World of Warcraft®

The Roleplaying Game

Lands of Mystery

A Fantasy Roleplaying Game for Revised Third Edition Rules

Sword & Sorcery

LANDS OF MYSTERY

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Introduction

To His Highness, King Magni Bronzebeard, Rightful Sovereign of Ironforge and Dun Morogh, and Grand Explorer of the Guild;

To High Explorer Tomli Magellas and all august members of the Excursion Council:

Well, I'm done. After months of slogging through swamps, plodding across deserts, slinking through forests, swimming through (and beneath) seas, and trudging across icy wastelands, I finished the task you set before me back in the Weary Boots. (I had had a few, as you might recall, and so wasn't in the clearest state of mind when you asked if I would undertake this journey. Especially considering I had just returned from my travels in the eastern lands that very day. Ah, we dwarves are crafty.)

The western lands are interesting — perhaps more so than the lands of the east, for I knew very little about the west before striking out on this expedition. Kalimdor, the islands of the South Seas, and Northrend were realms of mystery to me; and despite the secrets I uncovered, these regions retain a good many puzzles yet. Thus, I have entitled this volume *Lands of Mystery,* which accurately captures the feel of these western lands.

What I found is ferociously interesting but disconcerting for our plans. The orcs, tauren and trolls of the Horde are firmly established on Kalimdor and (boil my beard) they could be staunch allies against the Scourge and the Burning Legion. They certainly have every reason to hate the demons and the undead. Yet instead of working with them, the Alliance forces on Kalimdor (and the rest of the world, for that matter) squabble with the Horde over petty conflicts, mostly for tradition's sake. I say "squabble," but the situation is escalating toward outright war again, my friends. I can't think of anything the Scourge and the Legion would like better than to watch the mortal races chop each other to bits so they can inherit whatever's left when we're done. We need diplomacy and handshakes, Magni, not swords and guns.

The western lands hold other potential allies as well — the most obvious are the night elves. However, they face their own problems, both internal and external. Other forces also exist, but instinct (and the fact that they tried to kill me) tells me they'll prove hostile to our cause. Centaur, trolls, naga — the world is full of people who want to eat your liver, and I fear we don't have enough strong dwarves to stand against them.

These are dark times, my friends. At least they're interesting times, too.

I suppose I should summarize the contents of this volume. That way you can zip right to the most interesting bits (though obviously, since I wrote it, it's all interesting).

Summary of Contents

In **Chapters 1 through 5,** I recount my travels through northern, central and southern Kalimdor, then through the South Seas and finally up into Northrend. I provide estimates (which range from wild guesses to accurate statements backed by official records) of the populations in each of the regions within these areas, as well as the region's resources, rulers, settlements and the like. I should point out that the **Language** section of each region entry lists the region's most prominent language first, and the others follow in alphabetical order.

Scattered throughout these chapters are scraps of information that I picked up from some of the denizens in the region. These are journal excerpts, transcripts of conversations, and the like; so if you don't believe me, believe the natives. Speaking of natives, also scattered throughout these chapters are descriptions of some especially interesting denizens.

Cultures and civilizations fascinate me, so **Chapter 6** explores four of the most intriguing civilizations in the western lands: the blue dragonflight, magnataur, murlocs and nerubians.

I heard all sorts of adventurous tales in my travels; I describe three of the most exciting in **Chapter 7**. If any young bucks would care to test the truth of these rumors, be my guest; I may even do so myself some day.

Chapter 8 describes some of the organizations I encountered on my travels: the Bloodsail Buccaneers, the Burning Blade, the Druids of the Fang, and the damnable Scourge. Know thy enemy.

Finally, **Chapter 9** includes various miscellanies that I thought would interest you. What does it take to be a techno mage? How do people survive in the north? If you challenge a goblin in XK-77 steam armor to a duel, what are you up against? The answers are here.

A Closing Thought

I have now traveled the whole of the world. I'm possibly the only (and certainly the handsomest) individual who has done so in all of history. One might imagine, then, that the thought of continuing my career as an explorer (and archeologist, and adventurer, and anthropologist…) suddenly holds little interest. What can I see, a hypothetical questioner might wonder, that I haven't seen before? What else is there? Won't the rest of my life be a disappointment, as I have already accomplished this greatest of exploratory feats?

To this I say: Well, hypothetical questioner, why don't you go off and squirt some lemon juice up your kilt? Trying to make me feel bad like that.

If there's one thing I learned in my travels through the lands of mystery, it's that the world holds innumerable wonders. My expedition turned up at least as many questions as it answered, and I am eager to return to the wilds to seek more answers — and the best part about the questions I'll answer is that they'll lead to more questions. The world brims with possibilities and with the unknown, and I will always be there to partake.

And that's just Azeroth. There are other worlds than this… what's next for me, Magni?

— Brann Bronzebeard

Maps

I can hear the complaints on the message boards (www.warcraftrpg.com) now: "Why didn't they include maps for each of the regions?! They could have just taken them from the *World of Warcraft* computer game!"

The answer is: We have only so much room in the book, and it seems silly to fill that room with maps that people can find online. We figured readers would prefer some new and original content instead.

Web Bonuses!

People apparently like writing about **Warcraft**, because I had to cut huge chunks out of this book to make everything fit. Hopefully, we'll make the chopped-out sections available for free at www.warcraftrpg.com, so check it out.

—Luke Johnson, Developer

Only a few years have passed since the Alliance and the Horde arrived on Kalimdor, and the night elves have done their best to adapt to the presence of these newcomers. While the Horde initially fought against the elves, at great cost to both sides, eventually all three factions were willing to cooperate against the Burning Legion. Since then, the night elves joined the Alliance, and hostilities have broken out against the Horde once again. The Horde now inhabits much of central Kalimdor, and northern borderlands like Ashenvale and Azshara have turned into war zones. Many elves wonder how they ever could have worked with races that use goblin-designed shredders to destroy the ancient trees, while others remember the shamanistic ways of the orcs and tauren who fought side by side with them at Mount Hyjal and seek to find a way to return peace to the land.

While the Third War scarred all of Kalimdor, it was the land surrounding the mighty Mount Hyjal where the most damage was done, and where the final battles were waged. While the combined efforts of the night elves, Jaina Proudmoore's expedition, and Warchief Thrall's Horde defeated Archimonde, a demonic taint remains on the land, and many demons and satyrs survive to continue the chaos. Felwood, where the massive infernals first scorched the land, remains almost entirely under the control of the Shadow Council, a group of powerful warlocks and demons. Darkwhisper Gorge hides a massive army of demons powerful enough to besiege Mount Hyjal — but they seem to be waiting for something. The threat of another demon invasion is very real, and with the resources of the night elves taxed by the strife with the Horde, each passing day makes the warring lands more vulnerable.

In spite of all the brutal combat that has occurred in Kalimdor, the night elves are still dominant here, and the wise and powerful priestess Tyrande Whisperwind leads them. Still, even with such a well-respected leader, many night elves seek change — a return to their immortality and idyllic lifestyle, potentially at great cost. Teldrassil, the new World Tree, is an attempt to recreate that past glory — and many fear that attempt failed. Teldrassil grows more corrupt, and the source of the taint is unknown. The greatest of all druids, Malfurion Stormrage, lies sleeping and unable to help his race in their time of need. The priestesses of Elune and the Sentinels seek willing allies to help them purge the remaining demons; but even with the Alliance's help, the fight proves long and deadly.

Ashenvale

Capital: Astrannar (4,000).

Population: 7,000 (81% night elf, 7% orc, 5% human, 4% naga, 3% other).

Government: Elected council.

Ruler: Sentinel Raene Wolfrunner (female night elf hunter 5/warrior 3/elven ranger 3).

Major Settlements: Astrannar (4,000), Raynewood Retreat (750), Maestra's Post (500), Warsong Lumber Mill (450).

Languages: Darnassian, Common, Orcish, Ursine.

Faiths: Ancients, Elune, Holy Light, shamanism.

Resources: Gold, hunting, leather, timber.

Affiliation: Alliance.

Ashenvale is a lush forest, reminding me much of the home of my Wildhammer cousins in the Hinterlands. In spite of the corruption spreading from Felwood in the north, much of the forest remains pristine and untouched, carefully protected by the night elves. The weather when I arrived was warm and temperate, and I'm told it's usually quite comfortable overall. I spent most of my time in Astrannar, a large town in the southwestern area. The road from Astrannar splits in four major directions; northwest toward Darkshore, northeast toward Felwood, southeast in the direction of the Barrens, and directly east toward Azshara.

People and Culture

I've seen some fancy druid magic before, but a goodly number of the trees here *walk of their own accord*, and I think a few of them gave me bad looks when they saw my axe. Fortunately, the trees proved friendly, as did the fey creatures I ran into on the way to town. I had heard of dryads and keepers of the grove before, but seeing one for the first time sure is a bit of a surprise. One of the dryads even showed me a clear spring to drink from on the way to Astrannar, and I was surprised to find she spoke Common as well as any elf I had met. In spite of the friendliness of most of the creatures, the area still can be quite dangerous — wildkin (another thing that reminded me of the Hinterlands) roam a good part of the area, and some of the ancient trees near Felwood have grown corrupted and aggressive.

It didn't take long to reach Astrannar with practically every tree in the forest pointing me in the right direction; and once the initial disorientation of being guided by walking trees faded, I decided I liked the place. Since this was one of the first night elf lands I visited, I spent a fair bit of time here to learn about the people of the area. Astrannar proved a good place to kill a few days; and the ruins in the south were just as good a place to kill a few demons. I was surprised to find satyrs and felguards so close to Astrannar's borders, and I joined a group of the elves in hunting down a solid dozen of them. The cat-riding Sentinels here have been trained pretty well, but they lack real combat experience. Fortunately, the demons weren't expecting a rifle among the bows, and we caught them off guard; most of us made it back to the city with only a few scrapes and bruises.

Geography

The trees are huge and ancient here, and a few of them even talk a bit. Suits the elves well enough, and I'm not complaining either — I saw the way one of those trees handled an orc that was silly enough to try to take a chop at it. Let's just say that I have a new respect for the destructive power of flora.

The elves and their allies control most of the western part of the forest, whereas the Horde has a few camps and such on the far south and east sides, toward the Barrens and Azshara. There are many animals in the forest — birds, panthers, and other usual stuff. I imagine they'd make pretty good hunting, but after that tree's demonstration earlier, I'm not swinging my axe out here without the forest's express permission.

Iris Lake: This small lake to the northeast of Astrannar is renowned for Elune's Tears, stones with medicinal properties. Unfortunately, bog beasts and other nasty creatures roam the area, so keep an axe handy if you go rock collecting. Similar stones, called "moonstones," can be found at Fallen Sky Lake to the southeast as well, but they are used for curing different ailments. There are several other bodies of water in Ashenvale, including another lake that surrounds Astrannar itself, as well as at least two rivers.

Sites and Settlements

Night elves control the majority of the area, and a number of small camps and ruins are spread over the area.

Astrannar (small city, 4,000): This Alliance-held city is lead by the Sentinel Raene Wolfrunner, who organizes Ashenvale's defense against the corrupted creatures in the north and the encroaching orcs in the south and east.

Blackfathom Deeps: I wasn't able to get inside this underground ruin, but one of the elves in the city explained that the naga there seem to be searching for something. The Twilight's Hammer, a foul cult dedicated to the Old Gods, works with the naga here for an unknown purpose.

Demon Fall Canyon: This area houses an obelisk dedicated to the so-called hero Grom Hellscream. I admit the orc did good work in destroying a pit lord, but Hellscream was a monster in the Second War, and we can't be too quick in forgetting that. The orcs like him, though — he's one of their greatest heroes.

Firescar Shrine: The center of Burning Legion activity in Ashenvale, this shrine is guarded by deadly felguards and felhounds. I heard rumors of a warlock by the name of Illkrud controlling these demons, but I didn't have the chance to investigate in detail.

Howling Vale: This mysterious grove is the home to a group of worgen. Your idea of why they are here is as good as mine.

Maestra's Post (military camp, 500): The first place I visited in Ashenvale was Maestra's Post, an Alliance encampment. A human scout met me on the road and led me to the camp, explaining on the way that a paladin named Delgren the Purifier leads their camp. I found his title funny, but I was glad to be meeting up with one of the few Knights of the Silver Hand left. I fought with a good number of Uther's knights in the Second War, and they were good folk, if a bit too righteous for their own good.

It didn't take me long to find Delgren, pacing around Maestra's Post, checking on the activities of the people encamped in the area. The knight stuck out like a sore thumb, his shining armor making him a glowing beacon in the forest, whereas most of the other humans and elves had long ago learned to wear something that blended in a bit better. In spite of the stubborn habits of the knighthood, I found that I liked the lad. Delgren and his folk were investigating an orc and Forsaken cult in the north, called the Darkstrand Cult, and I gladly volunteered to help. While we cleared out the zombies, Delgren explained a bit about the area and even taught me a few words in Darnassian. I regret not having a chance to stay around and help out more with the cultists, but I had a lot of work ahead of me.

Raynewood Retreat (outpost, 750): The Raynewood Retreat is a friendly outpost lead by a keeper of the grove named Ordanus. The druids and keepers here oppose the corruption that spreads through their beloved land.

Satyrnarr: Once a night elven place of worship, this temple ground has been taken over by the Night Run and Felmusk satyrs. I accompanied some night elves in fighting the foul satyrs here, and I hope to come back to take a few more demon heads before I return home.

Talondeep Path: This path connects to the Stonetalon Mountains.

Warsong Lumber Mill (military encampment, 450): The elves told me about the Warsong Lumber Mill to the east of Astrannar and advised I avoid it. I learned the hostilities with the Horde are intense here, and the orcs would probably attack me on sight. While the prospect of bashing a few orc heads didn't bother me, I decided not to waste the time. The lumber mill is the only Horde encampment in the area and a small military base, populated almost exclusively by orcs. These orcs seem to have only one goal — to cut down every tree in Ashenvale for timber.

The Zoram Strand: While traveling to the northwest of Astrannar in an area called the Zoram Strand, I noticed an ancient ruin in the distance, with several figures moving around nearby. As I drew closer, I realized that I was observing a large group of naga — not exactly what I expected. I observed from a distance, and after a while I noticed a few humans and others walking among them. I almost considered going up to greet them before I noticed the insignias on their robes, marking these people as members of the Twilight's Hammer: servants of the Old Gods. I put a few good holes in the group before heading back to Astrannar that night.

History

After the cataclysm that destroyed the Well of Eternity, Ashenvale was one of the first places in which the night elves rebuilt their lives. The forests of Ashenvale, near the base of Mount Hyjal, were virtually untouched by the taint of the demons, and it proved an ideal place to start life over. Astrannar is an ancient settlement, and many families — even some specific elves — have lived in the city for generations. Not far from Cenarius's home, Ashenvale was one of the night elves' cultural centers, and it remains so to this day.

In the Third War, Ashenvale sustained some damage, but it proved one of the few areas the night elves stubbornly refused to give up. Unfortunately, many of the experienced and determined troops who fought in Ashenvale in the Third War have since been sent to help elsewhere; for this reason, the Sentinels in the area are not anywhere near as prepared to defend the city as they might have been before the war. Nevertheless, Ashenvale remains one of few places in northern Kalimdor under undisputed Alliance control.

Adventures

The pristine forests of Ashenvale are full of danger, and the many mysterious ruins of the land offer countless opportunities for exploration.

Twilight's Fall: A knight visits Astrannar in search of companions to vanquish the Twilight's Hammer and naga in Blackfathom Deeps. He offers gold and magic items for help. There's one complication: the PCs need to meet his partner outside the city. The knight's partner turns out to be a troll mage, who is interested in exploring the ruins only to increase his own power. He does not betray the PCs, but he could be a potentially dangerous foe in the future if he is allowed free rein in the ruins. The Twilight's Hammer, a large group of naga, and smaller groups of murlocs and hydras occupy the ruins.

Azshara

Population: 9,000 (50% naga, 15% sea giant, 10% satyr, 10% night elf, 8% blue dragonspawn, 7% tauren, 5% high elf, 5% furbolg)

Major Settlements: None.

Languages: Nazja, Darnassian, Taur-ahe, Ursine.

Faiths: Ancients, Azshara, Arkkoroc, Elune.

Resources: Artifacts, hunting, gemstones, gold.

Affiliation: Contested.

After the Great Sundering, a good part of Ashenvale was renamed Azshara to remind the night elves of their mistakes. The night elves consider the forest cursed, and few are willing to stay in the area for long. The trees themselves don't look quite as bad as the ones in Felwood and parts of Ashenvale, but they are stuck in a perpetual state of autumn.

Azshara is covered in Highborne ruins, many of which have recently been taken over by the foul satyrs and naga. Perhaps even more intriguing is the presence of the blue dragonflight in the area, which certainly implies there is something important here. The blues are highly territorial, and are likely to attack anyone who wanders into the ruins they claim. Fortunately, the blue dragonspawn here are common and visible enough that a passerby is unlikely to wander into dragon territory by accident.

Due to the rumors about magic items in the area, both the Alliance and the Horde have set up camps in the area to investigate. I do not expect either to have too much success with so many dangerous creatures in the area, but time will tell.

People and Culture

While naga are the most populous race in the area, they are relatively new arrivals, and many other people inhabit the area. Both night elves and high elves alike seek to reclaim the area for their people, but at present, neither race has the numbers to put much of a dent in the naga or blue dragonspawn occupation. Fortunately, the Alliance has been wise enough not to anger the dragons into sweeping them out of the area completely, at least for now.

There are a good number of Timbermaw furbolgs in the region, and I believe they are native to the area. The Timbermaws are one of few furbolg tribes that remains uncorrupted. While the Timbermaws aren't tainted like many furbolgs, they are still aggressive toward outsiders, primarily because they are the targets of fools who think they *are* corrupted. Given a chance, they talk, but it takes some effort to gain enough trust to be allowed access to their tunnel system. I wasn't able to get inside this time, but I do plan to help them a bit later and see where their tunnels go.

Geography

Azshara's terrain is uneven, with a single main road representing the only level ground in most of the area. The hills and mountains are treacherous, and an inexperienced climber will no doubt have difficulty reaching the higher peaks. The highest peak I could find in the area was guarded by blue dragonspawn, and as such, I'm unable to report what can be found there.

The majority of Azshara is dotted with ancient trees, but there are some open plains as well, on both the northeast and southeast tips of the mainland. Several islands also are included in the region, and a few of them are noteworthy. A few months back, a fellow member of the Explorer's Guild constructed a landing platform suitable for a flying machine on one of the furthest islands to the south. I would suggest having our flying machines patrol that area on a regular basis and use it as a staging point for excavations into the area. I noticed the presence of several water elementals on an island northeast of

the landing pad. It was quite a distance away, and I didn't fancy fighting the elementals if they proved unfriendly, so I left it alone.

Bay of Storms: The eastern coastline of Azshara is called the Bay of Storms, and notable for several reasons. First, it forms almost a perfect crescent shape, with the north and south points extending far further east than the center. This makes swimming out to the small islands that cover the area easiest from the tips, since it is quite a distance from the center of the bay to any other solid land. Second, the bay's name is accurate — thunder, lightning and tidal waves constantly strike at the ruins here, making the bay a dangerous location.

Sites and Settlements

There are few formal settlements in Azshara, and no intact cities, but neverthess a large number of people and monsters reside here. Generally, naga, satyrs, and dragonspawn control the ruins, and everyone else is forced to find other places to make camp.

Camp Valormok (camp, 250): This small encampment is the staging point for most of the Horde forces in the area, and it consists of little more than a gathering of a few tents and crude walls. Still, it's better than the Alliance holdings — we've got nothing but a landing pad and a couple elves standing around here and there.

Eldarath: Before the Sundering, Eldrath was one of the most beautiful cities of the night elves. Now in ruins, the naga have reclaimed it, and the powerful warlord Krellian controls the ruins from the shattered remains of Elune's temple. About half of the ruins of the city are deep underwater, and I didn't feel like putting in the effort to explore them at the time. Plenty of underwater fun was already in my future.

The Forlorn Ridge: This massive area in central-eastern to southeastern Azshara is controlled by the blue dragonflight. The blue dragonflight's presence in Azshara is unusual; while a standing army of several hundred dragonspawn is present in Azshara, only one full dragon dwells with them. This massive dragon, Azuregos, is not immediately aggressive, and wanders much of southeastern Azshara. When I approached the dragon, he ignored me completely at first, but after I identified myself he was willing to speak. His message was simple — there were things in this place not meant for mortal eyes, and while he understood my curiosity, he *suggested* I leave the area immediately. When a blue dragon the size of a small town suggests I do something, I take that request seriously. The blue dragonspawn are not permissive of outsiders in their territory, and I had to retreat to prevent a fight. I'd really like to keep our relations with the dragons positive.

Ravencrest Monument: The furthest southeast peninsula is marked by a tremendous statue of Lord Kur'talos Ravencrest, Lord of Blackrook Hold. He led the armies against the first assault of the Burning Legion before the Sundering, and as far as I can tell, he's about the closest thing the night elves had to what we'd call a paladin. The statue is in pretty bad shape — only the legs still stand. The remainder of the colossus is smashed to bits. After 10,000 years, though, it's remarkable the statue still exists at all. I must admit, I was impressed. The stoneworking here rivals some of our best — just the legs stand as tall as our fabled statues in Loch Modan and Ironforge. Naga seem to like it, too, because there were quite a few of them guarding some shrines in the area. I made my way over to one of the shrines and saw a couple strange naga statues, but I wasn't able to discern what exactly the naga are up to here.

Temple of Arkkoran: Another former Temple of Elune now belongs to Arkkoran, the supposed god of the sea giants. Apparently the makrura and murlocs in the area think he's some kind of divinity as well, or at least they seemed to be calling for his help when I introduced them to dwarven sharpshooting. Fortunately, his children proved mortal enough — I had to put a couple down on my way over to take a look at the temple. Unfortunately, about a half-dozen giants guarded the temple entrance, so I contented myself to watch from a distance. I camped out for a few good hours, hoping to see the god out for a walk, but he never came. After inquiring about it to a few of the night elves in the area, they said I was lucky — apparently Arkkoran only leaves the temple when he's in a foul mood, and I decided that wouldn't be the best time to ask him a few questions.

History

The night elf city of Eldrath was one of the greatest before the Sundering, and perhaps the most severely damaged during the explosion. When the Sundering shattered the continent of Kalimdor, much of the eastern part of Azshara was destroyed and drifted underwater, leaving only about half of Eldrath on the surface. The remaining parts of the city were severely damaged, and although a few inhabitable buildings remained, most of them have fallen apart in the 10,000 years since.

One side effect of all the sudden destruction is that many speculate that there are numerous, unattended magic items remaining in the ruins,

both underwater and aboveground. This rumor is both true and false — there are certainly objects of power here (I picked up a trinket or two myself) but they are hardly unguarded, even discounting the naga and dragons. Many of the ruins are haunted by ghosts and specters.

Adventures

The rumors of treasure in Azshara are true, but adventurers find the competition fierce. Many groups from the Alliance and Horde alike scour the ruins, and the blue dragonflight and naga carefully guard Azshara's greatest secrets.

A Rare Gift: Arkkoran, the ruler of the sea giants, emerges from his temple under heavy guard. Rather than attacking the creatures in the area, he makes an offer: The first creature to bring him the head of the hydra that has been eating his children will be rewarded with great secrets and power. This unusually powerful hydra is located east of the Bay of Storms.

Darkshore

Capital: Auberdine (5,500).

Population: 9,000 (87% night elf, 6% furbolg, 5% Ironforge dwarf, 2% other).

Government: Elected council.

Ruler: Thundris Windweaver (male night elf Drd5).

Major Settlement: Auberdine (5,500).

Languages: Darnassian, Dwarven, Ursine.

Faiths: Ancients, Elune, Holy Light.

Resources: Gold, hunting, seafood, timber.

Affiliation: Alliance.

I arrived in Darkshore by boat from Menethil Harbor, and it was good to be on land again. The boat ride was long, but I had decided to work my way from the top of Kalimdor down, and thus Auberdine was a better option than Theramore. Darkshore was the first I had seen of Kalimdor, and I was impressed.

It was just at the beginning of spring when I arrived, and the temperature was surprisingly cold in Darkshore, but beyond that the environment was quite hospitable. The massive numbers of trees reminded me of Quel'thalas, before the Scourge razed the city. Fortunately, the elves here seem to be in minimal danger. There are small bands of murlocs and corrupted furbolgs in Darkshore that might cause a wandering adventurer trouble, but they pose no threat to the town itself.

I'm proud to report that I was not the first member of the Explorer's League to reach Darkshore, and I was greeted immediately on my arrival by a stout dwarf named Hollee, one of the excavation leaders. A good number of other dwarves are about the area, inspecting the numerous ruins; and one in particular named Remtravel may have found some objects linked to the Titans.

People and Culture

The night elves of Darkshore are friendly and organized and used to travelers. I was fortunate that there was room in the inn when I arrived, which is apparently something of a rarity. The town was extremely busy, which I understand was in part due to an upcoming festival, the Rain Dance (in Common; the elves have a different name for it). The festival is one of the largest of the year, and it involves dancing in heavy rain — typical elf stuff. While the villagers are almost exclusively night elves, the few humans and dwarves living in the area have made a good impression on them, and they were quite willing to answer my questions about the area.

The dwarves here are few, but they are experienced adventurers, and most of them are members of the Explorer's Guild. Kalimdor is a land of many mysteries, and the dwarves here spend their time investigating these secrets, focusing specifically on Titan ruins and the creations of their enemies, the Old Gods.

The only truly native creatures in the area are furbolgs, and sadly those here are corrupted. The night elves do their best to find a cure for the once noble creatures, but sadly, the power of the Burning Legion allows no antidote.

Geography

As a coastal area, Darkshore is cooled by a sea breeze and is perpetually humid. Rain is frequent but mild. The majority of the forest is peaceful and tranquil, but a few spots have been corrupted by the presence of warlocks or tainted furbolgs. Darkshore is dotted with several bodies of water,

including at least one fairly large waterfall on the eastern side; I thought I saw movement behind the falls as I passed, but I can't be sure. The eastern edge of Darkshore is marked by a large mountain range, which separates Darkshore from Felwood (directly east) and Moonglade (northeast).

Sites and Settlements

Darkshore is one of the last refuges of the night elves, distant enough from Mount Hyjal to have been spared the worst damage from demonic attacks.

Ameth'Aran: Once an ancient night elf city, Ameth'Aran was destroyed in the Sundering. Highborne ghosts haunt the ruins, but most of them are not dangerous for an experienced adventurer.

Auberdine (small city, 5,500): Perhaps the journey by sea influenced my judgement, but I found the city of Auberdine a welcome change. The night elves' buildings, all crafted from wood, interested me because each building seemed to be crafted from a single tree or piece of lumber — none of the typical signs of craftsmanship such as nails or screws hold the pieces of wood together. When I inquired about the method of construction, I was told the majority of the buildings were created using druidic magic — cheating! But impressive nonetheless.

This town is successful, and a friendly druid named Thundris Windweaver runs day-to-day activities. A skilled Sentinel named Elissa Starbreeze organizes the town's defenses, which are more than sufficient for the time being. The town is old, but recent construction is abundant, and the night elves constantly hustle to improve upon the smallish town. I found the city comfortable, and I recommend that anyone traveling to western Kalimdor begin their journey here.

Bashal'Aran: Like Ameth'Aran, this city was destroyed in the explosion of the first Well of Eternity.

Grove of Ancients: This peaceful grove is the home of Onu, an ancient of lore; or as we dwarves would put it, a tree that talks too much. A few night elves also frequent the grove: mostly druids who come to study Onu's teachings. Onu investigates the nearby ruins of Malthystra, and I decided to help him out by paying the ruins a visit later.

The Master's Glaive: This unusual monument consists of a large statue (or corpse?) surrounded by a small lake. Once a night elf holy place, the area is now under the control of the Twilight's Hammer. After dragging one of the robed crazies to a corner to talk, I determined that they believe the statue is some sort of divine corpse — the remains of an Old God. The term "Master's Glaive" refers to part of the monument — examined closely, the strange statue or mound in the center appears to be a snail shell-like skull, with a massive weapon imbedded in the crown. I would speculate that it's possible a Titan killed one of the Old Gods here, or one of their minions.

Mathystra: This is an ancient ruin, another Highborne city. The place is infested with naga, though I can't see why the naga would favor this ruin over any of the other Highborne ruins in the area. Apparently Onu's suspicions were right; there's something strange going on here.

Remtravel's Excavation: An archaeologist from the Explorer's League named Remtravel runs a dig here, searching for Titan clues. Monsters infest the nearby area, making it a dangerous place to work, but Remtravel is persistent.

Tower of Althalaxx: This dangerous tower is the home to the leader of the Darkstrand Cult, a blood elf warlock named Athrikus Narassin. I was advised that the area was deadly, but I couldn't help myself from taking a peek. The tower is guarded by naga, elves, humans and even satyrs! Truly, this cult leader has quite an impressive following — it would be best to keep a close eye on Athrikus to make sure he doesn't make any moves on Auberdine.

History

Darkshore was once one of the most prosperous regions of the Kaldorei empire, and great cities such as Ameth'Aran and Bashal'Aran were the pinnacle of civilization at that time. Much of the coastline was destroyed in the Sundering, and it was many years before the night elves began to rebuild in the area. Although Auberdine is successful, the elves never rebuilt anything comparable to the cities of old. During the Third War, Auberdine was almost completely abandoned for a time as all capable night elves moved toward Mount Hyjal to protect the World Tree. Recently, the night elves returned, and they found to their dismay that small parts of the land are tainted by the corruption from Felwood in the east. Even so, the Alliance has made Auberdine successful in recent years, and the druids hope to turn the tide against the corruption here soon.

Adventures

While the city of Auberdine offers safe refuge, most of Darkshore is wild and uncontrolled. Cultists, tainted furbolgs and naga are just some of the many dangerous that can be found in the area — and these creatures often guard ancient and powerful secrets.

Darkstrand Disciples: Darian Thunderhammer, a human paladin, stumbles into Auberdine heavily wounded. Though not mortally injured, he is incapable of continuing in his mission — investigating the ever-growing Darkstrand Cult at the Tower of Althalaxx. A capable fighter, he expected to fare well against a few cultists — what he wasn't expecting was the intervention of demons. Somehow, the warlock leading the cult has become powerful enough to command over a dozen felhounds: a major threat to the region. Darian needs the PCs to find the source of this tremendous increase in the cult's power, but a frontal attack would be suicide. He asks the PCs to infiltrate the cult by disguising themselves as members. If the PCs are successful, they find that Athrikus, the leader of the cult, has found a powerful gem that allows him to summon and control demons far beyond his own abilities. If the PCs destroy the gem, the demons turn on their former master.

Felwood

Population: 9,500 (44% satyr, 23% demon, 15% furbolg, 11% night elf, 6% tauren, 1% other).

Major Settlements: None.

Languages: Eredun, Common, Darnassian, Ursine.

Faith: Burning Legion, Elune.

Resources: Hunting, timber.

Affiliation: Burning Legion.

I could damn near smell the corruption as I walked into Felwood, and I most certainly could see it. The trees in this once beautiful forest are twisted and scarred to a level only rivaled by the Plaguelands in Lordaeron, and even then, the damage here seems more terrible somehow — mainly because some of the twisted plants and trees here are still *alive*. The weather here isn't much different from Ashenvale, except that it seems harder to breathe. I don't think the air is poisonous, but unclean mist clouds the sky, and I can't imagine it's healthy to stay in the area for long. The main road was safe enough, but even there I ran into the occasional diseased beast. Poor creatures.

People and Culture

I wasn't expecting to run into many people outside the Emerald Sanctuary, but there are a few scattered druids throughout the forest trying new salves on the plants in the area. This is important, because Felwood is home to several unusual herbs that, when uncorrupted, are useful for healing. I also note that there are Horde druids trying to do the same thing — in fact, I even encountered a tauren and night elf pair working together. This close to Moonglade, the faction boundaries seemed less intense. There is an air of desperation here, and those living here seem well aware that every non-demon is an asset.

The northern tip of Felwood is controlled by the Timbermaw furbolgs, and the ones here proved friendlier than the group I encountered in Azshara. After proving myself by bashing a few Deadwood and Felpaw furbolgs for them, their leaders granted me access to their tunnel system, which I used later to reach Moonglade and Winterspring. I decided to use Shatterscar Vale to make my way to Mount Hyjal, since the Timbermaw have closed off their tunnels to it.

Geography

Felwood is to the west of Mount Hyjal, and east of Darkshore. The series of caves on the northern edge serve as a path to both Winterspring and Moonglade. Ashenvale lies directly to the south, and Felwood's borders encroach on Ashenvale more and more each passing day as the corrupted terrain slowly expands.

The water here — if it can be called that — has been reduced to a green slime, and I wasn't foolish enough to test if it was safe to drink. The center of Felwood has an immense lake of this muck, with several rivers and streams branching off throughout the woods. I saw several other pools of the gunk from my vantage point on the road as well, and I suspect some might be used as feeding pools for the demons in the area or the experimentation of warlocks.

A river of this sludge divides Felwood. This river feeds into considerably larger pools of slime. I was fortunate to have a full waterskin when I entered the forest, else I'd likely be in as bad a shape as many of the animals here. The bears, deer and wolves here are all corrupted and aggressive. Most of the other animals are similarly affected, but oddly, the birds have not yet been tainted. Perhaps the birds have

found another source of water and are smart enough to avoid the rivers and lakes here. The signs of corruption in the animals are obvious at a glance: One can see the flesh hanging from them in places, much like zombies. These poor beasts are still alive, however, and in terrible pain.

Bloodvenom Falls: On the eastern side of Felwood, near the center, is a waterfall of sludge that feeds all the rivers and other bodies of corrupted water in the area. This is likely where the demons go to make sure the water stays polluted, I imagine. I ran into several oozes and slimes here, but no matter how many I destroyed, there seemed to be dozens more. I also found what I'd call "elementals" formed from the sludge — disgusting monstrosities. Perhaps these creatures were once water elementals? In any case, I destroyed several of them, but their numbers were endless. This is not a good spot for a picnic.

Shatterscar Vale: While the rest of the forest is at least recognizable, most of the trees here have been completely obliterated, and huge charred craters mark the ground — the locations where infernals landed in the Third War. This is truly a terrible place — felguards and infernals still roam in packs.

Sites and Settlements

Satyrs, demons and cultists are the main occupants of Felwood, but the night elves struggle daily to regain a foothold. The Horde has some interest in the land as well, but for what reason, I cannot say.

Bloodvenom Post (outpost, 200): This small but well-guarded outpost serves as the only stopping point for Horde members in the region. This outpost is mostly a tauren establishment, but there are a good number of orcs as well. The guards here constantly fight with the demons of Jaedenar, since the outpost is close to the demonic city's borders.

The guards at the Horde camp didn't attack me on sight, but they wouldn't allow me to pass, either. I decided to be diplomatic and refrain from knocking the orcs silly. In a dangerous place like this, I wouldn't want to deprive the Horde of a couple of their guards — everyone who stands against the Legion here is an ally, like it or not.

Deadwood Village (encampment, 725): The home of the Deadwood clan of furbolgs, this encampment consists of little more than a

Fel'dan, 24th-Level Warlock

Male Orc: CR 24; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 24d6+192, hp 278; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 26, touch 18, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +10; Epic Atk +2; Grp +19; Atk +24 melee (2d6+19/19–20 plus 2d6 negative energy, *Hellfire*); Full Atk +24/+19 melee (2d6+19/19–20 plus 2d6 negative energy, *Hellfire*); SA spells, battle rage, +1 bonus on attack rolls against humans; SQ low-light vision, demon mastery, demonologist, enslave outsider, fel companion, summoner; AL CE; SV Fort +23, Ref +18, Will +23; Str 24, Agy 16, Sta 26, Int 33, Spt 15, Cha 14.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Eredun, Goblin, Kalimag, Orcish.

Skills: Concentration +35, Decipher Script +38, Craft (alchemy) +38, Diplomacy +29, Intimidate +30, Knowledge (arcana) +38, Knowledge (local) +38, Knowledge (military tactics) +38, Knowledge (religion) +38, Knowledge (the planes) +38, Spellcraft +38.

Feats: Augment Summoning, Diehard, Endurance, Epic Summoning*, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (thorium weapons), Greater Spell Focus (conjuration), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Magic Energy Control, Martial Weapon Proficiency (greatsword), Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (conjuration), Unstoppable*, Weaponspell Channel*.

Warlock Spells (4/7/7/7/6/6/6/6/5/5; save DC 21 + spell level): Fel'dan's high Intellect score and his ranks in Spellcraft allow him to prepare 19 spells per level; he can prepare most of the spells on the warlock spell list. Against conjuration spells from the warlock spell list, the save DC is 24.

*Possessions**: *Hellfire**, *bracers of armor +8, ring of protection +5, cloak of resistance +5, belt of giant Strength +6, amulet of health +6, headband of Intellect +6,* spell component pouch, spellbooks.

* See Chapter 9: New Rules.

** See **More Magic & Mayhem** for descriptions of these magic items.

Description

This ancient orc obviously has lost none of his strength to age, and his bloodied robes and gruesome blade make him an intimidating sight.

With the death of Gul'dan, Fel'dan has taken charge of the remainder of the Shadow Council, and reestablished its powerful ties to the Burning Legion. He works extensively with Lord Banehollow to further the Shadow Council's interests, most notably spreading the corruption of Felwood into other areas. Fel'dan seeks to corrupt the druidic home of Moonglade, but thus far, his efforts have been thwarted by the Emerald Circle and Remulos, the mighty son of Cenarius.

In combat, Fel'dan prefers to allow his two succubi companions, Moora and Salia, to lead the way into melee while he destroys his enemies with spells from a distance. If his succubi are not present, he attempts to summon help to fill their roles. He is not hesitant to cut down his foes in melee, and retreats only if truly necessary. He prefers to use directly damaging spells over curses, unless he expects the battle to last a long time.

mass of crude tents and basic wooden structures. Regardless, it is one of the two largest encampments of corrupted furbolgs, and the ones here are more dangerous than usual.

Emerald Sanctuary (druidic encampment, 500): The Emerald Circle, a subsect of the Cenarion Circle, maintains this safe haven as a refuge for all living creatures in Felwood. While the majority of the druids here are night elves, you will see a small number of tauren at the sanctuary as well, trading information and studying with their fellow servants of nature. The Emerald Circle reveres Cenarius, and many of the members maintain that he will manifest a new body and return to the world if given enough time to recover. A night elf druid by the name of Eridan Bluewind is the leader of the small camp, and she explained the situation.

Felpaw Village (encampment, 650): A bit of exploring led me to a corrupted furbolg camp to the northwest of the main road. I put a few of the creatures out of their misery while investigating the area. I found Chieftain Bloodpaw, the Felpaw's clan leader, but I decided that it would be pointless to attack him with so many of his shamans and guards nearby. Felpaw Village is the second largest corrupted furbolg camp in Felwood, and one of the largest anywhere. Felpaws are even more deadly than the Deadwood furbolgs. Satyrs also lurk close by.

Irontree Woods: North of Bloodvenom Falls and the Shatterscar Vale is a small forest glade filled with corrupted ancients. A nearby druid told me that occasionally the spirits of the ancients that fell here can also be seen, but it seems impossible to communicate with them without some sort of magic object. I spent some time investigating an ancient night elf ruin here, where one massive statue remains intact. I wasn't able to find out much about the area with so many nasty critters nearby, though.

Jadefire Glen (encampment, 425): This large satyr encampment represents the largest satyr community outside of Jaedenar. The encampment is located north of the Deadwood Village and south of Jaedenar.

Jadefire Run (encampment, 275): Another large satyr camp, Jadefire Run is likely the staging point for assaults on the nearby Timbermaw furbolgs. Located near Felpaw Village, the satyrs here are likely the source of the continuing corruption of the Felpaws, and I suspect they have their eyes on corrupting or killing the Timbermaws as well.

Jaedenar (corrupted barrow den, 3,500): I know perhaps too much of Jaedenar's dark history. It was once a druidic barrow den, but members of the Shadow Council overtook it. Under Kil'jaedan's hand, the orc warlock Gul'dan founded the Shadow Council to spread dark magic among the orcs. The warlocks murdered the druids sleeping here and renamed the site in honor of Kil'jaedan. Fel'dan, the current leader of the Shadow Council, plans with the dreadlord Banehollow within Shadow Hold, which was once the largest of the barrow dens. Archimonde appointed Banehollow during the Third War and tasked him with the cultivation of a network of fanatical spies who would infiltrate and corrupt the lands of mortals. The majority of the residents here are satyrs, but there are a number of other demons and corrupted mortals residing in the walls of Jaedenar as well.

Talonbranch Glade: A small night elf homestead, this is as close to Alliance territory as you'll find in Felwood. This amounts to a single house, a hippogryph roost, and a few friendly — if edgy — night elves. I didn't find out about Talonbranch until after my initial visit, since it's quite a ways off the beaten path.

Timbermaw Hold (town, 1,250): After helping the Timbermaws against the Deadwood and Felpaw furbolgs, I was able to gain enough of their trust to gain access to their town. Timbermaw Hold is impressive, and it reminded me a bit of home. Almost exclusively underground in a system of tunnels, it also contains simple wooden homes inside. Well-sculpted paths lead to Moonglade and Winterspring; apparently it contains tunnels to Azshara and Mount Hyjal as well, but those aren't available to everyone. The furbolgs here work with the druids of Moonglade frequently, and are some of the staunchest allies of the night elves and the Alliance. If the Scourge ever reappears here, I'm sure the furbolgs will be some of the most valuable additions to our forces. However, there are rumors of an insane furbolg leading the clan.

Eridan's Explanation

"We've been working hard to oppose the efforts of the Shadow Council, a group of warlocks and demons. The council slaughtered many of our sleeping brothers and sisters in a Barrow Den to the northwest and took it over, renaming it Jaedenar. These horrible creatures are led by a dreadlord named Lord Banehollow, who continually pushes to corrupt and destroy more of our land. We are slowly beginning to find cures for the diseased plants here, but the animals seem beyond our abilities for now."

History

Once a beautiful region of rolling hills and flowing streams, Felwood was much like modern Ashenvale before the coming of the Burning Legion. During the Third War, this area was the point to which the demons summoned their infernals to lay siege to Mount Hyjal, and the site of several bloody battles. The devastation scarred the land forever, and many of the remaining demons chose to reside here after Archimonde's fall. Recently, a few brave adventurers from both the Alliance and the Horde constructed encampments here, but the major force opposing the demonic presence is the druids of Moonglade. The druids lost many of their friends in the slaughter of the Barrow Den, and that tragedy spurred the druids into a frenzy greater here than anywhere else on Kalimdor.

Adventures

The demon-filled lands of Felwood are one of the easiest places to find adventure — nearly every acre of the forest is inhabited by some sort of monster. That being said, the majority of adventurers don't survive long here; only the most experienced or suicidal of travelers should attempt to fight against the forces of darkness here.

Corruption Most Foul: Eridan Bluewind of the Emerald Circle has discovered that Lord Banehollow has been teaching the Shadow Council necromantic magic, and perhaps even grooming them to begin a new Scourge. When the PCs investigate, they find that the situation is worse still: Fel'dan has learned how to reanimate the deceased druids of Jaedenar into intelligent undead druids who retain many of their abilities. These undead druids have such an intimate knowledge of nature that they are able to spread the corruption of Felwood much further and faster than normal.

Hyjal Summit

Capital: Astrannar (4,000).

Population: 5,000 (30% demon, 20% night elf, 17% dryad, 11% blue dragonflight, 10% red dragonflight, 9% bronze dragonflight, 3% keeper of the grove).

Languages: Draconic, Darnassian, Elven, Eredun.

Faiths: Ancients, Burning Legion, Elune.

Resources: Gold, hunting, leather, timber.

Affiliation: Contested.

The massive summit of Mount Hyjal is one of the most impressive places in Kalimdor. Here, the World Tree known as Nordrassil regrows, with the second Well of Eternity below. The site of the final battle of the Third War, the land here is now as well protected as anywhere in the world — protected by the power and majesty of dragons. The blue, red and bronze dragonflights keep a constant vigil over the recovering World Tree here, seeking to prevent the Burning Legion from ever again reaching the shores of the Well of Eternity and the branches of the sacred tree. From the lofty peak, one can see much of Ashenvale, Winterspring and Felwood far below. Making the trek here was not easy.

People and Culture

Three important groups form the bulk of the people at Mount Hyjal. The first are the night elves, humans and others who steadfastly guard the World Tree against future attacks. These demon hunters are some of the most experienced and powerful adventurers in the world, and rightly so; most of them either fought in the Battle of Hyjal in the Third War or otherwise have considerable experience tracking down and destroying demons. These demon hunters are assisted by dryads and keepers of the grove, who have an even greater investment in Mount Hyjal's safety. Hyjal's summit is sacred to the dryads and keepers, just as it is to the night elves, but it is also their home — in some cases, for many thousands of years.

Finally, three dragonflights carefully watch over the massive tree, their high numbers perhaps a form of compensation for their noted absence during the Third War. The blue dragonflight is particularly devoted to this cause, and while their numbers here are not large, they guard the tree from lower on the mountainside in their caverns of Mazthoril (see "Winterspring," below).

Geography

The top of Mount Hyjal shares the plight of Ashenvale: it is mostly uncorrupted, but bears scars and gashes from the battles of the Third War. In the center of the summit is the World Tree, stretching far above the mountaintop even in its damaged state. The forests are inhabited by your usual untainted beasts, which the dryads and keepers of the grove care for. The dryads and keepers are friendly, having worked alongside mortals in the Third War, and are much less shy and worried than those I encountered in Ashenvale.

Sites and Settlements

Night elves control the majority of the area, but a number of small camps and ruins are spread over Hyjal Summit.

Darkwhisper Gorge: Darkwhisper Gorge consists of a series of ravines and canyons atop the mountainous range that borders Hyjal Summit and Winterspring. It is now inhabited by agents of the Burning Legion, including pit lords, felguards, doom guards and infernals. Thousands of the foul creatures live here, and their leaders are unknown. I noted fissures and caves leading deep into the ground, not all of which look natural — I fear the demons may be tunneling underneath the summit, closer to the Well of Eternity.

Nordrassil: Guarded by three dragonflights, the World Tree Nordrassil is slowly regrowing. The bones of Archimonde, the great demon lord who led the invasion of Azeroth in the Third War, still hang from the massive tree's mighty branches. Many speculate that when the tree regrows completely, the night elves will regain their immortality; but that day may never come if we fail to assist the dragons against the continuing threat of the Burning Legion.

The Well of Eternity: The second Well of Eternity is a massive pool of water infused with raw mana at the base of the World Tree. Coveted by demons, warlocks and many mages, the well is the greatest source of arcane magic in the world. While the World Tree's powers have suppressed the corrupting nature of this magic for centuries, if the tree were ever destroyed, this Well would be the source of unfathomable power to an evil creature powerful enough to wield it.

History

Before the Sundering, Illidan Stormrage took a sample from the first Well of Eternity. He then traveled to a lake atop Mount Hyjal, a site that was already sacred to the Kaldorei. Illidan poured the water into the lake, and before long another Well of Eternity was born on the new continent of Kalimdor. Malfurion Stormrage soon discovered the new Well. In order to ensure that it would not serve as a gateway to the Burning Legion, and unwilling to destroy the Well for fear that it would trigger an even larger catastrophe, he enlisted the aid and advice of the dragons.

The red dragon Alexstrazsa planted an acorn within the Well, and from it grew a great tree that would serve to shelter and protect the Well. They named the World Tree Nordrassil, or "Crown of Heaven." Alexstrazsa's fellow dragons imbued the tree with magnificent powers: The bronze dragon Nozdormu granted the night elves immortality as long as Nordrassil stood; Ysera, the green dragon, linked the tree to her ethereal home plane, allowing the druids to use the tree as a gateway to this realm, the Emerald Dream; and Alexstrasza the red dragon granted the night elves immunity to disease.

During the events of the Third War, it was the World Tree that saved the night elf people. Empowered by the combined will and sacrifice of the world's races, Nordrassil's might destroyed Archimonde the Defiler, leader of the Burning Legion's armies. His bones still cling to the tree, a monument to the Legion's final defeat.

Adventures

With the imminent threat of a demonic attack, travelers to Mount Hyjal could play an important role in a battle that could change the face of Kalimdor forever.

Danger From Below: The blue dragons discover that the waters of the Well of Eternity are draining: The demons have created an underground tunnel system below the well, and drain the powerful waters into their tunnels to use for their own purposes. The dragons, who would be vulnerable in humanoid form inside the tunnels, ask for PCs to accompany them to investigate. The PCs discover that the demons are led by an eredar warlock who plans to consume the water in a ritual in an attempt to gain enough power to resurrect Archimonde.

Remulos' Request

"My brother's spirit rests in Desolace, in the ancient caverns of Maraudon. I use the term "rest" loosely — my poor brother's spirit is trapped there, his power stolen by traitors. Adventurer, I realize your mission may not allow you to seek out my brother yourself, but please hear my plea. If you come upon others like yourself who may be willing to strike against the centaur in Maraudon, I would be eternally grateful if you would tell them my tale and seek their aid."

Moonglade

Capital: Nighthaven (2,000).

Population: 5,000 (85% night elf, 8% dryad, 5% tauren, 2% keeper of the grove).

Government: Religious hierarchy.

Ruler: Remulos (male keeper of the grove druid 24).

Major Settlements: Nighthaven (2,000).

Languages: Darnassian, Common, Orcish.

Faiths: Ancients, druidism, Elune.

Resources: Textiles, timber, water.

Affiliation: Unaffiliated, but favors Alliance.

Moonglade is one of the most unusual places on Kalimdor. Virtually untouched by demonic taint, the forests here remain pristine — and perhaps more importantly, peaceful. Unlike any other place on Kalimdor, Moonglade is a place of peace; the druids remove anyone who attempts to damage the forest here or start a fight in the area. As such, Moonglade is sometimes a neutral meeting ground for the Alliance and the Horde, and a number of tauren druids come here to study with the night elves. The air is cool and soothing, not as cold as Darkshore or Winterspring, but slightly chilly. Many travelers come here simply to taste the fresh waters of Lake Elune'ara. The druids also prepare and trade exotic cloth goods, some of which are created from mooncloth supplied by the nearby Timbermaw furbolgs.

People and Culture

In spite of the peaceful nature of the Moonglade, many druids are tense. An unknown assailant recently did *something* to the famed leader of the druids, Malfurion Stormrage, and he has been in some sort of catatonic state ever since. With the knowledge that the Cenarion Circle has an enemy powerful enough to incapacitate their leader, the druids have become increasingly worried and suspicious. After speaking with some of the druids here, I learned some unusual — and unsettling — facts.

As far as these few druids are concerned, the new World Tree is about as safe a place to build a city as a field of goblin land mines. The druids are already finding sources of corruption in Teldrassil — and that probably means there's something spreading it from the inside.

In spite of these worries, the druids are happy and safe enough here.

Geography

A thick ring of mountains seals Moonglade from Darkshore in the west, although I hear Auberdine is a surprisingly short flight away by hippogryph. The city of Nighthaven rests on the waters of Lake Elune'ara in central Moonglade, with the Shrine of Remulos within a few minutes walk to the west. I was surprised to find the father of the dryad race living so close by to a mortal city, but apparently these desperate times make Remulos realize that the night elves need immediate guidance, and his father is no longer around to provide it.

The southwest side of Moonglade has the only entrance and exit from Moonglade (other than by hippogryph or magic): the tunnels of the Timbermaw furbolgs. (See "Felwood," above.)

Lake Elune'ara: A massive lake near the center of Moonglade, the reflective water resembles starlight and moonshine, giving the body of water its legendary name. Perhaps the water is blessed by Elune, for it is some of the most pure and healthy on the continent. The druids allowed me to fill several waterskins for my journey, and for that, I'm grateful. Water this fresh is a luxury I can't find often in my travels.

Sites and Settlements

The only major settlement in Moonglade is Nighthaven, but many druids, Sentinels and dryads have smaller camps outside the city walls. In addition, there are a few permanent structures near the barrows to guard the sleeping druids inside.

Nighthaven (town, 2,000): One of the greatest safe havens on Kalimdor, Nighthaven is populated almost exclusively by druids, which also makes it one of the most concentrated sources of magic power on Azeroth. I suggest using Nighthaven as a meeting place between the Alliance and the Horde, since the druids here would make sure peace is enforced.

Shrine of Remulos: The Shrine of Remulos is the home of Keeper Remulos, and it can be found a few minutes walk to the west of Nighthaven. Many younger druids turn to Remulos, the son of the legendary demigod Cenarius, for advice. If I lived within walking distance of a divine being, I'd probably chat with him occasionally as well. I paid Remulos a visit at his shrine, and the ancient keeper of the grove greeted me warmly. After a bit of discussion about what I was doing in Moonglade, he asked me an odd question — if I was planning to go to Desolace. I explained that I was taking a full tour of Kalimdor, and he told me a bit of his own story.

Having lost a brother myself to the cursed undead, I sympathized with Remulos. After this expedition is complete, I intend to gather a group of adventurers to fulfill his request.

Stormrage Barrow Dens: I can't say how many druids here rest along with Malfurion, since I wasn't actually able to get inside. The Sentinel guards here were frustrated and uncertain, and I gather it's because they have the unenviable duty of guarding against an invisible attacker — whatever severed Malfurion from his physical form must be one of the most powerful entities in the world, and I don't think that sits well with anyone.

History

Once the home of the demigod Cenarius, land is bathed in eternal moonlight. The night elves received Elune's blessing to build a home for the druids here after the destruction of the Well of Eternity; the barrow dens were made available as a resting place for the druids, where they could slumber and connect to the Emerald Dream.

During the Third War the Legion attempted to invade the enchanted forests, but was unsuccessful. As a result this land of eternal moonlight remains uncorrupted. The successful defense of Moonglade was attributed to the power and strategy of Malfurion Stormrage, the greatest of the druids.

With Malfurion incapacitated, the night elves are worried about their defenses, and they rely on Remulos for advice.

Adventures

While Moonglade is one of the safest places in Kalimdor, that doesn't mean it is without its own mysteries to explore.

Wake Up Call: The Archdruid Malfurion Stormrage awakens, explaining that he finally was able to fight his way back into his body. He had been trapped in the Nightmare — a corrupted portion of the Emerald Dream — after one of the other druids betrayed him and forced him inside. Oddly, he can't remember who it was who committed the foul act of treachery — and he'd like the PCs to help him find out. Prime suspects are Remulos and Fandral Staghelm, since they are the only druids powerful enough to potentially sabotage Malfurion's efforts in the Emerald Dream; but perhaps the betrayer wasn't a druid at all.

Teldrassil

Capital: Darnassus (15,000).

Population: 24,000 (85% night elf, 6% furbolg, 5% dryad, 3% human, 1% other).

Government: Elected council.

Rulers: High Priestess Tyrande Whisperwind (female night elf priest 17/hunter 7/night elf 1), Archdruid Fandral Staghelm (male night elf druid 18). (See **Shadows & Light** for Tyrande Whisperwind's statistics and history.)

Major Settlements: Darnassus (15,000), Dolanaar (5,000), Aldrassil (2,000).

Languages: Darnassian, Common, Ursine.

Faiths: Ancients, druidism, Elune.

Resources: Gold, hunting, leather, timber.

Affiliation: Alliance.

The massive second World Tree is a marvel, and unlike any location I have ever visited. Within the massive tree's branches are entire cities of elves — and the homes of less friendly creatures as well. Located on an island off the coast of Darkshore, Teldrassil is isolated from the rest of Kalimdor, and generally is a safer and more tranquil place. Teldrassil is best known for being the location of Darnassus, the cultural center of the night elf race and one of the most impressive cities in the known world. Things are a bit wilder outside Darnassus' gates, but there are several other friendly villages as well.

People and Culture

The atmosphere here is a bit strange; there's a mix between carefree, joyful elves and grim citizens with suspicions similar to those of the druids in Moonglade. The druids and priests of Elune here are keenly aware that the tree is being corrupted, and both sides try their best to combat the effects with minimal success. More interestingly — and perhaps more dangerously — the druids and the priests are beginning to blame each other for the mess.

I met with a few of the non-elves here (a few human paladins and two of our own dwarves from the Explorer's Guild) to get an outsider's perspective, and got a pretty blunt summary: Archdruid Fandral Staghelm hates Tyrande's guts. At least, things certainly seem that way. The archdruid questions High Priestess Whisperwind's leadership abilities, and that causes strife in the community. Tyrande was the companion to Malfurion Stormrage, the greatest of all druids, and many elves see the rift between their orders as both shocking and appalling. The situation hasn't reached the point where people choose sides, but I suspect things could get there, and that could turn real ugly real fast. My dwarven brothers suggested someone needs to wake up Malfurion before circumstances get messy, and I must agree.

Outside Darnassus, small communities of night elves thrive, and one can find a few camps of furbolgs and wildkin as well. The furbolgs and wildkin here are uncorrupted, but can nevertheless be dangerous.

Geography

The majority of Teldrassil's upper reaches is open forest, and it resembles a mid-sized forested island. Darnassus takes up a large chunk on the western side of this island, and smaller cities dot the remaining forest. All forms of terrain exist here, including streams, full-sized lakes, and a few hills that non-dwarves might consider mountains.

Lake Al'Ameth: One of the largest bodies of water on Teldrassil, Al'Ameth is yet another site where

the impending corruption of the tree is apparent. Bog beasts here are aggressive, and seeds that fall from the nearby trees spread corruption. The druids of Teldrassil investigate these occurrences.

Oracle Glade: The Oracle Glade is the site of an ancient and mysterious tree shaped liked a bear with an eagle flying from its back. This bizarre tree emerged without warning, and the Cenarion Circle studies it for clues. The circle believes that when the tree reaches the appropriate state of evolution, it may divulge information regarding the origin of the second World Tree from which it grew.

Sites and Settlements

Aldrassil (village, 2,000): A village located in the center of Shadowglen, Aldrassil is a haven for evolving druids. Tenaron Stormgrip runs it.

Dolanaar (city, 5,000): Located in the center of Teldrassil, Dolanaar is a night elf village run by Talonkai Swiftroot. It is similar to Aldrassil in that it is a proving ground for young druids.

Rut'theran Village (village, 300): Rut'theran's harbor lines the roots of the grand tree, and this humble but friendly village provides just a taste of the majestic locations held in Teldrassil's mighty branches. I arrived in Rut'theran by boat from Auberdine, but a number of hippogryphs carry passengers between the ports as well. In fact, this is one of the primary breeding grounds of the hippogryphs, and eggs from all across Kalimdor arrive here for care. Inside Rut'theran is a shimmering portal that leads to Darnassus, far above.

Starbreeze Village: Once a night elf village, Starbreeze is now overrun by corrupted furbolgs, an indication of the demonic infection that bleeds into Teldrassil.

Darnassus

6th-Level Religious Community/3rd-Level Military Community/1st-Level Civilian Community

Population: 15,000

Abilities: Force 12, Mobility 12, Resilience 16, Learning 16, Awareness 18, Command 16

Wealth: +51

Defense Bonus: +6

Reputation Bonus: +4

Skills: Craft (blacksmithing) +5, Craft (leatherworking) +6, Diplomacy +13, Gather Information +13, Handle Animal +13, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (nature) +13, Knowledge (religion) +13, Profession (herbalist) +7, Profession (hunter) +9, Spellcraft +13, Survival +9

Feats: Basic Fortifications, Great Temple, Moderate Fortifications, Renown, Safe Harbor, Shrine, Simple Temple, Stockpile

Archdruid Fandral Staghelm, 18th-Level Druid

Male Night Elf: CR 18; Medium humanoid (night elf); HD 18d8+126, hp 210; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 26, touch 19, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +13; Grp +16; Atk +20 melee (1d6+8, quarterstaff); Full Atk +20/+15/+10 melee (1d6+8, quarterstaff); SA rebuke/command animals and plants, spells, spontaneous casting (*summon nature's ally* spells); SQ low-light vision, Animal domain (lesser), dreamwalker, greater dreamwalk, group stride, strider, timeless body, Wild domain (greater), wild shape 6/day; AL NE; SV Fort +23, Ref +15, Will +26; Str 17, Agy 18, Sta 24, Int 18, Spt 28, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Darnassian, Draconic, Goblin, Low Common, Thalassian.

Skills: Concentration +28, Diplomacy +24, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (nature) +27, Knowledge (religion) +15, Knowledge (the planes) +25, Survival +32, Listen +13, Spellcraft +15, Spot +12.

Feats: Block Spell, Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Improved Counterspell, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Magic Energy Control, Mirror Spell, Natural Spell, Reflect Spell.

Druid Spells (6/8/7/7/7/6/5/4/4/3; save DC 19 + spell level): Fandral's high Spirit score and his ranks in Spellcraft allow him to prepare 18 spells per level; he can prepare most of the spells on the druid spell list.

Domain Spells: 1st—*roar*; 2nd—*hold animal*; 3rd—*dominate animal;* 4th—*mark of the wild;* 5nd—*wall of thorns;* 6th—*force of nature;* 7th—*animate plants;* 8th—*control plants;* 9th—*shambler.*

Domains: Animal (*speak with animals* 1/day) and Wild (swiftpaws [speed increases by +10 ft. in animal form]; adamantine fang [animal form's natural weapons gain +9 divine bonus on attack and damage rolls for 9 rounds 1/day]).

Possessions: +4 quarterstaff, +5 leather armor, amulet of health +6, periapt of Spirit +6, moonrage ring**, ring of protection +5, cloak of resistance +5,* spell component pouch.

* See **More Magic & Mayhem** for descriptions of Fandral's magic items.

** See Chapter 9: New Rules.

Description

This tall night elf plants his quarterstaff on the ground and looks around with condescension and condemnation in his eyes.

Archdruid Fandral Staghelm is among the most ancient of the remaining night elves, having been born about a thousand years after the Sundering (making him over 9,000 years old). Fandral towers most other night elves, standing close to 8 feet in height. He uses this height to his advantage both in battle and conversation, seeking to intimidate all those around him with his massive stature. Staghelm follows many of the beliefs of the ancient night elves, and one in particular has made him unpopular — Fandral is a staunch night elf supremacist, and he believes that night elves are the only true druids, as well as the superior race on the planet.

In combat, Fandral is vicious, using summoned creatures to do most of his work for him. He tears his enemies apart from a distance with spells like *greater moonfire*, using his ring to supplement his own abilities. If seriously threatened, Fandral retreats immediately, using spells such as *transport via plants* or *plane shift* to escape.

Government: Elected Council

Rulers: High Priestess Tyrande Whisperwind (night elf female priest 17/hunter 7/night elf 1), Archdruid Fandral Staghelm (male night elf druid 18). (See **Shadows & Light** for Tyrande Whisperwind's statistics and history.)

Languages: Darnassian, Common.

Faiths: Ancients, druidism, Elune.

Resources: Gold, hunting, timber.

Affiliation: Alliance.

Darnassus is the greatest city of the night elves, housing the leaders of both the druids and the faithful of Elune. Carefully guarded by Sentinels, ancient protectors, and ancients of war, the city is formidable in spite of the peaceful natures of the night elves. In addition to the night elves, many guests and diplomats from elsewhere reside here, such as groups from our own Explorer's Guild and the Knights of the Silver Hand, as well as a few representatives of the Horde negotiating peace treaties.

The population here is almost entirely elven, and most of the night elves are tolerant of others. After hearing about the political strife between the druids and priests, I went to discuss things with the city's two leaders to hear their perspectives.

I chose to see the archdruid first, since the Argent Dawn guys advised that I'd probably like Tyrande better. Fandral seemed polite at first, but I didn't even get a chance to ask him about the situation before his manner disturbed me. After he started referring to me as "mortal," I decided it was time to politely bow out and go for a chat with the high priestess.

Visiting the Temple of Elune gave me a feeling of serenity similar to that of Moonglade. High Priestess Tyrande met me at the front door and brought me to a private chamber where we discussed the situation in Darnassus over a meal and ale (for me) and wine (for her). She was good company, and a strong woman; I can see why Archdruid Stormrage fancies the lass. As a hero of the Third War, Tyrande told me some interesting details about the battles I missed, as well as the current situation in Kalimdor. I traded a few of my own stories with her, and all in all, I found the meeting informative and enjoyable. I felt more comfortable in Darnassus after our talk, and she was kind enough to write letters of introduction to Jaina Proudmoore and Warchief Thrall to ease my travels into central Kalimdor. She assured me that she would send word directly to her friend Shandris in Feathermoon to prepare for my arrival in Feralas later on. In exchange for these favors, I promised to send her a copy of the research I compiled — likely in the form of this book.

History

Recently, an unknown assailant attacked Archdruid Malfurion Stormrage and reduced him to a comatose state. With Malfurion unable to lead the druids, one of his lieutenants — Fandral Staghelm — rose to the occasion and helps lead the night elves in this time of crisis. Fandral created the new World Tree, Teldrassil, and convinced the night elf people to relocate here, promising them a new beginning and an idyllic life.

Adventures

With an unstable political climate and the growing corruption of the World Tree, danger lurks within Teldrassil.

Endless Blight?: The World Tree's decay begins to accelerate, and the Cenarion Circle is unable to find the source. Rather than continue to explore the slow destruction of the tree, the druids finally agree with the priests of Elune that they need outside help. They send the PCs to find the only beings who may be able to save the World Tree — the Dragon Aspects. If the PCs gain the blessing of even a single Aspect, the corruption halts for a time — perhaps forever. The blessing of more than one Aspect reverses the damage that has already been caused.

Winterspring

Capital: Everlook (3,000).

Population: 6,500 (40% night elf, 25% goblin, 15% wildkin, 10% blue dragonflight, 10% other).

Major Settlements: Everlook (3,000), Starfall Village (1,500), Mazthoril (550).

Languages: Darnassian, Common, Draconic.

Faiths: Ancients, druidism, Elune, shamanism.

Resources: Arcanite, thorium, timber.

Affiliation: None.

Winterspring is a frozen land, and the snows remind me of home. While most night elves find the land less hospitable than the nearby forests, a number of elves reside there for two main reasons: First, it is in close proximity to Mount Hyjal; and second, its mysterious hot springs may be connected to demon activity. Winterspring's perpetual cold is natural enough — Winterspring is the closest area to Mount Hyjal's summit.

People and Culture

Only three major humanoid settlements exist here: the night elf village of Starfall, and more interestingly, the goblin town of Everlook. The third is Mazthoril, home of Kalimdor's blue dragonflight.

Geography

Winterspring lies to the east of Felwood and Moonglade, and to the northeast of Hyjal Summit. The easiest access to any of these locations on foot is through the caves of the Timbermaw furbolgs, although Everlook offers flying mounts that travel to Felwood or Moonglade — for a price. Everlook is located on the far east side of Winterspring, near

Malyfous Darkhammer's Catalogue

Exotic Goods from the Thorium Brotherhood

Note: Materials must be provided. The material requirements for each product are listed here for your convenience.

Leggings of Arcana — 30,000 gold pieces — 1x Pristine Hide of the Beast, 5x Frostwhisper Embalming Fluid, 5x Arcanite Bar, 5x Frayed Abomination Stitching

Breastplate of Bloodthirst — 45,000 gold pieces — 1x Pristine Hide of the Beast, 5x Skin of Shadow, 5x Arcanite Bar, 10x Frayed Abomination Stitching

Cap of the Scarlet Savant — 30,000 gold pieces — 1x Pristine Hide of the Beast, 5x Enchanted Scarlet Thread, 8x Arcane Crystal, 5x Frayed Abomination Stitching

Fiery Plate Gauntlets — 15,000 gold pieces — 1x Unfired Plate Gauntlets, 4x Star Ruby, 2x Essence of Fire, 6x Enchanted Thorium Bar

the center, and Starfall Village is slightly to the northwest. Several creatures live in the icy terrain, such as chimeras, polar bears, and the rare and legendary frostsaber cats. Almost all of the animals here are vicious and dangerous predators.

Hidden Grove: Located in the north, Hidden Grove is a sacred site revered by night elf druids and protected by fierce wildkin.

Lake Kel'Theril: Once the site of a Highborne city, Kel'theril was reduced to a lake in the Sundering, and subsequently froze over in the following years. Many of the city's pillars are partially above the water line, but much of the city is submerged and encased in ice. Kel'theril is now the largest body of water in Winterspring, and the ghosts of the Highborne that died there haunt the lake. Jaron, a fellow in Starfall, told me something of the lake.

Sites and Settlements

Caverns of Mazthoril (caves, 550): Mazthoril is the home of the blue dragonflight on Kalimdor. The blue dragonspawn General Cobaltann guards it and the blue dragon matron Haleh oversees it. (For more information on the blue dragonflight, see

General Cobaltann, 5th-Level Mage/ 3rd-Level Warrior

Male Blue Dragonspawn (Scalebane): CR 15; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 9d8+5d6+3d10+75, hp 153; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 25, touch 15, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +14; Grp +25; Atk +24 melee (3d6+13/17–20 plus 1d6 cold, greatsword); Full Atk +24/+19/+14 melee (3d6+13/17–20 plus 1d6 cold, greatsword); Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.; SA call elemental (Small) 1/day, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., heritage immunites; AL NG; SV Fort +14, Ref +11, Will +15; Str 24, Agy 16, Sta 20, Int 26, Spt 18, Cha 24.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Low Common, Darnassian, Dwarven, Thalassian.

Skills: Balance +11*, Bluff +25, Concentration +23, Craft (blacksmithing) +18, Intimidate +25, Knowledge (arcana) +26, Knowledge (military tactics) +26, Listen +22, Spellcraft +26, Spot +22, Stealth +7* (+3* to hide), Survival +22.
* Includes –1 armor check penalty.

Feats: Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Magic Energy Control, Power Attack, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Mage Spells (4/5/4/3; save DC 18 + spell level): Cobaltann's high Intellect score and his ranks in Spellcraft allow him to prepare 16 spells per level; he can prepare most of the spells on the mage spell list. He favors those dealing with cold.

Possessions: +3 icy burst greatsword, mithril +2 scale mail* (15% spell failure)*, headband of Intellect +4, cloak of Charisma +2, ring of protection +3, ring of frost***, 3 *potions of cure serious wounds,* 2 *potions of neutralize poison,* spell component pouch, spellbooks.

* See **More Magic & Mayhem** for descriptions of Cobaltann's magic items.
** See Chapter 9: New Rules.

Description

This blue dragonspawn is a majestic figure, his massive frame covered from head to clawed feet in shining mithril scale armor dotted with glowing blue runes. The greatsword he carries resembles a jagged shard of ice, and his flowing white and blue cloak a rift of snow.

General Cobaltann is a proud warrior, as well as a cunning tactician and kind-hearted soul. His goal is to eradicate the black dragonflight from the world, but for now, he settles for using his ever-growing army of blue dragons and blue dragonspawn to protect those who require shelter from the evil dragons. He is one of few dragonspawn intelligent and diplomatic enough that, rather than serving a dragon as most do, he is a leader for the blue dragonflight. Cobaltann works closely with the blue dragon matron Haleh, and together they plan to strike against Onyxia in Dustwallow Marsh.

In combat, Cobaltann is usually in a commanding role, and he uses his spells to wear down enemies from a distance, typically beginning with his lowest-level spells to test his enemies' defenses. If participating in a battle between two large groups, he finds a good place to cast *blizzard*. If forced into single combat, he keeps his distance long enough to use *frost bolt* and *frost nova* to slow his enemy, then protective spells such as *mana shield* and *protection from evil* before entering melee.

Chapter 6: Civilizations.)

Everlook (town, 3,000): Everlook is the only major goblin outpost in northern Kalimdor, and it serves several purposes. First, it serves as the base of operations for goblin thorium and arcanite miners, since Winterspring has some of the few untapped veins of those materials on the continent. Second, it serves as a center of trade between the Alliance and the Horde. While Everlook is hardly as safe as Moonglade, generally the Alliance and the Horde treat each other fairly well there.

Additionally, Everlook is a frequent stop-off and resupply point for the faithful who make the pilgrimage through Winterspring to Hyjal Summit. The town is also the home of the Thorium Brotherhood, a group of self-righteous Dark Irons who think they are the best smiths in existence. Lead by Malyfous Darkhammer, the brotherhood sells their thorium goods for ridiculous amounts of gold. I was tempted to show them what a real smith

— and a real dwarf — could make, but I decided it was a waste of my time to even pay attention to them. I suggest others do the same. I've attached a catalogue of the garbage Malyfous tries to sell here — even a novice would know that his prices (and the wares he offers in the first place) are simply ridiculous.

Frostsaber Rock: The upper reaches of Winterspring are home to the roaming frostsaber cats, revered by the night elves. It is said that if a wandering night elf warrior is fortunate enough to gaze upon Shy'Rotan, the greatest of all frostsabers, that warrior will be blessed for the rest of his days. Frostsaber Rock itself is a small cave; the inside is not used by the cats, but rather by hopeful trainers. The frostsabers roam near the top of the rock, and trainers encamp there while attempting to convince the mighty beasts to serve as their companions.

Starfall Village (village, 1,500): Starfall is a night elf village located in northwestern Winterspring. I was pleased to encounter a fellow member of the Explorer's League, Jaron Stoneshaper, in Starfall Village. Jaron was equally glad to see another dwarf — apparently a rarity in these parts — and he explained his work to me over a pint of fine ale.

I spent some time talking to the night elves in Starfall, and they were kind enough to let me rest in the village for a few days. I found that most of the night elves at Starfall were there to observe the wildkin nearby, which some believed are tied to Elune.

Winterfall Village (village, 300): This is the home of the Winterfall furbolgs, a clan that is now completely corrupted. The Timbermaws sought to help their corrupted cousins here to no avail, and now brace themselves for the possibility of having to go to battle with their own kind.

History

The ancient ruins in Winterspring are evidence of the scars left by the Sundering. Once hinterlands, the entire eastern expanse was ripped away during the Sundering, leaving a sprawling coastline.

It was also here in Winterspring, long ago, that dragons took up residence to watch over neighboring Hyjal and the nearby World Tree. The blue dragonflight keeps its vigil here, whereas most of the other dragonflights have moved to the base of the World Tree or other locations. The recent success of Everlook has brought more adventurers into Winterspring, which the natives hope will aid them in defeating the threat of the demons of Darkwhisper Gorge.

Adventures

Home of dragons, goblins and filthy Dark Irons, there's a lot to be done in this frozen tundra.

Diplomatic Profit: The goblins of Everlook discover a new mine to the south of their city, not far from the dragon caves of Mazthoril. This mine is valuable due to a large amount of arcanite within it, but thus far it proves inaccessible. While not part of the blue dragon's cave complex, the dragons are territorial. If the PCs can find a way to convince the blue dragonflight to allow the goblins access to the mine, the goblins reward them with a share of the money made from the mine (or some of the arcanite).

Central Kalimdor is the new home of the Horde, but controlling the regions they have claimed proves a daunting task. The Horde's numbers have thinned since their exodus from Azeroth; and while the orcs have found new allies in the trolls, the tauren and the Forsaken, they continue to be pressed by threats from all sides, as well as internal conflicts. The Alliance's power here has waned since the Third War, and a handful of new dwarven excavation sites and night elven camps are the best refuge an Alliance member can hope for outside the city of Theramore.

Theramore was once the Alliance's ray of hope in Kalimdor, but its brightness has diminished since the death of Admiral Daelin Proudmoore. The weight of his fall still hangs heavy over the people of Theramore, and the coming of the massive black dragon Onyxia places the Alliance's settlements in mortal danger.

Central Kalimdor is one of the most war-torn regions on the globe, with the regions of Desolace, the Stonetalon Mountains, and the Barrens already reduced to little more than ash and rubble by the constant fighting among numerous factions. While the Alliance and the Horde struggle with each other here, it is other groups such as the Burning Legion, the black dragonflight, and even the goblins of the Venture Company that threaten to reduce this entire section of the continent to an uninhabitable wasteland. Adventurers continue to work toward restoring peace and tranquility to the land, but their numbers are few, and there is much work yet to be done.

The Barrens

Capital: Ratchet (9,000).

Population: 17,000 (30% orc, 25% tauren, 20% goblin, 15% troll, 5% dwarf, 3% gnome, 1% night elf, 1% human).

Government: Trade princes (Ratchet) and elected council (Crossroads).

Rulers: Gazlowe, Overseer of Ratchet (male goblin rogue 3); Thork, Defender of Crossroads (male orc warrior 5).

Major Settlements: Ratchet (9,000), Crossroads (6,000).

Languages: Goblin, Common, Orcish.

Faith: Agamaggan, Mystery of the Makers, shamanism.

Resources: Gold, hunting, timber.

Affiliation: Horde.

After my departure from Winterspring, I returned to Ashenvale and headed south to the Barrens. This scorched plain was once a forest before the Sundering, but that was so long ago even the ageless night elves barely remember. The climate here is warm now, reflecting the terrain, and a dramatic change from Ashenvale in the north. Now, the desolate area thrives as a center of trade. Crossroads serves as a hub for Horde activities, and the goblin town of Ratchet is the single most successful port in all of Kalimdor. A massive trail known as the Gold Road runs north to south and crosses the Barrens, with several Horde-controlled villages lying along the trail. For the Horde, this makes the area fairly secure — for Alliance members, it makes the Barrens even more dangerous.

The Barrens is a coastal area, and two important forces control the harbors — the goblins of Ratchet and the Blackwater Pirates. While the majority of the Barrens is controlled by the Horde or neutral groups such as the goblins, two small Alliance outposts exist here as well.

People and Culture

The Barrens are massive — it took days for me to cover the whole thing, even riding a borrowed ram for most of the journey. I visited Bael Modan first, enjoying the chance to meet up with my kinfolk. Using Bael Modan as my base while traveling the Barrens, I explored the other regions.

After visiting several Horde settlements, I realized something important.

With the exception of the Forsaken, the Horde seems to have less tension among their races than we do in the Alliance. While I drink with humans and elves on a regular basis, and gnomes have always been our close friends, I rarely see the level of kinship among us as I saw among the Horde. I noted several mixed race groups practicing for contests in the Darkmoon Fair in Mulgore. To be blunt, I envy the amount of cooperation I saw here, and I'd like to see our own people get off their high horses and work together like this. The kinship here reminded me of what I saw in the Second War — I'm reminded of a high elf priest who saved my hide and nearly lost his own life in the process — and it's something I haven't personally seen much since within the Alliance. The Alliance needs a real smack in the face, because we aren't working as a team, and that needs to change — and fast.

Geography

The Barrens is a land of blasted rock and dirt, a sharp contrast to the surrounding lands. Perhaps the most important feature of the Barrens is that it is connected to so many other regions. From the Barrens, one can travel to Ashenvale in the north, Durotar in the northeast, the Stonetalon Mountains in the southwest, Mulgore in the west, Dustwallow Marsh in the southwest, and Thousand Needles in the south. One can reach any of these locations from a single road, and Crossroads provides flying mounts to the Horde as well. The central portion of the Barrens is almost all flatland, with a few trees and pools of carefully guarded water. The borders are marked with low mountain ranges that can be crossed with sufficient effort.

Forgotten Pools, Lushwater Oasis and Stagnant Oasis: The oases are watering holes controlled by the Kolkar centaur. Corruption, possibly linked to the Wailing Caverns, manifests in the oases.

Sites and Settlements

There are a number of different Horde, Alliance and neutral encampments in the Barrens. In addition, several camps of centaur exist, much to the concern of the tauren who live in nearby Mulgore.

Bael Modan (excavation site, 800): Bael Modan is heralded by some as the new home of the dwarves and gnomes on Kalimdor. In my trek through the Barrens, I visited Bael Modan first, eager to spend some time with my kinfolk. The dwarves and gnomes here are a hardy bunch, even by dwarven standards —they suffer constant attacks from the Horde, especially the nearby tauren from Mulgore. The dwarves were excited to see me, perhaps viewing my presence as support from Ironforge. I'd certainly like to get these brave men and women all the help they can get, since this excavation is an important strategic position — and since they deserve the aid. The stalwart dwarves and gnomes here gradually make the area more suitable for habitation, and within a few years I expect there will be thousands of us living here.

Camp Taurajo (camp, 500): Tauren run this camp, and Jorn Skyseer leads it. It lies along the Gold Road, south of Crossroads. The camp is concerned with defending against the encroaching quilboar, and often holds captured quilboar prisoners. I suspect that if the threat of the quilboar is ever removed, they may turn their attention toward our people in Bael Modan, and that could pose a threat to the excavation.

Crossroads (town, 5,000): I found it difficult to work my way into Crossroads, since the hostilities between the Alliance and Horde are in full swing here. Fortunately, the dwarves of Bael Modan are considered fairly unthreatening, and I was able to convince Crossroads' guards that I was simply there to learn about Titan ruins in the area and move on. I got a few dangerous looks, but the Horde tolerated my presence.

This settlement is run mainly by orcs, though it is populated by tauren and trolls as well. I was disgusted to see several Forsaken working with the Horde here. The village's leader is Thork, an orc who is concerned with defending the town against the quilboar and centaur. Crossroads is a helpful stop-off for any Horde adventurers traveling through the Barrens. Alliance members would be wise to avoid it.

Dreadmist Peak: The fog-enshrouded peak of Dreadmist Mountain is home to agents of the Burning Blade, orc warlocks linked to the ancient Shadow Council. Here they practice occult rituals, using an item of power called a demonstone to corrupt the flora and fauna of the land.

Dry Hills: This is a site in the northwest corner of the Barrens occupied by harpies, who are led by Serena Bloodfeather. The harpies stage frequent attacks on caravans.

Field of Giants: It is rumored that a race of massive arachnids lives within the towering dirt columns that litter this site. Some see the presence of these silithid as the first stages of an invasion, suggesting that the insects possess a degree of intelligence. When viewed from afar, the tall dirt towers resemble giants, providing the area with its name.

Northwatch Hold (fortress, 150): Northwatch Hold is one of two Alliance positions held in the Barrens. Grim forces — soldiers loyal to Jaina Proudmoore's father Admiral Proudmoore — man the Hold. Due to the events following the Third War and Jaina's decision to forge an alliance with the orcs, which eventually resulted in Admiral Proudmoore's death, the soldiers here harbor a hatred of the Horde and attack its people and outposts often. It is important to note that Jaina Proudmoore openly opposes their actions, which causes strife in the area's Alliance politics.

Razorfen Downs and Razorfen Kraul: Following Agamaggan' s defeat (see "History," below), quilboar occupied the sites of his fallen body, Razorfen Kraul and Razorfen Downs. Here the most powerful quilboar tribe in the land, the Razorfens, practices shamanistic magic and stages attacks on rival tribes and Horde villages. Charlga Razorflank leads the Razorfens. Rumors hint that Charlga may be in negotiations with agents of the Scourge. In the Downs, the Death's Head tribe has already been turned by the undead. A powerful Lich named Anmennar the Coldbringer commands the undead in Razorfen Downs, and he has many powerful creatures under his control, including a massive abomination.

The Sludge Fen: The Venture Company has an operation here, in the Barrens' northern hills. It has built a derrick over what appears to be a large tar pit. The operation is led by a goblin, Supervisor Lugwizzle.

Wailing Caverns: A few months back a group of druids called the Druids of the Fang, led by the night elf Naralex, discovered a network of underground caves and fissures in the heart of the Barrens. Naralex believed that by connecting to the Emerald Dream inside the caverns, he might find a way to transfer some of the plane's magic to the underground springs of the cavern and reinvigorate the water to restore the Barrens to the lush forested region it once was. While in the Emerald Dream, however, Naralex's vision turned into a nightmare, and the Wailing Caverns changed. Now giant snakes, raptors, wind serpents and crocolisks inhabit the caves, and the fissures and springs are corrupted.

The disciples of the Druids of the Fang seek a way to cleanse the caverns, but first they must find a way to defeat the four corrupted druids who guard Naralex's sleeping body.

For more information on the Druids of the Fang, see Chapter 8: Organizations.

Ratchet

8th-Level Civilian Community/1st-Level Military Community

Population: 9,000 (80% goblin, 20% other)

Abilities: Force 12, Mobility 18, Resilience 12, Learning 14, Awareness 14, Command 16

Wealth: +56

Defense Bonus: +4

Reputation Bonus: +2

Skills: Craft (blacksmithing) +13, Craft (technological device) +16, Craft (woodcutting) +13, Diplomacy +14, Gather Information +7, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +13, Profession (miner) +13, Profession (sailor) +13, Use Technological Device +13

Feats: Basic Fortifications, Safe Harbor, Shipyard, Siege Weaponry, Workshop

Government: Trade princes.

Ruler: Gazlowe, Overseer of Ratchet (male goblin rogue 3).

Languages: Goblin, Common, Orcish.

Faith: None.

Resources: Alchemy, arcanite, entertainment, gems, gold, imported goods, shipping, silver, technology, thorium, timber, transportation, vice.

Affiliation: Neutral.

Ratchet is a port town governed by the trade princes, and populated primarily by goblins. It is a neutral town, so all races are welcome here. This is also a town built on trade and profit — both of legitimate and less legitimate varieties. Ratchet imports goods from Azeroth and exports supplies from Kalimdor through their trade alliance with Booty Bay, which makes both cities a hefty profit. For an adventurer looking to make money, Ratchet is ripe with opportunity. Gazlowe is the goblin in charge.

Ratchet's ships cross the sea all the way to Booty Bay in Azeroth and are a reliable method of transporting goods and passengers between Azeroth and Kalimdor. Ratchet also serves as a base of operations for many members of the Venture Company, which is infamous for its massive numbers of goblin shredders.

Fortunately, Ratchet proved a surprisingly pleasant place to stay for a while as well. The goblins here accommodate creatures of every race, and I actually found myself quite comfortable during my stay. The prices are not as ridiculous as one might expect from goblins, but most products are expensive nonetheless. The advantage is that one can find damn near anything here — I even found a couple urns from a Titan ruin on sale and hastily purchased them. I had the goblins ship them to Ironforge — if the urns are there and intact when I return, the goblins will officially have me impressed.

History

Ten thousand years ago, an Eternal boar named Agamaggan fought in the battle against the first coming of the Burning Legion. While Agamaggan was among the mightiest creatures alive, eventually the pit lord Mannoroth the Destructor defeated Agamaggan, and where the Eternal's blood fell, massive, thorn-ridden vines sprouted from the earth. These vines are still found throughout the Barrens, and it is in these places that the quilboar build their villages. It is believed that Razorfen Kraul and Razorfen Downs are the sites where Agamaggan's body fell, and his bones remain there to this day.

The Barrens was a lush and fertile plain until the Sundering shattered the region's ecosystem. The tauren roamed this region for many years, until the centaur drove them out. It was around this time that Thrall and the Horde arrived and forged an alliance with the tauren. After the Third War Thrall assisted the tauren in defeating the centaur, and now the Horde is once again fully entrenched

Gazlowe, 3rd-Level Rogue

Male Goblin: CR 3; Small humanoid (goblin); HD 3d6+6, hp 19; Init +8; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +2; Grp –2; Atk +8 melee (1d4+1/18–20, short sword); Full Atk +8 melee (1d4+1/18–20, short sword) or +7 ranged (2d6, grenade); SA backstab +2d6, finishing strike; SQ low-light vision, evasion; AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +0; Str 11, Agy 19, Sta 15, Int 14, Spt 11, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Goblin, Low Common, Orcish.

