty now. The only remaining furnishings are a moldy couch in the center of the room and a bookcase on the east wall that holds only dust.

## G8. Main Laboratory

This room served as the artificers' main laboratory. It appears to measure 30 feet by 40 feet, but the permanent extradimensional space within it extends the dimensions to the north and east, making its actual size 90 feet by 120 feet. The pillar pattern does not repeat, and the room has no other exits other than those shown on the map.

The larger part of the room is full of tables and lab benches, some equipped with racks for vials and flasks. Drawers in the benches hold strange tools and a vast quantity of blank parchment. Feel free to stock this part of the room with any items you would like to introduce into your campaign.

The stairs in the corner of the room lead down half a flight to area G9. This area is visible through the "wall" next to the stairs, which is a standard portcullis. A Mulan human male (Tyaral) traces an image on the wall of area G9 (see below).

**Development:** Tyaral can hear the PCs enter area G8, but he is too caught up in his activities to take any action the first round. In the second round after their entry, he begins casting his preparatory spells (see the Tactics section of area G9).

## G9. The zealot (EL 9)

This small room once housed the library used by the artificers working in the laboratory above. Only empty shelves are left now, since the artificers valued these books too much to leave any behind when they departed. Unbeknownst to them, however, more senior artificers had hidden an important Imaskari artifact in a secret compartment in the wall. Since the artificers of this fortress did not know it was there, they served as the perfect guards for it.

Tyaral and the two flameskulls that accompany him have already found their way into this room, having avoided two of the helmed horror guards in the other chambers. The priest has been exploring



the complex for a week now, and he has at last found the secret compartment that conceals the artifact.

When the PCs first arrive, he is muttering a spell that he hopes will unlock the secret door. It does so on the following round, allowing him a good view of the artifact that lies inside. At that point, he notices the PCs and begins preparing to fight them. Tyaral's only escape route from the complex is the one he used to enter, and he must get past the PCs to use it. Tyaral has no intention of leaving without the artifact.

**Creatures:** Tyaral is a Mulan human consumed with the desire to bring back his dead god, Bhaal. He was a priest of Bhaal at the time the god was murdered, and that event unhinged his mind. Tyaral knows he needs powerful magic to effect the return of a god, so he has been collecting all he can find.

➤ **Tyaral:** Male human (Mulan) cleric 8 of Bhaal; CR 8; Medium humanoid; HD 8d8+8; hp 44; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +6; Grp +5; Atk +6 melee (1d8–1, masterwork heavy mace); Full Atk +6/+1 melee (1d8–1, masterwork heavy mace); SA rebuke undead 9/day (+4, 2d6+10, 8th); AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +10; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 18, Cha 14.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +12, Diplomacy +10, Jump –18, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (religion) +12, Knowledge (the planes) +12, Spellcraft +10; Extra Turning, Lightning Reflexes, Servant of the Fallen\*, Spell Focus (necromancy).

\*New feat from *Lost Empires of Faerûn*.

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (caster level 8th): 0—*detect magic* (2), *guidance* (2), *read magic* (2); 1st—*command* (DC 15), *comprehend languages*, *cure light wounds*, *deathwatch*, *doom* (DC 16), *inflict light wounds*<sup>D</sup> (DC 16); 2nd—*bull's strength*, *cure moderate wounds*, *death knell*<sup>D</sup> (DC 17), *hold person* (DC 16), *summon monster II*; 3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 18), *contagion*<sup>D</sup> (DC 18), *searing light*, *speak with dead* (DC 18), *summon monster III*; 4th—*cure critical wounds*, *death ward*<sup>D</sup> (DC 19), *divination*, *divine power*.

D: Domain spell. Deity: Bhaal. Domains: Death (death touch 1/day, damage 8d6), Destruction (smite 1/day, +4 on attack, extra +8 damage).

**Possessions:** +1 full plate armor, ring of protection +1, masterwork heavy mace, divine scroll of *summon monster III*, pearl of power (2nd-level spell), travel clothing, silver holy symbol of Bhaal, backpack, bedroll, adventuring equipment, 12 pp.

➤ **Flameskulls** (2): hp 28; see *Lost Empires of Faerûn*, page 168.

**Tactics:** If Tyaral somehow becomes aware of the PCs' presence before they reach area G8, he casts *deathwatch* to warn him of their approach before returning to his business. If he notices them in area G8, he casts *divine power* and then *bull's strength* to give himself an additional +7 bonus on his attack and damage rolls. He uses spells in melee when they seem appropriate and knows which sorts of characters are likely to be more vulnerable than others to particular spells (that is, he knows that fighter-types are likely to fail Will saves, and wizard-types are likely to fail Fortitude saves). He spontaneously casts *inflict wounds* spells in combat whenever he feels that his other spells would not be useful, and he uses *death knell* on downed PCs to gain extra hit points.

The two flameskulls attack until destroyed, preferably from a distance.

**Development:** Once Tyaral is dead, go to Concluding the Adventure.

**Treasure:** In addition to his own equipment, Tyaral now has the artifact from the secret compartment. Its nature is up to you, but the *Seventh Imaskarcana*—a fabled artifact of ancient Imaskar that resembles a large, golden key—is an appropriate choice. The *Seventh Imaskarcana* holds the entire body of Imaskari knowledge about

creating permanent extradimensional spaces, and it also has additional powers that are left to your discretion. See page 158 of *Lost Empires of Faerûn* to aid in your design of this artifact. If you prefer a less powerful item, simply select an appropriate one from the list of ancient magic items in Chapter 10 of *Lost Empires of Faerûn*.

## G10. Downward stairs

These stairs lead downward to an area that was once a lower level of the complex. In the centuries that this place has lain empty, however, the stairway has collapsed, and no clear path to this level currently exists.

## concluding the Adventure

Once Tyaral is dead, the adventure is over. The church of Bhaal has lost a major power, and the dead god's return has been immeasurably delayed. If Jarval Keth is still alive, he undertakes a serious study of the underground Imaskari complex, perhaps hiring the PCs as guards while he does so.

## further Adventures

The artifact that Tyaral discovered in this complex has probably been sought by powerful wizards and clerics for centuries. If it falls into the PCs' hands, they immediately become targets for those who wish to retrieve it. They can either decipher its powers and try to make use of it themselves, or sell it to someone who is unlikely to misuse it.

Tyaral can become a recurring villain whether he escaped alive or not. Since he serves Bhaal, the dead god of murder, he might well return as a vengeful undead spirit even if the PCs managed to kill him.

The PCs might also wish to come back to the complex when they have gained more power and try to unearth the stairway leading down (area 10). That area is left for you to develop as you wish, using material on Imaskar from *Lost Empires of Faerûn*.

## About the Author

Robert Wiese is a veteran of the RPGA offices, where he worked for seven years. He has written more than sixty adventure scenarios for the club, a couple of articles for *Polyhedron*, and the *LIVING FORCE Campaign Guide* (with Morrie Mullins). He also got the LIVING GREYHAWK and LIVING FORCE campaigns off the ground and into the hands of the wonderful members to develop. Now he works at the University of Nevada at Reno in the Biochemistry Department, proving that you never can tell where you'll end up.