Skills: Appraise +11, Balance +10, Craft (alchemy) +10, Craft (technological device) +11, Diplomacy +11 , Disguise +9, Listen +10, Open Lock +10, Stealth +12, Tumble +10.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Skilled (Listen and Stealth), Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: Arcanite *+1 short sword,* 6 grenades, *+3 leather armor,* 3 *potions of cure moderate wounds.*

Description

This goblin's smile looks almost friendly, but for his sharp teeth.

In his younger days, Gazlowe was a thief, like many goblins. Through adventuring, he gradually managed to make enough money to begin legitimate business, and proved to excel at it. Now, at the age of 40, he runs one of the largest and most successful port towns in Kalimdor — if not the entire globe. While Gazlowe's city operates under the watchful eyes of the trade princes, he has considerable free rein, and proves effective because of it. A well-respected member of the goblin community, he also has a good heart, and is willing to help someone for little in return on occasion — but he wouldn't mind payback later, of course.

in the land. Recently, two Alliance sites have appeared as well, and the goblins have taken control over much of the coast. Still, the Barrens is unquestionably a Horde-dominated area, even with the success of Ratchet.

Adventures

As one of the largest and most central portions of Kalimdor, the Barrens are highly populated with a variety of creatures. The wealthy city of Ratchet hires adventurers for various purposes, and the Horde and Alliance have their own settlements that need help as well.

Death from Below: Jorn Skyseeker has had a vision of an army of undead emerging from Razorfen Downs to slaughter the inhabitants of the Barrens. He sends the PCs to investigate.

Desolace

Population: 11,000 (60% centaur, 10% tauren, 8% troll, 7% night elf, 5% satyr, 4% demon, 4% orc, 1% human, 1% naga).

Major Settlements: Maraudon (3,500), Nijel's Point (2,000), Valley of Spears (1,500), Ghost Walker Post (1,250), Thunder Axe Fortress (1,000), Shadowprey Village (900).

Languages: Low Common, Common, Darnassian, Nazja, Taur-ahe.

Faiths: Burning Legion, druidism, Old Gods, shamanism.

Resources: Adventure, gems, gold, iron, ore.

Affiliation: None.

Desolace fits its name well — it is a dry, desolate land and I can hardly fathom why so many thousands live here. While inhospitable, the raw rock here is an excellent source of iron and gold as well as precious gems. The lure of unclaimed riches draws many adventurers to the region, and centaur and tauren call the area home as well. The Horde and the Alliance both have outposts here, and while some of their reasons for being there are the same, the primary concerns of each are different. The Alliance presence has two main goals: to free the spirit of Zaetar, a son of Cenarius, and to destroy the slowly building undead presence in the region. The Horde, on the other hand, spends most of its efforts opposing the demons in the area as well as the demons' worshippers in the Burning Blade clan.

People and Culture

The most significant culture here is that of the centaur, since they are the predominant species in the region. The centaur culture is based on warfare. It is a culture in which only the strongest, and quite often the most vicious, survive. In addition to the three dominant tribes — the Kolkar (led by Khan Dez'hepah), Magram (led by Khan Jehn) and Gelkis (led by Khan Shaka) — a fourth tribe, the Maraudine, occupies the Valley of Spears. These centaur are the chosen protectors of Maraudon, the site of the tomb of the centaur's father — Zaetar.

The Magram and the Gelkis are the most open to discussion with outsiders, and I had an opportunity to spend a bit of time with each. In typical centaur fashion, they blame each other for everything, and their entire society is based on the ongoing war with the opposing tribe — and to a lesser extent, all other tribes. The Magram have a new advantage in this civil war, however — they have begun to study necromancy and now control small numbers of undead. There is no Scourge presence in the area, so the source of this budding necromancy is unknown. Since the Magram side with the undead, that makes both the Alliance and the Horde potential allies of the Gelkis. The Gelkis tribe is shamanistic, but bloodthirsty, perhaps comparable to most troll species. As such, I suspect it is possible the Horde may convince them to give up their bloody sacrifices to join it, like the jungle trolls did, but that is pure speculation.

The Burning Blade clan controls a good chunk of central Desolace with the assistance of a demonic coven to their south. It is possible that these demons and warlocks are the ones teaching necromancy to the centaur, which implies that they may be working on a "new" Scourge. The Horde is intent on bringing the Burning Blade down, and for that, we should all be thankful.

Along the northern coast, the naga emerge and grow in numbers. The reason behind the naga presence in the region is unknown, but I did run across a large statue of Azshara on an island off the northwestern coast. There was a slot for a missing gemstone in the statue; perhaps the naga look for it.

In general, the Alliance and the Horde try to avoid each other here; their causes are similar enough in the land that they probably should be working together, but politics make that difficult or impossible. As such, both forces are aware of each other and pass by without conflict for the most part, taking turns striking against the demons, warlocks and undead in the region. Rexxar, champion of the Horde, patrols the roads near Stonetalon to keep them safe, but I never encountered him myself. I wager he would have given me a good sparring match if I did, though.

Geography

Desolace is a bleak, remote and inhospitable land. It lies along the western coast of Kalimdor, north of Feralas, west of Mulgore and south of the Stonetalon Mountains. The ground is dry and gray, and for the most part, infertile — save for the few places where trolls or the Alliance have made attempts to maintain the land that surrounds their temporary shelters, and near the areas of the Stonetalons and Feralas. There are a few scattered bodies of stagnant water. The northern, southern and eastern edges of the region are mountainous, with several tunnels and caves serving as shelter for the centaur in those areas. The northwestern coast borders the ocean, but further south one finds more mountains.

The wildlife of the land includes vultures, kodo beasts, basilisks, air elementals, hyenas and thunder lizards.

Sites and Settlements

Desolace has few permanent structures (beyond the massive caverns of Maraudon), but nearly every faction imaginable has an encampment of some sort here.

Ethel Rethor: These night elf ruins in northern Sar'theris Strand have been overtaken by the naga, who dwell in the ruins both above and below the water. A human archmage named Azore Aldamorthas manages to keep the naga away from a massive, sealed tower that was probably created by the Highborne. While he is interested in the tower, he is more concerned with a missing artifact — the *Scepter of Light*. According to Azore, legends say the scepter is powerful enough to sink entire cities. He believes the warlocks at Thunder Axe fortress have it, and if he's right about how powerful this thing is, that worries me.

Ghost Walker Post (tauren camp, 1,250): The post is a tauren village north of the Kodo Graveyard. The tauren keep an eye on their old enemies, the centaur, and the Burning Blade clan. The leader here is Gurda Wildmane, a tauren shaman. Gurda and the other shamans ease the nearby kodo into their next lives and sometimes communicate with the spirits of dead kodo. There is also a contingent of orcs here, sent by Thrall.

The Kodo Graveyard: In the waning years of their lives, kodo instinctively trek to this bone-laden expanse in the center of Kalimdor, where they spend their last hours.

Mannoroc Coven (coven, 500): Several agents of the Burning Legion, including fel hunters, infernals, doom guards and succubi, reside here, led by Lord Azrethoc. The orc warlock Jugkar Grim'rod also represents the Burning Blade here. This group is the largest demonic coven in central Kalimdor.

Maraudon (caverns, 3,500): Maraudon is a holy place to the centaur — it is the tomb of Zaetar, and the house of Princess Theradras (see "History," below). Within the tomb is a maze of underground caves and tunnels, populated by the spirits of the long-dead centaur khans. Earth elementals, basilisks and rock borers also inhabit the site. It is rumored that satyrs and other emissaries of the Burning Legion have moved into these caverns as well.

Nijel's Point (small town, 2,000): Nijel's Point is one of the only Alliance camps in Desolace, overseen by the Alliance military and led by Captain Pentigast. In addition, Remulos, son of Cenarius, has dispatched members of his Cenarion Circle here to try to recover Zaetar's remains from Maraudon. The night elves rebuild here on the site of some of their ancient ruins. The Cenarion Circle members are led by Keeper Marandis.

Sargeron (ruins, 100): These night elf ruins have been taken over by satyrs. Their purpose here remains a mystery, though I speculate it relates to the satyrs' affiliation with the Burning Legion.

Shadowbreak Ravine (enclave, 200): Shadowbreak is a hidden enclave where the Burning Blade practices its dark arts. Here wild horses are infused with the necessary components to make them fitting mounts for the warlocks. Here also demon summoning is freely practiced, and Thrall's Horde has recently begun to amass a force large enough to stop the warlocks.

Shadowprey Village (small village, 900): Primarily a troll fishing village, Shadowprey is also a travel node for Horde adventurers. It lies along the Sar'theris Strand, south of the Valley of Spears.

Nearby a representative of the Cenarion Circle, the dryad Selendra, investigates the whereabouts of Zaetar's remains. The trolls tolerate her presence because they are aware that the centaur are a threat to them as well, and the Alliance here helps their cause against the Burning Blade.

Thunder Axe Fortress (fortress, 1,000): Thunder Axe is the most remote Burning Blade hideaway in the land. Here warlocks practice their dark magic but seem to refrain from their demon-summoning ways, at least to the casual observer. While Thrall is aware of the cult's existence, he has thus far sent only a small contingent of orcs to the area. It is also rumored that a sect from Thunder Axe is allied with the Magram centaur against the Gelkis.

For more information on the Burning Blade, see Chapter 8: Organizations.

Valley of Bones: Many believe that the Valley of Bones is cursed, and as such almost all of the centaur clans avoid it. The valley's floor is littered with what is believed to be bones of the Old Gods, presided over by Magram centaur necromancers and skeletons.

Valley of Spears (village, 1,500): The protectors of Maraudon, the Maraudine, live in this centaur village. Only the bravest and mightiest of the tribe's warriors are chosen to guard the tomb of Zaetar at Maraudon.

History

The centaur are the offspring of one of Cenarius's two sons, Zaetar, and the elemental Princess Theradras. It is said that upon their emergence, the centaur turned and killed their father. Over time, five tribes of centaur emerged, three of which continue to battle to this day: the Magram, Gelkis and Kolkar. A fourth tribe, the Maraudine, have taken over the role of protectors for Zaetar's tomb.

The land itself was once a part of Feralas, lush and verdant. Following the invasion of the Burning Legion, the creatures of the land were decimated and the ground rendered infertile. After the defeat of the Legion at Mount Hyjal, many surviving demons retreated here, and the warlocks of the Burning Blade followed. The presence of the centaur makes attempts to replenish the area's natural resources challenging, to say the least. In recent days, a contingent of druids and adventurers has set up an Alliance camp at Nijel's Point to combat the Mauradine in attempts to free Zaetar's spirit.

Adventures

The presence of the centaur, naga and other unusual creatures in Desolace makes the region one of the most mysterious places on Kalimdor.

Shining Light: Azore Aldamorthas asks the PCs to retrieve the *Scepter of Light* from the Thunder Axe Fortress. While the scepter is guarded, the more difficult part of the mission is returning to scepter to the archmage; the scepter is intelligent, and it compels the user to return it to its master — a long dead Highborne elf in the ruins now known as Dire Maul in Feralas. While the PCs can simply attempt to fight the intellect of the object and return it to Azore, he asks them to accompany him to Dire Maul to show the object the truth about its former master. Once the scepter has been shown the ruins, the PCs must find the master's spirit, who releases the object and allows Azore (or a powerful PC mage) to claim it.

Durotar

Capital: Orgrimmar (14,000).

Population: 21,000 (65% orc, 20% troll, 15% tauren, 8% Forsaken, 2% human).

Government: Tribal chiefdom.

Ruler: Warchief Thrall (male orc shaman 13/warrior 5/gladiator 10). (See **Shadows & Light** for Thrall's statistics and history.)

Major Settlements: Orgrimmar (14,000), Razor Hill (3,000), Sen'jin Village (2,000).

Languages: Orcish, Common, Low Common, Taur-ahe, Zandali.

Faith: Shamanism.

Resources: Gold, iron, timber.

Affiliation: Horde.

Durotar is a proving ground for young orcs, who are sent to the Valley of Trials to complete several rites of passage before they are considered fit for the challenges that lie ahead. Durotar is the new homeland of the orcs and the site of the orcs' principal city of Orgrimmar. While the orcs founded their city of Orgrimmar here, Durotar has become something of a haven for all of the Horde races, especially the trolls.

People and Culture

Durotar is the most populated of all Horde-controlled regions, as well as their cultural center. Here, young orcs, tauren and trolls study shamanism and hunting. There is a strong sense of unity here, although a number of Horde members are disturbed by the growing presence of the Forsaken in their lands. I expected this central point for the Horde to also be a major battlefield, and that I would be attacked on sight — I couldn't have been more wrong. Most of the people here are trying to live normal lives, focusing on agriculture and spiritual pursuits. That doesn't mean their guards didn't try to rough me up, but after I put the first couple of them on the floor, the rest were smart enough to realize they would be dead if I wanted them to be. After that, most of the people left me alone — a few were even willing to talk to me. I suspect some of them had never seen a dwarf before.

Beyond the Horde, harpies, centaur and quilboar are prevalent in specific regions of Durotar, attacking caravans and neighboring villages. These prove to be some of the first challenges for young warriors before they move on to bigger battles; these creatures are hardly organized enough to pose a major threat.

The Troll Language

Trolls of all types speak Zandali, which is descended from their ancestral tongue, though some have descended so far into barbarism that they have forgotten this language. Jungle troll characters may choose to speak Zandali instead of Low Common (see **WoW RPG,** Chapter 2: Races, "Troll, Jungle"). In addition, characters of all types may take the skill Speak Language (Zandali) to become conversant in the troll tongue (see **WoW RPG,** Chapter 5: Skills).

Geography

The geography of Durotar is similar to that of the orcs' original homeland of Draenor, which is probably part of the reason why they are so comfortable settling here. The land is dry, baked red by the sun and littered with cacti and watering holes.

The landmass itself is a long expanse separated from mainland Kalimdor by the Southfury River. Durotar is south of Azshara. The Southern tip of Durotar ends at the Great Sea. The eastern coast is littered with sunken ships and considered to be a prime scavenging spot.

The wildlife of the land includes boars, scorpids, raptors, crocolisks, thunder lizards and makrura.

Southfury River: The Southfury forms a natural border between the western portion of Durotar and the northeastern Barrens.

Sites and Settlements

The overwhelming majority of the sites of interest in Durotar are Horde communities.

Drygulch Ravine: Consisting of canyons walled by rocky cliffs, the ravine is completely infested by the Dustwind tribe of harpies.

Echo Isles: After the Third War, when the Horde settled in Durotar, Thrall made these islands off the Southern tip available to the trolls. Recently, a Darkspear troll named Zalazane decided that the trolls did not need the orcs as allies and began practicing dark magic. He drove his fellow trolls off of the islands, converted followers, and created the zombies who now inhabit the Echo

Isles. I suspect an agent of the Scourge may have influenced Zalazane, since the Scourge seems to have a monopoly on zombie-creating crazies.

Orgrimmar (city, 14,000): This city is the base of operations for the Horde. (See separate listing, below.)

Razor Hill (town, 3,000): Razor Hill is a Horde-controlled town and one of two major Horde outposts in Durotar. Its leader, Orgnil Soulscar, is occupied with investigating the Burning Blade.

Sen'jin Village (village, 2,000): This is the troll village where most of the Darkspear tribe relocated after Zalazane drove them out of the Echo Isles. The trolls here practice more peaceful shamanism, and are trying to fight their way back to reclaiming their island home.

Skull Rock: Skull Rock is a Burning Blade hideout, a cave system where the orc warlock Gazz'Uz hides. Several other Burning Blade caves probably exist in this area. I found out about this one completely by accident while wandering — I suspect the Burning Blade is trying to use locations like this to prepare for an invasion of Orgrimmar, but it will be a long time before they are be able to amass that kind of support.

Thunder Ridge: The ridge is home to behemoth lightning lizards, which help to obscure the presence of the Burning Blade here, led by the goblin warlock Fizzle Darkstorm. Until I heard about this place, I wasn't even aware that goblin warlocks existed.

Tiragarde Keep (fortress, 200): The only "Alliance" outpost in the area, soldiers loyal to Admiral Daelin Proudmoore, father of Jaina Proudmoore, man Tiragarde (much like Northwatch Hold in the Barrens). Since Daelin's death, they have continued their crusade against the Horde. While Jaina does not approve of their actions, the majority of the Alliance accepts the dangerous philosophy of these troops. Personally, I view them as being almost as fanatical and stupid as the Scarlet Crusade. I suspect Thrall hasn't crushed this group out of mercy, and that may prove a strategic mistake.

Valley of Trials: This area is where new arrivals are tested by being put through several rites of passage. From the simple (thinning out the boar population) to the daunting (killing the summoned creatures of the Burning Blade), any young orc finds the Valley of Trials to be a perfect place to cut his tusks.

History

After uniting the clans and revitalizing his people, Thrall was visited by the prophet Medivh, who convinced the warchief to travel across the Great Sea to the land of Kalimdor. Thrall and his forces landed on the eastern shores of the continent. After overcoming a series of challenges, Thrall met again with Medivh, who convinced Thrall to ally with Jaina Proudmoore and Malfurion Stormrage. It was shortly following this event that the final battle of the Third War unfolded.

The defeat of Archimonde signaled the end of the Third War. Soon after, Thrall settled in the territory where he and his forces had first landed. Thrall named the new land Durotar, in honor of his father, Durotan, who had tried in vain to prevent the orcs from following the path that would lead them to demonic dependence.

Adventures

The Horde's cultural center is in constant strife, much to the dismay of the orcs, who are finally adapting to the possibility of a more peaceful lifestyle. In this time of conflict, young and experienced adventurers alike find many chances to prove their mettle.

Test of Blood: The Burning Blade clan assassinates the orcs responsible for training young orcs in the Valley of Trials and takes their places. These trainers in disguise give deadly "tests" intended to slaughter the young orcs; the few who survive are given the chance to join the Burning Blade or die.

Very Big Bad Voodoo: Zalazane's experiments on the Echo Isles have progressed far further than the Horde ever anticipated, and the trolls create greater undead, such as abominations. The warchief calls for a full assault on the Echo Isles before the situation escalates.

Zalazane, 4th-Level Necromancer

Male Jungle troll: CR 4; Medium humanoid (troll); HD 4d6+8, hp 24; Init +8; Spd 30 ft; AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk +5 melee (1d6+4 plus 2d6 negative energy, quarterstaff); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+4 plus 2d6 negative energy, quarterstaff); SA death touch, spells; SQ low-light vision, death resistance, rapid healing; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 14, Agy 19, Sta 15, Int 17, Spt 13, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Low Common, Orcish, Zandali.

Skills: Concentration +9, Jump +7, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Spellcraft +10, Survival +7, Tumble +8.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy).

Necromancer Spells (4/4/3; save DC 13 + spell level): Zalazane's high Intellect score and his ranks in Spellcraft allow him to prepare 10 spells per level; he can prepare many of the spells on the necromancer spell list.

Possessions: +1 unholy quarterstaff, bracers of armor +2, cloak of resistance +1,* spell component pouch, spellbook.

* See **More Magic & Mayhem** for descriptions of Zalazane's magic items.

Description

This large troll is draped in black robes and wears a black-and-white wooden mask reminiscent of both necromancy and voodoo. Wrinkled hands grip a dark quarterstaff with a humanoid skull on the top.

Zalazane, in his mid-50s, decided that his people did not need the help of the orcs in order to succeed. He was further offended when he heard about Thrall's distrust of arcane magic. With the help of a number of similar-minded trolls — and summoned zombies — Zalazane drove most of his fellow jungle trolls from the Echo Isles. He continues to attack the other trolls of the Darkspear tribe, and his reasoning is unknown. The source of his knowledge of necromantic magic is equally mysterious.

In combat, Zalazane begins the fight by summoning undead. He then uses *death coil* and other offensive spells until he exhausts his repertoire, then wades into melee or retreats.

Dustwallow Marsh

Capital: Theramore (9,500).

Population: 12,000 (42% human, 15% night elf, 12% Ironforge dwarf, 8% high elf, 5% gnome, 4% ogre, 3% orc, 3% tauren, 3% jungle troll, 3% black dragonflight, 2% Forsaken).

Government: Elected council.

Rulers: Lady Jaina Proudmoore (female human mage 13/archmage of Kirin Tor 4); Lady Onyxia (female black dragon). (See **Shadows & Light** for Jaina Proudmoore's statistics and history.)

Major Settlements: Theramore (9,500), Brackenwall Village (1,000).

Languages: Common, Darnassian, Dwarven, Low Common, Nazja.

Faiths: Holy Light, Mystery of the Makers.

Resources: Hunting, gold, iron, timber.

Affiliation: Alliance.

Dustwallow is an Alliance-controlled territory, though much of the land is not well suited for human colonization. Giant stone watchtowers maintain a steady vigil along the central road that leads through the center of Dustwallow into the Barrens.

Although Jaina Proudmoore and Thrall were allies at the end of the Third War, the actions and eventual death of Jaina's father, Admiral Proudmoore, put a strain on that coalition. Now many of Admiral Proudmoore's loyal Theramore forces are openly hostile to the Horde, while Jaina tries her best to maintain a tenuous peace. As the only Alliance-controlled land in central Kalimdor, Dustwallow is a dangerous region, since a number of Horde groups assault anyone outside Theramore's walls. A number of other forces threaten the Alliance as well, including the Stonemaul ogres and the black dragonflight.

People and Culture

Inside the city of Theramore, most people are optimistic, in spite of the loss of many friends and allies in the recent Horde attack. This is one of few places where all the Alliance races are represented, although humans are (not surprisingly) the most common. The overwhelming majority of the people settled here are fiercely loyal to Lady Proudmoore; those who favor her father's approach to the war have left to reside elsewhere. Several groups of those loyal to Daelin Proudmoore have taken over abandoned towers and barracks nearby and show open contempt toward others. I suspect they would be just as aggressive toward the people of Theramore as they are toward the Horde if they had the numbers.

The black dragonflight dominates the southwest portion of Dustwallow, and is led by a massive black dragon named Onyxia. Onyxia is one of Deathwing's daughters, and the younger sister of Nefarion, the ruler of Blackrock Spire. Unlike most areas under black dragonflight dominance, the dragons and dragonspawn here are unified and organized, making them considerably more dangerous. Rumors persist that Nefarion and Onyxia work to gain complete control of the black dragonflight in Deathwing's absence — if this event occurs, Theramore will likely be one of their first targets. The people of Theramore are keenly aware of this threat, and Jaina probably has a few tricks up her sleeve for such an occasion.

Geography

Dustwallow Marsh is exactly what it sounds like — a stinkin' marsh. Bogs, quagmires and other fun stuff can be found here. The entire region is a low-lying transition between the Great Sea to the east and the dry, sun-baked earth of the Barrens to the west and north. To the south of Dustwallow is Thousand Needles, but a small mountain range makes a direct journey from one to the other difficult. The area's vegetation consists of grass, reeds and weeping willow trees. The humidity is high, and the weather is muggy. Needless to say, I didn't enjoy my time in the swamp. Once one gets inside Theramore, things are much more tolerable — the island is solid and grassy, although I suspect this is because magic makes it more inhabitable.

An adventurer passing through the land is likely to come across crocodiles, giant spiders, raptors and bog beasts in the north — the black dragonflight controls the south, so most adventurers don't last long enough to appreciate the flora and fauna there.

Sites and Settlements

Dustwallow Marsh is home to many interesting things, and only about half of them want to suck your blood.

Alcaz Island: Once a human settlement, naga have taken over Alcaz Island and seem to be protecting something. Rumors abound, but so far no one has uncovered what the naga may be

hiding. Alcaz was a small human village with an underground tunnel system, and presumably the tunnel system might be where the naga are hiding whatever it is they are guarding. Hydras also dwell off the coast; these may be native to the area, but I suspect the naga have summoned them.

Brackenwall Village (village, 1,000): Brackenwall represents the only Horde presence in Dustwallow. It is also the home of the Stonemaul ogres, who had maintained a village of their own but were driven out by agents of the black dragonflight. The Stonemaul ogres have remained allied with the Horde since the Third War, when the half-ogre Rexxar defeated their leader in combat and took command of the tribe.

Daelin's loyalists harass Brackenwall, but Jaina keeps her own troops reined in. Most of the Horde members here try to trade with Theramore peacefully, but there are a few that organize groups to attack travelers.

Stonemaul Ruins: Once the site of an ogre village, Firemane dragonkin besieged Stonemaul and still roam the smoking ruins. The Firemanes help raise a small number of young black dragons in the ruins.

Theramore Isle (city, 9,500): One of the primary centers for the Alliance on Kalimdor, Theramore is a beautiful city of white stone, bearing a strong resemblance to the once-great Lordaeron. This is no surprise, since the humans here are mostly Lordaeron natives, and Theramore was constructed through a cooperative effort between humans, dwarves and elves (among others).

I had the pleasure of spending several days here, and I used much of that time to catch up with Lady Jaina — the lass certainly has grown since I last saw her. I had mixed feelings talking to her; I fought alongside her father in the Second War, and I understand all too well why he chose to continue the assault against the Horde. After hearing her perspective, however, I realize that he was too hasty in his assault, and I cannot blame her for withholding her support. I also realized something equally important — Jaina is still little more than a child, and she bears a tremendous weight on her shoulders.

Most of the people of Theramore see her as their savior, since they know that if they had remained in Lordaeron they would now likely belong to the Scourge or the Forsaken. A couple heavy events have served to transform Jaina from a girl to a woman: the fates of her father and of her best friend from childhood. We avoided discussion of Arthas, but it was clear he was still on her mind — she probably blames herself for being unable to stop his descent into madness. That all being said, I think she can handle the strain of leadership — she has certainly risen to the difficulties of controlling an entire region. She probably needs more help than she's getting, though, and I hope she finds it soon.

The damage done to Theramore's structures in Thrall's reluctant attack (in response to Daelin's hostilities) is repaired, and the city continues to expand. In fact, as more civilians arrive from the east, it seems likely that the Alliance will have to establish control over more of Dustwallow just to find more places to for people to live.

The Wyrmbog: The Wyrmbog is perhaps the only known location where black dragons dwell only a stone's throw away from human and orc settlements. The massive drake known as Emberstrife runs the day-to-day activities of the dragonflight from his lair, but even he is merely a servant of Lady Onyxia, one of the most powerful dragons in the world. Onyxia secludes herself in her lair to take care of her immediate children, and unlike most black dragons, she seems obsessed with their safety. Powerful wards prevent anyone from entering the lair without a *Drakefire Amulet*, a ritual object created with the help of General Drakkisath, the leader of the dragonspawn in Blackrock Spire. Since the amulet requires some of Drakkisath's blood, I wasn't able to get one on the spot to explore the lair, but in the future I intend to work my way into there to investigate things further.

History

Dustwallow was once at the center of the great continent of Kalimdor, before the Sundering. When the Sundering struck the continent in half, much of the land around Dustwallow sank as the waters rushed in. The ecosystem has since balanced itself into the wetlands that exist here now.

During the Third War, in an unprecedented show of solidarity, the humans, night elves and orcs of the world banded together to defeat Archimonde and the Burning Legion. The leader of the humans, Jaina Proudmoore, maintained the union with the orcs, who allowed her and her fellow humans to reside on Theramore Isle. All was well until the return of Jaina's father, Admiral Daelin Proudmoore, one of the principal commanders in the battles against the orcs in the Second War.

Jaina's attempts to pacify her father failed, and, knowing that war was inevitable, Thrall gave the order to attack. Admiral Proudmoore fell in battle, and Jaina remains at Theramore, trying to prevent another war between her people and the Horde.

Since Jaina refused to aid her father in the battle that led to his demise, many of the troops loyal to her father abandoned Theramore to form their own settlements. While Jaina and Thrall maintained a tenuous peace for about two years after her father's demise, the hostilities between the Alliance and the Horde have begun to affect Theramore. Trade between Theramore and Orgrimmar has all but ceased, and vigilantes from both factions strike against merchant caravans.

Adventures

The black dragonflight poses the most imminent threat to both the Alliance and the Horde in Dustwallow, but the mysterious naga and hydras on Alcaz Island and the small groups of Alliance and Horde raiders also warrant investigation.

Dragonfire: Theramore comes under attack by the black dragonflight, and when the smoke clears after the first day of the assault, Jaina Proudmoore is missing. The sheer number of dragons is overwhelming, and they are well coordinated under the leadership of Lady Onyxia, and perhaps her brother Nefarion as well. Without their beloved leader, the people of Theramore are disorganized and scared as more dragons descend on the city. The PCs must hold out for three days before Jaina returns with help from the Horde (or, alternatively, the other dragonflights).

Mulgore

Capital: Thunder Bluff (6,000).

Population: 9,000 (85% tauren, 6% goblin, 5% dwarf, 2% harpy, 2% orc).

Government: Spiritual hierarchy.

Ruler: Cairne Bloodhoof, Chieftain of the United Tauren Tribes (male tauren scout 11/hunter 10). (See **Shadows & Light** for Cairne Bloodhoof's statistics and history.)

Major Settlements: Thunder Bluff (6,000), Bloodhoof Village (1,000).

Languages: Taur-ahe, Dwarven, Goblin, Low Common, Orcish.

Faiths: Druidism, Mystery of the Makers, shamanism.

Resources: Furs, gems, gold, hunting, iron, leather, silver, timber, tin.

Affiliation: Horde.

The transition between the Barrens and Mulgore is dramatic. Here, life flourishes, and the sounds of war fade in the quiet serenity of the land. I do not imply that all is peaceful here; harpies and other dangerous creatures harass the tauren, and our own excavations for Titan relics draw ire from the reverent shamans, who feel we damage the land. While the tauren are typically friendly to outsiders, they have recently been violent toward the dwarves and goblins mining in the region, likely at the urging of the orcs.

Mulgore is the homeland of the tauren. It is here that young tauren learn to communicate with the spirits of earth, air, fire and water. From warriors to hunters to shamans, all tauren must complete several rites of passage before they are allowed to enter the towering city of Thunder Bluff, where their lives of adventure truly begin. Thunder Bluff is the central city of the tauren, located in northern Mulgore, high atop a cluster of mesas (see separate listing, below).

People and Culture

The culture of the tauren is what some would call primitive, but it is based on an understanding of nature's balance and the role of each life form in this cycle. The tauren are a peaceful race that prefers tranquility to violence, but they are fearsome and relentless enemies when provoked. Although the tauren have tried to share their land, the continuous encroachment and lack of respect shown by factions such as quilboar, harpies and the Venture Company result in escalating conflict in the region. The tauren are also loyal to the Horde, and many of their leaders open the doors of Thunder Bluff to young orc and troll shamans who wish to train.

The Venture Company's presence here is for profit, plain and simple. The goblins intended to capitalize on the peaceful nature of the tauren and steal the resources of their home, and that plan has begun to fall apart only recently. I suspect if pressed hard enough, the goblins will eventually get the picture and withdraw.

Geography

Mulgore is a land of rolling hills and open grasslands, enclosed by towering mountains. There is one major lake, Stonebull, which partially

encircles Bloodhoof Village. Throughout the land are a series of watering holes, where wind-driven devices dig wells or turn massive stones to grind corn.

Mulgore is located in the center of Kalimdor, surrounded by Feralas to the southwest, Desolace to the west, Stonetalon to the north, the Barrens to the east and the tip of Thousand Needles to the southeast. Across the open plains of Mulgore many animals roam, including kodo, mountain lions, vultures, wolves and plainstalkers.

Golden Plains: A wide, flat, grassy expanse, the Golden Plains stretch between Bloodhoof Village and Thunder Bluff, and host herds of grazing kodo.

Sites and Settlements

Tauren dominate Mulgore, but thus far, these peaceful people refrain from stomping out the small pockets where other races reside in their land. Hopefully, we can find a peaceful way to resolve the tensions between the tauren and the dwarven explorers soon.

Bael'Dun Dig Site (excavation site, 200): The Explorers' Guild has set up an excavation site here. A strong supply line runs from Bael'dun to Bael Modan in the Barrens. The dwarves here are some of the most fervent in their interest in the Titans, and in their haste to dig they have unknowingly drawn the ire of the tauren. I believe that if the tauren realized we were searching for relics of our heritage and not a quick source of cash like the goblins, they would allow us to work in peace, and perhaps even with their blessing. The tauren respect the worship of ancestors, and I suspect they would find our purpose similar enough to tolerate the digging, provided we showed the proper respect for the land. I intend to discuss this issue with the tauren chieftain when I reach Thunder Bluff if a meeting can be arranged.

I found the dwarves here pleasant, and I even know a few of them from back home. Overall, spending some time working here was enjoyable, but I know I must act before my friends' lives are placed in greater danger.

Bloodhoof Village (village, 1,000): Here Baine Bloodhoof, the son of Cairne, leads an investigation into Venture Company operations to the east and a campaign against the Palemane gnolls to the west. With his father growing older, Baine takes a greater role in the leadership of the tauren with each passing year. He has grown into a formidable warrior, but it will be some time before he matches his legendary father's exploits.

Brambleblade Ravine: Quilboar have taken up residence here, where massive, thorny vines sprout from the earth, similar to those found outside Razorfen in the Barrens. The tauren find the quilboar to be a growing problem, and will likely take stronger action to eradicate them soon.

Camp Narache (camp, 500): Run by Chief Hawkwind, Camp Narache is a small tauren outpost. Nearby, Seer Graytongue, a spiritual leader, sends fledgling tauren on rites of passage. This small camp is where most tauren shamans begin their careers.

Palemane Rock: Palemane gnolls infest this area, carelessly poaching the wildlife of the land and selling the hides to the Venture Company, disturbing the balance of nature in the region and drawing the wrath of the tauren. I find it highly unusual that these gnolls are intelligent enough to conduct trade with the goblins; most gnolls attack any other race on sight.

Red Cloud Mesa (village, 650): Tauren who finish their trials at Camp Narache often travel here to continue their trials. From here initiates set out on series of adventures, fighting quilboar and centaur, all the while learning about the balance of nature. Once these trials are complete, a young tauren is usually ready to travel to Thunder Bluff for further training.

Red Rocks: The Red Rocks are a sacred, ancestral burial ground where dead tauren lie wrapped in cloth atop wooden pyres. Quilboar have recently desecrated the grounds and scavenge the bodies for valuables.

Thunder Bluff (city, 6,000): See separate listing, below.

Venture Company Mine (mining camp, 300): Driven by profit, the Venture Company mines for iron and tin in eastern Mulgore, depleting the land's natural resources, hording the region's water supplies, and drawing the anger of the tauren. Supervisor Fizzsprocket, an extremely cunning goblin who probably will meet his end at a tauren totem before I finish this volume, leads the mining contingent here. I've seen a few tauren fight, and no amount of profit is going to stop one of their swings from cracking a goblin skull.

Windfury Ridge: Harpies overrun this mountainous area in northern Mulgore.

History

The tauren occupied the land of Mulgore for hundreds of years, but the centaur were driving them out when Thrall's forces arrived on Kalimdor. Thrall and his Horde allied with the tauren, and following the events of the Third War, assisted

the tauren in reclaiming the land of Mulgore. The massive city of Thunder Bluff is a more recent development; for most of their history, the tauren were a nomadic people, and roamed the plains without a permanent home.

The territory is rich with iron and tin, which has attracted the attention of the Venture Company. With the centaur gone, the Venture Company takes advantage of the tauren's peaceful nature and sets up mining operations throughout the region. Ironforge dwarves also excavate here, although they are more focused on the discovery of ancient secrets than valuable ore.

Adventures

Nearly every young tauren begins his adventures here, and many other members of the Horde have traveled to Mulgore for greater insight into the spirits of nature.

Test of Diplomacy: Baine Bloodhoof asks a group of young tauren heroes to act as emissaries to the dwarven excavation of Bael'dun to convince the dwarves to cease their careless digging. Given enough effort, the heroes can convince the dwarves to allow a shaman to oversee their site to make sure that the land is properly cared for during the excavation, and that the dwarves return to the land as much as they take. If the PCs are successful, Baine asks them to deal with the Venture Company as well — a more difficult proposition. In this case, a few good axe swings are likely more effective than conventional diplomacy.

Orgrimmar

Population: 14,000 (80% orc, 13% jungle troll, 12% tauren, 5% Forsaken).

Government: Tribal chiefdom.

Ruler: Warchief Thrall (male orc shaman 13/warrior 5/gladiator 10). (See **Shadows & Light** for Thrall's statistics and history.)

Languages: Orcish, Common, Taur-ahe, Zandali.

Faith: Shamanism.

Affiliation: Horde.

Orgrimmar has been the central hub of the orc community since the end of the Third War. The city was founded by Thrall and named after his friend and mentor, the former Warchief Orgrim Doomhammer. It is a fortified complex guarded by stout walls, massive gates and tall towers. The mountainous ranges of northern Durotar form a natural barrier to the rear of the fortress, and parts of the complex are carved into the mountain itself.

Orgrimmar is openly hospitable to all members of the Horde and is an important center of commerce. Visitors may fly into the city by way of zeppelin or wyvern, or simply walk through the fortress's main gates. While not a member of the Horde, I tried the third method of entry, and not surprisingly the guards weren't too convinced that I was simply there to talk and observe. My letter from Tyrande did little to pacify them, but it was enough to get me to speak to a guard captain, who had fought with the night elves and Jaina's forces at Mount Hyjal. It took quite a bit of convincing, but I was able to get permission to remain in the city for one day. Of course, if any of the citizens didn't approve of my presence, I was on my own — which is just the way I like it.

People and Culture

Although orcs comprise the majority of the city's inhabitants, there is a strong troll presence here as well, primarily in the Valley of Spirits. The simple, rustic architecture of the orcs is used to maximum effect, creating a network of wooden towers and mud-hut style structures. The Horde races also use Orgrimmar as a center of trade, not only of physical goods, but ideas as well. For example, a number of different holidays are celebrated here, including a tauren festival for the winter solstice and a number of others.

Although Thrall's "new Horde" turns away from demonic influence and the brutish aggression that it was once known for, some remnants of the Horde's darker days linger. It is rumored that the Burning Blade steadily infiltrates Orgrimmar via underground tunnels beneath the city, in the Cleft of Shadows, a dark cavern where warlocks and rogues dwell.

The most significant figure in Orgrimmar is undoubtedly the warchief himself, and I was permitted to see him, with a fairly large armed escort. After seeing the warchief in person, I suspect

The Warchief's Missive

King Magni Bronzebeard of Ironforge,

Our people fight and die each day in a false war. The spirits of nature tremble at the might of the Burning Legion and the undead Scourge, and yet the mortals of the world are content to shed each other's blood — we must end this. Your noble brother has shown me that the chance for peace between our people still exists, and I will fight to my dying breath to see that day come. Lady Jaina Proudmoore has sacrificed much to assist me in this cause, and that debt will never be fully repaid, but I must know that we do not stand alone. I request that we arrange a meeting between the leaders of our mighty peoples to discuss the terms for a truce, and the spirits willing, an alliance against the darker forces of this world as well. The homeworld of my people was shattered by the bloodshed between the Alliance and the Horde; I would not see that happen to Azeroth as well.

May the spirits watch over you.

Respectfully,

Warchief Thrall

he probably would be the one protecting his guards in most fights, but that didn't stop them from being careful. Surprisingly, he dismissed my escort when I entered the chamber, and allowed me to sit and talk with him for quite some time. I must admit, I was a bit biased entering the encounter — as a veteran of the Second War, it has proven difficult to shake the memories of losing friends to the Horde.

After only a few minutes with Thrall, I realized that he is nothing like those orcs — this warchief is as different from Blackhand or Doomhammer as we are from the Dark Irons. He explained to me that he considered Tyrande, Jaina and many other members of the Alliance to be friends, and he would gladly do whatever it takes to end the hostilities between the two factions. We agreed that the Burning Legion and the Scourge are greater threats, and ones that we should cooperate against — but I had one question he could not answer in a satisfactory way. When I asked Thrall about allowing the Forsaken to join the Horde, he grunted. He didn't seem pleased about the idea either, and admitted he expected them to betray him, but he simply felt that he needed allies — even if those allies were not completely trustworthy. I avoided using the word "desperate," but that's exactly what he is — Thrall knows that his forces are too diminished to stand up to the combined might of the Alliance without outside help, and the Forsaken provide that help. I discussed a number of other issues with Thrall, and overall, he proved a surprisingly friendly and respectful host. He also asked me to carry a message to you, Magni, which I have attached.

Geography

Orgrimmar is located in the far north of Durotar, at the foothills of the mountain range that separates Durotar from Azshara. Several valleys have been dug out from the mountain and provide a way of naturally dissecting the city into various zones, including the Valley of Spirits, Valley of Strength, Valley of Wisdom, and the Valley of Honor.

Several specialty shops are found in the Drag, a dark pathway that leads from the Valley of Strength to the Valley of Honor. Those searching for potions or training in the darker arts of the rogue or warlock find a tunnel leading down to the Cleft of Shadow from the Drag.

Sites and Settlements

The majority of Orgrimmar is divided into "valleys" that function like the neighborhoods in an Alliance city. Each of these valleys houses different types of people, shops, and the like.

Grommash Hold: Thrall holds court inside the hold, while outside a traveler may find a monument to the orcs' triumph over demonic influence. Mannoroth, the demon lord who cursed the bloodline of the orcs, fell in battle to Thrall and Grom Hellscream. Mannoroth's skull and armor are displayed on the trunk of an ancient tree, bearing a plaque that tells of the orcs' victorious transformation and reminds readers of the mistakes of the past. The keep is simple, and while well designed, it lacks the riches and statues one might see in a human palace. I like it — reminds me a bit of home.

Ragefire Chasm: Ragefire Chasm is a network of tunnels beneath the city, rumored to be the point of entry used recently by agents of the Burning Blade.

Ring of Valor: The Ring of Valor is a massive gladiatorial arena. Here warriors fight to honor the Horde, not for the amusement of bloodthirsty crowds. Young orcs practice here with blunted weapons, but occasionally fight to severe injury or death.

Valley of Spirits: I find the name of this valley ironic; it is here that those spellcasters who do not follow the way of the spirits learn their trade. Trolls and Forsaken practice arcane magic here — a rarity in the orc lands — and some follow the path of priesthood as well. This valley is found on the southwest side of Orgrimmar.

Valley of Strength: This valley is notable above the other sectors of the city for the simple reason that this is where the majority of commerce takes place. The bank and auction house are located here, as is the flight tower where zeppelins and wyverns arrive from afar. This is also the first sector a visitor is exposed to upon passing the city's main gates. In addition to the bank, one can also find an armor shop and the city's main inn. Run by an innkeeper named Gryshka, it seemed like a suitable place to stay, but I didn't have the luxury of enough time in Orgrimmar to rent a room.

Valley of Wisdom: This is the location of the city's general store, as well as Grommash Hold. The Valley of Wisdom is found on the northwest side of Orgrimmar. Many experienced shamans are also found here, training the younger orcs, trolls and tauren, or assisting the warchief.

History

In the years following the Second War, a young orc named Thrall studied the early shamanistic influences of his culture. The majority of the orcs who remained on Azeroth had been captured and placed in internment camps by the Alliance, and they suffered from an unusual state of lethargy, which Thrall later learned was due to withdrawal from the addictive demonic magic of the Burning Legion. Thrall found the one remaining free clan of orcs and became friends with their chieftain, the legendary Grom Hellscream. After this encounter, he managed to find the former Warchief of the Horde, Orgrim Doomhammer, and convince him to begin the fight anew and free their people.

With Orgrim at his side, Thrall began a reformation of the orcs, liberating them from their camps and teaching them the ways of shamanism. After several successful raids, Doomhammer fell, and Thrall took his place as the new Warchief of the Horde.

In the events leading up to the Third War, Thrall and his orcs landed on Kalimdor, guided by a mysterious prophet. The united forces of the Horde, humans and night elves succeeded in defeating Archimonde and the Burning Legion, and reclaiming the land of Kalimdor. It was shortly thereafter that Thrall claimed Durotar as the Horde's new homeland and built the city of Orgrimmar, named after Thrall's friend and mentor, the former Warchief of the Horde, Orgrim Doomhammer.

During Orgrimmar's early construction, Admiral Daelin Proudmoore arrived in the nearby human city of Theramore and took control of most of his daughter's forces there. Jaina did her best to warn the Horde of this new threat, and after a series of battles, a half-ogre named Rexxar led the Horde to victory against Admiral Proudmoore's forces. The admiral fell in battle, and this event strains the already tenuous relationship between the Alliance and the Horde in Kalimdor.

Adventures

Orgrimmar is where most orcs make their homes, but it is hardly a place of tranquility. Burning Blade agents tunnel their way in from below, and the threat of an attack from the Alliance grows with each passing day.

The First Few Steps: The PCs are asked to participate in a large escort for the warchief from Orgrimmar to Ratchet in the Barrens, where Thrall meets with Jaina Proudmoore and Tyrande Whisperwind to continue to work toward peace between the Alliance and the Horde. More than half of Thrall's guards are actually agents of the Burning Blade, and a battle breaks out as the group leaves Durotar, severely thinning the number of guards available to escort the warchief. As the convoy approaches Ratchet, it is attacked again, this time by soldiers loyal to Daelin Proudmoore. Finally, the PCs must prevent assassins from disrupting the peace council.

Stonetalon Mountains

Population: 6,000 (40% goblin, 30% night elf, 25% tauren, 3% harpy, 2% jungle troll).

Major Settlements: Windshear Crag (2,500), Stonetalon Retreat (1,750), Sun Rock Retreat (1,500).

Languages: Goblin, Darnassian, Low Common, Taur-ahe.

Faiths: Druidism, shamanism.

Resources: Copper, gold, iron, timber, tin.

Affiliation: Contested.

Stonetalon's peak remains verdant and lush, but much of the remainder of the region has been deforested or otherwise destroyed. Certain parts of the land are now the homes of elementals, harpies and other deadly creatures. The greatest danger to the peak, however, is from goblins — the Venture Company gradually destroys the remaining trees and takes the remaining resources from the earth. If this process continues, Stonetalon could soon become as much a wasteland as Desolace in the south or the Barrens in the east. Druids and shamans take a firm stand here, doing what they can to stop the destruction of nature, but the difficulties between the Alliance and the Horde prevent the night elves and the tauren from working together effectively to halt the goblin operations. Many of the tauren still hold the unrealistic hope that the Venture Company can be reasoned with, and this belief prevents progress.

People and Culture

The goblins of Stonetalon are among the finest engineers of their race, and their inventions have allowed them to remove massive chunks of the forest in a few short months. This endeavor draws ire from the night elves and tauren alike, who find the deforestation barbaric and dangerous. The night elves take shelter on Stonetalon Peak, maintaining that refuge with the help of dryads and keepers of the grove. While the majority of the tauren take a similar, defensive role, the Grimtotem tribe strikes back against the goblins. Rumors persist that the Grimtotems prepare to take extreme measures to rid the goblins from their land, including the use of Forsaken-made toxins. Clearly, if these toxins are misused, they could cause as much damage as the goblins.

For all the intelligence the goblins possess, they have yet to understand politics, and this is true on an internal level as well as with the outside world. The trade princes have recently caused problems for the Venture Company, and it is looking increasingly likely that the goblins will turn on each other soon.

Geography

The Stonetalon Mountains lie along the western coast of Kalimdor, south of Ashenvale and north of Desolace and Mulgore. The most frequently used entrance to the mountains, however, is a path from the Barrens in the east, and that's where I came from. The mountains were at one time filled with lush forests, but the Venture Company's expeditions and mining operations changed much of the landscape to dusty, barren canyons and desolate cliffs. The only region of the mountains that retains its former splendor is the peak itself, which is protected by the night elves. There is a large river, the Bloodfury, as well as two large lakes, Mirkfallon and Cragpool.

Cragpool Lake: This lake is located just northwest of Windshear Crag, at the head of the Blackwolf River. The site is dominated by a massive Venture Company water wheel, accessible only by a tower of rickety scaffolding.

Sites and Settlements

The goblin-dominated mountains have few major settlements, but the night elves, tauren, trolls and harpies each claim a small share of the land.

Charred Vale: Charred Vale was once a tranquil and verdant section of forest, but in recent times a number of fire and earth elementals appeared here, burning and blasting the ancient trees. To complicate matters further, harpies not only maintain a presence here, but seem to flourish. Corrupted treants also wander the vale, along with basilisks and even a few chimeras. I was unable to discover what causes the corruption here, but I suspect that the demons to the south in Desolace are responsible. The road to Desolace leads through this vale, and thus I suggest that inexperienced adventurers invest in a flying mount to travel over this region rather than walking through it on foot.

Greatwood Vale: This vale is one of the primary sources of tauren activity in the Stonetalon Mountains. Two separate tauren villages are found here, the Grimtotem Village and Camp Aparaje. Both are inhabited by the Grimtotem tauren, a tribe of dissidents who do not share Cairne Bloodhoof's ideals of uniting the clans and instead focus on seeking retribution for the wrongs imposed on them in recent history. This approach is not popular enough to gain the support of the more numerous tauren in the Sun Rock Retreat, but nevertheless the Grimtotem tribe has been successful in their initial attempts to "cleanse" the other races from the land.

Malaka'jin (camp, 100): Inside this troll encampment, night elves are being held by the shaman Jin'Zil, who seeks ingredients for his voodoo potions. I picked off a good number of the trolls here before they noticed me, and I feel better for it. Fortunately, there aren't enough trolls here to be a great threat to the elves, or I would have put in a bit more effort.

Stonetalon Peak (village, 1,750): This forested peak is a glimpse at what the entire region looked like before the goblins and elementals arrived. Here, one can find the only Alliance outpost, lead by a night elf named Albagorn. The elves here are assisted in their efforts to reclaim the mountains by dryads and mighty keepers of the grove. A barrow den is also located here, where some druids lie sleeping, connecting to the Emerald Dream.

Sun Rock Retreat (village, 1,500): The retreat is a tauren-controlled outpost run by a druid named Maggran Earthbinder. A mean-spirited blood elf named Braelyn Firehand also resides here, and she entices travelers to carry out acts of violence against the night elves. She harbors a special hatred for the night elf Ordanus in Ashenvale, and actively speaks of hiring a stranger to carry out Ordanus's assassination. She is almost as big a bastard as Baron Rivendare (see *Lands of Conflict.*) The other inhabitants of the retreat are concerned with discovering why elementals spring from beneath the earth in Charred Vale, and that seems like a damn good thing to look into.

Windshear Crag (Venture Company operation, 2,500): Windshear Crag is the hotbed of Venture Company activity in the mountains, and the area is swarming with dozens of machines. The most impressive of these is a unique, tanklike logging machine called the Super Reaper 6000 — and while the machine is used primarily for cutting wood, I have no doubt that the goblins have rigged every inch of it with some sort of explosive device. Goblin shredders, including the XT-9 and XT-4 prototypes, also strip the land, albeit with somewhat less speed than the Super Reaper. The area is littered with mines (of both the "ore-filled" and "damn, I stepped on a —" kinds), excavation sites and gyrocopter landing pads. Nearby, travelers might find Ziz Fizziks, a goblin who works with the trade princes. Ziz works to retrieve plans that a disloyal goblin stole and sold to the Venture Company.

History

The Stonetalon Mountains survived the Sundering, although the cataclysmic events forever

altered the landscape, creating great canyons and valleys within the mountain ranges. The indigenous tauren created a camp south of Mirkfallon Lake, built upon ancient ley lines. It is perhaps due to these ley lines that the elementals are drawn to the area around Charred Vale. The arrival of the other races is a recent development. The goblins found the region an excellent place to harvest lumber and ore, and the majority of the modern night elf presence in the mountains exists simply to stop the continuing deforestation. While the night elves had settlements in the mountains in ancient times, only the druids remained there continuously over the years, resting safely in their barrow dens.

Recently, rumors have arisen about a massive series of tunnels beneath the peak, which served as the home for some kind of oracle or sage. The name Medivh has been mentioned, but I personally find the chances of him staying in the caverns here to be minimal — but still a possibility.

Adventures

The primary source of activity here revolves around the goblins destroying the forest, but other opportunities for adventure exist in the mountains as well.

A Sage's Warning: A mysterious prophet emerges from the caverns beneath Stonetalon, claiming that the world must prepare itself for a new threat. The sage calls for the extermination of the Forsaken, on the grounds that they will be the ones to usher in the next coming of the Burning Legion — and perhaps Sargeras himself. He sends the PCs on a number of anti-Forsaken missions if they listen, but if the PCs investigate the issue thoroughly, they discover that this "sage" is actually an agent of Balzannar, the brother of the Dreadlord Varimathras. Balzannar survived his "death" at his brother's hands, and has plotted his revenge against Sylvanas ever since — this sage is apparently just one small part of his plan.

Thunder Bluff

Population: 6,000 (88% tauren, 5% orc, 4% Forsaken, 3% troll).

Government: Spiritual hierarchy.

Ruler: Cairne Bloodhoof, Chieftain of the United Tauren Tribes (male tauren scout 11/hunter 10). (See **Shadows & Light** for Cairne Bloodhoof's statistics and history.)

Languages: Taur-ahe, Common, Orcish, Zandali.

Faiths: Shamanism, druidism.

Resources: Furs, gems, gold, hunting, iron, leather, silver, timber, tin.

Affiliation: Horde.

Thunder Bluff was settled fairly recently by the tauren, who successfully drove out the marauding centaur from their lands. Thunder Bluff is the first city of its kind; for centuries, the tauren wandered the plains as nomads, unable to claim a permanent home. All Horde visitors are welcome here, and the expertise of the tauren in the fields of everything from leatherworking to shamanism, druidism to hunting are all taught here. Fortunately, the peaceful nature of the tauren also makes Thunder Bluff the most accessible of the major Horde cities to Alliance members, and I didn't have anywhere near the level of difficulty getting in here that I did at Orgrimmar.

Thunder Bluff's location makes it resistant to enemy attack. Visitors must either ride wyverns to one of the four towering mesas that make up Thunder Bluff, or be lifted via rope and wood elevators, an invention unique to the tauren. I was impressed by the ingenuity of the tauren in creating these simple elevators, and I suspect that given time and the interest, the tauren might develop the same interest in engineering that dwarves and gnomes possess. Of course, they would have to study with us for a while first, and that is sadly impossible with the current hostilities.

People and Culture

I was amazed at how similar Thunder Bluff *felt* to the night elf city of Darnassus; the two druidic races have a great deal in common. While the tauren are concerned with the nearby dwarven excavation site, most are friendly, and they offered me the blessings of the spirits. And speaking of spirits, the shamans here conjure them openly, leaving little doubt to the power of their magic. I asked one of the elders about the difference between the magic of their druids and shamans, and he explained that they were like two sides of the same coin. That explanation didn't really help much, so I asked him

to elaborate, and from what I gathered, the druids seem to focus on plants and nature more, and the shamans deal with animals and the raw elements. A fine line — I suspect even some of the druids and shamans probably get confused.

The tauren constantly work to improve and expand their massive city, which explains how it appeared practically out of thin air. While some tauren probably regret their departure from a nomadic lifestyle, they all are proud to finally have a home and spend much of their time trying to make it better. They also are thrilled to have the help of a good number of orcs and trolls, but less thrilled at the presence of the Forsaken, who they grudgingly tolerate due to their alliance. As I understand it, the tauren place a strong emphasis on the value of life, and the unlife of the Forsaken stands as an affront to their beliefs. I can definitely agree with them on that one.

Geography

Thunder Bluff is composed of four towering mesas, or rises. The only entrances from the plains below are elevators leading to the central platform. The central rise is connected to the others through large wooden bridges.

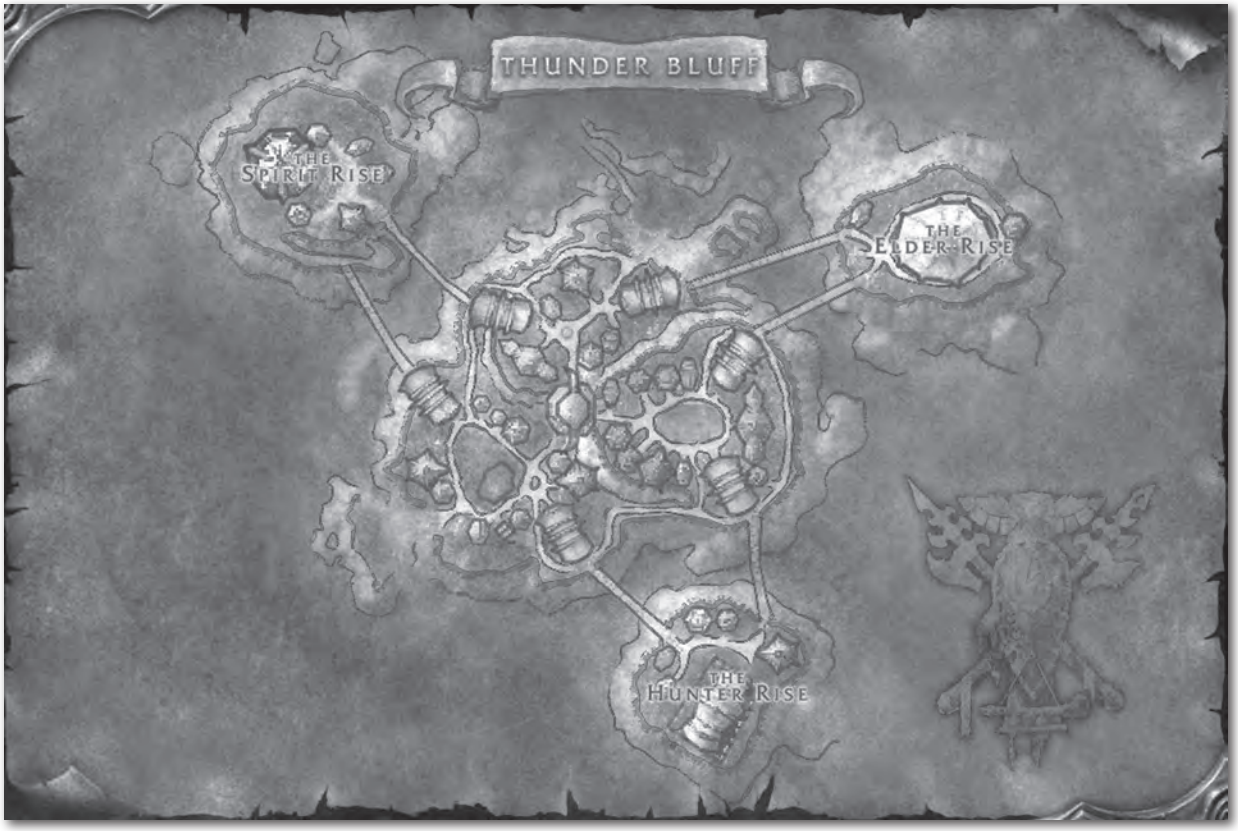
Thunder Bluff is located in the far north of Mulgore, among the sprawling flatlands of the Golden Plains. Due to its height, the air around Thunder Bluff is thinner than at ground level, but not to the point of being uncomfortable. Mount Hyjal was much, much worse. The weather is almost always warm and sunny, with intermittent breezes carried in from the Barrens.

Sites and Settlements

The various rises in Thunder Bluff act a bit like neighborhoods or quarters in a human city,

Central Rise: On this rise one may find the inn, bank, flight tower and court of Cairne Bloodhoof. As such, this rise also serves as the center of commerce for Thunder Bluff, and perhaps the most important section for visitors. I spoke to the chieftain only briefly, and our conversation was simple. He echoed Thrall's message of a willingness to have peace, and I specifically asked that he allow the nearby dwarves to continue their excavation, explaining that they were searching for relics of their ancestors and creators. The mighty tauren seemed to accept this explanation to an extent, but he stated that he would not permit them to damage the land without restriction. I suggested he send a group of his own people to work with the dwarves in exchange for making sure that the land was properly cared for, and he agreed to bring my offer to his council of elders for discussion.

Cairne seemed distracted during our conversation, as if lost in thought on other matters. I did not find



this rude, but rather, it seemed intriguing. Cairne's age shows, but I doubt that is what was slowing him. I learned a bit more about what might be bugging him when I moved on to the Elder Rise.

Elder Rise: The northeastern rise is the home of Hamuul Runetotem, master druid of the Horde. I spoke to Hamuul about the tauren and the night elves working together in Moonglade, and he did not seem pleased. When pressed, he explained that he was grateful that some of the elves work with his people, but one night elf —Archdruid Fandral Staghelm — has greatly offended the tauren by stating that only night elves can be "true" druids. Staghelm needs to get his head screwed on a bit tighter; it's people like him that perpetuate our struggles.

"Elder Crone" Magatha Grimtotem also resides here, close enough to the hall of the Council of Elders to engage in political maneuvering. Apparently "Elder Crone" is actually a title of respect among the tauren, as far as I can tell — must have lost something in the translation. The Grimtotem clan adopts a harsh stance against the other races of the world and cares little for Cairne's peacekeeping ways. Rumors allude to dark affiliations among the Grimtotems. Some even suggest that the Grimtotems wish to bring about Cairne's downfall. If Cairne is suspicious of the Grimtotems' motives, he has so far not openly expressed it.

Hunter Rise: Warriors and hunters travel here from all across the land to sharpen their skills and further their training. Like elves, tauren tend to prefer bows and other simple weapons to rifles. I considered teaching them the value of a good gun until I remembered that they might be using them against us. It's easy to get caught up in the peaceful nature of the tauren city and forget minor details like that.

Hunter Rise is located on the southeastern side of Thunder Bluff.

Pools of Vision: Located within a tunnel system just below the cap of Spirit Rise, the Pools of Vision serve as the Forsaken base of operations at Thunder Bluff. It is said that the misty, luminous pools reveal visions to those who can channel their energies. Here the Forsaken collect and study items of arcane power. I avoided this area, but in the little time I spent there, I noted the Forsaken practicing their trademark talent of alchemy as well — and that can never be a good sign.

Spirit Rise: Here the arts of shamanism are practiced and handed down to young tauren initiates. Spirit Rise is located on the northwest side of Thunder Bluff.

History

The centaur were driving the tauren out of their homeland around the time of the Third War. When Thrall and his Horde arrived on the continent, an alliance was forged between the Horde and the tauren. Following the defeat of Archimonde and the end of the war, Thrall helped the tauren rout the centaur and reclaim their land. Shortly thereafter the tauren founded the city of Thunder Bluff and began the process of settling into their old surroundings and repairing the ecological damage the centaur had wrought. Thunder Bluff grows and expands at a tremendous rate.

Adventures

The tauren city is mostly peaceful, but the elders here offer many young travelers some of their first missions.

A Grim Fate: Magatha Grimtotem asks the PCs to gather reagents for her to create a potion. When the PCs return with the reagents, they learn that Magatha has been working with the Forsaken on some sort of alchemical project; the PCs must decide if they trust the crone enough to hand over the ingredients. If not, the Forsaken try to take the items by force.

Before heading into southern Kalimdor, I stopped in Theramore for supplies. Naturally, this meant tossing back a few ales in the city's sole surviving tavern, which is about all I can say about the establishment. I suppose putting things like defensive towers and walls back together is more important to humans than wetting one's whistle. Sometimes I don't think I'll ever understand these people.

Still, I can't say they didn't brew an interesting throat-burner or two. The food was… exotic — especially the stuff cooked up from critters found in the swamp. I remember one dish called "Mudrock Soup and Bugs" that — well, I think I'll spare you the details. Suffice to say it slid down easy, and came right back out just as fast.

In any event, I was telling some locals of my recent trip to Thunder Bluff, and was surprised to see them all simply nodding in agreement instead of gazing at me in the typical wide-eyed wonder displayed by those who foolishly choose not to become explorers. They told me of Thuran Whitewind, a scout who'd been many places on Kalimdor in service to Jaina Proudmoore's forces. Apparently he already spilled the beans about the wonders I'd seen, because he saw them first! Well, naturally I had to meet this man as soon as possible. Much to my good fortune he was in town at the time, delivering a report, and I sought him out that evening.

Thuran initially ignored me, but when I gave him my name, he opened up. I learned that this tall, lanky fellow had been all over Kalimdor, mostly in the north, collecting information. That is to say, he is a spy. Not that there's anything wrong with that, really. I've met some very nice spies in my time.

With his lips properly moistened, I got him to tell me a bit about the south, where I was going next — an area about which I knew little. Until this meeting, I had expected to be learning only as I traveled. Thuran gave me just what I needed, which was an overview I'll summarize here.

He told me of five major regions southern Kalimdor: Feralas, Thousand Needles, Tanaris, Un'Goro Crater, and Silithus. Of these, Thuran purported to have visited the first three, and knew only bits and pieces about the last two. In addition to being the hardest to reach, they are also uncivilized. I decided to visit them last.

Southern Kalimdor is by far the wildest area of the continent. Much of its lands are uncharted, and there are few settlements larger than small towns. Ancient ruins dating back to the Sundering — and earlier — dot the landscape. The terrain varies from thick forests and jungles to vast desert wastelands or bleak salt flats. The creatures that dwell there

are vicious and deadly. One should not venture forth into the south without plenty of supplies and good, strong weapons at his side.

These were just some of the tidbits I learned in my few hours spent chatting with Thuran Whitewind. Most importantly, however, I was able to gather enough information to piece together a planned travel route. I would begin my travels in the lush forest land of Feralas.

Heat Dangers

Heat deals nonlethal damage that cannot be recovered until the character gets cooled off (reaches shade, survives until nightfall, gets doused in water, is targeted by certain spells, and so forth). Once rendered unconscious through the accumulation of nonlethal damage, the character begins to take lethal damage at the same rate.

A character in very hot conditions (above 90° F) must make a Fortitude saving throw each hour (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. Characters wearing heavy clothing or armor of any sort take a –4 penalty on their saves. A character with the Survival skill may receive a bonus on this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well (see **WoW RPG,** Chapter 5: Skills). Characters reduced to unconsciousness begin taking lethal damage (1d4 points per hour).

In severe heat (above 110° F), a character must make a Fortitude save once every 10 minutes (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. Characters wearing heavy clothing or armor of any sort take a –4 penalty on their saves. A character with the Survival skill may receive a bonus on this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well. Characters reduced to unconsciousness begin taking lethal damage (1d4 points per each 10-minute period).

A character who takes any nonlethal damage from heat exposure now suffers from heatstroke and is fatigued.

These penalties end when the character recovers the nonlethal damage she took from the heat.

Extreme heat (air temperature over 140° F, fire, boiling water, lava) deals lethal damage. Breathing air in these temperatures deals 1d6 points of damage per minute (no save). In addition, a character must make a Fortitude save every 5 minutes (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. Those wearing heavy clothing or any sort of armor take a –4 penalty on their saves.

Boiling water deals 1d6 points of scalding damage, unless the character is fully immersed, in which case it deals 10d6 points of damage per round of exposure.

Feralas

Population: 2,200 (35% ogre, 30% tauren, 20% night elf, 15% naga).

Government: Tribal.

Rulers: Shandris Feathermoon, Sentinel-General of Feathermoon Stronghold (female night elf warrior 6/mounted warrior 4/night elf 2); Gordok, King of the Gordok Ogres (male ogre warrior 14); Shalzaru, Hatecrest Lord (male naga mage 15).

Major Settlements: Camp Mojache (360), Dire Maul (300), Feathermoon Stronghold (240), Isle of Dread (180).

Languages: Common, Low Common, Nazja, Taurahe, Thalassian.

Faiths: Holy Light, shamanism.

Resources: Minerals, timber.

Affiliation: Contested.

At first I thought Feralas wouldn't be so bad. I began my journey by returning to Desolace, in central Kalimdor. A friendly gryphon master was able to arrange a flight for me to Nijel's Point, from which I began my journey by traveling southwest through the Kodo Graveyard then toward the pass to Feralas.

As I topped that rise the next morning, I beheld an amazing sight: a lush valley, filled with enough ancient trees to make any elf weep with joy. Best of all, towering amid them almost to the clouds stood two massive peaks topped with flat, square plateaus. I resolved that I would find a way to the summit of one of these colossal spires, so that I could see the entire land spread before me.

I spent the better part of that day circling the peaks, fending off wild creatures and avoiding the stony giants that lumbered through the area on strange, silent missions. I didn't find a way to climb more than a few dozen feet up the slippery slopes. Finally, as evening approached, I came across a cloaked night elf in the foliage. His green eyes glinted with humor as he admitted to having watched me in my futile quest. He asked if I wished to see the summit — which of course I did — then he waved his hands, uttered some mystical words, and poof! There I was, shivering in a cold breeze atop one of the windswept plateaus.

What a strange fellow he was. I never did catch his name….

Thus it was that I spent that sunset looking out across the land of Feralas. Cutting through the thick forest, a road descended into the valley to the south, before turning east and disappearing from view. Further east, amid the thick treetops, stone ruins jutted up like bony fingers. Westward, the land ended at the graceful curve of a beach, beyond which two large islands were visible along the horizon. I spotted the mast of a ship against the pink backdrop.

People and Culture

With the exception of the night elves of Feathermoon, most residents of Feralas are what we civilized folk consider barbaric. They live in simple dwellings or holes in the ground, and wear whatever they can create using simple tools and whatever they can gather from their environment. Higher technologies, such as stonecutting and metalwork, are virtually unknown. The elves, of course, bring their own supplies and society with them, but they are not truly natives of this land.

The tauren of Camp Mojache are the most civilized of the bunch, but still remain true to their tribal roots. They live in cone-shaped huts made of animal skins stretched out around a single, stiff pole. They are hunter-gatherers by nature and treat their surroundings with respect.

Ogres, by far the worst menace in the area, are scavengers and squatters. Some dwell in the traditional mounds used by such creatures across Azeroth, but others occupy the Highborne ruins. They hate anything that isn't an ogre (and sometimes even that doesn't stop them), so if you venture close to Dire Maul or one of their other dwellings, expect to be attacked.

Geography

Feralas is a lush, L-shaped valley stretching from Desolace in the north to touch the ocean to the west, and finally stretching eastward more than halfway across Kalimdor to the fringe of Thousand Needles. A ridge of mountains almost bisects the area, ending abruptly at the ancient Highborne city now known as Dire Maul. Off the coast are two large islands, Sardor Isle (which hosts Feathermoon Stronghold) and the Isle of Dread, where naga lurk.

The climate is subtropical, with most days warm and humid and rainfall plentiful. The forests are technically jungles by any scientific description, but they pale in comparison to those of Un'Goro Crater. All manner of wild creatures can be found here, including such carnivores as wolves, bears and hippogryphs. Intelligent life also abounds, from the borderline "smart animals" known as yeti to the feral, bloodthirsty gnolls, and of course the ever-present ogres that dominate the high wilderness. Watch out also for isolated pockets of cruel satyrs and harpies, either of whom will kill you first, eat you second, and ask questions last.

The Dream Bough: In the northwest, east of the Twin Colossals and shrouded in mist, lies Jademir Lake. Within is the Dream Bough. In my first night in Feralas, spent upon that cold and windswept peak, I couldn't see the place, so I missed it in my travels the next day. This proved fortunate, as the green dragonflight guards the area — or so the elves of Feathermoon explained. A druid I met there told me that she once made a pilgrimage there, and while the dragons didn't eat her on sight, they turned her away without explanation. She believes they guard a portal of some sort, perhaps to the Emerald Dream.

The Twin Colossals: These great mesas represent the highest point in Feralas.

Sites and Settlements

There are no major cities or towns in Feralas, a trait that proved pretty much true throughout all of southern Kalimdor.

Camp Mojache (village, 360): If you want to see a fine example of what a "civilized barbarian" looks like, here's the place to go. The tauren of

this village dress in simple animal skins, live in flimsy huts, and dance in strange mystic rituals beyond my understanding. Yet in their own way they're as civilized as us. They have a written language, practice leatherworking and tailoring, and understand their environment better than I ever could. They also love to tell stories. I could've stayed there for weeks, but they warned me of the rainy season quickly approaching. So I scooted — but not before learning they were the main reason the ogres hadn't taken over all of Feralas. The tauren, it seems, are involved in an endless effort to keep the ogres from encroaching on their lands. I can't help but wonder — if we were to help them defeat the ogres, could we call upon these tauren as allies in our own conflict?

Dire Maul (ruin, 300): This used to be an elven city called Eldre'Thalas. It boasts towering ruins of marble, with statues carved larger than even those in Ironforge or Stormwind. Those took some serious craftsmanship, but all are broken now. I pressed on, dodging ogres when I could and slaying others, but all for naught — in the great courtyard at the center of the ruins, there was nowhere to hide. Sure, I can take on three or four ogres at a time, but a horde of them? I beat feet! I did spot several promising doorways to other parts of the city, though — and one of these days I'll pass through them.

Feathermoon Stronghold (fortress, 240): Overseen by Shandris Feathermoon, this stronghold is the only Alliance-held region in Feralas. The night elf outpost mainly occupies itself with searching for artifacts among the Highborne ruins and investigating the presence of the naga to the south. The stronghold is located off the west coast of Feralas, on Sardor Isle. Friendly but distant, these elves.

Isle of Dread: Directly south of Sardor Isle, across a narrow channel, lies this place, home to ancient ruins from the Sundering. The night elves of Feathermoon studied them until recently, when naga of the Hatecrest tribe showed up and moved in. Shandris Feathermoon is sure the Hatecrest are up to no good — a safe bet. Whatever they're looking for in that place, it bodes ill.

Writhing Deep: Giant bugs, the elves said, inhabit this strange ruin in the southern part of the wilderness. I took a side trip there and looked it over, but it was no ruin — more like a purple blot on the landscape, with gigantic insect legs sticking out of it! I got close enough to see there really were massive bugs flying and crawling around this place.

The Legend of Feralas

Back in the days before the Sundering, the land we now call Feralas was part of a great valley that stretched across south-central Kalimdor, reaching as far east as the lake that is now the Shimmering Flats. Queen Azshara's servitors, the Highborne, dwelled here, and the city of Eldre'Thalas was their capital. Within its walls, the elves lived in peace. Among them was a group of powerful arcanists known as the Shen'dralar.

Then the Sundering occurred, and the Highborne found themselves cut off from the Well of Eternity. Without their powers, they became lethargic and seemed doomed to entropy. The great elven prince Tortheldrin determined that they needed a new source of mystical power, and the only way to get this power was by stealing it from their enemies, the demons.

To this end he constructed a network of pylons intended to harness magical forces, thereby forming a force field capable of permanently confining a mighty demon, which the elves could use to feed their thirst for magic. They summoned and trapped the demon Immol'thar, and for centuries the plan worked. Despite his attempts, Immol'thar could not escape his prison, and the elves siphoned his energies.

Yet Tortheldrin didn't foresee that the demon's power had limits. After thousands of years, the supply faded. The elven prince, by now driven mad with his lust for power, solved the problem by slaying most of the Shen'dralar arcanists, forcing those he spared to continue channeling energy into the pylons so Immol'thar would remain confined.

Even this wasn't enough for Tortheldrin. With no other arcanists draining energy from the demon, he was able to absorb its power for himself. In doing so he has increased his own strength to almost unimaginable levels, but only so long as he remains where he is. Thus Immol'thar remains confined, the arcanists remain Tortheldrin's slaves, and the once beautiful city of Eldre'thalas has become an ogre-infested ruin.

A hive of some sort. Ick. Insects have no history or culture, so I can't say I was particularly intrigued. I made a couple of sketches of the hive, then was on my way. I found out later that the locals refer to the insects as "silithid." This would not be my last encounter with them. Unfortunately.

History

While I was in Feathermoon, I heard a legend about Feralas's history, and I can't help but wonder if it's true. It probably is, although I never got far enough to find out for sure. Most legends, after all, are based in truth.

Adventures

Feralas is a wild place, filled with creatures that would as soon eat you as look at you.

The Lost Messenger: A messenger recently attempted to reach Feathermoon from Gadgetzan, but never arrived. The messenger was carrying a sealed pouch containing written documents vital to the night elves of Feathermoon. The heroes are sent to track down the missing package, which disappeared somewhere between Camp Mojache and Feathermoon. Did ogres or gnolls ambush the poor messenger? Or is his body now wrapped up in a cocoon in Writhing Deep?

Silithus

Population: 800 (30% tauren, 20% night elf, 20% orc, 20% troll, 10% human).

Government: None.

Rulers: Layo Starstrike, Cenarion Circle agent (male night elf druid 15); Twilight Lord Everun (male tauren warlock 18).

Major Settlements: Twilight Base Camp (640), Valor's Rest (160).

Languages: Darnassian, Low Common, Orcish, Zandali.

Faiths: Ancients, druidism, Old Gods.

Resources: Gems, minerals.

Affiliation: None.

Silithus was my last stop in southern Kalimdor. Having already spent several months in hot places, I was resigned to continuing to do so, and I was not disappointed. A friend in Un'Goro showed me a barely noticeable path leading up the northwestern edge of the crater into the forsaken area known as Silithus. Intelligent humanoid hands clearly cut this path, which picked its way through rocks and the immense boles of trees. I followed it slowly and with difficulty, but without it, I doubt I could've made the ascent.

As I climbed out of the jungle, the air became drier, but no less warm. Soon I found myself facing another bleak, desolate, windswept desert.

Almost immediately upon arrival I spotted a gryphon in the distance, coming in for a landing. Following its path I came to a small outpost of night elves — absolutely the last people I expected to find in what was surely the bleakest, most remote section of all Kalimdor! Yet here they were, and judging by the buildings they'd constructed, they'd been here for a while.

Well, not so, as I learned later. They occupy a night elven ruin they fixed up. Apparently the land now called Silithus was once occupied by the elves, in the days before the Sundering. This outpost was manned by the Cenarion Circle, a band of druids concerned with keeping the land in balance. They spoke to me of their fears — that the silithid present a major threat to all Kalimdor, and perhaps the entire world.

I hadn't seen any evidence of such a threat so far. The hives I ran across in Feralas, Tanaris and Un'Goro keep to themselves. They are small and occupy desolate places nobody wants to be. Here in Silithus, though, there is evidence of intelligent movement by the bugs. The Cenarion Circle is here to observe and report on this activity.

Perhaps in the hopes of enlisting Ironforge aid, they were more than happy to show me around this dry, desolate place.

People and Culture

There are only two non-insect groups in Silithus: the Cenarion elves, and a group of little-understood malcontents called the Twilight's Hammer. These people, mostly Horde but with a few humans, far outnumber the druids. Fortunately they keep to themselves, performing strange rituals and digging through ruins. They spend most of their time fighting insects for access to ancient Kaldorei cities, caring little for the fate of travelers.

Fortunately for me, I'm a pretty diplomatic sort

I want to be. I managed to convince them to let me into their camp for the night, where I spoke to some of the humans about their goals. They were guarded at first, but after some stories and the last of the ale from Marshal's Refuge, they loosened up. Apparently their main purpose here is to locate and recover massive ancient crystals located deep under the desert sands. Why they're doing this, I don't know, but later on I ran into one of the crystals in the desert. I could only view it from a distance, but it resembled the rune-covered black spires that float in mid-air near Un'Goro. I'm unsure as to the significance of the crystal, but see a sketch in appendix 15.

Geography

Silithus is a wasteland similar to Tanaris but without friendly goblins providing water. Still, rain falls frequently enough to maintain a greater diversity of life than found in, say, the Shimmering Flats. Furthermore, the plant life soaks up and stores water, so travelers can find what they need by harvesting the hardy cacti that dot the landscape.

The worst threats in Silithus are the frequent windstorms and towering dust funnels, which form as gusts snake their way through the broken rocks and sheer cliffs that dot the landscape. Worse, rogue air and earth elementals lurk in the corners, striking at living creatures. Fortunately these creatures stay mostly in the deep desert, away from settlements and cautious travelers.

Crystal Vale: Apparently not all the Twilight's Hammer followers are the skilled warlocks they purport to be. While in the Twilight Base Camp I heard a story about this place, where a warlock called Highlord Demitrian got a bit greedy raising those crystals I mentioned earlier. Seems he tried to enslave a powerful air elemental called Thunderaan, but got caught himself. Now he and his men serve the wind elemental, searching the area for some talisman.

The Scarab Wall: Bisecting the region is a massive, slippery barrier called the Scarab Wall. Standing a hundred feet high, this impassible obstruction stretches between the mountains from west to east. The lands beyond, which I could see only by climbing a high cliff some distance away, appear much the same as the rest of Silithus — dry, windswept desert. The elves called the area beyond the Scarab Wall "Ahn'Qiraj," but I'm not sure what it means. The elves advised I steer clear; that's advice I would have ignored had there

Highlord Demitrian, 12th-Level Shaman

Male Human: CR 12; Medium humanoid (human); HD 12d8, hp 92; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +9; Grp +9; Atk +13 melee (1d6+3, *Kaldorei channeling staff*); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d6+3, *Kaldorei channeling staff*); SA flametongue/frostbrand, purge, spells; SQ Elements domain (greater), ghostwolf, Spirits domain (lesser); AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 11, Agy 14, Sta 15, Int 10, Spt 21, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Low Common.

Skills: Craft (alchemy) +17, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (religion) +15, Spellcraft +17, Survival +18.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (medium), Armor Proficiency (heavy), Brew Potion, Brilliant Leadership, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Enlarge Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Penetration, Weapon Focus (staff).

Shaman Spells (7/6/5/5/4/4/3; save DC 15 + spell level): Demitrian's high Spirit score and his ranks in Spellcraft allow him to prepare 16 spells per level; he can prepare most of the spells on the shaman spell list.

Domain Spells (caster level 12th): 1st — *bless*; 2nd — *fog cloud*; 3rd — *frost nova*, 4th — *control water*, 5th — *fire shield*, 6th — *chain lightning*.

Domains: Elements (Demitrian casts Elements spells as a 13th-level caster; elemental resistance aura 1/day for 6 rounds [allies within 15 feet gain energy resistance 11]) and Spirits (Demitrian casts Spirits spells as a 13th-level caster).

Possessions: +2 plate mail, Kaldorei channeling staff, periapt of Spirit +4, potion of cure serious wounds, potion of lightning guardians,* spell component pouch.

* See **More Magic & Mayhem** for descriptions of these magic items.

Description

This man is tall and powerful-looking, with sharply chiseled features.

Demitrian was recruited at an early age by the Twilight's Hammer, who found in him a willing and able student of the shaman's arts — a rare feature in a human. He grew quickly in rank and power, earning the rank of highlord at an unusually young age. Unfortunately, his brashness led to overconfidence. While serving at a post in the Crystal Vale in Silithus, he learned secret ways to soothe and control the enraged air elementals there. Convinced he could bend any elemental to his will, he dared to assault an enormous wind elemental called Thunderaan. Instead of taking control of the elemental, Demitrian fell under its sway. Soon after, the forces of air demolished the Twilight's Hammer outpost, but Demitrian was allowed to live as Thunderaan's servant. Now he searches for the remaining essences of his master, torn from him by Ragnaros in ages past.

actually been a way to breach or climb the Scarab Wall. I can do many things, but taking flight isn't one of them. Some day, I'll return with a mage, and we'll both swoop over the wall to unearth some secrets and piss off some ancient evils — business as usual.

Southwind Village: This was once a night elf city, before the Sundering. The elves in Valor's Rest occupy a small outpost of this ancient town, restoring much of it to a livable state. The remainder of Southwind is overrun by silithid. Ghosts of tortured residents also roam the sand-blasted streets.

Sites and Settlements

There are really only two settlements in Silithus: Valor's Rest and the Twilight Base Camp, which doesn't even have a name as far as I can tell. The Twilight's Hammer has other outposts scattered here and there, including one in Crystal Vale, but they are nothing more than watchtowers and a couple of tents.

Hive Ashi, Hive Regal and Hive Zora: These are the three major silithid hives in Silithus, located in the north, southeast and midwest respectively. Unlike the Gorashi silithid of Un'Goro, these insects are tolerant of visitors. As my elven guides demonstrated, as long as you don't present yourself in a threatening manner, you can approach right up to the edge of the hives and even get a look inside. That's when I changed my outlook on the silithid — they aren't mindless bugs. As I suspected back in Un'Goro, they're intelligent and social. They communicate, maintain ranks, undertake rituals, and even trade with the neighboring communities. The one thing they don't do is talk, so I couldn't open up a dialogue with them. I have to say, though, that the silithid worry me. If their bug minds ever turned to expansion, they could be a grave threat, just as the Cenarion elves believe. Just what we need — another enemy.

Twilight Base Camp (village, 640): This village is made up mostly of trolls, tauren and orcs. A low wall surrounds a ramshackle cluster of huts

and burrows. A single well in the center provides water. Most of the residents are warlocks or other arcane types, seeking crystals under the sands for some obscure purpose I couldn't figure out. When I reported my findings to the elves, they frowned and shook their heads. It's a mystery.

Valor's Rest (camp, 160): This former elven ruin is now occupied almost exclusively by night elves of the Cenarion Circle. From here they keep an eye on silithid and Twilight's Hammer activities, sometimes venturing into nearby ruins. They're also the ones who cut the path down into Un'Goro — the path I followed on my way out — chiefly to aid in resupplying themselves. I guess eating silithid meat just isn't all that appealing.

History

Now, what I'm about to tell you is all second-hand information and speculation based on notes I dug out of Kaldorei books from various libraries. So don't quote me, but this history is as accurate as I can get it.

Long ago, before the Sundering, there were two troll empires: the Gurubashi and the Amani. I've located Gurubashi ruins in Stranglethorn Vale, so I know there's some truth to this. Anyway, at some point in their history, the trolls found themselves threatened by an insect race called the Azj'Aqir. Eventually the trolls beat back the creatures and split them into two factions, the nerubians in the north and the qiraji to the south. The nerubians eventually faced the Lich King in Northrend, and the qiraji fought the night elves in Silithus after the Sundering. The elves won, but the land was blasted by the war, and the elven towns were left in ruins. Thus you have the smashed remnants of Southwind, and several other smaller elf villages scattered throughout the region.

After this I can only speculate. I know for certain that the silithid are *not* the same as the qiraji, which, the tales have it, walked upright like men. The Scarab Wall was built either by the elves to keep the surviving qiraji out, or by the qiraji to keep themselves safe from the elves. Nobody knows or remembers.

The elves of the Cenarion Circle think the silithid aren't just intelligent, they're part of some sort of grand plan by the qiraji, or some other as yet unknown force.

Adventures

As with any desert, you'd better bring along a supply of water if you expect to survive. I wouldn't count on a lot of hospitality from the natives, either. The elves keep to themselves, and the Twilight's Hammer won't give up supplies cheaply. You're on your own in this place.

Crystal Collecting: Word has traveled about the mysterious crystals the Twilight's Hammer collects, and a group of mages from Dalaran want a sample or two to find out what's so important about the huge things. They dispatch the heroes to acquire a few chunks of Silithus crystal. Certainly the Twilight's Hammer won't give up such a sample without a fight. Or will they?

Tanaris

Population: 3,000 (40% goblin, 25% human, 15% Sandfury troll, 10% Dunemaul ogre, 10% gnome).

Government: None.

Rulers: Chief Engineer Bilgewhizzle of the Gadgetzan Waterworks Company (male goblin tinker 8), Andre Firebeard, leader of the Southsea Pirates (male human rogue 8/buccaneer* 7); Caliph Scorpidsting, leader of the Wastewander Bandits (male human rogue 10/warrior 2).

* See Chapter 9: New Rules.

Major Settlements: Gadgetzan (1,500), Steamwheedle Port (500), Lostrigger Cove (400).

Languages: Common, Gnome, Goblin, Low Common, Zandali.

Faith: Shamanism.

Resources: Artifacts, technology, water.

Affiliation: Neutral.

After leaving the Mirage Raceway in Thousand Needles, I headed south toward Tanaris. After enduring a couple of salt windstorms, and dodging basilisks all the way, I finally came to the pass through the hills to Tanaris, where Gadgetzan awaited. I climbed the hills, looking forward to getting out of the desert at last, and finally I crested the ridge to look down upon —

Another desert.

Yep, that's right, Tanaris is a desert too. All shifting sands and rocky wasteland, as if somebody

huge just poured the Shimmering Flats' sands on top of the solid floor of Thousand Needles. The only thing that raised my spirits was that Gadgetzan was in sight. And what a sight it was: a metal-walled town, with rusted buildings, giant moving wheels, and smoke rising from chimneys all about. I could hear the hammering and grinding from at least a mile away, where I stood gazing out at Tanaris.

Wearily I made my way into town, and found myself amid people of all races. Now, I've been to Booty Bay and you've heard me talk about the way you can run into all sorts of people there. Gadgetzan was much the same thing. I saw elves, humans, dwarves, goblins, gnomes, trolls, and even an ogre in the streets, all moving about on whatever business brought them to this busy place. I soon came to learn that they arrived via wyvern or gryphon — there are both sorts of masters here, keeping their camps outside the city walls, opposite each other.

I went to the bar, and as you might imagine it was a rollicking place. I heard stories there that you wouldn't believe, and I told some of mine as well. The information I got that night probably saved my life several times in the upcoming days. For example, I learned that if you get too close to the coast in the wrong place, the sea giants come out and make a meal of you. I chalked that one up in the "good to know" category.

I also learned that, in Tanaris, water is a precious commodity — more precious than gold, really. I had to *buy* some in Gadgetzan. Imagine — having to buy water in bottles! Why, next thing you know I'll be buying bottled air!

Yet the reason for bottled water was clear later on — there are no easily attainable sources of water anywhere in Tanaris, and bringing it in by ship or trade route is more expensive than sinking wells. So that's what the goblins and gnomes do — build wells across the desert to farm fresh water. The Gadgetzan Waterworks Company, or GWC, runs the whole operation, without which just about everybody in Tanaris would die of thirst. So most everybody leaves the wells alone, except for some annoying bandits. Wastewander Bandits, they're called. You have to watch out for them, or they kill you, steal your water, and then — if the rumors I heard were true — they "distill" your body, draining all the liquid out for their own use.

Needless to say, wandering the desert alone with these guys around is risky at best. For the better part of my explorations here, I traveled with a GWC patrol that agreed to be my guides. Thanks boys, and I'm raising a glass to you!

People and Culture

The two towns of Tanaris, Gadgetzan and Steamwheedle Port, were built and are manned mostly by goblins, with some gnomes helping out here and there. Almost all of them work for the Gadgetzan Waterworks Company. Gathering water, or making devices to improve their water-collecting methods, dominates their lives. From what I saw, they had thought of everything: deeper wells, methods to make it rain, condensation devices, plans to draw the salt out of seawater, even an insanely long pipe running all the way to the closest spring in Thousand Needles. How they were going to pull that one off, I have no idea, but that's the way goblins think.

Outside the cities, the need for water is still key, but the means to get it differ. The Wastewander Bandits steal it, while the Dunemaul ogres and Sandfury trolls control the only natural wells in the region. The Southsea Pirates get theirs by raiding, or simply sailing further up the coast to resupply. If it weren't for them, the GWC could ship in supplies from Steamwheedle — but the pirates intercept most shipping these days, so until they're dealt with, things will stay as they are.

One interesting thing I learned, although I didn't experience it myself, is that about twice a year actual rain falls on Tanaris. When this happens, it's not just a drizzle, but an intense downpour that lasts for hours. The few scraggly plants that survive in the desert do so chiefly because of this tiny bit of moisture, but for the residents of Gadgetzan, it's a cause for celebration. The entire town comes to a stop, and a holiday breaks out. Everyone collects as much water as they can, and then it's an all-day and all-night party. Part of the celebration's appeal is its unpredictability. If you're ever so fortunate as to be in Gadgetzan on a Rainy Day, you'll have to tell me all about it — over a pint of ale, naturally.

Geography

Like Thousand Needles, Tanaris is a desert; but unlike the barren rocks to the northwest, this desert is made up of sand dunes. From a distance, in fact, it resembles an ocean, except the waves are brown and don't move. When the wind kicks up, though, intense storms result, causing the dunes to change position and shape. If you visit Tanaris one month, you might come back the next and find that everything has moved around.

Gadgetzan and Steamwheedle Port, as well as the troll city of Zul'Farrak, are located up near the edge of the northern mountains. Because the

winds blow out in the plains, theses settlements are usually spared the shifting sands treatment. Still, everywhere you go there's going to be sand. Expect to be picking it out of your clothes all the time, and especially your boots. I learned the trick of putting leather inserts in your boot cuffs, but even that doesn't work all the time.

Although there isn't a lot of life in the desert, what you find there is hardy. It has to be, in order to survive. I saw scorpids, buzzards, elementals and hyenas while I traveled, all of which were masters at finding water. If they couldn't get it from a well, they simply caught and killed something for its blood. Nice.

The northern edge of Tanaris is blocked by steep hills, running all the way to the edge of Un'Goro Crater to the west and the ocean to the east. A few scattered hills and mountains litter the landscape, but mostly it's just open dunes everywhere you look. In the southwest, near the Thistleshrub Valley, there is a sloping path into Un'Goro.

Thistleshrub Valley: One of the lowest spots in Tanaris, this area lies on the southwestern edge of the region, near the only easy access to Un'Goro. Massive cacti and other desert plants dominate the area, a possible indication of water under the surface. Sadly, the location's proximity to the Dunemaul ogres makes it unsuitable for Waterworks wells. Furthermore, elementals protect the area — these are creatures of living vines, attacking anything that comes near. Only the huge tortoises of the desert are immune to their ire.

Sites and Settlements

There are only two settlements of note in Tanaris. Both are goblin controlled, although Gadgetzan is well traveled by all sorts of people. In addition to these places, trolls and ogres have smaller settlements.

The Caverns of Time: In the south, amid a mountain cluster, lies this mysterious place. Bronze dragons dwell here for reasons unknown. My guides led me close to the caves, but refused to enter for reasons that soon became clear. We saw, to our surprise, a dwarf coming out of the entrance. He grew closer — he looked a bit like me. He gave a wave and a smile, and told me that he entered the cave an hour ago to have a look around. That's when we both realized *he was me* — the caves sent him (me) back in time! Well, that was an interesting conversation, I can tell you. When it was done, I headed in, and when I came out — I had exactly the same conversation with myself again, from the opposite side! The other me then went in — and since I'd already came out, my little party went on our way. Is the other me going to encounter another me? How many mes are there? What does this place do to time? Creepy.

Rumors say that Nozdormu, the bronze dragon Aspect and Lord of time, makes his home here. I didn't see him inside, though; I saw multicolored walls, the occasional image of a piece of unrecognizable landscape, that sort of thing — and a small bronze dragon who ushered me out of the place. I'm not sure if I'll ever go back. I might come

The Scarabs of Zul'Farrak

Paraphrased from a letter by the goblin engineer Tran'rek in Gadgetzan

Scarabs are big, thick-shelled beetles that scuttle about the desert, digging under the sands at night and emerging during the day to… well, scuttle about, I guess!

A long time ago they were all over the place! But then the other goblins found out what I already knew — their shells are almost as strong as iron. I was making all sorts of things with them, and the best part was they don't conduct electricity or heat! So I can put them in my machines and not worry about them melting or shocking anybody who touches them.

Unfortunately, once those dolts at the Mirage Raceway found out about the scarabs, and they descended like buzzards! Soon the beetles were all gone. Nobody thought to keep a few alive for breeding — not that anybody ever figured out how they breed, anyway. So no more dampeners or insulators for me!

But wait! A few weeks ago I saw a troll in Gadgetzan with a necklace of scarabs! He wouldn't talk to me, but I know where he came from — Zul'Farrak! There must still be scarabs in that place! The trolls won't sell them to me, though. I think they're sacred or something. Primitive,

out a hundred years ago — or a thousand years from now!

Dunemaul Compound (village, 300): Basically a collection of huts set up around one of the few water holes in southern Tanaris, this place is home to the bronze-skinned Dunemaul ogres. Unlike most ogres, the Dunemauls keep to themselves, probably because traveling across the desert requires more water than they can spare. They don't like visitors, however. Fortunately for me, when I headed to Un'Goro Crater, I brought enough water to bribe the ogres into letting me pass. Perhaps they figured it was better to take the free water than fight me for it. I guess not all ogres are stupid, eh?

Gadgetzan (village, 1,500): This small, walled settlement is made almost entirely of metal, with some stone mixed in here and there. The dominant features are forges and a number of massive machines used to produce and cut metal structures, such as the many wells found throughout the desert. Apparently bandits knock them down almost as fast as goblins put them up, although why they would destroy a source of good water is beyond me. The skies above Gadgetzan are almost always choked with black smoke from the various machines that always operate, and you might want to bring a set of earplugs if you expect to get any sleep at night.

Gaping Chasm and Noxious Lair: These are two more of those weird insect hives of the sort I encountered in Feralas. These, though, are larger. My guides told me a Gadgetzan Waterworks Company explorer was lost in the Gaping Chasm, so we fought off a couple of bugs and entered the small cave system, but other than some yucky slime walls and strange light-emitting insects, we didn't find anything. One of the creatures poisoned one of our party, so we headed back to town for the night. I never did find out what happened to that poor goblin, but the way his skin turned all purple, I had no intention of going near one of those silithid hives again….

Steamwheedle Port (village, 500): This small village is home to a more sedate population of goblins and peaceful trolls, who spend most of their time fishing and fighting off Southsea Pirates. They have several machines set up to turn salt water into fresh water, but these work only on rare occasions. The residents fixed us some of the best seafood meals I've had, even outpacing the elves of Rut'theran Village. You haven't lived until you've had a grilled winter squid! See appendix 12 for the recipe.

Zul'Farrak (village, 450): I didn't go into this place of brown adobe walls and mud-brick buildings, but I did climb a nearby hill to look down upon it. What I saw was similar to the troll places found half a world away in Stranglethorn Vale, which is amazing in itself. How did trolls separated for thousands of years build what was so obviously a new town, using the same construction methods known only to their ancestors thousands of years — and miles — away?

It's said that an ancient weapon, *Sul'thraze the Lasher,* is held by the trolls within Zul'Farrak, and another legend says that a mighty demigod sleeps within a sacred pool inside the village. These may just be stories told to fool the unwise visitor, but as I've said before, there is a grain of truth in any legend.

The Sandfury trolls didn't want to talk to me, as the minute I approached the wells outside the city, they attacked. I suspect one day they might pose a bigger threat to Gadgetzan than the GWC admits.

History

As anyone interested in the Mystery of the Makers knows, the Titans long ago created the world. Then, for whatever reason, the Titans disappeared, leaving behind only scattered remnants of their once mighty cities. It's said that Tanaris once housed one such city, a place known as Uldum. While I was in Gadgetzan, I heard talk of this place, but we were unable to locate it on our travels throughout the desert. Perhaps the sands cover it, or maybe Uldum is just another name for the Caverns of Time.

Tanaris was also once part of the Gurubashi Empire, a troll nation that existed long before the Sundering and once covered a great part of the world. The Sundering smashed this empire, separating the trolls into tiny fragments of their former greatness. While I don't believe Zul'Farrak to be a ruin of the Gurubashi, as it is too recent, it may have been built atop such a ruin.

As for the Caverns of Time, little is known about them. From everything I've learned about the place, it has always been there, a permanent landmark — surviving even changes as violent as the Sundering. Perhaps it exists outside of time itself, as a sage once suggested to me.

Adventures

If you venture into the desert, be aware that it's got little or no cover. If the bandits see you — and they will see you from a distance, trust me — they'll be waiting over the next sand dune. Oh, and that business about moving only at night? Good luck with that. There are almost never any clouds, so the

moonlight makes you stand out like a sore thumb. The worst creatures come out at night, too, like scorpids and silithid. Plus, it gets downright cold at night. Bring a blanket.

Thousand Needles

Strange Elixir: A goblin in Gadgetzan, Marin Noggenfogger, asks the heroes to bring back a water-laden dew gland from one of the plant elementals in Thistleshrub Valley. In exchange he'll give them all samples of his new concoction, *Noggenfogger elixir*. (See **More Magic & Mayhem** for details.) The heroes must then contend with a trip across the desert, duel ogres guarding their territory, and finally defeat an elemental to recover the gland.

Population: 5,000 (35% Galak centaur, 25% tauren, 15% harpy, 10% gnome, 10% goblin, 5% kobold).

Government: Tribal.

Rulers: Rau Cliffrunner, Overseer of Freewind Post (male tauren warrior 12/tauren 3); Arnak Grimtotem (male tauren warrior 14), Grenka Bloodscreech (female harpy rogue 12).

Major Settlements: Mirage Raceway (1,000), Roguefeather Den (750), Freewind Post (800), Darkcloud Pinnacle (450).

Languages: Common, Gnomish, Goblin, Low Common, Taur-ahe.

Faith: Shamanism.

Resources: Minerals, technology.

Affiliation: Horde.

After I made my way east from Camp Mojache in Feralas, I came to the border of Thousand Needles. The mountains to either side narrowed, and then, like a line drawn on a map, the sands of the desert appeared ahead. The forest of Feralas died abruptly at this line. So many places I've been in this world, and never have I seen a change of climate and terrain come so quickly. There has to be magic at work on that border, but if so I found no sign of it.

I met a few night elves at a camp, there on the green side of the border. They were guarding, of all things, a moonwell! Maybe that well was what held the desert back. If so, the elves didn't say. They did warn me, however, that the centaur and harpies of Thousand Needles were not to be trifled with. They pointed out a path, barely visible in the desert sands, that I should stick to, or so they claimed. I pretended to listen as I set off, but as soon as I made it around the first mesa, I was off to explore this strange place.

Thousand Needles sits in a deep valley, and sticking up everywhere are towering spires, balancing rocks and sheer-walled mesas. These are the "needles" the name of the place refers to, and damned if there weren't at least a thousand of them. I don't know for sure; I lost count when I came to the first Galak village.

The centaur weren't hostile to me; at least, not at first. They came over and chatted in Low Common. I explained that I was an explorer, just trying to learn about the land, but when I asked about their village their demeanor changed. They told me to leave, and their spears suggested I obey. I didn't see the need to slaughter a dozen centaur at that particular moment, so I just smiled and waved and moved off.

In time I arrived at Freewind Post, a simple village located atop a mesa near the center of Thousand Needles. From here I could look out upon the whole area, with the exception of the Shimmering Flats. I also learned that from here, I could travel through the Shimmering Flats on my way to Tanaris, the next stop on my journey.

People and Culture

Thousand Needles is really two regions in one. The white sand desert called the Shimmering Flats has its own moniker. For the rest of this discussion, when I refer to Thousand Needles I'm talking about the main area, not including the Shimmering Flats, which I'll discuss separately.

Tauren dominate Thousand Needles. They are split into two camps: the friendly Cliffrunners in Freewind Post and the more aggressive Grimtotems in Darkcloud Pinnacle. Both are tribal cultures, with a strong dedication to bloodlines, as evidenced by the fact that the clans take their names from their leaders. Interestingly, both tauren clans dwell atop mesas, making their way to ground level only to hunt for food or raid the other faction. While the Grimtotems use ladders and ropes, the Cliffrunners use a smaller version of the Great Lift (see below), allowing them greater mobility. However, the Grimtotems have a bridge to the Barrens, while their rivals do not.

In constant warfare with both tauren tribes are the Galak centaur, who dwell in two separate villages: Splithoof Crag and Camp E'thok. In my initial foray into Thousand Needles, I came to E'thok,

where I was rebuffed. At Splithoof, I probably would've been attacked on sight. Both companies of centaur are inherently distrustful of outsiders, but the Splithoof residents are downright mean. I didn't get a chance to learn much of their culture, but it seemed typically centaur. The centaur of both villages use brightly colored paint, slathered in symbols on their bodies, to identify themselves. Presumably this has some sort of rank designation or other form of importance.

Geography

Thousand Needles is a desert, plain and simple. The ground isn't sand, however, but smooth rock, as though water once flowed through here, carving out the canyon. Perhaps a river once flowed from Feralas through here to the lake that was once the Shimmering Flats.

Speaking of water, bring lots of it. That's my recommendation if you're going to come here.

In Thousand Needles, it's not so big a deal. There are water holes here and there (just watch out for the buzzards, hyenas and kobolds), as well as a couple of geysers and even a natural spring or two. Shimmering Flats is another story. There's no water anywhere at all, and the winds kick up salt dust that gets caked on your lips and face. A few accidental licks of that and you'll be thirstier than you thought possible. My recommendation? Make some kind of mask, or wrap your face like those nomads in Tanaris.

The canyon that makes up most of Thousand Needles is long and narrow, with the entrance to Feralas on the extreme west side. In the northwest is the Great Lift to the southern Barrens. In the southwest, wyverns dwell, and hunters of all races steal eggs for use by wyvern masters across Azeroth. Eastward, beyond Freewind Post, the lands become rougher, and travelers find themselves menaced by harpies, rogue elementals and kobolds. Then, at the southeast edge, the rocks end and the white sands begin.

The Great Lift: A well-worn road leads to the cliff walls that border Thousand Needles. At the end of this road is the Great Lift. You have to see this thing to believe it. It's got to be the largest rope-and-pulley device I've ever seen, and I've seen a lot of inventions in my travels. Ten tauren, standing together and heaving as one, hoist a massive wooden platform all the way up the sheer cliff wall. I watched them do this, and they could move two of their number at once to the top, several hundred feet above. And this thing was invented by tauren! Not goblins or gnomes, but tauren! I repeat: They could prove able engineers, if given the chance.

I suppose I was in a bit of awe when I spoke to them about their incredible creation, and that endeared me to them. The centaur, it seemed, try often to destroy the Great Lift and it was only just now repaired. They let me ride it to the top, where I looked out upon the southern Barrens. That human spy, Thuran, never mentioned this place, or I could've come this way and skipped the expensive gryphon ride to Nijel's Point. Ah well, I suppose I shouldn't have given him quite so many free drinks that night.

Also interesting is that the tauren consider this a neutral site — the Cliffrunners and Grimtotems don't attack each other when they're using the Great Lift. However, this pact doesn't stop centaur.

Highperch: Located in the southwestern edge of Thousand Needles, this section of cliff face is riddled with caves and open areas. Wyverns nest here by the hundreds, and the area is a popular hunting ground for egg poachers. Centaur consider the wyverns sacred, and woe to anyone they catch stealing eggs. When I passed this way, I saw more than a few rotting skeletons tied to posts near the path up to Highperch — a clear warning if ever I've seen one.

The Shimmering Flats: The Shimmering Flats may well be the most inhospitable place on Azeroth. (I make that claim before traveling to Northrend, mind.) The sands are endless, with only the occasional rock, hardy cactus, or burnt machine part breaking the monotony. The sand is caked with salt, evidence that this entire area was once a salty lakebed. Well, that and the fact that every now and then you come across an ancient shipwreck where none has any right to be. Dried bones of giant sea creatures indicate that once, perhaps before the Sundering, this lake provided access to the ocean.

Even in this baking wasteland, though, life exists. I spotted giant scorpions, basilisks, vultures and even an air elemental as I made my way across this desolate plain.

Sites and Settlements

Sites and settlements here are few and far between. After all, both Thousand Needles and the Shimmering Flats are deserts. Who wants to live in a desert?

Well, tauren and centaur, obviously. And gnomes and goblins. And harpies. Well, okay, lots of people like the desert, I guess. I suppose if you hate the rain, it's the place to be.

Camp E'thok (village, 750) and Splithoof Crag (village, 1,000): These villages are the

main centaur settlements in Thousand Needles. Splithoof is north of Freewind Post, almost within sight of Darkcloud Pinnacle, while E'thok is to the west, close to the Feralas border. Both villages are part of the Galak tribe. Although each has its own leader, they are part of the same family and are closely allied. The Splithoofs have an uneasy truce with the Grimtotem tauren, although this peace seemed tenuous at best.

Darkcloud Pinnacle (village, 450): East of the Great Lift, the Grimtotem tauren make their home atop three small mesas connected by rope bridges. There are two access ways to this place: a natural slope up a fourth mesa followed by a trip across a bridge, or another bridge from the Barrens. Both are well guarded, and the Grimtotems don't like visitors. They also wield potent shaman magic, as I found out when I tried to hail them from halfway up the southern ramp. Climbing upward while being blasted by spells is like swimming up a waterfall, so I turned around and left.

Freewind Post (village, 800): If you travel from the Feralas border to the Shimmering Flats, you come to Freewind Post about halfway through your journey. If you don't look up, though, you might miss it. It's located atop a huge mesa, accessible only via a tauren-pulled lift like the one to the Barrens or the one leading to Thunder Bluff. I have no idea how the Cliffrunners got up there in the first place, but there they are. Dozens of huts and teepees stand up there, and the best thing is, they don't need a lot of guards. Who's going to mount an attack that far up?

The Mirage Raceway (village, 1,000): The Shimmering Flats is home to a small collection of buildings and forges operated by rival gnomes and goblins. There, they operate a racetrack carved out of the salt sands, pitting their machines against each other in regular contests to prove which race is technologically superior. Naturally, this leaves the sands littered with debris from countless mechanical failures, but since no other intelligent beings live in this wasteland, there isn't anybody around to care.

The Mirage Raceway is a bustling settlement divided down the middle by a racetrack carved in the salt-caked lakebed. On one side the goblins labor in their forges, while on the other gnomes tinker in workshops day in and day out. The goal of both sides seems to be to develop the fastest, and most dangerous, mechanical vehicle on Azeroth. The frequency with which they blow themselves up is as astonishing as the racing vehicles they construct. See appendix 16 for a few of my sketches of these machines.

Roguefeather Den (village, 750): Most of the harpies I meet are cruel, bloodthirsty monsters who attack on sight. These at least gave me a second look, and screeched among themselves a few times, before coming at me. A couple of them carried weapons in their clawed hands, and most wore primitive belts and jewelry, too. I suspect they are smarter than your average harpy, but that's still not saying much. After I killed a half-dozen of them, they left me alone. This is a place you want to avoid.

History

Well, I'm no geologist, but I believe Thousand Needles is a recent creation. There was probably a river here once, and Shimmering Flats was a saltwater lake that reached the ocean somewhere — probably via Tanaris. Too bad I can't go back in time. (Or maybe I can, thanks to the Caverns of Time.)

At some point after the Sundering, tauren moved in and occupied the area. They thought it was sacred at the time — something about communing with spirits or some other nature-worship business. Regardless, they stayed. Then centaur showed up and it's been war ever since.

Neither side is the slightest bit interested in the Shimmering Flats, so when the goblins and gnomes showed up a while ago, no one cared. I think a vast, barren wasteland is just about the best place in the world for a bunch of crazies trying to blow each other up.

Adventures

From centaur to tauren to raceways, Thousand Needles has ample opportunity for adventure.

Good Egg: A wyvern trainer in Gadgetzan is looking for a new mount, but he needs a special type that comes only from the perfect sort of egg. A gnomish machine, the egg-o-matic, can analyze eggs to determine if they are the right kind. The heroes must carry the machine to Highperch, examine eggs they find there, and locate one perfectly suited for the trainer's needs. Then, on the way back, they must explain to the centaur just what they're doing with one of the sacred wyvern eggs in their possession.

Un'Goro Crater

Population: 300 (a smattering of individuals from all races).

Government: None.

Ruler: Williden Marshal, leader of the Marshal Expedition (male human scout 15).

Major Settlements: None.

Language: Common.

Faiths: Individual beliefs only.

Resources: Chemicals, crystals, herbs, hunting, leather, minerals, mystery, timber, water.

Affiliation: None.

After leaving the Dunemaul ogres and battling past several precocious elementals in southwestern Tanaris, I found myself standing between two obsidian spires marked with strange runes, the likes of which I'd never seen. Interestingly, the sands beneath these thin towers had blown away, so that the tapered ends didn't even touch the ground — yet the spires remained, hovering in the air, unmoving. Beyond them lay the path into Un'Goro Crater.

I could see little of the great valley from above, as the treetops lay enshrouded in the morning mist. I descended, coming almost immediately upon the vine-wrapped trees of a thick jungle. All about me I saw only trees and mist, although the air was thick with the cries of birds, and things much larger that I had yet to see.

Finally I came to the crater floor, at the edge of a massive waterfall tumbling amid moss-covered roots as thick as a tauren's chest. Advancing carefully, I came upon a surprise: a 15-foot construct of stone, shaped like a hooded man, marked with runes similar to those on the spires I encountered before. The thing stared at me, as if taking my measure, before tromping off into the jungle on whatever mission interested such things.

Satisfied that my entry into the humid, dank jungle was not to be denied, I pressed on. There was no sign of civilization, just strange plants and stranger beasts. Most were of a reptilian sort, feral and savage, attacking me without pause. They hopped, crawled, flew and tromped on massive legs that shook the ground.

For a while I thought myself alone in the hot swamps and misty jungles, but then I came across the remains of a camp. From the clues left scattered

Excerpt from "The Power Crystals of Un'Goro" by J.D. Collie

Amid the rocks and rich soil of the crater floor can be found all manner of colorful crystals, each as fragile as glass. Held to a light, they seem to flicker and glow like flames….

They seem to have no useful purpose, or so I believed at first, until I found the first Crystal Pylon. Located in the east, guarded by the pterrodax, this humming pillar holds the same sort of runes found on the Stone Guardians as well as the hovering pylons that guard the entrance to the crater. All my attempts to decipher this ancient tongue have met with failure. And yet — the pictographs clearly show power crystals being used for something. A ritual, a spell, I do not yet know….

Although the crystals come in all shapes and sizes, I have classified them in four main colors: red, blue, green and yellow. I've never found anything truly in between these shades, so there are no orange or brown ones, for example. Anyone who isn't color-blind can tell them apart by a glance. What's more, I'm fairly certain the crystals can be employed by the Crystal Pylons. If I could figure out the right pattern — but how? How?

Much later in the text.

I've done it! I found one of the patterns! Or at least I'm pretty sure I have. I need to make another trip to the western Crystal Pylon to see. If this works, the crystals I've collected should coalesce into a single mega-crystal infused with the combined powers of all the shards! I can't wait to report on the results when I get back!

The text ends.

about, I learned that my visit here had been preceded by a team of explorers led by a human named Williden Marshal — I'd heard of him, but until now our paths never crossed. So! This was his latest project, was it? I resolved to find him, and so I did. He was holed up near a cave in the north, where the natural terrain allowed for defense.

Williden and I spent hours swapping stories, many of which were quite fanciful — yet totally believable, considering what I'd seen of this place. I found him and his people to be passionate. They are here to learn everything they can, and that is exactly what they are doing. I have to tell you, I was more than a little tempted to join them.

Instead I spent several fine weeks dining on roast raptor, exploring the misty jungles, and duking it out with wild reptiles by the dozens. Now *that* was living.

People and Culture

There are *no* native, sentient residents of Un'Goro Crater. That's right, none. No ancient troll cities, no barbarous ogre mounds, no gnoll villages, nothing. Not even a kobold tent or murloc hovel. Nothing, unless you count the silithid hive in the south, but I don't. The closest thing to a town was Marshal's Refuge, the cavern in the north where Williden's people stay during their tenure in the crater. All they have are ramshackle storage sheds and a communal tent to shunt the rain away.

As for Marshal's Expedition, they were as diverse a group as any I've encountered. Members of every civilized race were there, both Horde and Alliance, none of whom held prejudice or hatred toward another. I think that's why I got along with them so well — they put aside their people's differences for the sake of knowledge and exploration.

Geography

Un'Goro Crater is, well, a crater. Let's be honest. This is no simple valley or dried lake bed here. It's as if a massive giant reached down and scooped out a chunk of land right off the surface of the world. Maybe that's what happened, too. Legends say the Titans used Un'Goro as a proving grounds for their creations. Maybe this place is as they left it, unchanged after all these eons.

Nearly all the crater is covered with thick jungle. The southeast and north are swampy, while the west is slightly drier. Rivers, flowing from underground sources, crisscross the basin.

Except for the volcanic area in the center of the crater, the land teems with life. Reptiles of enormous size roam the place, hunting apes, silithid and each other. Raptors are prevalent in the southeast, while the western side is populated mostly by stegadons and dimetrodons. Monstrous devilsaurs roam all over, but fortunately these huge beasts are few and far between. The walls of the crater contain numerous small caves where pterrodaxes live, swooping down on anything caught in the open, but fortunately they are cowardly creatures that flee from a determined opponent.

The most curious residents of the crater are the walking plants called bloodpetals. They amble about on thorny branches adapted to motion, but as to why they move, I don't know. They just wander from place to place, sometimes in groups, sometimes alone. The flowers mostly ignored me, although if I got too close, they'd strike at me with thorn-covered limbs.

Fire Plume Ridge: In the crater's center, rising out of the foliage like a black stain, is a cluster of volcanoes: Fire Plume Ridge. Here the jungle ends, burned away by constant lava flows and fiery vents. Rogue fire elementals roam the area, and the heat is oppressive. The lava must touch the underground streams to the west, for the natural springs there are steamy, bubbling pools riddled with scalding geysers.

Lakkari Tar Pits: In the north central area, in the area of sparsest tree cover, lie these curious lakes of black tar. Creatures that venture too close get stuck and perish in the dark depths. The bones of perhaps thousands of reptiles and other beasts lie strewn about the place, some of them ancient.

Terror Run: The southwestern part of Un'Goro is home to the most powerful and deadliest creatures in the whole crater, including vicious stegadons, and so the place takes the name Terror Run. Strange rock formations litter the place, possibly left over from some ancient culture as yet unknown. A dwarf in the expedition — sorry, his name escapes me now — thought these might be relics of the Titans, but none of us were able to get close enough to study them in detail.

Sites and Settlements

The only settlement of any note here is Marshal's Refuge, though the crater has many interesting sites.

Fungal Rock: Along the northeastern wall, not far from Marshal's Refuge, lies this cave complex where the savage Un'Goro apes dwell. Among the few mammals I encountered in the crater, these beasts defended their territory ruthlessly, driving

off any reptiles that tried to approach. A member of Marshal's Expedition named Kara Remtravel dedicates herself to studying these apes, and as I departed the area she was building a mechanical ape to get a closer look at their society.

Marshal's Refuge (camp, 50): Williden's group claimed a cave in the north as its semi-permanent home in Un'Goro. Here these stalwart explorers live a primitive existence as they study the crater. Although among them they have the means to improve their settlement, none of them has bothered to spend the time doing so. They're too busy with their research. If you visit the place, better bring your own supplies — they only have enough to support themselves.

Slithering Scar: Home to one of the more savage silithid groups, the bugs are, like the apes, highly xenophobic. They attack anything that approaches their hive with a ferocity matched only by the devilsaurs. We were hunting power crystals in the south when we tried to slip past their hive along the southern wall, only to be assaulted by a full dozen of these man-sized insects. This was the first time I realized they were smarter than beasts — the silithid use tactics. Fortunately for us, the silithid didn't chase us down once we retreated from their territory. I wouldn't approach the Slithering Scar with anything less than an army.

History

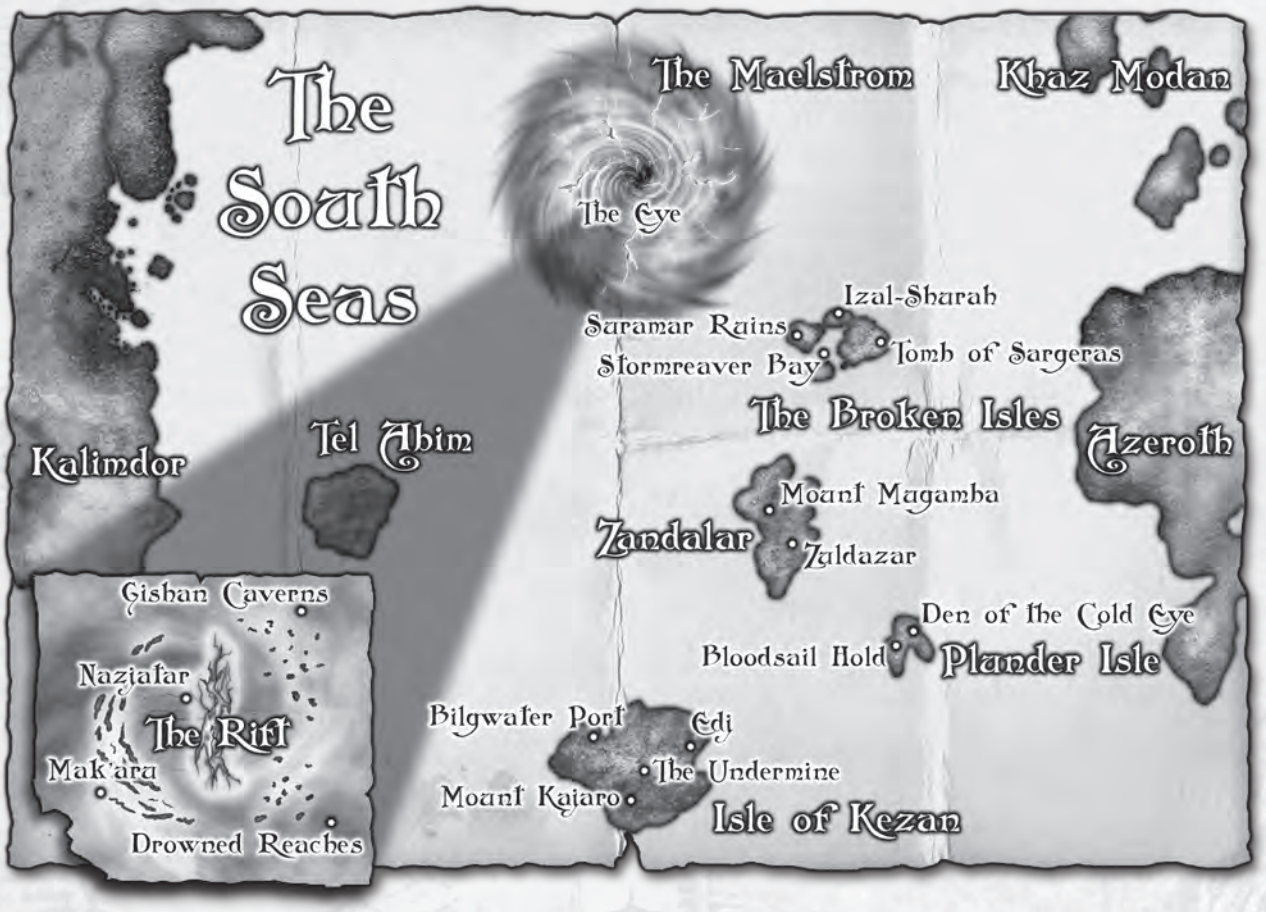
Members of the Marshal Expedition told me legends that speak of Un'Goro Crater as a melting pot for Titan creations. The Titans supposedly placed their creations in the basin to see which were worthy of survival. When the Titans left the world, the last of their experiments — the great reptiles — remained behind. Their sheer size and power, as well as the crater's remoteness, keep the area free of outside influence.

Whether or not the Titans created the place, I don't know. I've interviewed geologists and scientists, and they tell me the only way such a lowland can come to exist naturally is through a massive impact from outside the world. One of them told me to throw a rock into the sand and see what results. Throw it hard enough and the stone leaves a round divot in the soft surface. The presence of Fire Plume Ridge in the center of Un'Goro, where molten earth wells out from the scar, perhaps left behind by some ancient meteor, suggests this theory may be correct. Yet if it is, why weren't any of the surrounding regions affected? And why would such a shattered land produce such strange creatures seen nowhere else in the world?

Adventures

Un'Goro is a wild, untamed, uncharted place seen only by a few hardy explorers. It is a land of many questions and few answers.

The Mysterious Boat: While exploring the swamps of the southeast, the heroes discover a wrecked boat. Clearly built outside the crater, it has no business here. The only clues to its mission are a torn knapsack, a few scraps of rations, and the broken pommel of a sword. How did someone come to the landlocked crater by boat, and where are they now? Perhaps Williden Marshal can help, if the explorers can find him….



Ahoy! I had heard much of the South Seas. Some of what I heard was good: The South Seas supposedly boast action (and what self-respecting dwarf would be against action?), unique civilizations (and what self-respecting explorer would be against unique civilizations?), and ancient mysteries (and what self-respecting adventurer would be against ancient mysteries?). On the negative side, most of the action is swashbuckling (give me solid stone under my feet and an axe in my hand any day), most of the unique civilizations are composed of bastards like the naga, and most of the ancient mysteries are dangerous. (Actually, I'm okay with dangerous mysteries. It makes them more exciting.) In any case, I certainly wasn't going to *sail* to the islands of the South Seas, so I purchased a gryphon in Steamwheedle Port. The beast, which I cleverly called Gryphadin in honor of my fallen brother, was a strong flier and served me well.

According to the history books, 10,000 years ago all the lands in Azeroth were part of the same giant land mass: the primeval Kalimdor. The Kaldorei civilization grew strong there, thanks to the mystic energies inherent in the Well of Eternity. However, as most of us now know, Queen Azshara summoned the Burning Legion with the well's energy. At the climax of the ensuing War of the Ancients the Well of Eternity imploded and tore the giant continent asunder, splitting it into the continents as they exist today... and a few islands.

When the Well of Eternity collapsed, it created a raging magical vortex, enormous in size, that still exists today. Indeed, it shows no sign of dissipating. This vortex is the Maelstrom, and it occupies the center of the Great Sea. It makes seagoing travel between Kalimdor and the eastern continents difficult, but its magic winds hide secret mysteries — mysteries that I was determined to uncover. The Maelstrom forms the northern boundary of the South Seas, and south of it are several tropical islands. Though small, these islands have played pivotal roles in history.

The Broken Isles

Capital: None

Population: 2,000 (almost all unsavory creatures of various types)

Government: None.

Ruler: Tide Priest Harash (male naga shaman 13).

Major Settlements: None. Just a few huts and encampments.

Languages: Nazja, Common, Eredun, Nerglish, Orcish.

Faiths: Azshara, Holy Light, shamanism.

Resources: Ancient magic items, mercenaries, ruins.

Affiliation: Naga.

The Broken Isles include about four large (relatively speaking) islands and about three small islands. They were underwater until a scant few decades ago, when the orc warlock Gul'dan raised them from the ocean floor. Gul'dan was searching for the tomb of the fallen Titan Sargeras, and indeed he found it: The ancient Kaldorei structure stands on the largest isle. Other Kaldorei ruins, remnants of their culture from 10,000 years ago, stand on the other islands. For having been underwater for the better part of ten millennia, they look pretty good.

The Broken Isles are an unpleasant and dangerous place. The Death Hiss tribe of naga dominates the region. Other threats are abundant as well: Giant turtles, hydras, wendigo and a host of other dangers occupy the areas the naga are not. Also, a few goblin merchants have managed to carve out some spaces for themselves with the help of hired mercenaries. I don't trust goblins, but I have to admire their gumption.

The Maelstrom is just northwest of the Broken Isles. It's close. It's *too* close. The Maelstrom's magical storms lash the Broken Isles, making for near constant winds and rainfall and, occasionally, something stranger. (I believe I saw purple dancing sparkles in the air at one point, for a full hour... and I had only had a half-dozen or so pints the night before, so it wasn't the booze.) The Maelstrom's

Drak'Thul, 7th-Level Warlock

Male Orc: CR 7; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 7d6+21, hp 48; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +6; Atk +7 melee (1d6+5, quarterstaff); SA +1 bonus on attacks against humans, battle rage 1/day; SQ low-light vision, fel companion, summoner; AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 16, Agy 10, Sta 17, Int 18, Spt 12, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Eredun, Goblin, Nazja, Nerglish, Orcish.

Skills: Concentration +15, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (religion) +14, Knowledge (the planes) +16, Spellcraft +14, Survival +6.

Feats: Augment Summoning, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Skilled (Concentration and Knowledge [the planes]), Spell Penetration.

Warlock Spells (4/4/3/2/1; save DC 14 + spell level): Drak'thul's high Intellect score and his ranks in Spellcraft allow him to prepare 11 spells per level; he can prepare most of the spells on the warlock spell list.

Possessions: +1 quarterstaff, +4 bracers of armor, 2 potions of cure moderate wounds, potion of delay poison, potion of lesser restoration,* spell component pouch.

* See **More Magic & Mayhem.**

Description

This weathered orc wears a tattered wolf pelt and a pair of tarnished bracers sprouting wolf hair. The wolf's head falls over his face, obscuring his eyes, but his long gray hair spills, greasy, down his shoulders. He moves with arthritic care.

Drak'thul didn't survive to become one of the last Stormreavers by being stupid. He is a canny combatant, staying back when he needs to stay back and striking preemptively when the situation warrants. He prefers ranged attacks, like *shadow bolt**, to eliminate his opponents early; if forced into melee, he uses spells like *demon skin* and *mirror image* to improve his chances. He avoids using his battle rage ability, as it clouds his mind and prevents him from fleeing if he is outmatched.

* See **More Magic & Mayhem.**

proximity makes the Broken Isles unstable. Soon, the storm will prove too much and the islands will sink back into the sea.

So plunder while you can.

People and Culture

People aren't particularly prevalent in the Broken Isles, but cultures certainly are.

The dominant force is the Death Hiss naga tribe. They have several bases throughout the region, and their forces are strong. Naga myrmidons, sirens and royal guard are out in force, posing a threat to all sensible races. The terrain favors the naga as well; if you're forced to flee the creatures, you can run only to the shore, and then they've got you. The naga live in Kaldorei ruins and have constructed some of their own buildings as well. The architecture is frighteningly similar. The Death Hiss naga have a distinctive warcry: the hiss, from which they take their name, which sounds like rain striking the ocean.

The Lostfin tribe of murlocs is also strong in the Broken Isles. They, a few other murloc tribes, and some mur'gul tribes live in stilted huts on the shores. I think murlocs sound funny. Especially when they die.

As if these guys weren't bad enough, I also ran across sea giants and makrura. These two races aren't quite as bad as the others; I have a feeling that they aren't naturally jerks. In fact, I have a theory that we might get the makrura to fight on our side (more on this below). However, constant fighting against the naga, murlocs and other threats can do poor things to anyone's disposition, and makrura tend to attack intruders on sight. I slew several bands of makrura and a few sea giants in my time on the rainswept Broken Isles.

A few enterprising goblins manage to set themselves up on the islands as well, hiring out boats to make travel among the islands easier. They cater solely to adventurers. They brought mercenaries with them, to carve out locations for their shops and to protect them, and now the mercenaries hire themselves out to adventurers as well. I'm not a big fan of mercenaries myself, but as these seem to focus their efforts against the naga and murlocs and other native creatures, I can appreciate them. In fact, I even hired one: a strapping human lad named Gruce. I wanted to give him a taste of true adventure, but the first sea giant we ran across flattened him. I don't suppose I'll be hiring any more mercenaries.

One other culture exists on these islands: orcs. These aren't orcs from Thrall's Horde, either, and many of them aren't even alive. During Gul'dan's betrayal, forces from the Blackrock, Twilight's Hammer, and Stormreaver clans clashed on the newly-summoned Broken Isles. The demons that guarded Sargeras's Tomb slaughtered the survivors, and now these skeletal and ghostly orc warriors battle each other for eternity.

A few orcs, however, are not dead. These are mostly leftover warlocks from Gul'dan's clan, the Stormreavers, who were canny or lucky enough to escape destruction. They are scattered across the islands and have been living as hermits, eating crabs, I suppose, ever since the Second War. (Perhaps a few more warlocks used to abide here, but they were voted off the islands.) The oldest and sanest of these Stormreavers is a warlock named Drak'thul. Drak'thul ambushed me one night, as I trudged through the rain, blasting me with fel energy from a rocky ridge. (That fel stuff always makes me want to take a shower.) I rolled a good 20 feet before I got my boots back under me, roaring at my attacker and brandishing my axe. I heard him mutter "A dwarf?" in Orcish (don't tell the Horde I speak its language, by the way — I don't think they know). Then the creature called out, "I apologize. I thought you were a murloc. But tell me, dwarf, are you friend or foe?"

Well, I'm normally a foe to orcs who shoot spells at me, but I figured I could learn some interesting things from this warlock, and indeed I did. (See "History," below.)

Nerglish

Murlocs, makrura and a few other aquatic races speak a language called Nerglish. Nerglish is a low aquatic tongue, akin to Low Common for cultures that dwell in the deeps. Characters can take Speak Language (Nerglish) to be conversant in it.

Geography

Rain-lashed islands with ancient ruins and palm trees. That pretty much sums up the Broken Isles. The four large islands are arranged in a bit of a circle, with one large island at each point on the compass. As I mentioned already, all sorts of nasty beasts live here. I wouldn't be surprised if I found out the rocks were carnivorous.

Since the islands haven't been islands for very long, natural life hasn't had much a chance to get a foothold here, but palm trees, tropical fronds, and a

few flowering plants push through the ruins. Coral is prevalent, and I saw at least a dozen albatrosses during my visit. The coasts boast hermit crabs and colorful fish.

Purple, black and orange urchins inhabit tide pools and the shores around the coral reefs. Don't step on them. If you're unlucky, you're dead. If you're lucky, you have to piss on yourself.

Stormreaver Bay: This natural bay between the southwestern islands boasts a bit of history. Gul'dan anchored his ships here when he was exploring the isles. The ships are long smashed, but their remains still drift in the aptly-named Stormreaver Bay.

Sites and Settlements

The Broken Isles are home to naga military forces and Kaldorei ruins from the age of the ancients.

Izal-Shurah: In ancient times, Izal-Shurah was a great library. Perhaps the Kaldorei who created it even had the foresight to waterproof their books and scrolls. As much as I wanted to get in there (my brain watered in anticipation), I found that makrura overran the place. I didn't think a lone dwarf assaulting one of their strongholds would be good for future diplomatic relations, so I left them alone. I suggest, however, that we figure out a way to get in there and get that knowledge before the Broken Isles become the Broken Seafloor.

Suramar: Ten thousand years ago, Suramar was a great Kaldorei city. In fact, some important night elves once called this place home: Tyrande Whisperwind and the brothers Stormrage. The ruins are now a sad reminder of ancient Kaldorei folly. In the center of the ruins, the stumps of two great aspen trees stand side by side. Strange, since the climate is not right for aspens; and even if a seedling did manage to grow, it would not have had time to reach the girth of these enormous stumps. When I returned to Khaz Modan, a bit of correspondence with our night elf allies solved the mystery: In ancient times, a great garden stood at Suramar's center, and at the center of this garden stood the fabled Boughs of Azshara. Now, these petrified stumps are all that remain.

The Tomb of Sargeras: This site is certainly the most important on the Broken Isles.

The tomb, an ancient Kaldorei structure from before the Sundering, is constructed of tan stone. Its recent history (see below) has collapsed the tomb in places, and it is unstable. Shifting stones and tunnel collapses are common. Red orc letters, Gul'dan's legacy, mark the walls.

The Tomb of Sargeras is a haunted and eerie place. Skeletal and ghostly orcs battle each other ad infinitum. A few Stormreaver warlocks, remnants from Gul'dan's disastrous expedition, also occupy the deep places, as do demons. Demons are particularly prevalent in the Chamber of the Eye, which is the section of the tomb that held Sargeras's body and, until recently, the last remnant of his withered form: the *Eye of Sargeras.*

Heavy stone gates and round doors barricade the tunnels. Sometimes, stepping onto a platform (outlined in eerie white light) causes such a door to roll to the side. Apparently the Kaldorei liked columns, because they are prevalent in the tomb; some remain whole, but many have collapsed or broken. The tomb also contains obelisks, fountains, seahorse statues, archways, coral, seashells, torches, braziers, crates, barrels and fallen rock. Alga slicks many surfaces. In some places, the ruin's original floor is intact: tan stone or brick. In others, the floor is shattered or covered by dirt or seawater.

The Tomb of Sargeras is perhaps the most dangerous place in the Broken Isles. Take a trip here only if you think you're up to killing some demons.

History

Five hundred years ago, Magna Aegwynn, Guardian of Tirisfal, slew the demon Sargeras. (Well, she slew his physical form; his spirit inhabited her body and later possessed her child, Medivh. Nothing is ever simple with demon lords.) Knowing that the demon-Titan's corpse still had power, she sought a safe place to entomb it. She discovered a Kaldorei ruin deep beneath the sea, near the Maelstrom, and placed the body within, believing it to be secure. Time proved her incorrect.

Centuries later, Medivh, possessed by Sargeras, convinced the orc shaman Gul'dan to lead his people through the Dark Portal to wage war on Azeroth. Medivh–Sargeras offered Gul'dan a powerful artifact called the *Eye of Sargeras* as incentive (though I doubt the tricky wizard had any intention of keeping his promise). Gul'dan grew impatient, though, and through magic and research divined the location of the Tomb of Sargeras. He raised the Broken Isles and entered the tomb.

Gul'dan encountered many trials within the tomb. I know, because he kept a record of his experiences — a sort of diary — by painting Orcish runes onto the tomb's walls. (I won't recount the entire story here, but see appendix 9 for a full account.) Orc forces loyal to Doomhammer attacked Gul'dan's Stormreavers, and the shaman desperately sought the *Eye.* In the end, he failed, and the tomb's demonic guardians tore him asunder.

Years passed, and the Third War began and ended.

In the chaos following the conflict, Illidan Stormrage the Betrayer (and what an apt title that has proved) traveled to the Tomb of Sargeras. Like Gul'dan, he too sought the *Eye of Sargeras,* supposedly intending to use it in a ritual to destabilize and destroy the Frozen Throne. The night elf warden Maiev Shadowsong tracked Illidan to the tomb. While there, she crossed paths with Drak'thul, and the warlock convinced her to help put some of the undead orcs to rest. She did so, though after she discovered that Drak'thul was part of Gul'dan's original coven and partly responsible for raising the Broken Isles (and thus bringing dangerous artifacts like the *Eye of Sargeras* back into the world), she regretted her decision. Also within the tomb, Maiev discovered pieces of an artifact called the *Orb of Shadow,* and when she collected the entirety of the object it gave her great power. (The whereabouts of the orb are currently unknown — though maybe we should figure it out.)

Maiev and her forces confronted Illidan deep within the tomb and interrupted his ritual. Illidan used the *Eye* to flood the tomb and escaped. Out of all the night elves, only Maiev had the power to escape death, and the loss of her forces embittered her. I suppose this is one reason why she hated Illidan with such fervency.

Since that time, naga and murlocs have emerged to claim the Broken Isles, and undead orcs continue to fight the Second War.

Adventures

Naga, murlocs, mur'gul and numerous other threats are prevalent in the Broken Isles. Kaldorei artifacts undoubtedly lurk in the ruins.

Read.: The Maelstrom's proximity finally proves too much for the Broken Isles, and they begin to sink back into the sea. Before they do, however, several factions — including Theramore's mages and Ironforge's Explorers' Guild — want to save the library of Izal-Shurah. They send expeditions to treat with (or destroy) the library's makrura defenders. Complicating things are the naga, who are out in force, believing that the sinking of the isles is a time for celebration and a good omen for their culture. Also, the few orc survivors from the Second War and several roving bands of mercenaries attempt to storm the Alliance's ships in a desperate attempt to save themselves.

The Eye

Capital: Nazjatar (unknown; perhaps 50,000).

Population: Unknown; perhaps 80,000 (60% naga, 40% makrura).

Government: Monarchy.

Ruler: Queen Azshara (female naga mage 43). (See **Shadows & Light** for Queen Azshara's statistics and history.)

Major Settlements: Nazjatar (unknown; perhaps 50,000), Mak'aru (unknown; perhaps 30,000).

Languages: Nazja, Nerglish.

Faiths: Queen Azshara, shamanism.

Resources: Armor, magic, nutrients, seafood, war, weapons.

Affiliation: Naga.

When the Well of Eternity went boom at the end of the War of the Ancients, it created the Maelstrom: a magic storm that lashes the waves with wind, rain and raw magic power. It creates a great vortex beneath the waves, which draws in ships and creatures foolish enough to get too close.

The center of the Maelstrom is called the Eye. There's not much on the surface (besides an ancient whirl of arcane energy), but beneath the waves, on the ocean's floor, is the capital of both the naga and makrura civilizations, as well as giant sea monsters, underwater volcanoes and thermal vents.

I write all this down. Then I look at what I've written and think, "There's no way they can expect me to *go down there.*" And no one did. If I decided not to swim down to the bottom of the Eye, no one would ridicule me or question my bravery. In fact, they'd probably praise my wisdom. We dwarves are very dangerous on land, but swimming in a turbulent sea, I'd literally be out of my element.

Yet there were things to learn in the depths. Cultures to explore and information to glean. So, for my people, for Ironforge and the dwarves of Khaz Modan, I resolved to put my mettle to the test.

Are you getting all this, Magni?

Gryphadin wasn't going to do me any good in the Eye, so I left him with the most trustworthy goblin I could find in the Broken Isles. Some people might question my sanity for delving into the Eye, but I'm not completely stupid. You don't want to go into a place like this unprepared.

I bought a magic helmet to allow me to breathe and swim easily underwater. (The other option was to buy a goblin-made contraption that claimed to do the same thing. Not even an option, really.) Just in case, I also stocked up on potions that would allow me to breathe underwater and some that would turn me invisible (for those quick escapes). I bought a pair of boots that would allow me to teleport out of there if things got too crazy. (The receipts are in the attached envelope; I expect to be reimbursed.)

Thus, suitably outfitted, I bid Gryphadin goodbye and dove into the water around the Broken Isles, heading northwest.

People and Culture

Naga control the Eye, dominating it from their capital city of Nazjatar. They are serpentlike humanoids, resembling snakes from the waists down (they have snake tails) and reptilian humanoids from the waist up. They wear bandoliers and belts to hold weapons and spell components, but little other clothing. Many, especially the females, wear jewelry, much of it magic. Naga men are stronger and larger than females and usually serve as the warrior caste; two particularly dangerous types of naga frontline soldiers are myrmidons and royal guard. Naga women tend to be smarter and have an affinity for magic; they serve as spellcasters. Due to their superior mental acuity, naga culture values females more than males, and females tend to hold positions of leadership. A queen — the legendary Azshara (yes, *that* Azshara) — still rules her fallen people.

Makrura also inhabit the Eye. They are lobsterlike humanoids much more primitive than the naga. They speak Nerglish (and perhaps were the first to use that tongue) and construct tools and jewelry out of rocks, seashells, and driftwood. They have a connection with the elemental forces of the sea, and some of them are strong spellcasters. The makrura hate the naga and are their sworn enemies. Unfortunately, they don't seem to care much for outsiders of any kind, no matter their intentions.

I was surprised to find no murlocs or mur'guls in the Eye. I assume that the naga slay any murlocs they find here (or that the dim creatures are sharp enough to steer clear of this place — unlike some dwarven adventurers I could name). As for mur'gul, perhaps the naga consider their capital too sacred to allow their slaves access.

Geography

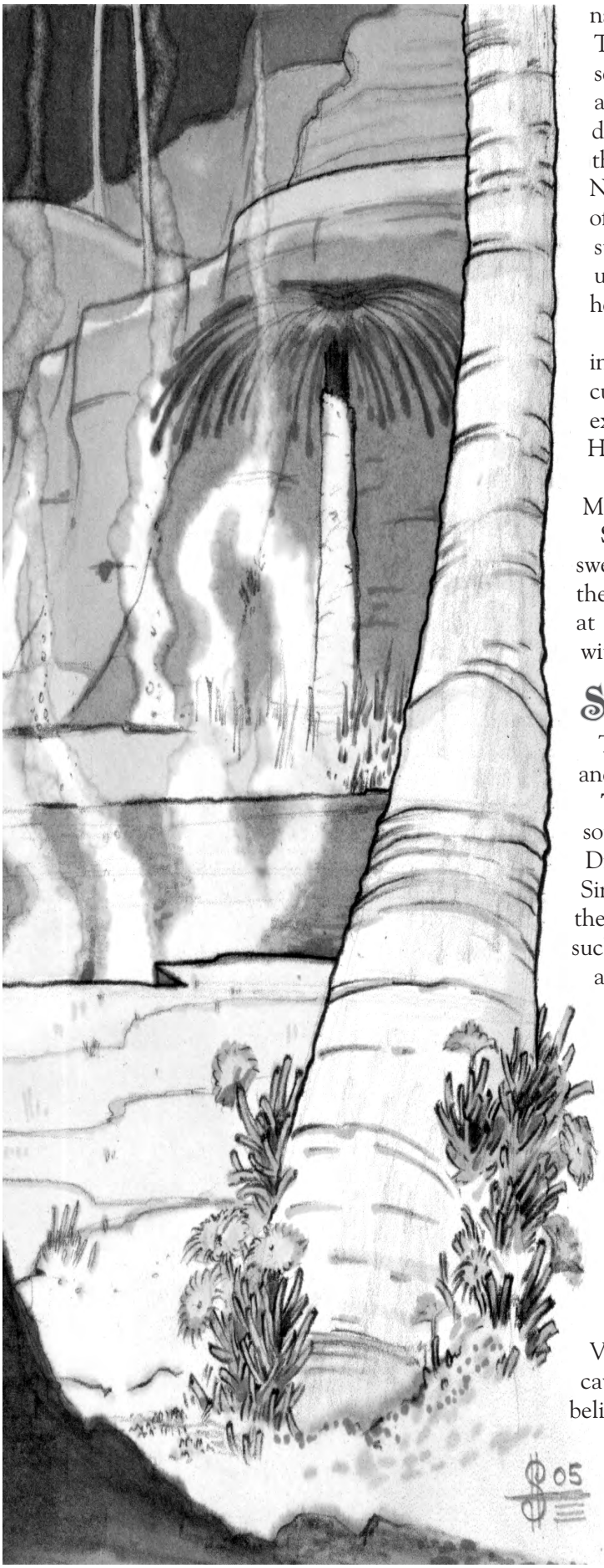
On the surface, the Eye is a vast arcane storm swirling with magical power. The Maelstrom creates a vortex below it, forming a massive whirlpool that leads into the depths of the Eye. The Maelstrom also creates a wall of swirling water, nearly impassable, beneath the surface. Accessing the Eye is no mean trick.

The ocean floor is volcanic. Undersea volcanoes belch magma and steam into the water. Thermal vents release strange gases, which manifest as large bubbles that rise toward the surface. Natural life thrives around these vents, devouring the nutrients released from the world's core. Seaweed, fish and more bizarre creatures — pale, eyeless worms and spiderlike crabs with eyes on stalks, among others — appear in profusion. Indeed, I saw more forms of life in the Eye than I imagined existed in all the world. I saw creatures that defied categorization; they seemed more like alien organisms from other planes than simply animals native to Azeroth. I have tried to recreate some in oil paints; they are included in appendix 17.

In addition to these fascinating and harmless creatures, the Eye is home to water elementals, octopi, sharks, hydras, threshadons, frenzies and giant squid. I dared not bring my blunderbuss beneath the waves; battling these creatures, as well as naga and makrura patrols, underwater, in the dark, with just my axe, was an eerie experience.

The Boiling Terrace: Thermal activity is at its peak here. Numerous vents, volcanoes, fissures and similar features make this water seethe with heat — it's even boiling in places, which gives it its name. I quaffed a potion to protect me from the heat; even though the scalding waters didn't bother me, I still did not have an easy time. Enormous gas bubbles, steam and shimmering water limit visibility. The only creatures that can survive here are those that tolerate great heat — giant crabs and the like. The Boiling Terrace is in the southeast reaches of the Eye.

The Rift: At the end of the War of the Ancients, the powers released in the Well of Eternity blasted the well downward, smashing through seawater and rock, driving it into Azeroth's molten core. Ten thousand years later, that core is still exposed. The well's descent broke an enormous fissure in the ocean floor, and red and orange light are visible deep, deep down. I couldn't delve too far into the Rift, for the pressure is incredible; even with magic enchantments, it was too much for me, though the



naga seem to handle it with few problems. The well's descent also destabilized the seafloor for miles around, causing the thermal activity that characterizes the region to this day. If not for the Sundering, this area of the sea would be chill, perhaps colder than Northrend, cold enough to freeze the blood of dwarves. Now, the seawater, even near the surface, is pleasantly warm, increasing to uncomfortable, dangerous, and even lethal heat in places.

Perhaps the Well of Eternity still exists, in some form, in Azeroth's heart, for arcane currents emanate from the Rift. Millennia of exposure to this power warped the Kaldorei Highborne into the naga.

Nazjatar is constructed into the Rift's sides. More on this frightening place below.

Scintal Reef: This miles-long coral reef sweeps around the southwest perimeter of the Eye. Makrura activity here keeps the naga at bay — the makrura capital of Mak'aru is within.

Sites and Settlements

The Eye is the naga's domain. Strange plant and animal life is also abundant.

The Drowned Reaches: Located on the southeastern edge of the Boiling Terrace, the Drowned Reaches is a great ships' graveyard. Since 10,000 years ago, ships that run afoul of the Maelstrom are caught in its whirlpool and sucked downward, and the currents rip them asunder and deposit their remains here. Because the sailors die in fear and agony and are surrounded by the Maelstrom's unstable influence, the dead often do not find peace. The zombified and skeletal remains of these unfortunates wander the Boiling Terrace, raging at their fate. The naga fear the undead and avoid this area; so far, they have managed to avoid outright conflict with the millennia-strong drowned men and women.

Gishan Caverns: North of the Rift is a series of enormous caverns in the seafloor. Volcanic activity is responsible for these caverns, and the naga avoid them — they believe that gargantuan sea creatures dwell within. I poked around a bit, but didn't go in too deep. I had to get back to Ironforge, after all, and anything nasty enough to intimidate the naga on their home turf was enough to make me cautious.

Mak'aru (metropolis, unknown population; perhaps 30,000): Mak'aru is the capital of the makrura civilization. It is built into the Scintal Reef, and the buildings and other structures appear almost organic. The city is built on a series of coral terraces, and the layout protects the makrura's egg clutches. Makrura guards range from Mak'aru throughout the Scintal Reef, which they consider their territory.

The lobsterlike makrura hate the naga and are their chief enemy. There's potential here. The makrura don't take kindly to outsiders of any kind, but their war with the naga — which has been going on for who knows how long — makes them potential allies. They are protective of their homeland, but perhaps if skilled diplomats approached some of their people near the shores, we could maneuver our way into a meeting with their mysterious leaders. Then we could explain to the makrura that we have common goals. Certainly the makrura would be valuable companions, given their physical and magical prowess and their skills underwater. It would be nice to bring the fight to the naga in their own element.

Pillar Deep: Located toward the northeast, Pillar Deep is a terraced area with many thermal vents releasing steam and gas bubbles. As I swam toward it, I saw that there were hundreds, perhaps thousands, of enormous stone columns stretching toward the surface. Intrigued, I approached the pillars... and was nearly shocked out of my leather undies when one of them moved. They are not columns at all — they are colossal tubeworms, grown to gigantism on the acidic gas from the volcanic fissures. Innumerable smaller worms inhabit this area as well.

Nazjatar

10th-Level Arcane Community/6th-Level Military Community/5th-Level Religious Community/4th-Level Civilian Community

Population: Unknown; perhaps 50,000.

Abilities: Force 20, Mobility 10, Resilience 19, Learning 31, Awareness 16, Command 18.

Wealth: +157

Defense Bonus: +14

Reputation Bonus: +10

Skills: Appraise +17, Bluff +7, Craft (armorsmithing) +22, Craft (leatherworking) +23, Craft (stonemasonry) +17, Craft (weaponsmithing) +22, Decipher Script +22, Diplomacy +35, Gather Information +16, Handle Animal +16, Heal +13, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +56, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +24, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +23, Knowledge (geography) +18, Knowledge (history) +34, Knowledge (local) +18, Knowledge (nature) +18, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +18, Knowledge (religion) +21, Knowledge (the planes) +36, Perform (oratory) +14, Profession (bookkeeper) +10, Profession (fisher) +10, Profession (hunter) +10, Profession (military commander) +21, Spellcraft +47, Survival +10, Use Magic Device +31.

Feats: Ancient Ruins, Basic Fortifications, Brew Potion, Caves, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Rod, Craft Staff, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Forge Ring, Heavy Fortifications, Infamous, Ley Line Nexus, Library, Moderate Fortifications, Scribe Scroll, University.

Government: Monarchy.

Ruler: Queen Azshara (female naga mage 43). (See **Shadows & Light** for Queen Azshara's statistics and history.)

Language: Nazja.

Faith: Queen Azshara.

Resources: Armor, magic, nutrients, seafood, war, weapons.

Affiliation: Naga.

Built into the walls of the Rift is the naga capital Nazjatar. This is the seat of their hideous empire, and it is an eerie and frightening place. The buildings' foundations merge with the walls of the Rift, though the structures themselves are oriented vertically, as normal (not horizontally; their foundations are on their walls). Naga swim among the buildings, conducting their nefarious plans.

Much of Nazjatar was once a Kaldorei city, and the ruins and architecture remain. However, the naga have added a good amount of their own art to this place, dredging building material from coral and rock and the fallen ruins of their former civilization. The place has a dark and sinister atmosphere. The buildings' colors are muted, usually tan or gray, and bear carvings of waves, seahorses, fish, and more disturbing motifs: powerful naga warriors and mages, battling the makrura, enslaving the mur'gul, and returning to the surface to exact revenge on their ancient kin.

Moving around in this city was a harrowing time. I slugged all my invisibility potions over the course of my exploration, and despite this precaution the naga nearly had me several times. Their spellcasters are canny and can see through such simple illusions. Queen Azshara, grown massive in size and in power, dwells in a great palace in Nazjatar's center; this structure was her palace in the Kaldorei civilization 10,000 years ago as well. I didn't want to test my luck, so I left the city without

trying for a glance at the potent queen. If rumors and my intuition are to be believed, Azshara is one of the most powerful beings on Azeroth, rivaled, perhaps, only by the Lich King. Speaking of which, while the naga are despicable and evil, they are not allies of the Scourge, and are a powerful force. If only there were some way to play the two against each other....

History

The Eye was once the Kaldorei capital Zin-Azshari, which means "Glory of Azshara." It played a key role in the War of the Ancients, for it was the site of the Well of Eternity and of the Burning Legion's first invasion of Azeroth. With the Sundering, Zin-Azshari shattered and sank. Its ruins are now scattered throughout the Eye.

For as long as the eastern and western continents have existed, the Maelstrom has made sea travel between the two difficult. Both the Horde and the Alliance lost numerous ships to the Drowned Reaches during the exodus to Kalimdor. In addition, during Thrall's expedition, he was shipwrecked on one lone island somewhere in the South Seas (I do not know exactly where, but it must have been close to the Maelstrom). It was here that he met the Darkspear trolls and saved them from zealous murlocs, thereby enlisting them as members of the Horde.

Adventures

Naga civilization is ancient, evil and steeped in arcane mystery. The Eye holds other secrets as well.

Queennapped!: In a desperate gamble, the Alliance outfits hundreds of their best and brightest with the magic and technological items necessary to survive underwater. With the help of some allied makrura, they stage an attack on Nazjatar. However, the attack is simply a distraction in order to allow a small group of adventurers to enter the city, steal into the palace, overcome Queen Azshara's defenses, capture her, and return her to the surface. The Alliance plans to either siphon the captured queen's arcane powers or use her to enlist the help of the naga against the Scourge.

Isle of Kezan

Capital: Undermine (20,000).

Population: 40,000 (71% goblin, 15% forest troll, 5% human, 2% gnome, 2% jungle troll, 1% high elf, 1% Ironforge dwarf, 1% night elf, 1% orc, 1% tauren).

Government: Corporate.

Rulers: The goblin trade princes.

Major Settlements: Undermine (20,000), Bilgewater Port (14,000), Edj (4,000), Voodress Village (1,000).

Languages: Goblin, Common, Zandali.

Faith: Voodoo.

Resources: Alchemy, armor, contraband, food, gemstones, intrigue, magic items, metals, lumber, mercenaries, privateers, slaves, spices, technology, textiles, transportation, weapons.

Affiliation: Independent.

Goblins are in charge on the Isle of Kezan, making the whole place a swarming cesspool of corruption, chaos, scheming and invention. Several cities exist on Kezan, including the nefarious Undermine, the de facto capital of the goblins' trade empire. Kezan is a tropical island, and palm trees and other greenery appear in profusion. Kezan's many ports bustle day and night as merchant ships approach and depart, carrying goods of all sorts to places of all sorts for people of all sorts. Kezan is a valuable way station between the eastern and western lands, and almost all travelers stop here, whether traveling by ship or gryphon or more esoteric means. The island is the heart of the goblins' mercantile efforts, pumping trade throughout Azeroth.

Kezan is the largest and southernmost of the South Seas islands, and, despite the goblin presence, the safest. Unlike the surrounding islands, Kezan's inhabitants won't try to kill you on sight; rather, they first attempt to take your money and all your worldly possessions, then leave you to die on the rain-soaked cobblestone streets. Perhaps I am being unfair; Kezan's ports are valuable neutral areas for both the Alliance and the Horde, and if not for the goblins trade would grind to a standstill and I wouldn't find adventurer shops in ridiculous places like Stranglethorn Vale. Still, I was on the receiving end of one too many goblin explosions in the Second War, and old grudges die hard.

People and Culture

Goblins are short and green and they don't laugh; they cackle. They wear leather clothing, often

cut into aprons to protect themselves from the caustic fluids they handle. Their entire culture is, apparently, focused on mercantile enterprises, and they work hard to expand their markets in any way possible. Most goblins seem friendly but insane.

Goblins can be cutthroat merchants, and this ruthlessness is more prevalent on Kezan than anywhere else — probably because the goblins are competing against their own kind. While goblins answer to no king or other such titular head, a collection of trade princes rules their merchant empire, which is called the Trade Coalition. Officially, five trade princes exist, though I wouldn't be surprised if there were one or two more lurking about in the shadows. The goblins certainly don't elect their trade princes, nor are the positions hereditary; the trade princes killed, blackmailed and schemed their way to the top. Together, these five goblins make the mercantile machine run, organizing the extensive and complex Trade Fleets.

The Trade Coalition is huge, far-reaching and massively complicated. In addition, numerous other, smaller goblin companies, created and run by entrepreneurs called moguls, operate throughout Azeroth. Perhaps the most famous of these smaller businesses is the Venture Company, founded and ruled by Mogul Razdunk.

Goblins engage in any activity that earns them a profit. They traffic in legitimate dealings, including food, spices and textiles, as well as more esoteric and questionable wares, such as magic items and arms dealing. Goblins have no respect for nature and engage in deforestation and mining on vast scales (the Venture Company is particularly notorious for such activities). In addition, goblins run morally corrupt businesses such as smuggling and slave trading. While the Trade Coalition condones all such activities, goblin smugglers and slavers prefer to maintain low profiles — for obvious reasons.

Goblins are mad but brilliant. Their technology is just as ingenuous, if usually more volatile, than gnomish inventions. Goblins are also the best alchemists around, with the possible exception of the Forsaken. Goblin tinkers and alchemists are found throughout Kezan.

As chaotic as it is, goblin society does have some order to it. Goblin barons serve as magistrates to run the trade princes' lands and holdings, and goblin captains command vessels for the Trade Fleets or for private merchants.

Kezan was my first stop in the South Seas. I stabled Gryphadin with the most reputable facility I could find. My time in Kezan was exciting, though not in the way I normally like. Every city on the island is a bit like Ratchet on a larger scale. I always felt like I had to watch my back and count my change.

Geography

Kezan is a tropical island, and the associated flora and fauna appear in the wilderness between cities. Palm trees are everywhere, and in the wild places I found tasty fruits and flowers the size of my head. I also ran into many tropical animals, including tigers and lots of bugs.

Kezan has several natural bays, and the goblins have constructed at least small port towns in most of them. As you travel south, the elevation rises. Southern Kezan is volcanic, and several volcanoes constantly ooze lava into the ocean.

An Explanation of the Purple-Skinned Goblin Giants, by Alchemist Zovzik

Zovzik: "Master dwarf, first you have to understand that we goblins are the best alchemists in the world. We've come up with all *kinds* of interesting potions. They can cure your wounds, make you smarter, or make your beard grow long and luxurious. One of our masterpieces produced those fellows you saw wandering around outside. Those purple-skinned guys. We call them hobgoblins. They were originally goblins, of course, but now they're bigger, stronger and much stupider. They aren't so good at thinking about things, but they make great shock troops. And we don't have to feel bad about sending them into battle on the front lines, because they have a life expectancy of only three years anyway."

Me (Brann Bronzebeard): "But isn't there a moral question involved when you turn members of your own race into such grotesque monstrosities?"

(Zovzik gives me a blank look.)

Lava tubes and other geological tunnels and caves riddle the island.

Mount Kajaro: Mount Kajaro is the most recognizable mountain on the island, and is a landmark for ships and flying travelers. It is a volcano, and still active. Kajaro is sacred to Kezan's jungle trolls, and it is their last holdout on the island. They have one small settlement near the mountain: Voodress Village. Kajaro's volcanic and tectonic activity created the tunnels that house Undermine.

Sites and Settlements

Goblins control just about everything on Kezan. You'll leave with less gold than you had when you came.

Bilgewater Port (city, 14,000): Bilgewater Port, on a bay on the island's northwest coast, is Kezan's primary port city. It bustles at all hours, with ships arriving and departing in perpetuity. Cranes load and unload. Sailors embark and disembark. The docks are noisy and crowded, with visiting races rubbing shoulders with the native goblins and the goblin merchant sailors who arrive to drop off and/or pick up their goods. Bilgewater is *the* port in the South Seas, and the only one worth mentioning that exists between the western and eastern continents; as such, it sees a lot of activity, and races of all types are found here. Bilgewater is connected to goblin enterprises all over the world and is linked directly to Undermine. A circle of goblins called the Bilgewater Cartel oversees operations here.

Edj (large town, 4,000): This much smaller cousin to Bilgewater Port is on the opposite side of the island. A pirate group called the Blackwater Raiders runs the town, and Edj has a secluded port that primarily serves the Raiders and their allies. Despite the fact that they're pirates, the Blackwater Raiders aren't really *bad guys* (at least, not when you compare them to the Scourge and the Burning Legion). They're less interested in plunder and more interested in securing mercantile deals and widening the circle of ports with which they can trade. A goblin called Baron Revilgaz, based in Booty Bay in southern Azeroth, rules the Blackwater Raiders and thus is technically in charge of Edj. The Trade Coalition has little influence over Revilgaz, and indeed the Raiders attempt to go under, above, or around the coalition's head. The port in this town is largely for goods the pirates don't want the coalition to know about: contraband and especially pricey stuff, like magic items and political prisoners. For normal trade items, they go through Bilgewater like everyone else.

Bilgewater Port

10th-Level Civilian Community/6th-Level Military Community

Population: 14,000

Abilities: Force 15, Mobility 16, Resilience 18, Learning 17, Awareness 16, Command 12

Wealth: +48

Defense Bonus: +12

Reputation Bonus: +7

Skills: Appraise +16, Craft (blacksmithing) +15, Craft (carpentry) +16, Craft (leatherworking) +16, Craft (locksmithing) +9, Craft (shipmaking) +18, Craft (technological device) +25, Gather Information +14, Profession (brewer) +7, Profession (innkeeper) +7, Profession (fisherman) +8, Profession (sailor) +16, Use Technological Device +22.

Feats: Basic Fortifications, Brew Potion, Moderate Fortifications, Heavy Fortifications, Safe Harbor, Shipyard, Stockpile, Windfall, Workshop.

Description: Whatever you're looking for, you can find it in Bilgewater Port. The waterfront boasts inns, taverns, gambling halls, theaters, pleasure houses and numerous other businesses that cater to sailors and visitors. Deeper in the city, small shops of every kind fight for space on the cobblestone streets.

Voodress Village (village, 1,000): Located near Mount Kajaro, Voodress Village is the only troll settlement left on Kezan. The trolls once controlled much more of the island, but the goblins battled them for control and, over time, technological advancements gave them the edge. The goblins leave the trolls mostly alone now, and despite their old war the goblins show no signs of an expansionist or imperialist mindset; they haven't attempted to conquer nearby Zandalar, for example. The goblins seem content to focus on mercantile concerns.

Undermine

18th-Level Civilian Community

Population: 20,000.

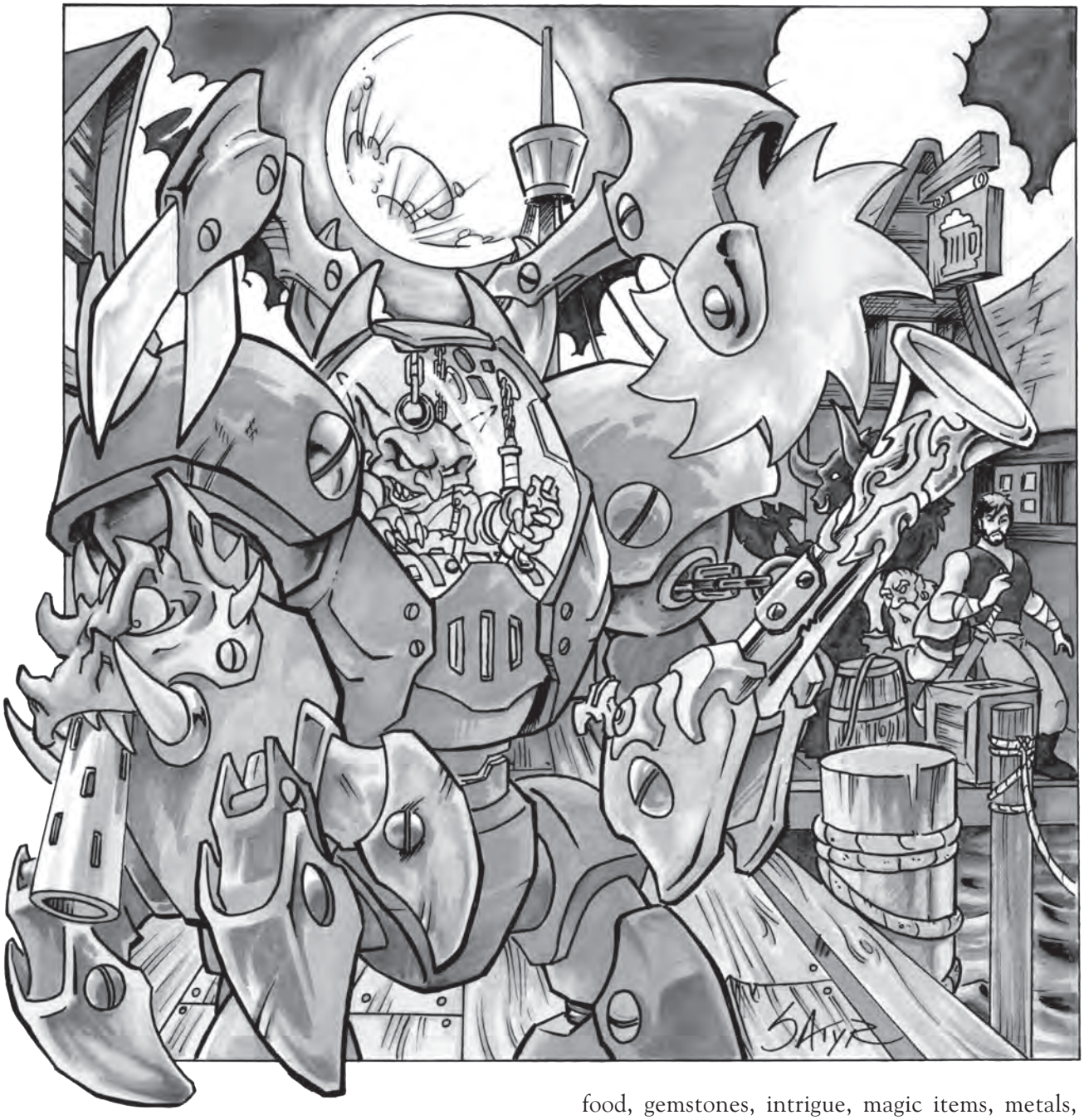
Abilities: Force 14, Mobility 6, Resilience 19, Learning 23, Awareness 13, Command 18

Wealth: +66

Defense Bonus: +6

Reputation Bonus: +6

Skills: Appraise +27, Craft (blacksmithing)



+27, Craft (carpentry) +27, Craft (leatherworking) +27, Craft (locksmithing) +27, Craft (technological device) +30, Diplomacy +28, Gather Information +25, Knowledge (local) +27, Profession (bookkeeper) +6, Profession (brewer) +6, Profession (cook) +9, Profession (innkeeper) +22, Profession (tanner) +6, Use Technological Device +27.

Feats: Basic Fortifications, Renown, Stockpile (x2), Windfall, Workshop.

Government: Corporate.

Rulers: The goblin trade princes.

Languages: Goblin, Common.

Faiths: None.

Resources: Alchemy, armor, contraband, food, gemstones, intrigue, magic items, metals, lumber, mercenaries, privateers, slaves, spices, technology, textiles, transportation, weapons.

Undermine is the center of goblin civilization. It is located beneath and within Kezan, and is connected to the island via a series of volcanic tunnels.

The main centers of Undermine are in volcanic caverns beneath Kezan. Secondary island caverns exist farther away, and the goblins have constructed tunnels of thick glass that lead to these smaller areas. Passing through these tubes means walking along the ocean's floor and looking out to see the colorful fish and hungry sharks nearby. Weird.

As the capital of goblin culture, Undermine

teems with chaotic activity. Goblin alchemists and tinkers practice their crafts and set off explosions. Slave markets bustle in out-of-the-way places. Shops and businesses of all kinds are based here, and the headquarters of the Trade Coalition, the Venture Company and myriad other enterprises are within this city. In Undermine, you can find the extremes on both ends: reeking slave pens in one area, the trade princes' lavish palaces in another.

Of particular interest is the fact that, wandering around Undermine, I saw a strange breed of creature I had never seen before. They resembled goblins, but were much taller and had purple

Mogal Razdunk, 5th-Level Mage/1st-Level Tinker/2nd-Level Techno Mage*

Male Goblin: CR 8; Small humanoid (goblin); HD 8d6+8, hp 41; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +3; Grp –2; Atk +4 melee (1d6–1/x3, spear); Full Atk +4 melee (1d6–1/x3, spear) or +6 ranged (2d6/x3, flintlock pistol); SA call elemental (Small) 1/day, spells; SQ low-light vision, arcitech connection 1/day, familiar, fire resistance 5; AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +8, Will +9; Str 8, Agy 14, Sta 13, Int 22, Spt 10, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Dwarven, Goblin, Low Common, Orcish, Zandali.

Skills: Appraise +8, Concentration +12, Craft (alchemy) +17, Craft (technological device) +22, Diplomacy +2, Disable Device +7, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Listen +2, Spellcraft +17, Use Magic Device +11, Use Technological Device +19.

Feats: Advanced Steam Armor Operation (Large)*, Craft Wondrous Item, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (firearms), Scribe Scroll, Skilled (Craft [technological device] and Use Technological Device), Still Spell, Vehicle Proficiency (steam armor)**.

Mage Spells (4/5/5/3; save DC 16 + spell level): Razdunk's high Intellect score and his ranks in Spellcraft allow him to prepare 15 spells per level; he can prepare most of the spells on the mage spell list.

Possessions: Masterwork spear, masterwork flintlock pistol with 20 balls, XK-77 armor*, *headband of Intellect*** *+4*, spell component pouch.

In Steam Armor: Large humanoid (goblin); hp 141; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 25, touch 12, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +3; Grp +19; Atk +7 melee (3d6+4, steam fist*); Full Atk +3 melee (3d6+4, steam fist*), +3 melee (2d6+2, slicer*), +3 melee (2d6+2, slicer) or +7 ranged (3d8/x3, masterwork long rifle) or special ranged (4d6 fire, dragon mouth); Str 18.

* See Chapter 9: New Rules.

** See **More Magic & Mayhem.**

Description

A large suit of steam armor looms threateningly, its mithril construction speaking of sharpness and speed rather than elegance. A long, mithril-and-wood rifle, its barrel the size of a human head, replaces its left arm. Its right hand is a huge, distorted claw-fist, and above it on the arm sits a perforated iron nozzle projecting from a dragon's mouth. Arcing over the contraption's back, like spider legs, are two spindly arms. One ends in a pair of scissor-like blades, while the other ends in a circular saw that whines as it spins. The pilot, a goblin with a mad grin, is visible through a rectangular window in the thing's front. The goblin's hands dart among a bewildering array of levers, buttons and hanging chains.

Razdunk's steam armor is legendary on Kezan, and he prefers to intimidate and threaten his opponents into submission rather than actually attack them. When forced into combat, Razdunk begins by using his arcitech connection ability to imbue *frost nova* into his long rifle (opening a small hatch in the armor's side to touch the weapon), then blasts away with it. After this tactic, he takes great joy in all of his armor's weapons, flailing away with rifle, dragon mouth, steam fist and slicers. If Razdunk is having problems hitting his opponents, he calms down enough to make single attacks with his steam fist. If the battle looks grim, he attempts to escape with the help of *invisibility*.

Razdunk's familiar is a toad named Bernard.

skin. I introduced myself to one such individual. It stared at me in confusion for a moment, then said, "See Zovzik." It jerked a thumb at a nearby alchemist's shop. Apparently these purple-skinned creatures aren't too bright.

I stopped in at the shop and met Zovzik. He was thrilled that I took notes on his explanation, and repeated himself numerous times to make sure I got it right. I included his diatribe off to the side there.

History

As far as I know, no particularly noteworthy events have happened in Kezan. The goblins created Undermine and beat up the trolls pretty bad; since that time, they've ranged out and allowed people of all races to buy silly merchandise at exorbitant prices. They allied themselves to the Horde in the Second War (because the orcs paid and/or intimidated them), but in the Third War they were a neutral force, making money off every side.

Adventures

Goblins always scheme.

Lizardskin: The goblin mogul Ryzor discovers that thunder lizard hides make excellent coverings for cannons; they protect them from weather conditions and from overheating. Thinking to capitalize on this discovery, he gathers a group of goblin employees and an adventuring group to head into central Kalimdor to harvest some lizard hides. Unfortunately, Ryzor's apprentice Bibbs betrays his master, takes a group of loyal employees, and also heads toward the lizards, hiring a band of Horde adventurers in the process. The PCs' job is to beat this other force to the lizards, fight off the rival adventurers, kill the thunder lizards, and safely transport their hides to Bilgewater Port. This task is made especially difficult because a baron from the Trade Coalition learns of this plan and hires a group of ex-Blackwater Raiders to attack the trade ships as they travel back to Kezan with the hides.

Plunder Isle

Capital: Bloodsail Hold (500).

Population: 500 (85% human, 10% orc, 3% goblin, 2% jungle troll).

Government: Tyranny.

Ruler: Duke Falrevere (male human warrior 5/aristocrat 2/buccaneer* 10).

Major Settlements: Bloodsail Hold (500).

Languages: Common, Nerglish.

Faiths: None.

Resources: Contraband, mercenaries, privateers, smuggling, transport.

Affiliation: Bloodsail Buccaneers.

* See Chapter 9: New Rules for the buccaneer class.

The small Plunder Isle holds little of distinction. Murlocs inhabit the coasts and the interior, menacing all who come close. The island is also home to a thriving population of basilisks, who enjoy the warm climate. Adventurers (stupid adventurers) can find these creatures sunning themselves on rocks and beaches; when the cold-blooded lizards get too hot, they retreat to the cool of numerous caves.

I had former experience with basilisks (in Stranglethorn Vale, among other places) and knew enough to strap on my goofy-looking-but-helpful magic glasses. The glasses protect me from the basilisks' gaze, which can turn you to stone, through and through. "Statues" of former adventurers stand in the jungles throughout Plunder Isle, many covered with green creepers and moss. Unfortunately, one night a basilisk snuck into my camp, and met the eyes of poor Gryphadin before I could do anything about it. I slew the basilisk, but Gryphadin had become a regal-looking gryphon statue. As handsome as he was, I needed him to get me off the island, so I used a packet of magic dust to restore him... but not until I had fully explored Plunder Isle and was ready to leave.

Plunder Isle is also the home base of a pirate group called the Bloodsail Buccaneers. This odious bunch of thieves and murderers maintains a keep on Plunder Isle and their ships strike out from there. Plunder Isle's other dangers provide a sort of natural protection for the pirates, and they remain safe here to conduct their nefarious schemes.

People and Culture

The only people here are the Bloodsail Buccaneers. You may remember that when I was discussing the Blackwater Raiders, above, I mentioned that they aren't really *bad guys.* The same is not true of the Bloodsail Buccaneers. These are *bad guys.* They are cutthroats and ruffians of the worst sort. Many

dress in rusty reds, browns and blacks to show their affiliation. They are the sworn enemies of the Blackwater Raiders, and at the behest of their leader, Duke Falrevere, they make forays against the Raiders' ships and, occasionally, their headquarters in Booty Bay.

Geography

Plunder Isle is a small tropical island directly east of Kezan and southeast of Zandalar. Its rocky coasts are inhospitable and it has no natural bays. The place is covered mostly in palm trees, other tropical foliage, and bare rock. A misty rain falls at about 3:00 every afternoon (you can set your gnomish timekeeping device to it), but otherwise the climate is warm and sunny. Of the South Seas islands, Plunder Isle is the closest to the mainland (Azeroth, in this case). Booty Bay is the closest mainland port, to Plunder Isle's northeast.

Sites and Settlements

The Bloodsail Buccaneers maintain the only shreds of civilization here. Basilisks and murlocs range elsewhere.

Bloodsail Hold (fortress, 500): This large fortress stands atop Plunder Isle's west coast. Duke Falrevere, a former Lordaeron noble, holds court here when he isn't leading his pirates to battle against merchant ships or the Blackwater Raiders. Because murlocs and basilisks inhabit the island's eastern portion, the pirates don't really worry about attack from that direction, but they take suitable precautions against naval attacks from the west. Numerous cannons bristle from Bloodsail Hold, pointing west into the ocean.

For more information on the Bloodsail Buccaneers, see Chapter 8: Organizations.

Den of the Cold Eye: The Den of the Cold Eye is a series of natural caves on Plunder Isle's northeast side, near the shore. Basilisks favor these cool caves. The complex draws its name from the frightening attacks of these creatures. In the Den of the Cold Eye, statues of ill-fated adventurers are particularly prevalent.

History

As far as I know, nothing of particular historical significance has happened on Plunder Isle. The murlocs and basilisks have lived here for a long time, and in more recent times (say 5 to 10 years ago), the Bloodsail Buccaneers arrived and set up shop.

Adventures

Murlocs, basilisks and pirates provide ample opportunities for adventurers looking to test their mettle. While the Bloodsail Buccaneers are despicable people, Duke Falrevere always has a use for those willing to thwart his enemies.

The Axe in the Stone: Ogrik Wolfclaw, a shaman from Orgrimmar, last saw his sister over a year ago; she was setting out to explore the South Seas. Worried about her fate, Ogrik consulted the spirits and divined that she now exists on Plunder Isle — "dead but not dead," came the cryptic response. Ogrik believes that she has been turned to stone by the basilisks of Plunder Isle. He hires a group of adventurers and entrusts them with a box, supposedly full of spirits that will turn flesh back to stone. "Open this when you are near her," he says. If the adventurers find her dead or are unable to restore her, they are instead to recover her axe, which is a Wolfclaw family heirloom.

Ogrik's sister was indeed turned to stone, and her statue now exists in the Den of the Cold Eye. Problems arise when the heroes open the box and the spirits streak throughout the complex, restoring all those who were once stone. Anarchy reigns as the disparate groups battle for the caves' treasure, fight out old rivalries, and desperately try to avoid being turned to stone again. Complicating matters further, Ogrik's sister turns out to be a traitor who was planning on slaying Ogrik and taking his valuable shamanistic materials when she returned.

Zandalar

Capital: Zuldazar (17,000).
Population: 25,000 (100% troll).
Government: Monarchy.
Ruler: King Rastakhan (male jungle troll witch doctor 17/jungle troll 3).
Major Settlement: Zuldazar (27,000).
Languages: Zandali, Nerglish.
Faith: Voodoo.
Resources: Gold, hunting, lumber, magic items, mercenaries, voodoo.

Affiliation: Independent.

I winged my way toward Zandalar from the Isle of Kezan, holding tight to Gryphadin with one gloved hand. I learned in Kezan that Zandalar is home to many trolls, so I resolved to limber up my axe arm before striking into the jungle. As the island resolved out of the mist, I could see that two enormous mountains dominated it, one snow-capped for at least a third of its height. Aside from these two megaliths, green blanketed the landscape.

As I flew closer, I saw something strange about one of the mountains. Flying closer, I realized that my initial impression was wrong: this was not a mountain; it was a great series of structures. Ziggurats. Troll work. They have carved a city out of stepped pyramids, and it rises as high as a mountain.

I circled the island at low altitude, and saw numerous other, smaller ziggurats poking their heads out of the foliage. Trolls fished and hunted on the shores. Colorful birds and larger, more fantastic flying beasts — couatl — called and swooped among the treetops.

No ports. No towns for visitors. Not even any goblin shops. The only way for an individual to get here is by personal watercraft or flying mount, and then you have to deal with the trolls. I found a secluded clearing near the northeast shore, landed, and bid Gryphadin to keep hidden. Then I limbered up.

Zandalar is a large island northeast of Kezan and south of the Broken Isles. Westfall, on the mainland, is a ways to the northeast.

People and Culture

Trolls dominate Zandalar, and it was inevitable that I clash with them — and I did so, numerous times. I learned what I could from my captured prisoners before putting them out of their misery. As the trolls' various cultures fascinate me, I was keen to learn more about this land.

Apparently, all trolls, from jungle to ice, consider Zandalar their homeland. It is neutral territory for their kind, so trolls don't battle each other when on Zandalar. The same courtesy doesn't extend toward other races, though, and Zandalar's trolls are a wicked and voodoo-worshipping bunch who delight in slaying their enemies and devouring their remains. As such, not even goblin merchants are safe on this island, and visitors face stalking, axe- and spear-wielding danger from every green shadow.

Every 6 years, trolls from all tribes from all over the world congregate in Zandalar to discuss matters that affect all trolls. Desert and ice trolls rub shoulders with jungle and forest trolls. They meet at Zuldazar, their capital city — the one that looks like a mountain.

Most of the native trolls here are jungle trolls, though ice trolls live atop Mount Mugamba's snowy peak. The trolls here are bigger, stronger and nastier than all other trolls — almost (the Drakkari of Northrend are a bit bigger). King Rastakhan, an ancient and formidable witch doctor and keeper of troll lore, rules from Zuldazar. I suppose one could call him the king of all trolls throughout the world, but I don't think that's an entirely accurate description. Trolls often have trouble working with each other, despite the conferences on Zandalar.

Geography

Zandalar is tropical and lush. Mount Mugamba is by far the highest peak on the island, rising from its center. Troll ziggurats, the domains of troll shamans, priests and witch doctors, are scattered throughout the jungle, as are troll totems and huts. Also, I saw a few statues of snakes throughout the jungle, particularly giant anacondas. I wondered at these. Did they represent the trolls' strange gods? Unfortunately, I did not solve this mystery this time around.

Zandalar boasts impressive wildlife as well, and is a prime hunting ground. Bright fish, hermit crabs, birds and monkeys dwell in the waters or jungle. In addition, more interesting prey attracts the discerning hunter: tigers, hydras, lions and couatl. A few makrura inhabit the area as well.

Warm weather and rain are constant (except on Mugamba, where the rain turns to snow).

Mount Mugamba: This enormous mountain towers over the jungle northwest of Zuldazar. Much of it is covered with snow and cold, despite the tropical weather below. Ice trolls dwell here, and their totems, chiseled of solid ice, are scattered throughout.

Sites and Settlements

Trolls rule here, and small family or individual dwellings appear throughout the jungle. Trolls range through Zandalar, hunting, fishing and trapping.

Zuldazar (city, 17,000): Zandalar's capital is built into a series of ziggurats. From a distance (I swear), it looks like a towering mountain (though in retrospect its lack of snow should have tipped me off). Zuldazar includes standard troll architecture: It features a winding, tiered structure of walls and

King Rastakhan, 17th-Level Witch Doctor*/ 3rd-Level Jungle Troll

Male Jungle Troll: CR 20; Medium humanoid (troll); HD 20d8+120, hp 216; Init +9; Spd 30 ft.; AC 25, touch 15, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +15; Grp +23; Atk +27 melee (1d8+12/19–20/x3 plus 1d6 fire, spear); Full Atk +27/+22/+17 melee (1d8+12/x3 plus 1d6 fire, spear); SA rebuke undead, spontaneous casting (*inflict* spells), +1 to hit with ranged weapons; SQ low-light vision, big mojo, Healing domain (lesser), juju potion, mojo, potion master, Spirits domain (greater), witch doctor's brews, troll healing (fast healing 3); AL LN; SV Fort +13, Ref +8, Will +11; Str 26, Agy 21, Sta 22, Int 16, Spt 30, Cha 20.

Languages Spoken: Common, Goblin, Low Common, Orcish, Zandali.

Skills: Concentration +26, Craft (alchemy) +23, Diplomacy +25, Jump +15**, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (the planes) +23, Listen +15, Spot +16, Spellcraft +23, Stealth +9**, Survival +12, Tumble +12**.

** Includes –1 armor check penalty.

Feats: Artisan Alchemist*, Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Rod, Dodge, Expert Alchemist*, Improved Initiative, Journeyman Alchemist*, Master Alchemist*, Mobility, Spring Attack.

Typical Witch Doctor Spells Prepared (6/8/8/7/7/6/6/4/3/2; save DC 20 + spell level; caster level 20th): Rastakhan's high Spirit score and his ranks in Spellcraft allow him to prepare 18 spells per level; he can prepare most of the spells on the witch doctor spell list.

Domain Spells: 1st—*bless;* 2nd—*call of the spirits;* 3rd—*bloodlust;* 4th—*cure critical wounds;* 5th—*true seeing;* 6th—*mass bear's endurance;* 7th—*earthquake;* 8th—*whirlwind;* 9th—*foresight.*

Domains: Healing (Rastakhan casts Healing spells as a 21st-level caster) and Spirits (Rastakhan casts Spirits spells as a 21st-level caster; far sight 1/day (+17 on Spot checks for 13 rounds)).

Possessions: +4 elfbane keen flaming spear, mithril +5 breastplate, belt of giant Strength +6, cloak of Charisma +6, periapt of Spirit +6, ring of adaptation,* spell component pouch. In addition, Rastakhan has access to just about every potion and alchemical concoction imaginable.

* See **More Magic & Mayhem** for the witch doctor class and for descriptions of Rastakan's magic items.

Description

This troll is ancient and hoary, but his wire-hard muscles speak to his strength. A string of shrunken heads hangs from his neck, and a humanoid skull is impaled on his spear.

Rastakhan, as king of all Azeroth's trolls, rarely enters combat when not accompanied by a host of barbarians, warriors, shamans, witch doctors and other support. He prefers to remain out of melee, decimating his foes from a distance with his spells. If he has time to prepare before a battle, he doles out potions and alchemical concoctions to his elite: brews to increase their defenses and combat efficacy.

buildings. Thousands of cannibalistic jungle trolls inhabit these ziggurats, making visiting it a difficult prospect for a lone dwarf. Zuldazar is the seat of King Rastakhan and hosts a gathering of all the troll tribes every 6 years; the trolls meet to share information and plot (I imagine).

History

Millennia after the Sundering was the Age of Discovery, when the young races explored the world and unearthed some of its secrets. According to the trolls I spoke to, Zandalar was one of the first, if not *the* first, permanent strongholds that the trolls established. Eventually, they ranged out from the South Seas into the eastern continents, creating an empire and clashing with elves and humans for control of land. As we know, the humans and elves defeated the trolls with the help of magic and alliances, toppling their empire and almost eliminating the entire race.

Out of hatred for their ancient foes, forest trolls allied with the orcs in the Second War. After their Horde's defeat, many trolls retreated back to Zandalar, reestablishing it as the center of their

civilization. Now, with Zandalar a solid center and its satellite stronghold of Zul'Gurub (in Stranglethorn Vale) and Zul'Aman (in northeast Lordaeron), the trolls aim to retake their former lands and recreate their ancient empire.

They'll have to defeat the Scourge, and a host of other enemies, to do it.

Adventures

The troll capital contains ancient secrets and sinister plots. Fantastic creatures also draw adventurers to Zandalar.

Secret Agent Troll: The Alliance uses magic items to disguise a group of adventurers as jungle trolls. It sends this band to Zandalar for one of the 6-year troll gatherings. The heroes' job is to learn anything they can about the trolls and their plots without being discovered — if they get a chance, they are also to (discreetly) determine if the trolls could become allies (dark allies, but war makes strange bedfellows) against the Scourge, Burning Legion, naga and/or Forsaken. Before they head out on this mission, an archmage named Laius takes the heroes aside and asks them if they could also check the Zuldazar vaults for a collection of ancient troll artifacts that supposedly existed in the days of the troll empire. If these items do lie in the vaults, Laius would love to study them.

I hate it here.

Not just because it's so cold my beard's frozen, though that's part of it. I'm a dwarf, not an icicle — my skin isn't supposed to be blue! I shouldn't have to beat myself with a stick when I walk indoors, to break up the ice enough to move my arms and legs. But it's more than that.

Northrend is the home of the Scourge. This land belongs to the Lich King and his undead minions. All the undead sweeping down into the other nations start here.

And this is where Muradin died.

Coming here, I think about that all the time. This is the last place my brother saw, this barren land of ice and snow, this horrible, glacial country overrun with the walking dead. This frigid air that burns when you breathe was the last to touch his lungs. It was here that he brought his expedition, spurred on by rumors of that strange runeblade and its powers. It was here that he hoped to find artifacts from our own history, and weapons to push back the Scourge. It was here that he lost his life. Despite my frivolity in naming Gryphadin after my brother, entering Northrend, I felt his loss like a knife in the gut. The South Seas is a bit intoxicating; Northrend is sobering.

I hate it here.

Yet that's why I have to come here. It's why I have to examine this place. Not because I was ordered to, though of course I obey my king. Not because it's the heart of the Scourge and the best place to assess their strength. No, I have to experience this land that Muradin experienced. I have to know what my brother encountered before his death. I have to understand what he went through.

There's a lot to know. Northrend was here long before the Lich King arrived. The Titans walked here, and their children the giants remain. Nerubians, furbolgs and other strange creatures have entire civilizations here — or did before the Scourge assimilated them or forced them into hiding. Massive battles have been fought over these glaciers and snowfields and frozen lakes. The fate of the continent, and of the world, has been decided here more than once. The Scourge was almost destroyed right here, before it could infect Lordaeron or spread to the other continents. If any place has the key to defeating the Lich King and destroying his power forever, it is this icy continent.

I intend to peer into every nook and cranny of this land. I'll scale every ice cliff, scramble down every frozen gully, walk across each ice-sheeted river. I will wander the mazelike tunnels beneath the surface, tussle with wendigo and frost wolves, and speak with nerubians, furbolgs and any others that can understand me. I will not rest until I

have unearthed this land's secrets and brought home anything that can aid us in our struggle. My brother's spirit deserves nothing less.

But I still hate it.

Argh, I can feel myself losing my sense of humor already.

History

It's hard to be sure about Northrend's past — it's never had a large population, and most of those creatures were destroyed or corrupted. The few left hide for survival, which doesn't exactly make them chatty. But I've picked up hints here and there, and I've shared tidbits with other travelers. Between us I've pieced a few things together — though as most of this is hearsay, legend or dredged from third-party sources, I can't be sure of its accuracy.

The furbolgs were here first. Yes, furbolgs, those big, bearlike barbarians. Not the Titans — they came second. The ursine tribes were already here back when Kalimdor was the only continent in the world. The furbolgs lived at the northern tip of that great land, their fur well suited to the harsh cold. Their oral histories actually talk about seeing the Titans step forth and roam the wild. I wish furbolgs were more scholarly — it's all they can do to write their own names, usually, and those are sigils and slashes rather than proper letters. If they had a better written language we might have real descriptions of the Titans and their activities. Instead we have folk tales and songs. Yet it's enough to tell me that these shaggy bear-men saw our creators arrive and watched them build fortresses, establish strongholds, and create our race.

I think the furbolgs may actually descend from the pandaren. Both are big and bearlike, and the pandaren also date back before the Great Sundering. Some of them like to travel, I hear, so maybe a few pandaren settled up here in Northrend and their children forgot their heritage, became more brutish, and were the first furbolgs. I'm not sure, but it could have happened. Or maybe some furbolgs wandered to Pandaria, became more contemplative, and became the first pandaren. Nobody knows, but I wouldn't be surprised if the two races were related.

After the furbolgs and the Titans came the nerubians. The spider-men set up house beneath the ground, preferring dark caves and tunnels to glittering ice and blustery wind. Can't say I blame them. They carved extensive kingdoms below the surface, creating a vast empire that never saw the light of day. The furbolgs knew about this, I think — their songs talk about "the many-legged dark" — but weren't interested in caves. Despite their savage appearance furbolgs aren't very warlike unless attacked first. They aren't interested in things like conquest, only in holding enough space for their people to survive. Since the nerubians didn't venture above ground the two races didn't fight or even communicate. Things were nice and quiet.

Storm giants were here around this time as well. The Titans created them, just as they created our ancestors, and kept the giants close at hand. It's hard to say whether the nerubians or the giants came first, really, but the spider-men have a clearer timeline. At least, I've seen theirs. The giants' history I know only from what I've heard or found carved into their ruins.

I'm not sure when the trolls arrived, or how. Definitely before the Sundering — Zul'Drak has ruins from well before that event. They might actually predate the nerubians. The nerubians kept their records neat, however. The trolls rarely bother keeping track of anything except their last meal and kill count. Their fortresses have also endured centuries of wind and ice, which has worn them down considerably, so anything the trolls had carved on the walls is long since lost. Drakkari speak Zandali, same as the jungle trolls, though, and are probably from the same original stock. I don't know which were the originals.

Tuskarr and magnataur arrived more recently, I'd say. Though again it's hard to be sure, since neither of them keep good records. But the furbolgs have songs of "the tusked invaders" and "the mammoth half-men" so both races must have arrived after the ursine tribes. The songs seem more recent than those about the nerubians, as well. Magnataur don't exactly bother with records, and I can't go up and ask them about their history anyway. Tuskarr are friendly enough but more concerned with present survival than past history. Their songs and legends are vaguer than the furbolgs' and more cautionary than historical.

Murlocs were the last race to reach Northrend. They arrived only a few centuries ago at most. Some of the other races here call the murlocs "younglings" and "hatchlings" and other funny names to indicate their general youth. I think they're wrong, though.

Murlocs aren't new; they're just new to here. Some of the things I've seen suggest that the fish-men are a lot older than anyone realizes. I don't know why they came out of the water, or what they want here in Northrend. It certainly isn't the company, since they hate everyone else and either hide or attack whenever someone approaches.

One thing I do know, though: Northrend was a quiet place for a long time. It had a lot of different races, but either they stayed in some place no one else wanted (like the nerubians), or didn't care what others did as long as they were left alone (like the furbolgs and the storm giants), or they weren't strong enough to pose a threat beyond their own borders (like the Drakkari trolls). No single race could claim dominance. Northrend had plenty of space to go around, if you like ice and snow. Races fought from time to time, usually when one wandered into another's territory, but it rarely went beyond that. Until the Lich King came.

That was around the end of the Second War. The nerubians have the best recollection and say it was just over 20 years ago. In Northrend, it's been only two decades since the world changed, and not for the better. That's when the nerubians recorded the shockwave that destroyed several of their tunnels. They say it came from something striking the surface and drilling deep into the ice and rock. The furbolgs have songs about it as well: a great flashing shard that fell from the sky, imbedding itself somewhere in the north. That had to be the body of Ner'zhul the orc shaman. It became the Frozen Throne. With its arrival came Ner'zhul himself: the Lich King.

He reached out and took hold of the other races in Northrend. Furbolg, troll, dwarf, human: anyone in reach. The Lich King was not picky. His magic consumed them, killed them and converted them to undead. The Scourge was born.

The races didn't go willingly, of course. The nerubians, in particular, fought long and hard. They almost won, too. Almost. Yet the Scourge was too strong, the Lich King's magic too powerful, and every spider-man that fell became one of the enemy. Finally the nerubians were defeated, their civilization destroyed, their kingdom ruined. They became leaders of the Scourge, and the Lich King grew in power. His minions built him a fortress in Icecrown Glacier, Icecrown Citadel, centered around that block of ice the furbolgs had seen fall. That was the center of his power, the Frozen Throne. The Lich King couldn't leave his throne, but he didn't have to — his magic let him strike down foes from a distance, and then he had his Scourge to send forth in his name.

Some people will do anything for power. The Lich King found some of them and won their service with his dark promises, and they became the Cult of the Damned. The Lich King sent the cultists to Lordaeron, carrying corrupted grain. Everyone who ate the grain took sick with plague and died, and then rose again as part of the Scourge. Thus the Lich King was able to create an army in Lordaeron, and it swept across the country, killing everyone and adding to its own ranks in the process. Prince Arthas Menethil — curse his name— discovered the Lich King's plan and slew his servant, Kel'Thuzad, but he was too late. The plague had run rampant, and the demon Mal'Ganis led the Scourge across the continent. Arthas decided to stop the plague at its source and traveled here, to Northrend. It was here that he met my brother Muradin, who knew tales of the runeblade *Frostmourne*. If Muradin had killed Arthas then, the world would have been spared a great deal and my brother would still be alive. Yet Muradin was always a trusting sort, and he and Arthas joined forces. They fought their way to the sword and Arthas claimed it, killing Muradin in the process. Then the cursed prince defeated Mal'Ganis and killed him, even though both then served the Lich King. Arthas proved as much when he returned to Lordaeron, slaughtered his father, and gave the country to the Scourge.

That was 5 years ago. The Alliance and the Horde were busy with their own problems and didn't pay enough attention to the Scourge or to Lordaeron. By the time Arthas returned home and killed his father, the Third War was in full swing. Kel'Thuzad, a lich now, summoned the Burning Legion, and the Horde and the Alliance found themselves working together in order to survive. Meanwhile more of Lordaeron's people became undead, and the Lich King continued to consolidate his power in Northrend. A handful of nerubians survived the fall of their kingdom and fought against him, but without success. The remaining dwarves from Muradin's expedition hid within ruins or gathered with humans in Valgarde, the only free city on the continent. The storm giants, who might have been strong enough to stop the Lich King, hid away in the Storm Peaks and avoided all contact. The blue dragons kept to Coldarra and their own tasks, as did the green dragons in Crystalsong Forest. If all the other races here on Northrend had united they might have stopped the Lich King once and for all, but they didn't. Most of the races were too busy surviving the harsh climate and evading Scourge patrols. No one drew them together. I doubt anyone could have. And as the Lich King grew stronger and those other races weaker, their chance against him faded away.

Regions of Northrend

Two years ago, the Lich King summoned Arthas back to Northrend. His power was waning, and Kil'jaeden sent the ancient mage Illidan Stormrage to destroy him. Arthas returned and fought his way to Icecrown Citadel with his new comrade, the crypt lord Anub'arak. They faced Illidan at Icecrown Citadel, and large portions of the fortress were destroyed in the battle. Arthas won, though.

I don't know what happened next, exactly. When Arthas went into Icecrown he was still mortal, though a death knight in the Lich King's service, and Ner'zhul was bound to his Frozen Throne. After the battle, Arthas and Ner'zhul merged. They became the new Lich King. The Lich King is stronger than ever now, and more mobile. He's also more aggressive and more ruthless. His plague still eats away at Lordaeron, and rumors say it's begun to appear in other lands. His army grows larger and stronger. Northrend is still almost completely under Scourge control, and the undead walk openly here.

Okay, so Northrend isn't ugly. It's actually pretty, in a bleak way, especially in the southeast. The trees are tall, thick and evergreen, their needle-leaves coated in snow and rimmed in ice. The soil, under the snow and rock, is a rich black, and those plants hardy enough to endure the cold and the biting winds thrive. The east has more dirt, and even some farms mixed in among the forests, while the west is drier and more barren. I've seen waterfalls taller than some mountains, a few of them so frozen I could climb them like twisted ladders. Other waterfalls and lakes still run, though hunks of ice bob along, catching the rare sunlight like gems sliding across cloth. The ground away from the trees is a blanket of pure white, broken only by bluish ice and gray rock. It is breathtaking, and not just because every breath feels like a knife slicing down your throat.

The north is less pleasant. That's the Lich King's domain, home of the Scourge, and his blight touched the land even while it corrupted the people. The

Cold Dangers

Cold and exposure deal nonlethal damage to the victim. This nonlethal damage cannot be recovered until the character gets out of the cold and warms up again. Once a character is rendered unconscious through the accumulation of nonlethal damage, the cold and exposure begins to deal lethal damage at the same rate.

An unprotected character in cold weather (below 40° F) must make a Fortitude save each hour (DC 15, + 1 per previous check) or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. A character can use the Survival skill to receive a bonus on this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well (see **WoW RPG,** Chapter 5: Skills).

In conditions of severe cold or exposure (below 0° F), an unprotected character must make a Fortitude save once every 10 minutes (DC 15, +1 per previous check) can use the Survival skill to receive a bonus on this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well (see **WoW RPG,** Chapter 5: Skills). Characters wearing winter clothing only need check once per hour for cold and exposure damage.

A character who takes any nonlethal damage from cold or exposure is beset by frostbite or hypothermia (treat her as fatigued). These penalties end when the character recovers the nonlethal damage she took from the cold and exposure.

Extreme cold (below –20° F) deals 1d6 points of lethal damage per minute (no save). In addition, a character must make a Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage.).

Characters with the Coldskin feat (see Chapter 9: New Rules) are immune to these effects.

Ice Effects

Characters walking on ice must spend 2 squares of movement to enter a square covered by ice, and the DCs for Balance and Tumble checks increases by +5. Characters in prolonged contact with ice may run the risk of taking damage from severe cold (see above).

trees there are smaller and twisted, their trunks an ugly mix of green and gray, their leaves black and shriveled. Few other plants survive. The soil is gray as well, with a tinge of yellow; and even the snow seems dirty. The water, what little I saw, is discolored and tastes of soot and rot. No one goes there if they can help it — no one living, anyway. The south isn't much better, at least not the central south where the dragons once lived.

The weather out here is bitter. I think it might actually be pleasant in the lower regions, if the sun ever shone down and that cursed wind ever stalled. It blows almost constantly, cutting through every layer of cloth and fur. People walk bent over, and most of the villages have ropes linking the buildings so you can haul yourself from place to place. I saw the sun peek out only twice during my travels. The rest of the time thick gray clouds filled the sky. It snowed most days, ranging from a light dusting to sheets of blinding white.

This country has only a few natural boundaries, but between those, the settlements and ruins dotting the landscape, and the creatures that lay claim to certain sections, Northrend is divided into clear regions. What's funny is that humans and dwarves, furbolgs and Drakkari trolls and even the Scourge all recognize the same borders and use the same names. It's one of the only things I saw everyone here agree upon; that and the cold.

Azjol-Nerub

Population: 20,000 (82% Scourge, 17% nerubian, 1% dwarf).

Government: Monarchy.

Ruler: Anub'arak (male crypt fiend).

Major Settlements: None.

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Nerubian.

Faiths: Lich King, Holy Light.

Resources: Artifacts, minerals, precious metals, weapons.

Affiliation: Scourge.

I wish I'd seen this place 20 years ago. Back then, the nerubian civilization was still alive and strong. Azjol-Nerub was their kingdom, and the spider-men controlled all its tunnels. From what I have seen, it must have been amazing. Their culture is almost as old as our own, and every bit as attuned to life underground. The biggest difference, I'd say, is that the nerubians focus more on the cerebral and less on the physical — their society had more scholars and artists and fewer smiths and miners.

That was all before the Lich King, of course.

He saw immediately that the nerubians posed a major threat. None of the other races on Northrend had their numbers, their organization, or their discipline. True, the nerubians rarely ventured aboveground, but he couldn't take that chance. In his place I'd have either walled up every entrance to Azjol-Nerub or swarmed the underground kingdom and wiped it clean. He chose the latter.

They call it the War of the Spider. It was long and hard, and the nerubians almost won — they may prefer thought and art but they're fearsome foes when roused. Unfortunately, the Scourge has an endless supply of warriors and every dead nerubian potentially added to its ranks. In the end the Scourge's numbers prevailed, and the implacable undead swept through Azjol-Nerub and emptied its tunnels of defenders. The Lich King conquered, and the nerubian civilization all but died.

Now most of Azjol-Nerub lies in ruins. It's still a fascinating place, and many of its murals and frescoes and columns stand intact. The Scourge doesn't care about riches, material or scholarly, and rich tapestries still hang on the walls while impressive tomes line bookcases. I could spend months roaming the tunnels and still never see all of this great kingdom.

But I wish I could have seen it then.

People and Culture

There aren't many people left in Azjol-Nerub. Not many living ones, anyway. The place is overrun with Scourge creatures, of course, and the undead stalk up and down the corridors and through the tunnels, carrying and hammering and digging. It's best to stay out of their way if possible. Some Scourge creatures walk right by you, oblivious, completely focused on their current task, but others drop everything in order to convert you — meaning kill you and reanimate you as one of them. You can't tell beforehand which approach a creature will take, so you're better off ducking when you see them coming.

The nerubians haven't completely abandoned their kingdom. I saw several nerubians here and

Baelgun Flamebeard, 6th-Level Warrior/ 4th-Level Scout

Male Ironforge Dwarf: CR 10; Medium humanoid (Ironforge dwarf); HD 6d10+4d8+40, hp 95; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +9; Grp +12; Atk +14 melee (1d10+5 plus 1d6 fire/x3, dwarven battle hammer); Full Atk +14/+9 melee (1d10+5 plus 1d6 fire/x3, dwarven battle hammer) or +10 ranged (3d6/x3, flintlock pistol); SQ darkvision, nature sense, trackless step, uncanny dodge, wild healing, woodland stride, stability, stonecunning; AL CG; SV Fort +13, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 16, Agy 12, Sta 18, Int 14, Spt 10, Cha 14.

Languages Spoken: Common, Dwarven, Nerubian, Thalassian.

Skills: Appraisal +4, Climb +6*, Craft (armorsmithing) +2, Craft (technological device) +2, Craft (weaponsmithing) +4, Handle Animal +2, Heal +2, Intimidate +5, Jump +4*, Knowledge (military tactics) +5, Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +4, Profession (archaeologist) +3, Profession (military commander) +2, Profession (miner) +4, Ride +1, Search +6, Spot +4, Stealth +2*, Survival +6, Swim +2*, Use Rope +4.

* Includes –1 armor check penalty.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Bloodletter, Careful Strike, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Punishing Blow, Track.

Possessions: +2 flaming dwarven battle hammer, flintlock pistol, *mithril +3 breastplate, mithril +1 heavy shield.* Baelgun also has various adventuring supplies (ropes, lanterns, rations and the like).

Description

This dwarf is short and stocky, even for one of his race. His flame-red beard looks like it would brush the top of his boots when loose, though a double braid hangs only to his knees. He scowls beneath his thick red eyebrows, and his battered nose is all but lost between brow and beard.

In battle Baelgun is a fierce and wily opponent, leaping into the fray and swinging from side to side, deliberately using his braids to distract opponents from his whirling hammer. Baelgun is smart enough to retreat when the odds turn against him, and he is not above attacking from behind — though with his bulk and coloring he is not built for stealth. Since Muradin Bronzebeard's death Baelgun is the leader of the Bronzebeard Expedition. He and the other survivors are camped near the entrance to Azjol-Nerub and guard it to ensure that nothing escapes from within.

there during my wanderings, and even talked to a few of them, particularly once I'd met up with Baelgun and his crew. Most of the nerubians died in the War of the Spider, though, and few remain. The survivors are scattered throughout the tunnels, hiding alone or in small groups, destroying Scourge creatures whenever possible but keeping hidden at all costs. Others form larger bands and plot rebellion, but there's only so much you can do when you're outnumbered hundreds to one. It doesn't help that Azjol-Nerub's ruler is a former nerubian himself, a crypt lord who was once the nerubian king. What I've seen of the nerubians is a nervous, almost paranoid people given to rage, grief and violence, but I'm sure that's a response to their plight. Baelgun tells me they were polished, courtly scholars and artisans once, and rarely raised a voice or a talon in anger. I haven't seen many fallen races. It's fascinating from a scientific standpoint, examining how the nerubians have changed their outlook, their activities and even their appearance based upon events. It's also heartbreaking and more than a little terrifying to see these once-proud creatures reduced to scrounging for food and digging through ruins for broken tools and anything else they can use.

Baelgun Flamebeard leads the Ironforge dwarves here: the remnants of Muradin's party. He's a good fellow, though a bit intense, and the dwarves made me welcome when I arrived. In fact, since they've staked out an area right by the main entrance to the kingdom, my fellow dwarves were the first people I saw upon my descent. For a moment I thought the entire kingdom might be filled with our kind. That was a pleasant fantasy, even if it only lasted a moment. Baelgun's got few dwarves with him, good hardy souls, but they're no match for the Scourge. I doubt they could even stop the nerubians,

particularly the larger rebel bands. Fortunately the nerubians are cordial. We hate the Scourge almost as much as they do, and we have a lot in common with them. Under other circumstances our two races could have become strong allies. As it is, the nerubians leave Baelgun's crew alone, and sometimes stop by to exchange information or trade found items for food. Baelgun keeps his men hidden from the Scourge, but they watch the doors constantly. He's told me a little about what lies deep beneath the earth here, and I completely understand his vow to stop such evils from escaping to the surface.

The only other residents of Azjol-Nerub are monsters — most mysterious creatures called faceless ones. I've seen one or two, heard a few others, and been told about several more. They are humanoid, and their heads look like insectile octopi. One arm is much larger than the other, grotesque and misshapen. Tales say they lived here long before the Scourge came, dwelling too deep for the nerubians to hunt them. It's these horrors Baelgun has vowed to stop, and I wish him luck. I'd say we should send him more men if I thought it would help.

Geography

Azjol-Nerub is entirely underground. It's a fascinating place and stretches for miles — I wouldn't be surprised if it lies beneath most or all of Northrend.

The rock here is predominately granite, mixed with some igneous stone where volcanoes once rose and where magma from deep beneath bubbled up long ago. The nerubians were thorough artisans and left nary a corner untouched — every edge is smooth and faceted, every corridor planed and polished. They preserved the odd angles created by nature but straightened and widened tunnels into corridors and vaulted ceilings. Our people could learn something from their techniques, I think.

Little lives down here, especially now. Various lichen and fungi grow in corners and along the walls — the nerubians evidently nurtured certain phosphorescent and luminescent varieties to provide light, and these have since grown unchecked. Bats perch on doorframes and columns, as do spiders of varying size. Underground lakes teem with blind, silvery-white fish, and insects and worms crawl through the soft dirt alongside. Monsters prowl the deeper caves, and the less said about these the better. Do not approach them unless heavily armed and surrounded by friends.

Azjol-Nerub can be divided into two sections: the Old Kingdom and the Upper Kingdom.

The Old Kingdom: This area is deep below the surface and is the original location of Azjol-Nerub. The nerubians preferred to stay well below surface level. This area has not been well maintained because the Scourge never descended this far. By the same token, that means they have not looted as much here, and it is also easier to avoid them by staying to these lower levels. Most of the nerubian rebels live down here.

The Upper Kingdom: This area includes more recent structures, built when the nerubians grew too numerous to stay below. The War of the Spider was fought through here, so much of this area is destroyed. The Scourge now occupies this level; they've reopened damaged passages and cleared rubble-filled tunnels, but they did not bother to repair the many statues, friezes and murals that were ruined.

Sites and Settlements

Azjol-Nerub has no separate settlements. Once it was a single unified kingdom. Now it is a shadow of its former self, controlled by the Scourge except where pockets of nerubian resistance lurk or where the dwarves hunker down or where even darker creatures roam unopposed.

I should mention that Azjol-Nerub is not a safe place, for several reasons. First, of course, the Scourge controls it. Second, *creatures* live below, including the strange faceless ones: ancient monsters long imprisoned beneath the ice and recently loosed again. Yet even uninhabited, this kingdom would be dangerous. The nerubians set all manner of traps here, including circular doors that must be moved just so to avoid them crashing down on you, statues that release streams of frost at intruders and pits hidden beneath seemingly normal floor tiles. I suspect many adventurers have ventured into this place, hoping for gold and other treasures, and found death instead.

Doorward: This is the area Baelgun selects for his camp. He and the other dwarves fortify it heavily. They also have several barrels of explosives placed around the camp, which I pointed out was not the safest idea in the world.

Baelgun has a fine view of the tunnel leading up to the surface. Behind him is the massive, blood-red door leading down to the depths of the Old Kingdom. The door is locked, and Baelgun holds the Blood Key that opens it.

History

Azjol-Nerub was the center of nerubian civilization. I don't know if the nerubians began here, but certainly most if not their entire race dwelled here. They left the rest of the world in peace and pursued their interests beneath the ground. Then the Lich King attacked. He defeated them, killing most of the nerubians in the process and converting many of the survivors into crypt fiends and other undead. Those who could fled his touch.

Two years ago, Arthas and the mighty Anub'arak traveled through this area on their way to the Frozen Throne.

Adventures

Azjol-Nerub is a mystery waiting to be explored. It once held a powerful and advanced civilization, and many of its treasures still rest here undamaged. Great riches litter the lower halls, not only gems and magic items but art and literature and scholarly tomes. The Scourge infest this place. Forgotten ones seethe below, eager to return to the world above.

No Longer Forgotten: Baelgun thought the blood-red door behind him was the only way out of the Old Kingdom. Now a second passage has been discovered. The Scourge prepares to enter the tunnel and explore the region below. Baelgun knows the faceless ones will overpower even the undead and then be free to escape into Northrend proper, and so must stop them. Yet he cannot leave the first door unattended. The PCs must follow the new passage in his stead, making sure no one releases the horrors below.

The Borean Tundra

Capital: Kaskala (12,500).

Population: 28,500 (80% tuskarr, 10% Drakkari troll, 8% naga, 1% blue dragonflight, 1% Scourge).

Government: Tribal.

Ruler: Tusklord Hrak'kar (male tuskarr Bbn4/Sha4).

Major Settlements: Kaskala (12,500), Riplash Ruins (3,000).

Languages: Tuskarr, Common, Draconic, Nazja, Zandali.

Faiths: Druidism, shamanism.

Resources: Crops, fish, silver, stone, timber, whales.

Affiliation: Independent.

It's a pretty place, the Borean Tundra. If you like miles and miles of snow. This is the longest region in Northrend, running from its southwest tip up to Lake Wintergrasp. The ground here is more dirt than rock, and small trees and scrub dot the landscape. But everything is still frozen solid.

Somehow the tundra avoids most of Northrend's problems. The Scourge rarely comes here, the Drakkari are only a minor nuisance, and even the ice storms are less severe. Perhaps the Borean Tundra owes its fortune to its isolation. Along its south edge is the ocean, of course, and along the southwest tip as well.

People and Culture

Tuskarr are the dominant presence in the Borean Tundra. That isn't saying much, since they keep near their villages and you can go days without seeing another living creature. They're good neighbors, too, these walrus-men. Mostly they care about fishing, whaling and protecting their villages. I have seen tuskarr fending off hungry Drakkari, and even fighting a few wayward nerubians, so they are formidable foes; but I've never seen them attack anyone without good reason.

If you're going to visit a tuskarr village, bring several fresh fish. Fishing is more than just a means to survive for them — it's also a moral guideline. They think you cannot fish well if you are a bad person, so evidence of successful fishing means you must have good morals and therefore must be respectable. It's a strange notion but it works for them, and when I showed up lugging three massive pike they treated me like a long lost and much-beloved cousin. They're a simple people, and family-based. Everything is about the family first, the larger community second and the individual third. I think the only reason the families don't live separately is because they would be too vulnerable, and when they have to coordinate they simply pick a family at random to take charge for that particular situation. Each family has its own leader, who is obeyed implicitly, but the entire family bears responsibility for each of its members. Too bad dwarves aren't so obedient, eh, brother?

Drakkari wander the tundra, but not in any significant numbers. Or, rather, if all of them got together in one place they'd be a problem, but most are content to roam alone or in small packs. I don't think they have a city here — at least I haven't been able to find it. I have seen several camps, though. I think they wandered over from Zul'Drak, through the Dragonblight, and came here to hunt. They harass the tuskarr from time to time, but every time the tuskarr gather their forces and send the Drakkari running. An individual Drakkari is probably tougher than a tuskarr, but the tundra has a lot more tuskarr.

It's got naga as well, though only near the south end, in the Riplash Ruins. Sometimes you see blue dragons. They live on Coldarra, right nearby, and fly overhead from time to time. Breathtaking creatures, and surprisingly cordial — one hailed me to ask about my axe. I did see a few Scourge creatures, but I think they were lone scouts straggling over from the lake area.

The Borean Tundra is not an important part of Northrend, at least according to both humans and the Scourge. It's too isolated and too barren to be desirable and has too much shoreline to be defensible. Tuskarr like it because of that expansive shore, and the Riplash Ruins gives the naga a perfect view of anyone approaching across the ocean from the south. Drakkari hunt here because they can and because the tundra provides little cover for wildlife. Most others stay well away, preferring the forested areas to the east.

Geography

The Borean Tundra is wide, flat and cold. A solid sheet of ice covers it, and beneath that is soil frozen rock-hard. Along the west edge the ice rises up into some nasty cliffs, which then shear off into the Westrift. To the north the ice smooths out into one glittering sheet that's glass-slick and leads right to Lake Wintergrasp. The northwest corner, up by the

Sholazar Basin, has no ice and only a little snow — a few hardy souls have even set up farms there. The east is also gentler, still snow-covered but less treacherous where it leads down to the ocean.

At its north edge the tundra runs into Lake Wintergrasp, a vast frozen lake that effectively shields it from the Dragonblight and Icecrown Glacier. The only way to reach these areas overland is across the mountains bordering the Dragonblight or through the Sholazar Basin, neither of which are easy for even a seasoned traveler. An army would be suicidal to attempt either.

Not many plants can survive up here. Without any cover the wind is fierce enough to tear flesh, and you can barely hear yourself when you shout. A few trees manage to hang on, evergreens, but the small twisted kind rather than the tall proud ones out east. I saw some animals, wolves and rabbits and foxes and even bears, roaming about here. Most of the life is in the water, though. The tuskarr can point out every kind of whale imaginable and a few I'm not sure are real, and they hunt all of them. They also told me of at least twenty different types of fish. If you're handy with a spear and a net you can feed yourself pretty easily along the shore.

Sholazar Basin: This place is amazing. It's hard to believe it's part of Northrend. Much like Kalimdor's Un'Goro Crater, the Sholazar Basin is an anomaly. It fills the northwest corner of the Borean Tundra, and you have to climb a nasty ridge to reach it. Once you top that ridge, however, you're looking down into a lush tropical jungle. Hot springs dot the basin and you have to watch out for steam vents and geysers — they'll cook the flesh from your bones in an instant if you get caught in one. Thick vegetation fills the basin, and birds and small animals are everywhere. So are insects. I'd say it was pleasant to walk around out of the cold for a bit, but afterward the rest of Northrend just seems that much worse.

Westrift: Just above the region's southwest tip is Westrift, a tremendous tear in the ice that stretches for miles. It separates the Borean Tundra from Coldarra, and the only place to cross is a lone bridge near the center.

Sites and Settlements

Most of the Borean Tundra is empty ice. It has several Drakkari camps but none big enough to have names. Nerubians wander about as well, though I saw only small packs of them. Same with the Scourge.

Riplash Ruins (ruins/military camp, 3,000): An old ruin stands at the tundra's south end — the southern tip of Northrend. From its architecture I'd say it was nerubian except that it's above ground. Mostly above ground. There may have been an earthquake long ago, possibly the result of magma beneath, and this section of Azjol-Nerub got shoved up to the surface. Regardless, nerubians aren't there now, and a pack of naga moved in some time ago. They're nasty and attack anyone who gets within range. Fortunately there's no reason to venture down there — you can reach the ocean just as easily all along the shore.

Kaskala

7th-Level Civilian Community/3rd-Level Military Community

Population: 12,500

Abilities: Force 15, Mobility 10, Resilience 18, Learning 12, Awareness 18, Command 15

Wealth: +51

Defense Bonus: +10

Reputation Bonus: +8

Skills: Craft (basketweaving) +4, Craft (carpentry) +4, Craft (leatherworking) +4, Craft (stonemasonry) +2, Craft (weaponsmithing) +4, Craft (weaving) +5, Diplomacy +3, Gather Information +2, Handle Animal +4, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (nature) +8, Profession (fisherman) +10, Profession (hunter) +8, Speak Language +2, Survival +10

Feats: Basic Fortifications, Renown, Rich Fishing (Rich Hunting variant), Rich Hunting, Stockpile (x2)

Government: Tribal.

Ruler: Tusklord Hrak'kar (male tuskarr barbarian 4/shaman 4).

Language: Tuskarr.

Faiths: Druidism, shamanism.

Resources: Crops, fish, silver, stone, timber, whales.

Affiliation: Independent.

Kaskala is the tuskarr homeland. At least that's what they told me. It's a collection of villages, actually, none of them more than 400 people but clustered so close together they create one larger unit. Tuskarr are extremely family-focused, and each village is a single extended family, all connected by blood or marriage. You could look at Kaskala as a single city divided into family compounds, but that's not entirely accurate because each village runs itself. The males of each village hunt and fish while the females raise what few crops grow in the tundra, gather berries and roots, fashion and repair clothing and tend to the homes and the children.

Tuskarr houses are solidly built structures of wood

and stone, with thick, thatched roofs. They're only one story and sprawl rather than rise, which makes sense given the incessant wind. Heavy shutters cover the windows and short entry halls lead from the outer door to an inner one, which keeps heat from escaping and cold from entering. Their homes are radial, with a single large chamber at the middle and the sleeping quarters arrayed around it. They have large pits in the center, lined with stone, and keep a fire blazing constantly — it heats the entire house and has spits and trays for cooking food.

Tuskarr are fishers and whalers, and they use every part of the animals they hunt. Whale bones form support beams in their homes, and heavy sealskins and other furs cover the floors and the doorways. They create dyes from various squid inks and fish scales, and have colorful weavings on their walls. Their inner clothing is bright as well, under their thick furs and oilskins. When a tuskarr woman accepts a man as her husband she weaves him a vest and he wears that against his skin. She replaces it once they have children, and again if he becomes the head of their extended family. She repairs it when necessary but otherwise he never takes it off. When males die they are buried in their most recent vest, and the others are wrapped together to fashion a pillow for the body.

As I said, each village is one extended family and handles its own affairs. The eldest male of the family is the village chief, and dictates where they fish and hunt and who handles which tasks. His wife oversees the women's activities and the children's education. The different villages trade together, swapping excess items for things they need.

Every tuskarr takes part in guarding Kaskala and patrolling the area for danger, but Tusklord Hrak'kar decides the schedule. He spreads the tasks evenly so no one village bears the brunt of any task or has too few men to bring in food. If one village has a poor week fishing, the others pool their resources and share their food. No one in Kaskala goes hungry or unclothed unless everyone does. That doesn't mean they share equally — if one village has more success at whaling than the others but everyone brings home enough to feed their own families, that one village keeps its spoils. Yet if someone is hungry, the village with the most is the first to share — tuskarr consider it a mark of honor to help support their people.

History

I'd say the nerubians were here first, judging by the ruins. I still think that's just part of Azjol-Nerub that got thrust up from underground, though, unless it was an experiment to see if they could be comfortable living above ground. If that's the case it must have failed, since it is a ruin. The tuskarr were next — Kaskala's oldest village is at least several centuries old, and the rest grew up around it as family members split off to start their own smaller families. The Drakkari are more recent additions to this area and have no fixed settlement. The Scourge rarely appears, and its agents never stay longer than it takes to patrol and look for potential dangers or new recruits.

Adventures

Despite its empty landscape, the Borean Tundra provides opportunities for adventure. It has ruins to explore, a city to approach, hunters to avoid, and a strangely warm basin to examine.

Titans' Legacy: A visiting high elf scholar in Kaskala believes the Titans used the Sholazar Basin as a testing ground. Some of their experiments, or at least the remains of those experiments, may still exist. Thus the basin is a potential treasure trove of knowledge and power. Who knows what species the Titans left here, and what notes and tools?

Trolltown: The Drakkari wander the Tundra in small hunting parties based out of isolated camps. Yet now a Drakkari warrior named Han'jin has allied his camp with three others. They are building a more permanent base and inviting the other camps to join them. If he can keep the hunters united, Han'jin will become the ruler of a small town, and the Drakkari will become a major threat to the tuskarr and anyone else roaming the Borean Tundra.

Coldarra

Capital: The Nexus (100).
Population: 500 (100% blue dragon).
Government: Monarchy.
Ruler: Malygos the Spellweaver. (See **Shadows & Light** for Malygos's statistics and history.)
Major Settlement: The Nexus.
Language: Draconic.
Faiths: None.
Resources: Knowledge, magic, magic artifacts.
Affiliation: Independent.

I said the Borean Tundra was the most isolated part of Northrend, but that's not exactly true. It's the most isolated part of the mainland. Coldarra, its nearest neighbor, is the only island in Northrend (not counting the two lifeless rocks down by the Howling Fjord). The only access point is the bridge across the Westrift, and to get across that you have to gain the permission of the blue dragons guarding it. No one sets foot on Coldarra unannounced or uninvited.

Coldarra's name suits it. The entire island is made of ice, great jagged peaks that rise from the cold ocean like pale blue fangs. Some of those peaks rise high enough that you can see all the way to Crystalsong Forest and even to the Dragonblight. I had a clear view of Icecrown Citadel as well, though I didn't dwell on it. How the dragons live here I have no idea. I guess the cold doesn't bother them.

Dragons are the only inhabitants, not counting the occasional sheep or mountain goat. Rumors say that visitors sometimes stay to study with Malygos or record his tales, but no one settles permanently. The dragons don't allow it.

That also means Coldarra has no Scourge presence. I think even the Lich King knows better than to invade this place. He wouldn't gain much by trying, and he might anger the dragons into retaliating. So the Scourge stays on the mainland and the dragons live in peace with their thoughts and their magic and their icy cliffs.

People and Culture

Blue dragons are fascinating creatures. They consider themselves the guardians of Azeroth's magic and know more about the arcane than any other race alive. Supposedly Malygos the Spellweaver, their ruler, actually created magic or at least codified it so others could study the arcane arts. It must be true, since dragons do not lie. (Except for Deathwing. And a whole bunch of others.) They are a strange race, thoughtful and somber except in flight, when they become as carefree and joyous as children. I found them pleasant and cordial, and eager to trade tales and ideas. Blue dragons have no need for coin, and have ample food, but they delight in knowledge and in samples of new crafts.

The dragons are not at all religious. They say science is truth, and religion only myth and misinterpretation. Despite that, they treat Malygos with a reverence you would normally expect only due a god, and they commune with the spirits of their dead. Considering the black dragon Deathwing killed most of the blue dragons long ago, they have a lot of spirits available.

For more information on the blue dragonflight, see Chapter 6: Civilizations.

Geography

Coldarra is a large island — at least relative to the Northrend mainland. It is roughly a third as long as the mainland, though only as wide as the tip of the Borean Tundra or the Howling Fjord. Coldarra has no beaches and no gentle shore — its edges rear up as cliffs from the surrounding water. Most of the island is rock covered by thick ice, though here and there enough dirt has gathered to produce tough grass or small bushes. The dragons themselves live in caves fashioned from the cliffs and mountains, or in handsome stone buildings carved into the peaks. The island has no roads or bridges, save the one linking it to the mainland. The dragons fly everywhere, and carry guests from place to place. I think an experienced climber could scale the peaks, though, if he had their permission or somehow evaded their notice.

Sites and Settlements

Coldarra has only one real settlement. Blue dragons, I discovered, are solitary creatures. They prefer to live alone and meet only for discussion, flight or mating. One exception to the dragons' solitary existence is the Nexus, Malygos's home and the dragons' center of knowledge.

The Frostbridge: One bridge spans the Westrift to connect Coldarra to the Borean Tundra. It is narrow (but more than one hundred feet across) and arcs slightly. The top is rough to provide purchases, and has a small lip along the edges, enough to keep travelers from walking unknowing off the bridge but not enough to stop someone from being pushed. Blue dragons watch the bridge at all times and stop travelers from crossing without declaring their names and intentions.

Some tuskarr nearby call this the Frostbridge, and they have a tale as to why the dragons built it.

The Nexus (scholarly retreat, 100): Originally Malygos's lair, the Nexus has expanded considerably as other blue dragons choose to live near their leader and partake of his wisdom. The Nexus is an extensive series of caves and tunnels that riddles Coldarra. Every space has been carved and smoothed so that it seems more like a castle buried in ice than a natural formation. The walls are ice and crystal, and cast rainbows of light from small glowing gems set in strategic locations; most flat surfaces are carved to show dragons in various activities. The floors are solid stone, polished glass-smooth and mirror-bright. No stairs exist — in many places an archway opens onto a vast open chamber and the dragons simply fly across to another portal placed somewhere on the other side. The outermost chambers are dotted with lifelike ice statues — or so I thought. These statues are the remains of uninvited guests, transformed by dragon magic and placed here as a warning. The caves themselves are fascinating, and many have unusual magical properties. I am sure some actually changed while I was visiting, but I chose not to ask for fear of angering my hosts.

Taskarr Legend of the Frostbridge

At some point a few centuries back a human came to Coldarra to see Malygos. This man was a scholar and wished to exchange ideas. The great dragon chose to see him, and had the man flown to the Nexus. For months they communed and formed a great friendship, but then the man returned to the world and his duties. He came back several times, however. Finally Malygos ordered a bridge fashioned across the Westrift so his friend could approach unaided.

History

The blue dragons say Malygos, the oldest and greatest of their kind, created the spells that set the sky and the earth into motion. Harnessing the world's magic and developing these spells took millennia; he settled here in these ice cliffs during that time. Other blue dragons joined him, though many lived elsewhere in the north. Then the black dragon Deathwing attacked the blue dragons, slaughtering them by the dozens. The survivors fought back but were no match for Deathwing's ferocity. In the process their homes were destroyed and the land so damaged it could never recover. This area became the Dragonblight. Malygos, in his rage and grief, split his home from the rest of the land, creating the gap later named the Westrift.

The remainder of the blue dragon race settled on Malygos's island, which they named Coldarra, and carved out homes of their own. They gave up the war against Deathwing and the black dragonflight and chose to withdraw from the world. Soon they lost themselves in study, though always they look toward the Dragonblight and the spirits of their kin still lingering there.

Adventures

Coldarra is an irresistible lure for arcanists. Malygos is unquestionably the most powerful arcane spellcaster in all Azeroth, and designed not only most spells but the theories behind them. His libraries could make any mage powerful beyond her dreams, and even a few words with the ancient blue dragon could grant power and wisdom most mortals never achieve.

Scourge Cure: An ancient scroll, found in a Northrend ruin, mentions a spell that can remove undeath from a huge number of creatures at the same time, laying the undead creatures permanently to rest. Such a spell could rid the world of the Scourge for good and strip the Lich King of his power. The scroll has no details, but if such a spell does exist the blue dragons of Coldarra must know it, and possibly have it. All that remains is to gain access to the island and ask them — or, barring that, sneak onto the island unnoticed, sneak into the Nexus, and search for the spell without getting caught.

Crystalsong Forest

Population: 141 (70% crystalline golem, 30% green dragon).
Government: None.
Ruler: None.
Major Settlements: None.
Language: Draconic.
Faith: Druidism.
Resources: Crystals, passage to the Emerald Dream.
Affiliation: Independent.

I've never seen a place like this before, and probably never shall again. Words cannot do it justice. Picture a forest crafted from crystal — but no, that's not accurate because these are not trees. Imagine a place where crystals as tall as trees sprout from the ground. That's not quite right either, because the ground is crystal as well. Think of a winter scene, snow and ice blanketing the ground, the rocks, the trees. Then change that snow and ice to crystal that glows from within. That's as close as I can come, and it doesn't begin to explain the beauty and peace that fill Crystalsong Forest.

The crystals make noise — they *sing.* Ancient magic is at work here.

People and Culture

Only two races live within Crystalsong Forest: crystalline golems and green dragons. Neither is what I would call normal, or particularly friendly, and neither of them have real homes or cultures.

The crystalline golems are constructs created by the storm giants up in Ulduar. They look like men only larger (and made of crystal), and serve the giants as workers, scouts and servants. The storm giants use crystal from Crystalsong Forest in their experiments and items, and send the golems to fetch it. The golems also protect this place from travelers who might despoil it or settle here and destroy the place's magic. I had a few run-ins with the golems when I arrived, but once I'd assured them that I was only passing through and they saw that I was not harming the crystals, they left me alone. I was still tempted to break off a small sample, but it didn't seem worth the risk.

Green dragons live here as well, though only around the Great Tree. They ignored me until I approached it, then told me to step back or be

History of Crystalsong Forest

A combination of various tuskarr tales, compiled by Brann Bronzebeard.

Crystalsong Forest was not always as it is now. Once, it resembled a normal landscape. Then, black and blue dragons fought a great battle here, and many dragons died. Their magic released into the air and settled as glittering light on the ground and the rocks and the trees. Finally an elder blue dragon, beset by many blacks, unleashed a powerful spell to strip the life from his attackers and turn them to stone. The loose magic altered and amplified the spell, spreading it across the entire region and changing soil and stone and wood and flesh into living crystal. Only the Great Tree was spared, protected by its green dragon guardians.

After the battle ended, the storm giants investigated this strange new place. They discovered that the crystals contained strong magic of their own, and began mining the forest for their own purposes. They created crystalline golems to handle the actual work, and left these creatures to defend the forest and carry crystals back to Ulduar.

When the Dark One (Brann's Note: I think they mean the Lich King) arrived in Northrend, he immediately sensed the power of the forest. He dispatched several of his mightiest servants to secure the region for his use. The golems destroyed them, and the green dragons eliminated the servants who approached the Great Tree. The Dark One tried again, this time sending a small army into Crystalsong, and this time the forest itself took steps. As the monstrosities approached, the forest's song grew louder, shaking every spire, and the creatures burst like shattered glass. The Dark One never made a third attempt, perhaps accepting that some force protected the forest and would not let him pass.

destroyed. No discussion. I think they nest in its branches when they're not buzzing around like angry hornets.

Geography

I've already described the forest as best I can. The ground here rolls slightly, not enough to produce real hills or valleys but enough to keep it from being utterly flat. The crystals vary in size, from a few feet to hundreds of feet high, and from a small tree to a large house in width. Small streams flow here and there, probably where snowmelt has worn channels in the crystal, and I have seen a few waterfalls as well, when those streams reach the edge of one level and fall to the next. It's breathtaking watching that water cascade down, lit from behind by the crystals' light.

I don't know who dubbed this place a forest, though. I'd have said Crystalsong Canyon, or Valley or Landscape. Many of the crystals do rise like trees, tall and straight, but others are wide and flat or slightly curved or tilted at some strange angle. It really is an entire land of crystal, as if something took an ordinary region and transformed everything within it.

The only other creatures here are birds. They perch everywhere, flitting from crystal to crystal and singing as they go. The sound echoes, and the crystals resonate to it, amplifying notes and creating new melodies from several sources. The forest itself seems to be playing music, and you can feel it through your feet and up through your bones. It's lovely and in most places so soft you strain to hear it, but it never completely fades.

It's important to note, though, that even if there were no birds here, the crystals would still sing. This is old magic and has nothing to do with wildlife.

The Chamber: The music is soft in most places, but not here. The Chamber is near the center of the forest and you can't find it until you stumble into it. That's because it's surrounded by a small maze of crystal spires. Yet if you turn just the right way you pass through them and into this shallow basin. The innermost spires tower above it and arch in slightly, forming a vaulted ceiling high overhead. The forest's song is trapped here, bouncing from surface to surface and swelling with each impact, so loud your ears ring. I didn't see any other creatures here, or any indication of previous visitors, so perhaps I was the first to find that place. I know that if I ever return to Crystalsong Forest I'll look for it again. Standing there, letting the music wash over you, you can believe you're hearing life itself.

Sites and Settlements

Crystalsong Forest has only one settlement of any sort. The golems are not technically alive and are always busy here, so they have no camp anywhere. Travelers who are allowed entrance set up camp anywhere the ground is level enough and open enough, but they never stay long. Only the dragons remain.

The Great Tree: The only non-crystal in the entire forest, this enormous tree stands near its northern edge. I've seen few trees even close to this one's size — its trunk is easily as thick around as a castle and its canopy rises several hundred feet above the ground. Its roots must be equally deep to pass below the crystals into soil, unless the crystals themselves provide nourishment. The Great Tree is a portal into the Emerald Dream. Twelve green dragons guard it constantly, nesting in its branches and swooping down to intercept visitors. Druids are allowed entrance. Everyone else is turned back, or killed.

History

In Kaskala, a few tuskarr told me some rumors about Crystalsong Forest's history. Several of these rumors conflicted, and who knows if they have any truth to them, but I included the most interesting one.

Adventures

Crystalsong has few residents, though they defend the forest effectively. Its crystals contain mysterious and impressive magic, enough to tempt any arcanist or tinker. For those allowed entry, the forest also provides an easy way to reach the Storm Peaks, Zul'Drak, Icecrown Glacier or the Dragonblight.

Crystal Theft: Several spires within the forest show chips, gouges, and fractures — someone has been mining Crystalsong for its crystals. The golems are more precise and less invasive, so this is someone else. Who has gained access, and what do they plan to do with the magic gems? Has the Lich King found a way past the forest's defenses? The heroes need to find out who is carving off pieces and stop them before those gems can be used to create something that threatens the free people of Northrend.

The Dragonblight

Population: 800 (50% nerubian, 20% tauren, 20% Scourge, 10% blue dragon).

Government: None.

Ruler: None.

Major Settlement: Icemist Village (160).

Languages: Nerubian, Common, Draconic, Taurahe.

Faiths: Druidism, shamanism.

Resources: Draconic artifacts, dragon bones, dragon hide.

Affiliation: Horde.

The Dragonblight is a depressing sight. Once this region was a thriving land, the most fertile in Northrend after the Sholazar Basin. That was long ago. Now it is a vast wasteland where even the snow and ice seem drained. Most of the Dragonblight is a single enormous valley. And it's filled with bodies.

Not just any bodies, either. These are dragons. Ailing and old dragons, from every dragonflight, from all over the world, come here to die.

The ground is littered with dragons of all colors. Black and red and green and blue and bronze, they all lie here together, all their differences set aside in death. The mightiest creatures in the world, laid low by age and illness and attack. The land has never recovered, and never will. It weeps for its lost children, and remains barren in their memory.

While I was here, I also attended to a certain mission pertaining to the nerubians, recounted in Chapter 6: Civilizations.

People and Culture

Of the living, the most common creatures here are nerubians. The entrance to Azjol-Nerub sits near the north edge of the Dragonblight, just below Crystalsong Forest; and before the Scourge came the spider-men wandered freely through this region, moving among the dragon corpses without a care. Now those who survived the War of the Spider find refuge up here, using dragon bones for cover from Scourge patrols. They hatch plans to reclaim their kingdom but lack the numbers or the strength to succeed.

Tauren live here as well, though only in one place. A pack of Icemist tauren settled on the west edge of the Dragonblight, on the shore of Lake Wintergrasp. They don't venture into the blight proper very often, preferring the clean cold of the lake to this bitter air of doom and death. Can't say I blame them.

Scourge creatures wander through here all the time. I think they're looking for ways to use the dragon remains, or searching for any artifacts the dragons left behind. Since they can't pass through Crystalsong Forest, the Dragonblight also provides the only route to the east of Northrend, unless they want to scale the Storm Peaks. Most of the Scourge creatures lurk near the northwest corner, close to Icecrown Glacier.

Some blue dragons live here as well. They tend their fallen kin and pay their respects. The dragons live in Wyrmrest Temple, down toward the southern shore. They communicate regularly with their kin in Coldarra. I think they rotate through, since even a dragon can stand only so much of this gloom.

Geography

Most of the Dragonblight is a single valley, sloping southward to the Shiverwind Coast. Low hills rise along the sides, taller to the east where they butt up against the Grizzly Hills and Zul'Drak. To the north a thin line of tall, sharp-edged cliffs breaks the land where Icecrown Glacier begins. The western edge borders Lake Wintergrasp, and the ground there is low and even and frozen solid.

Many animals live here, feeding off the dragons' remains. Birds, bears, spiders, wolves and bats all tear at the remains or at each other. I saw wendigo and sasquatch, and heard the cries of a worg pack as well. Strange that a communal graveyard should support so much life, but I suppose the dragons would find it appropriate. Thanks to the Scourge, undead animals wander here as well, killing and converting the living where they can.

Lake Wintergrasp: The largest body of water in all Northrend, this frozen lake sits midway up and just west of the Dragonblight proper. I don't know if the lake has always been frozen — it probably has, since Icecrown Glacier is right above it. "Frozen lake" is a misnomer, of course. The surface is frozen solid, and you can walk across it and even drag a small cart if it's not too full. Yet beneath that sheet of ice the water flows, so cold it'll suck the heat from you in minutes (if you're lucky) and so blue it rivals a clear evening sky. The tauren cut holes in the ice and spear the fish swimming beneath. It's bitterly cold near the water, and the wind can slice right through you, but it's nice to know that not everything in the Dragonblight is dead or feeding off death.

Sites and Settlements

The Dragonblight is an eerie place and I know I wouldn't want to live here. Everywhere you look you see dead dragons and their remains. Most of the creatures here shelter beneath or behind or even within dragon carcasses. A few dig shallow pits into the valley wall, or settle beneath the rotted trees that dot the landscape. The region has only two settlements of any real size — everything else is a single family or a small band, a pack at best.

Icemist Village (small village, 160): This tauren outpost perches on the edge of Lake Wintergrasp. It's a pleasant enough town, surprisingly so given its setting, and the tauren are friendly and helpful. Most travelers in Northrend stop here when passing in this direction, so you can always find someone with whom to trade or share information over a drink. The tauren keep a ready supply of food, drink, clothes and basic tools, and sell them to anyone in need. They even give things away, if people are desperate, and I've seen them drag in travelers they found collapsed on the lake or in the surrounding area. Tundra Coldhoof oversees the village.

Wyrmrest Temple: Set in the blight's southwest, this structure dominates the landscape for two reasons. First, it is massive and impressive. The second reason for the structure's dominance is its inhabitants, past and present. The Titans built the temple, though no one alive knows why. It looked out upon the dragons to the north and the ocean to the south. The Titans have long since vanished, of course, and now the temple occupants are dragons: blue dragons. I believe they monitor the Dragonblight, see to the needs of those dragons arriving here to die, and commune with the spirits of those dragons already departed. The dragons allow non-dragon visitors up to the temple but not within, so I've no idea what the interior looks like. If it is half as impressive as the exterior, this is the most beautiful building in all of Northrend.

History

Nothing particularly noteworthy has happened in the Dragonblight, save for a bunch of dragons dying.

Adventures

The Dragonblight seems peaceful at first, just a giant graveyard. It is not, however. Nerubians stalk the valley, Scourge creatures patrol it, dragons protect it, and other creatures scavenge through it.

Tundra Coldhoof, 6th-Level Druid/ 3rd-Level Warrior

Female Tauren: CR 9; Medium humanoid (tauren); HD 6d8+3d10+18, hp 61; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +7; Grp +10; Atk +12 melee (2d6+6/x3, tauren halberd); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (2d6+6/x3, tauren halberd) or +8 ranged (1d8+3/x3, composite longbow); SA horns; SQ animal companion (wolf), spontaneous casting (*summon nature's ally* spells), strider, turn/rebuke plant creatures, Wild domain (lesser), wild shape; AL LG; SV Fort +10, Ref +3, Will +10; Str 16, Agy 11, Sta 15, Int 12, Spt 18, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Low Common, Taur-ahe.

Skills: Bluff +1, Climb +1, Concentration +4, Craft (woodcarving) +3, Diplomacy +6, Handle Animal +5, Heal +4, Intimidate +2, Jump +1, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Knowledge (military tactics) +2, Knowledge (nature) +5, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +3, Profession (fisherman) +2, Speak Language +3, Spellcraft +6, Survival +6, Swim +1.

Feats: Augment Summoning, Brew Potion, Craft Wondrous Item, Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Natural Spell, Point Blank Shot, Snowfoot*.

* See Chapter 9: New Rules.

Typical Druid Spells Prepared (5/3/3/2; save DC 14 + spell level): Tundra's high Spirit score and her ranks in Spellcraft allow her to prepare 10 spells per level; she can prepare most of the spells on the druid spell list.

Domain Spells (caster level 6th): 1st—*roar*; 2nd—*moonfire*; 3rd—*entangling roots*.

Domain: Wild (when in animal form, Tundra's speed increases by +10 feet).

Possessions: +2 tauren halberd, masterwork composite longbow (+3) with 20 arrows, masterwork dagger, *dragonhide +1 breastplate, potion of cure serious wounds.*

Description

This tauren cuts an imposing figure, with her long horns, her carved halberd and a wolf at her side.

Tundra is a gentle soul who welcomes travelers to Icemist Village as they arrive, making sure the wounded and weary receive whatever care is necessary. Tundra is no weakling, as those who have abused her hospitality have learned, but she is more inclined to talk than to fight. In battle she fires her bow, releases her wolf, Grayven, to worry an opponent's legs, and then uses her spells to summon more help or charges in herself.

Deathwing: The ancient black dragon Deathwing returns to Northrend. He lands in the Dragonblight, at the foot of Wyrmrest Temple, and announces that he is close to death and wishes to end his life here with the others already present. Many of the blues are furious that their ancient enemy would claim such an honor here. Others admire his willingness to set aside the past. The non-dragons are simply excited at the idea that such a powerful dragon is here. The Lich King wants to corrupt him and make him undead. The nerubians want to enlist him in their cause and unleash him upon the Scourge before he dies. Scavengers want his bones and flesh. Treasure-hunters want his skin and claws and any items he carries. The heroes need to keep this situation from escalating into a multi-sided war.

Grizzly Hills

Capital: Grizzlemaw (10,000).

Population: 47,500 (60% furbolg, 30% Ironforge dwarf, 10% Scourge).

Government: Tribal.

Ruler: Baergar Blackpaw (male furbolg, shaman 5/warrior 4).

Major Settlements: Grizzlemaw (10,000), Thor Modan (3,000), Drak'Tharon Keep (2,000).

Languages: Ursine, Dwarven.

Faiths: Druidism, Mystery of the Makers, shamanism.

Resources: Artifacts, fur, leather, meat, timber.

Affiliation: Independent.

I have to admit, I like the Grizzly Hills. They remind me of other forests during wintertime, except that winter here is year-round. The trees are tall and thick, the pine needles and crisp, clean air produce a pleasant scent, the snow leaves the ground clean and fresh, and the hills themselves are high enough for decent elevation but low enough and gradual enough to be easily climbed. It's one of the nicest regions in Northrend, and I'm not just saying that because dwarves live here.

Of course, the dwarves at Thor Modan aren't the only residents. Furbolgs dominate the region, and they make fine neighbors when they're not attacking. The Scourge has a presence here as well, but not strong enough to do much more than block the northwest corner. Wild animals roam the hills, providing plenty of meat and fur and entertainment. It's not an easy land by any stretch, but it's handsome and fierce and full of life.

People and Culture

This region is the furbolg homeland, and they outnumber every other race here combined. If you've never seen these massive bear-men, that's exactly what they are: enormous creatures with a bear's build and fur and basic features, but a man's hands and, to a limited extent, mind. That's a dangerous combination, and they're powerful in a fight. Fortunately they're not aggressive beyond their own territory. The dwarves at Thor Modan have run-ins with furbolgs on a regular basis, since furbolgs feel our kinsmen are trespassers and grave-robbers. Furbolgs are surprisingly friendly to travelers, though, and greeted me warmly once I assured them I laid no claim to anything in the hills. I've heard they're less approving of large groups, and particularly wary of strange races, but I can't blame them for their caution.

The furbolgs have a city here, Grizzlemaw, but it holds less than half their number. The rest are gathered in clans and scattered throughout the region. Each clan has its own totem, and when you see one you know you've entered Snowspring territory or Winterpaw land or Snow Flurry hunting grounds or any of the others. It's best to declare yourself openly once you see the totem, since a furbolg may be watching and won't appreciate your trying to sneak past.

The dwarves in Thor Modan were thrilled to see me, and eager for news of home. I guess they don't get that many travelers up here, particularly other dwarves. They're not here for socializing, though, and remain focused on their excavations. They have not yet discovered anything of note, but they're still hopeful.

The Scourge forces at Drak'Tharon Keep are typical: nasty, violent and focused. They hold the passes between Zul'Drak, the Dragonblight, and the rest of the Grizzly Hills, so that more Scourge forces can reach the east or return to Icecrown Glacier.

Geography

The Grizzly Hills are as hilly as the name suggests. Along the northern edges the land gains height and depth, approaching the level of small mountain ranges, while it flattens out a little in the south. Thick forest covers the land from end to end, broken only by small clearings or the space alongside one of the many streams and small rivers. Snow is everywhere but the region has little ice — the wind whistles overhead but the trees block it from entering down below, and the hills seem almost warm after the Dragonblight and the Borean Tundra. It's still dangerous, with treacherous slopes and hidden caves and partially frozen rivers, but better than most of the other regions.

All manner of wild animals must agree with me, because the hills are full of life. Wolves, bears, foxes, rabbits and some small deer are the most common, though I saw others as well. Mice and other rodents hide from the snowy owls and other raptors in the trees, but mercifully snakes and spiders aren't present here, as they wouldn't be happy with the temperature. Wendigo and sasquatch prowl the hills, so it's best not to go out alone. The Drakkari live just north in Zul'Drak and sometimes their hunters drift down to the hills as well, in search of prey.

Sites and Settlements

The Grizzly Hills have three major settlements, each controlled by a different race. It's strange that all three can coexist here, and even stranger that they're all along the north edge. The southern hills have other furbolg tribes and the random trapper or traveler, but nothing larger than a small village.

Drak'Tharon Keep (military outpost, 2,000): This ancient stone citadel once belonged to the Drakkari trolls. The Scourge drove them out and took possession, and now the Scourge has a garrison here holding the mountain passes. It's a well-placed, solidly built structure, and the small group of undead within can easily hold the keep against forces ten times its size, particularly since they don't need food or water during a siege.

Thor Modan (town, 3,000): This little town looks like it was thrown together, which it was. Mismatched tents stand between rough wooden

shacks and the occasional stone hut, and streets veer wherever someone has settled in their path. I know the expedition leaders slowly correct the settlement's haphazard construction, replacing the temporary buildings with permanent ones and straightening the paths, but they've still got a ways to go. That isn't surprising, since they're more interested in digging for old dwarven relics than in setting up shop. Furbolgs attack frequently, so the camp has walls up now and a guard in place. That at least gives it some shape.

Grizzlemaw

5th-Level Civilian Community/4th-Level Military Community

Population: 10,000

Abilities: Force 16, Mobility 10, Resilience 14, Learning 10, Awareness 16, Command 18

Wealth: +63

Defense Bonus: +12

Reputation Bonus: +8

Skills: Craft (armorsmithing) +1, Craft (carpentry) +2, Craft (leatherworking) +4, Craft (stonemasonry) +2, Craft (weaponsmithing) +2, Craft (weaving) +3, Diplomacy +2, Gather Information +2, Handle Animal +2, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +4, Knowledge (geography) +2, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (military tactics) +2, Knowledge (nature) +4, Profession (brewer) +2, Profession (herbalist) +2, Profession (hunter) +8, Survival +8

Feats: Caves, Moderate Fortifications, Renown, Rich Hunting, Stockpile

Government: Tribal.

Ruler: Baergar Blackpaw (male furbolg, shaman 5/warrior 4).

Language: Ursine.

Faiths: Druidism, shamanism.

Resources: Furs, leather, meat, timber.

Affiliation: Independent.

Furbolgs are nomadic, following caribou and other prey through established territories; so they don't have many fixed structures, just central lodges in the centers of their hunting grounds. Grizzlemaw is the exception. A few stories claim the city was built on the site of the Frost Paw tribe's lodge and made large enough to accommodate several tribes at once. The Frost Paw then invited other friendly

tribes to shelter the winter with them. The resulting ties changed the furbolgs from scattered hunters to a stronger, more unified race, and the Grizzly Hills from ancestral hunting grounds to a loosely defined nation. It's a big, rough-hewn place, with a tall wooden palisade surrounding massive stone and wood houses. Guard towers mark the four corners, and smaller ones flank the double doors in front.

Furbolgs are simple and uncomplicated, and so is their home. Furs cover the floors and furniture, which is large and comfortable, and woven tapestries lend some color to the walls. Weapons and other trophies are mounted above doors and windows, which have thin sheets of skin to keep out the cold. Large fire pits stand at the center of every house, and some large rooms have their own smaller pits down the middle.

Furbolgs remind me of tuskarr (or perhaps it's the other way around): They are focused on their work and the survival of their families, and are not violent unless you cross them. They're hunters and trappers rather than fishermen, though I have seen furbolgs spearing fish in the river. Shamans run the tribes along with the family elders. Warriors are next and then hunters and gatherers. The women stay home and tend to the children and to food preparation, though an angry furbolg woman is as dangerous as most armed men.

History

The furbolgs claim they were the first people in these hills. So do the Drakkari, though they're concentrated to the north in Zul'Drak. But actually they're both wrong. We were here first. At least that's what Hardigan Ironjaw, of the Thor Modan expedition, tells me. He says the Titans placed dwarves here, after they'd created us. It was an experiment to see if we could survive on our own. We not only survived but flourished, spreading southward and into what would later become Kalimdor and the other continents. Hardigan thinks he can find evidence of our ancestors here in the hills, and uncover truths about our race's early culture.

Maybe he's right. The Explorers' Guild thought it likely enough to send him here, at any rate. I believe we did start here in the north, since the Titans were here. I'm just not sure we ever settled up here.

Regardless, all this was well before any surviving history. Furbolgs don't keep careful records beyond births, deaths, marriages, blood feuds and hunting tallies. The Drakkari wouldn't have cared about dwarves even if they'd seen us, unless it was how we tasted on a spit. So no one really knows what went on here back then. Yet.

Other stories say that the Drakkari built Drak'Tharon Keep before the furbolgs built Grizzlemaw. Supposedly, the Frost Paws gathered the tribes together in part to fend off the new Drakkari threat. Both races were here and hated each other — the furbolgs had the numbers but with their new keep the Drakkari were more organized, and the trolls were always more unified than the furbolgs. The existence of Grizzlemaw affected the balance, and the furbolgs' victory over the Drakkari in a series of skirmishes may have led to the keep's eventual loss of Drak'Tharon to the Scourge.

Adventures

You definitely want to stay alert in the Grizzly Hills. Furbolgs don't attack unless you trespass on their lands, or threaten their kin, or steal their prey, or look like you could pose a threat later. Drakkari attack on sight, and so do Scourge forces. The dwarves just want to know what you've seen.

Unearthed: A dwarven prospector finally uncovers what the Thor Modan expedition seeks — an ancient relic clearly made by dwarves. The relic is an enormous and heavy statue of iron. The problem is, he found the statue in a cave between Grizzlemaw and Drak'Tharon Keep. The heroes have to find and retrieve the relic without getting caught by the Scourge or the furbolgs, all the while avoiding the wild beasts in the area.

The Howling Fjord

Capital: Valgarde (5,000).

Population: 11,000 (60% human, 30% Ironforge dwarf, 5% Drakkari troll, 5% furbolg).

Government: Town council.

Ruler: Magistrate Randalvarr (half-elf scout 8/warrior 5).

Major Settlements: Valgarde (5,000).

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Ursine, Zandali.

Faiths: Holy Light, druidism, Mystery of the Makers, shamanism.

Resources: Fur, grain, information, leather, meat, timber, transportation.

Affiliation: Alliance.

The Howling Fjord is a great name for this place. They call it that because the wind races in from the sea on all three sides, producing a constant howl like a maddened beast seeking its prey. Most people who arrive in Valgarde purchase low, fur-lined caps with flaps for the ears, or headbands that slant down in back, or thick hoods, anything to keep their ears from ringing when outside.

Other than the noise, the Howling Fjord is pleasant. It's not as heavily forested as the Grizzly Hills, or as hilly, but the temperature here is a little milder; between that and the flatter terrain it's an ideal place to grow grain and other crops. Small farms dot the landscape, particularly down south near Valgarde. To the north the trees begin again, and creatures roam there from the hills above, making it more dangerous but also an excellent place for hunters.

People and Culture

This is the only region in Northrend dominated by humans and dwarves. That's entirely because of Valgarde, however — without that city it would be an even match between us and the Drakkari and the furbolgs. No one's factored the murlocs in, either, mainly because they don't let most people close enough to count them.

Almost everyone lives in Valgarde. The exceptions are the farmers, who have their thick-walled farmhouses by their fields, and the hunters and trappers, who live in small camps among the trees and come south only to trade or sell.

This region is also the only Alliance-dominated region in Northrend. The Howling Fjord really is Alliance territory, though, and here the Drakkari and even the furbolgs are the ones at risk. It makes a nice change.

Geography

The north edge of the Fjord has low hills and thick forest. The land smoothes out to the south, however, and the trees fade back, to be replaced by grain and a few hardy fruits and vegetables. Daggercap Bay dominates the southern end, which is all rock. Most people live in Valgarde or in a semicircle above it.

The fjord has its share of wildlife. Bears, wolves and other creatures prowl the forests, and small animals sneak through the farmland as well. Birds roost in the trees and steal grain and seeds, and the warmer climate and rich soil draws insects and other vermin as well.

Daggercap Bay: By far the finest — and largest — bay in all Northrend, Daggercap has high, sharp rock walls on either side and enough space for only one large ship to pass through. It widens out quickly, however, into a roughly circular bay with calm waters and a rocky northern beach. You can land almost anywhere along the Shiverwind Coast, if you're an expert sailor in a small boat, but for larger vessels and less experienced crew the only real option is Daggercap.

Sites and Settlements

The Howling Fjord has only one major settlement, and that's Valgarde. Everyone else lives in isolated farmhouses or small hunting camps. Even the Drakkari and the furbolg wander down from the Grizzly Hills or Zul'Drak and set up hasty camps among the trees.

Valgarde (township, 5,000): The only established Alliance settlement in Northrend, Valgarde is the obvious arrival point for anyone traveling to this continent. It's a rough seaport and you can find all races, occupations and characters floating through here. Valgarde is an excellent place to find information about Northrend in general, and to hire guides or buy equipment before setting out. It is also the only place in Northrend where you can hire passage off this ice-coated land, back to warmer and more civilized continents. Of course, Drakkari trolls, furbolgs and occasional monsters attack the town frequently, but its strong walls never fail and the watchtowers provide ample warning.

History

The Howling Fjord was a favorite on Northrend from the first time explorers reached the continent through Daggercap Bay. The natural harbor provided an ideal launching point for expeditions throughout the continent.

After the Lich King arrived, the Scourge swept across the continent, conquering its races and claiming many of the towns and citadels. During the Third War, Prince Arthas of Lordaeron arrived with soldiers to destroy the Lich King and punish him for the plague he had unleashed. Arthas and the noble Muradin Bronzebeard joined forces against the Lich King's ally, the dreadlord Mal'Ganis.

When Arthas's father summoned him home again, the prince responded by burning his own ships, thus forcing his men to stay and fight. He obtained the cursed sword *Frostmourne* in this region, killing Muradin in the process, and defeated Mal'Ganis but lost his soul to the Lich King as a result. Arthas

staggered away alone after the battle, and his men were left behind, stranded on Northrend. These humans and dwarves founded Valgarde. They also built the fortifications that protect it to this day. As Valgarde grew its residents forced the Drakkari and furbolgs back into the Grizzly Hills and beyond, making the region safe enough for brave farmers to till the land.

Adventures

The Howling Fjord has dark forests, open plains, treacherous rocks, and the only city — and port — on the continent. The last item in particular makes it an ideal place for Northrend adventures.

Strange Bedfellows: A band of Drakkari trolls attacks Valgarde one night. At the same time, furbolgs assault the city from the other side. A drunken trapper spots an old friend wandering through the city — a friend who died days before, back in the forest. Have the Scourge found a way past Valgarde's defenses? Are they, the Drakkari, and the furbolgs working together to bring down the city? The heroes need to find out what is happening and who is behind it before it's too late.

Icecrown Glacier

Capital: Icecrown Citadel (unknown population; perhaps 250,000 — yes, I said 250,000).

Population: Unknown; perhaps 250,000 (100% undead).

Government: Monarchy.

Ruler: The Lich King Arthas.

Major Settlement: Icecrown Citadel (unknown population; perhaps 250,000).

Language: Common.

Faith: Lich King.

Resources: Magic artifacts, undead.

Affiliation: Scourge.

This is the part I hate. Not just because it's the Lich King's domain, the center of his power. Not just because it's crawling with Scourge monstrosities.

No, I hate it because it's a bloody glacier. Who in their right mind builds a castle on top of a solid hunk of ice?

Icecrown Glacier is exactly what the name says. It's a glacier. Most likely it ran into Northrend centuries ago or longer and got stuck. Somewhere beneath this ice is the real northwest corner of this continent. I don't know how far it extends — it could go all the way to the shoreline or be just beyond the end of Crystalsong Forest. The important thing is, what's here now is not frozen soil or snow-covered forest. It's all ice. Nothing grows here. Nothing lives here. A few penguins and walruses and other arctic sea creatures might use the shore as a resting place but that's about it.

The one thing it does have, of course, is undead. It has undead in spades.

People and Culture

Like I said, nothing lives here — but the Lich King and his Scourge aren't exactly alive. The glacier teems with undead creatures. I think more creatures inhabit this one region than the entire rest of the continent (that estimate on the population, above, is really rough, by the way, but it's my best guess). All of the beings here are undead, which makes it a really awful place to visit.

Still, you've got to give the Lich King credit. He landed in the coldest part of the coldest continent on Azeroth and figured out a way to get loyal, hardworking servants. Undead don't feel cold. They don't need food or drink. They don't breathe. And they don't get distracted or lazy or bored. No wonder he managed to build his citadel in a few years when it would have taken even a dwarven team decades. All his servants do exactly what he commands, for as long as he requires.

Geography

Describing the glacier is easy: ice. That about covers it. Literally. A sheet of ice, several feet thick even at the edges, coats the entire region. A river cuts down through it, from the upper corner to Lake Wintergrasp below, and much of that is frozen over as well, at least on the surface. Along the southern edges a few stunted trees cling to survival but that's where the glacier ends and real soil begins again.

The glacier isn't flat, though. It has levels, some of them gentle hills and valleys and others abrupt tears and sudden cliffs. The banks of the river drop sharply to the water, too high and steep for anyone caught in the water to climb back out.

Icecrown River: This freezing, often frozen river cuts across the glacier from northwest to southeast. It's too wide to leap across and too fast and cold to swim, plus the banks are steep and slick all along

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its length. (I don't know if the river has an official name, by the way, but it's in Icecrown so I'm calling it Icecrown River).

Sites and Settlements

Just like the Howling Fjord, Icecrown Glacier has only one real settlement. Unlike the Fjord, the glacier has no exceptions. Icecrown Citadel teems with Scourge forces, and undead wander the landscape, on missions for their cursed leader.

Icecrown Citadel (metropolis, unknown population; perhaps 250,000): From the name you would assume Icecrown Citadel was an enormous fortress planted on the glacier, with thick walls, sturdy guard towers, and massive front gates. Not quite.

Most of the citadel lurks below the surface. The glacier is split, creating a deep fissure. Scourge forces lurk down there, and they have carved levels into either side of that massive split and created bridges, walkways and even solid floors across the gap.

Not surprisingly, Icecrown Citadel is a cold, unforgiving place. It has no decorations, no furs or rugs, no fires, nothing to provide comfort or warmth. The Scourge creatures move silently from one problem to another, focused on their tasks. All manner of undead dwell here, including zombies, wraiths and beings composed of cold energy.

At the bottom of the rift is the Frozen Throne, the heart of the Scourge and the Lich King's personal seat. This throne is the remains of the block of ice that first brought Ner'zhul to Azeroth, the same block that held him prisoner until Arthas freed the ancient orc shaman and merged with him.

Arthas sits on the Frozen Throne. I didn't get close enough to see for myself, but I captured a necromancer outside the citadel, and he gave me some valuable information. Then he rejoined his buddies at the bottom of the rift — though he descended via the hard, fast and deadly route.

History

Before the Lich King, this region was the capital of Azjol-Nerub, the nerubian spider kingdom. (The nerubians now dwell in ruins by that same name.) Then Ner'zhul arrived, and he used his magic to draw many dead or dying creatures onto the glacier and into his army. He conquered the nerubians and built his undead army. Travelers learned to avoid the place.

The glacier has seen its share of battle within the past few decades: the Scourge fighting and destroying nerubians, furbolgs and Drakkari; adventurers assaulting the citadel and requiring rescue; Arthas and Illidan Stormrage fighting for the right to open the Frozen Throne's chamber. Many consider the glacier the most evil place in all Azeroth. I'd say they're right.

Icecrown's Depths

As told to Brann Bronzebeard by the necromancer Al'satt

The Lich King sits on the Frozen Throne at the bottom of the rift, and his glory and power are terrible. Four stone obelisks carved with runes of powerful magic surround the Frozen Throne. Bridges of pale blue, translucent energy stretch from the obelisk platforms to the Frozen Throne. Jets of frost periodically spew blue flames into the air, and there are glyphs carved into the rocky ground surrounding the Frozen Throne.

Whoever wishes to enter the Throne Chamber, to risk the Lich King's wrath, must activate all four obelisks.

Adventures

More than one adventurer has sneaked onto Icecrown Glacier, trying to kill the Lich King and destroy the Scourge. None return.

Underground Bay: An adventurer staggers into an inn in Valgarde, half-frozen, scared and excited all at once. After warming up she explains that she was on Icecrown Glacier and slipped, falling into the river. As she was swept along she saw a cave on the east bank — roughly level with Icecrown Citadel. If this cave is real it could be a new access into the castle, one of which the Lich King does not know and therefore does not guard. The PCs' mission is to search the riverbanks for that cave and sneak into Icecrown Citadel before the Lich King discovers the gap. Once inside, they can search for the Lich King and, perhaps, kill him before he can flood the place with his Scourge minions.

The Storm Peaks

Capital: Ulduar (unknown population; perhaps 150).

Population: Unknown; perhaps 300 (70% storm giant, 25% crystalline golem, 3% magnataur, 2% wendigo).

Government: None.

Ruler: None.

Major Settlement: Ulduar (143; unknown population, perhaps 150).

Language: Titan.

Faiths: Druidism, Titans.

Resources: Artifacts, gems, information, minerals, secrets, stone.

Affiliation: Independent.

From the name, you'd think the Storm Peaks were mountains. That's not entirely accurate. Oh, they have the highest elevation of any region in Northrend, certainly. On the edge of the peaks you can look out over Icecrown Glacier to the west, Crystalsong Forest to the south, Zul'Drak to the east, and the ocean to the north. But they aren't mountains. They're cliffs. The "peaks" are the spots where wind has not cut away the ice and rock, as opposed to the narrow paths it has carved. Through large parts of this region you can literally leap from peak to peak, provided the wind does not throw you over the edge.

Ulduar, like much of Northrend, is sparsely inhabited. The giants stay hidden, their golems don't bother you unless you approach the giants' homes, and the magnataur and wendigo are infrequent and large enough to spot from a distance. It's a good place to be alone with your thoughts if you don't mind the biting wind, the searing cold, and the repetitive stretches of ice and rock.

People and Culture

The storm giants make their home here in the Storm Peaks. I know that's true because I saw a few giants there, though only from a distance. They're impressive, more than 30 feet tall and powerfully built. One of the giants I spotted was summoning a small storm. Fortunately, they keep to themselves, hidden in their caves and tunnels below the surface, and avoid visitors. Still, it would have been fascinating to meet them and talk with them. Myths say the Titans created them as well, so perhaps we have a common origin. They might know more about our past than we do — but they're not likely to tell me about it.

The giants like their privacy, and their crystalline golems help maintain that. I saw the same golems down in Crystalsong Forest, gathering crystals to bring back here. There they were servants and couriers. Here they function as door wardens and bodyguards, making sure no intruder gains entrance to the giants' lairs.

Magnataur and wendigo roam the peaks. I had a run-in with a wendigo, but one good shot to the shoulder persuaded it I wasn't easy prey. I didn't see a magnataur up close here and that was fine with me — they look like nasty customers. Fortunately they're solitary, and easy to spot.

For more information on magnataur, see Chapter 6: Civilizations.

Geography

The two biggest dangers in the Storm Peaks aren't necessarily its inhabitants. The wind is fierce and constant, and can easily tug a grown dwarf off a cliff. One look at those paths it has cut through the cliffs and you realize how deadly wind can be.

The second danger is sunlight. That sounds strange, I know, but the peaks are covered in ice and the light reflects from every angle. Icecrown Glacier has the same effect, but the ice there is composed of flat sheets so you can't look down easily. Up here the ice is everywhere. Wearing dark glasses is the only way to survive — otherwise you're blinded every time you move your head, and before long you step wrong and tumble off a cliff or down a ravine. The weather doesn't help — it's either clear and sunny, with that nasty glare, or dark as night and pouring, with sheets of freezing rain, hail or snow battering you and making every surface as slick as oil.

The peaks are handsome in an austere way. Little grows here — a random bush sprouting in a nook along a cliff face, a few tough blades of grass in a crack. Everything else is stone and ice. I haven't seen any animals and I'm not sure what the wendigo and magnataur eat to survive. Probably each other and any travelers they can find.

Sites and Settlements

No one lives here except the storm giants, their golems, and beasts like the wendigo and magnataur. The latter have caves they've found or dug into the ice and rock. The giants have their city, Ulduar, and the Temple of Storms.

The Temple of Storms: When I saw this building I knew at once it was Titan-made. It's similar to the Wyrmrest Temple down in the Dragonblight. This temple sits on one of the tallest peaks, right along the western border, so just beyond it the cliffs drop to Icecrown Glacier. A wide path, one of the only straight channels in this region, leads to massive stone steps that stop at the temple's front door. Crystal golems stand guard at the perimeter, so again I couldn't gain access, but I did see shapes moving around within: massive shapes, too big to be anything but storm giants. The Titans must have built this, but I don't know if it was for themselves or for the giants. Either way, the Titans have long since vanished and the giants claim this temple as their own. One night I saw lightning flickering from the dome — not down to it but up from it — so perhaps they're doing something more than worship in there.

Ulduar (unknown population; perhaps 150): This is the storm giants' stronghold, but they didn't build it. I'd stake my reputation on Ulduar being a Titan city — it matches the design of the two temples here in Northrend, and other ruins we've found elsewhere. (And its name starts with "Uld.") It's an amazing place but you'd never know it from outside, because it's completely hidden. The exterior looks like the other peaks: a jumble of rock and ice cut at angles only nature would have produced. The entrance is well-hidden and heavily guarded by those golems, but a clever dwarf can sneak inside.

Inside, Ulduar is a profusion of tunnels and stairs and balconies. I suspect the entire place was carved out of a massive cave, and many of the levels are natural ledges. It has that feel, as if nature were improved upon rather than replaced or recreated. The surfaces are a strange mix of smooth and unaltered stone and ice, as when a master sculptor works in stone and lets the material's natural texture add depth and beauty. I can see where we get our skill in stonework, but judging by Ulduar I'd say we're still a long way from matching our creators.

The giants themselves are so few in number you can wander the halls without ever meeting one — which is probably for the best, since no one is supposed to gain entrance. From what I saw and overheard, the giants are a dying race desperately avoiding their fate. They seem to think another race will vanquish them some day, and so they hide here rather than girding for battle. They are too frightened (30-foot giants, frightened!) to battle the Scourge, though I believe they hate it.

I didn't get to explore as much as I would like, but I suspect Ulduar is a treasure trove of information on the Titans and their activities. We'll have to send an expedition back to inspect it properly. Ulduar is a mysterious subterranean realm of ice and stone.

History

The Storm Peaks have a mysterious history, but I believe I've pieced together some truths.

Long ago the Titans lived here. They created Ulduar as their city, and from here they worked their experiments. The storm giants began here, and perhaps the dwarves and troggs as well. Then the Titans disappeared, leaving the races to survive on their own. The dwarves moved south, into warmer climates, but the storm giants remained and claimed Ulduar. They developed crystalline golems to aid them in their research and to defend them. Over time the giants have dwindled in number and grown ever more reclusive. Now only a handful remains.

Adventures

The Storm Peaks have treacherous paths, powerful winds, jagged cliffs and hungry monsters. They are also home to the storm giants, one of the oldest races in the world and the keepers of the Titans' legacy.

Fell Path: The heroes are roaming through the Storm Peaks when a storm hits. The wind and hail shake loose an unstable cliff face, which crashes down and blocks off the heroes' path. Now they have no way out of the ravine, except to scale the walls or retreat. After the storm, magnataur and wendigo search for victims.

Titan Hoard: During one of the frequent storms, lightning shatters a small peak, revealing a cave hidden within. The cave walls have clearly been fashioned by an artisan, and resemble a strangely organic city or house. A traveler notices this event and brings word back to Valgarde, creating a stir. Could the cave have been a Titan home? If so, what secrets remain there undisturbed? The heroes must mount an expedition and explore the cave before the storm giants find it and claim it.

Zul'Drak

Capital: Gundrak (13,000).

Population: 38,000 (95% Drakkari troll, 5% wendigo).

Government: Tribal.

Ruler: Frost King Malakk (male Drakkari troll witch doctor 9/barbarian 7).

Major Settlements: Gundrak (13,000).

Language: Zandali.

Faiths: Shamanism, voodoo.

Resources: Furs, leather, meat, stone, timber.

Affiliation: Independent.

Climate-wise, Zul'Drak is the least pleasant of the eastern regions. It's colder than the Grizzly Hills or the Howling Fjord, less majestic than the Storm Peaks, and more crowded than any of them. And most of the crowd is Drakkari. This region is the trolls' homeland, and they swarm the place looking for intruders and prey.

I can't see much to recommend Zul'Drak. It does have Drakkari ruins, which are interesting; it's a pity trolls aren't better historians. Most other races avoid this region, and for good reason. You don't even need it for passage north or south — you can stick to the Grizzly Hills, which surround Zul'Drak on both sides and reach all the way up to Crystalsong Forest and the Storm Peaks. The only reason I can see for wandering through Zul'Drak is if you want to meet the Drakkari — and you'd better have a large group of armed warriors with you when you do.

People and Culture

As I said, this is the Drakkari homeland. Judging by the ruins, their culture was here long before the Great Sundering. They live here by the thousands, which at least means they aren't anywhere else. It's amazing this one land can support so many trolls, especially since fresh meat is their principle food. Fortunately for them, wild beasts roam the area as well and provide plenty of prey.

Drakkari are unpleasant. They epitomize the nastiness and barbarism of trolls everywhere (except, perhaps, for the Darkspears). They're large, bigger than any other troll I've seen (and by this point I think I've seen them all) and crude, and they prefer violence to discussion or negotiation. They're a barbaric people who practice voodoo and worship strange spirit-gods and devour their enemies — and sometimes their friends — raw. The only thing a Drakkari respects is strength and the only thing they want from others is fear and flesh.

Fortunately, Drakkari are tribal. They live in small tribes throughout Zul'Drak and wage war among themselves. I saw bands of Drakkari slaughtering each other simply because they met along the border between their two tribes. Such conflict helps keep the troll population down. No one else is foolish enough to share the region with them.

Geography

Zul'Drak is a single large valley between the arms of the Grizzly Hills, Crystalsong Forest, and the Storm Peaks. The trees here are smaller than the southern forests but numerous and upright, and provide excellent cover when sniping trolls. Some grass and other plants poke up through the snow, and frozen ponds and streams dot the land. Obelisks and ziggurats are everywhere, often at the center of active troll camps. Ruins show where troll tribes must have lived long ago — most of these look like they were destroyed during battle rather than simply abandoned.

The valley teems with life. In addition to the Drakkari, giant wolves, wendigo and other animals live among the trees and grass. Furbolgs wander up from the Grizzly Hills to hunt and clash with the Drakkari. The trolls maintain patrols along their border, both to drive out intruders and to kill anyone they find.

Sites and Settlements

Troll villages are everywhere in Zul'Drak. Most of these are small, crude places, a handful of wood or stone buildings around a single larger hall. Some are built on the ruins of older structures or surround an ancient obelisk or ziggurat, carved from stone and more impressive than the more recent structures. The only large settlement is Gundrak, the capital city.

Gundrak

6th-Level Military Community/4th-Level Civilian Community

Population: 13,000 (100% Drakkari ice troll)

Abilities: Force 18, Mobility 10, Resilience 18, Learning 10, Awareness 14, Command 18

Wealth: +68

Defense Bonus: +17

Reputation Bonus: +11

Skills: Craft (armorsmithing) +4, Craft (blacksmithing) +2, Craft (carpentry) +2, Craft

(leatherworking) +4, Craft (stonemasonry) +2, Craft (trapmaking) +1, Craft (weaponsmithing) +3, Craft (weaving) +3, Gather Information +4, Handle Animal +2, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +4, Knowledge (geography) +2, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (military tactics) +4, Knowledge (nature) +3, Profession (hunter) +8, Survival +8

Feats: Ancient Ruins, Heavy Fortifications, Infamous, Light Fortifications, Moderate Fortifications, Rich Hunting, Tower

Government: Tribal.

Ruler: Frost King Malakk (male Drakkari troll witch doctor 9/barbarian 7).

Language: Zandali.

Faith: Voodoo.

Resources: Furs, leather, meat, stone, timber.

Affiliation: Independent.

It's easy to forget that trolls are even remotely intelligent until you see a place like Gundrak. This is the Drakkari capital, the only large city in Zul'Drak and the home to the Drakkari Frost King. It is a massive place, with thick walls, tall guard towers and heavy gates. Inside, the buildings are tiered and covered in steps, and wind about one another like a nest of small animals, each fitting into the next. The architecture here is almost identical to that of Zuldazar, in the South Seas.

The Drakkari are crude and violent, but there is a modicum of organization in the city. Women and whelps handle most of the cleaning, food preparation and clothing needs. Those unfit for battle do manual labor or simple crafts. Many of the buildings have rough carvings along their walls, and war trophies are interspersed with furs. Chores are handled quickly and efficiently to make time for drinking, eating and combat. Warriors fight frequently, from mere wrestling matches to armed death duels, and brawls occur at every meal. Rather than stop this, the Frost King uses these conflicts to gauge the strength of his warriors, selecting the victors for favored missions.

Of course, the Drakkari do not welcome visitors — at least, not as guests. Sometimes, a couple furbolgs told me, a warrior who has demonstrated his strength may be invited to dine with the Drakkari and his safety is then guaranteed until the end of the meal. After that, however, he may find himself a target of the assembled tribes. Trolls are unpredictable, though, so an adventurer attempting this tactic may find himself part of the meal.

The best way to enter Gundrak is by slipping in unnoticed. Sometimes the Drakkari are too busy fighting and drinking to look down.

History

The Drakkari ice trolls are an old race, one of the first in Northrend and perhaps one of the first in all Azeroth. They were building homes in Zul'Drak before the Great Sundering and never departed, though some of them may have migrated south and become the jungle trolls and the other troll races. (I'm still trying to figure out which trolls came first.)

The furbolgs of Grizzlemaw have fought the Drakkari for many years, and they told me something of their culture. The furbolgs are probably making some assumptions, but *my* assumption is that their tales are mostly true.

Drakkari History

As told to Brann Bronzebeard by Rurson and Gorroc, Grizzlemaw furbolgs.

Drakkari are tribal, and early in their history each tribe established its own territory and fought off any trespassers. Then one tribe conquered another and enslaved its warriors. These slaves were forced to build the victors a new and larger home, and their children became part of the dominant tribe. This tribe continued to conquer its neighbors, each time absorbing them, until finally it was powerful enough to claim all of Zul'Drak as its kingdom. Any tribe that resisted was destroyed. Those tribes that accepted the powerful tribe's dominance were allowed to keep their own territories, provided they accepted any orders from the ruling tribe. Thus the Drakkari nation truly began.

The central tribe's home became Gundrak, the capital city. The tribes still war among themselves, and the Frost King allows this because it keeps his people strong and aggressive. He coordinates border patrols and establishes protocols for calling all the tribes together should an army attack them in force. Many tribe chieftains thought these efforts foolish until they encountered the walking dead. Then the Frost King organized the other Drakkari and drove the dead from their lands.

Thus far the Scourge has not penetrated into Zul'Drak to any degree, though it claims Drak'Tharon Keep, an old Drakkari stronghold in the Grizzly Hills just beyond Zul'Drak's southwest edge.

Adventures

Zul'Drak belongs to the Drakkari, who roam in hunting parties searching for prey. Old troll ruins are strewn across the countryside and the Scourge hovers just beyond the western border, waiting for a chance to strike.

Ancient Home: An explorer mentions hiding in an old troll ziggurat in Zul'Drak and sketches some of the markings he saw there. Yet these markings are not Zandali, the troll language, and they look too complex for the barbaric Drakkari to have fashioned — at least in their present state. Is the ziggurat from some other race? Or were the trolls more intelligent and more sophisticated long ago?

Why highlighted?

Oh yeah. Waiting on word from Blizz. I'll nudge them.

Kalimdor, the South Seas and Northrend boast many strange and interesting civilizations. Compiled here is what I know about four of them: the blue dragonflight, magnataur, murlocs and nerubians.

The Blue Dragonflight

The blue dragonflight encompasses both the literal descendants of Malygos — the blue dragons — and their loyal servants and companions, the blue dragonspawn. For the thousands of years between the Sundering and the destruction of the *Demon Soul*, blue dragons were all but unheard of, but they have begun to emerge in the world once again.

Blue dragons are the undisputed masters of magic, and most of their lives revolve around the working of spells. They focus on the acquisition of knowledge and greater magical power to the exclusion of almost everything else, but this is not to say they are single minded. Rather, the dragons are extremely loyal, and know that the Titans gave their master his domain so that they would use their magic to keep the world safe. As such, the "proper" use of magic is a matter of great importance to the dragons — while blue dragons are naturally curious about the use of warlock magic and the like, they consider such forms of magic to be perversions of nature. For this reason, warlocks and necromancers are considered enemies of the dragonflight, although the dragons have higher priorities on their hit list — namely every living black dragon.

In their pursuit of magic, blue dragons infiltrate mortal societies in humanoid forms to learn more about how mortals practice spellcasting. While some dragons have engaged in this activity for centuries, it has been widespread only since Malygos's recent recovery from years of insanity.

While the dragons are primarily interested in arcane magic, other forms interest them as well, especially those that do not require the worship of a divine being. For this reason, I suspect a number of blue dragons engage in a scholarly study of the Holy Light. I wouldn't be surprised find blue dragons in the ranks of many mortal orders: the Kirin Tor, naturally, but also orders dedicated to the Light such as the Argent Dawn and the Knights of the Silver Hand.

While magic is strongly associated with the blue dragonflight, they are also the masters of frost, and find all forms of ice and water welcome. Most blue dragons make their lairs in the frozen peaks of mountains or in caverns near (or under) freezing water. The traditional home of the blue dragonflight is Northrend, but more and more dragons migrate to the caverns of Mazthoril in Winterspring on Kalimdor. This migration occurs for two main reasons: First, because of the growing concern about another imminent attack on the World Tree; and second, to retreat from the Scourge, which some dragons see as a threat the dragonflight is not prepared to conquer.

Blue dragonspawn are the descendants of mortals who associated with blue dragons so closely that their families gradually transformed into part-humanoid, part-dragon crossbreeds. They take many roles in the blue dragonflight, serving as foot soldiers, emissaries to the humanoid races, and companions. While the dragons respect them, they are essentially a slave race, and they are trained from birth to give their lives to protect dragons (most dragonspawn are intelligent and loyal enough to sacrifice themselves without any such training, however). Most dragonspawn are raised and tutored by a dragon, in addition to their dragonspawn parents, and they often wear the symbol of this mentor for the rest of their lives.

While dragonspawn exist for all the major dragonflights, an unusually large number of blue dragonspawn progress beyond the level of simply serving as grunt soldiers of the blue dragonflight. The unusual intelligence and disposition toward magic associated with the blue dragonflight is true of the dragonspawn as well, and this makes them more likely to follow in the footsteps of their mentors and become arcanists. Magical aptitude is rare among dragonspawn, however; it is simply less so among the blues.

Description

Blue dragons are slim and regal, and the glow of intelligence shines brightly in their eyes. Historically, dragons have had a reputation for spending their days in solitary contemplation of the secrets of the world, but in recent times blue dragons have proved to be more social due to the growing threats to all living creatures. In addition to their noted obsession with magic, blue dragons also enjoy researching other subjects. They could be called the academics among dragons; they have begun to serve more and more as the teachers of younger members of other

species. While in humanoid form, many dragons also notice the scientific discoveries of other races and take an increasing interest in the development of engineering and similar studies. Blue dragons are also highly territorial, largely due to their paranoia that any intruder wandering into their lairs are probably agents of the black dragonflight. In previous years, blue dragons even attacked each other over territorial disputes, but such conflicts are unlikely now that so many dragons have adapted to living in groups for protection.

Blue dragonspawn have the same interests and lifestyles as their blue dragon mentors, but they tend to work in groups, oftentimes with a military function. These dragonspawn are almost never found far from at least one dragon of their flight.

Appearance

Blue dragons are no smaller than the average dragon, but they tend to be thin and sinuous in form. Most blues have scales the color of ice, but some have scales that resemble the sky or a type of gem. Some dragons are named or nicknamed after a gemstone type that their skin resembles. Many dragons also mark their scales with eldritch runes, which serve the same function as tattoos do for humanoids, as well as potentially having magical effects. Male and female blue dragons are nearly indistinguishable to most humanoids, but some ancient texts and my associations with dragons makes me believe that males tend to have straighter and thicker horns, while the female's horns tend to look more rounded.

Blue dragonspawn resemble blue dragons from the waist down, but their upper bodies are those of scaled humanoids. Their arms and torsos resemble those of a human, with only slight claws in most cases, but their heads more closely resemble their draconic allies. Blue dragonspawn scales are similar in color to those of blue dragons, and they typically wear armor with colors to match their dragonflight as well.

Regions

The blue dragonflight has a major presence in two regions. These two places are the Nexus in Coldarra (on Northrend) and Mazthoril in Winterspring (in northern Kalimdor). In both cases, the dragons inhabit massive tunnel systems, where they study magic and prepare for battle against the black dragonflight, the Scourge and other dangers.

Faith

The blue dragonflight's belief system is scientific; they seek proof of everything, and take little on faith or word of mouth alone. The dragons revere Malygos as a creator of magic, but not as a god; rather, they feel Malygos is simply the greatest scientific mind that has ever existed. Those dragons that know of the Titans respect them as powerful users of magic and as creators, but they consider the Titans good examples and mentors, not divinities to be worshipped. Likewise, the dragons respect the followers of Elune, Cenarius and the other Ancients, but they do not worship these entities.

History

In the early days of the world, five dragons were granted great power by the Titans in order to safeguard the world from dark forces. These five dragons are known as the Dragon Aspects, and Malygos is one. Magic is Malygos's domain, and for thousands of years, his children prospered and experimented with the eldritch powers of the universe, unrivaled in their mastery of arcane power. When the night elves inadvertently called the Burning Legion to the world, the blue dragons were among the first to realize the potential threat; and when the Aspect of the Earth, Neltharion, suggested creating a magical artifact to aid in the destruction of the demons, the blues were some of the first to agree to the plan. Malygos himself was one of Neltharion's closest friends, and he gave much of his own essence toward the creation of this object, called the *Dragon Soul.*

When each dragon had contributed a portion of his or her essence to the artifact, Neltharion deemed it complete, and brought it to bear against the demons — but only for a precious few moments. Soon, he turned the artifact against the terrified night elves as well, and finally his own brethren. The shocked dragons were helpless to resist the power of the *Dragon Soul,* for it contained a fraction of the essence of each — with the exception of Neltharion himself. All the dragonflights, save Neltharion's own, were paralyzed in the air until the timely intervention of Korialstrasz, one of the mates of the red dragonqueen, who had been absent from the initial use of the artifact. While Korialstrasz was no match for the might of the Aspect of Earth, he was powerful enough to interrupt Neltharion's concentration for a moment, which freed the other dragons from their paralysis and allowed them to act. Malygos, infuriated at the betrayal by one of his closest companions, struck first — and at a great price. As the blue dragonflight attacked Neltharion, the mighty black wyrm unleashed the full fury of the *Dragon Soul* against them, and the power instantly slew nearly every one of them. Malygos narrowly

managed to raise a protective spell fast enough to survive, and only a handful of others reached the safety of his barrier in time. As the other dragons turned to act, Neltharion retreated, leaving the blue dragonflight broken in his wake.

The loss of most of his children and mates drove Malygos out of his mind. Malygos continued for some time in the war against Neltharion, who now called himself Deathwing, but Malygos's presence in the world diminished more and more over time. Perhaps Malygos's last sane act was aiding in the creation of the World Tree over the second Well of Eternity and placing many of his surviving dragons nearby in the caverns of Mazthoril to hold eternal vigil over the sacred site. For thousands of years, none but a few of the most ancient dragons knew of Malygos's whereabouts, and much of his dragonflight hid in solitude, realizing their fight against Deathwing was doomed without their leader.

In the events leading up to the Second War, Deathwing led a powerful orc warlock named Nekros to the *Dragon Soul* — now renamed the *Demon Soul* — and instructed him how to use it. Nekros used the *Demon Soul* to force the red Dragon Aspect, Alexstrasza, into submission, and forced the rest of the red dragonflight to serve him or risk the death of their queen. Korialstrasz, who escaped by faking his death and taking the identity of an archmage of the Kirin Tor, sought the other Aspects for help. Though each Aspect was difficult to convince, he eventually succeeded, and the dragons battled Deathwing in the sky near Grim Batol. Korialstrasz's human apprentice, Rhonin, defeated Nekros and used one of Deathwing's scales to destroy the *Demon Soul*. The destruction of the artifact released the ancient power that had been sealed inside for millennia, and allowed the Aspects to defeat Deathwing and force him to retreat.

A couple decades have passed since the defeat of Deathwing at Grim Batol, and in the aftermath Malygos finally recovered from his 10,000 years of insanity. With his recovery, his children found new hope and renewed their efforts to learn the mysteries of the world and protect its people. Since the blue dragonflight was so long secluded from the affairs of mortals, most are pleasantly surprised at the progress humans and high elves have made in the mastery of arcane magic.Their pride in the accomplishments of these races allows them to justify taking humanoid form to trade secrets with the mortals.

Since Deathwing's disappearance, the black dragonflight is less organized, and this chaos allows the blues the chance to strike back against the murderous dragons who hunted them for millennia. General Cobaltann, one of the eldest and most powerful of the blue dragonspawn, has organized an army to protect all creatures against the threat of the black dragonflight — and if he has his way, his army will grow strong enough to obliterate the black dragonflight.

Society

Blue dragons were once solitary creatures, and thus their society does not have a rigid hierarchy. All blue dragons serve Malygos with roughly equal standing, although there are some ancient dragons who are considered authority figures due simply to their great knowledge and mastery of magic. In essence, it is a society ruled by the powerful, but in a group of intellectuals such as these any real ranking system would do nothing but cause endless debate. Males and females have equal standing in blue dragon society, although usually it is the female who chooses her mate, not the other way around. With a few exceptions, blue dragons usually take only a single mate, and they are immensely protective of their mates and children. Female blue dragons sometimes stalk and observe a potential mate in a number of different forms to gauge the male's worth before revealing themselves.

Blue dragonspawn communities are male dominated, not because of any difference in power or physical strength, but rather due to the amount of time females spend dealing with the young. While blue dragonspawn value their children as much as any race, they are so focused on military objectives and the achievement of greater power and knowledge that they often neglect their young more than most races; this is especially true of the males. Unlike blue dragons, dragonspawn have a set ranking system. Blue dragonspawn ranks include (in ascending order) azurewing, cold talon, shiver scale, ice blade, magefury, winterfury, arctic magus, and ice tempest. The highest ranks are available only to those individuals who exhibit arcane mastery.

Most blue dragons focus on advancing in spellcasting ability, and thus, the overwhelming majority of them favor the arcanist class. Many dragonspawn are warriors, rogues, hunters, scouts or other combat-oriented classes. The gladiator prestige class is popular among melee-oriented dragonspawn. Several blue dragons have joined the Kirin Tor and become archmages, and a handful of paladins also exist in their numbers. A few dragonspawn priests worship the blue dragonflight or Malygos, contrary to most blue dragon beliefs, but shamans and druids are almost unheard of among the blue dragonflight.

Blue Dragons and Corruption

Blue dragons are some of the foremost arcane spellcasters on Azeroth. As such, some are concerned that the demons' taint may touch and corrupt the dragonflight. These concerns are unfounded; blue dragons, blue wyrmkin, and the rest of the dragonflight are immune to arcane corruption — though no one yet understands why. Perhaps they have mastered magic to such an extent that they surpassed the danger. If this is true, perhaps arcanists of other races can achieve similar transcendence.

Mentality

The blue dragonflight is focused on the pursuit of ever greater power and knowledge. This doesn't make them completely egocentric; the dragons share what they learn to help others of their kind as well as the world in general. Many blue dragons strive to impress their master, Malygos, with their knowledge of magic, or invent new spells or magic items. Members of the blue dragonflight value other thinkers, including spellcasters, engineers, writers, artists and general academic types. If a mortal shows a blue dragon a spell he has never seen, she earns that dragon's respect. If she teaches the dragon that spell, she likely gains the dragon's gratitude for a lifetime — and blues live a very long time. Generally, members of the blue dragonflight consider adventurers in general to be kindred spirits, but they highly favor those who are clever, inventive and powerful.

Relations

While blue dragons are slowly growing in numbers again, they lack the power to take on the children of Deathwing, such as Onyxia and Nefarion, directly. As such, the blues entrust favored mortals with the task of fighting against these powerful black dragons, and reward their mortal allies with magical secrets and objects of power in return for risking their lives to aid the dragonflight. Generally, the blue dragonflight likes the mortal races, especially those that practice arcane magic, but there are a few exceptions. Most blue dragons dislike goblins, since many goblins serve the black dragonflight, and it was a group of goblins that outfitted Deathwing with the adamantine armor attached to his scales. Also, blue dragons are wary of orcs, due to their role in enslaving the red dragonflight in recent years.

Relations between the blue dragonflight and the other dragonflights have dramatically improved since the fall of Deathwing at Grim Batol; many of the other dragons felt that the blues abandoned them after the construction of the World Tree; but now red, bronze and blue dragons guard Nordrassil together once again.

Distinguishing Characteristics

Two major features of blue dragon lairs stand out considerably. First, blue dragons sculpt much of their lairs from solid ice, using magic as well as their claws to form intricate caverns of frost. The ice they extract is often hardened with magic into objects of art or defensive structures, such as columns, statues or barricades of enchanted ice. Their artwork and architecture both favor sharp features; for example, stalactites and stalagmites in their lairs are intentionally reformed to be shaped like claws or fangs, and their artwork tends to have a similar edge to it.

Second, blue dragons are well known for their use of unusual arcane runes for a variety of different purposes. As already noted earlier, they use runes like tattoos on their bodies, and a dragon often marks her lair with matching runes to let her friends and allies know who lives there. These runes also can be tied to powerful magic; for example, in Mazthoril, I was able to use a blue dragonscale given to me at Mount Hyjal to activate a circle of runes that functioned as a portal. Rumors speak of a few blue dragon runemasters — these must be impressive sights.

Blue dragons also use runes as a form of code or language; I noticed a number of tablets of glacial ice marked with these unusual runes that must have served to keep records. In other words, the ice blocks are probably glorified pieces of paper that only the dragons — or someone else familiar with their system of runes — can read. The tablets are numerous enough that I suspect they have a method of producing them as quickly as we write on a page.

Since most of the creations of the dragons are more or less permanent, it is difficult to distinguish between an abandoned dragon home and one that is still in use. Dragons typically take only their personal belongings, such as stashes of extra magical items or gold, with them when they leave any given cavern. As such, there are a number of abandoned dragon caves out there somewhere just waiting to be examined — but it's rather dangerous to wander in and check which ones are empty.

Leaders

The following are blue dragonflight leaders:

• Malygos the Spellweaver (male blue wyrm Eternal; see **Shadows & Light** for Malygos's statistics and description) is the blue Dragon Aspect, and the master of the blue dragonflight. He is one of the most ancient creatures living on Azeroth, and one of only a handful who were alive at the time the Titans departed. Now that he has regained his sanity, he is once again taking an active role in the protection of the world.

• General Cobaltann (male blue dragonspawn [scalebane] mage 5/warrior 3; see Chapter 1: Northern Kalimdor for General Cobaltann's statistics and description) is one of the most renowned heroes of the blue dragonspawn, and he serves as the leader of their military forces in Kalimdor. His goal is for his army to grow strong enough to crush the black dragonflight once and for all.

Blue Wyrmkin as Player Characters

Blue wyrmkin are the smallest, weakest and youngest of the blue dragonspawn. While most are content — and often eager — to serve their blue dragon patrons, some strike out on more adventuresome paths. Sometimes a blue wyrmkin rebels against her oppressive culture, while other times a wyrmkin's patron or dragonflight gives her its blessings on her quest. Some adventuring blue wyrmkin are on lengthy missions for the dragonflight, exploring new places and discovering new magic.

Blue Wyrmkin Racial Traits

• +1 Strength, –2 Charisma. Blue wyrmkin are physically powerful, but their culture teaches them to be submissive.

• Large: Blue wyrmkin are 7 to 8 feet tall and their quadrupedal bodies give them great girth. As Large creatures, blue wyrmkin take a –1 size penalty to Armor Class, a –1 size penalty on attack rolls, and a –4 size penalty on Stealth checks to hide; they have a +4 bonus on grapple checks, and a natural fighting space and reach of 10 feet. They must use larger weapons and armor than Medium creatures.

Blue Dragonflight Adventure Hooks

• A red dragon emissary arrives at the blue dragon home of Mazthoril with bad news: The shards of the shattered *Demon Soul* have been stolen.

• A warlock steals a number of blue dragon eggs with the intent to infuse them with demonic magic and create a demon dragonflight.

• A powerful archmage of Kirin Tor discovers that two of his students are blue dragons and places them in an arcane prison, refusing to release them until his demands are met.

• A blue dragon discovers the location of a Titan artifact using powerful divination spells, but the artifact's power sends him into a coma.

• Malygos calls for a full-scale assault on Nefarion's citadel in Blackrock Spire, but Nefarion's new creations —dragons with the powers of each dragonflight — prove a difficult challenge to overcome.

• Quadrupedal: As Large quadrupeds, blue wyrmkin have carrying capacities triple those of Medium bipeds. Their strange frames mean that armor must be custom-made, however, and costs four times the normal amount.

• Blue wyrmkin base land speed is 30 feet.

• Monstrous Humanoid: Blue wyrmkin are monstrous humanoids, not humanoids. As such, they are immune to *hold person* and similar effects that specifically target humanoids.

• Darkvision: Blue wyrmkin can see in the dark up to 60 feet. Darkvision is black and white, but it is otherwise just like normal sight.

• Heritage Immunities (Ex): By virtue of their unique lineage, blue wyrmkin are immune to blue dragons' breath weapons. They are likewise immune to the frightful presence of any blue dragon with less than twice as many Hit Dice as they have.

• Automatic Languages: Common and Draconic.

• Bonus Languages: Any. Blue dragons are scholars and often learn many languages; some pass this knowledge onto their wyrmkin allies.

• Racial Levels: Unlike humans and some other races, blue wyrmkin can take a few levels in "blue wyrmkin" as a class to develop their racial qualities more fully.

• Favored Class: Warrior. A multiclass blue wyrmkin's warrior class does not count when determining whether he suffers an experience point penalty for multiclassing (see **World of Warcraft RPG,** Chapter 3: Classes, "Multiclass Characters," *XP for Multiclass Characters*).

Description

While more intelligent than the wyrmkin of other dragonflights, blue wyrmkin still serve as the grunt forces of the blue dragonflight, rarely acting without specific orders. Those wyrmkin who show exceptional intelligence are often trained in spellcasting.

The statistics above represent a wyrmkin with three racial levels of blue wyrmkin.

Combat

Blue wyrmkin are not quite as hardy as other dragonspawn, but they are clever, and attempt to set up ambushes or otherwise turn the tables in their favor. Most carry *+1 longswords* or other minor magic weapons, provided by their patrons. Most wyrmkin fight in large units, and they are capable of performing advanced maneuvers such as flanking their enemies or taking specific formations, but they rarely think of such strategies on their own. Fortunately, most of these groups are lead by higher-ranking dragonspawn, and they look to these individuals for orders.

Heritage Immunities: By virtue of their unique lineage, blue wyrmkin are immune to blue dragons' breath weapons. They are likewise immune to the frightful presence of any blue dragon with less than twice as many Hit Dice as they have.

Masterwork or Magic Arms and Armor: Dragonspawn are equipped with the best weapons and armor available. Unless stated otherwise, each dragonspawn has masterwork quality weapons and armor. Some may also have enchanted equipment.

Saves: Unlike other monstrous humanoids, blue dragonspawn have good Fortitude and Will saves and poor Reflex saves.

Blue Wyrmkin Levels

Blue wyrmkin can take up to three levels in "blue wyrmkin" at any time. Blue wyrmkin levels represent the individual's exploration of her draconic heritage, tapping into the talents granted by her association with the blue dragonflight.

Blue wyrmkin levels stack with an arcane spellcasting class level for purposes of determining caster level for spells. If the blue wyrmkin has more than one arcane spellcasting class, add the racial levels to the highest.

Table 6-1: The Blue Wyrmkin

Blue Wyrmkin Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Light armor proficiency, martial weapon proficiency, +1 Strength, +1 Stamina
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	Medium armor proficiency, martial weapon proficiency, +1 Strength, +1 natural armor bonus to AC
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	Heavy armor proficiency, martial weapon proficiency, +1 Strength, +1 Stamina, +1 natural armor bonus to AC

Hit Die: d8.

Skill Points at 1st Character Level: (2 + Int modifier) x 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Int modifier.

"Class" Skills: Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Listen (Spt), Spellcraft (Int), and Spot (Spt). See Chapter 5: Skills in **World of Warcraft RPG** for skill descriptions.

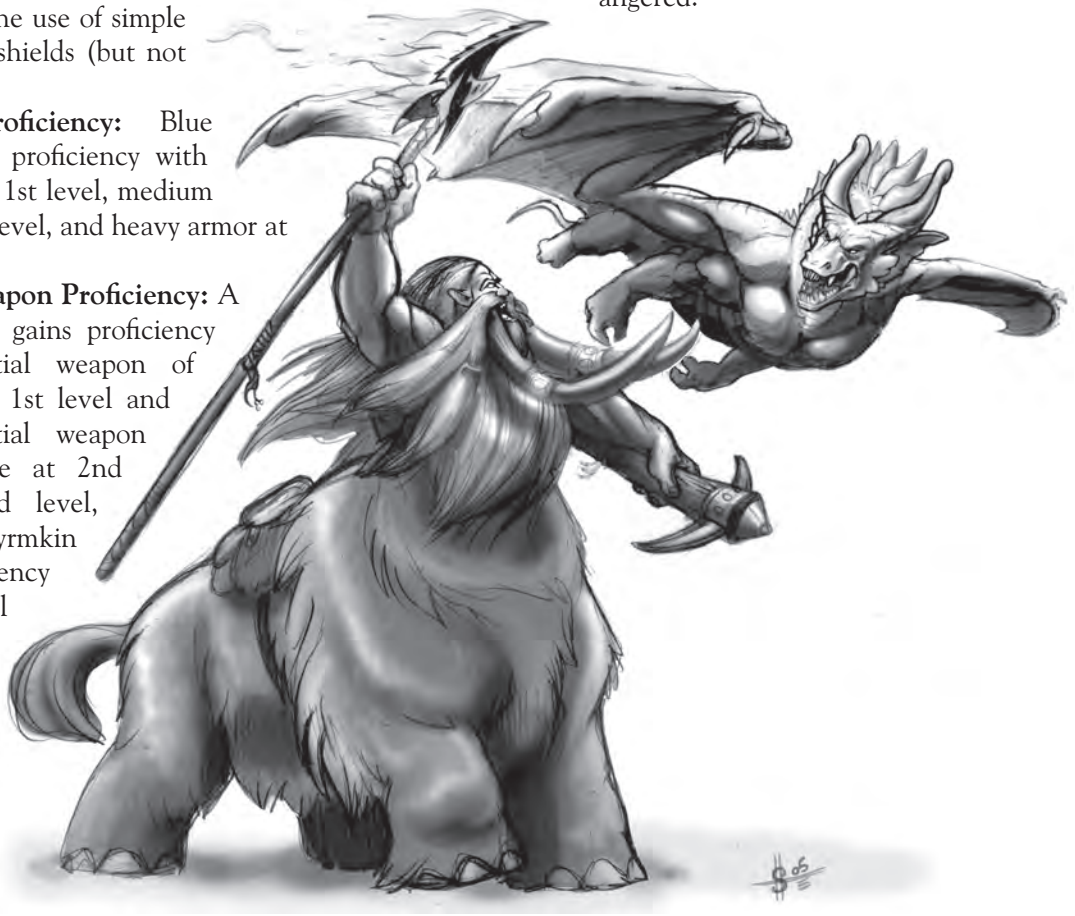
Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Blue wyrmkin with levels in blue wyrmkin are proficient in the use of simple weapons and shields (but not tower shields).

Armor Proficiency: Blue wyrmkin gain proficiency with light armor at 1st level, medium armor at 2nd level, and heavy armor at 3rd level.

Martial Weapon Proficiency: A blue wyrmkin gains proficiency in one martial weapon of her choice at 1st level and another martial weapon of her choice at 2nd level. At 3rd level, a blue wyrmkin gains proficiency in all martial weapons.

Description

Blue whelps are the youngest blue dragons who are capable of any sort of combat. At only a few years of age, a blue whelp is already as intelligent as a fully grown human, but he lacks the maturity and grace of an adult. These young dragons delight in play, especially where magic is involved, and they would much rather have a new friend than an enemy. As such, whelps are usually friendly, but like most children they can be easily frightened or angered.



	Blue Whelp	Blue Drake
	Medium Dragon (Cold, Earth)	**Huge Dragon (Cold, Earth)**
Hit Dice:	9d12+9 (67 hp)	24d12+120 (276 hp)
Initiative:	+4	+4
Speed:	40 ft. (8 squares), fly 150 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.	40 ft. (8 squares), fly 150 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.
Armor Class:	18 (+8 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 18	31 (–2 size, +23 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 31
Base Attack/Grapple:	+9/+11	+24/+41
Attack:	Bite +11 melee (1d8+2)	Bite +31 melee (2d8+9/19–20/x2)
Full Attack:	Bite +11 melee (1d8+2) and 2 claws +9 melee (1d6+1) and 2 wings +9 melee (1d4+1)	Bite +31 melee (2d8+9) and 2 claws +29 melee (2d6+4) and 2 wings +29 melee (1d8+4)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.	15 ft./10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)
Special Attacks:	Breath weapon 4d6 cold (DC 15 Reflex), crush, spell-like abilities, spells	Breath weapon 14d6 (DC 27 Reflex), crush, frightful presence (180 ft., DC 27), spell-like abilities, spells
Special Qualities:	Darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision, blindsense 60 ft., damage reduction 5/magic, immunity to cold, *sleep*, and paralysis, vulnerability to fire, water breathing	Darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision, blindsense 60 ft., danage reduction 10/magic, immunity to cold, *sleep*, and paralysis, vulnerability to fire, water breathing, spell resistance 25
Saves:	Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +8	Fort +19, Ref +14, Will +19
Abilities:	Str 15, Agy 10, Sta 13, Int 14, Spt 15, Cha 14	Str 29, Agy 10, Sta 21, Int 20, Spt 21, Cha 20
Skills:	Appraise +8, Concentration +7, Craft (alchemy) +8, Decipher Script +8, Gather Information +8, Heal +8, Intimidate +8, Jump +8, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Listen +8, Search +8, Spellcraft +14, Spot +8, Swim +8	Appraise +32, Concentration +32, Craft (alchemy) +32, Decipher Script +20, Gather Information +17, Heal +19, Intimidate +32, Jump +22, Knowledge (arcana) +32, Listen +18, Search +32, Spellcraft +32, Spot +19, Swim +36
Feats:	Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Multiattack	Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Flyby Attack*, Hover*, Improved Critical (bite), Silent Spell, Wingover* * See Chapter 9: New Rules.
Environment:	Cold plains, tundra or grasslands	Cold plains, tundra or grasslands
Organization:	Solitary or clutch (2–5)	Solitary, pair, or family (1–2 and 2-5 offspring)
Challenge Rating:	6	17
Treasure:	Double standard	Double standard
Alignment:	Usually lawful neutral	Usually lawful neutral
Advancement:	10–23 HD (Large) or by character class	25–40 HD (Huge) or by character class
Level Adjustment:	+5	—

The dragon is not overwhelmingly large, standing only about 6 feet in height, but his shimmering scales and brilliant eyes hint at the great power contained within his small frame.

Combat

If threatened, blue whelps usually flee. If no route of escape is available, they lash out viciously at their attackers, instinctively using their breath attacks as frequently as possible. They are smart enough to fly out of the range of melee attackers if they are in an open area, and they use their spells and breath to gradually wear their enemies down from above.

Breath Weapon (Su): 30-ft. cone, damage 4d6 cold, Reflex DC 15 half; secondary effect: *mana burn* as a 4th-level caster.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day —*detect thoughts, wavesend**; 2/day — *fog cloud;* 1/day — *control weather, waterworks**. Caster level 4th; save DC 12 + spell level. The save DC is Charisma-based.

* See Chapter 9: New Rules.

Spells: A blue dragon casts spells as a mage of a level equal to half his Hit Dice. Unlike other mages, blue dragons do not need spellbooks to prepare their spells; rather, a blue dragon stores his spell knowledge in a separate part of his mind that functions as a spellbook — blue dragons effectively have the Spell Mastery feat for all the spells they know. A blue dragon can learn a new spell from a scroll, spellbook or other source just as any other mage can, except he does not need to scribe it into a spellbook and thus spends no money to do so.

Blindsense (Ex): Blue dragons can pinpoint creatures within a distance of 60 feet. Opponents the dragon can't actually see still have total concealment against the dragon.

Water Breathing (Ex): A blue dragon can breathe underwater indefinitely and can use his breath weapon, spells and other abilities while submerged.

Skills: A blue dragon has a +8 racial bonus on Swim checks to perform a special action or avoid a hazard. In addition, a blue dragon can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even when distracted or endangered. A blue dragon can use the run action while swimming, provided he swims in a straight line.

Blue Drake

The massive drake emerges from the frigid waters, her ice-colored scales shimmering with hidden light. Patterns of cobalt runes line her neck and upper body, and her wings fold almost invisibly against her lithe form.

Description

Blue drakes are average members of blue dragon society, and they are as highly varied as the young adults of any race. Drakes often take the forms of mortals to learn about them and assist mortals in their own struggles. Many drakes also begin training the youngest of the dragonspawn, taking a small group of these loyal creatures under their wing — both literally and figuratively.

Combat

Blue drakes prefer a swift kill in combat, and they prefer to remain airborne. They use their breath weapons whenever possible, and supplement their breath with spells designed to slow down or kill their prey. They are excellent tacticians and focus on enemy spellcasters and other threats first. They do not land unless there is an immediate need or all opposition is destroyed.

Breath Weapon (Su): 50-ft. cone, damage 14d6 cold, Reflex DC 27 half; secondary effect: *mana burn* as a 12th-level caster.

Crush (Ex): Area 15 ft. by 15 ft.; Small or smaller opponents take 2d8+13 points of bludgeoning damage, and must succeed at a DC 27 Reflex save or be pinned.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day —*detect thoughts, wavesend*;* 2/day — *fog cloud;* 1/day — *control weather, waterworks**. Caster level 12th; save DC 15 + spell level. The save DC is Charisma-based.

* See Chapter 9: New Rules.

Dragons

Dragons have a number of special attacks and special qualities unique to their race.

Crush (Ex): This special attack allows a flying or jumping dragon of at least Huge size to land on opponents as a standard action, using its whole body to crush them. Crush attacks are effective only against opponents three or more size categories smaller than the dragon (though it can attempt normal overrun or grapple attacks against larger opponents).

A crush attack affects as many creatures as can fit under the dragon's body. Creatures in the affected area must succeed on a Reflex save (DC equal to that of the dragon's breath weapon) or be pinned, automatically taking bludgeoning damage during the next round unless the dragon moves off them. If the dragon chooses to maintain the pin, treat it as a normal grapple attack. Pinned opponents take damage from the crush each round if they don't escape.

Breath Weapon (Su): Using a breath weapon is a standard action. Once a dragon breathes, it can't breathe again until 1d4 rounds later. A blast from a breath weapon always starts at any intersection adjacent to the dragon and extends in a direction of the dragon's choice, with an area as noted on the table below. If the breath weapon deals damage, creatures caught in the area can attempt Reflex saves to take half damage. Saves against nondamaging breath weapons use the same DC; the kind of saving throw is noted in the description. The save DC against a breath weapon is (10 + 1/2 dragon's HD + dragon's Sta modifier).

Frightful Presence (Ex): Some dragons can unsettle foes with their mere presence. The ability takes effect automatically whenever the dragon attacks, charges or flies overhead. Creatures within the given radius are subject to the effect if they have fewer Hit Dice than the dragon. A potentially affected creature that succeeds on a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 dragon's HD + dragon's Cha modifier) remains immune to that dragon's frightful presence for 24 hours. On a failure, creatures with 4 or less HD become panicked for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 4d6 rounds. Dragons ignore the frightful presence of other dragons.

	Blue Whelp	Blue Drake
	Medium Dragon (Cold, Earth)	**Huge Dragon (Cold, Earth)**
Hit Dice:	9d12+9 (67 hp)	24d12+120 (276 hp)
Initiative:	+4	+4
Speed:	40 ft. (8 squares), fly 150 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.	40 ft. (8 squares), fly 150 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.
Armor Class:	18 (+8 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 18	31 (–2 size, +23 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 31
Base Attack/Grapple:	+9/+11	+24/+41
Attack:	Bite +11 melee (1d8+2)	Bite +31 melee (2d8+9/19–20/x2)
Full Attack:	Bite +11 melee (1d8+2) and 2 claws +9 melee (1d6+1) and 2 wings +9 melee (1d4+1)	Bite +31 melee (2d8+9) and 2 claws +29 melee (2d6+4) and 2 wings +29 melee (1d8+4)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.	15 ft./10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)
Special Attacks:	Breath weapon 4d6 cold (DC 15 Reflex), crush, spell-like abilities, spells	Breath weapon 14d6 (DC 27 Reflex), crush, frightful presence (180 ft., DC 27), spell-like abilities, spells
Special Qualities:	Darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision, blindsense 60 ft., damage reduction 5/magic, immunity to cold, *sleep*, and paralysis, vulnerability to fire, water breathing	Darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision, blindsense 60 ft., danage reduction 10/magic, immunity to cold, *sleep*, and paralysis, vulnerability to fire, water breathing, spell resistance 25
Saves:	Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +8	Fort +19, Ref +14, Will +19
Abilities:	Str 15, Agy 10, Sta 13, Int 14, Spt 15, Cha 14	Str 29, Agy 10, Sta 21, Int 20, Spt 21, Cha 20
Skills:	Appraise +8, Concentration +7, Craft (alchemy) +8, Decipher Script +8, Gather Information +8, Heal +8, Intimidate +8, Jump +8, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Listen +8, Search +8, Spellcraft +14, Spot +8, Swim +8	Appraise +32, Concentration +32, Craft (alchemy) +32, Decipher Script +20, Gather Information +17, Heal +19, Intimidate +32, Jump +22, Knowledge (arcana) +32, Listen +18, Search +32, Spellcraft +32, Spot +19, Swim +36
Feats:	Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Multiattack	Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Flyby Attack*, Hover*, Improved Critical (bite), Silent Spell, Wingover* * See Chapter 9: New Rules.
Environment:	Cold plains, tundra or grasslands	Cold plains, tundra or grasslands
Organization:	Solitary or clutch (2–5)	Solitary, pair, or family (1–2 and 2-5 offspring)
Challenge Rating:	6	17
Treasure:	Double standard	Double standard
Alignment:	Usually lawful neutral	Usually lawful neutral
Advancement:	10–23 HD (Large) or by character class	25–40 HD (Huge) or by character class
Level Adjustment:	+5	—

The dragon is not overwhelmingly large, standing only about 6 feet in height, but his shimmering scales and brilliant eyes hint at the great power contained within his small frame.

Spells: A blue drake casts spells as a 12th-level mage.

Blindsense (Ex): Blue dragons can pinpoint creatures within a distance of 60 feet. Opponents the dragon can't actually see still have total concealment against the dragon.

Water Breathing (Ex): A blue dragon can breathe underwater indefinitely and can use her breath weapon, spells and other abilities while submerged.

Skills: A blue dragon has a +8 racial bonus on Swim checks to perform a special action or avoid a hazard. In addition, a blue dragon can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even when distracted or endangered. A blue dragon can use the run action while swimming, provided she swims in a straight line.

Blue Scalebane

Scalebanes are the most elite of the blue dragonspawn, and they represent a small fraction of blue dragonspawn society. These are the leaders, the most powerful spellcasters, and the elders of the blue dragonspawn race. While all blue scalebanes were wyrmkin and flametongues (see **Manual of Monsters,** Chapter 1: Creatures of Azeroth) earlier in life, scalebanes are technically a different species, having been transformed by a complicated ritual similar to those undergone by dragons as they mature. Scalebanes are chosen from the best of the lesser ranks, those who demonstrate exceptional leadership as well as combat or magical abilities.

While most scalebanes are intellectual, they are still powerfully built for combat, standing 7 feet tall on average. They are trained in the use of all types of weapons and tactics. Many blue scalebanes carry banners representing their draconic patron or matron, such as Azuregos in Azshara or Haleh in Winterspring.

Combat

Blue scalebanes spend most of their time in combat commanding their units, but those with spellcaster levels pepper their enemies with spells from a distance. If pressed, they fight fearlessly, but prefer to avoid melee combat if possible because they know they are most effective in command positions.

Masterwork or Magic Arms and Armor (Ex): Each scalebane is always equipped with a +3 magic weapon, usually a greatsword, which often has other abilities in addition to its enhancement bonus. In addition, a scalebane typically carries at least one other magic item, such as a shield, armor, a wand, or something that would benefit the blue scalebane's unit.

Blue Dragonflight Community: Mazthoril

4th-Level Arcane Community/1st-Level Military Community

Population: 550

Abilities: Force 12, Mobility 10, Resilience 12, Learning 18, Awareness 10, Command 10

Wealth: +12

Defense Bonus: +3

Reputation Bonus: +1

Skills: Appraise +11, Craft (blacksmithing) +10, Craft (sculpting) +11, Decipher Script +11, Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Spellcraft +11, Use Magic Device +7

Feats: Basic Fortifications, Caves, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Ley Line Nexus, Scribe Scroll

Description: The blue dragons here are primarily on watch for activity from the black dragonflight, although there have recently been concerns that the blue dragonflight will be needed to assist the dragons at Mount Hyjal if the demons in Darkwhisper Gorge attack. Since Deathwing's disappearance after the battle of Grim Batol, the black dragonflight's members have been busy fighting each other for dominance. Recently, however, two of Deathwing's children — Onyxia and Nefarion — have taken charge over much of their dragonflight and could be a considerable threat. To this end, the blue dragonflight organizes an army here, led by the dragonspawn General Cobaltann, to protect the world from the increasing threat of the black dragons. In specific, Cobaltann focuses on the protection of dragon eggs, which are being stolen by the blacks for some evil purpose.

Magnataur

Azeroth has many hybrid races — creatures that resemble two different species put together — but the magnataur are unique among them for many reasons. First, they are by far the largest; a magnataur resembles a centaur, but on a colossal scale. A magnataur's lower half is that of a wooly mammoth, and in total, they are about 20–30 feet tall and weigh 15–20 tons. That's a lot of monster, right there. And I use the term monster for a reason — magnataur are pure evil, brutal and uncaring even beyond the level associated with the centaur.

Magnataur are also unusual in that we have no idea where they came from. While they obviously resemble centaur, dryads and other hybrid races, they do not appear to be descendants of Cenarius. My theory is that they are in some way related to one of the Old Gods, but there is little to confirm or dispute this idea. They do not worship the Old Gods, or any gods at all, and I have yet to find any writings that detail their creation, even through legends or hearsay. Magnataur never played a major role in the history of humanoid societies, but there is a potential for that to change in the coming years.

The overwhelming majority of magnataur are powerful melee fighters, charging into combat and using fear and massive clubs as their only weapons. Still, a few more specialized magnataur exist, including the shamans that often dominate small groups of their kind, and a few rare hunters, scouts and rogues. Regardless of their specialty, magnataur are among the deadliest creatures of Northrend, if not the world in general. They are a dying breed, but their recent desperation leads them to levels of cooperation never before seen, and this could prove disastrous for the other mortal races living on the glacial continent.

Description

Generally speaking, magnataur are raiders, and they spend most of their lives pillaging caravans, small towns, and even full-sized cities on the rare occasions that they work together as a group. Magnataur are one of few races that rarely even get along with other members of their own species, and these disagreements usually lead to bloodshed. For this reason, there are (thankfully) few magnataur left in the world. A few too many, if you ask me.

Due to their large size, magnataur are constantly hungry, and they eat almost anything. When raiding a caravan, they eat the humans, pack animals, and whatever else they can find that won't break their teeth.

Magnataur are intelligent enough to know that humanoid creatures can provide food for them, and I found a few historical mentions of magnataur setting up kingdoms and making humans into slave labor to provide them with nourishment. Such kingdoms don't last long, as magnataur are universally too impatient to deal with such situations for long.

Those magnataur who tire of a lifestyle of raiding often take up fishing or whaling. Whales are considered a delicacy among magnataur, and those who are able to catch them frequently are highly respected.

Appearance

A magnataur has the lower body of a wooly mammoth and the upper body of a humanoid with massive mammoth tusks. Their humanoid halves are well-muscled and often bearded, resembling dwarves or fierce humans on a massive scale. They wear little clothing, although the shamans often adorn themselves with stolen jewelry. Typically, the size of a magnataur is directly related to its place in society; the largest and strongest are almost always dominant, and this is true even of spellcasters. I believe that magnataur continue to grow throughout their lives, and thus the oldest are also the largest, strongest and most powerful.

Regions

The only places where large numbers of magnataur dwell are the Dragonblight and the Storm Peaks on Northrend. In the past, they inhabited a larger portion of Northrend, but they have suffered as many losses to the Scourge as any other race.

Faith

Most magnataur have no specific religious beliefs, although many have superstitions that are passed on within a specific family. There are a few shamans among the magnataur race, but their perverted concept of shamanism is most comparable to that of the forest trolls. For example, magnataur shamans often sacrifice large numbers of humanoids in their barbaric rituals — of course, they still eat the remains afterward. Overall, most magnataur distrust magic, although they *fear* only the most powerful spellcasters, such as dragons.

History

The history of the magnataur race is largely shrouded in mystery, but we do know that at one point in time, they were a dominant race. The shattered remnants of a few crude magnataur kingdoms have been found, but they are all extremely crude and underdeveloped by modern standards, having never progressed beyond the point of making simple tools and structures. A few early writings exist from cultures of humans who were kept as slaves by magnataur, but not many.

Society

Most magnataur live much of their lives alone, and as such, no formal society exists among the majority of them. A small number of tribal groups exist, and in these cases, they are held together by their mutual fear of their shaman leader. In most cases, these small tribal groups end with the assassination of their leader, but a few shamans have been strong enough to hold a tribe together for a number of years. The only system of rank that magnataur understand is dictated by power, and thus, a larger or more combat-worthy magnataur is always considered superior. The race as a whole is not formal enough to have an elite group of warriors, though small groups of powerful shamans do exist; these shamans are considered the leaders of the magnataur as a whole, although they lack any formal institution of this leadership.

Male and female magnataur differ only in that females have a slightly greater obligation to care for their children for a few years after childbirth. There is no mating season for magnataur; they simply mate when they feel like it, and the pair separates, often never to see each other again. Children are taught basic hunting, weapon-making, and language skills from their mothers, then abandoned when they are old enough to hunt on their own.

Experienced magnataur tend to advance as warriors or scouts. A few rare and powerful magnataur also learn the path of shamanism, or advance far enough as warriors to become gladiators. There have been a few arcanists, runemasters and inscribers in the history of magnataur, but they are rare. Hunters are not unheard of among their number, but they are looked down upon for favoring ranged weapons over melee. Due to their size, it is difficult for magnataur to become rogues, but a rare few exist; they are incapable of the kind of stealth most rogues enjoy, but specialize instead in setting traps and ambushes. Paladins, priests, witch doctors and druids do not exist among the magnataur.

Mentality

Strength means everything to magnataur, and they listen only to those who they feel are strong enough to threaten them or can somehow feed their gluttonous appetites. A given magnataur largly considers other creatures, including other magnataur, inferior. For the most part, a magnataur lacks long-term goals, save to grow more powerful and find ideal supplies of food. Outsiders are viewed as food, threats, or providers of food. There are few exceptions: Magnataur are wise enough to give dragons a wide berth and know that invading the territory of a dragon can be deadly. Likewise, they avoid the Scourge, knowing that the undead are dangerous and taste icky. Magnataur attack adventurers on sight, holding back only if they feel the adventurers would potentially have something to offer them — which is a rarity.

Relations

Since there is no formal magnataur society, they never go to war as a whole, and thus they largely try to avoid the threat of the Scourge, dragons and anything else they cannot handle individually. Magnataur routinely attack ice trolls and tuskarr, pillaging their villages for food and supplies. Generally, tuskarr defend themselves well against such attacks, and the Drakkari simply take their losses. Occasionally, a troll leader grows infuriated at the magnataur raids and sends out a massive group to hunt the creatures, but such an expedition usually ends up with so many troll casualties that future generations remember that retaliation is not worth the cost.

Murlocs often try to serve magnataur in an effort to save their own lives, and it occasionally works for a while. Most of the time, though, magnataur can't resist the taste of murloc and end up eating their slaves. Ew. Furbolgs know to hide from magnataur attacks, and magnataur find them irritating to hunt, and thus only the most desperate or skilled of magnataur try to hunt a furbolg. Magnataur have no allies, including among their own race.

Distinguishing Characteristics

Most magnataur never learn to read or write, including many of the shamans, and thus there is little written culture left behind from the rare instances where they have set up small civilizations. Their buildings are simple wooden structures at best, and while a few cave paintings have been found, they create little art. Generally, abandoned weapons, dishes for eating, and simple beds are the most intricate works left behind in their settlements. Perhaps the most unique creations of magnataur are their sacrificial chambers, where a number of crude wooden or metal cages hold prisoners as they are burned alive in a central ring of fire. The easiest way to

distinguish a magnataur ruin from any other is the sheer number of objects that have been crushed by massive force; when magnataur leave a city, they intentionally destroy anything they consider valuable that they cannot take with them, and they can be amazingly thorough. I suspect that this is because they use the destruction of their own cities as a way of alleviating the frustration of having to move to another home.

Leaders

The following are magnataur leaders:

• Grom'thar the Thunderbringer (male magnataur thunder bringer shaman 5) is the eldest living shaman of the magnataur race, and one of their strongest warriors as well. From his home in the Dragonblight, he commands about fifty other magnataur, which is quite an impressive feat. As he continues to gain support, he plans to attack a large civilization — likely the nearby trolls — to force them into servitude.

• Dammia Frostcut (female magnataur runemaster 8) is a solitary individual who moves from one cave to another in the Dragonblight and, occasionally, other places in Northrend. Other magnataur seek her out for advice, assistance or temporary alliance. She has a voracious appetite, even for a magnataur, and places no limits on the sorts of things she ingests.

Magnataur Adventure Hooks

• For the first time in their existence, the magnataur unite under a single ruler, Grom'thar the Thunderbringer. Hundreds of the massive beasts prepare for war against the other races of the world.

• The blue dragonflight calls for the extermination of the magnataur after one of their young is killed in a magnataur ritual.

• A tuskarr village is shattered by a group of magnataur, and the survivors seek the help of adventurers for protection and revenge.

Magnataur as Player Characters

Magnataur adventurers are rare, but a few have given up their life of raiding or whaling for a more fulfilling existence. With the growing threat of the Scourge, many magnataur are forced into a new way of thinking, and the wisest among their number realize that they may not be able to stand against the undead alone. It is also possible for a magnataur to be taught the value of more peaceful forms of shamanism or other faiths, much like Thrall taught the Darkspear trolls to curb their cannibalistic practices. Magnataur have a difficult time getting along with other races, but given time and effort, they could learn to adapt and teach others that they are different from the other creatures of their race.

A magnataur adventurer is an exceptional individual, but adventurers are exceptions by default.

Magnataur Racial Traits

• +22 Strength, –4 Agility, +18 Stamina, –2 Intellect, –2 Spirit, –4 Charisma. Magnataurs' massive size gives them incredible strength, but they are not known for being particularly dexterous or proficient at any mental or social skills.

• Huge: As Huge creatures, magnataur take a –2 size penalty to Armor Class, a –2 size penalty on attack rolls, and a –8 size penalty on Stealth checks to hide; they receive a +8 bonus on grapple checks, and have a natural fighting space and reach of 15 feet. They must use larger weapons and armor than Medium creatures.

• Quadrupedal: As Huge quadrupeds, magnataur have carrying capacities six times those of Medium bipeds. Their strange frames mean that armor must be custom-made, however, and costs at least four times the normal amount.

• A magnataur's base land speed is 50 feet.

• Magnataur have a +5 natural armor bonus to AC.

• Low-Light Vision: Magnataur can normally see two times farther than a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight and similar conditions of poor illumination. Magnataur retain the ability to distinguish color under these conditions.

• Frightful Presence (Ex): The sight of a magnataur charging, or engaging in some other threatening activity, is enough to give even the most hardened hero pause. Anyone within 60 feet must make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 magnataur's HD + magnataur's Cha modifier). Failure means the creature is frightened for 5d6 rounds. In any case, that creature is immune to that magnataur's frightful presence ability for 24 hours.

• Trample (Ex): As a full-round action, a magnataur can move up to twice its speed and literally run over any opponents at least one size category smaller than itself. The creature merely has to move over the opponents in its path; any creature whose space is completely covered by the trampling creature's space is subject to the trample

Monsters As Races

Some monsters, like blue wyrmkin and murlocs, are similar enough to existing PC races that they translate easily, with a few racial levels to help. Others, like magnataur and nerubians, are quite different and do not translate as easily. These monsters require racial Hit Dice and level adjustments to be suitable as PC races.

Starting Level of a Monster PC: Monsters suitable for play have a level adjustment given in their statistics. Add a monster's level adjustment to its Hit Dice and class levels to get the creature's effective character level, or ECL. Effectively, a monster with a level adjustment becomes a multiclass character when it takes class levels. A creature's "monster class" is always a favored class, and the creature never takes experience point penalties for having it.

Racial Hit Dice: Characters with more than 1 Hit Die because of their race do not get a feat for their first class level (as members of the common races do), and they do not multiply the skill points for their first class level by 4. Instead, they have already received a feat for their first Hit Die because of race, and they have already multiplied their racial skill points for their first Hit Die by 4.

Creatures with 2 or more Hit Dice have statistics based on these Hit Dice plus Hit Dice for class levels (if any).

Level Adjustment and Effective Character Level: To determine the effective character level (ECL) of a monster character, add its level adjustment to its racial Hit Dice and character class levels. (Thus, a starting magnataur PC is a 17th-level character.)

Use ECL instead of character level to determine how many experience points a monster character needs to reach its next level. Also use ECL to determine starting wealth for a monster character.

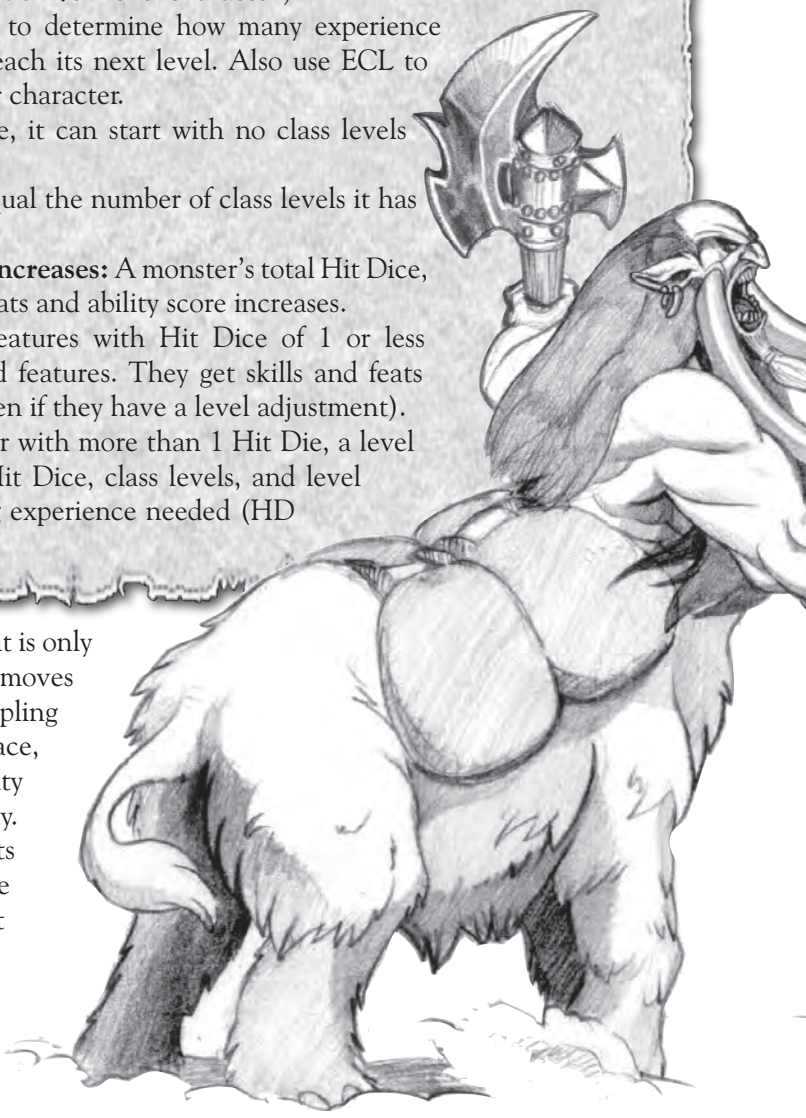
If a monster has 2 or more Hit Dice, it can start with no class levels (though it can gain them later).

Hit Dice: The creature's Hit Dice equal the number of class levels it has plus its racial Hit Dice.

Feat Acquisition and Ability Score Increases: A monster's total Hit Dice, not its ECL, govern its acquisition of feats and ability score increases.

Other Statistics for Monsters: Creatures with Hit Dice of 1 or less have normal, class-based Hit Dice and features. They get skills and feats appropriate to a 1st-level character (even if they have a level adjustment).

Experience for Monsters: A monster with more than 1 Hit Die, a level adjustment, and class levels adds its Hit Dice, class levels, and level adjustment together when determining experience needed (HD + level adjustment + class level).



attack. If a target's space is larger than 5 feet, it is only considered trampled if the trampling creature moves over all the squares it occupies. If the trampling creature moves over only some of a target's space, the target can make an attack of opportunity against the trampling creature at a –4 penalty. A trampling creature that accidentally ends its movement in an illegal space returns to the last legal position it occupied, or the closest legal position, if there's a legal position that's closer.

A trample attack deals bludgeoning damage (1d8 damage + 1-1/2 times the

magnataur's Str modifier, in a magnataur's case).

Trampled opponents can attempt attacks of opportunity, but these take a –4 penalty. If they do not make attacks of opportunity, trampled opponents can attempt Reflex saves to take half damage.

The save DC against a creature's trample attack is 10 + 1/2 creature's HD + creature's Str modifier (the exact DC is given in the creature's descriptive text). A trampling creature can only deal trampling damage to each target once per round, no matter how many times its movement takes it over a target creature.

• Resistance to Cold (Ex): Magnataur have resistance to cold 5.

• Magnataur have damage reduction 15/magic.

• Racial Hit Dice: A magnataur begins with twelve levels of giant, which provide 12d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +9, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +8, Ref +4, and Will +4.

• Racial Skills: A magnataur's giant levels give it skill points equal to 15 x (2 + Int modifier, minimum 4). Its class skills are Craft (weaponsmithing), Listen, Spot, Stealth, and Survival.

• Racial Feats: A magnataur's giant levels give it five feats (often Cleave, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Power Attack and Track).

• +4 racial bonus on Stealth checks. In spite of their massive size, magnataur are extremely adept at concealing themselves and stepping softly.

• Automatic Language: Low Common.

• Bonus Languages**:** None. Magnataur do not interact with any other cultures enough to learn other languages.

• Favored Class: Warrior. A multiclass magnataur's warrior class does not count when determining whether he suffers an experience point penalty for multiclassing (see **World of Warcraft RPG,** Chapter 3: Classes, "Multiclass Characters," *XP for Multiclass Characters*).

Level Adjustment: +8.

	Magnataur	Thander Bringer
	Huge Giant	**Huge Giant**
Hit Dice:	12d8+108 (162 hp)	24d8+254 (372 hp)
Initiative:	+0	+4
Speed:	50 ft. (10 squares)	50 ft. (10 squares)
Armor Class:	17 (–2 size, +9 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 17	17 (–2 size, +9 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 17
Base Attack/Grapple:	+9/+28	+18/+41
Attack:	Greatclub +18 melee (3d8+11)	Greatclub +31 melee (3d8+15)
Full Attack:	Greatclub +18/+13 melee (3d8+11)	Greatclub+31/+26/+21/+16 melee (3d8+15)
Space/Reach:	15 ft./15 ft.	15 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks:	Frightful presence, trample 1d8+16	Frightful presence, trample 1d8+22, spells
Special Qualities:	Low-light vision, damage resistance 15/magic, resistance to cold 5	Low-light vision, damage resistance 15/magic piercing, resistance to cold 5
Saves:	Fort +19, Ref +4, Will +5	Fort +29, Ref +8, Will +11
Abilities:	Str 32, Agy 10, Sta 28, Int 10, Spt 12, Cha 10	Str 40, Agy 10, Sta 32, Int 10, Spt 16, Cha 10
Skills:	Craft (weaponsmithing) +6, Listen +7, Spot +7, Stealth +6 (–2 to hide), Survival +7	Concentration +19, Craft (weaponsmithing) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +9, Spellcraft +6, Spot +7, Stealth +6 (–2 to hide), Survival +9
Feats:	Cleave, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Track	Cleave, Combat Casting, Great Cleave, Grea Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Punishing Blow, Track, War Stomp
Environment:	Cold mountains	Cold mountains
Organization:	Solitary	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	16	24
Treasure:	Standard	Standard
Alignment:	Usually chaotic evil	Usually chaotic evil
Advancement:	13–17 HD (Huge); 18–20 HD (Gargantuan) or by character class	24–30 HD (Huge); 31–36 HD (Gargantuan)
Level Adjustment:	+5	—

This creature has the upper body of a giant and the lower body of a wooly mammoth. It is fearsome to behold as it strides forward, its mighty feet making the ground quake with each step.

Description

These are the most common members of magnataur society, and they typically live as hunters and raiders. They are aware that their presence strikes fear in the hearts of lesser creatures, and delight in using this advantage to terrify their prey.

Combat

Common magnataur employ two basic strategies. The first is to simply charge in swinging and break anything that moves. The second requires a bit more patience, and is used only when a magnataur does not wish any enemies to escape. They are smart enough to lie in wait in the forest or hide behind the cover of unguarded wagons in a caravan and look for an opportunity to surprise those inside. Magnataur are fearless in combat, and fight to the death once enraged.

Given the lack of any appropriate weapons of their size, magnataur have some skill at fashioning trees into serviceable clubs. These huge greatclubs weigh between 200 and 600 pounds. Gargantuan magnataur have even larger greatclubs capable of dealing 4d8 points of damage.

- **Frightful Presence (Ex):** The sight of a magnataur charging and shouting with terrible joy, or engaging in other threatening acts, is enough to give even the most hardened hero pause. Any creature within 60 feet must make a DC 16 Will save. Failure means the creature is frightened for 5d6 rounds. In any case, that creature is immune to that magnataur's frightful presence ability for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.
- **Trample (Ex):** As a full-round action, a magnataur with can move up to twice its speed and literally run over any opponents at least one size

category smaller than itself. The creature merely has to move over the opponents in its path; any creature whose space is completely covered by the trampling creature's space is subject to the trample attack. If a target's space is larger than 5 feet, it is only considered trampled if the trampling creature moves over all the squares it occupies. If the trampling creature moves over only some of a target's space, the target can make an attack of opportunity against the trampling creature at a –4 penalty. A trampling creature that accidentally ends its movement in an illegal space returns to the last legal position it occupied, or the closest legal position, if there's a legal position that's closer.

A trample attack deals bludgeoning damage (1d8 damage + 1-1/2 times the magnataur's Strength modifier, in a magnataur's case).

Trampled opponents can attempt attacks of opportunity, but these take a –4 penalty. If they do not make attacks of opportunity, trampled opponents can attempt Reflex saves to take half damage.

The save DC against a creature's trample attack is 10 + 1/2 creature's HD + creature's Str modifier (DC 27 for a common magnataur). A trampling creature can only deal trampling damage to each target once per round, no matter how many times its movement takes it over a target creature.

Magnataur Thunder Bringer

At well over 30 feet in height, this massive, elephant-humanoid crossbreed is a terrible sight. Teeth and ears of victims form a crude necklace around the beast's neck, and it holds a sharpened tree as a massive club in its right hand. The creature grins wickedly as it begins to chant in an unearthly voice.

Description

Thunder bringers are rare, elite and powerful magnataur. While shamans are not uncommon among magnataur, few undergo the appropriate rituals that transform them from simple magnataur shamans to thunder bringers. Those who do rarely survive long. Thunder bringers represent the elite few who have survived years of assassination attempts and continued to grow in power and prominence over time. In addition to their great spellcasting abilities, they are also some of the largest and strongest of magnataur, making them even more formidable adversaries.

Combat

Magnataur thunder bringers prefer to allow weaker magnataur to enter the fray first and support them with spells, retreating if the battle goes badly. If confronted on their own, they cast as many enhancement spells as they can before wading into melee. If they are preparing to attack an unaware target, they cast all their augmentation spells beforehand, then sneak up on their enemies to try to gain the advantage of surprise.

Spells: A magnataur thunder bringer casts spells as a 12th-level shaman, but has no domain spells or abilities.

Shaman Spells (6/6/5/5/3/3/2; save DC 13 + spell level): A magnataur thunder bringer's high Spirit score and ranks in Spellcraft allow him to prepare 8 spells per level; he can prepare many of the spells on the shaman spell list.

Magnataur Community: Bloodmar

1st-Level Religious Community/1st-Level Military Community

Population: 53 (100% magnataur)

Abilities: Force 14, Mobility 12, Resilience 13, Learning 8, Awareness 8, Command 8

Wealth: +2

Defense Bonus: +3

Reputation Bonus: +0

Skills: Craft (weaponsmithing) +0, Gather Information +3, Knowledge (nature) +3, Knowledge (religion) +3, Spellcraft +3

Feats: Basic Fortifications, Caves, Shrine, Stockpile

Description: Bloodmar is a massive tribe by magnataur standards, with over 50 members in its ranks. Led by the mighty Grom'thar the Thunderbringer, they continue to build their numbers and gather resources in preparation for making war on the other races of the world. Fortunately, it would appear that they will be fighting against the Scourge first, since the undead are the most imminent threat. Their encampment boasts spiked wooden walls and gates, which are the most advanced defenses I've seen in a magnataur settlement. They also appear to be stockpiling resources in a nearby cave system, which is much more organization than I'm used to seeing from magnataur. In general, these creatures are no different from other magnataur, but they have somehow been whipped into a group by their leader, who uses promises of great power to prevent them from slaughtering each other — he threatens swift and painful death if they betray him.

Murlocs

I don't like water much. No surprise, really — I am a dwarf, after all. Water's fine to take off dirt and it's good for cooling hot metals from the forge. It helps crops grow, and I can even stand to drink it when there's nothing else available. But I don't enjoy traveling on it — if you ask me, if the Titans wanted us to sail they'd have given us rudders and masts and the like, instead of fingers and toes and hair. I can go on a boat when I have to — going from one continent to another, I don't have much choice — but I'm on last and off the second we're close enough to wade ashore. My time beneath the waves around Nazjatar didn't do anything to endear me to the element, either.

So the notion of moving under water instead of across it is unpleasant. And the idea that some beings live in it like fish — well, that's just wrong.

Murlocs don't agree.

I still remember the first time I saw one. I'd heard stories, of course, about fish-men who actually breathe under the water, easy as you please. But I've heard plenty of strange stories — people who fly, people who turn to smoke, people who eat their own limbs and grow them back overnight, all manner of weird. A lot of it was just stories, or exaggerations of something real and not even all that interesting, like the starving tribe that had no food and so each member cut off and ate his own left arm so he wouldn't hold a grudge against any of his tribemates. I figured this was more of the same. A tribe that liked water enough to swim every day — which I still say is unnatural all by itself — and somebody started calling them fish.

Then I saw them myself. I was down in Azeroth's Elwynn Forest, walking along a lakeshore, when I saw a faint glimmer out in the water. It disappeared almost immediately but then I saw it again, not forty feet out. I had one hand on my axe, just in case, but thought it was nothing more than some wreckage from a boat or perhaps a piece of driftwood.

Then it raised its head above the surface and stared at me.

My first thought was "since when do fish look *above* the water?" because that's what it looked like. A fish. A big one with bright shiny scales and a wide body and a spiny fin across the top. Only it kept coming toward me, rising up at the same time, and I saw that below the body was more flesh, and then it widened and I realized it had shoulders. The "body" was its head. It stood up then, twenty feet from me, barbed spear in one hand and net in the other, and tilted its head back. The sound that came out was a strange gurgle, loud and liquid, and it hefted its spear as if to throw. I knew I could take it in a fight, but what if more of them were lurking nearby, below the surface where I couldn't see them? So I backed up a bit, and when I glanced back it was gone.

I'm still not sure I believe everything I've learned about them since. Oh, people are happy to tell me all about the fish-men, or "gurglers" as they're sometimes called. I've seen murloc hunters, and heard about them fishing or fighting sharks and whales, and even heard about murloc traders. That's how people know the race's name. But the murlocs don't much like other people and don't interact except when necessary. They always shy away from me quick enough. Maybe it's the beard.

By the time I reached Northrend I had seen a lot of murlocs, but still didn't know much about them. Then I met an old druid named Mitrius, a pleasant sort of fellow, and we got to talking over some ale one night. He'd spent the past two years on the Shiverwind Coast, studying various plants and sea creatures, and his camp was less than a day's travel from a murloc tribe. After a few months they decided he wasn't dangerous and started trading with him, fresh fish and seaweed and shells for wood and cloth and spices. Things got to the point where they even invited Mitrius into their home. He became a regular guest, probably the most tolerated non-murloc in all Azeroth, and he knew more about them than anyone. He told me most of it, though I suspect he kept a few things back. What he did say was enough to convince me he's either a fool or the bravest human I ever met. Who else would walk right into a place like that, time and again, without fearing that each time might be his last?

To hear Mitrius tell it, the murloc race is far older than most people realize. Far older and far more intelligent. The folks in Valgarde consider them little more than upright fish who can speak a few words, but Mitrius says murlocs are as smart as we are. They spend hours each day thinking and talking and praying. Their whole culture is built around prayer, actually, and around their religion. Then he told me about their religion, before I finally stopped him and drank enough ale to pass out. Some things even dwarves shouldn't have to hear.

Description

Murlocs are amphibious humanoids. They breathe as easily underwater as on dry land, and can walk but swim more quickly and comfortably. Murlocs don't like being above the water — they find air too dry and walking awkward, slow, and slightly painful. Yet they remain, establishing their clustered villages along the shores and lakes of every continent.

To most humans and dwarves murlocs are just primitive fish-men who sometimes trade shells and seafood for metal, wood and spices, but more often battle us with crude weapons. Only a few murlocs ever enter other settlements, and they do so only to trade (or fight). Since murlocs usually live along empty coastlines no one else wants, people leave them alone.

Though murlocs can breathe air, they cannot remain out of water for long. Their skin is scaled like a fish and requires moisture to stay supple. Without daily immersion it dries and cracks, causing intense pain. This is why their villages are built along the shore — every murloc spends part of the day underwater, as much for survival as for enjoyment.

Appearance

Murlocs are fine-looking creatures, if you like fish. They stand as tall as a human male, though they hunch over when out of water, and they're as broad as a young man, with long arms and legs. Their skin gleams when wet, which it usually is, and you can see the scales clearly. One thing I hadn't expected from the stories was how colorful they are. Most fish I've seen are silvery or coppery. Murlocs are all manner of color, though — some have bands of red or blue or green across their torsos and foreheads, others have mottled patterns of silver and gold against bright green or blue, and others are striped or spotted. Some have a single color, but even that is bright and glistens with other colors in the light, like a scaly rainbow. Of course, much of the time their skin is coated with slime from the shore or the water, so the colors are dulled. On special occasions they splash themselves clean and then you can see all the colors fully — though if you're at such an occasion you may be a bit preoccupied.

One look and you know without a doubt that murlocs are water-dwellers. In addition to the scales they have fins atop their heads, down their backs, and at their wrists and ankles. Their fingers and toes are long and webbed. Their eyes are big saucers that bulge outward and they've got two or more eyelids. Their noses are small and their ears little more than dents in the sides of their heads, but their lips are thick and their teeth are small but sharp. They've also got gills on either side of their necks, clearly visible.

Murlocs don't wear much, even in Northrend. I guess their scales are enough to stave off the cold — if they can handle the temperature underwater they can certainly cope with the wind and chill on land. They do wear armlets and bracers and necklaces and belts, all ornamented with shells and teeth and bits of stone or metal. A few wear cloths draped across a shoulder or wrapped around their neck (below the gills) and I think that indicates some rank. Headdresses are common — they have no hair to get in the way and often arrange spines and spikes and shells and rocks about their heads, held in place by seaweed or twine or leather straps or even metal wire. A few pierce their skin with sharp coral needles or thin stone spikes, and use these as decorations as well. The few who trade with people sometimes wear loincloths and shawls as a concession to human modesty.

Regions

Murlocs have villages along at least one shore of every continent. In Northrend they've settled along the southern shore, from the mouth of Lake Wintergrasp to just above Valgarde and Daggercap Bay. They also live along the edges of freshwater lakes. It seems they usually choose large bodies of water, generally away from any other races. That way they have ready water access and no one bothers them.

The stories I've heard suggest that the murlocs only came out of the water within the last century. Before that, most people assume they lived on the shore of some other continent. They're wrong. From what I can tell, and what that druid Mitrius told me, they appeared on each continent around the same time. Before that they didn't live above water at all — their home was the sea and their villages dotted the ocean floor. So why did they leave that behind and move to dry land, which they clearly hate?

Faith

Religion plays a major part in murloc society. I'm not quite sure what to call their religion — polytheistic, maybe, or animistic, or perhaps shamanistic. Mitrius told me of odd rituals involving communication with the sea and its powers. He's convinced that murlocs worship the water and powerful entities within it. Their religion is flexible enough to include any new aquatic creature they encounter, and they happily add or remove creatures to fit recent events. Thus a naga sea witch might become part of their prayers until she is killed by a band of sharks, at which point she is removed but the sharks are added. The only real constant is the water itself, which is seen as the mother of the murlocs and of all life.

History

Mitrius told me that the murloc race is far older than anyone realizes. Most people think murlocs became sentient or mobile or amphibious or all three only within the past century, which is why we never saw them before that. They're wrong. The shamans carry staves with tiny chips of shell imbedded around them in a rising swirl from bottom to top, and a shaman told Mitrius that each chip is added by the shaman just before he hands the staff to his successor. Scratched into those chips are tiny sigils containing key information that shaman learned during his lifetime. The staff that shaman held bore at least a hundred chips and was only covered halfway up its length. That staff was created more than ten thousand years ago! That means the murlocs existed before the rise of the Kaldorei, before the Burning Legion came, before the Great Sundering tore Kalimdor apart. They may be one of the oldest races on Azeroth. And most of their existence has been beneath the waves, hidden from view. Of course, most of this is Mitrius's speculation, but if anyone should know what he's talking about, it's him.

If these tales are true, why, then, did murlocs emerge on shores all over the world a century ago? What brought them out of the water they love to the land they despise? I have no idea. Neither does Mitrius — every time he asked the murlocs fell silent or turned away. I did meet another traveler, though, a tinker named Kem, who offered some answers.

"I was trading with some of them fish-men," Kem told me over an ale, "spearheads for fish and seaweed. They didn't much like the smell of me, apparently, kept wrinkling those funny faces of theirs — I'd fought off some bats not long before and still had their droppings all over me. Anyways, one of the fish-men scowled and turned away but another stopped him and muttered something about 'our duty compels us.' Dunno what that meant, but after the deal was made I offered my hand to seal it. The first one shuddered and stepped back, but the second one stepped up and said 'as you require, Deepest Lord,' and put that fishy paw of his in mine."

Other travelers have told me similar stories. Murlocs have let slip comments about obedience, service, orders, and other hints that they came to dry land not because they chose but because they were ordered. But by whom? Since they worship every powerful aquatic creature, it could have been anything. Yet it must have had a lot of power and

made its wishes very clear for so many murlocs to leave the safety of the water and suffer through life on dry ground.

Society

Murlocs live in tribes, each tribe to its own village. Each tribe has a name that seems indicative of its members' activities, appearance, or history, such as "Lostfin" or "Bluegill." Tribes are organized into larger clans, and every so often all tribes in a clan meet to discuss items of importance. However, keeping a large group of murlocs coordinated and in agreement for any significant length of time is difficult.

Each tribe has a similar structure. An adult murloc is known as a huntsman, meaning he has proven himself capable of obtaining food for the tribe. Children are tested and given trials before becoming huntsmen. They can also become nightcrawlers, tiderunners and shamans. "Nightcrawler" is a name traders came up with, rather than a murloc name. I have no idea what they call it, but some murlocs hunt and gather on dry land instead of underwater. These murlocs are quieter and stealthier than their brethren, and if you've ever seen a murloc being sneaky you know that's saying something. I suspect nightcrawlers also scout new areas and inspect sites before the rest of their tribe moves in.

Tiderunners are expert hunters. They are more experienced, and also have skill at taming sea creatures and using them as guards, scouts and allies.

Shamans are the wise men and women of the murloc tribe. I don't think they ever go hunting, or perhaps only enough to establish themselves as full adults. Shamans commune with the water (the Deep Mother) and her favored children, and handle the tribe's rituals. From what I've seen they really can work some primitive magic — and sometimes, not-so-primitive magic.

At set times each year, several tribes gather together. Where they gather changes each time — it's usually one of the tribes' homes, though sometimes they meet in a neutral place instead. The tribes exchange information and also trade various goods. The shamans control these large gatherings, and the eldest shaman is considered the gathering's leader. He officiates and delegates tasks to the junior shamans, who then appoint other murlocs to handle mundane matters.

One thing about fish is you can't easily tell male from female. Murlocs are the same way. It took me a while to figure out that the length and shape of the head-fin and back-fin indicate gender, just as the shading indicates age. Murlocs treat males and females equally, and either can become a nightcrawler, a tiderunner or even a shaman. That's probably because murlocs lay eggs instead of birthing live babies — a murloc female can lay eggs one day, and be able to hunt again the day after that. The eggs are placed in water just off-shore, near the village, and have to be tended regularly but anyone can care for them. Apparently members of the tribe take turns caring for all the eggs together, and then for the hatchlings once they hatch. Mitrius told me it takes about a year before the baby murlocs can breathe air and join the rest of the tribe in the village.

A few rare murlocs show too much talent and independence to remain in their tribal system, and leave their village to seek out a life elsewhere. Most of these are barbarians, though a few are rogues or scouts. Only a handful of healers leave murloc society, and even fewer become arcanists. Murloc runemasters are unknown.

Mentality

Murlocs seem simple, when you first meet them. That's because they've entered a settlement, or allowed someone to enter their village, in order to trade. Murlocs have their goods ready and know exactly what they want in return. They don't want to bargain or haggle or trade stories (unless it's information they want). They just want to make a deal and be done with it. Most people think that means someone's simple. It just means they're focused.

Focused is a good word for murlocs. They are not a frivolous people. Oh, their young may cavort and splash about and dive just for fun, but older murlocs are too busy with survival and ritual to be so carefree. Life in a murloc village is difficult. The huntsmen are constantly gathering food, while the children and elders are preparing food, cleaning huts, making or repairing goods, and getting materials ready for the next ritual. Mitrius said even during celebrations most murlocs say as little as possible. I guess they're still not used to talking out of water.

To a murloc, the survival of the group is everything. First comes the race, then the tribe, then the individual. They'll do whatever's necessary for the survival of the largest group possible, even sacrificing lesser groups in the process. And in order to survive they need power. That's why they worship anyone water-based who has enough power. Every murloc hopes to gain that power himself, or make a deal with someone who has it. No one thinks amiss of a

fellow murloc who betrays his kin for such power, as long as it would benefit the race as a whole.

Murlocs value obedience above everything else. Agility and ruthlessness are also important, as are strength and hunting prowess. Spirit is important to shamans and separates tiderunners from mere huntsmen. They don't care about individuality or creativity unless it directly aids the survival of the tribe or some larger portion of the race.

Relations

Murlocs hate other races. There's no other way to say it. Well, at least they hate surface-dwellers. I've seen them insult and attack humans, elves, dwarves, furbolgs, gnomes, goblins, tuskarr, naga and even Drakkari trolls. It makes sense, since they hate living above the waves and hate dealing with land people. The only times murlocs don't attack members of another race are when they need something from them (whether that's information or goods) and can't kill for it, or when the other race severely outnumbers them. That includes travelers — I've passed through a few murloc villages unscathed, but then Mitrius told me how to approach them and what to offer them for safe passage. Others are not as lucky or not as well-equipped.

That's all above the waves, of course. Below the waves the murlocs may be more cordial. They certainly sacrifice often enough, so perhaps other aquatic races view them favorably or fear them and stay away. I suspect, though, that just as murlocs worship anyone they consider strong, they attack anyone they consider weak. That means each individual and each race has to prove itself strong on the first encounter, or become prey.

Distinguishing Characteristics

Murloc villages are strange little places. From the outside they're horrible and pitiful, a collection of rough mud-and-twig huts strewn about without pattern. The huts aren't uniform — they're roughly the same size and shape, but not perfectly so and most of them sag to one side or another. The villages have no fire, no clear walkways, and no defenses. The huts are ugly and plain, and the area is otherwise featureless except for the shallow basin behind the shaman's hut. Most huts stand on stilts to protect them from the tide and flooding. I can't imagine a plainer, uglier place.

That's the outside, though. The interior walls of each hut are often elaborately decorated. Some depict branching coral while others are mosaics of shell and stone and others are surprisingly delicate tapestries of shaded seaweed. The huts are usually open to the air, with small wooden pillars to hold the roof. Murlocs sleep in the water or on woven mats of seaweed, tied firmly to maintain their shape but so loose they look like small rectangular nets. Hooks of coral hold weapons and other items on the walls or pillars.

Murlocs rarely work in metal and almost never touch fire. They're expert carvers, however, and can work stone, shell, coral or wood into fabulous shapes and amazing scenes and designs. They don't trade these items, though, just shells and seaweed and other raw materials. I have a tiny sculpture I won from a trader, which he says a murloc gave him after a particularly good trade. I'm not sure I believe him about the circumstances but the item is probably murloc — it feels like something they made. It's a piranha carved from a short piece of coral, and so lifelike it almost seems to twitch when I blow on it. I've seen their shaman staffs firsthand and each is a work of art, carved to hold the many bone and shell chips in the teeth and flippers and claws of various creatures I hope do not really exist below the ocean surface.

Leaders

The following are murloc leaders:

• Shlur (female murloc shaman 11/rogue 2/murloc 3) is the senior shaman of the White Shark tribe. The White Sharks are an important force on the stretch of coast closest to Valgarde, and have more frequent dealings with surface-dwellers than many other murloc clans. Shlur is an old and crafty ruler and can silence even the proudest tiderunner with a single flick of her head-fin.

• Mimmil (male murloc barbarian 6/hunter 5/murloc 3) is the senior tiderunner of the Dark Ray tribe. He is revered as the mightiest tiderunner to appear since the murlocs moved above the water, and his skills are legendary. His talent at taming and riding sharks is particularly admired.

• Yshmeel (male murloc scout 10/rogue 7) is the chief nightcrawler of the Ripfang tribe. During large gatherings he handles land-based security and scouting, and reports directly to his chieftain. Yshmeel is said to be the first murloc as comfortable on land as in water, or at least the first to be as quick, quiet and deadly in both environments.

• Lilki (female murloc shaman 7/murloc 3) is an important shaman of the White Shark tribe. Though young for such a position, she is already admired for her wisdom, her power, and her fervent sacrifices. Most murlocs consider her Shlur's successor. Some whisper that Lilki not only wants the position but is unwilling to wait until her superior dies naturally.

Murloc Adventure Hooks

• A large sea beast has been sighted off the coast. Is it hostile? Is it mindless? Is it alone? The murlocs are the most likely to know the answer, and the best-suited to find out if they don't know already. But given their religion, will the murlocs attack the creature or worship it? Or did they summon it themselves?

• Several tribes in Northrend are gathering and they select the White Shark tribe's village as their location. Yet the White Sharks are the closest tribe to Valgarde, and now the southwest edge of the Howling Fjord is overrun with murlocs. Will some of the human and dwarven settlers lose patience and attack the irritating fish-men? Or will the murlocs finally grow tired of the city's presence and try to destroy it once and for all?

• A murloc is found dead on the edge of a small human town. The murloc has a nasty stab wound in its back. Who killed it and why? The humans should explain the situation to the murloc's tribe to avoid reprisals. But what if whatever did this is still out for blood — and what if it isn't picky?

• The murloc shamans' staves are thousands of years old and contain markings from each shaman who has wielded them. Are those markings merely symbolic or do they hold real information? Are the bone and shell chips magical somehow? Those staves are older than some civilizations. They could be immensely valuable, especially if they're enchanted. Of course, getting one won't be easy.

• A murloc appears in an orc town and demands to speak with the town's shaman. The frightened amphibian then explains that his tribe held a religious ceremony recently. As usual they offered a sacrifice and asked for instructions and blessings. The water spoke to their shaman then, but not in the usual voice. It foretold death, bloody death, for all those nearby. This orc village is the nearest non-murloc settlement. Should the warning be taken seriously? What could be coming for them — and from where? And why does this murloc care if orcs die?

• Murlocs attacked a band of explorers. Two of the expedition were killed and the other three captured. One of the survivors has an important document that must be recovered. Yet how do the PCs get the explorers — or even just the document — out of a murloc village? Especially when an important religious ceremony is only two days away, and the explorers are the planned sacrifices?

Murlocs as Player Characters

Murloc life is tightly constrained. Most never leave their village and the surrounding waters, and never become more than lowly huntsmen. Yet a few crave more independence and more adventure. These few also realize that the other races may not be as vile as their shamans claim. These young murlocs decide to explore the rest of the surface world and see all its wonders and dangers themselves. They walk away from their villages and their clans, leaving their old world behind and searching for a new one. These adventurous murlocs may also feel the hereditary quest for personal power without the accompanying need to save the race as a whole.

Murloc Racial Traits

• +1 Agility, +1 Spirit, –2 Charisma. Murlocs are faster than most people realize, even above the water, and surprisingly focused and strong-willed. Their appearance makes most surface-dwellers uncomfortable, however.

• Medium: As Medium creatures, murlocs have no special bonuses or penalties due to size.

• Murloc base land speed is 20 feet. A murloc has a base swim speed of 30 feet.

• Monstrous Humanoid: Murlocs are monstrous humanoids, not humanoids. As such, they are immune to *hold person* and other effects that specifically target humanoids.

• Darkvision: Murlocs can see up to 60 feet in total darkness. Darkvision is black and white only, but it is otherwise just like normal sight.

Table 6-2: The Murloc

Murloc Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+0	+2	+2	Increased swim speed, improved darkvision, trident proficiency, +2 racial bonus on Stealth checks
2nd	+2	+0	+3	+3	Bonus feat, increased land speed, +1 natural armor bonus to AC, +1 racial bonus on Concentration checks, +1 racial bonus on Stealth checks
3rd	+3	+1	+3	+3	Increased swim speed, improved darkvision, +1 natural +1 racial bonus on Concentration checks, +1 racial bonus on Stealth checks

• Amphibious: Murlocs can function as well in water as without. They can breathe underwater indefinitely, and take no penalties for movement in water.

• Dehydration: Murlocs must immerse themselves in water for at least 1 hour once per day. A murloc who spends 24 hours without immersing herself in water takes 1d6 points of damage and a –1 penalty on attack and damage rolls, skill and ability checks, and saving throws. Every 8 hours thereafter, the murloc takes the same damage and penalties, which are cumulative. Damage from this effect cannot be healed by any means until the murloc immerses herself in water for at least 1 minute for every hour she was out of water.

• Swim is a class skill for all murloc characters.

• A murloc has a +8 racial bonus on Swim checks to perform a special action or avoid a hazard. In addition, a murloc can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even when distracted or endangered. A murloc can use the run action while swimming, provided she swims in a straight line.

• Automatic Language: Nerglish.

• Bonus Languages: Common, Dwarven, Nazja, Zandali.

• Racial Levels: Unlike humans and some other races, murlocs can take a few levels in "murloc" as a class to develop their racial qualities more fully.

• Favored Class: Scout. A multiclass murloc's scout class does not count when determining whether she suffers an experience point penalty for multiclassing (see **World of Warcraft RPG,** Chapter 3: Classes, "Multiclass Characters," *XP for Multiclass Characters*).

Murloc Levels

Murlocs can take up to three levels in "murloc" at any time. Murloc racial levels represent the individual drawing upon his mysterious heritage and training in the unique ways of his race.

Murloc levels stack with a divine spellcasting class level for purposes of determining caster level for spells. If the murloc has more than one divine spellcasting class, add the racial levels to the highest.

Hit Die: d8.

Skill Points at 1st Character Level: (2 + Int modifier) x 4.

Skill Points at Higher Levels: 2 + Int modifier.

"Class" Skills: Concentration (Sta), Spot (Spt), Stealth (Agy), Survival (Spt), and Swim (Str). See Chapter 5: Skills in **World of Warcraft RPG** for skill descriptions.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Murlocs with levels in murloc are proficient in the use of simple weapons and shields (but not tower shields).

Increased Swim Speed: A 1st-level murloc's swim speed increases to 40 feet. A 3rd-level murloc's swim speed increases to 50 feet.

Improved Darkvision: A 1st-level murloc's darkvision increases to 90 feet. A 3rd-level murloc's darkvision increases to 120 feet.

Bonus Feat: A 2nd-level murloc can choose one of the following bonus feats: Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw or Track.

Increased Land Speed: A 2nd-level murloc's base land speed increases to 30 feet.

Bonus Weapon Proficiency: A 1st-level murloc gains proficiency with tridents.

A 3rd-level murloc gains proficiency with nets.

	Murloc Huntsman	Murloc Nightcrawler	Murloc Tiderunner
	Medium Monstrous Humanoid (Aquatic)	**Medium Monstrous Humanoid (Aquatic)**	**Medium Monstrous Humanoid (Aquatic)**
Hit Dice:	3d8+6 (19 hp)	5d8+10 (32 hp)	6d8+24 (51 hp)
Initiative:	+3	+8	+7
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares), swim 50 ft.	30 ft. (6 squares), swim 50 ft.	30 ft. (6 squares), swim 50 ft.
Armor Class:	15 (+3 Agy, +2 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 12	16 (+4 Agy, +2 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 12	15 (+3 Agy, +2 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 12
Base Attack/Grapple:	+3/+6	+5/+7	+6/+9
Attack:	Trident +6 melee (1d8+3)	Trident +7 melee (1d8+2)	Trident +9 melee (1d8+3)
Full Attack:	Trident +6 melee (1d8+3) or javelin +6 ranged (1d8+3)	Trident +7 melee (1d8+2) or javelin +9 ranged (1d8+2)	Trident +9 melee (1d8+3) or javelin +9 ranged (1d8+3)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	None	none	none
Special Qualities:	Darkvision 120 ft., amphibious, dehydration	Darkvision 120 ft., amphibious, dehydration	Darkvision 120 ft., amphibious, dehydration
Saves:	Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +2	Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +3	Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +4
Abilities:	Str 16, Agy 16, Sta 15, Int 10, Spt 13, Cha 10	Str 14, Agy 18, Sta 15, Int 12, Spt 14, Cha 10	Str 16, Agy 17, Sta 18, Int 12, Spt 15, Cha 10
Skills:	Concentration +5, Spot +6, Stealth +7, Swim +16	Concentration +7, Spot +8, Stealth +13, Swim +12	Concentration +7, Handle Animal +6 (+11 with aquatic/amphibious), Spot +8, Stealth +9, Swim +18
Feats:	Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw, Track	Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Run	Bloodletter, Demoralizing Shout, Improved Initiative, Leadership, Point Blank Shot
Environment:	Coastal/underwater	coastal/underwater	coastal/underwater
Organization:	Solitary, band (3–8), or pack (12–30)	Solitary, band (3–5), or pack (6–8)	Solitary, band (2–4), or pack (5–10)
Challenge Rating:	3	5	6
Treasure:	Normal	Normal	Normal
Alignment:	Usually chaotic neutral	Usually chaotic neutral	Usually chaotic neutral
Advancement:	4–12 HD (Medium) or by character class	6–16 HD (Medium) or by character class	7–18 HD (Medium) or by character class
Level Adjustment:	Use racial levels	Use racial levels	Use racial levels

The creature rises out of the water before you, its scales glistening as the moonlight hits them, its large, bulging eyes luminous. In one webbed hand it holds a nasty-looking javelin, in the other a weighted net. It glides toward you, apparently as comfortable walking as swimming.

Description

Murloc huntsmen are the standard adults of the race. Their task is to seek and secure food for the rest of the village. Huntsmen may also trade with other races for information, food and other goods. They do not like being out of water, and suffer pain if not immersed daily.

The murloc huntsman presented above represents a murloc with three levels in the murloc racial class.

Combat

Murloc huntsmen prefer to fight from or in the water when possible. They use their speed and agility to dart around their foes, tossing weighted nets to bind them and then stabbing with barbed javelins. Huntsmen are neither brave nor stupid, and retreat when faced with a clearly superior foe.

Amphibious (Ex): Murlocs can function as well in water as without. They can breathe underwater indefinitely, and take no penalties for movement in

water.

Dehydration (Su): Murlocs must immerse themselves in water for at least 1 hour once per day. A murloc who spends 24 hours without immersing herself in water takes 1d6 points of damage and a –1 penalty on attack and damage rolls, skill and ability checks, and saving throws. Every 8 hours thereafter, the murloc takes the same damage and penalties, which are cumulative. Damage from this effect cannot be healed by any means until the murloc immerses herself in water for at least 1 minute for every hour she was out of water.

Skills: Murloc huntsmen have a +2 racial bonus on Concentration checks and a +4 racial bonus on Stealth checks.

Murlocs have a +8 racial bonus on Swim checks to perform special actions or avoid hazards. In addition, murlocs can always choose to take 10 on Swim checks, even when distracted or endangered. A murloc can use the run action while swimming, provided she swims in a straight line.

Murloc Nightcrawler

You catch a faint glimmer in the moonlight, and a figure glides from the trees, a barbed trident in one hand and a weighted net in the other. Scales glint along its body and bulging fish eyes peer out of the shadows. Its fingers are webbed where they wrap around the weapons, and you notice a spiked fin above the creature's head as it stalks silently toward you.

Description

Murloc nightcrawlers are the race's spies, scouts and assassins on land. Nightcrawlers are even quieter and quicker than other murlocs, and train extensively on land. They scout new locations and trade sites, and gather information on intended targets.

Combat

Murloc nightcrawlers use their speed and stealth to attack by surprise whenever possible. Their first attack is to hurl weighted nets and hopefully bind their opponents. In combat they retreat to nearby shadows and circle around their foes, trying to strike from behind. If the battle turns against them nightcrawlers flee and fetch reinforcements.

Murloc Tiderunner

The creature rises out of the water before you, its scales glistening as the moonlight hits them, its large, bulging eyes luminous. In one webbed hand it holds a nasty-looking javelin, in the other a weighted net. It glides toward you, apparently as comfortable walking as swimming. As it moves you notice the spiked cords adorning its neck, arms and torso. You also see several dark shapes flitting about it in the water.

Description

Murloc tiderunners are the master warriors of the tribe. They are expert huntsmen but also talented animal handlers, and often have one or more tamed sea beasts nearby for aid.

Combat

Murloc tiderunners prefer to fight from or in the water. They send their aquatic pets in first to weaken opponents. Then they use their nets to bind foes and hurl javelins from a distance. If that fails the tiderunner retreats, luring the enemy after him, and summons additional creatures to his aid.

Skills: Tiderunners receive a +5 racial bonus on Handle Animal checks when training or interacting with aquatic or amphibious creatures.

Murloc Community: K's'litain

1st-Level Military Community/2nd-Level Religious Community

Population: 130

Abilities: Force 13, Mobility 8, Resilience 13, Learning 12, Awareness 14, Command 6

Wealth: 3

Defense Bonus: +2

Reputation Bonus: +1

Skills: Bluff +2, Craft (carving) +3, Craft (weaving) +3, Gather Information +1, Handle Animal +0, Heal +4, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (local) +4, Knowledge (nature) +4, Knowledge (religion) +6, Profession (fisher) +6, Spellcraft +2

Feats: Basic Fortifications, Craft Wondrous Item, Infamous, Shrine

Description: Each murloc tribe has at least one village. K's'litain houses the White Shark tribe. The White Sharks live along the west edge of the Howling Fjord in Northrend; it is the tribe closest to Valgarde. K's'litain is the easternmost village and is less than two days' run from Valgarde itself. As with all murlocs, the White Shark tribe is religious. They worship the Deep Mother, the water, and her favored children. Shamans rule the village, dictating who handles which chores and what must be done from day to day. Strangers rarely visit K's'litain (or any murloc village) but those who show strength and wisdom are sometimes tolerated. Those who seem weak or foolish are attacked and killed.

Nerubians

I encountered numerous species in my travels through Azeroth: orcs, humans, gnomes, trolls, scorpids and murlocs, among many others. However, Azeroth hides a new surprise under every stone, like a vein of unknown metals discovered in a lode. One of the most unexpected surprises was my encounter with a race of arachnid creatures. On my trip to Kalimdor, while milling around in the goblin bazaars of Gadgetzan, I met a trader who gave me the opportunity to present myself to nerubians (which he calls "spider-striders") without the specter of certain death rearing its grisly head. Recently the little goblin had looted the corpse of an explorer (a human female of unknown origin) who had taken several artifacts from the Scourge. There was also a spidersilk scroll on her body, a letter from a nerubian spiderlord that promised her safe conduct through nerubian lands and excellent compensation for the artifacts.

"So why didn't you take the opportunity to present yourself to them and make a tidy profit?" I asked the goblin. His only response was a nervous high-pitched laugh, as blood-curdling as any I've ever heard from a goblin's throat.

To the Nether with the little coward, I thought. Yes, I know I was being arrogant, blithely assuming that I could safely travel where goblins refuse to go, but something else prodded my decision to buy the artifacts and take the explorer's place. First, she sounded like a brave woman, and bravery creates a debt that must be honored. Second, such miraculous opportunities to do great things are rare (less so for people like myself, but still rare) and must be treated like gifts from the Light (or the Titans, or whatever your preference). I vowed that when I found myself in Northrend, I would use this opportunity to become the first known member of the Alliance to travel peacefully into a nerubian community and live to tell the tale.

After numerous adventures (some described elsewhere in these pages), I found myself on the southern shores of Northrend, unharmed and eager to attend to the nerubian mission. The letter told me to seek a great monolithic black stone, its top cracked and peeled by some unnatural force so it jutted like a huge Y-rune out of the ice. After several days of numb-fingers and bone-chill feet searching in the icelands, with only dwarven potables to sustain me, I found the stone.

I waited several hours for a chance encounter, then decided to climb the monolith to get a better vantage point — and discovered a hollow spot on one of the rock faces. My half-frozen fingers searched for a keyhole and finally found one, and after working the lock for five minutes, the rock face swung open, revealing a secret passage.

Now we came to the true test. I have to confess that at that moment the goblin didn't seem like such a coward after all. A narrow staircase composed of hardened spidersilk spiraled down into the darkness. The passages were blocked with webs, fibers thick as leather, which I needed to work with a steel dagger to cut. They gave way with a sudden whooshing sound that wasn't the wind. A warning, perhaps? But no, I was no skulker, I wanted them to find me; so I entered.

After a long descent, shadows started to flicker in the faint light beneath me and I heard a familiar sound: an army rousing in the dark.

"I bear tokens against the Scourge!" I repeated the words which were etched on the scroll. "Hazu'Asnab commands that you permit me safe passage! I carry his seal!"

The light at the bottom of the stairs flared, and I could see figures climbing the stairs in an elegant, almost silent manner. Now I could see how the nerubians had earned their reputation as assassins.

Within seconds, I was facing six spears brandished by bizarre looking creatures. Take a spider's torso, crown it with the upper body of a dark-skinned human with pitted skin and clawlike pincers for hands, cover the human half with chitin, and you might come close to an accurate description.

"Greetings," I dangled the letter in the hopes that someone who looked remotely like a captain would acknowledge it (and speak Common). "Nice spears. Let's talk!"

One of the creatures took the letter, read the writing that I could barely decipher, and eventually we came to an understanding. I would trade the artifacts in exchange for six days and nights spent living among them — and safe passage. A warrior named Mihal and a seer named Ul'Tomon would be my guides and answer my questions to the best of their ability. Hopefully, by observing the denizens of the Sundered Monolith in close quarters, I would learn the true nature of these alien creatures.

Description

Once the nerubians maintained the greatest civilization on Northrend, beautiful and

cultured, but, by some local accounts, cruel. Azjol-Nerub seemed unconquerable — until the coming of the Scourge. Ner'zhul descended upon them and broke their cities; he stole their lands, their lore, and even their bodies in the pursuit of his obscene corpse-dreams.

A few queens escaped the fall of Azjol-Nerub and scattered across Northrend. However, the race of vigorous philosophers was no more: now a typical nerubian lives out his life, performs his duties, and then dies, often in violence, without advancement or hope. One emotion still drives them: every nerubian knows that the Scourge has wronged them, and that the war between their kind and the Lich King is a struggle without end.

I don't entirely disapprove of this mentality.

Although not a warm or pleasant race, they honored their agreements, and showed no particular contempt toward me or my kind. To be sure, they would make strange allies for the Alliance, but allies they could become, given our mutual enemy. Many remember what they've lost, and are eager to reclaim what was stolen from them.

Appearance

Nerubians resemble humanoid-arachnid hybrids. A nerubian has the lower body of a spider, and a smaller humanoid upper body. Nerubians have pincerlike claws instead of hands, which they use with consummate skill; they handle complex tools with no difficulty.

Nerubians have a caste-based society, and their size depends heavily on the diet assigned to their caste. The average worker averages 10 feet in height fully standing, with a spider body roughly 8 feet in diameter. Warriors are larger, ranging between 10 feet and 12 feet tall, and 10 feet in diameter. Seers are larger still, reaching almost 15 feet in height and 13 feet in diameter. Watching a nerubian raise itself from a crouch to its full measure is a daunting sight.

Spiderlords are considerably different from typical nerubians. They can be enormous, reaching upward of 18 feet in height and 20 feet in diameter. They also have a carapace (typically colored black with dull red markings) and dual sets of wings, giving their lower torsos a beetlelike appearance.

Queens (or so I'm told, I was not permitted to meet one) are even more enormous, and the most ancient of queens can reach 40 feet in height and fill an entire cavern with their bloated bodies. I'm also told that a nerubian's power can be safely estimated by its size — so these very large queens are also very, very powerful.

Regions

Nerubians prefer to live underground, though they are comfortable in surface dwellings as well. They dwell under lands that are frozen for much of the year, but survive well in the cold. They prefer hills to plains, and seem comfortable tunneling through hard mountain stone. Almost all nerubians live in Northrend, their ancestral homeland.

Faith

After several days observing the nerubians, one thing struck me as especially curious — I had seen no temples, nor priests, nor holy warriors. I turned to Mihal and asked him whether I could observe the nerubians at worship.

"Worship?" He wondered, rolling the Common word across his mouth. "What is worship?"

This was certainly not the reaction I expected. I questioned him further on nerubian spiritual beliefs. Mihal was confused. After a few minutes of bartering over terms, he came to a crude understanding of what I was asking and told me they did not care about such questions. The nerubians had no such rituals, though perhaps the queen might know of such things.

Later, I broached the subject to Ul'Tamon the seer. By this time I figured I had picked up enough of their language to hold a complex conversation.

"In Azjol-Nerub," he told me, "where theological debates were as commonplace as any other form of battle, there were five or six schools of religious thought. Long ago, however, most sensible nerubians came to the conclusion that worshipping creatures from beyond the world is insane. Given the intentions of most such entities toward the world, honoring them makes as much sense as a fly caught in a web worshipping the spider who is about to devour him."

I laughed, if only because I could foresee priests of the Light having some interesting conversations with these seers. I inquired about the queen's role. The seer answered that the Sundered Monolith revered her, but did not openly praise her, except when she delivered a clutch of eggs. Likewise they revered their ancestors, but did not sacrifice to them or ask for their intervention. They did not understand the concept of holiness, though unholiness had been taught to them (quite vividly) by Ner'zhul.

History

Few among the nerubians know their history. For Mihal the warrior, the past was remembered only as a vague golden age. Ul'Tomon was more forthcoming, but I discovered most of what I learned about their earlier days from the Drakkari trolls.

The nerubians come from Azjol-Nerub in Northrend, but their true origins are much older. Once, they and another race, the qiraji, were one people, who established the empire of Azj'Aqir that was in power long ago. The qiraji warred with the Gurubashi and Amani troll empires, and after long centuries of battle their culture was shattered and they were driven into exile. The nerubians fled north.

In Northrend, the nerubians flourished. The subterranean civilization of Azjol-Nerub covered much of the continent. Terraced pits and tall ziggurats housed countless nerubians, who lived, worked and contemplated the universe. Theirs was no sterile civilization; Azjol-Nerub contained huge libraries of literature, music, philosophy and arcane lore. It was a golden age (except perhaps for the humans and elves they ensnared, a memory that still brings a rare, chilling smile to their faces).

Then, about 20 years ago, Ner'zhul descended on Northrend. The coming of an undead horde presented an undeniable threat. Elite warriors were hatched, trained and dispatched to fight the Scourge. Ten undead fell for every nerubian who was cut down; unfortunately, Ner'zhul could replenish his losses by raising the fallen as undead slaves, but the nerubians could not. Even so, nerubian resistance was fierce, until Ner'zhul finally unleashed the undead plague. In a matter of days, the civilization of Azjol-Nerub was broken. The philosophers were silenced, libraries burned, observatories shattered; and the surviving nerubians fled. The Scourge raised the animated corpses of the spider-striders, which they called crypt fiends, to rebuild their cities, paying a cold homage to the race by stealing their architecture and arcane arts. One of the most powerful of the nerubians, Anub'arak, became Ner'zhul's undead champion.

Now nerubians survive in scattered enclaves. The race of philosophers has fallen to a passionless existence.

Society

On first glance, a nerubian community resembles a hive of large insects. A nerubian community has a single leader (usually a queen), a few advisors, a small guard of warriors, and then a large body of workers.

Different types of nerubians are referred to as castes, but here the resemblance to insects ends; castes in nerubian society do not have a sense of superiority or stigma. Caste is determined in a nerubian's youth. Workers who show unusual physical abilities become warriors; workers who show mental talents become seers, and those who demonstrate exceptional weaving skills become webspinners.

Workers deal with the larger needs of the community: food, weaponsmithing, mining, building, and supplying the needs of the other castes. Their lives are unending labors, though they do not chafe at them. Unlike insects, nerubian workers need to rest; in the Sundered Monolith, workers sleep in small nests that line the walls of great living caverns.

The intellectual backbone of the community is the seers, a tightly knit sub-community of arcanists who are obsessed with preserving lore and rebuilding their lost libraries. The boldest seers are also explorers, risking the undead plague to venture into ruins and find fragments of lost knowledge. They understand the outside world better than other nerubians, and make the best diplomats.

Warriors are often organized into small bands to patrol a community's defenses, though they more often serve as hunters. To assist both tasks, entrances are covered in thick gossamer barriers that are ensorcelled to rouse the community when breached. As evidenced in many talks with Mihal, warriors are a stoic lot, as driven as workers. Prominent captains (and seers) are elevated to spiderlord status as a community grows.

In small communities, a council of spiderlords rules. Larger towns and cities have a more traditional structure; the leader is usually the eldest female, who is appointed queen. In Azjol-Nerub, there was also a king (Anub'arak). Groups formed for a specific purpose (such as a warband, a trade guild, or an aggregate of decimated families) choose leaders with proven ability. The queen's edicts are law, but her judgments are often tempered by the counsel of spiderlords, and the spiderlords do not hesitate to replace a queen whose judgment seems unwise. However, queens are revered as the keepers of ancestral memory, and no one except an entire council of spiderlords, acting in unison, would dare to openly challenge her authority.

Mentality

The nerubian race is a cold, callous people. They rarely see beyond their predetermined roles, and have little imagination. Even when they were living in Azjol-Nerub, the flames of passion rarely blazed brightly in their hearts. On the other hand, it is a mistake to think of the nerubians as mindless; they have keen intellects, and many are fluent in Common as well as their own tongue (a clicking, rasping language). They often find our ideas strange and confusing, especially concerning emotions or culture. However I've known more than a few dwarves whose single-mindedness and utilitarian nature is the nerubians' equal, so they aren't *that* hard to understand. (On the other hand, I'd hate to think of what gnomes would think of them!)

Their emotionless nature also extends some protection to them against certain spells. I spoke to a couple of priests in Valgarde after my foray into the Sundered Monolith, and they described nerubian minds as "frozen." "They resist our spells that focus on the mind," said one, "and telepathic communication is impossible. I've attempted to do so a couple times; it's like trying to drill through layers of solid ice."

The overall goal of the nerubian civilization is survival. At best, life beneath the Sundered Monolith is precarious. They live in a cold climate with no allies and many enemies, engaged in a difficult struggle to meet day-to-day needs. Many workers are gaunt and underfed, and carry out their labors with a faltering gait.

Yet it would be a mistake to pity them. Had I not possessed a letter of safe passage from a spiderlord, I would have been captured, paralyzed, tortured and killed for sport and meat. Their few emotions lead them toward sadism, the satiation of unrelenting hunger, and the exercise of gruesome power for power's sake. They are as dark and as twisted a people as any I have encountered. They trust no one. They might welcome the enemies of the Scourge, but because of their tendency to kill on first sight, it's difficult to prove that one is a sufficient Scourgebane to warrant joining in a common cause. Presenting suitable artifacts as gifts — and utter deference to their military might — might persuade them to parley, but I do *not* recommend it except in direst of needs.

Seers are the most driven members of the society as well as the most imaginative (and dare I say, *human*). They feel the loss of Azjol-Nerub more keenly than the others (except possibly the queens), and they're the ones who most strongly wish to reclaim their heritage. As long as they hold positions of authority, they also hold to the dream that Azjol-Nerub will be reborn, and the nerubians will not descend completely into barbarism.

Relations

Nerubians get along with no one. They trust no one, but true hatred is reserved for the Scourge. They have

domesticated minor beasts (most notably bane spiders — and many other spider varieties — that serve as pets in larger communities) for food and other needs.

The undead plague is a constant fear for all nerubian enclaves. To prevent a reoccurrence of the disease, many towns kill (and burn) nerubians they believe are infected with the plague. This fear hampers the efforts of seers who wish to rebuild Azjol-Nerub. The Sundered Monolith is more willing to send out seers and risk exposure than most enclaves.

One other matter needs to be addressed. For all their isolation, Ul'Tomon seemed remarkably knowledgeable about the peoples beyond Northrend, though he tried to hide the fact. It is more than possible that the surviving nerubians maintain a network of spies, using magic to cloak their identities. There have been rumors of wandering nerubian necromancers in Kalimdor, and I heard tales of one such creature operating in Lordaeron (see **Lands of Conflict,** Chapter 5: Adventures, "Dead Men's Tales"). Eventually Ul'Tomon speculated that *perhaps* a few surviving nerubians had thrown their lot in with the Scourge and had become Ner'zhul's apprentices (and would die painfully when they were captured). However, I would not be surprised if some of the seers were not dabbling in necromancy in the hopes of beating the Lich King at his own game.

Distinguishing Characteristics

The community of the Sundered Monolith is composed of six levels. The topmost level is for soldiers, who provide a defensive buffer between the community and the surface. The next three levels are for workers, with food and water stored on the fourth level. The fifth level is reserved for seers and spiderlords, while the sixth (which I was not allowed to visit), is a huge cavern that belongs to the queen and the other egg-laying females.

The architecture struck me as an odd mixture of human and insect influences; it was most insectlike in the workers' living quarters, and most humanlike in the library of the seers. All surfaces (including walls and ceilings) are meant to be traversed, and embroidered webs (some, the product of the most skilled webspinners, are extremely beautiful) decorate many surfaces. The Sundered Monolith is also rich in gemstones, which are polished to perfect roundness (like pearls) then mounted into facets into the webs, giving them the appearance of fine lace.

As I marveled over the beauty of the webs, Ul'Tomon informed me that they were paltry compared to those of Azjol-Nerub. The webspinners of the Sundered Monolith are able to produce webs of two colors (light silver and dark silver); the spinners of Azjol-Nerub were able to produce webs of numerous colors, woven together to form tapestry-webs comparable to the hangings of Stormwind Cathedral. Through some lost art, they spun transparent and translucent webs with the properties of stained glass, and even wove webs that produced harmonious sounds when one walked on them.

Though not equal to the masters of old, modern webspinners are still honored in nerubian society. They are the engines of industry. The webs they spin have many applications: They are refined into a substance with the consistency of leather, but are far tougher and more durable. These webs are used for everything from temporary shelters, walls and floors, to scrolls and cloaks.

A great deal of effort is spent in producing food. I heard that the worker caste members survive on a diet of maggots and termites, which are consumed live. Higher caste members are fed a much richer diet of small mammals (also consumed live), fish and birds. Whenever possible, game animals are penned in great underground enclosures. Some keep spiders as pets (like cats). Nerubians take a cruel satisfaction from the act of hunting.

I observed one unusual eating practice among the warriors. They produced a sticky but edible webline, spat venom onto it, then dipped it into several insect nests, and consumed it — it was as close to a delicacy (or a potent potable) as the culture tolerates. Mihal told me that it was to test their constitution. I did notice that he seemed to be a lot more talkative after the meal.

Magic plays an important role in day-to-day living. It is employed to help hives breed more quickly, to treat injury, to scry the lands for intruders (or game), to sound alerts to danger, and to help them survive the frigid chill. Though nerubians are naturally resistant to cold, in Northrend that is not always enough. Many of the gemstones that are made by the seers are enchanted to produce heat, and the webs in which they are set are used as magical conduits for warming the caverns. All nerubians, even the worker caste, possess a magical stone whose dweomer is meant to be triggered during the worst days of winter. This stone can mean the difference between an active worker, and a dead, frozen worker.

One telltale element of nerubian society that was not present here was an obelisk. In Azjol-Nerub, nerubians built many obelisks: great, black, rune-lined pillars that towered hundreds of feet above their communities, each crowned with a huge

gemstone that was used as a magical conduit. These structures are the most remarkable traces of the nerubian civilization — but any enclave which built one today would be offering an open invitation to the Scourge to invade their community. When I finally left the Sundered Monolith, I was determined to see one of them in person. Reluctantly, Ul'Tomon provided me with directions to the nearest one, and his reticence was justified when I encountered a crypt lord and came closer to losing my soul than I ever wished to come. (But that's a tale for another time.)

Leaders

The following are the nerubian leaders under the Sundered Monolith. Perhaps nerubians place great store in ages, for they gave me all of theirs, and they seemed impressed by mine.

- Azhuul'Mehab (female nerubian shaman 14) is the queen. She is 48 years old.
- Majis'Tomon (male nerubian spiderlord aristocrat 16) is the chief lawgiver of the Sundered Monolith. He is 77 years old.
- Ul'Tomon (male nerubian spiderlord mage 12) is the Sundered Monolith's chief seer. He is 39 years old.

Nerubians as Player Characters

Nerubian are cruel and xenophobic, but not every nerubian is evil to the core. Furthermore, the goal of most adventuring nerubians (opposing the Scourge) is compatible with most heroic PCs' goals. Wishing to explore the world (especially old nerubian ruins) is a perfectly justifiable rationale for an adventuring hero.

Nerubian characters possess the following racial traits.

- +4 Strength, +6 Agility, +4 Stamina, +2 Intelligence. Nerubians are physically and mentally superior to most humanoids.
- Large: As Large creatures, nerubians take a –1 size penalty to Armor Class, a –1 size penalty on attack rolls, and a –4 size penalty on Stealth checks to hide; they receive a +4 bonus on grapple checks, and have lifting and carrying limits double those of Medium characters. They have a fighting space of 10 feet and reach of 5 feet.
- A nerubian's base land speed is 40 feet. A nerubian's base climb speed is 20 feet.
- Darkvision: Nerubians can see up to 60 feet in areas of no illumination. Darkvision is black and white only, but it is otherwise like normal sight.
- Racial Hit Dice: A nerubian begins with four levels of aberration, which provide 4d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +3, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +1, Ref +1, and Will +4.
- Racial Skills: A nerubian's aberration levels give it skill points equal to 7 x (2 + Int modifier, minimum 4). Its class skills are Climb, Craft, Jump, Knowledge (any), Listen, Spot and Stealth.
- Racial Feats: A nerubian's aberration levels give it two feats (usually Ability Focus (poison) and Improved Initiative).
- Nerubians have a +4 racial bonus on Spot checks and Stealth checks to hide. A nerubian also has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.
- A nerubian has a +2 natural armor bonus to AC.
- Natural Weapons: Claw (1d4+1) and bite (1d8+2).
- Poison (Ex): Nerubian poison attacks the victim's muscles and is delivered by bite. Injury, Fortitude (DC 10 + 1/2 nerubian's HD + nerubian's Sta modifier), initial and secondary damage 1d6 Strength.

Nerubian Adventure Hooks

- Far from Northrend, trolls direct the PCs to artifacts of the ancient Azj-Aqir civilization. When they arrive at the site, they discover the presence of a nerubian warband.
- While traveling in northern Kalimdor, a familiar strays from the PCs' party and is trapped in a spider web. Can they rescue the familiar from the nerubians before the beloved creature is served as queen-chow? And what are nerubians doing in northern Kalimdor?
- An influx of bane spiders has appeared in the PCs' homeland. Tracking them to their source, the PCs discover a giant glowing spiderweb: a magical portal to the icy reaches of Northrend. The nerubian community on the other side is under siege from the Scourge and wishes to use the portal to escape. Do the heroes let them pass through or do they close the gate and let them die?
- After the PCs gain the trust of a nerubian enclave, an exiled nerubian necromancer who claims to have vital information on the Scourge approaches them and asks them to intercede on his behalf. He wants to return to his enclave and present his findings — but can he be trusted?

• Web (Ex): Nerubians can throw a web 8 times per day. This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets up to one size category larger than the nerubian. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check or burst the web with a Strength check (DC 10 + 1/2 nerubian's HD + nerubian's Sta modifier + 2 racial bonus). Both are standard actions.

In addition to using webbing as an attack, a nerubian can spin a single strand to descend at its climb speed. The strand can hold the weight of the nerubian and one creature of Medium or smaller size.

Some nerubians can instead create sheets of webbing. All nerubians can move across nerubian webbing at their climb speed.

• Nerubians have resistance to cold 5.

• Frozen Mind (Ex): Nerubians are immune to mind-affecting and fear effects, and to telepathy.

• Automatic Language: Nerubian.

• Bonus Language: Common.

• Favored Class: Warrior. A multiclass nerubian's warrior class does not count when determining whether he suffers an experience point penalty for multiclassing (see World of Warcraft RPG, Chapter 3: Classes, "Multiclass Characters," *XP for Multiclass Characters*).

• Level Adjustment: +2.

Description

Nerubians are cruel and intelligent spider-men. They lurk in the cold shadows of Northrend, waiting with claws and spells to ambush intruders.

Combat

Nerubian workers avoid combat. When pressed into service or when faced with destruction, however, they are disciplined, particularly if a skilled leader is present. Quick charges and use of simple weapons like spears and javelins are their normal tactics. Some nerubians also use longswords, axes and other martial weapons. They can also deliver a poisonous bite, but prefer the distance that wielding weapons offers.

Poison (Ex): Nerubian poison attacks the victim's muscles and is delivered by bite. Injury, Fortitude DC 16 (this includes the bonus provided by the

	Nerubian Worker	Nerubian Warrior	Nerubian Seer
	Large Aberration	**Large Aberration**	**Large Aberration**
Hit Dice:	4d8+8 (26 hp)	5d8+10 (32 hp)	4d8+3d6+12 (40 hp)
Initiative:	+7	+7 +7	
Speed:	40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft.	40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft.	40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft.
Armor Class:	14 (–1 size, +3 Agy, +2 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 11	14 (–1 size, +3 Agy, +2 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 11	14 (–1 size, +3 Agy, +2 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 11
Base Attack/ Grapple:	+3/+9	+3/+9	+4/+10
Attack:	Spear +4 melee (2d6+2) or bite +4 melee (1d8+2 and poison) or javelin +5 ranged (1d8+2)	*+1 longsword* +5 melee (2d6+3/ 19–20) or bite +4 melee (1d8+2 and poison) or javelin +5 ranged (1d8+2)	Spear +5 melee (2d6+2) or bite +5 melee (1d8+2 and poison) or javelin +6 ranged (1d8+2)
Full Attack:	Spear +4 melee (2d6+2) and 2 claws –1 melee (1d4+1); or bite +4 melee (1d8+2 and poison) and ; or 2 claws –1 melee (1d4+1); or ranged (1d8+2)	*+1 longsword* +5 melee (2d6+3/19 –20) and 2 claws –1 melee (1d4+1 bite +4 melee (1d8+2 and poison) and 2 claws –1 melee (1d4+ Javelin +5 ranged (1d8+2)	Spear +5 melee (2d6+2) and 2 +0 melee (1d4+1); or bite +5 melee (1d8+2 and poison) and 2 claws +0 melee (1d4+1); or javelin +6 1); or javelin +5 ranged (1d8+2)
Space/Reach:	10 ft./5 ft.	10 ft./5 ft.	10 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Poison, web (DC 16)	Poison, web (DC 16)	Poison, spells, web (DC 17)
Special Qualities:	Darkvision 60 ft., frozen mind, resistance to cold 5	Darkvision 60 ft., frozen mind, resistance to cold 5	Darkvision 60 ft., familiar, frozen mind, resistance to cold 5
Saves:	Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +4	Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +4	Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +7
Abilities:	Str 15, Agy 17, Sta 14, Int 12, Spt 10, Cha 10	Str 15, Agy 17, Sta 14, Int 12, Spt 10, Cha 10	Str 15, Agy 17, Sta 14, Int 16, Spt 10, Cha 10
Skills:	Climb +13, Craft or Knowledge (any one) +4, Jump +5, Listen +3, Spot +3, Stealth +9	Climb +13, Craft or Knowledge (any one) +4, Jump +5, Listen +5, Spot +4, Stealth +9	Climb +13, Concentration +7, Craft or Knowledge (any one) +6, Jump +5, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Listen +3, Spellcraft +8, Spot +3, Stealth +9
Feats:	Ability Focus* (poison), Improved Initiative	Ability Focus* (poison), Improved Initiative	Ability Focus* (poison), Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell
Environment:	Cold and temperate forest, hills, plains and underground	Cold and temperate forest, hills, plains and underground	Cold and temperate forest, hills, plains and underground
Organization:	Solitary, pair, squad (2–4), town 6–18 plus 50% young plus 1 warrior or webspinner per 5 adults), or city (20–200 plus 50% young plus 1 warrior and 1 webspinner per 10 adults, plus 1 seer per 20 adults, plus 1 spiderlord per 50 adults, plus 1 queen per 150 adults)		
Challenge Rating:	4	5	5
Treasure:	Standard	Standard	Standard
Alignment:	Usually lawful evil	Usually lawful evil	Usually lawful evil
Advancement:	5–10 HD (Large); 11–16 HD (Huge) or by character class	6–10 HD (Large); 11–16 HD (Huge) or by character class	By character class
Level Adjustment:	+2		
* See Chapter 9: New Rules.		—	—

The large creature has the lower body of a giant spider with a humanoid torso, arms and head. Its spider legs are long and thin, allowing it to top 10 feet when it rears up. It wields a simple, though wicked-looking, spear.

Ability Focus feat), initial and secondary damage 1d6 Strength. The save DC is Stamina-based. (Huge nerubian: initial and secondary damage 1d8 Str.)

Web (Ex): Nerubians can throw a web 8 times per day. This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets up to one size category larger than the nerubian. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check or burst the web with a Strength check (DC 10 + 1/2 nerubian's HD + nerubian's Sta modifier + 2 racial bonus). Both are standard actions.

In addition to using webbing as an attack, a nerubian can spin a single strand to descend at its climb speed. The strand can hold the weight of the nerubian and one creature of Medium or smaller size.

Some nerubians (though none listed here) can instead create sheets of webbing. All nerubians can move across nerubian webbing at their climb speed.

Frozen Mind (Ex): Nerubians are immune to mind-affecting and fear effects and to telepathy.

Skills: Nerubians have a +4 racial bonus on Spot checks and Stealth checks to hide. A nerubian also has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

Nerubian Warrior

Nerubian warriors are larger and tougher than their brethren, thanks to their specialized diet and their activities.

Nerubian Seer

Seers have a valued place in nerubian society. They are the counselors and mages of the spiderfolk. The Scourge destroyed Azjol-Nerub's libraries, leaving the nerubians with whatever few bits and pieces the seers could carry off. They are interested in returning to the ruins to recover all that they can. Once skilled in architecture, accounting, law and other esoteric disciplines, the demands of life now require most seers to focus on magic to protect their communities.

A seer often uses bits of webbing attached to its abdomen to hold spell components.

The seer presented above is a 3rd-level mage.

Spells: *Mage Spells* (4/3/2; save DC 13 + spell level): A nerubian seer's high Intellect score and ranks in Spellcraft allow it to prepare 8 spells per level; it can prepare many of the spells on the mage spell list. It favors spells dealing with cold and those that immobilize its opponents.

Familiar: Most seers have spider familiars.

Nerubian Community: Sundered Monolith

4th-Level Military Community

Population: 400

Abilities: Force 14, Mobility 12, Resilience 12, Learning 8, Awareness 12, Command 12

Wealth: +3

Defense Bonus: +4

Reputation Bonus: +1

Skills: Craft (web) +2, Handle Animal +2, Survival +2.

Feats: Basic Fortifications, Infamous, Stockpile.

Description: Buried under the ice of southeast Northrend, this community of exiles dreams of the day when the glory of their race may be restored. Naturally xenophobic, their hatred of the Scourge and desire for revenge might be enough to help a quick-witted adventurer win some much-needed aid — but if she fails, a quick death is likely to be her fate.

Kalimdor, Northrend and the South Seas host innumerable opportunities for adventure. Below are three adventures set in these lands.

Off to the Races

"Off to the Races" is a **World of Warcraft RPG** adventure designed for 4 heroes of any level. Any races can participate, although a party containing a mix of gnomes and goblins may have trouble determining which path to take. Boxed text is meant to be read aloud to the players.

The action takes place in the Shimmering Flats and involves goblins, gnomes and their agents.

Adventure Background

Deep within the dry lake bed known as the Shimmering Flats, goblin and gnome tinkers labor constantly to perfect the ultimate racing machines. At regular intervals, they participate in trials of their creations, and twice monthly the Mirage Raceway hosts a series of events to determine which side is the best. While no prizes are officially awarded, being "the best" is usually enough. Besides, there's plenty of betting going on behind the scenes to make a shrewd gambler a tidy fortune — or break the bank if he chooses poorly.

At the start of each month, the Mirage Raceway Independent Oversight Committee (MRIOC) announces the parameters for the next race (length, vehicle class, special rules, and so on). The first race is considered the "preliminaries," while the final race of the month determines the overall winner. The side that achieves victory then lords it over the losers for the next month.

As the heroes arrive at the Mirage Raceway, the preliminaries have just concluded, with the goblins winning by a few seconds over their gnomish competitors. As the goblins also won last month's race, they are jubilant, while the gnomes are all the more determined to win the finals in one week — at all costs.

Adventure Synopsis

Ideally, this adventure should be the characters' (and the players') first encounter with the Mirage Raceway. If they have been here before, they may not be all that interested in getting involved.

Doesn't Anybody Use Stracture Anymore?

This is a somewhat unusual adventure in that it's almost entirely social in nature. There are no dungeons or crypts to explore. Instead, it's an opportunity for extreme roleplaying, in which there may well be no combat whatsoever!

In other words, this is a somewhat unstructured adventure. The players will decide how much effort they want to put into it, and take it on its merry way. As a result, it's not possible to list every possible path or outcome, or post statistics for every potential NPC who could become involved. Even the way things get started is highly flexible.

The important thing to remember is to not push the characters down any particular road. Let them decide on their own, and face the consequences that result. They may also choose to simply go their own way. That's okay, too. They don't have to take every quest that comes their way.

Because of this unstructured layout, there are no encounters, lairs, dungeons or creatures. Instead, the adventure includes expansion points. At any expansion point, you can insert a random encounter, add a side quest, or even insert an entire adventure. In this manner, the adventure can be integrated easily into an ongoing campaign of any size or level, and provide a springboard into other adventures along the way.

Since this adventure is appropriate for characters of any level, consider adjusting the gold piece rewards and task DCs as appropriate for the heroes' level. Also, grant experience points for roleplaying and successful completion of the various sub-missions to reward the players.

The adventure begins with a discovery in the Shimmering Flats during the journey to the raceway. Upon arriving in town, the PCs are then accosted by agents of both the goblins and gnomes, both trying to curry favor with the heroes. Numerous back-door deals are proposed, often at breakneck speed, leaving it up to the PCs to decide which — if any — they will take. They might even play both sides against the middle, if they're up for a real challenge — and don't mind taking the risk of annoying the entire raceway!

For the Heroes

The adventure begins in either Freewind Post or Gadgetzan, the two towns closest to the Shimmering Flats. Alternatively, things could get started in any large city some distance away, but preferably the

PCs should be fairly close to the Mirage Raceway already.

The raceway has the misfortune of being located somewhat off the beaten path, since most travelers fly into Gadgetzan via gryphon or wyvern. However, the PCs could also simply be on their way to Gadgetzan from Thousand Needles and pass through the raceway as part of their journey.

The heroes could be in Freewind Post or Gadgetzan for any number of reasons, including the following:

- Picking up or dropping off an item.
- Scouting out the area for their race or faction.
- Collecting spell components from creatures or plants native to the area.
- On their way to explore remote parts of the continent. Gadgetzan is a good stopping-off point for anyone intending to head into Un'Goro Crater or Silithus.
- Investigating ancient legends of troll ruins in Tanaris.

The adventure begins with one or more of the characters discovering a flashy sign inviting any and all to see the fastest vehicles in the world at the Mirage Raceway. In many cases this will be enough to convince the PCs to go check it out, especially if they're bored and looking for something to do.

If this doesn't do it, some suggestions follow. However, the PCs should not be sent there by either gnomes or goblins, or on any business related to the raceway itself. When they arrive, they should be free to make their own choices about how to proceed.

- The heroes undertake a mission to deliver an item or message to a town on the other side of the Shimmering Flats, thus taking them through the Mirage Raceway. Note that the delivery should not be on any sort of timetable, so the characters don't feel rushed to depart.
- The heroes are asked to bring back flora or fauna native to the Shimmering Flats (such as a basilisk egg or a rare desert cactus).
- The heroes need information, and the only one who knows the answer is on his way to the raceway to enjoy watching the goblins and gnomes compete against each other.
- The heroes are hired as caravan guards for a tour group heading to the raceway for the next race.

Regardless of the means, the adventure commences as the characters are out in the flats, on their way across the desert for some reason or other. Read the following:

> The white sands of the desert seem to stretch on and on, as far as the eye can see. To the east and west, barely visible in the oppressive haze, the cliffs that once enclosed an ancient sea are fuzzy gray walls barely noticeable against the impossibly dark blue sky. You begin to wonder if ice-cold water isn't the most wonderful, precious liquid on the face of Azeroth.
>
> Then [roll some dice as if making a Spot check], [insert sharp-eyed character name here] notices something glimmering on the sands. It's not a rock — it's something metallic!

The object is a metal fastener — a rivet, actually. If the heroes approach it, a DC 10 Craft (technological device), Use Technological Device, or related Knowledge check identifies it as a rivet; characters who succeed on this check by 5 or more identify it as gnomish in manufacture. There's no clue as to why it would be out here in the desert, but if the characters make a DC 15 Spot check after discovering the item, they notice that it's sitting in a divot in the sand that's wider than it is, suggesting it fell to the ground from a height higher than a couple of feet. If they then make a DC 15 Search check of the immediate area, they discover another similar divot in the ground, and tracking back from there they can discern that the rivet bounced to its resting place from the east. After this it's a simple matter of following the resulting line (no tracking necessary) to find the rivet's origins.

> The sands of the flats are no longer as endless. Ahead, you can see the faint outline of buildings in the distance, and black smoke rising onto the horizon from multiple sources. What's more, you can see a long line carved out of the desert — a road of some sort, stretching out as far as you can see. There seem to be flags along the side of this path, all of them bright and gaily colored.
>
> Also, you notice ahead of you a set of footprints in the sand. Or maybe multiple sets of footprints — it's hard to say. They seem to be coming from the direction of the road.

Expansion Point

The heroes probably start digging the machine out of the crater, which would be a good time to surprise them with a wandering desert creature — perhaps a sand-dwelling beast that's using the crater as its new home.

On the other side of a small dune, off the path they were following, the characters find a 3-foot-deep crater. At the bottom, almost completely buried, is something metallic, with a couple of pieces of bent copper wire sticking out of it. Some kind of machine, no doubt!

After about 15 minutes of digging, the heroes recover a wrecked piece of machinery roughly rectangular in shape, with several bent and broken pipes coming out of it. A DC 18 Use Technological Device check identifies it as the remains of some kind of engine (or part of one), while a DC 20 Craft (alchemy) check identifies the evaporated remains of phlogiston where it trickled out of a storage tank inside. The engine is about 2 feet long and weighs almost 40 pounds, and is sitting at the bottom of a large crater, suggesting it flew here from a good distance. However, it didn't bounce, so it must have come in on a high arc.

The device is actually part of the engine the gnomes used in the last race. The vehicle made it past the finish line before exploding, sending parts flying everywhere. They've managed to locate every piece of the engine but this one — and they'd like to have it back just as much as the goblins would like to look at it.

Expansion Point

Actually, if you want to have a fight, let the goblins and gnomes start punching each other! If nothing else, this should be pretty comical. They don't use any sort of deadly weapons — in fact, none of them are armed at all — so all their attacks are of the nonlethal variety. They don't attack the PCs, either, unless they try to join in. If all the characters do is try to separate the combatants, they aren't attacked, merely resisted (so some grapple checks may be in order).

The characters have two options now: bring the thing with them, or leave it where it is. More than likely they know about the Mirage Raceway already and will bring it with them, so the remaining text assumes that's what they do.

In any case, after another couple of hours, read this:

A DC 10 Survival check made to track the footprints indicates that they definitely came from the road (the racetrack). They meander about in the desert for a while before heading back toward the town. At several locations they stop and part of the desert sand has been disturbed, as if something was collected from that spot. The PCs can follow this path all the way to either town or the road, if they wish, but there's nothing interesting to find.

The road itself is made of hard-packed sand crushed into the desert floor by some great weight (actually a goblin steamroller). It extends out from the town several hundred yards in either direction, curves to the west, and circles back around to meet at a dual start/finish line near a set of bleachers.

When the PCs reach the town, read this:

Finally, you reach the small town you spotted on the horizon. A road carved out of the desert splits the place in two. The buildings on one side are squat and angular, clearly of goblin manufacture, while those on the opposite side are round and bulbous, like those preferred by gnomes. Both sides have dozens of larger structures made of iron, with smoke and horrendously loud banging noises emanating from them.

The road you've been following cuts straight through town. At the center, hanging overhead, is a large banner with a unique white and black alternating pattern. The words "Start" and "Finish" are emblazoned across its surface in the Common tongue. Nearby, a series of empty bleachers oversees this flagged area. Beyond this, a single ordinary-looking structure awaits, its front doors open invitingly. A sign across the front says "Mirage Raceway Inn."

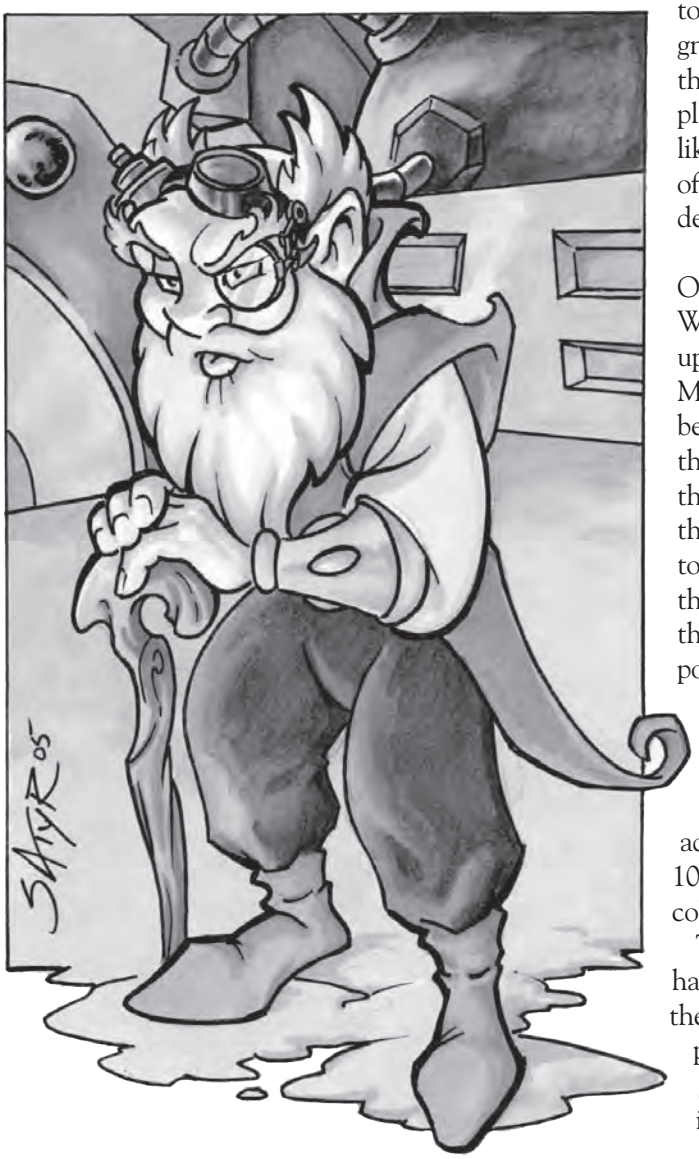
Engine Connoisseurs

The PCs can now seek to quench their thirst in the inn, or wander around checking out the place as they will. Regardless of how they go about it,

though, at some point the subject of the machine they found comes up. If they are carrying it visibly when they enter town, they draw attention at once. If they show it in the inn, or in another building, or simply talk about it with someone, they attract the attention of first one individual and then another. For purposes of this discussion, a goblin sees the engine first, although this might not be the case if they go into the gnomish side of town right away.

As soon as the goblins spot the engine, several of them come running up to the group. One of them, Izzik Threshbin, speaks for their party. "Ooh! Engine parts!" he notices at once. "We give you 10 gold for it! Very nice spare parts!"

Let the characters haggle or use Diplomacy checks to boost the price up to as high as 50 gp. Izzik complains a lot but agrees to raise the price until he reaches 50, at which point he starts to fidget and protest that the PCs are taking advantage of him. If asked why he wants the engine, he first says it's simply for pieces and parts, but eventually admits (grudgingly) that it's to keep the gnomes from getting it.



Expansion Point

If the PCs break into the gnome lab, consider including a guardian construct that defends the fuel. If the PCs bypass it or shut it off without destroying it, thereby not alerting the gnomes to their presence, so much the better.

While this is going on, the gnomes get word (one way or another) that their engine has turned up. They arrive, led by Second Engineer Arty Sandgunner. "That's not for you to sell!" he insists. "That's gnomish property! By the rules set forth by the Mirage Raceway Independent Oversight Committee, it must be returned to us at once!"

This immediately sets the goblins and gnomes to yelling and arguing with each other, the gnomes insisting the engine be returned while the goblins saying they already have a deal in place. Let the PCs intercede however they like (or simply listen to the fun). Regardless of how heated the arguing becomes, it never degenerates into a fight.

Eventually, a gray-bearded gnome named Oberer van Weerik (of the Gnomeregan van Weeriks — a rather aristocratic fellow) shows up, leaning on his cane. He's the chairman of MRIOC, and he agrees to settle the matter. He begins by asking the PCs for their story of how they came to be in possession of the engine. He then says that it is indeed Mirage Raceway rules that any piece or part of a contraption belongs to its creators (the gnomes cheer!) — but since the heroes did them a service by bringing it back, they have to pay them a finder's fee. At this point the goblins try to pay the fee in exchange for the engine, but Oberer laughs and says it's for the gnomes to do that. Oberer asks how much the engine part cost — the gnomes claim 10 gp but he frowns, and they finally admit it's worth at least 200. He insists they pay 10% of this value, and so the gnomes take up a collection and give the party 20 gp.

The meeting then breaks up, with the gnomes happily rushing off to work on their engine while the goblins mutter dejectedly, until somebody points out that at least the gnomes are out 20 gold. This brings jaunty laughter, which echoes into the distance as the goblins go home.

Questions

The characters can now take the opportunity to question Oberer about the raceway. He tells them all about the place, including the fact that the next big race is a week from now, and the gnomes were trying to get their engine back so they can find out why it blew up. However, he's old and gets tired easily, so after a few queries he retreats to the committee building on the other side of town.

At this point, this adventure loses its last semblance of structure. From here on out, the encounters can come in any order, and the PCs can react to them in any way they choose. You can also invent any number of additional side quests if you wish, keeping in mind that the next race takes place in one week. Most of the events listed hereafter culminate at that race, so if the characters are taken out of town for more than that much time, they miss the conclusion. Of course, in some cases the adventure could simply be extended to involve the next month's race, if desired.

Expansion Point

A gnome spots the heroes digging up sand for rocket fuel, and forces them to fast-talk their way out of the situation.

Raceway Encounters

This section lists a number of potential encounters that might take place in town. Some of these may be inappropriate depending on what's happened before (e.g., if the PCs sold the engine to the goblins before Oberer had a chance to arrive, the gnomes aren't too happy with them). Others are mutually exclusive, or at least appear to be — there's no reason some of the heroes couldn't undertake a goblin mission while the others try a gnome mission, for example. Also, a party made up mostly of gnomes isn't going to earn much trust from the goblins, and vice versa.

Because these encounters are general in nature, there isn't a lot of substance here. You should embellish as much as possible, tailoring each encounter to match the structure and flavor of your group.

High-Octane Goblin Rocket Fuel

Later, after the PCs find rooms at the inn, Izzik Threshbin approaches them once more. After forgiving them for the "unfortunate misunderstanding" earlier, he asks to speak to them alone and in private. He then tells the sad tale of how his valorous goblins had won the race four times in a row before the gnomes cheated and brought in a super-secret component from Tanaris. Now they're winning, and that's not fair! Izzik only wants to even the playing field, that's all….

Izzik needs the PCs to do two things. First, he needs a sample of the super rocket fuel being used by the gnomes. To get the fuel sample, the heroes can do one of several things:

- Break into the gnomish alchemy lab and steal some. This would be hard — at least a DC 30 Open Lock check to get in the door, and Stealth checks (DC 20) to get around inside without being heard by the guards.
- Bribe a needy gnome to steal some for them. If the characters look around for such a person, they find a half-drunk gnome named Razz Wheeler drowning his sorrows at the bar. He's down on his luck — his hand was permanently injured in an explosion so he can't work, and he lost the last of his money betting on the last race. If the PCs give him enough money to get him safely to a major city (say, 100 gp) — or use magic to restore his hand — he fetches the sample.
- Wait until the gnomes do another pre-race test, then collect a sample from the sands underneath the car. This is relatively easy — the PCs just have to wait two days for the next time trial, then surreptitiously collect a bucketful of sand from under the car.
- Trade an item or favor from one of the other encounters for the sample. This varies, depending on the item in question.

The characters might also come up with a totally different idea, too.

Once they have the sample, the heroes can either identify it themselves with a DC 25 Craft (alchemy) check or let Izzik take care of it. Then, once someone analyzes it, Izzik learns that the primary components are a plant called firebloom and a powerful alcoholic concoction called volatile rum. Firebloom grows in particularly hot southern areas of Tanaris and is used by the ogres there to spice up their otherwise bland meals. Volatile rum is enjoyed by the Southsea Pirates, who keep the secrets of its creation… well, secret.

Getting these components can be either a long, time-consuming quest, or a simple trip to Gadgetzan where the items can be purchased on the open market — it's up to you.

If the PCs accomplish all of this before the next race, they shift the chance of victory by 1 in the goblins' favor. Izzik also pays them 100 gp each for their services, and provides the party with a set of

goblin rocket boots (see the **WoW RPG** book) he made himself.

Uncracked Scarab Shells

At some point during their stay in the Shimmering Flats, the players hear about scarab shells — a rare kind that doesn't conduct heat. (See Chapter 3: Southern Kalimdor, "Tanaris," *The Scarabs of Zul'Farrak* for more information.) The heroes may also have learned about these scarabs while in Gadgetzan, and may even have some already, which would be ideal but isn't absolutely necessary.

Expansion Point

To expand the firebloom effort, require the PCs to fight the Dunemaul ogres for it, or make them track down a reclusive herbalist who knows the only safe place to harvest the flower. As for the volatile rum, all they have to do is get some from a pirate. Have them go to Steamwheedle Port and get into a bar fight.

In any case, both the goblins and gnomes let it be known that they'll pay well for any scarab shells the PCs happen to come across, as long as they're uncracked. A DC 15 Gather Information check reveals this information, as well as the fact that the going rate for a single shell is 50 gp. If there really are loads of scarabs in Zul'Farrak, the players could make thousands of gold pieces harvesting them.

But it gets better. If the PCs ask Oberer about the scarabs, he tells them all the background information mentioned in Tran'rek's letter (in Chapter 3), and also offers to provide them with an auctioneer. He suspects the scarabs would actually go for double their normal price with a proper auction, but the auctioneer gets 10% of the take. If they agree, the auctioneer rolls 1d20+50 to see how much money the players get per shell. If the characters instead choose to run the auction themselves, have the PC auctioneer make a Diplomacy roll and add 40 to determine the price.

Of course, this all assumes the players can get the shells at all. They have to go to Zul'Farrak, the ancient troll city, and hunt sacred scarabs there. Getting in and out might be easy with stealth, but the beetles are, after all, sacred — so they'll be guarded by someone. Or some*thing*.

If the PCs successfully get some shells, not only do they make a profit, they shift the chance of victory by one side or the other (their choice) by 1 (if both sides buy shells, there is no change).

Super Phlogiston Mixture Recipe

While the heroes are in town, a human arrives and gets a separate room in the inn, keeping to himself. (You might mention that the PCs see a wizardly type in blue robes arrive, toting a staff, but he doesn't say much and doesn't spend any time at the bar.) The following day, the man watches some of the pre-race proceedings with interest, and eventually approaches one of the characters (the one most like an arcanist in appearance). When he talks, he does so with a kind of stammer, and struggles to get out a word every now and then — obviously not a very good speaker.

He explains that his name is Crandor, of late an apprentice to the great wizard Zifban, whose tower was located in the western side of Silithus. (These are all lies, but he has Bluff and Diplomacy bonuses of +22.) Zifban was working on a number of alchemical formulae before the Twilight's Hammer destroyed his home and killed him. Crandor escaped and has been trying to make enough money to buy passage to the eastern continents. Exactly why he wants to go there, he won't say, but he has a couple of items left to sell. One is the recipe for an advanced phlogiston mixture that would really help these racecars go faster and more efficiently — but which side should he sell it to, and for how much? He's just not a good salesman (or so he says), and his stutter — which he doesn't otherwise call attention to — should suggest this.

The formula he has is actually bogus — Crandor is a rogue with a Forgery skill of +23 and Disguise +23 (so he looks and acts like a wizard/alchemist, and seems to know what he's talking about). He wants to get the PCs to help him sell the formula, and agrees to give them 25% of the take if they do. He suggests an auction, but the PCs might have other ideas (such as selling to one party or the other of their choice, or trying to run up the price in some other unique way).

Crandor sets up a demonstration, first for the PCs and then for the goblins and/or gnomes. He has in his possession an "ordinary" mechanical squirrel. When he puts in the special phlogiston mixture, which of course is nothing special, he secretly throws a hidden switch using sleight of hand (Spot check opposed by his Sleight of Hand check [he has a +20 bonus] to notice). The squirrel moves at what seems like breakneck speeds for several minutes before turning itself off.

Expansion Point

It's possible that someone in the party sees through Crandor's disguise, or spots the hidden switch on the squirrel. If they call attention to his trickery, he makes excuses, then dashes around a convenient corner, drinks a *potion of invisibility*, and hides until he can make his escape after nightfall. On the other hand, the PCs *could* let him follow through… and confront him later on, leading to any number of possible results. He might just leave, or he might cut them in for a bigger piece of the action!

Expansion Point

"Crandor" (who goes by many names), scam artist extraordinaire, could become a recurring character in the campaign.

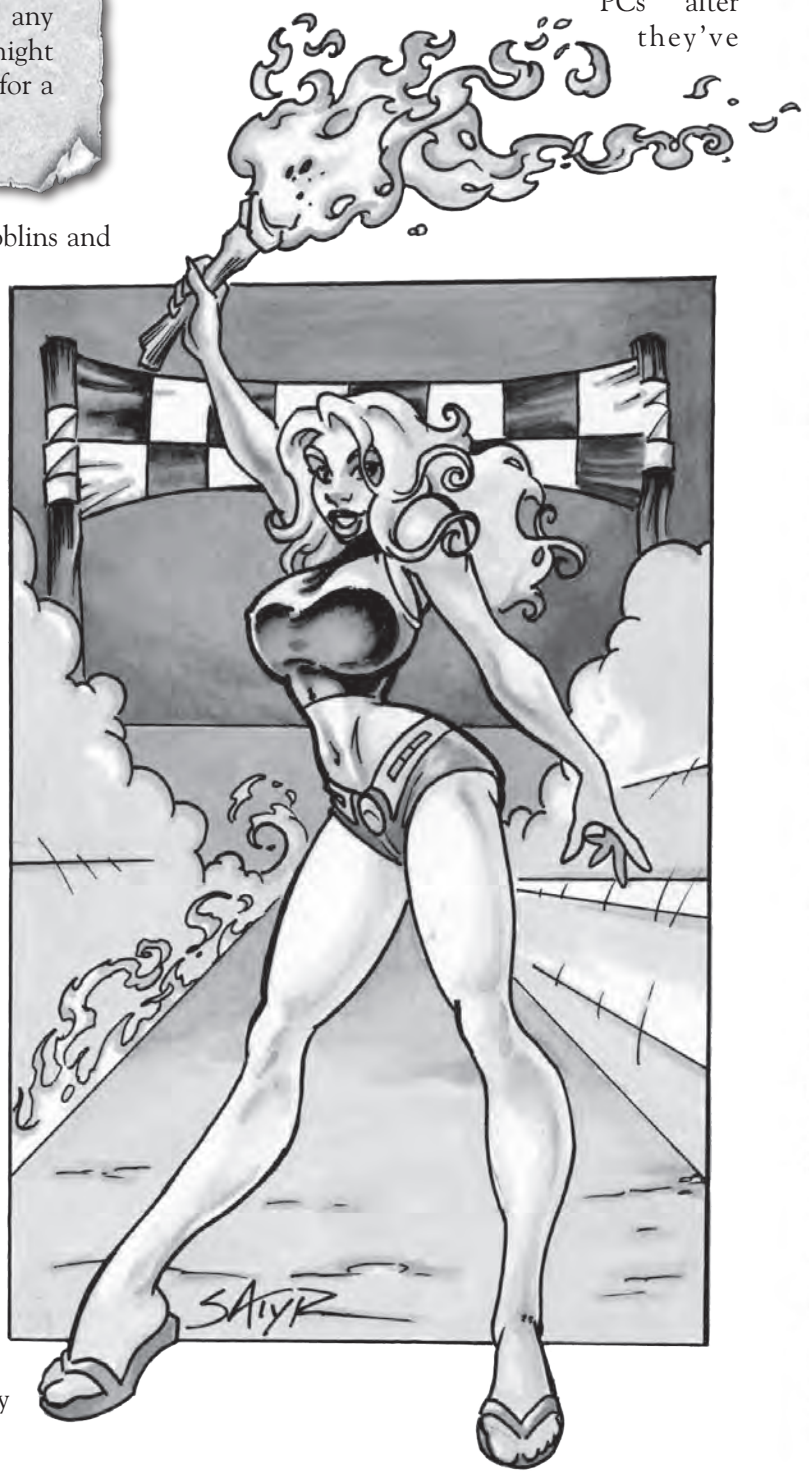
Upon seeing the demonstration, the goblins and gnomes almost come to blows over the right to buy the formula. Allow the auction or sale to play out in whatever way is most amusing, but in the end one side pays 2,000 gp for exclusive rights. Crandor gladly gives the PCs their cut of 500 gp, spends the evening celebrating with them, and the next day has mysteriously vanished.

Of course, the "super" phlogiston is bogus — it actually hurts the vehicle, shifting the race result roll at the end of the adventure by 2 away from the side that purchased it; and regardless of success or failure, the racecar crashes at the end of the proceedings. If the PCs stick around more than another day, the reason for the failure is traced back to their faulty formula, and the goblins and gnomes demand that they return all 2,000 gp. If they've already left town, the bill is waiting for them the next time they visit the raceway!

Daisy's Dilemma

Among the many residents of the raceway is Daisy, a voluptuous and vivacious human barmaid. In addition to that job, she also serves as the official "race starter girl." On race day she goes out in skimpy attire, stands in front of the vehicles, and waves a starting flag to send them on their way. For this she gets paid a day's wage, which admittedly isn't much, but it's something.

Daisy wants to go visit her friends and family in Theramore, but she can't afford it. There just isn't enough traffic at the inn for her tips to cover a gryphon flight or caravan ride. So she appeals to the PCs after they've



been in town a day or so. She pretends to be a somewhat simple-minded girl but in fact is surprisingly intelligent, having come up with three potential ways to get enough money to take a vacation:

• If there is a human male (of appropriate age and at least not horribly deformed or ugly) in the party, she comes on to him, hoping to eventually convince him to buy her a round-trip ticket (500 gp) as a favor to her. Of course, she doesn't come right out and say this up front. She's not in a big hurry, although she'd like to leave immediately after the next race and be back before the following one. So, to that end, she times her seduction to last most of the upcoming week. If more than one character fits her requirements, she plays one of them off against the other if she thinks it might help her get what she wants. While she may string along a character, she doesn't intend for this to be a permanent relationship, although the PC may believe otherwise.

• Assuming the above doesn't work out, either because there aren't any appropriate characters or because she fails to seduce anybody, her next choice is to offer her services as a guide or escort around the area. She knows quite a bit about the way the town works, and where things can be found. For a fee of 70 gp per day (multiple king's ransoms in these parts) she helps them out, travels with them, and so on. However, as it turns out, she's actually quite useless. She flies by the seat of her pants, as it were, making up stuff as she goes along and telling her employers what she thinks they want to hear. At least half the advice she gives is misleading or flat out wrong. However, if the PCs keep her in their employ for the entire week, she has enough money for her trip after race day, at which point she leaves town.

• Finally, she has one other idea — increase the number of people who come to town for the race, and she'll earn a whole lot more money in tips! To do this she's arranged to make a couple of new posters for Freewind Post and/or Gadgetzan, but these are much better than the crude ones currently hanging on message boards in those towns. These have a picture of her, scantily clad, and explosions going off all around. They promise a fireworks display, nearly nude girls and machines blowing up on the racetrack! She then hires the PCs to hang the signs in whichever town they are more likely to visit — presumably in concert with another quest that takes them in that direction. If the PCs do this, attendance doubles at the next race, and Daisy dresses even more seductively than ever. Yet there are no fireworks, and if a vehicle doesn't explode, a lot of customers go away angry.

Sabotage!

This encounter is more appropriate if the PCs have already completed a task for either the gnomes or goblins (or both). Having earned the trust of that side, they are then hired to take a direct hand in the outcome of the next race.

Depending on the side they're working for, one or the other of Izzik or Arty approaches them, asking if they want to earn some serious cash on the side. All they have to do is make a simple modification to the other side's car. They can do this any time after the last trial, but before the actual race. They are paid 250 gp up front to do it; plus, they can place whatever bets they want knowing the other side will lose.

The tweak requires a DC 15 Craft (technological device), Disable Device or Use Technological Device check to install and a second, similar check to hide it from view. Characters cannot take 10 or 20 on these checks. Depending upon the results, one of several things can happen:

• If both checks succeed, the vehicle breaks down or explodes during the race. Roll a d20, adding +2 for every 3 points by which the DC 15 check was beaten (i.e., +1 at 18, +2 at 21, and so forth). If the roll is 15 or more, the vehicle explodes and no trace of the sabotage can be found, so bets are paid normally. On any other result, the car just breaks down and an examination quickly discovers the sabotage. The losers blame the other side, and all bets are off.

• If the first check succeeds but not the second, the sabotage is discovered in a final pre-race test, and is immediately blamed on the other side. A fight is about to break out when someone (possibly Izzik or Arty) says — loudly — that he saw the PCs loitering about in the vicinity of the car. (Let the PCs overear this.) Now an angry mob turns towards the PCs, who had better use some skillful crowd control or get the heck out of Dodge!

• If the first check fails but the second succeeds, the PCs think they sabotaged the car, but it doesn't blow up (at least not as a result of their actions — the race result chart may say otherwise). If the side they were working for wins, they can grin and take credit for it, but if it loses, their patron demands his money back. Plus, the PCs are probably out a lot of money from their bad bets.

• If the PCs don't make either roll, they not only fail, they visibly damage the vehicle. Unless they have a way to quickly repair the car, they have to hastily depart the area. Alternatively, they could knock it over or set things up so it looks like an accident. Either way, the race is postponed by a couple of hours while repairs are made.

Of course, the PCs might refuse to participate in sabotage. If this is the case, Izzik or Arty simply shrugs and moves off, but later approaches the seediest looking PC (presumably a rogue, or another tinker) and makes the same offer privately. Should the PC agree and make the attempt, she can enjoy any success by herself, but the entire group pays the price if she fails (e.g., if her sabotage is discovered, the whole party is blamed, not just her).

Another possibility is that the PCs report Izzik or Arty to the MRIOC. If so, gives him a wrist slap fine and tells him never to do that again. (Apparently such things are not uncommon in this town.) By doing this the PCs incur the ire of that faction, while gaining little interest from the other side. The heroes would be better off just saying "no" and leaving it at that.

Expansion Point

Presumably the characters employ stealth or some other covert method to approach the vehicle and make the modification. They can do so during the night before or the morning of the race. Again, if this is to be made more difficult, employ a construct of some kind as a guardian, or possibly some guards who need to be pacified.

Concluding the Adventure

The adventure concludes when the next race occurs (approximately one week from the initial encounter). Regardless of the characters' success or failure in any or all of their side quests, the race goes on as planned. Should either the goblin or gnome vehicle be out of commission at the time, they use a backup vehicle, which swings the roll by 3 (against them) on the race result roll. However, everyone knows backup vehicles are inferior, so the bets are meager and the crowd goes away disappointed (unless the backup vehicle wins, which is a cause for great excitement).

If the PCs stacked the deck in the favor of one side or the other through various means, roll 1d10 and consult the following chart. If they shifted the odds towards the goblins, subtract –1 from the die for each such action they took. If they altered things in the gnomes' favor, add +1 per act. It's entirely possible that they took actions (either in whole or in part) that cancel each other out.

If the PCs manipulated events to their advantage, and made a profit by betting on the outcome, it's possible that others notice — or at least suspect —foul play. Even if they try to keep quiet about it, word gets out. The other side no longer trusts them, while the ones they helped are friendly thereafter. For example, if the heroes helped the goblins by providing advanced rocket fuel, they are welcome in the goblin side of town, but the gnomes turn their backs (or throw things at them when they aren't looking). While neither side resorts to outright violence, they don't forget — and word spreads outside of the Mirage Raceway, too.

"Off to the Races" can lead to other adventures, such as the following.

- If the PCs have proven to be a good friend to one side or the other, they might be sent on another mission to collect the ultimate racing fuel — the components of which are of course halfway across Azeroth.
- Some of the NPCs, such as Crandor or Daisy, might become recurring characters in the campaign. Crandor might appear later on in a new disguise, working on some new scheme to bilk unsuspecting people out of their money. Daisy might be working in a new city, or trying to earn passage to another part of the world.
- If the PCs proved to be impartial, Oberer von Weerik suggests to them his idea of starting commercial racetracks in various cities across the world. Depending on which races the heroes represent, he sends them to their capitals to inquire about franchise opportunities, potentially leading to big profits!

Race Results

Die Roll	Result
2 or less	The goblins win easily, while the gnome car blows up or suffers some other catastrophe.
3–4	The goblins win, but it's close.
5	The race is too close to call, and is declared a draw. All bets are off.
6	Both vehicles blow up before reaching the finish line. All bets are off.
7–8	The gnomes win, but it's close.
9 or more	The gnomes win in overwhelming fashion, while the goblin car explodes or is otherwise eliminated in fiery glory.

Ghost Ship

"Ghost Ship" is a **World of Warcraft RPG** adventure designed for 4 11th-level heroes. Characters may be of any race or class, but swashbuckling folks like rogues, duelists and buccaneers are especially appropriate. Boxed text is meant to be read aloud to the players.

The action takes place in the South Seas and involves goblin sailors, murlocs, and an orc warlock and his tauren companion.

> "Ship ahoy!" Shouts the sailor from the crow's next, gesturing toward the bow. After a few minutes, an object resolves out of the glare. It looks to be a ship, but a small one. As it comes closer, it is apparent that the ship is not a ship at all, but a rowboat — a life raft. Small figures within wave their arms, swing white flags, and call out in indiscernible, high-pitched voices.
>
> Finally the raft pulls up alongside you. Six goblins stand within, staring up as the crewmen toss a rope ladder down the side. "Thanks!" "Thank you!" The goblins chatter as they scramble up the ladder. Soon they are all on deck, breathing heavily, sweat shining on their bald green heads.

Adventure Background

The *Fearsome Yacht* is a goblin prison ship of the highest caliber. It is used to transport prisoners — especially dangerous prisoners — from one location to another and, occasionally, as a permanent jail (housing prisoners on a ship reduces the possibility of escape).

Two days ago, the *Fearsome Yacht* took aboard its most dangerous passenger to date: an orc warlock called Dak'mal. Dak'mal was captured on the Isle of Kezan, controlling a cult of demon worshippers in the jungle. A group of adventurers penetrated his stronghold and apprehended him, returning him to Bilgewater Port for incarceration. Thinking the orc too dangerous to keep in a conventional prison (and too big a political issue to execute, as he claims to be a simple mage and a representative of Orgrimmar), the goblins decided to transport him to the magic prison of Tol Barad in Kul Tiras.

Two days out from Bilgewater, as they passed the Broken Isles, a band of ferocious murlocs from the Wide Grin tribe swam from a nearby island and swarmed up the ship's sides. The goblins put up a good fight, but the murlocs overpowered them. During the battle, the ship ran into a coral reef (which tore a hole in its bow), and began to sink. The goblin survivors fled in a small dinghy.

Unbeknownst to the goblins, it was Dak'mal's telepathic projections that called the murlocs. When the *Fearsome Yacht* crashed into the reef, the magic restraints containing Dak'mal failed. He now lurks on the ship's lowest deck, striking against the murlocs and plotting the best way to escape. Unbeknownst to anyone, Dak'mal also managed to secret his companion, the tauren runemaster Umber Goonrock, on his person, polymorphed in the form of a beetle. The tauren now also runs rampant on the lower and mid decks.

Adventure Synopsis

The PCs, sailing through the South Seas on some unrelated venture, run into a life raft from the *Fearsome Yacht.* The goblins are relieved to be saved, but they are terrified that Dak'mal, the most dangerous prisoner to ever have been in their custody, may escape. They ask the heroes to return to the ship and clear it of murlocs and kill or recapture Dak'mal. If the PCs rescue the *Fearsome Yacht,* as well, the trade princes will surely pay them handsomely.

So forewarned, the heroes approach the wounded *Yacht.* A storm breaks as they clamber aboard, and they battle murlocs on a tilting, rain-slicked deck. They cross swords with more murlocs below, and, in the deepest levels, they encounter Umber Goonrock and Dak'mal.

For the Heroes

The adventure begins in the South Seas, southeast of the Broken Isles and northeast of Zandalar. The goblin survivors approach the heroes on their dinghy; the opening works best if the heroes are in a ship themselves.

The heroes could be in the South Seas for any number of reasons, including the following:

- Hunting for artifacts in the Broken Isles.
- Collecting couatl feathers from Zandalar.
- Privateering (i.e., patrolling for pirates).
- Traveling from one continent to another.
- Traveling to Undermine to learn the art of true alchemy.

• Playing bodyguard for the *Fearsome Yacht.* In this case, the heroes could be scouting ahead when the murlocs attack, or they could be involved in the initial raid.

• Captured by goblins and being held prisoner aboard the *Fearsome Yacht.* In this case, the heroes battle to free themselves before they sink or their enemies overpower them.

The following text assumes that the heroes are on a ship southeast of the Broken Isles. If this is not the case, make the appropriate adjustments.

When you area ready to begin, read or paraphrase the following.

The heroes (or one of the sailors) probably ask, "What happened?" (If not, the goblins volunteer the information.) Continue with the following.

The heroes may have questions for the goblins. Use the "Adventure Background" section, above, to determine Kazmo's answers. The following are some of his answers to specific questions.

• **Are you paying us for this?** "Well, as you can see, we're pretty poor ourselves right now. If you take care of the orc, everyone'll be happy. If you save the *Fearsome Yacht,* they'll be even happier. I can't give you an official quote, but the coalition usually pays about 10,000 gold to salvage a ship like the *Fearsome Yacht.*"

• **What do you know about the murlocs?** "They had red tattoos: a pair of slitted eyes over a big, toothy grin." A character who makes a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check recognizes the symbol of the Wide Grin murloc tribe. This tribe is supposed to be particularly ferocious and intelligent, and its members wield some of the best equipment. They usually content themselves with mincing rival murloc tribes; the fact that they attacked a goblin ship is strange.

• **What else can you tell us about this warlock prisoner?** "His name is Dak'mal. We had magic manacles to keep him restrained."

Fearsome Yacht Features

The *Fearsome Yacht* is an amalgamation of traditional shipbuilding and crazy goblin technology. Metal plates are bolted to the wooden walls, floors and ceilings at random places. The ship runs on both steam power, via a large boiler and a pair of waterwheels, and wind power, via two masts.

The *Yacht* includes three levels: the deck, the mid level, and the bottom level. Ceiling height is 6 feet (forcing many Medium characters to stoop). Lanterns hang from the ceilings on chains; *continual flame* spells (see Chapter 9: New Rules) keep these lit, though in many cases the lanterns have fallen to the floor or behind refuse, or were taken or destroyed by the crew or murlocs. Thus, most areas have shadowy illumination. Doors are iron-banded wood unless noted otherwise.

Walls: 6 in. thick; hardness 7; 75 hp*; break DC 25; Climb DC 15.

Doors: 2 in. thick; hardness 5; 20 hp.

Ship's Sides: 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; 75 hp*; break DC 26; Climb DC 25.

* per 10-ft.-by-10-ft. section.

"I'll tell you what happened," says one goblin. "I'm Kazmo, by the way. Pleased to meetcha." He thrusts out an arm. "Thanks for saving me and my mates.

"We may not look it now, but a couple hours ago we were members of the finest, most important crew in all the South Seas." Nods and murmurs of assent come from the rest of the goblins. "We were on board the *Fearsome Yacht*. Heard of it…? No, I guess not. Well, the *Fearsome Yacht* is a prison ship. We were transporting a dangerous prisoner to Kul Tiras, but murlocs attacked us. The damn things seem especially tough for murlocs, and they took us by surprise, so there wasn't much we could do… though we fought like demons!" More nods and shouts. "Anyway, the *Yacht* ran into a coral reef during the fight. Tore a big hole in it, and the murlocs were everywhere. We," he jerks a thumb at his companions, "managed to escape. Everyone else is probably dead by now.

"Look. This prisoner we were carrying, he was an orc. He says he's a mage, but he's not — he's a demon worshiper. A warlock, and a powerful one. He was making trouble on Kezan. If he escapes, he'll make trouble somewhere else.

"I don't think the *Fearsome Yacht* has sunk yet. She's pretty tough. You look pretty tough, too. If you want to do a favor for Undermine and Azeroth, head over to the *Yacht* and kill or recapture the orc — if he's still there. If you can salvage the ship, too, I'm sure the Trade Coalition would be grateful." Nods from the other goblins.

Your ship alters course to the north. After an hour or so, the crewmember in the crow's nest shouts, "Ship ahoy!" At the same time, clouds roll over the sun. Fat drops of rain patter on your ship, and the goblins open umbrellas. Soon, through the increasing rain, you can make out a shape ahead, which must be the *Fearsome Yacht.* It is tilted forward, its bow in the water, at a 10 or 15-degree angle. As your ship approaches, the rain picks up. It drums on the deck and hisses into the sea. It raises a mist on the ocean's surface and obscures the *Yacht.* As you approach still closer, you can make out details on the prison ship.

The *Fearsome Yacht* looks to be a bizarre cross between goblin technology and traditional shipbuilding. It is constructed primarily of wood, but metal armor plates are bolted onto its sides in various places. Two masts, trailing tattered sails and waving ropes, stand from its deck, and behind them is an enormous smoke stack. Two great waterwheels, painted a garish red, are attached to the ship's stern. Cannons poke out of holes along the side. Figures move about on the deck, their lurching gait and gurgling cries betraying them as murlocs.

Kazmo grins. "Good thing they can't use those cannons, or we'd be in deep kodo droppings."

Approaching the Fearsome Yacht

When the heroes are ready to head out, continue with the following.

The PCs' ship can get as close as they like.

If the heroes suggest sinking the *Fearsome Yacht* from a distance, the goblins protest. "No, no! The *Fearsome Yacht* is a marvel of ingenuity! The trade princes will pay for its recovery! And some of our friends may still be aboard!" If the PCs attempt this course of action anyway, the murlocs abandon ship and swim to the PCs' ship, intending to climb the sides and bring the fight to the enemy. Dak'mal, when he realizes what's happening, attempts similar tactics with his magic.

When the heroes are ready to board the *Yacht,* proceed to area **1,** below.

Encounters

Consult the map for keyed encounters.

Area 1: The Deck (EL 13)

The heroes have several options to approach the deck. They can fly, via magic or mount; this is probably the easiest way, though the storm limits the visibility and the actions of flying combatants (see sidebar). The PCs can swim to the ship (Swim DC 15) and climb up the sides (Climb DC 25), but this tactic allows the murlocs to attack with javelins and spells (remember that climbers lose their Agility bonus to AC).

If the PCs' ship gets close enough, their sailors can throw grappling hooks to attach to the *Fearsome Yacht*, and the heroes can toss these onto the *Yacht's* masts to swing across. They can also place long planks across the gap between ships and rush across; this tactic is dangerous, as the *Yacht* is angled and the rain makes surfaces slick. Characters racing across planks must make DC 20 Balance checks; failing such a check results in no progress, unless the check fails by 5 or more, in which case the character slips overboard. The heroes' sailor cronies probably don't participate in any combat (it's not in their contract), though if you'd like to stage a large battle here, increase the number of foes proportionately.

The deck crawls with murlocs.

Thunder booms overhead, and rain pounds the decks. The dark storm clouds have turned daylight into evening, and lightning illuminates the *Fearsome Yacht*'s deck in startling flashes. Crates, barrels and other refuse litters the scene. Bodies — of goblins, murlocs and a few other races — lie where they fell in a recent battle, surrounded by blood that stains the deck and mixes with the rain. Toppled cannons and cannonballs lie about. Ropes and scraps of sail hang from the masts.

Murlocs, almost a dozen of them, stalk the deck. Their skin and large eyes gleam in the lightning flashes. They gurgle their alien warcries as they charge.

The tilting deck makes footing perilous; creatures must make DC 15 Balance checks at the beginning of their turns or fall prone.

The stairs here lead down to the mid level. A steering wheel stands close to the bow. It is useless

now, but if the heroes repair the boiler (see area **3**), it proves useful. A speaking horn here connects to a similar device in the boiler room, allowing the pilot and engineers to communicate.

Combat here should be reminiscent of a swashbuckling adventure. To facilitate this feeling, consider having the murlocs and PCs use the following tactics. (To assist the PCs in taking such actions, you can point out likely strategies; e.g., "There's a coiled rope wedged against a pile of cannonballs to your right.")

• Running, jumping, swinging on a dangling rope (a DC 15 Agility check), and jumping back to the deck as part of a charge grants a character a +4 bonus on her attack roll (instead of the normal +2 for a charge).

• Leaping from a mast or ladder (a DC 20 Jump check) as part of a charge grants a character a +4 bonus on her attack roll (instead of the normal +2 for a charge).

• Fighting from atop the short wall around the deck grants a +1 bonus on attack rolls for being on higher ground, but increases the DCs of the Balance checks to 20.

• As a standard action, kicking or tossing a bit of debris (a barrel, a body, a shattered crate) at an opponent within 15 feet requires the target to make a DC 15 Balance check or fall prone.

The Storm

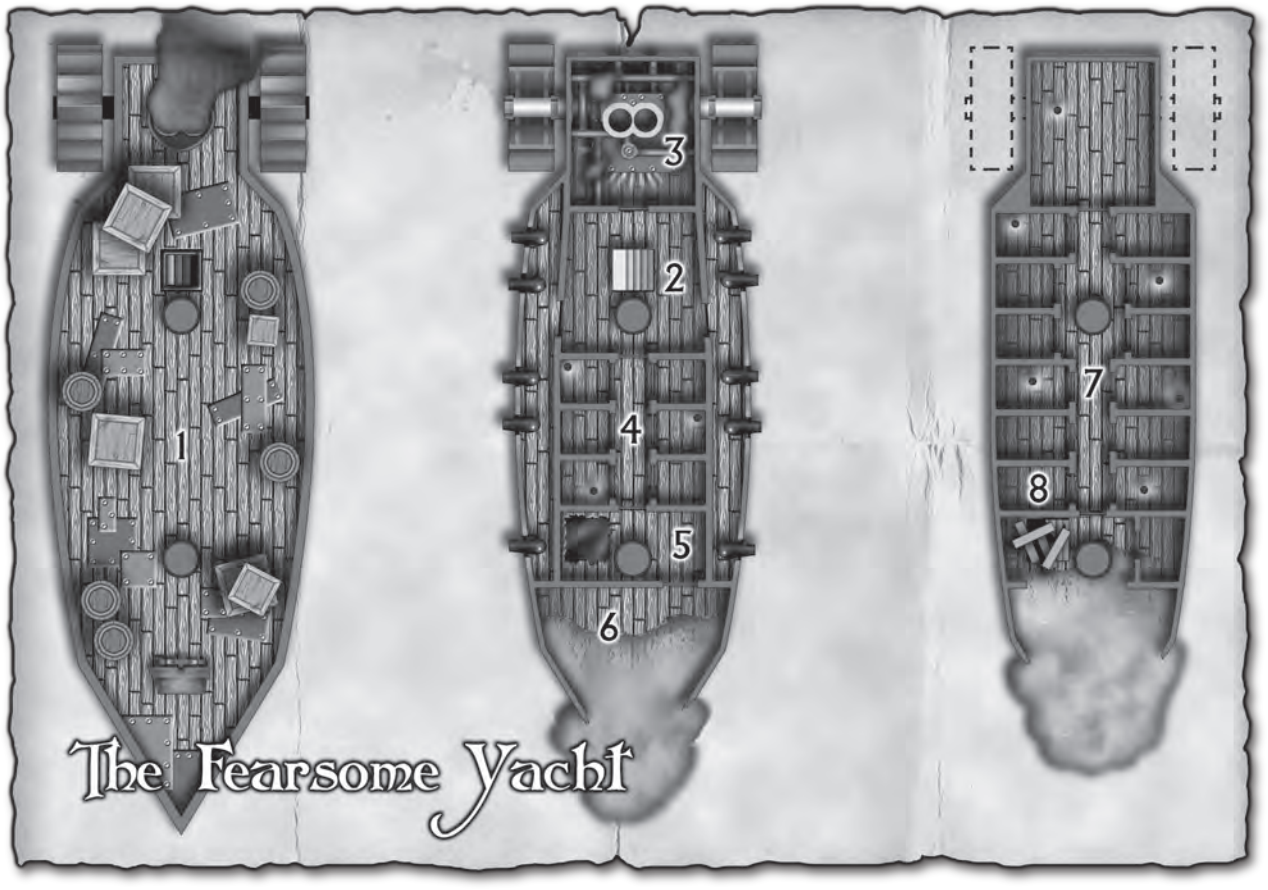
The storm here contains a prodigious amount of rain, but little wind. It has the following effects on combat:

The rain is heavy enough that creatures farther than 5 feet away have concealment (20% miss chance).

It also reduces visibility (and audibility) ranges by half, resulting in a –4 penalty on Listen, Spot and Search checks. It automatically extinguishes unprotected flames and causes protected flames (such as those of lanterns) to dance wildly. The rain has a 50% chance of extinguishing these lights. Ranged weapon attacks take a –4 circumstance penalty.

• Releasing a pile of cannon balls (by tipping over a crate filled with them or pulling away a piece of obstructing debris: a standard action) causes them to roll downhill (toward the bow); all creatures in a 10-foot-wide path must make DC 20 Balance checks or fall prone.

Creatures: The murlocs, turquoise-skinned with yellow bellies, all bear red tattoos of slitted eyes above wide, toothy grins. Some murlcos have



painted this symbol across their bodies as well. A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check allows a character to recognize this symbol; see "For the Heroes," above.

A shaman named Ogloop, one of the tribe's chiefs, leads the murlocs here.

Wide Grin Murlocs (8), male and female murloc rogue 1/warrior 1/murloc 3: CR 5; Medium monstrous humanoid (murloc); HD 1d6+1d10+3d8+10, hp 36; Init +4; Spd 30 ft., swim 50 ft.; AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (2d4+4/18–20, falchion); Full Atk +8 melee (2d4+4/18–20, falchion) or +8 ranged (1d6+3, javelin); SA backstab +1d6; SQ darkvision 120 ft., trapfinding, amphibious, dehydration; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +9, Will +4; Str 16, Agy 18, Sta 14, Int 11, Spt 12, Cha 10. *Skills:* Balance +6*, Spot +7, Stealth +12*, Swim +9*. *Feats:* Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (falchion), Weapon Focus (javelin).

* Includes –2 armor check penalty.

Possessions: Masterwork falchion, four javelins, masterwork hide armor (made of turtle shell), *potion of cure moderate wounds.*

Ogloop, female murloc shaman 7/murloc 3: CR 10; Medium monstrous humanoid (murloc); HD 10d8+10, hp 58; Init +3; Spd 30 ft., swim 50 ft.; AC 27, touch 14, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +6; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (1d8+3 plus 1d6 electricity, trident); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d8+3 plus 1d6 electricity, trident) or +11 ranged (1d6+2, javelin); SA flametongue/frostbrand 1/day (6 rounds), rebuke/command water elementals, spontaneous casting (*inflict* spells), turn/destroy fire elementals; SQ darkvision 120 ft., augur 1/day, amphibious, dehydration; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +13; Str 15, Agy 17, Sta 12, Int 14, Spt 21, Cha 14. *Skills:* Concentration +14, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (religion) +9, Spellcraft +9, Spot +11, Stealth +7*, Swim +12*. *Feats:* Brew Potion, Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Silent Spell, Still Spell, Weapon Focus (trident).

* Includes –2 armor check penalty.

Shaman Spells (6/6/4/3; save DC 17 + spell level): Ogloop's high Spirit score and her ranks in Spellcraft allow her to prepare 14 spells per level; she can prepare most of the spells on the shaman spell list. She casts spells that are not from the Elements domain as a 10th-level caster. (The save DC includes a +2 bonus from the *crown of potency*, below.)

Domain Spells: 1st—*lightning guardians*; 2nd—*fog cloud*; 3rd—*frost nova.*

Domain: Elements (Ogloop casts Elements spells as an 11th-level caster).

Possessions: +1 shock trident,* two masterwork javelins, *mithril +2 breastplate, +2 heavy shield* (made from turtle shell), *periapt of Spirit +2, ring of protection +1, crown of potency***,* spell component pouch.

* See **More Magic & Mayhem** for descriptions of Ogloop's magic items.

** See Chapter 9: New Rules.

Tactics: The Wide Grins are cannier than most of their kind. They fight well together, leading off by throwing their javelins before charging into melee. Injured murlocs back off to swig *potions of cure moderate wounds*. Ogloop uses her spells to support her forces and damage her enemies. When she sees enemies approaching, she casts *call of the spirits* to give her a +5 bonus on her "first attack against my opponents." In combat, she casts *bloodlust* on her troops and *lightning guardians* on herself. She uses *frost nova, serpent ward,* and/or *shockwave* to damage her opponents and *blindness/deafness* and *silence* to befuddle them. If she feels confident, she casts *frost armor* and uses her frostbrand ability on her trident and closes to melee.

If attacked at range (with spells or missile weapons from flying characters, for example), the murlocs take cover among the refuse on the deck and watch for an opening.

Treasure: The murlocs have coins (plundered from their victims) totaling 212 gp among them. Ogloop has a polished bit of turtle shell on a gold chain (150 gp).

Area 2: Murloc Refuge (EL 10)

The door to the west is metal and has a wheel set in the center, at goblin chest height. Turning the wheel clockwise unlocks and opens the door.

Metal Door: 6 in. thick; hardness 10; 80 hp; break DC 30; Open Lock DC 30.

Creatures: Several murlocs lurk here. When they hear conflict on the deck above, they ready themselves to ambush intruders. They found a supply of poison in the goblins' storeroom and have coated their weapons with it.

> More dead murlocs and goblins lie about this large room. Tables and chairs are overturned or smashed. A door on the east wall has semi-intact tables and chairs piled in front of it. From beyond a metal door on the west wall come bangs and wheezes. Rain drums on the deck above you and mists the stairs. In the distance, thunder growls.

Wide Grin Murlocs (6): hp 36 each. See area **1** for statistics. In addition, each of their weapons bears sassone leaf residue. A creature that takes damage from such a weapon must make a DC 16 Fortitude save or take 2d12 points of damage. Whether this save is successful or not, she must make a second DC 16 Fortitude save 1 minute later or take 1d6 points of Stamina damage.

Tactics: If the murlocs are aware of intruders, they take cover behind upturned tables, gaining cover (+4 AC). They throw their javelins until forced out of cover or into melee.

Treasure: One murloc carries the skull of a small demon — a trophy from a previous raid. He has replaced the teeth with golden recreations, and the skull itself radiates faint necromancy magic. From the right buyer (like a warlock), the skull could fetch 1,500 gp. The gold alone is worth 300 gp.

This room is technological insanity. The walls are dark and rusty metal. A giant mechanism dominates the room, taking up its entirety except for a narrow walkway around the bulky device. Stopped pistons protrude from the device in various stages of action. Wheels, levers and buttons of various colors appear at all angles and heights; metal stepladders, toppled near the door, imply how the goblins managed to reach some of these.

The device emits a dangerous whistling, and needles on several displays all point to the red. Steam blasts from numerous chinks and holes, and shoots randomly from other areas. The room is stiflingly hot.

A closed furnace door is at the front of the device. A shovel and a pile of coal, spilled toward the bow, stand nearby.

Area 3: Boiler Room (EL special)

This device controls the steam that powers the waterwheels on the *Fearsome Yacht.* A DC 15 Use Technological Device allows a character to realize this fact. A DC 20 Use Technological Device check reveals that the device is not functioning properly at the moment and that staying in its vicinity is dangerous. A character who succeeds on such a check by 5 or more also realizes that the device can be repaired. Another DC 20 Use Technological Device or Profession (sailor) check allows a character to discern that, if the boiler were returned to working order, it could, perhaps, drag the ship off the coral reef and allow a character to pilot it back to port.

A speaking horn here connects to a similar device at the steering wheel, allowing the pilot and engineers to communicate.

Trap: Merely staying in the room is dangerous. Every round, 1d4 random characters take steam blasts to the face or body, taking 1d6 points of fire damage (DC 14 Reflex half). There is a 20% chance (a 1–4 on a d20) each round that one such blast is part of a larger rupture; pressure has built up to the point where the steam shoots a bolt or screw across the room like a gunshot. These blasts deal 3d6 points of fire damage (DC 18 Reflex half) and also include an attack: +20 ranged, 3d6 piercing.

Steam Trap: CR special (see below); mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; 1d4 random characters each round (1d6 fire, DC 14 Ref half); 20% chance of instead 3d6 fire (DC 18 Ref half) and attack +20 ranged, 3d6 piercing; Search DC n/a; Disable Device DC special (see below).

Repairing the Device: Repairing the boiler takes three DC 30 Craft (technological device) checks followed by three DC 30 Use Technological Device checks. Characters cannot take 10 or 20 on these checks, and they are subject to damage from steam (see **Trap,** above) every round. In addition, if a character fails one of these checks, he inadvertently triggers another steam blast and takes 1d6 points of fire damage (DC 14 Reflex half). If a character fails a check to repair the boiler by 5 or more, he screws up particularly badly: Steam vents throughout the room, dealing 3d6 points of fire damage to all characters within it (DC 22 Reflex half). If a character fails a repair check by 10 or more, gears and bolts shoot from the walls, wheels spin from their bindings, and steam shoots from every surface; all characters in the room take 5d6 points of fire damage (DC 30 Reflex half) and are subject to two ranged attacks each: +15 ranged, 3d6 piercing. In addition, the remaining DCs to repair the boiler all increase by +5.

If a character rolls a 1 on any of these repair checks, in addition to the above effects for failing by 10 or more, the character makes another check. If the second check fails (i.e., is less than the DC of 30), the boiler explodes. All characters in the room take 10d6 points of fire damage and 10d6 points of piercing and slashing damage (DC 26 Reflex half). Those in the corridor outside within 15 feet take half this amount (DC 22 Reflex to halve it again). The boiler is completely destroyed and tears a hole in the ship's side; the *Yacht* begins taking on water from this rent. The ship sinks in 1d20x10 minutes, slowly filling with water during that time.

If the heroes successfully repair the device, they can operate it with DC 20 Use Technological Device checks from this location. They can move the ship forward or backward (the steering wheel on the above deck controls its direction). In its present location, moving the ship forward grinds it

Umber Goonrock, male tauren runemaster *7/fel-sworn 3: CR 10; Large humanoid (tauren); HD 7d8+3d6 +40, hp 85; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23 touch 17, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +8; Grp +22; Atk +20 melee (2d6+10, unarmed strike); Full Atk +18/+13/+18 melee (2d6+10, unarmed strike); SA Enruned fists, horns 1d8; SQ hastened empowerment (3/day), simple runes (rune of flowing water, rune of perfect steel, rune of starlight), runic attunement, runic dispelling, runic magic, runic sense, fel boons (darkvision, hellish growth, scabrous hide), thrall; FS 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +10; Str 30, Agy 13, Sta 18, Int 10, Spt 22, Cha 9. *Skills:* Handle Animal +1, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Listen +14, Spellcraft +10, Spot +19, Survival +6. *Feats:* Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Runic Attunement*, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike).

Runes Known (4/5/4/3/2; save DC = 14 + rune level): 0—*mark of the cat, mark of kind striking, mark of lesser speed, mark of minor healing;* 1st—*glyph of safefall, mark of lesser healing, mark of sure striking, mark of the tiger;* 2nd—*mark of the beast, mark of healing, mark of magic striking, mark of speed;* 3rd—*mark of aligned striking, mark of the badger, mark of flying, mark of greater healing;* 4th—*mark of hardened striking, mark of the lizard, mark of superior healing, sigil of lesser teleportation.*

Pattern Attunement: Beast (Umber can make a full attack when he charges a foe), Striking (Umber has a +1 competence bonus on attack rolls with unarmed strikes).

further into the coral reef; moving it backward pulls it away from the reef and allows the heroes to sail it back to Bilgewater Port (or anywhere else). During this trek, Dak'mal's *limited wish* spell (see area **7**) keeps the ship from sinking due to the big hole in its bow.

Ad Hoc XP Award: If the heroes successfully repair the boiler, award them XP as if they defeated a CR 11 creature.

Area 4: Umber's Hall (EL 10)

Umber Goonrock terrorizes this hall, separating Ipwoom, the murloc leader, from her followers. The murlocs have attempted to retake this hall several times, but to no avail. Umber and Ipwoom have clashed repeatedly, but the murloc manages to hold out against the runemaster.

Umber usually lurks in one of the small rooms off the hall. If he detects creatures in the hall (by hearing them, for example), continue with the following.

Creature: Umber is Dak'mal's right-hand tauren.

> A door in the wall bangs open and a large shape steps forth. It is a tauren, but enormous and misshapen. The creature is forced to stoop to maneuver through the corridor, and his massive bulk is like a wall. Patches of red, scaly skin mark his black-furred hide. His black horns curve downward, and they are long and twisted, fading to red at their tips. Runes glitter across his body.
>
> "You creatures are not murlocs." His nostrils flare. "Good. I am tired of killing those weak-skulled frogs." He roars and charges.

Possessions: Bracers of armor +2, ring of protection +2, periapt of Spirit +4,* mana draught. Umber has permanently scribed all the marks he knows onto himself.

* See **More Magic & Mayhem** for descriptions of Umber's magic items.

Tactics: When he detects intruders, Umber empowers the *mark of the tiger* (to make his unarmed strikes deal more damage) and *mark of the beast* (to gain +4 Strength). The effects of both are already figured into his statistics. He can empower both in one round, thanks to his hastened empowerment ability.

Umber lashes around in combat, pummeling all his foes. If an opponent deals 15 points of damage or more in a single attack, Umber focuses his efforts on that creature. When reduced to 30 hit points or fewer, Umber empowers his *mark of superior healing* with a move action. If reduced to 30 hit points or below again, he empowers his *mark of greater healing.* If it happens a third time, he empowers his *sigil of lesser transportation,* taking him to area **8,** where he downs his mana draught and waits for the PCs to run afoul of Dak'mal. His *mark of the tiger* and *mark of the beast* will have expired by this point, so he must re-empower them if he wishes to gain their benefits.

Area 5: No-Murloc's Land (EL 5)

Umber and Dak'mal clashed several times with Ipwoom and the other murlocs here. The room now separates the two factions, and while the murlocs are so terrified of Umber that he could sneak through here and rejoin Dak'mal if he wanted, the unstable tauren prefers to stake a territory and wander back and forth, pummeling murlocs when they cross him. He thinks his role of separating Ipwoom from the other murlocs is vital to his and Dak'mal's escape (and he may be right).

If the heroes look down the hole, they see the twisted and blackened remains of a wooden staircase with metal rails lying on the level below, 7 feet down. Water laps at it.

Creature: A single murloc sentry lurks beyond the far door.

Wide Grin Murloc: hp 36. See area **1** for statistics.

Tactics: If the sentry detects any intruders, he races back to area **6** to alert Ipwoom, who takes appropriate action (see area **6**).

Area 6: Ipwoom's Lair

A hole, chopped into the floor with an axe, lets in the seawater from the lower level.

Creatures: Ipwoom, the Wide Grin's chief shaman, has taken up residence here. Three murloc bodyguards stay with her.

Ipwoom, female murloc shaman 7/murloc 3: hp 58. See area **1** for statistics (use Ogloop's.)
Wide Grin Murlocs (3): hp 36. See area **1** for statistics.

Tactics: If the sentry from area **5** warns Ipwoom of intruders, she casts *lightning guardians, inner fire* and *owl's wisdom* to prepare. She casts *bull's strength* on one of her bodyguards. The murlocs then move to confront the intruders. Ipwoom, no fool, begins the encounter by talking to the heroes (she speaks Nazja, Nerglish and Low Common), attempting to ascertain their purpose. She is shrewd, and she wants to slay the warlock below and his henchman so that the murlocs can loot the *Fearsome Yacht* at their leisure (prying up floorboards and so forth). She wouldn't normally have attacked the ship, but "the spirits told her to," and she sees her victory (albeit costly) as a sign of their favor. If the heroes agree to let the murlocs plunder the ship and help her defeat Dak'mal, she agrees to a temporary alliance. She keeps herself and her troops behind in the ensuing battle with the warlock, however, conserving her spells, intending to slay the heroes after they are weakened.

If negotiations fall through, the murloc sentry and 2 bodyguards throw their javelins before moving into melee, while 1 bodyguard remains by Ipwoom to protect her. The shaman casts *bloodlust* on her warriors and *frost nova* and *flaming sphere* on her enemies. If battling in area **5,** the murlocs fall back to area **6** when 2 of them fall, using the water to their advantage. If all her minions fall and she is reduced to half of her hit points, Ipwoom dives into the water, swims to the lower level, and flees through the rift in the hull.

> Dead murlocs lie in grotesque poses in this hall, their bones broken and heads smashed in. The ceiling is battered and defaced with dents and holes. No goblin weapon did this.

Treasure: Ipwoom carries several items in a pouch that she stole from the fallen goblin captain: an emerald earring (150 gp), a ruby ring (200 gp), and a gold necklace bearing a gold statuette of a night elf priestess carrying a jewel-topped staff (750 gp). Under the water in the far corner is a weighted

chest containing the captain's treasure (Ipwoom hasn't moved it yet, though she is aware of it): 4,000 gp and 3,500 sp. (The Trade Coalition expects the heroes to return this to them, of course.)

> This small room has seen combat. The pieces of several murlocs are scattered across the floor or stuck to the walls. Small craters dot the floor, and scorch marks, both circular and linear, mar all surfaces. A hole in the floor marks where a staircase might once have been. On the opposite wall, a wooden door hangs on one hinge.

Area 7: Lower Level (EL 14)

The lower level is now Dak'mal's domain. When the *Fearsome Yacht* ground against the coral reef, the metal plank holding the warlock to his cell wall broke free, destroying the enchantment on his manacles. Thus freed, the orc restored his companion Umber to his true form (he was hiding on Dak'mal's person in the form of a beetle), and the tauren shattered the manacles. The two then moved out into the chaotic corridor and made short work of the goblins and murlocs within.

Dak'mal knows that murlocs, and perhaps more goblin guards, dwell above, and they have resisted his advances so far. He has returned to the lower level to plot his escape. A spell from a scroll (*limited wish*) keeps the ship from sinking any further. (After using the scroll in this way, Dak'mal realized he could probably have used it to teleport to a safe area; he's upset at himself for his poor judgment.)

Dak'mal's fel companion, an imp named Istafeen, keeps watch in this hallway. He alerts his master to the presence of intruders. Dak'mal prepares himself (see **Tactics,** below) before moving out to confront the heroes.

Creature: Dak'mal hopes to win the PCs over with diplomacy before resorting to violence (see **Tactics,** below).

If Umber escaped the heroes earlier, he also shows up

.

Dak'mal, male orc warlock 13: CR 13; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 13d6+26, hp 68; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (1d6+1, quarterstaff); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6+1, quarterstaff) or +8 ranged touch; SA spells, battle rage, +1 bonus on attack rolls against humans; SQ low-light vision, demonologist, enslave outsider, fel companion, summoner; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +9; Str 12, Agy 14, Sta 14, Int 22, Spt 13, Cha 17. *Skills:* Concentration +18, Decipher Script +22, Diplomacy +19, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (the planes) +22, Speak Language (Eredar), Spellcraft +22. *Feats:* Augment Summoning, Craft Wand, Dodge, Empower Spell, Great Fortitude, Mobility, Scribe Scroll, Spell Penetration, Spring Attack.

Warlock Spells Prepared (5/5/5/4/4/3/2/2; save DC 18 + spell level): 0—*acid splash, arcane mark, detect magic, ghost sound, prestidigitation,*

read magic, resistance, sense demons;* 1st—*alarm, identify, comprehend languages, lesser demon skin, lesser immolation*, shadow meld, summon monster I*; 2nd—*detect thoughts, mirror image, orb of annihilation, searing pain*, storm hammer, summon monster II*; 3rd—*create firestone*, demon skin, dispel magic, hold person, hooks of binding, major image, searing pain*, shadow bolt*, summon monster III, tongues;* 4th—*confusion, create spellstone*, dimensional anchor, lesser globe of invulnerability, Ner'zhul's black tentacles, rain of fire, stoneskin, summon monster IV;* 5th—*dismissal, sending, drain life, greater searing pain*, greater shadow bolt*, immolation*, lesser planar binding, summon monster V*; 6th—*greater demon skin, greater dispel magic, planar binding, summon monster VI, true seeing;* 7th—*banishment, conflagrate*, dark metamorphosis, spell turning, summon monster VII.*

Possessions:* Masterwork quarterstaff, *bracers of armor +4, crown of potency*** (stolen from a fallen murloc shaman), *ring of protection +1,* four glass vials of diamond dust (250 gp; *stoneskin* components), spell component pouch, traveling spellbook containing the above spells. (Dak'mal is normally able to prepare 16 spells per spell level, and thus have access to most of the spells on the warlock list, but he has lost most of his spellbooks.)

Most of Dak'mal's equipment fell to various adventurers or prison wardens. He managed to reclaim these items from area **8** after freeing himself.

* See **More Magic & Mayhem** for descriptions of Dak'mal's magic items**.**

** See Chapter 9: New Rules.

Umber Goonrock: hp 85. See area **4** for statistics.

Istafeen: Istafeen is invisible (Stealth +15). He hides during combat.

Tactics: Before he confronts the heroes, if he has time, Dak'mal casts *greater demon skin* and *stone skin* (in that order). He then casts *create firestone* and *create spellstone,* clutching both stones in his left hand as he parleys.

Dak'mal hopes to convince the heroes to help him escape; he does this by offering them rewards of magic items, which he says he will give them when he reaches a safe destination. (He is good for his word, actually; he sees no problem with courting powerful allies.) If the heroes don't seem interested, or if the discussion lasts for more than six rounds, he abandons diplomacy and tries to slay the PCs, figuring they must have wiped out the murlocs and now pose the last obstacle to his safety.

If combat ensues, Dak'mal roars and casts *immolation* on a weak-looking character. He follows this with *confusion* and *greater shadow bolt,* then finishes his initial *immolation* by casting *conflagrate.* He then casts *dark metamorphosis* and flings *orbs of annihilation* or moves into melee — whichever is tactically advantageous. Note that Dak'mal has fewer spells per day than normal because he has already cast some; his normal spells per day are 5/7/7/6/6/5/3/2.

Umber hides in area **8**, a storage closet. When Dak'mal attacks (loudly), Umber bursts forth and attacks the PCs from the back. (The two villains have rehearsed this maneuver.)

The tattoo on Dak'mal's head is a permanently scribed *mark of superior healing.* If Umber thinks his master looks hurt (reduced to 35 hit points or fewer), he empowers it. He does this every time he thinks Dak'mal could use it, resorting to less powerful runes from the Healing pattern if necessary.

Both villains fight to the death.

Area 8: Closet

Umber hides in this small closet if forced to flee from area **4.**

This chamber must have been the captain's room, now defaced. Rich wood paneling is scored with blade marks. Daggers jut from the walls and the faces of oil portraits. Large portholes look down onto the sea, calm but for the rain pouring straight down. Lightning flashes.

The room is partially submerged; seawater rises at the far end. A desk, a couple chairs, wooden debris, and a facedown goblin in rich clothing bob on the surface.

The hallway here is scorched in places; the wood withered and the metal planks peeled away and lying, discarded and misshapen, on the floor. The burned and chopped husks of goblins and murlocs lie strewn about. The place smells like a barbeque in which someone has left the meat on the grill for too long. Barred jail cells, empty and open, line both sides of the corridor. The ceiling lanterns have fallen from their chains and lie on the floor with the rest of the refuse; instead of their normal yellow light, they shed a green-purple glow that is painful to the eyes.

Concluding the Adventure

If the heroes return the *Fearsome Yacht* to Bilgewater Port, the trade princes are pleased with their efforts. In addition to keeping them in mind for future missions, the Trade Coalition authorizes payment of 10,000 gp to the heroes. If the heroes recapture Dak'mal, the coalition pays them 5,000 gp (2,000 if they kill him). The coalition doesn't care too much about Dak'mal's (or Umber's) items, as they were supposed to go to Tol Barad anyway; if the heroes looted the items, the coalition looks the other way. (Unless the heroes force the issue, in which case the goblins take the items back into custody.) The heroes also made allies of Kazmo and his crewmembers, who, contrary to goblin mentality, scrape together 3,500 gp for the heroes in thanks.

"Ghost Ship" can lead to other adventures, such as the following.

- If Dak'mal and/or Umber Goonrock escape, they might return to the Isle of Kezan, getting back to their old tricks. The powers-that-be in Undermine, remembering that the heroes crossed paths with these villains before, ask them to do so again.
- If Ipwoom escapes, she vows revenge on the adventurers who thwarted her.
- Ironforge's gnomes are interested in boilers of the magnitude that appear on the *Fearsome Yacht*. They get wind of the heroes' exploits on the prison ship and contact them to ask them about the workings of the boiler. The goblins hear about this and get upset at the gnomes, starting a covert war of sabotage and espionage between Undermine and Ironforge.
- Dak'mal's allies in the Shadow Council take revenge upon his slayers.
- The PCs gain a reputation as heroes in the South Seas. Wealthy patrons look to hire them, and powerful buccaneers look to challenge them.

> The inn is surprisingly cozy considering the bitter cold outside. The fire is warm, the stew is filling and the ale is rich. If you ignore the windows, and the snow you see blowing past them, you could imagine you were in Stormwind or Orgrimmar or some other civilized land.
>
> All that is shattered when the door flies open and a man rushes in. He is wearing only a heavy cloak against the cold and his hair and beard are frozen clumps around his face, but he seems oblivious to that. In fact, the way his eyes are bulging and his face turning red you'd guess he doesn't even realize it's snowing.
>
> "Troll!" He shouts, and with that one word the inn falls silent. You can hear the wind gusting past outside, through the still-open door behind him. "Troll," he gasps again, leaning against a stool. "Not an hour… from the walls."

Troll Meat

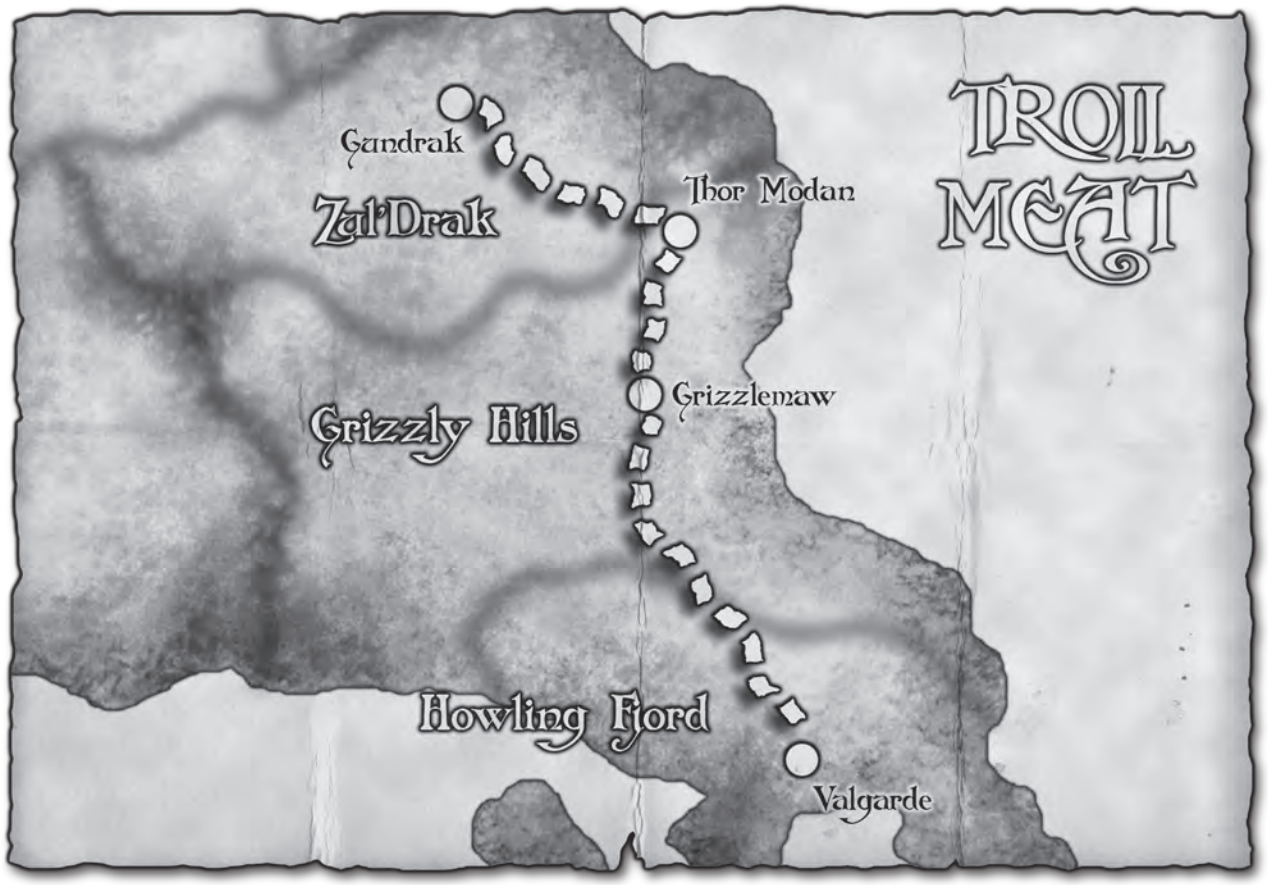
"Troll Meat" is a **World of Warcraft RPG** adventure designed for 4 13th-level heroes. It is best suited to arcanists, healers, paladins, scouts and warriors, though barbarians, rogues and tinkers still prove useful. Any of the races can be used, though jungle trolls and Forsaken have both added advantages and additional difficulties. Boxed text is meant to be read aloud to the PCs.

The action takes place in Northrend. It begins in the Howling Fjord and passes through the Grizzly Hills but takes place primarily in Zul'Drak and involves ice trolls and the Scourge.

Adventure Background

Years ago the Lich King sent his servants, the Cult of the Damned, to the nation of Lordaeron with contaminated grain. This grain had been enchanted to carry a foul taint, and all those who ate it fell deathly ill with plague. After their deaths these victims rose again as members of the Scourge, their minds and souls enthralled.

When the Lich King fell to Azeroth, he struck ground in Northrend. Through foul magic he killed several nearby creatures and discovered that he could reanimate them as his servants. This was the start of the Scourge. Most creatures in Icecrown are now members of the Scourge, and the Lich King's forces grow, sweeping across the continent. Some, like the furbolgs, have survived by evading his undead soldiers. Others, like the nerubians, fought against his army and lost. Furbolgs present little threat, particularly if left alone. The remaining



nerubians are too weak to cause problems. The tuskarr are too busy trying to survive. Only one race in Northrend is still powerful enough, individually and en masse, to pose a threat: the Drakkari trolls.

The Drakkari trolls are the most powerful group of ice trolls around. Frost King Malakk and most of the other Drakkari trolls live in Gundrak, their stronghold in the northeast corner of Zul'Drak. Another ice troll tribe, the Winterfangs, also lives in Northrend. Winterfangs are smaller than Drakkari trolls, more akin to jungle trolls in size and stature. Kril, a member of the Winterfang tribe, hates and envies the Drakkari because of their power. He schemed against Malakk and the Drakkari, and his chieftain, Shakor, discovered his plans. Shakor was infuriated, for Kril's actions could have brought the wrath of the Drakkari on the Winterfangs. Shakor could have killed Kril, but the two are cousins, so Shakor instead demanded an apology. Kril did apologize, though with poor grace. Then Kril absented himself, becoming Kril'fon (he claimed to have discovered some ancestral language codices that state the suffix "fon" means "loner": someone who has deliberately absented himself from troll society and its obligations and is little better than a pariah). Many among the Winterfangs feel Shakor was too lenient, and would rather see Kril'fon dead than risk him angering the Drakkari.

Adventure Synopsis

Ra'sal, a powerful lich in service to the Scourge, has decided to consolidate the Lich King's hold on Northrend by eliminating any potential threats. The Drakkari trolls are the single greatest danger since each individual is personally powerful and the race is numerous enough, organized enough and violent enough to produce a rival army. At the same time, undead trolls would make an excellent addition to the Scourge.

Ra'sal subverts a troll hunter-trader and enlists him in the Cult of the Damned. The corrupted troll, Kril'fon, is given a sled-load of tainted meat to bring to Gundrak. The meat contains the same plague as the grain the Lich King used to conquer Lordaeron, and Ra'sal hopes it will have the same effect on the trolls.

The PCs encounter a lone undead troll (used by Kril'fon and Ra'sal as a test subject). From there they can track the trader and his cargo through the Grizzly Hills and into Zul'Drak, all the way to Gundrak itself. They can ambush him along the way. They can even go straight to Gundrak and warn the trolls directly. Yet the Drakkari have no reason to trust non-trolls and little reason to toss aside perfectly good meat. Some Winterfang trolls have set an ambush for Kril'fon, and have no qualms

about killing others in the process. Meanwhile, the Scourge watches the situation and is prepared to step in to aid Kril'fon if necessary. Ultimately the PCs have to destroy the meat before it can kill and taint the Drakkari race.

Ice Trolls

Ice trolls vary in size and coloration. Most Drakkari trolls are large and strong. The trolls in this adventure are Winterfangs and somewhat smaller — they resemble jungle trolls, save that they are snow-colored and a bit taller and bulkier. Most of the trolls in this adventure use the jungle troll racial levels presented in the **WoW RPG** book (Chapter 2: Races), but Drakkari trolls may have different statistics.

Winterfang ice trolls use jungle troll statistics (and racial levels) with the following exception:

• Instead of low-light vision, Winterfangs have resistance to cold 1.

For the Heroes

The adventure begins in Valgarde, the major port city of Northrend. The heroes could be in Valgarde for any number of reasons, including the following:

• The PCs have arrived in Northrend recently and are getting their bearings and equipping themselves to enter the frozen wastelands.

• They are traders, trappers or hunters and have come to Valgarde to trade their catches for food and other items.

• Valgarde has the single largest concentration of humans and dwarves — civilized folk — in Northrend. The PCs have been out in the wilderness too long and have returned for companionship and polite (relatively speaking) society.

• Since Valgarde is the major port, most messages to other continents leave from here. The PCs are here sending reports to their superiors back home and awaiting new orders.

• Trolls, furbolgs and other creatures frequently attack Valgarde. The PCs have come to aid in the city's defense, whether they came from deeper in Northrend or from another nation over the sea.

• Many gather in Valgarde to recover from encounters with the Scourge, and to trade tales and information about Scourge activities.

The PCs are sitting in one of Valgarde's few inns, not far from the outer walls, when a man rushes in. When you are ready to begin, read the following aloud:

Trolls are a major threat in Northrend, and they have attacked Valgarde several times before. The inn empties almost before the stranger finishes his warning, as every man runs for his home and his weapons. The PCs should also go. Hopefully they actively seek out the troll rather than hiding or waiting for it. Here are some reasons to take such an aggressive approach:

• Drakkari trolls are unique to Northrend. Newcomers may be curious to see one and compare it to the jungle trolls they are used to. (Though this troll is not a Drakkari.)

• Trolls are dangerous, and one could just be the frontrunner in an assault. If that's the case it's better to be ready, and to meet the attack when it appears.

• The troll could be a scout. Killing it prevents it from carrying back information, and could forestall an attack.

• Trolls are impressive, and killing one would win respect.

• Trollskin is thick and extremely tough. It and the horns, fangs and claws would fetch a handsome price from certain collectors.

As you step toward the troll, raising your blades, the troll grins at you, lips pulling back from long fangs. One hand closes on the massive axe at his side and the other grasps a javelin in the sheath on his upper leg, but he does not look concerned.

"Nice meeting you all," he drawls in Common, still grinning. "Always good to meet new folk. Find new friends. Whyn't you meet some of mine?"

A rustling pulls your attention to the side, where a snow-covered tree branch is bending down and in. Then a figure slides past it, entering the clearing and gliding up beside the troll. This newcomer is not as tall or as broad, but still has a mighty build beneath his snow-covered armor. In one hand he carries a longsword and on the other arm a shield, the symbols scraped away. Then he raises his head, and you see his face behind the helm: graying skin, blank milky eyes, slack jaw.

He is undead.

And, as other trees rustle nearby, you realize he is not alone.

Troll Sighting (EL 6)

Regardless of the reason, the PCs should head to the city walls to sight this lone troll. Upon seeing it each PC can make a DC 20 Spot check. Anyone brave enough to venture beyond the walls has as a DC 15 for this roll.

Those who succeed notice that something is wrong with this troll. Trolls are not the most graceful creatures, but they are surprisingly agile and nearly silent when moving through their native element. This troll, however, is swaying as it walks, its long hands dragging on the ground, its knees barely bending with each stride. Its small eyes stare straight ahead, and it does not swerve to avoid obstacles but plows through them.

Closer examination (another Spot check, DC 25 or DC 20 for those outside the walls) reveals more abnormalities. Most ice trolls have bright blue eyes and mottled gray-white or gray-green skin. This one's eyes are a pale, milky blue and its skin is a sickly green with strange, light gray splotches.

Those who have seen Scourge creatures may make another Spot check, DC 15. If they have only seen only other types of undead the DC is 20. Success means the PCs realize that this troll is actually undead. It is part of the Scourge.

The PCs can fight the undead troll or stay out of its way. It staggers around with no clear purpose and follows any movement it sees. The minute it sees another living creature it attacks, trying to kill the target.

No one in Valgarde has seen an undead troll before. The notion is enough to fill people with terror, and those who have seen the creature are badly shaken. Still, Valgarde has enough warriors that, even if the PCs choose not to step in, the undead creature is eventually destroyed. It kills several of the town's defenders, however, and comes close to battering down the outer gates.

Creatures: The troll attacks creatures that come close enough. It was an early test subject for Kril'fon's tainted meat, though Ra'sal has to work some extra magic on him for the transformation to kick in. The lich altered the meat afterward, but he's still unsure as to its efficacy.

Scourge Troll, undead male ice troll barbarian 3/ice troll 3: CR 6; Medium undead (cold); HD 6d12, hp 39; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +6; Grp +9; Atk +9 melee (1d12+4/x3, greataxe); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d12+4/x3, greataxe) or +10 ranged (1d8+3, javelin); SA rage 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to cold, vulnerability to fire, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 17, Agy 16, Sta —, Int 7, Spt 8, Cha 6. *Skills:* Balance +2, Climb +4, Intimidate +5, Jump +4, Listen +3, Spot +3, Stealth +1, Survival +6, Swim +4, Tumble +4. *Feats:* Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack. *Possessions:* Hide armor (furs), greataxe, javelin, two dead rabbits.

> After several hours you come across a campsite. The tracks stop here near the remains of a massive campfire. Two boulders have been rolled close to it. A small hunk of meat sits near one boulder, not far from a roughly hewn wooden cup. Another set of tracks leads away, farther north and west, and deep furrows flank these prints.

> You top a small rise and pause. Down below you see a massive gray block sliding along the ground. After a moment you realize you're looking at a rough sled skimming across the thick snow. It has no horses or oxen, but now you make out a tall, burly figure at the front and can just see thick beams set upon his shoulders. He is dragging the sled.

Tactics: The troll was not very bright when alive and is even less so now — if attacked from multiple directions it grows confused and disoriented.

Backtracking

Once the troll has been dispatched people start wondering where it came from and how it was created. This must be some new attack from the Lich King, but why send just one troll against a well-armed city? That doesn't make much sense.

A DC 10 Survival check (DC 15 Spot check for characters without Track) allows a character to notice the massive tracks from the undead troll. They lead north, away from Valgarde.

Anyone following the tracks finds the following:

The cup, which is the size of a small ale keg, has a few (frozen) dregs of ale left. The rest has spilled out and frozen. The meat looks to be bear or wolf. It looks rancid, but anyone familiar with trolls knows that they are not picky eaters.

PCs who make a DC 12 Knowledge (religion) check notice something strange here. The meat and ale are off by one of the two boulders and clearly belonged to whoever sat there. The undead troll's tracks begin by that same boulder. Yet undead creatures do not eat or drink. Yet the meat has clear bite marks, as if it is only the remains of a larger portion.

The other tracks are similar to the first set and clearly belong to another troll. The furrows suggest a sled or cart being carried, dragged or pushed. But most ice trolls hate the Scourge. They destroy undead on sight. Could both trolls be undead? If so, why were they sitting here?

Anyone who makes another DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check realizes that the first troll was probably alive when it sat down to eat but undead by the time it reached Valgarde's outer wall. But what killed it? How did it reanimate? And, if that did happen, why did the other troll simply walk away?

It may also seem strange that both trolls left the piece of meat behind. It is roughly the size of a man's hand, still a decent snack even for a troll.

A character studying the meat can make a DC 25 Craft (alchemy) or Knowledge (religion) check. Those who were in Lordaeron when the tainted grain appeared get a +5 bonus on this check. Anyone with 5 or more ranks in Spellcraft gets a +2 synergy bonus. Success means the PC realizes that the meat has been tainted somehow. That should instantly make people think about Lordaeron and its grain, and the plague that followed.

Follow My Lead

At this point the PCs should follow the other troll. They have several reasons to do so, even if they have not figured out the tainted meat:

- Trolls are dangerous, nasty creatures and this one was only a few hours from Valgarde's walls. It may have been spying on the city, and should not be allowed to escape with whatever information it gleaned.
- The troll was lugging a large cart or sled, heavily loaded judging from the deep furrows. Anything a troll wants that badly it probably shouldn't have. And whatever it is might be valuable to the PCs as well.
- Something happened to the first troll to turn it into an undead monstrosity. What if the same thing strikes the second one? A live troll is bad enough — an undead troll is more dangerous.
- This second troll is carrying goods of some sort. Most ice trolls care little about supplies and trade goods and shipments. Perhaps this one is more intelligent. If that's true, it might also be willing to converse without violence. On the other hand, if this troll is more intelligent than most it is also more dangerous. Such a creature should either be befriended or be destroyed.

The troll in question, Kril'fon, is brighter than average. He wanders Northrend, testing his strength against new creatures and collecting all manner of trophies, weapons, and other items. A few weeks ago Kril'fon crossed the Dragonblight and approached Icecrown Citadel. Kril'fon hated the Scourge, but when an undead creature hailed him Kril'fon was intrigued. He had always thought the undead were mindless, shambling creatures, and this one seemed intelligent. This creature was a lich, Ra'sal, who had a plan in mind for the

wandering troll. As the two conversed, Kril'fon found himself talking about his cousin and the Drakkari, and his own thwarted ambitions. Ra'sal suggested that he might be able to help Kril'fon. The lich soon swayed the troll to his cause. Finally Kril'fon swore loyalty to the Lich King, and in return he was promised dominion over the other trolls and over all Zul'Drak.

Encounters

The following encounters occur as the PCs track Kril'fon and follow his trail. The encounters can occur in any order, but the following is a logical progression. They can take place anywhere along the trail.

Wagon Ho! (CL 14)

Finding Kril'fon is not difficult, since he is heavily encumbered.

Kril'fon is dragging a large, roughly built sled behind him. The sled has tall sides and is piled high with tainted meat. He plans to deliver this meat to Gundrak, claiming it is a peace offering from the Winterfangs. Frost King Malakk is as greedy and ravenous as most Drakkari, and will immediately accept, doling the meat out to his subjects as well. Soon all of Gundrak may fall to the plague, and then rise up again as undead. The Lich King will give control of them to Ra'sal and Kril'fon, and he will become king of the Drakkari — and one of few ice trolls left alive.

Creatures: Kril'fon drags the sled toward his lethal rendezvous.

Kril'fon, male ice troll scout 8/barbarian 3/ice troll 3: CR 14; Medium humanoid (cold, troll); HD 3d12+11d8+56, hp 135; Init +8; Spd 40 ft.; AC 20 touch 14, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +12; Grp +15; Atk +17 melee (1d12+6/x3, greataxe); Full Atk +17/+12 melee (1d12+6/x3, greataxe) or +18 ranged (1d8+3, javelin); SA rage 1/day (8 rounds); SQ immunity to cold, improved uncanny dodge, locate object 1/day, nature sense, swift tracker, trackless step, trap sense +3, vulnerability to fire, wild healing +5, woodland stride, troll healing (fast healing 2), ice troll traits; AL CE; SV Fort +16, Ref +14, Will +4; Str 17, Agy 18, Sta 19, Int 13, Spt 10, Cha 9. *Skills:* Balance +8, Climb +12, Craft (woodcarving) +8, Intimidate +10, Jump +8, Knowledge (nature) +10, Listen +8, Profession (trapper) +10, Search +6, Spot +12, Stealth +6, Survival +12, Swim +7, Tumble +8, Use Rope +10. *Feats:* Cleave, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Snowfoot*, Track, Windear*.

* See Chapter 9: New Rules.

Possessions: +2 greataxe, four masterwork javelins, dagger, *+3 hide armor* (furs), backpack, coil of rope, waterskin, wineskin, belt pouch, heavy cloak.

Tactics: Kril'fon is more polished than most ice trolls, more intelligent, and more worldly, but he is still a troll. He has little patience, particularly with anyone he considers useless, and he resorts to violence easily. He speaks Zandali and rough Common. If the PCs approach him, his first response is to intimidate them into leaving. If that fails Kril'fon gruffly asks what they want. He has no need for money and no interest in most goods beyond weapons, food and drink. Offering him those distracts him temporarily, and inclines him to listen to the PCs until he grows restless. Power is the only thing that can sway Kril'fon, particularly an offer of power over his fellow trolls.

Kril'fon is smart enough not to reveal the nature of the meat or the source of its contagion. He does not mention the Scourge, but if the PCs raise the topic he spits at the name and swears to drive them from these lands — then corrects himself and says, "Or at least I would if I ruled here." He does not trust other races, particularly adventurers, and keeps a wary distance from the PCs unless bribed with food, drink or weapons.

Kril'fon is proud but pragmatic. If the PCs attack and are clearly stronger, he runs. He drags the sled if possible but leaves it behind and escapes if necessary, planning to return for it later.

Ad Hoc XP Award: If the heroes convince Kril'fon to forego his plan and surrender the meat, award them XP as if they defeated him in combat plus an additional 600 XP each.

Prolonged Pursuit

Catching Kril'fon and confiscating the tainted meat before it reaches Gundrak ends the adventure. Thus it is best if that does not occur too quickly. The PCs should have a chance to pursue him and perhaps confront him but not capture him too easily.

If the PCs are drawing too close, or Kril'fon is too weak to resist them, you can throw other obstacles in their path. Here are a few options:

- *Blizzard:* Northrend has violent weather and vicious winter storms are common. A sudden blizzard covers Kril'fon's tracks and gives him time to vanish, and leaves the adventurers struggling through the ice and snow.
- *Wild beasts:* Northrend has its share of wild animals, including sasquatch, wendigo, bears and wolves. Unless the adventurers are experienced scouts, their travels draw attention. Some of the local beasts, prompted by hunger or by

possessiveness, attack. Kril'fon is in little danger of this himself —most animals know enough to steer clear of the trolls.

• *Unstable ground:* Kril'fon is an old hand at navigating the frozen lands of Northrend. The PCs may not be as experienced, and this arctic terrain offers many dangers for the unwary. Rivers and lakes are frozen but may crack under pressure. Snow and ice cover crevices and other gaps. Snow, and its presence blanketing the landscape, can confound the senses, leaving travelers lost.

• *Patrols:* The Scourge is not as strong here as it is to the north, but it still has a presence. It controls Drak'Tharon Keep in the Grizzly Hills, just south of Zul'Drak's southwest corner. Armed Scourge patrols wander the countryside, scaring anyone they meet. These patrols either attack living people or act menacing to frighten them away. Kril'fon could use this distraction to escape unnoticed.

Do not prolong the chase unnecessarily, however. If the PCs can track Kril'fon effectively and overcome such obstacles they eventually close the distance and confront him.

Hidden Escort (CL 16)

When Kril'fon gets more than 10 miles from Valgarde, confronting him is not nearly as easy. If the PCs attack him after they have traveled such a distance, they receive a nasty surprise.

Ra'sal sent a squad of Scourge warriors to accompany Kril'fon. Ostensibly they were tasked to keep the troll safe during his journey. Their real mission is to see the tainted meat safely to Gundrak — Kril'fon's survival is a bonus but not crucial. Kril'fon did not object to the squad's presence but insisted they stay out of sight. He warned that seeing undead creatures would put the Drakkari on their guard and ruin the plan, and Ra'sal agreed. He cast spells to make the creatures invisible, though Kril'fon can make them visible (but not invisible again) by speaking the word "friends." These Scourge warriors have been traveling with Kril'fon since Icecrown Glacier but remained a safe distance away from Valgarde. If the PCs threaten Kril'fon or advance menacingly toward him the Scourge patrol becomes visible and steps up to defend him.

Creatures: Kril'fon has 12 bodyguards.

Scourge Warrior, warrior 4 (12): CR 4; Medium undead; HD 4d12, hp 26 Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (1d8+3/19–20, longsword); Full Atk +8 melee (1d8+3/19–20, longsword); SQ darkvision, undead; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 16, Agy 13, Sta —, Int 10, Spt 10, Cha 6. *Skills:* Balance –4*, Climb –3*, Intimidate +4, Jump –1*, Listen +4, Spot +4, Survival +1, Swim –7*. *Feats:* Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack.
* Includes –5 armor check penalty.

Possessions: Masterwork longsword, hide armor, heavy steel shield.

Tactics: The Scourge warriors split up, two or more targeting each hero. Kril'fon stands back and watches to gauge the heroes' strength, then attacks the strongest.

Crossfire (CL 15)

One of Shakor's brothers, Ranvin, hates Kril'fon. He knows Kril'fon is dangerous and believes Shakor was stupid to let their cousin live. Ranvin intends to remedy the situation. He has gathered 11 of his closest friends and is lying in ambush for Kril'fon, who a scout saw approaching. Ranvin is not terribly bright but vicious, and he happily slaughters anyone else who wanders into their trap.

Creatures: Twelve Winterfang trolls lie hidden around the edges of a small gap in a row of steep, icy hills. They have coated their armor with snow and ice and have dug small pits to lay in while waiting. These preparations grant them +4 circumstance bonuses on their Stealth checks to hide.

Winterfang warrior, male and female ice troll barbarian 5/ice troll 3 (12): CR 8; Medium humanoid (cold, troll); HD 5d12+3d8+32, hp 85; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +8; Grp +12; Atk +13 melee (1d12+7/x3, greataxe); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d12+7/x3, greataxe) or +13 ranged (1d8+4, javelin); SA rage 2/day (8 rounds); SQ immunity to cold, improved uncanny dodge, locate trap sense +1, vulnerability to fire, troll healing (fast healing 2); AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 18, Agy 16, Sta 19, Int 8, Spt 12, Cha 8. *Skills:* Balance +2**, Climb +6**, Intimidate +8, Jump +4**, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +5, Search +6, Spot +10, Stealth +0**, Survival +8, Swim +0**, Tumble +6**, Use Rope +3. *Feats:* Cleave, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Snowfoot*, Track.
* See Chapter 9: New Rules.
** Includes –2 armor check penalty.

Possessions: +1 greataxe, two masterwork javelins, dagger, *+2 hide armor,* backpack, coil of rope, waterskin, wineskin, belt pouch, heavy cloak.

Tactics: The Winterfangs have placed themselves all around this gap in the hills, knowing it is the only place to cross that ridgeline. As soon as Kril'fon is below them they emerge from their hiding places and hurl their javelins at him, then charge. Anyone with or even near Kril'fon is also a target. If the

trolls find themselves losing the fight Ranvin runs to Gundrak to plead for reinforcements.

Friendly Furbolgs?

Kril'fon's path takes him up through the Grizzly Hills and on to Zul'Drak. Furbolgs dominate the Grizzly Hills, and their stronghold, Grizzlemaw, is along the straightest route from Valgarde to Gundrak. Kril'fon veers west to avoid Grizzlemaw — furbolgs are not violent by nature but they attack to defend their territory, and they dislike both the trolls and the Scourge.

The heroes can speak with furbolgs in the Grizzly Hills. With some skillful wordplay (a DC 30 Diplomacy check), they are allowed entrance to Grizzlemaw and treated as guests as long as they do not start trouble.

Tactics: Furbolgs are rough and crude but peaceful. They hate ice trolls and also hate the Scourge. Anything that causes either group trouble has the furbolgs' approval provided it does not harm them or damage their lands. If a chieftain or shaman learns that an ice troll is passing through the Grizzly Hills, he dispatches a band of furbolgs (12 in all) to find and kill him. The heroes can intervene and insist upon handling Kril'fon themselves, in which case the furbolgs offer warriors as support.

Ad Hoc XP Award: If the heroes convince a furbolg leader to provide help, award them XP as if they defeated a CR 11 creature.

Stout Aid

A small force of dwarves has settled in Thor Modan, midway up the east side of the Grizzly Hills and halfway between Grizzlemaw and Gundrak. They dislike the trolls, who constantly attack them, and hate the Scourge. Any hero from a typical Alliance race receives a warm welcome. Dwarves are greeted like long-lost family.

The dwarves here are researchers and archaeologists rather than warriors. They offer whatever aid they can, but do not fight unless their homes are threatened. They feed the heroes and give them basic supplies, but have little else to share beyond local knowledge and experience fighting ice trolls.

Tactics: These dwarves are noncombative. They live in Thor Modan and seek clues and artifacts from their own past. They do know shortcuts to Gundrak, however, and can guide the heroes there unseen.

Ad Hoc XP Award: If the heroes gain the dwarves' trust, award them XP as if they defeated a CR 7 monster.

Nearby Scourge (CL 12)

Drak'Tharon Keep was once a Drakkari stronghold. Now the Scourge owns it and uses it as its powerbase in Northrend's southeast corner. Two thousand Scourge creatures patrol the ruined old keep. They often fight Drakkari and occasionally furbolgs, though they have yet to attack either Gundrak or Grizzlemaw directly. If Scourge forces spot the heroes, they send a squad to investigate. The squad is told to observe and report back, and attack only if the adventurers seem too weak to resist.

Creatures: The squad consists of 16 undead warriors.

Scourge Warrior (16): hp 26 each. See "Hidden Escort" above for statistics.

Tactics: The Scourge warriors are not clever tacticians. They march toward opponents, counting on supernatural vitality and sheer numbers to overwhelm any foe. If the fight goes poorly, 1 warrior flees to summon reinforcements.

Gundrak

Kril'fon reaches the Drakkari stronghold. Now the PCs can no longer ambush him out in the snow. They have to follow him into the troll citadel and either fight, talk or sneak their way through. Scourge creatures do not enter, of course, which alleviates one concern. Yet Gundrak is filled with Drakkari, and though Kril'fon is from another tribe he is immediately backed up by his fellow trolls, and in such numbers that the heroes probably have no choice but to retreat.

Tactics: Gundrak is a walled city. Most of the Drakkari here have everyday activities: cleaning the halls, repairing damaged walls, mending armor, sharpening weapons. Frequent hunting parties scour the nearby countryside for food and for intruders. Guards are posted at the main doors, along the outer walls, along major walkways, and outside important buildings and rooms. The Drakkari are violent and proud, and most attack intruders immediately without raising an alarm first.

Concluding the Adventure

If the heroes capture Kril'fon and confiscate the tainted meat before it can reach Gundrak they earn the respect and gratitude of Valgarde's citizens. The ruling council of that city rewards them with gold, food, drink and an open invitation to stay in Valgarde as often and as long as they like. The heroes also earn the enmity of a lich for thwarting his plans — even if they destroy the entire squad escorting Kril'fon, Ra'sal divines the source of the problem. The lich plots revenge. If they tell Frost King Malakk what happened, he refuses to believe outsiders and turns on them.

If the heroes kill Kril'fon but do not capture the meat, more Scourge creatures arrive and carry the tainted cargo just outside Gundrak's front gates. Troll hunters find it there and drag it inside, where it is rapidly consumed. Based on your preference, the plague may or may not course through the troll stronghold; if so, within a month all the Drakkari have become undead. Anyone who knew the heroes' mission blames them for not stopping it.

If the heroes defeat Kril'fon and destroy the meat but let the troll escape, he runs to Gundrak. Kril'fon invents a wild tale about wealthy human marauders in the area and whips Malakk into a frenzy. Drakkari pour from their stronghold to sweep the area and march on Valgarde. Kril'fon participates in the attack and points out the heroes as the marauders.

If the heroes fail to stop Kril'fon he brings the meat to Gundrak and offers it to Malakk, who accepts it and uses it for a great feast. A month later, if the plague works as Ra'sal hopes, Kril'fon calls himself Kril'jin and rules the Scourge trolls for his master.

"Troll Meat" can lead to other adventures, such as the following.

- If the heroes did not stop the meat in time they need to follow it into Gundrak and destroy it there. Yet Gundrak is a well-fortified troll stronghold, filled with brutal Drakkari.
- If the heroes failed, the Drakkari become Scourge. Now the Lich King has a second Scourge army, this one on the east coast of Northrend, and he sends them out to destroy all opposition. Grizzlemaw and Thor Modan are targets, but Valgarde is their ultimate goal.
- This is the second time the Lich King has used tainted food to expand — or try to expand — his army. The heroes may decide that he cannot be allowed to use this tactic a third time. That means taking the fight to the Lich King himself.
- Ra'sal is furious that his plan failed. He targets the heroes for revenge.
- Perhaps the heroes captured Kril'fon and convinced him to drop his plan. Yet Ra'sal does not know that yet. If the PCs can get Kril'fon to pretend he's still loyal to the Scourge, they have a direct source of information on the Lich King's plans and forces.

Numerous organizations operate in Kalimdor, the South Seas, and Northrend. I gathered some information about some of the most interesting ones by asking questions, studying records, and generally being a sneak. I've organized my findings in the following sections. Some of it's rumors and hearsay, but hey — they're still good stories.

The Bloodsail Buccaneers

Membership: 1,200.
Alignment: Neutral evil.
Affiliation: Independent.
Regions of Influence: Plunder Isle, the South Seas, Booty Bay.
Activities: The Bloodsail Buccaneers commit acts of piracy, smuggling and revenge.

Six or 7 years ago, a man named Falrevere had a grand estate in Kul Tiras. He was one of Admiral Daelin Proudmoore's greatest rivals on the island, and he boasted a dozen merchant ships and twice as many warships. Falrevere enjoyed sailing and was good at it; he often joined his men on the seas, patrolling for pirates and following his goods down the coast, breathing the sea air and seeing interesting sights. Falrevere wasn't particularly friendly or likeable, but he kept his people fed and safe, and so they liked him.

Falrevere was a staunch believer in human supremacy. He thought the other races — elves, dwarves and gnomes in addition to orcs and goblins and the others — would be the downfall of Kul Tiras and Lordaeron; perhaps of the world. He advocated harsh measures against the other races, which made him unpopular but attracted people of like mindset.

When the Third War began, Falrevere was at sea with one of his battleships. A gryphon rider found him and the small fleet with which he sailed; the dwarf told him of the war and begged him to come to the assistance of Drisburg, on the northern coast of Kul Tiras. Falerevere sneered at the dwarf but agreed, and put his sail to the wind. Upon sighting Drisburg, the duke saw that the Scourge had landed a small army on the coast and laid siege to the town. The defenders fired catapults and a few cannons at their besiegers, but there was little they could do. Falrevere calculated, and came to the conclusion that if he landed and fought the Scourge, Drisburg would have about a 50% chance of surviving the onslaught, but most of its people, and Falrevere's people, would die. Many of Drisburg's citizens were gnome and dwarf immigrants from Ironforge. Falrevere's choice was cleaer. He turned his ships around and bid goodbye to the doomed settlement. Many of his crewmembers railed against this action. Falrevere threw the loudest overboard.

Knowing he could never set foot in Kul Tiras again, Falrevere sailed to the mainland for news of the war. He learned that the invasion was in full swing. Lordaeron's north had become a blighted and twisted land, overrun with undead monstrosities. "This is because we made friends with those damn elves and dwarves," Falrevere muttered. "I'll have no more part in this land's folly." He gathered his crew and announced that any sailor who wished to do so could disembark here and fight for Lordaeron. As for himself, he was going to reestablish his estate elsewhere; a tropical island in the South Seas, perhaps, where the Scourge could not reach them and he could choose his friends. Many of his soldiers left his ships and died on Lordaeron soil, but more joined him. A month later, Falrevere found Plunder Isle and began construction of his new fortress. Once a stalwart Lordaeron noble, Duke Falrevere became a professional pirate lord.

The Bloodsail Buccaneers are a bunch of vile bastards, and everyone who knows them knows it. Others see them as ruthless and devoid of scruples, which they are. Five years on Plunder Isle has done little to improve Falrevere's disposition, and he and every pirate under his banner seem to bear a personal grudge against everyone they come across — especially non-humans. This grudge is particularly strong when it comes to the Blackwater Raiders. Falrevere despises the Blackwater Raiders because the despicable trade princes — *goblins* — provide the Raiders with gold, equipment and other support. Falrevere believes that humans rightfully deserve control of the seas. Tavern tales also say that the Blackwater Raiders are responsible for the death of Falrevere's son (though the same tales mention that Falrevere was never fond of his son). The Buccaneers and the Raiders have clashed numerous times over the last 5 years.

As for themselves, the Bloodsail Buccaneers revel in their reputation. They display their characteristic rust-red, black and brown clothing with pride, and make sure their symbol — a double-masted ship's silhouette against a bloody sun — is always predominant. The Buccaneers ply the waters between Azeroth and the South Seas, and occasionally travel west toward Kalimdor. They

frequent seedy taverns in Booty Bay (where they and the Blackwater Raiders duel in the streets and bars), Bilgewater Port and Steamwheedle Port. In addition to ambushing merchant ships that cross the South Seas, they and the Blackwater Raiders are embroiled in a private naval war that spans the length of the sea, from Steamwheedle to Booty Bay.

Organization

Duke Falrevere runs the Bloodsail Buccaneers and is usually sailing the seas on his flagship, the *Devil Shark*. Four commodores assist him, each of whom is in charge of about a dozen pirate ships. Fleet masters command smaller groups of ships, captains command individual ships, and their first mates take over when they fall. Most of the Bloodsail elites are former members of Falrevere's estate — knights, reeves and the like who joined him in his exile.

When a commodore falls, Falrevere personally selects a replacement. He picks those he trusts; loyalty is more valuable than skill, for Falrevere knows what an odious bunch he commands and realizes the potential for mutiny and betrayal. However, his experience as a noble proves valuable in his new role, and while he has become a thoroughly unpleasant individual he keeps his men and women well fed with food, plunder and blood, and so most are glad to have him at their head.

Locations

The Buccaneers' primary base is on Plunder Isle; they control a fort called Bloodsail Hold (displaying a remarkable lack of originality). Bloodsail Hold is well protected and strategically located. Buccaneers range throughout the South Seas and Azeroth's west and south coasts; occasionally they make raids along Kalimdor's coasts as well.

Members

Imagine the most bloodthirsty and depraved person you can. This person is probably a member of the Bloodsail Buccaneers. About half the Buccaneers are remnants of Falrevere's original crew that betrayed Lordaeron and Kul Tiras for a life of piracy; the remaining members come from waterfront saloons and docks. The Bloodsail Buccaneers aren't above pressganging people into their service.

As Falrevere has a reputation for treating his people reasonably well, new members are in ready supply — at least, they're enough to replace the buccaneers who fall on their missions. These are people with nowhere else to go, or those who enjoy bloodshed and the seas, or those who want to vent their hatred of non-humans, or those looking for an easy gold piece. The Buccaneers don't try to train new members (though a few individual captains implement such schemes); for the most part, the life of a new Bloodsail Buccaneer is, often literally, sink or swim.

Falrevere and his pirate followers blame the fall of Lordaeron and the rise of the undead on other races, like orcs and elves. That's why they're so pissed at everyone and have cultivated an exclusive group.

Leaders

Duke Falrevere (male human warrior 5/aristocrat 2/buccaneer* 10): Falrevere is tall and lanky, with black hair, long mustaches, and a short beard. He wears a tri-corner black hat pulled low over his eyes. He is neither affable nor likable, but keeps his people together. He prefers to give his commodores, fleet masters, and captains free reign, but when they err he responds with veiled threats and detailed explanations of what went wrong and what could have been done to make it right. Despite his threats, he is protective of the Bloodsail Buccaneers and each of its members, and only rarely does he execute pirates under his command — though he has no problems with individual captains engaging in such brutal justice. Falrevere spends almost all his time aboard the *Devil Shark,* hunting Blackwater Raiders, and stops off in Bloodsail Hold only occasionally. He is distant, with few friends.

Commodre Jessi Falrevere (female human rogue 4/aristocrat 1/buccaneer* 3): Jessi Falrevere is Duke Falrevere's daughter. She is in her mid-20s, and is a short, solid woman who looks as if she has a hint of dwarf in her veins. She is red-faced from shouting, drink, and sun. She seems to have been trying to make up for her gender since she came to terms with her pirate lifestyle, and can drink most men under the table. She commands her ships in much the same way her father does, though she is more gregarious and has many friends among her captains and crew. She is moody and prone to extremes: If you're not her friend, you are probably her enemy — and she deals with her enemies harshly. Lordaeron's fall, her father's descent into evil, and her brother's demise have worked together to make her a hard and ruthless individual.

Jessi was barely 20 when Duke Falrevere began building Bloodsail Hold. She was depressed for months, for her mother had been left behind in Kul Tiras and none knew her fate. Her brother Magrann, who saw the shift to piracy as a grand adventure, dragged her out of her despair. When he died before the cannons of the Blackwater Raiders, all that was once good and fun in her shattered. She must be a sad, sad woman now.

* See Chapter 9: New Rules for the buccaneer class.

Commodore Lester Zank (male human warlock 10): In Kul Tiras, young Lester served as a minor mage in Falrevere's estate. The noble indulged the lad's interest in the dark arts out of respect for his father, who died in Falrevere's service when Lester was a baby. Others were not so kind, and shunned the pale, bald, fatherless boy. When the Scourge invaded Lordaeron, Lester traveled to the mainland, thinking to join with the undead. The sight of the creatures horrified him, however, and he lost his nerve. He found a secret basement and hid, surviving on preserved fruit while the Third War raged above. Finally, he emerged and slunk past the undead forces, hoping to find the only man who had ever shown him kindness. Three years ago, he reunited with Falrevere and became a Bloodsail Buccaneer.

Lester is fiercely loyal to Duke Falrevere, and he and Jessi are the only people the duke allows into his confidence. Lester's sailing skills leave much to be desired, but the past 3 years and his emulation of Duke and Jessi Falrevere have taught him much. His sailors are afraid of him, and he is ruthless when it comes to destroying his enemies; he often takes dangerous measures to accomplish his goals, such as pursuing an enemy vessel into a probable trap or taking a shortcut over a coral reef. Lester's arcane powers — particularly those that involve fire — are valuable in naval engagements, and the young warlock has finally found people who respect his abilities.

Commodore Wallace Boltscrew (male human tinker 8): A high-ranking member of Duke Falrevere's personal staff back in Kul Tiras, Wallace and his collection of fellow tinkers — whom he calls Wallace's Warriors — are valuable additions to Falrevere's crew. Wallace and the other tinkers improve the Bloodsail Buccaneers by adding technology to their equipment. Armored plating and more powerful cannons were only the first step; Wallace has tried numerous other experiments as well, and has slain only a dozen or so sailors testing them. A couple years ago, Wallace ran into another human engineer, Annetta Crank, in Bilgewater Port, and the two are now inseparable lovers and inventors. The two of them have crafted several submarines that could prove extremely dangerous; Duke Falrevere is holding these vessels secretly beneath Bloodsail Hold for now, for fear of tipping his hand to the Blackwater Raiders before he is ready.

Wallace was a valuable member of Falrevere's household before the Third War; he created devices to assist in all manner of situations and was the head of the other servants. He was head butler (he still wears his butler suit), head chef and stablemaster. Once he started constructing devices of war, though, he found his calling. I surmise that Wallace isn't really an evil individual; he's just found his passion, and unfortunately he happened to be a Bloodsail Buccaneer at the time. One could conceivably convince him to work for someone else, where his genius could be better used against those who really deserve a torpedo up the kilt.

The Burning Blade

Membership: 3,000.
Alignment: Lawful evil.
Affiliation: Burning Legion.
Regions of Influence: Their stronghold lies in the Thunder Axe Fortress of Desolace, but their foul taint reaches as far as the heights of the mountains of the Barrens and even under Thrall's feet in Orgrimmar.
Activities: Spreading the Burning Legion's taint and bringing down Thrall's Horde.

The Burning Blade is made of orc warlocks who oppose Thrall's new Horde. The few meetings between Thrall and Jaina Proudmoore revealed some things about orc history, and it terrified me to my toes. The orcs were once puppets for their masters, the Shadow Council, powerful warlocks who infected them with demonic bloodlust and urged them to pass through the portal to Azeroth to destroy us.

This does not, of course, forgive them their many atrocities. Yet it explains much.

After the Second War, the warlocks lost their power over the orcs. They did what they could to aid the Burning Legion during the Third War, but that failed too. Currently they are splintered, and what remains is the Burning Blade, a group of warlocks who wish to return to the old ways.

Split into several small groups around Kalimdor, these orcs see nothing wrong with the demonic-influenced existence they used to enjoy. The new Horde has put aside its demon-influenced, savage ways in favor of shamanistic savage ways, and these orcs desire nothing of it. They split from the Horde and dedicate themselves to serving the remaining demons of the Burning Legion, wishing to aid them in their continuous attacks on the people who have bested them.

If you thought the Horde was bad, this extension of the orcs harkens back to the First War, which should make anyone's blood run cold. They wish to bring back what they consider the glory days of the Horde, where the power of demons ran hot in their veins and Azeroth was theirs to control.

Those who know about the Burning Blade are quick to either run from them or try to destroy their little festering pockets of influence. I believe Thrall knows of their existence; he's not stupid. I don't know what he's waiting for, but I bet he has a reason.

Organization

The Burning Blade is a tightly run organization, with a fear of spies coloring their strict hierarchy. Leaders, one to every pocket of foul sorcerers, call themselves the Firsts, likely harkening back to the First War when they pushed the Horde to demon-tainted victory over the Alliance. The Firsts have direct contact with the demons still on Kalimdor, and work to summon more of their infernal allies from the Twisting Nether. They also send out inferiors, to serve as spies among the Horde. Since some goblins have joined the Burning Blade's ranks, it is likely there are spies among the Alliance as well.

Their inferiors are split into three other groups, called the Second, the Third, and Nothing. This refers to the Second War, which ended in defeat, and the Third War, in which the Horde did what the Burning Blade considers unthinkable — joined with the Alliance to defeat the demons. Nothing refers to the current state of truce with the Alliance, defeated demons, and a splintered Burning Blade.

The Seconds report directly to the Firsts, and know most of the secrets of the cult. Many powerful warlocks hold this rank, likely hoping their mentors kick it one day so they can take the reins. The Thirds comprise most of the Burning Blade, ambitious and foul orcs who want power and do anything to get it. Nothings are the initiates, sent on mundane tasks such as hunting, cleaning, cooking, and even serving as bait to snare those who trespass on the Burning Blade's territory.

Locations

The Burning Blade makes its beds wherever one can find demons. Their main area of influence is the Thunder Axe Fortress in Desolace, and the arcane energy there can curl your beard. I did discover an area in the hills of Desolace where they were actually attempting to summon more demons. I split one of these orcs in twain, but I couldn't take them all on, and I trotted off with my axe and my life, which was fine with me. Once I realized who these orcs are, they seemed to crop up everywhere: Dreadmist Peak in the Barrens, Skull Rock and Thunder Ridge in Durotar (and Thunder Ridge proved that the Burning Blade now has goblins serving it!), and there is even a whisper about Burning Blade movement in Orgrimmar itself, in Ragefire Chasm, the cave complex underneath Thrall's city.

Members

There are many orcs who are not happy with the current Horde. Why should they be? The current state of the Horde is a tenuous peace with the Alliance, and

most orcs prefer a life of blood and… what are they always saying… oh yes, blood and thunder. However, many orcs attack Alliance caravans and travelers without ever leaving the Horde. The orcs who serve the Burning Blade likely feel that the divine magic Thrall encourages is weak, and they long for the rush of demonic power. I've been close to a demon. I can almost understand the pull, but one would have to be a fool to give in to it. (But these *are* orcs, after all.)

The Burning Blade is comprised of orcs, mostly warlocks, who crave more and more power. The organization is aware of its tenuous existence, with both the Alliance and their former brethren after them, and so they are watchful of Horde spies.

I met an orc in Ratchet who lacked an eye. I had to buy him six pints of cherry stout, and have the innkeeper vouch for me, before he would tell me his story. He had been trying to infiltrate the Burning Blade to get information for Thrall. He made it past the first couple of tests, mostly arcane spellcasting and pledging oneself to the Burning Legion. He even made it past the drinking of foul demon blood (I bought him another pint at this point in the story, and one for myself, imagining the taste). Yet the final test, the cold-blooded murder of one of his own people, he couldn't get past. He escaped, and it only cost him one eye.

During his weeks of testing, he had learned that the Burning Blade is planning on summoning more demons to bolster an army, he didn't know where. His initiations were at the top of Dreadmist Peak. He had gotten high enough in the chain that they had told him about their footholds in Desolace. He was to travel there for further training after his test, heading toward an armorsmith in Crossroads.

The leaders are all orcs from the old wars, those who actually remember the First War and their old homeland. I didn't know orcs could live that long, but my drinking companion said the magic sustained them, but ravaged their bodies in the process. Twisted, ancient and evil to the core they are, he said, and harbor a deep hatred for the Alliance, the Horde and the Scourge.

I suppose one can hate that many people as long as he has the demons at his back.

The leaders do know, however, that they are not immortal, and that the weakened forces of the demons make them vulnerable. They are carefully grooming younger warlocks to take their positions, but my companion did not know what initiations that entailed.

When I asked what Thrall was going to do about them, the one-eyed orc glared at me and would say nothing more. He soon left for his boat, headed for Booty Bay. I guessed he was taking a vacation, hunting in Stranglethorn.

Leaders

Klass Metalfist (male orc Wrl18): Klass Metalfist was born 18 years before the First War. He was a willing receptacle for the arcane influence of the demonic powers, and joined the Shadow Council to prepare for the first invasion of Azeroth. He was a junior warlock, and thus was not destroyed after the Second War. He helped pull together the remaining warlocks and followed the "castrated" Horde (and the Burning Legion) across the seas to Kalimdor. The warlocks attempted to aid the Burning Legion, even tricking some orcs into accepting demonic influence for more power, but still fled, defeated, at the end of the war. Klass helped build Thunder Axe Fortress in Desolace, allying himself with the Magram centaur in order to keep his hideout secret. He performs dark magic in the fortress, but leaves the demon-summoning to Al'arr, as she is even more secluded than he. He wants nothing less than the usurpation of Thrall. Well, that and becoming leader of the Horde. And the toppling of the Alliance. And the return of the Burning Legion. Okay, he's an ambitious bastard. I've not seen him, but I've heard of him, and how he looks less like an orc and more like a nightmare that some of the more damaged Third War heroes dream about.

Al'arr Darkhills (female orc Wrl16): Al'arr was a child when her father, Shan'ku, joined with the Shadow Council to open the portal to Azeroth. She spied on her father and his comrades and studied magic without his knowledge. When the First War ended, she strode into the Shadow Council's secret meeting, shocking them all with her prowess. She helped keep the council together after the Second War, and then helped form the Burning Blade. Her skill is such that she is Klass's first choice for the leader of the Shadowbreak Ravine chapter, as they are the foremost demon-summoning group. Now, orc women are nothing to look at, but I've seen Al'arr — she makes the rest of their race look fine indeed. Let's just say that female orc fangs are supposed to stop at four inches and leave it at that.

Neeru Fireblade (male orc Wrl10): Neeru Fireblade has perhaps the most dangerous position of any Burning Blade member: He sits under Thrall's nose in Orgrimmar, claiming to be a warlock who aids the orc leader, but really works to do the Burning Blade's bidding right in the heart of the Horde. He leads the Burning Blade regiment that inhabits a cave complex just outside of Orgrimmar, and they work to watch the Horde's movement and see if Thrall plans to move against them before they have a sufficient defense. Neeru is one of the youngest Burning Blade members, in healthy prime instead of hoarding corrupted and twisted years. Since he wasn't in the First War, and

only tasted the end of the Second War, Klass Metalfist doesn't trust him as far as he could spit a dead rat (although I hear that's pretty far). He put Neeru in charge of the orcs in Durotar, but there are a handful of warlocks who know they must watch Neeru in turn. Neeru is fed carefully modified information in case he does cave in to Thrall. If Klass has his ultimate wish, Thrall will swallow the misinformation, then kill Neeru as a traitor, fulfilling two goals.

As Neeru is not a warlock from the original Shadow Council, he isn't a gnarled horror. He's just really ugly like a normal orc.

The Druids of the Fang

Membership: 3,000.

Alignment: Neutral good (or chaotic evil; see below).

Affiliation: Independent.

Regions of Influence: Since the tragedy, the druids have scattered around Kalimdor to look for a key to saving their leader, but they gather mostly in Thunder Bluff and the Barrens.

Activities: Heal the Barrens. Unequivocally taint the Barrens. Work to save their leader from the nightmare realm where he exists.

The Druids of the Fang were previously a night elf faction devoted to healing the Barrens and returning it to its former lush glory. After their leader became trapped in an attempt to connect to the Emerald Dream, those close to him became corrupted and now keep others from attempting to save him. These druids work to spread the chaos and corruption in the caverns and throughout the Barrens.

Turning independent to entreat the tauren druids for help, the remaining druids now struggle to free their leader, defeat their evil brethren, and complete the goal of restoring the Barrens from the further taint. Their biggest rivals are their own kind, the druids that carry corrupted souls and prevent the rescue of Naralex, the fallen Druid of the Fang leader.

An organization beset by tragedy, these druids accept any and all help to achieve their goals. It is one of the few organizations supported by both the Alliance and the Horde.

Organization

The leader of this shattered shell of a group was Naralex. The night elf druids I spoke to paint him into a savior figure, one to deliver the Barrens from its desert existence and deliver us all from the demons. The tauren druids have a slightly more realistic view of this man: He thought the cavern complex underneath the Barrens would be the ideal place to try to siphon in some of the magic of the Emerald Dream. Bring in the dream magic, he thought, and the Barrens will flower again. Now, I don't know much about magic, but I wasn't much surprised to hear the second part of the story. This druid took a wrong turn and ended up not in the Emerald Dream, but stuck in some nightmare place. Now he's in a coma, and is the conduit through which this nightmare stuff is coming to warp and twist everything in the Wailing Caverns. His seconds, four extremely powerful druids, were corrupted and still remain down there, guarding his body from anyone who tries to help.

So no one reports to Naralex, although he's the leader. The remaining Druids of the Fang are so distraught that there is little organization among them. If a druid discovers a band of strong adventurers who seem decent enough, he entreats them for help.

The tauren took pity on the disorganized druids and invited them into their fold. Now tauren druids, while they do not directly order the night elves, guide them in druidic spells to try to cleanse the caverns, and give them places to train to increase their skills. The night elf druids are focused on restoring their master to his former state and have since put off the small matter of fixing the Barrens. Yet it is likely that the Barrens can't be fixed until Naralex is released from his sleep, so it probably all points to the same goal.

Locations

The Druids of the Fang have no central gathering place, unless you count the horrors of the Wailing Caverns. I found both kinds of druid there — the mad, powerful, corrupted druids, and the confused and disorganized good ones. The latter are not as deep in the caverns. The best place to get information about the Druids of the Fang is Thunder Bluff, which surprises the beard off me. Tauren druids are keenly aware of the horrors of the Wailing Caverns, and druids of both races often travel between the Wailing Caverns, Crossroads and Thunder Bluff, working to get more information and make plans. These druids often travel to Moonglade, as well, but they don't spend too much time there.

Members

The Druids of the Fang were once a proud and powerful group. Druids who wished to connect to the potent power of the bear would study nature and live long lives of arrogant superiority (although most night

elves already did that). The existing Druids of the Fang would go through years of initiation and live in nature away from towns, communing with nature and those massive ancient trees.

Now, their numbers have dwindled. Many druids lost their lives in the Third War; and after Naralex fell into his half-living, half-dead state, most figured the Druids of the Fang were a lost organization, dishonored by their destruction of the nature of the caves. Yet some night elves, and some tauren, believe the caverns can be cleansed. These optimistic youths either attempt to find druids in Thunder Bluff or Crossroads (or even the caverns, although some of those youths don't survive that journey) who can help them.

Apart from a cursory check to see if the student has promise, a good heart, and a willingness to do hard work and possibly lose her soul in the corrupting magic of the caverns, the Druids of the Fang accept any new acolyte. Their numbers are low, and they are desperate to increase them.

I admit that even though the druids don't seem to care too much who they take in, their new acolytes are eager and strong. I haven't met a new initiate who isn't determined to heal the caverns and the Barrens. Night elves and tauren in the organization don't quarrel. I've seen night elves in Thunder Bluff (always escorted by tauren, of course) and tauren in Moonglade, where druids sometimes go to meditate. The new ones are focused, and I think they give some life to the old druids in their miserable states.

Leaders

Naralex (male night elf druid 18): While an impotent leader, the druids I spoke with still insist that Naralex is, in fact, their leader. A powerful druid who had connected to the Emerald Dream countless times, this night elf was devoured by the magical energies of the Wailing Caverns when he tried to become a conduit for the magic of the Emerald Dream. Now he is a conduit for the energies of a nightmare plane, guarded by night elves driven mad by the dark energies he emits. He does not lead the druids anymore, but to name a new leader would be to admit defeat, to admit that their once noble organization is now evil and corrupt, responsible for the Wailing Caverns and the murderer of the Barrens' last hope for restoration.

Ebru (male night elf druid 13): Ebru is likely the strongest of the druids trained after Naralex's fall. He is, oddly enough, the one druid who keeps the rest of them together. He lacks the grim view of the situation that the older druids have, as well as the eager simplicity of the younger ones. He hunts in the Wailing Caverns, piling up the bodies of monsters, collecting gruesome trophies. He welcomes anyone who wishes to hunt beside him, and feels that if they can cleanse the caverns of monsters, he's one step toward healing the Barrens. He is young, but when he gives orders, the druids listen. He sometimes clashes with Nalpak, who also stays near the caves, but the druids are drawn to Ebru's fierce optimism. Ebru focuses mainly on killing

the raptors in the caves, believing that their creation was the first thing to taint the caves after Naralex's descent into nightmare.

Nalpak (male night elf druid 16): Nalpak is one of the druids who remains in the higher tunnels of the Wailing Caverns, attempting to keep the dark monsters residing in the caverns contained and away from the Barrens. He is one of the older druids, one who escaped the fate of his companions. He mourns his friends and refuses to leave the caverns, feeling that he has some part of the responsibility of keeping the monsters within from streaming into the Barrens. If a druid wishing to receive training can make it to him, he accepts her immediately, believing that the student has undergone enough tests in simply getting to him. He is a tired yet determined druid, waiting for the right time to help his leader.

Nara Wildmane (female tauren druid 14): Nara is a young druid, raised and trained in Thunder Bluff, but one of the first tauren to reach out to the night elves after Naralex fell into his coma. She resides in Crossroads, in close proximity to the Wailing Caverns, keeping track of the comings and goings of druids in the area. She has traveled to the Wailing Caverns several times, and has the battle scars to prove it. She works closely with Nalpak, sending eager young druids his way to give him what aid she can. She believes Naralex was right in his theory that the Wailing Caverns are the key to healing the Barrens, and is determined to aid Naralex however she can.

Hamuul Runetotem (male tauren druid 19): An elderly tauren who knows Naralex from years back, Hamuul lives in Thunder Bluff and trains druids. Quite old, he rarely leaves the city, but I've seen his skills and he is not to be trifled with. I sometimes wonder if he's past his prime, or even afraid of Naralex's fate. He likely has enough power to help heal the caverns, but he claims he is too old to travel that far. He's hesitant to travel by magic to the area, fearing the magic of the caverns will trap him the way Naralex was trapped. He sends new druids to Nara Wildmane in the Barrens when he feels they're ready for further training.

The Scourge

Membership: Unknown. Undoubtedly in the tens or hundreds of thousands.

Alignment: Lawful evil.

Affiliation: Scourge.

Regions of Influence: Northrend, Lordaeron.

Activities: Sow evil, terror and undeath among the living. Dominate Lordaeron and eventually the world. Return the Forsaken to the power of the Scourge. Destroy the Alliance, Horde and Burning Legion.

Everyone knows about the Scourge. They paved the way for the coming of the Burning Legion. The Lich King, who was an orc warlock (big surprise that it was an orc warlock, huh?) named Ner'zhul, sent an undead plague to Lordaeron with the help of a corrupted Alliance archmage, Kel'Thuzad. This attack threw the citizens into chaos: Some contracted a plague that would kill them then raise them as foul zombies (or worse); and others were forced to watch the graveyards erupt, their loved ones returning as monsters.

The Lich King then corrupted the beloved prince of Lordaeron, Arthas. In a masterful move, he played Arthas with the help of Kel'Thuzad, convincing him that he served his people by slaying them in cold blood when he realized they had contracted the undead plague. His soul was forfeit when he took up the powerful, corrupted blade Frostmourne with the intent of becoming powerful enough to save his people. He became a death knight, killed his father in cold blood, and claimed the throne of Lordaeron for the Scourge. When the Lich King's power began to fail, Arthas investigated and split the Frozen Throne where Ner'zhul was imprisoned. The power of the Lich King entered him, Ner'zhul and Arthas merged, and Arthas claimed the Frozen Throne as the new Lich King. So he's now the new Lich King and resides in Northrend, the place of his corruption. He, however, is not encased in ice as the former Lich King was, and all we know is that he commands the Scourge on Northrend as well as the thousands of undead that have overrun the former jewel of the Alliance, Lordaeron.

We do not know the current plans of the Scourge, but we all fear the implications of more and more undead, powerful necromancers, and liches populating what used to be our homes. Fighting in war and dying a warrior's death is one thing. I face that every day, gladly. Yet fighting with the knowledge that your death will not be a clean one, that you will come back as a foul being; that is something else. The Scourge fights everyone, Alliance, Horde, Burning Legion and innocent bystanders. You'd think, with that many enemies, it would fall, but it does not. It thrives, because when we lose warriors in battle, they gain them.

The Scourge is not invincible, however. I have cut down many of them, some of them once my own friends, and will cut down more. I don't know anyone, tauren or gnome, who would not do as much.

What we hate, however, is the necessity of defiling our own people's corpses to make them unfit for the

Scourge to raise again. There are some who cannot bring themselves to do this, for religious or sentimental reasons, and they are fools; it is better to cut off a friend's head when he is dead then to cut it off when he is risen again, and can look you in the eye.

Fighting the Scourge is something everyone on Azeroth can get behind. While simply "killing" a creature again doesn't seem to do the job, as they often have a necromancer on the rear lines to just raise the damn thing, I'm fond of cutting them up. A couple of good slices with the axe and they're done for. Fire is also useful, as charred husks do not serve as such a useful army. People do not want to come home to burned fields and shells of houses, but a scorched home is better than no home at all.

We have the Knights of the Silver Hand on our side, but this is a group that has experienced more hardships than most during these dark days. Once the pinnacle of enlightenment, goodness, purity and light, they are forever shamed that the powerful Lich King who sits upon the frozen throne was one of theirs. They wrack their brains on where they went wrong, why they couldn't see the streak of evil that obviously lurked inside Arthas. If he were truly a paladin, as they are, then there is no way he would have been corrupted. I think they have rather a too high opinion of the paladins, but I'm not the one to tell them.

Even though paladins are some of our most powerful weapons against the Scourge, with their holy power over undead, the paladins are not what they once were. Some have been driven into obsessive madness, forming the Scarlet Crusade and killing living and undead alike in their eagerness to eradicate the Scourge. Others traveled across the sea with Jaina Proudmoore to help defeat the Burning Legion and now reside on Theramore. They certainly do what they can to destroy undead they discover on Kalimdor, but the Scourge's numbers there are like a thimble of beer compared to the great kegs that are Lordaeron and Northrend. We'll need the paladins to defeat the Scourge, but they are not up to the task right now, and I don't know how much longer we can wait.

Reports from Lordaeron say that the Scourge's goal currently is to hunt down the remaining pockets of resistance, destroy the remote villages, and raise all of the Alliance's graveyards. Essentially, they are trying to take what was once the most populated continent and turn it into a hell, subverting every available person, dead or alive, to their control.

Organization

At the top of the organization, of course, is the Lich King, Arthas. He sends orders from on high in his ice fortress at Northrend. His direct underlings are liches, undead mages and necromancers with incredible power to spread plague and command undead armies. I do not know how many liches there are, but I know Arthas's right-hand lich is Kel'Thuzad, who reigns in Lordaeron. He has his hands partially full fighting the Scarlet Crusade — human zealots who would just as soon kill a living creature as an undead one, just to make sure. Kel'Thuzad also battles the Forsaken, who are undead who broke free from the control of the Lich King. (Yes, we have two groups of undead to deal with. Makes me want to pick up my axe and go harvesting some zombie heads.)

Another fearsome undead creature is the banshee. They often lead scouting troops to discover new areas to infiltrate. Other important Scourge members inlcude necromancers, who are responsible for raising the dead and commanding them, and the Cult of the Damned, a bizarre group of mortals, mostly humans, who are insane. They are so fascinated by the undead that they follow them, worship them, even emulate them, hoping to one day be damned as the undead are. They don't see the foulness and evil. They see power and eternal life. How they can view existence as a rotting creature who's a slave to a bastard in Northrend as something they want to experience forever is beyond me. (See **Lands of Conflict** for more information on the Cult of the Damned.)

Most of the undead report to a region's necromancers or liches, who in turn report to Kel'Thuzad. He reports pertinent information to Arthas, but I do not think he inundates his lord with all of the details of the happenings on the continents. That's a lot of news. And what is there to say, anyway? "Greetings, lord, I killed some people, turned them undead, and rotted a bit?"

Then again, if they take over another city the size of Stratholme, or re-enslave the Forsaken, that would be news indeed.

The rogue undead, the Forsaken, are the wild cards here. Apparently Arthas lost some power over the undead before becoming the Lich King, which allowed one of the more powerful banshees, Sylvanas Windrunner, to escape his hold. She freed many more undead creatures, and currently leads the Forsaken from her tunnel complex underneath the former court of Lordaeron. While they are not part of the Scourge and do not fall into the Scourge organization, they certainly work along the same lines — kill the living and dominate the whole of Azeroth. Arthas sees the Forsaken as something akin to lost sheep, and wishes to bring them back into the Scourge. He has many plans for Azeroth, so he can't focus entirely on Sylvanas, but who knows when he'll turn his full gaze to her and her followers?

The interesting thing is that the farther from a lich or a necromancer the undead get, the more disoriented they are. They lose the command of the Lich King, but they don't necessarily become free. Once the will of the necromancer or other controlling force leaves their head, they have no memory of their former selves, and they shuffle around, mindless husks, searching for someone to lead them. Of course, you or I couldn't do it; there's no going up to a zombie and commanding it to follow you, unless you're a necromancer.

Locations

Arthas leads the Scourge in Northrend from the Frozen Throne, and you can't throw a dagger in Icecrown without hitting one of those beasts. And believe me, I've been there and thrown those daggers; there's always more.

The Scourge's secondary base is the continent of Lordaeron, in the city of Stratholme, Arthas's first conquest. It was a bustling city of 25,000 people; I'd visited it often. And now it's gone. I don't believe there are any remaining mortals there, except for those of the Cult of the Damned and mortal necromancers. It is a pleasure to kill one of those traitorous bastards and make it so they can never be raised. Take the head, that usually does it. Lordaeron's north and eastern areas are practically abysmal with the Scourge. Their foul stench permeates the air.

Yet the Scourge has reached all areas of the world, dripping down through my home of Khaz Modan and into Azeroth, and even west to Kalimdor. Arthas wants his finger on everything happening in the world, and he has the forces to do it. About the only place the Scourge doesn't go is the Undercity in Lordaeron, but it's lousy enough with Forsaken that you couldn't tell if there was a Scourge presence there or not. Well, the Forsaken might know. Yet hanging out in a city of Scourge and Forsaken is not my idea of fun, even if they do serve good beer.

Members

The members of the Scourge are easy to spot, smell and identify. And it doesn't take much to join. Either love the Scourge or be undead and under the Lich King's spell, and you're in. Not a lot you have to do to be in this club.

Some of the first members were mortals who had fallen in the undead plague. People sickened from the plague and died, only to rise as zombies. This city-razing technique proved to be not as efficient as the Lich King desired, apparently, because he started telling his necromancers to desecrate our graveyards and raise up even more members.

Only two things seem to separate a Scourge servitor from the Lich King's will: whatever faltering in the Lich King's power allowed the Forsaken to free themselves from his grasp, and a good old-fashioned axe. Scourge creatures are bidden to do the Lich King's will, and they do this with a blind fervor.

The Cult of the Damned, now there's an enigma. No one knows why they do what they do. Mothers didn't love them enough? Didn't get the right apprenticeships? Love of their lives spurned them (or got turned into undead — there's a gruesome thought)? Whatever the reason, they willfully follow the Scourge, dressing in dark robes, doing their bidding, helping to spread the plague into more and more cities.

Leaders

Arthas, the Lich King: Formerly a Knight of the Silver Hand and heir to the throne of Lordaeron, Arthas was a proud paladin. When he saw his people sicken and die of plague, then rise as an undead army against him, he went a little mad. Feeling the only way to cleanse the plague would be to kill those infected with it, he slaughtered many in the city of Stratholme. He did not succeed in holding back the plague, and the city fell to the Scourge. He then heard of a mighty blade that could give him the power to defeat the Scourge, but it was a clever trap designed to enslave Arthas. He murdered mercenaries, and then his own allies, during the journey to get to the blade, and once there, surrendered his soul to *Frostmourne* and slew his friend Muradin Bronzebeard. Now supposedly powerful enough to help his people, he was so well and truly evil that he gave his services willingly to the Scourge.

Arthas was a faithful servant to the Lich King and in charge of the Scourge, when he felt his power wane. Tremors ran through the earth: Illidan Stormrage had taken on the aspect of a demon, then raised an army of naga and blood elves to strike at the Frozen Throne. Arthas and his army of undead met and defeated Illidan's forces at Icecrown Citadel. The throne was sundered and Ner'zhul's spirit was finally free. It entered Arthas, and the two beings mingled, becoming the new Lich King.

Now Arthas reigns from Northrend, driving the Scourge to take over more and more of the living lands. He has many goals, or so we believe. He wants to retake control of the Forsaken,

becoming king — or god — of all undead. He wants to spread the plague south to Stormwind and the surrounding towns, and over to Kalimdor. He wants to kill his former friend and lover, Jaina Proudmoore, and take control of the Alliance. And then, just to make sure he hasn't missed anything, he wants to control all sentient races on the planet. The night elves even whisper that he has his eye set on the dragons, and even Elune, for domination. If he can destroy the gods of Azeroth, then nothing can stop him.

Kel'Thuzad (male lich necromancer 25): Kel'Thuzad was a human mage whose addiction to arcane magic allowed Ner'zhul to corrupt him. Twenty years ago, Kel'Thuzad started the Cult of the Damned to help spread Ner'zhul's undead plague. It took 15 years to develop the plague and start its spread, but once it took hold, it snowballed like a child's game in Khaz Modan gone wrong. Kel'Thuzad had a hand in the corruption of Arthas, taunting him and drawing him further and further north. Arthas killed Kel'Thuzad, but later raised him as a powerful lich. Once Arthas was fully corrupted, he took Kel'Thuzad as his second. They began doing the Lich King's bidding, which was to summon the demons of the Burning Legion into the world.

The line of power gets a little fuzzy here, but I believe I've puzzled out the truth. The Lich King was bound to do the will of the Burning Legion. Arthas and Kel'Thuzad were bound to do the will of the Lich King. During the Third War, Arthas and Kel'Thuzad, although faithful to their lord, did not want to do the will of the demons. They had begun to feel the hatred

Death in the North

From the Journal of Jemni Coppertongue, found in the wilderness of Northrend.

My travels through Northrend have gone as expected. The landscape has changed considerably since the Scourge has taken up residence here. The slime and mold that has taken over Lordaeron looks like a dirty hanky compared to this.

Most of the animals that used to prowl these northern wastes are gone. I saw a small army of zombies find a rabbit burrow, root it out, and devour every living thing they could find. Ghosts fly high above, searching the caves for any mountain cats that they can suck the life from. In some regions, there are no birds, no land creatures — I didn't even find insects on the small scraps the zombies had left behind. They've removed the life from everything.

There are not, however, as many Scourge creatures here as I expected. The land is thick with them, yes, but not as many as reported. Necromancers ride to and from the Frozen Throne frequently, leading groups of loping undead behind them. A small port on the southern coast bustles with shipbuilding. But the wilderness around Icecrown is as dead as the wildlife. This leads me to think that much of Arthas's army has moved to the mainland. I don't know what they are planning, but I intend to send word back as soon as I finish this journey.

There were no ships on the water when I landed. Three large ships are in the construction, I expect they'll be finished in a month or so. Zombies swarm over the ships, working nonstop. I suppose they don't get tired. Then again, with a necromancer over me, I might work round the clock too.

Icecrown Citadel glows, sending its light up into the night sky. It's a necropolis, purple arcane power pulsing from it, making it easy to find. I plan on heading there tomorrow to see what I can find out. I've done much to conceal myself and am somewhat confident I will remain safe. I plan on returning to my skiff and Lordaeron in two days after mapping out the area around the Frozen Throne. I have kept an eye on the main road since I got here, and have not seen him at all. He should be at his necropolis, doing who knows what. I intend on finding out at least a little bit.

I will add to this report tomorrow night after my trip to Arthas's fortress.

The torn and bloody journal ends here.

Brann's Note: I'm not sure how reliable Jemni Coppertongue is. I didn't notice Icecrown glowing, for instance. Perhaps it was in the throes of some arcane experiment? Or perhaps Jemni is a few ounces short of a powder horn?

the Lich King had for his enslavers, the demons, and began to work on a way to free themselves from the hold of the Burning Legion. Like it or not, I believe it was the mutiny of the Scourge that had a hand in our victory over the Burning Legion. If Archimonde had been able to command the entirety of the Scourge, I don't think there would have been anyone to stop them. I don't know anyone who feels gratitude toward the Scourge, however.

Currently, Kel'Thuzad resides in Stratholme, instructing the Scourge, reporting to Arthas, and overseeing the Cult of the Damned. He appears to be completely dedicated to the Lich King, but one has to wonder. Ner'zhul wished to break free from his servitude to the demons. Arthas absorbed the power of Ner'zhul. Does Kel'Thuzad wish to one day take Arthas's place at the throne at Northrend? The resulting battle would be a fascinating one to watch. It might do a decent job of eradicating a good amount of the undead. In fact, that might a really good thing; setting the two enemies, the Scourge and the Burning Legion, against each other in the Third War served almost everyone. Least of all the demons, of course.

Linnena Hallow (female human necromancer 13): Linnena studied magic from an early age, having been dumped on the doorstep of a mage's house in Stormwind as a child. Having no parents and being raised among mages, she grew to be talented and cold. I met her once, years ago. She stopped in Khaz Modan on her way north. We didn't know at the time that she was secretly training as a necromancer, and had been in contact with Kel'Thuzad. He called her to be by his side as he sowed the undead plague through Stratholme, and she was instrumental in raising the undead to strengthen the Scourge's army.

With that done, she began training necromancers to further serve the Scourge. She has met with some resistance, as the Forsaken do what they can to stop her. The Forsaken are desperate for the powers of a necromancer, and they focus on the trainees to try to entice them to their side. However, the Scourge has so much more to offer a necromancer, and most of them serve Arthas. With Linnena training them, they become as cold and calculating as she is.

Linnena's whereabouts are currently unknown, but her name is whispered enough to assure me that she is still alive and well, and still raising the undead around Lordaeron. I suspect she is in southern Lordaeron, around the Hillsbrad Foothills, or sniffing around the proud city of Aerie Peak. After depleting the graveyards of our dead, I suspect she could be planning on slaughtering the trolls in the area and then raising them, but I fear she is hunting the green dragons that patrol and protect the area. The Scourge is terrifying. The Scourge accompanied by undead green dragons would be a juggernaut.

Letter from Uther Lightbringer to the paladin Mimblis Evermorne, year 24

Mimblis,

Greetings, my friend. I hope the Light finds you well.

The young Arthas fills me with hope. He recently became a full paladin, and is nearly all I could hope for in a Knight of the Silver Hand. He is strong and powerful, with a devotion to his people that borders on zealousness. He's a fine paladin and will make a fine king when our beloved Terenas leaves us. Arthas has some growing to do, so I hope King Terenas will remain here for some time.

The only thing that bothers me about Arthas is that he has a disturbing quality in him. Sometimes, in training, I have seen him go a little far while sparring. He is so dedicating to winning the match that he forgets that it is only for training. He lacks control; I suppose it's a sense of ruthlessness that lies under his honorable exterior. I have full confidence that he will use this dedication to battle for his people, and I look forward to testing him. Once he really wets his sword, I can begin to teach him control. I don't want to rein his power just yet, until I can see what he's capable of.

Arthas loves his people very much. We recently visited some of the poorer villages outside of Lordaeron, giving healing to those in need. I wanted to test his healing powers, as well as see how he interacted with his people beyond the wealthy nobles in the city. He was full of pity for these people, weeping for a woman who had lost her leg in a wolf attack. After healing her pain, he set out on horseback, searching for the wolf. He slew three, bringing the pelts back to the woman to serve as her blankets. I was touched, but again, a little alarmed at his single-mindedness. She was grateful, and as we were there to serve the wounded and sick, our work was completed.

His relationship with Jaina Proudmoore is one I must watch. Lordaeron has never had a mage as a queen, but if she and Arthas wed, that's what we will be faced with. Perhaps it will be a good union of magic and politics, or at least bring the mages and paladins closer together. I will watch them carefully.

A good thing about Jaina is that she will soften his hard edges. While she attacks her obstacles with a firm and unyielding mind, she is more diplomatic and cerebral in her approach, while Arthas may simply hammer on something until it disintegrates. They will make a strong union: He is the naked steel of a sword, and she is a fist in a velvet glove. I have confidence that they will receive public support, and I will lend them my support as well. I watch Arthas training on the field, and feel he can take on anything. He attacks with a single-mindedness that I know he will apply toward anything in life, be it physical confrontations or political. King Terenas has a good son.

I have total confidence in Arthas. Yes, he has more to learn, but don't we all? He'll overcome his weaknesses and become a wise king, in time.

Looking forward to our trip to Stratholme,

Uther

This chapter is more of an appendix. It is a collection of miscellaneous notes — combat tactics, spells, research, magic developments and the like — that the folks in Kalimdor, the South Seas and Northrend have discovered (or rediscovered), or that are particular to them.

Prestige Classes

As introduced in **World of Warcraft RPG,** Chapter 4: Prestige Classes, here are more prestige classes for your players to choose from.

Buccaneer

Description: Satisfied to let the Scourge, the Burning Legion and the mortals fight for supremacy of the land, the buccaneer is the unrivaled lord of the seas. A buccaneer dominates the seas and becomes rich off the hapless ships that fall into his traps.

Nursing hatred in his heart, the buccaneer shows no mercy or consideration for any. He tyrannizes Alliance and Horde ships alike, gold being the same color to him no matter the race of the victim.

The buccaneer is highly skilled in sea combat, including, but not limited to, firearms and sailing. The appearance of a buccaneer ship on the horizon can make the most seasoned captain's heart grow cold with panic.

Buccaneers in the World: Although any race can become a buccaneer, most are human or goblin, the Bloodsail Buccaneers and the Blackwater Raiders of the South Seas being the most notorious. The most successful buccaneers are part of larger organizations; a lone ship of buccaneers is going to do little damage before being set upon by authorities — or larger pirate groups. Some buccaneers are in the employ of more respectable members of society, acting as privateers or doing dirty work against a lord's enemy's fleet; but most work for themselves.

Pirates are feared and hated by the populace, and privateers have a reputation for being almost as bad as those they hunt. The seas are already a treacherous place to be, with the Maelstrom and the naga among other dangers, and the fear of pirate fleets slows sea travel considerably. The buccaneer is proud of this notoriety, and does much to encourage it.

In an adventuring party, the buccaneer is concerned with exploration and plunder, and is useful to have along for any trips across the seas or any dealings with unsavory characters. An evil buccaneer is likely to attempt to take the party's portion of the treasure once the adventure is at an end, or leave them stranded on an island.

The typical buccaneer is a soul who believes the world is his oyster, and everyone else is there to either give him things, or be in the way of him having things. Treasure, the freedom of the sea, and more treasure are his only concerns in life.

The buccaneer relies mostly on Agility, as he favors firearms over swords (although he does, of course, use swords and knives frequently), and needs the sure-footedness for his sea legs. Spirit and Stamina help in keeping alive in on the seas, and Strength never hurt a man in a fight. Charisma comes in handy now and then, if the buccaneer would rather bluff his way out of a situation than fight, as rare as those situations may be. Intellect? You don't need to read to puzzle out a map or recognize treasure.

Buccaneers commonly band together with other buccaneers, rogues or warriors. Tinkers are welcome on their ships for their usefulness, but scouts are considered useless, as the buccaneer knows all he needs to about the sea. Priests and shamans are considered useful for healing spells, but buccaneers do not tolerate proselytizing. Arcane spellcasters are regarded with caution, and can be bargained with if throwing them into the sea proves a bad idea.

Although some buccaneers have used the ingenious submarines that tinkers create, the majority of buccaneers love sailing almost as much as they love their treasure. Their ships are commonly in top shape, and they commonly have a crew of slaves onboard to keep the ship watertight and seaworthy. A buccaneer pays for nothing he is not forced to.

Hit Die: d10.

Requirements

To qualify to become a buccaneer, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Alignment: Any non-good.

Affiliation: Any.

Base Attack Bonus: +4.

Lords of the Sea – Notable Buccaneers

Ana Bloodteeth: Formerly of the Darkspear clan, Ana is a troll who never could accept the Horde's command to abandon cannibalism. She fled the Horde and commandeered a goblin merchant ship. She ate the captain in front of the terrified crew, and since then they have sailed under her command with the knowledge that she will eat any mutineers. One of the few successful solo pirate ships, she patrols the eastern coast of Kalimdor, robbing merchant ships and occasionally raiding Theramore as a challenge. She eats the heart of every captain she kills, convinced that her victim's leadership power enters her this way. Her ship is the *Beating Heart* and her flag depicts sharp teeth fastened to a heart.

Enric Torque: Captain of the *Shattered Dagger*, Enric is a goblin who is relatively new to the Blackwater Raiders, but has become a respected and feared member. He has an uncanny ability to judge weather and sea conditions, and once challenged one of the other captains in the Blackwater Raiders to a race. He did so on a day he could taste a storm on the air; the other captain got well ahead, pleased with his progress, until his ship was struck by lightning and sank, burning. Some of the Blackwater Raiders believe he commands the weather to do his will. Small even for a goblin, Enric attacks the knees and tendons of his opponents, preferring to cripple them before dissecting them.

Quentin Bandor: Formerly a shrewd, ambitious student of architecture at Stormwind University, Quentin's ship to Lordaeron was commandeered by the Bloodsail Buccaneers. He watched the captain and the first mate killed in cold blood, and when the rest of the terrified passengers were dumped on an island west of Stormwind, he asked to join the pirates. They laughed at the student, and he offered to fight the first mate for the honor. He slew the buccaneer with little fanfare, his bloodthirsty manner surprising even himself. Two years later, he killed his own captain in his bunk. Now captain of the *Sea's Castle*, Quentin's ship is the envy of other pirates, as he applied his architectural know-how to modify his ship into a comfortable and terrifying war machine.

Skills: Profession (sailor) 4 ranks, Survival 3 ranks, Swim 5 ranks, Tumble 3 ranks.

Special: Proficiency with at least one firearm.

Class Skills

The Buccaneer's class skills (and the key ability for each) are Balance (Agy), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Agy), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Open Lock (Agy), Profession (sailor) (Spt), Stealth (Agy), Swim (Str), Use Rope (Agy), and Use Technological Device (Int). See **World of Warcraft RPG,** Chapter 5: Skills for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Buccaneers do not gain any additional weapon or armor proficiencies.

Bonus Feat: A buccaneer begins his career with a bonus feat. This feat must be chosen from the list below. The buccaneer also receives a bonus feat at 4th and 8th level. A buccaneer must meet all prerequisites for his bonus feats. The buccaneer bonus feats are: Bloodletter, Cleave, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (firearms), Far Shot, Great Cleave, Lightning Reload, Mighty Lungs, Pistol Whip, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Reload and Trick Shot.

Intuit Direction (Ex): The buccaneer has a difficult time being the scourge of the sea if he's always getting lost. On a sunny day or a clear night, the buccaneer can determine north with a DC 5 Survival check. If it's a cloudy day, the DC rises to 15, and if it's a cloudy night, the DC is 25. In addition, the buccaneer can make a DC 15 Profession (sailor) or Survival check to sail to a place he's never been, provided he has rough directions.

Prayers to the Sea (Sp): Although an unsavory lot, buccaneers do revere and respect two things (other than themselves): the sea and her lover, the wind. A buccaneer can use *control weather* as a caster equal to his buccaneer level once per day at 2nd level and twice per day at 7th level. However, doing so requires a quick ceremony and a sacrifice. The ceremony requires a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity, and the sacrifice can be either a living creature (hopefully a sentient enemy) or the buccaneer's own blood. Sacrificing another creature involves a coup de grace as part of the ceremony, and the victim must die in the attack. Sacrificing blood means the buccaneer slashes himself, dealing 1d6 points of damage per buccaneer level. This damage cannot be prevented in any way if the ceremony is to be successful.

Drunken Brawl (Ex): A veteran of the barroom brawl, as well as the ship's mess brawl, the buccaneer has mastered the art of using alcohol to fuel his rage. After two drinks (one drink equals one glass of wine, one mug of stout, one shot of whiskey, or the like),

Table 9-1: The Buccaneer (Buc)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Bonus feat, intuit direction
2nd	+2	+1	+3	+0	Prayers to the sea 1/day
3rd	+3	+2	+3	+1	Drunken brawl
4th	+4	+2	+4	+1	Bonus feat
5th	+5	+2	+4	+1	Ship familiarity
6th	+6	+3	+5	+2	Treasure nose
7th	+7	+3	+5	+2	Prayers to the sea 2/day
8th	+8	+3	+6	+2	Bonus feat, shrewdness
9th	+9	+4	+6	+3	Deck fighting
10th	+10	+4	+7	+3	Swashbuckle

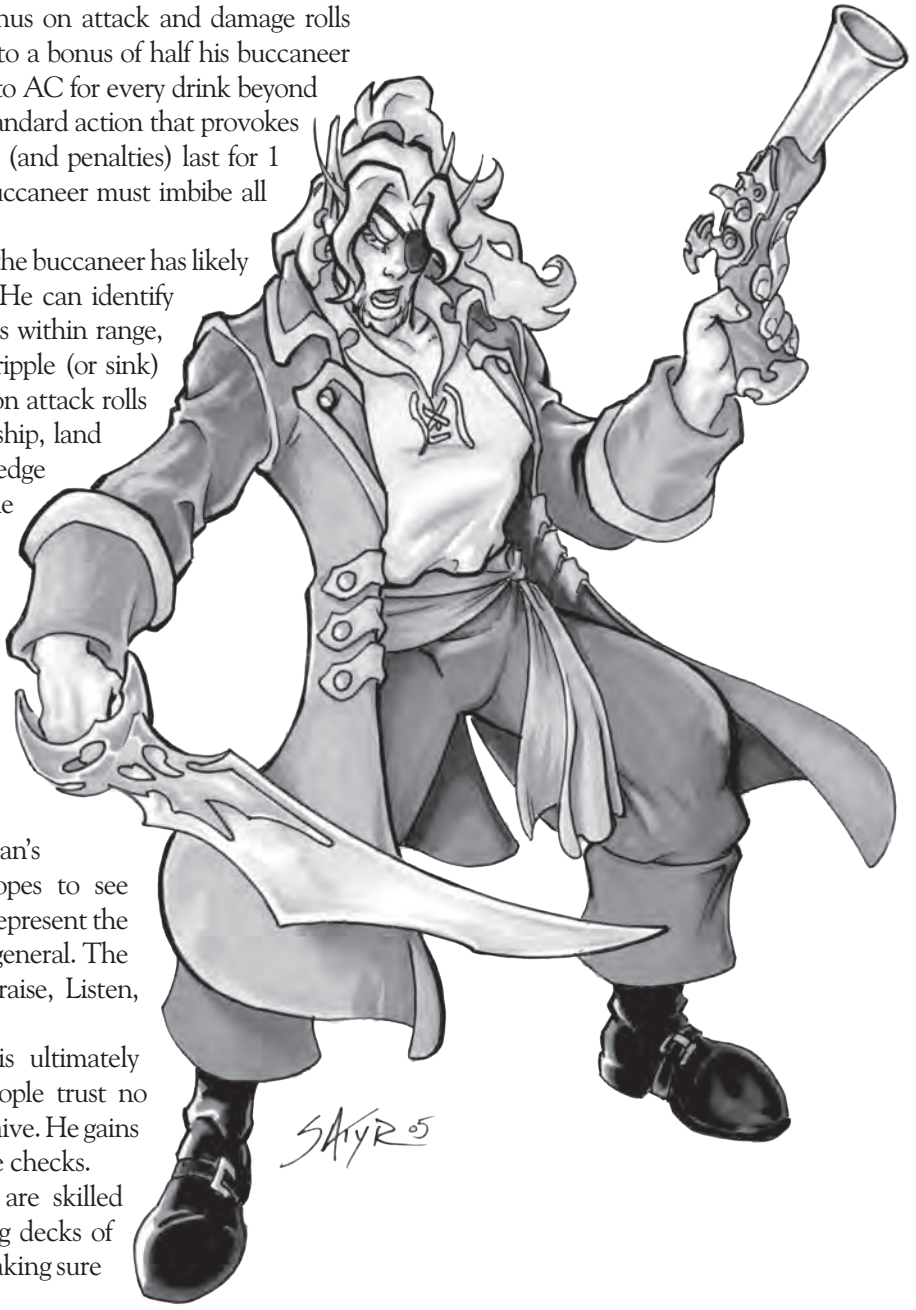
the buccaneer gains a +1 morale bonus on attack and damage rolls for every drink beyond those two, up to a bonus of half his buccaneer level. However, he takes a –1 penalty to AC for every drink beyond the initial two. Imbibing a drink is a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. These bonuses (and penalties) last for 1 minute per drink beyond two. The buccaneer must imbibe all drinks within 1 minute.

Ship Familiarity (Ex): By 5th level, the buccaneer has likely seen everything that floats or swims. He can identify a ship on the horizon, and once it gets within range, he knows exactly where to hit it to cripple (or sink) it. He gains a +3 competence bonus on attack rolls when firing a cannon (whether on a ship, land or anywhere else) at a ship. This knowledge extends to other structures as well. The buccaneer's cannon attacks against structures (including ships) ignore up to 5 points of hardness.

Treasure Nose (Ex): The buccaneer becomes so obsessed with treasure that his eyes are automatically drawn to any treasure nearby. He can spot a glint of gold in a cave, and he can hear the tinkle of a silver chain around a noblewoman's neck. Fortunately, the buccaneer hopes to see treasure everywhere, so these abilities represent the increasing acuity of his perceptions in general. The buccaneer gets a +2 bonus on Appraise, Listen, Search and Spot checks.

Shrewdness (Ex): A buccaneer is ultimately untrustworthy, and untrustworthy people trust no one else. A pirate cannot afford to be naive. He gains a +3 bonus on Bluff and Sense Motive checks.

Deck Fighting (Ex): Buccaneers are skilled at fighting on the pitching and rolling decks of ships. The life of a pirate also means making sure



no one sneaks up on you. At 9th level, the buccaneer cannot be flanked in melee combat. He loses this ability whenever he is denied his Agility bonus to AC. He also gains a +2 bonus on Balance checks.

Swashbuckle (Ex): At 10th level, the buccaneer has reached the pinnacle of his swashbuckling skills. He is adept at moving and tumbling around to confuse his opponents and put himself in the best position to strike. If the buccaneer moves at least 10 feet in a round, he can make a DC 0 Tumble check. For every 10 points by which he beats the DC, he gains a +1 bonus on melee attack and damage rolls and a +1 dodge bonus to AC. These bonuses last for 1 round.

Holy Strider

Description: The nomadic tauren gave the world the first holy strider. Constantly on the move, the tauren had to have reliable scouts able to go far ahead and return swiftly. If they ran into trouble, they had take care of themselves, either talking their way out of things, fighting their way out, or simply running and hiding. The holy strider tapped into the world's readily available energy and began harnessing that magic to aid their travels.

Now, although the tauren have their own well-fortified homeland and capital, the holy striders still find themselves in high demand as messengers, diplomats, spies and explorers.

Lanky and tall, nearly all holy striders carry minimal equipment, relying on nature, their own resourcefulness, and the kindness of strangers to aid them.

Holy Striders in the World: Along with shamanistic traditions, the tauren brought the secrets of the holy strider to the Horde, and its followers have spread. Once dominated by the tauren, the holy striders are now represented by trolls and, to a lesser extent, orcs and a handful of Forsaken.

Now that they have been trained in diplomatic endeavors, the holy strider has become a vital resource to any court in the Horde. It is quite useful to get a message — as well as a persuasive messenger — to its destination quickly. If the message is not well received, the holy strider has ways to remove himself from the situation quickly. Sometimes called spies, the holy striders claim that they are only gathering information for their employers.

Holy striders are well-respected among the Horde. Although they are not spellcasters, their mastery of the environment is said to be inspired by

Notable Holy Striders

Perith Stormhoof: While he is not famous in Azeroth, the name of Perith Stormhoof is whispered with reverence among the holy striders. He is one of the oldest holy striders. Tauren whisper that he has visited both Northrend and Theramore without injury, and he has even seen the shattered remains of Draenor. Perith does not confirm or deny these rumors; he knows that they only strengthen the respect and therefore worth of the holy striders. He works only for Cairne Bloodhoof and keeps many of his leader's secrets (even secrets Thrall doesn't know).

Nightwind: This troll has a shock of black hair shooting from the top of her head, swept back as though the wind is always in her face. Always grinning, she puts most people at ease when she first meets them; but her sharp mind takes in all details, and she is usually gone before anyone notices her pilfering through documents or questioning a simple-minded son of a powerful lord. "The nice troll-lady" is loved no matter where she goes, which makes her one of the best spies in Orgrimmar, although she travels under the title of messenger.

Hreggan Krakfist: One of Orgrimmar's few orc holy striders, Hreggan is charged with the important task of mapping Kalimdor and its surrounding islands. He looks for new settlement sites, charts the monsters or Alliance forces in the area, and makes sure Thrall's maps are correct. He returns to Orgrimmar every year and has a 3-day meeting alone with his leader to report his findings. Once he charts the entirety of Kalimdor, Thrall plans on sending him to chart Northrend to learn of the Lich King's activities.

nothing less than the divine. Thrall himself employs four: two orcs, one troll and one tauren. Rumor has it that he is looking for a neutral holy strider to make Horde negotiations with other races go more smoothly, but there are no holy striders outside the Horde at present.

Cairne Bloodhoof employs only tauren, out of respect for the long heritage of the holy strider. Although his demeanor does not suggest a covert mind, Cairne does not disclose how many holy striders he employs, only that they are all tauren.

The orcs have followed the tauren lead and record the farthest each holy strider has traveled. The Horde has created its own maps of Kalimdor based on its holy striders' reports, and it rewards them well. It is not difficult for a holy strider to receive work, whether it be from a noble lord or a goblin merchant. She has only to bear a letter confirming her longest run, and most employers will be satisfied.

Holy striders commonly work alone, as few can keep up with them, but they serve as exemplary party leaders with their natural charm and diplomatic skills. Their genial manners allow them to talk a party out of tense situations, and they are certainly useful for checking out a dangerous area quickly.

There is no centralized training center on Kalimdor for holy striders, but most major cities have apprenticeship programs. Often a holy strider who has been injured or is past her prime will train some new recruits. Apprentices approach the mentors with great honor and reverence, as they hope to someday be as great as those who have seen the different corners of the world.

The kind of person who takes up the mantle of the holy strider has a never-ceasing curiosity — someone who will never be satisfied with stopping before the next hill. She must always see what comes next. Her eclectic skills turn her into a well-rounded character. Her mind must remain sharp in difficult situations, so Intellect is important, and in conflict she relies on Agility to keep her from harm — or even detection. Of course, during her diplomatic missions, Charisma is vital for her negotiations. Lastly, this endurance runner can't afford to skimp on Stamina, as her skill with stealth and negotiations will be worthless if she can't reach her destination in the first place.

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

To qualify to become a holy strider, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Affiliation: Any, though all holy striders are currently affiliated with the Horde.

Skills: Diplomacy 7 ranks, Stealth 5 ranks.

Feats: Endurance, Run.

Class Skills

The Holy Strider's class skills (and the key ability for each) are Balance (Agy), Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (local) (Int), Knowledge (nobility and royalty) (Int), Sense Motive (Spt), Speak Language (Int), Stealth (Agy), and Survival (Spt). See **World of Warcraft RPG,** Chapter 5: Skills for skill descriptions.

Table 9-2: The Holy Strider (Hst)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Creases in the road, creases in the world 1/day
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	Graceful exit
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Creases in the world 2/day
4th	+2	+4	+1	+4	*Shadow meld* 1/day
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Creases in the mountain, creases in the world 3/day
6th	+3	+5	+2	+5	All eyes on me
7th	+4	+5	+2	+5	Creases in the world 4/day
8th	+5	+6	+2	+6	*Shadow meld* 2/day
9th	+6	+6	+3	+6	Backpedal
10th	+6	+7	+3	+7	Creases in the sea, creases in the world 5/day

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All the following are features of the holy strider prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Holy striders do not gain any additional weapon or armor proficiencies.

Creasing the World: The holy strider can cover vast distances by meditating while running. Her meditation moves her mind into the ground beneath her feet, where she coaxes it to fold upon itself while she is running. This effect only works for the holy strider herself; no party members can benefit from these abilities. The meditation cannot be used during combat. A holy strider can use these abilities a limited number of times per day, as shown on Table 9–2: The Holy Strider.

Creases in the Road (Su): After settling into a comfortable, meditative run (1-1/2 times her walk speed), the holy strider can begin manipulating the terrain under her. This causes her to run at twice her maximum run speed while still managing to keep the easy run. She can keep this up for a number of hours equal to her Stamina modifier before she becomes fatigued and must stop the creasing run. To the observer, she seems to move in unnaturally long strides or jumps. The holy strider gains a +4 dodge bonus to AC while creasing the road, but she cannot attack and maintain the run.

Creases in the Mountain (Su): While creasing the mountain, the holy strider can run at her normal run speed up or down any grade of 90 degrees or less as if it were 45 degrees. The holy strider needs to make a DC 15 Balance check to ensure her stride on the grade. If she takes damage while moving up or down a slope greater than 45 degrees, she must make a Concentration check (DC 10 + damage dealt). If she fails, her meditation ends and she must make a Climb check (the DC equals the slope's Climb DC) to find something to grab onto, else she falls.

Creases in the Sea (Su): Once she has mastered solid land, the holy strider can reach beneath the waters of the seas and crease them, creating a solid foothold. After achieving the necessary meditative state, she run across water, though she moves only at her normal run speed. If she stops her meditation, she falls into the body of water. If she takes damage while creasing the sea, she must make a Concentration check (DC 10 + damage dealt) or her meditation ends and she falls into the water.

Shadow Meld (Sp): A 4th-level holy strider can use *shadow meld* once per day as a spell-like ability. This increases to twice per day at 8th-level.

Graceful Exit (Ex): The holy strider's job is part scout, part diplomat, part spy. Her job is to reach her destination as quickly as possible and then meet with — or spy on — her target. She is highly trained, but sometimes things don't go as well as hoped. In these cases, the holy strider must rely on her skills to get out of the situation as quickly, efficiently and safely as possible. At 2nd level, she gains a +4 bonus on Stealth checks and a +1 bonus on initiative checks.

All Eyes on Me (Ex): When the holy strider wishes to enter a room with flair, she can easily get the attention of anyone she likes with the force of her personal charm. She is a powerful negotiator and no one can rival her persuasive skills. At this level, she can choose to either gain a +4 bonus on Diplomacy checks or a +1 bonus to Charisma.

Backpedal (Su): No matter how skilled, the holy strider can make a mistake in her negotiations. A casual statement about the Third War or an inquiry about a spouse can turn unexpectedly ugly. This ability allows the holy strider to re-roll any Diplomacy check she makes. She must take the result of the re-roll, even if it is worse.

Techno Mage

Description: For years, arcane magic users and tinkers looked on each other with disdain. Each group believed that its way of manipulating the world was superior. Mages have history on their side, with 10,000 or more years of practice, and clear proof of their power (both good and evil). Tinkers have the arrogance of the new kid on the block, showing how they can give the common man the power to fly through the skies or go under the sea, while previously only stuck-up mages were able to do those things.

Not surprisingly, few enterprising arcanists pick up a wrench and see what they can do with it. The time, energy and money it takes to make wondrous items compounded with the time, energy and money it takes to make technological items makes imbuing technological items with magic highly impractical. Some do it, of course, and are considered eccentric and spendthrifts.

The techno mages rose as an answer to this problem. Instead of treating their inventions as mere items, they tended to view the objects as extensions of themselves, using their will to enhance the item temporarily. As they commonly do this in battle, some consider them valuable warriors. Others consider them insane.

Views of the techno mages are mixed, as tinkers and mages see the class as a perversion of the purity of their own respective paths. Yet no one can deny the power these people wield.

Techno Mages in the World: Techno mages are wild-eyed folk, always looking for a shortcut to get what they want.

Techno mages are solitary by design (though some gather together at the House of the Arcane Contraption; see sidebar), as there are few of them and many are put off by their odd pursuit of both technology and magic. They are, however, mind-hungry and have a keen interest to talk to mages or tinkers to see if they can learn new things. And if the tinker or mage is then interested in following the path of the techno mage, even better! They are used to derision, but often too caught up in their latest invention to really care.

The life of the techno mage is not for the weak.

Both mages and tinkers need high Intellect scores to function, so few people would excel enough in magic or technology without having personal strength. Intellect is far and above the most important ability for the techno mage, but is followed closely by Agility — Reflex saves keep techno mages safe from their own folly.

Most techno mages come from a background of the mage path, although some warlocks have joined the ranks.

Hit Die: d6.

Requirements

To qualify to become a techno mage, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Race: Any.

Alignment: Any non-lawful.

Affiliation: Any.

Skills: Craft (technological device) 5 ranks, Use Technological Device 8 ranks.

Spellcasting: Must be able to cast 3rd-level arcane spells.

Class Skills

The techno mage's class skills (and the key ability for each) are Appraise (Int), Concentration (Sta), Craft (technological device) (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Disable Device (Int), Knowledge (arcana) (Int),

The House of the Arcane Contraption

While some techno mages are solitary, about twenty years ago several banded together to form a small group of like-minded individuals. Their numbers have grown incrementally since then. This group Preferring neutrality, this group of techno mages built a small fortress in the Barrens, just south of Ashenvale, making it equal access for all races who wish to learn. They call this fortress, and, by extension, their organization, the House of the Arcane Contraption.

Because most techno mages are neutral, or so interested in meeting those of like minds, they welcome any race into their ranks. Techno mages of Alliance or Horde affiliation are not required to cast off their affiliations, but there is a strict code of truce in the House of the Arcane Contraption. Any racial — or other — issues are settled in a small arena in the courtyard, where the techno mages battle using their magical inventions. Some battles can be fierce and bloody, the techno mages actually going for the kill with invented weapons, but others are less heated, usually having the inventions battle each other.

The House of the Arcane Contraption has remained impenetrable since its founders, the Cabal of 5.3, built it 13 years before the Third War. Even the demonic fury that destroyed much of Ashenvale did not touch it. The techno mages defended their fortress with such fury that even the demons left it alone. (Although others say the techno mages put such a strong glamer on the fortress that the demons couldn't see it, and were less concerned with that smell of arcane magic than the power of the World Tree.)

Inside, a large courtyard littered with broken springs, bits of wiring, and soot marks from fireball blasts on the stone walls usually contains at least two techno mages working on inventions considered too dangerous for the inside. The rooms inside are made of various materials, depending on what they are used for. The mages' rooms contain simple wooden walls and doors. The lower levels of the fortress, where most castles would have dungeons, are all workrooms. Although egos reign supreme in the house, the workrooms are public places. If a techno mage wishes to create in his own room, he can, but many prefer the wider areas of the workroom, not to mention the stone walls that are less likely to burst into flame.

The House of the Arcane Contraption is built on the side of a hill. The courtyard and front gate are opposite the hill, but through a door in the rear of the courtyard one can find the crypt. This is the final resting places for Those Who Discovered the Final Answer. Techno mages' bodies (or body parts, or ashes) are interred here, alongside plaques depicting the names of the deceased and their failed invention. If another techno mage had picked up the invention to perfect it, his name is inscribed under the plaque. If he failed, then his remains lie beside the first techno mage's.

The Cabal of 53

Grimm Onearm: The ".3" of the cabal, Grimm is a goblin who lost his right arm and leg in a rather impressive accident. He has prosthetic limbs that are made from metal, look exactly like flesh, and respond to his mind's commands. Few other than other techno mages realize his limbs are not natural. Although he jokes he is only .3 of a member of the cabal, he still carries a lot of weight in the House of the Arcane Contraption. When not sailing his merchant ship up and down the coast, secretly smuggling Horde supplies to roguish Alliance groups who care not for the affiliation enmity and only want the goods, he spends his time at the House of the Arcane Contraption, training new techno mages. His merchant ship is called the *Snarling Gribble Eel* and is one of the fastest ships in the eastern sea. It runs on a complicated perpetual motion engine that is fueled by his will whenever he steps aboard.

Fanala Bridkind: A human who fled Dalaran when the Scourge came, she stowed away on a goblin merchant ship and found herself in Ratchet. Feelings about arcanists being at a low, she apprenticed herself with a tinker and used subtle magic to aid her when her tinkering abilities proved insufficient. Soon she was melding the two skillfully and caught the attention of Grimm Onearm. Her fireball-firing pistol, while being nearly as dangerous to the attacker as her target, impressed him sufficiently to appoint her in charge of the weaponsmithing of the House. She has lost only three fingers to her art, but wears the scars like badges, and enjoys showing off the weapons that claimed her digits. She also keeps body parts of any undead she takes down with her weapons, displaying them proudly in her room.

Mememgem: This foul-tempered orc techno mage with a background in vehicles and warlock magic scares the rest of the techno mages. He works in the vehicle area of the dungeon, which is the deepest part. He claimed the large area as his own, and built a tunnel leading from the deep level to the ground level; on more than one occasion a failure has flown out of the hidden mouth of the tunnel, terrifying local wildlife. The burning hunk of metal usually reaches high in the air before crashing in an impressive display. He does not clean up his messes, and the other techno mages call that area "Mememgem's Graveyard." Some scavenge for supplies there, but no one wants Mememgem to discover their pilfering, as the orc sometimes goes to the graveyard to mourn his children.

Profession (Spt), Spellcraft (Int), Use Magic Device (Cha), and Use Technological Device (Int). See **World of Warcraft RPG,** Chapter 5: Skills for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Techno mages do not gain any additional weapon or armor proficiencies.

Spell Slots per Day: Every time the techno mage gains a level beyond 1st, she gains new spell slots per day as if she had also gained a level in the arcane spellcasting class in which she could cast 3rd-level spells before she added the techno mage level. She does not gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained. If she had more than one arcane spellcasting class in which she could cast 3rd-level arcane spells before she became a techno mage, she must decide to which class she adds each level of techno mage for the purpose of determining spell slots per day.

ArciTech Connection (Su): The techno mage has little patience when it comes to battle. She wishes to go in, hit the enemy with all she has, and have it done with. The techno mage knows how to connect with her technological weapons, channeling her magic through them. Her gun does not shoot bullets, but fireballs or dire rats.

Once per day (more often as she gains levels), the techno mage can, by touch, place any spell she has prepared into a technological weapon (any weapon with a Malfunction Rating — commonly a firearm). Doing so is a standard action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. This ability does not expend a spell slot.

The weapon's next attack does not consume ammunition or fuel (if applicable). Instead, the weapon attacks with the spell. On a successful attack roll, instead of dealing damage, the spell

Table 9-3: The Technomage (Tmg)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spell Slots per Day
1st	+0	+0	+2	+2	ArciTech connection 1/day	—
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+3	Energy resistance	+1 level of existing arcane spellcaster class
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+3	ArciTech control (+1)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcaster class
4th	+3	+1	+4	+4	ArciTech connection 2/day	+1 level of existing arcane spellcaster class
5th	+3	+1	+4	+4	ArciTech bond	+1 level of existing arcane spellcaster class
6th	+4	+2	+5	+5	Energy resistance	+1 level of existing arcane spellcaster class
7th	+5	+2	+5	+5	ArciTech control (+2)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcaster class
8th	+6	+2	+6	+6	ArciTech connection 3/day	+1 level of existing arcane spellcaster class
9th	+6	+3	+6	+6	Energy resistance	+1 level of existing arcane spellcaster class
10th	+7	+3	+7	+7	Become the machine 1/day	+1 level of existing arcane spellcaster class

occurs, just as if the techno mage had cast it at that location. The techno mage then makes all decisions the spell requires, and the attack expends a spell slot of the appropriate level, just as if the techno mage had cast it. Note that characters firing (or otherwise employing) a weapon so enhanced do not need to target creatures; one could fire a long rifle containing a *frost nova* at a spot on the ground, for instance. Wherever the weapon strikes, the spell occurs. If the attack misses, depending on the spell involved, the attack might be wasted or the spell effect might scatter, as a splash weapon. In either case, the attempt still expends a spell level. (Spells with a target of "self" are useful with this ability only if a character targets the techno mage with the weapon.)

The arcitech connection persists for 1 round per techno mage level + the techno mage's Cha modifier (minimum 1 round). Every time the weapon is used in this period, it carries the spell effect and expends a spell slot, up to once per round. If the techno mage runs out of spell slots of the appropriate level, the weapon consumes spell slots of the next highest level, then the next, and so on. If no such spell levels exist, the arcitech connection ends.

If the techno mage uses this ability on a melee weapon, the weapon can deliver the spell with a touch attack or a normal attack. If the wielder makes a normal attack with it, it deals normal damage in addition to the spell effect.

Note that this ability is not necessarily aggressive. It can carry *cure serious wounds* and *teleport* just as easily as *starfall.*

Note also that the techno mage does not need to attack with the weapon; someone else can. The spell effect occurs on the weapon's first attack in a round. If someone attacks with it more than once, all subsequent attacks in that round are normal attacks with the weapon. The arcitech connection does not increase the weapon's MR.

Energy Resistance (Ex): If a techno mage has made it this far, she has likely endured many mishaps, both technological and magical. The result of these trials is that she is more likely to be able to withstand damage from some form of energy. When she gains this ability, choose acid, cold, electricity, fire or sonic energy. The techno mage gains resistance 5 against that energy type. When she gains this ability for the second and third times, she can gain resistance 5 against a new energy type or increase her resistance against one she has already selected by +5. This energy resistance stacks with that gained from the tinker's energy resistance class feature or from spells such as *resist energy*.

ArciTech Control (Su): As the techno mage becomes more and more in tune with her inventions,

she can feel them as if they were sentient beings. She can almost communicate with them, telling ammunition and even grenades where to go. Any technological weapon (a firearm, grenade or the like) in her hands gains an additional +1 enhancement bonus on attack and damage rolls and is considered magic (if it was not already). At 7th level, the bonus increases from an additional +1 to +2. This ability cannot increase a magic weapon's enhancement bonus beyond +5. This ability does not increase a weapon's Malfunction Rating.

ArciTech Bond (Su): When a device breaks, usually from a malfunction, most consider it lost forever, or until a skilled tinker has a good, long, expensive look at it. The techno mage can touch a device and coax it into one last use, putting some of her energy into it to keep it together.

At 5th level, the techno mage can repair any technological device by touching it (a standard action). The device is repaired and ready for use, but its Malfunction Rating increases by +5.

Become the Machine (Su): A 10th-level techno mage can truly feel the machines she touches (a standard action). She can put her consciousness into a machine, vehicle or suit of steam armor and command it to move as if she were inside it. She controls the device completely, automatically succeeding at any Use Technological Device checks it requires. She is often able to force a device to do things of which it is otherwise incapable, since her mind controls it directly. While controlling a device in this manner, the techno mage's body is in a trance-like state, and she is unaware of her surroundings. This ability lasts for 10 minutes; after this time, the techno mage can extend the duration as an immediate action by spending spell slots. The duration increases by 1 minute per level of each spell slot she spends in this way. When the duration expires, the techno mage's mind returns to her body. She is stunned for 2 rounds while she acclimates to her own body again. She can use this ability once per day.

Feats

Those clever devils — and nasty monsters — of the western lands have a variety of techniques and skills that are worthy of emulation.

Northrend is a cold, bitter place but its people have learned to adapt. Over time even visitors can acquire the skills and talents necessary for survival there.

Those feats related specifically to monsters refer to "the creature" instead of "you." Even though primarily monsters take them, any character can take them if she meets the prerequisites.

Ability Focus [General]

The creature's attacks are especially potent.

Prerequisite: Special attack.

Benefit: Choose one of the creature's special attacks. Add +2 to the DC for all saving throws against the special attack on which the creature focuses.

Special: A creature can gain this feat multiple times. Each time the creature takes the feat it applies to a different special attack.

Advanced Steam Armor Operation [Technology]

You have received advanced training or extensive practice in steam armor movement.

Prerequisite: Vehicle Proficiency (steam armor).

Benefit: Choose a size of steam armor (Medium, Large or Huge). When you are operating a steam armor suit of the chosen size, you gain a +1 dodge bonus to AC. Furthermore, armor check penalties for operating the steam armor are –2 less than they would otherwise be (minimum penalty –0).

Bug Hunter [General]

You are naturally adept at tracking and fighting insectoid creatures, such as silithid.

Prerequisites: Track. Also, you must have previously fought and defeated an insectile creature of your size category or larger, with Hit Dice equal to or greater than your level at the time of the encounter.

Benefit: You receive a +2 bonus whenever using any of these skills with regard to insectoid creatures (primarily silithid and nerubians, but the bonuses apply to other insects such as giant wasps, scorpids and most vermin): Listen, Spot, Stealth and Survival. You also receive a +4 bonus on saving throws against poisons or spell-like abilities produced by such creatures.

Special: A warrior can select this feat as one of his warrior bonus feats.

Coldskin [General]

Cold does not bother you. Rogues and scouts in Northrend often take Coldskin because it allows them to conceal themselves in the snow while waiting to ambush someone.

Prerequisites: Survival 4 ranks, Endurance, Sta 14, Str 10.

Benefit: You gain resistance to cold 1. You can wear little to no clothing and not feel ill effects from cold. You can even lay down in snow for hours without suffering frostbite. You take no penalties from cold environments. This does not apply to supernatural cold, or cold-based spells, though you still subtract –1 point of damage from those sources.

Normal: See Chapter 5: Northrend, "Cold Dangers."

Diehard [General]

You are unusually resilient, allowing you to remain conscious even when severely wounded.

Prerequisites: Endurance.

Benefit: When reduced to between –1 hit point and 1 more than the hit point total at which you would die (for example, –9, if your Stamina is 11), you automatically become stable.

When reduced to negative hit points, you may choose to act as if you were disabled, rather than dying. You must make this decision as soon as you are reduced to negative hit points (even if it isn't your turn). If you do not choose to act as if you were disabled, you immediately fall unconscious.

When using this feat, you can take either a single move or standard action each round, but not both, and you cannot take a full-round action. You can take a move action without further injuring yourself, but if you perform any standard action (or any other action deemed as strenuous, including some free or swift actions, such as casting a quickened spell) you take 1 point of damage after completing the act. If you take a total amount of damage equal to –(10 + your Sta modifier), you immediately die, as normal.

Normal: A character without this feat who is reduced to between –1 and –(9 + Sta modifier) hit points is unconscious and dying.

Dowser [General]

You are almost supernaturally adept at finding water in dry, arid environments.

Prerequisite: Survival 8 ranks.

Benefit: When traveling in any terrain where water is scarce — including, but not limited to, deserts — you can always find enough water to sustain yourself. Even you don't know how to explain it — you just feel that water is near. As a result, you receive a +4 bonus on any check made to avoid fatigue, heat exhaustion, or any other similar terrain-induced effect caused by arid climates. Furthermore, since you are usually well hydrated, you receive a +2 bonus to resist any fatigue or exhaustion effect, regardless of its source.

If you make a Survival check (DC 15 or higher, depending on the scarcity of water in the area), you can locate enough water to sustain 2d6 Medium creatures for 1 day. This check can be made once per day.

Finally, if you are involved in any profession that involves locating water (such as working for the Gadgetzan Waterworks Company), you receive a +2 bonus on any related Profession skill check.

Epic Summoning [Epic]

Your summoned creatures are incredibly tough and powerful.

Prerequisites: Augment Summoning, Spell Focus (conjuration), ability to cast at least one 9th-level conjuration spell.

Benefit: Each creature you conjure with any *summon* spell gains a +12 enhancement bonus to Strength and Stamina for the duration of the spell that summoned it.

Flyby Attack [General]

The creature is adept at making attacks from the air while swooping past opponents.

Prerequisite: Fly speed.

Benefit: When flying, the creature can take a move action (including a dive) and another standard action at any point during the move. The creature cannot take a second move action during a round when it makes a flyby attack.

Normal: Without this feat, the creature takes a standard action either before or after its move.

Hover [General]

The creature can hover.

Prerequisite: Fly speed.

Benefit: When flying, the creature can halt its forward motion and hover in place as a move action. It can then fly in any direction, including straight down or straight up, at half speed, regardless of its maneuverability.

If a creature begins its turn hovering, it can hover in place for the round and take a full-round action. A hovering creature cannot make wing attacks, but it can attack with all other limbs and appendages it could use in a full attack. The creature can instead use a breath weapon or cast a spell instead of making physical attacks, if it could normally do so.

If a creature of Large size or larger hovers within 20 feet of the ground in an area with lots of loose debris,

the draft from its wings creates a hemispherical cloud with a radius of 60 feet. The winds so generated can snuff torches, small campfires, exposed lanterns, and other small, open flames of non-magical origin. Clear vision within the cloud is limited to 10 feet. Creatures have concealment at 15 to 20 feet (20% miss chance). At 25 feet or more, creatures have total concealment (50% miss chance, and opponents cannot use sight to locate the creature).

Those caught in the cloud must succeed on a Concentration check (DC 10 + 1/2 creature's HD) to cast a spell.

Normal: Without this feat, a creature must keep moving while flying unless it has perfect maneuverability.

Numb Ears [General]

You've lived in an area with noises so loud that your hearing has become somewhat dulled. Although this makes you hard of hearing, you're much more resistant to sonic attacks than a normal person.

Benefit: Because of your dulled hearing, you take a–2 penalty on Listen checks. However, you also enjoy resistance to sonic 2 as well as a +4 bonus on Fortitude saves to avoid being deafened by loud noises.

Racer [General]

You have competitively driven either a goblin or gnomish race vehicle at the Mirage Raceway in the Shimmering Flats. Obviously, you do not know the meaning of fear!

Prerequisites: Iron Will. Also, you must have raced a vehicle at the Mirage Raceway. You don't have to win this race… you only have to survive!

Benefit: You receive a +4 bonus on Will saves made to avoid fear effects, regardless of source. Also, once per day, you can automatically succeed on one saving throw against fear, demonstrating your unbelievable ability to shrug off the most frightening situation. You can decide to use this ability after attempting the save and after determining its success or failure.

Snowfoot [General]

You can move easily through the frozen north.

Benefit: You can move across ice and snow at your normal movement rate.

Special: Characters who take this feat and have Trackless Step and Woodland Stride can use those abilities fully while crossing snow and ice.

Unstoppable [Epic]

Foes have a very difficult time killing you.

Prerequisites: Sta 25, Diehard, Toughness.

Benefit: You cannot die by taking massive damage. You receive a +10 bonus on all saving throws to resist sudden death (such as from a coup de grace or magic death effect.) Your threshold between unconsciousness and death increases by 15 additional hit points. (For example, if you could have survived to –15 hit points without this feat, you can survive to –30 with it.)

Weaponspell Channel [Epic]

You can store spells within your weapons.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast spells of the normal maximum spell level in at least one spellcasting class (for example, 9th-level priest spells or 4th-level paladin spells).

Benefit: You can store a single targeted spell in of up to 3rd level in any weapon. (The spell must have a casting time of 1 standard action.) Any time you strike a creature with the weapon and the creature takes damage from it, the weapon can immediately cast the spell on that creature as an immediate action if you desire. (This special ability is an exception to the general rule that casting a spell from an item takes at least as long as casting that spell normally.) Once the spell has been cast from the weapon, you can cast any other targeted spell of up to 3rd level into it. You can store a spell in only one weapon at a time.

The spells you store within your weapon must be from a class in which you can spells of the maximum spell level.

Special: You can take this feat more than once. Each time you do, you can store spells of 3 levels higher in your weapon. For example, if you take the feat twice, you can store spells of up to 6th-level in your weapon. If you take this feat three times, you can store spells of up to 9th-level in your weapon.

Windear [General]

You can hear sounds even over the constant northern winds.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on Listen checks. You can hear clearly even in heavy winds.

Wingover [General]

The creature is skilled at swift turns on the wing.

Prerequisite: Fly speed.

Benefits: A flying creature with this feat can change direction quickly once each round as a free action. This

feat allows it to turn up to 180 degrees regardless of its maneuverability, in addition to any other turns it is normally allowed. A creature cannot gain altitude during a round when it executes a wingover, but it can dive.

The change of direction consumes 10 feet of flying movement.

They make interesting magic items in the western lands, boil my beard if they don't.

Magic Items

Argent Dawn Insignia

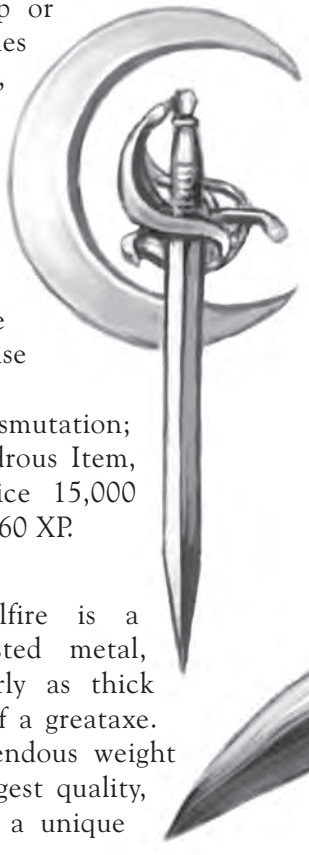
Description: This brooch, shaped like a silver sword under a crescent moon, empowers the wielder to strike against the creatures of darkness. The secret of creating these insignias is carefully guarded by the highest-ranking officers of the Argent Dawn, and they are usually given as rare gifts to friends and allies who may be fighting against demons or undead in the near future.

Powers: When worn, this insignia adds +2d6 points of holy damage to all of the user's melee attacks. This stacks with the additional holy damage from a holy weapon or any other source.

Moderate evocation; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *holy sword*; Price 56,000 gp; Cost 28,000 gp + 2,240 XP.

Crown of Potency

Description: This headband, a unique murloc creation, consists of an inch-thick, braided rope, often of hemp or seaweed, that encircles the head. Shells, pearls, polished pieces of driftwood, and other such items dangle from it.



Powers: The save DCs of all of the wearer's spells increase by +2.

Moderate transmutation; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, Heighten Spell; Price 15,000 gp; Cost 7,500 gp + 60 XP.

Hellfire

Description: Hellfire is a greatsword of twisted metal, with its blade nearly as thick and heavy as that of a greataxe. The weapon's tremendous weight is far from its strongest quality, however. Hellfire is a unique weapon created by Lord Banehollow of the Burning Legion, and its blade burns maliciously with unholy fire. The blade is now carried by Fel'dan, the warlock leader of the Shadow Council.

Powers: Hellfire is a thorium +5 *unholy greatsword.*

Strong abjuration [evil]; CL 17th; Craft magic arms and armor, *protection from good*; Price 108,000 gp; Weight 16 lb.

Moonrage Ring

Description: This ring is shaped like a leaf wrapped around the finger, but an optical illusion makes the edges of the leaf appear razor sharp.

Powers: On command, this leaf-shaped band projects a blast of *greater moonfire**. This function is usable 3 times per day.

Moderate evocation; CL 9th; Forge Ring, *greater moonfire**; Price 54,000 gp; Cost 27,000 gp + 2,160 XP.

* See **More Magic & Mayhem.**

Ring of Frost

Description: This ring is cleverly disguised as the clawed finger of a blue dragon. When worn by a blue dragonspawn or a similar creature, it is almost unnoticeable, assuming the dragonspawn does not have an unusual shade of scales. It can be worn normally by any humanoid creature, however.

Powers: On command, the ring of frost unleashes a *cone of cold* once per day.

Strong evocation; CL 15th; Forge Ring, *cone of cold*; Price 30,000 gp; Cost 15,000 gp + 1,200 XP.

Steam Armor and Equipment

Those crafty goblins are always thinking of something.

See **More Magic & Mayhem** for steam armor rules.

XK-77 Armor

This large suit of steam armor looms threateningly, its mithril construction speaking of sharpness and speed rather than elegance. A long, mithril-and-wood rifle, its barrel the size of a human head, replaces its left arm. Its right hand is a huge, distorted claw-fist, and above it on the arm sits a perforated iron nozzle projecting from a dragon's mouth. Arcing over the contraption's back, like spider legs, are two spindly arms. One ends in a pair of scissorlike blades, while the other end in a circular saw that whines as it spins. The pilot is visible through a rectangular window in the thing's front.

Mogul Razdunk, head of the Venture Company, either built this suit himself or had one of his engineers build it before killing him (reports vary).

XK-77 armor weighs 1,000 pounds and is 10 feet tall.

Size: Large	Hit Points: 100
Hull: Mithril	Hardness: 10
Armor Bonus: +13	Armor Check Penalty: –2
Max Agy Bonus: +3	Arcane Spell Failure: 20%
Fighting Space: 10 ft.	Reach: 10 ft.
Strength Bonus: +10	Speed: 40 ft.
TS: 10	Cost to Build: 35,000 gp

Slicer

Description: A thin, multi-jointed arm arcs from the steam armor's back to dangle at about shoulder level. It ends in a spinning buzz saw, an axe blade, a spike-studded iron ball, a pair of steam-powered shears, or some other nasty weapon. The arm is swift and mobile, able to strike creatures on the ground as well as those above.

Powers: The pilot gains an additional attack per round at his highest base attack bonus. The slicer deals slashing, piercing or bludgeoning damage (depending on the weapon installed) based on its size, as shown on the table below.

Steam Armor Size	Slicer Damage
Medium	1d8
Large	2d6
Huge	3d6

Operating a slicer in addition to making normal attacks is difficult; if the pilot attacks with slicers in addition to his normal attacks, all of his attacks take a –2 penalty per slicer for 1 round. Attacks with a slicer add the pilot's Strength modifier on attack rolls, as normal, but add only half his Strength modifier (if it is positive) on damage rolls.

Equipment Slot: 1 (back or shoulders).

MR: 2. On a bad malfunction, the slicer attacks the steam armor, automatically hitting and dealing damage.

Craft DC: 20

TS Modifier: +1

Cost: 2,000 gp

Special: A suit of steam armor can have as many slicers as it has equipments slots available.

Steam Fist

Description: A steam fist is a disproportionately large, clawlike fist that replaces a steam armor suit's hand. Extra pistons and a small boiler provide it with extra strength, both for punching and crushing.

Powers: The steam fist increases the damage the steam armor's slam deals, as shown on the table below. In addition, it provides a +8 bonus on grapple checks.

Steam Armor Size	Steam Fist Damage
Medium	2d6
Large	3d6
Huge	4d6

Equipment Slot: 1 (hand).

Activation: DC 15 Use Technological Device check

MR: 1

Craft DC: 21

TS Modifier: +1

Cost: 1,500 gp

Special Material

Bored of mithril? Make your armor out of spider skin!

Nerubian Chitin

Nerubians often wear a special kind of armor formed from their own molted exoskeletons. The discarded chitin is combined with wood pulp, lacquer and alchemical preparations. Creating chitin armor requires a DC 15 Craft (alchemy) check to prepare the raw material, followed by the standard crafting procedure.

Any suit of armor or shield can be made of nerubian chitin. Chitin armor weighs the same as regular armor. The maximum Agility bonus allowed by the armor increases by +1, the armor check penalty is reduced by –1, and the armor's arcane spell failure chance is reduced by –5%. These benefits are in addition to those provided by the masterwork quality.

Weapons or armors fashioned from chitin are always masterwork items as well; the masterwork cost is included in the prices given below.

Nerubian chitin has 20 hit points per inch of thickness, and hardness 10.

Type of Chitin Armor	Item Cost Modifier
Light armor	+300 gp
Medium armor	+1,200 gp
Heavy armor	+2,700 gp
Shield	+300 gp

Spells

Murlocs are closely attuned to the water. Their shamans have learned to call upon it for protection and even to stymie their foes. *Continual flame* is a utilitarian spell common in the west.

Continual Flame

Evocation [Light]
Level: Arcanist 2, Healer 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Object touched
Effect: Magical, heatless flame
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

A flame, equivalent in brightness to a torch, springs forth from an object that you touch. The effect looks like a regular flame, but it creates no heat and doesn't use oxygen. A *continual flame* can be covered and hidden but not smothered or quenched.

Light spells counter and dispel darkness spells of an equal or lower level.

Material Component: You sprinkle ruby dust (worth 50 gp) on the item that is to carry the flame.

Ever-Wet

Conjuration (Creation) [Water]
Level: Shaman/Witch Doctor 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: One creature
Duration: 1 day/level
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

The powerful murloc shaman Hislur Gookah devised this spell to aid her people, who suffer unless immersed in water at least once each day. This spell creates a thin sheen of salt water about the target. The water does not evaporate, freeze or shed. This allows a murloc to move about on land without worrying about immersion. It also provides some protection against temperatures and against both fire- and cold-based attacks (+4 bonus on saves). When the spell ends the water vanishes. Note that someone affected by this spell does not leave wet footprints, because the water does not leave his body.

Material Components: A drop of salt water and a small shell.

Skillstrip

Enchantment [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Arcanist 5
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 caster levels)
Target: One creature

Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You select a target and a skill. If the target fails her save she cannot remember how to use that skill, even untrained, for the duration; she falls all skill checks associated with that skill. The most common use of this spell is to strip someone underwater of the Swim skill, or someone scaling a cliff of the Climb skill. (Creatures with natural climb or swim speeds can still use them, but they cannot make checks to avoid hazards, for example.)

Material Component: A pinch of ground granite.

Skillstrip, Mass

Enchantment [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Arcanist 8
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 caster levels)
Targets: Up to two creatures/caster level, all of which must be within a 50-foot radius

This spell functions as *skillstrip* except as noted above.

Waterworks

Conjuration (Creation) [Water]
Level: Druid 4, Shaman/Witch Doctor 4
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./caster level)
Area: One 10-foot cube/level (S)
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This spell fills the designated area with cold (35° F) salt water. The water appears instantly and stays in the shape selected, even if doing so defies the laws of physics. The water's bottom edge must rest upon a solid surface. When the spell ends the water disappears, though objects and people remain soaked and cold.

Material Components: A drop of seawater and a small spiral shell.

Wavesend

Divination [Water]
Level: Druid 3, Shaman/Witch Doctor 3
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Unlimited
Target: One creature
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You can send a message through the water with this spell. First you select a recipient, either by name or unambiguous description, who must be in or close (within 5 feet) to a body of water of at least 50 gallons. That individual hears the message as if you were in that water and speaking in a normal tone of voice (the water does not garble the message). No one else hears the message, even if they are in the same water as the recipient. Note that this spell does not grant translation — the recipient must be able to understand the language you use.

Focus: A bowl of water or a freestanding body of water.

Waveshout

Divination [Water]
Level: Druid 3, Shaman/Witch Doctor 3
Range: Unlimited
Area: All creatures in a 50-foot radius

This spell functions as *wavesend* except that you broadcasts a message to an area rather than targeting a recipient. Anyone within that area can hear the message clearly.

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