



Glorantha

THE SECOND AGE



BLOOD OF ORLANTH

RuneQuest



BLOOD OF ORLANTH

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INTRODUCTION

Three Men Stand in a Circle and Each of Them has His Sword at His Brother's Throat

The Great Dragon angered Orlanth in three ways and these are the ways: it ate his flocks and despoiled his lands; it slew his warriors and devoured his followers; it rose up and blotted out the sun and the stars and wreaked great devastation across the land. So Orlanth decided to kill the dragon. He took up his spear and his shield and his sword and he called for the best of his fighting men. They came to the long-house of Orlanth and he welcomed them and feasted with them. Then they all went off to kill the dragon.

They met the dragon in the sky and they fought. Orlanth stabbed the dragon with his spear but the dragon tossed its mighty head and wrenched the spear from Orlanth's grip. The spear landed with such force that it cut a hole all the way to the underworld; that is where Snakepipe Hollow comes from. Orlanth stabbed the dragon with his sword but he could not pierce its scales. The dragon roared and breathed fire, and Orlanth sheltered behind his shield. The shield grew so hot that it shone like the sun and Orlanth cast it aside into the ocean; that is where the Smoking Islands come from.

The dragon clawed Orlanth once, twice, three times and he cried out in pain. But Orlanth was brave and even as the dragon cut him, he swung his sword and cut the dragon even deeper. He sliced its head off.

The dragon's body reared up in its death throes and spread its wings and lashed its tail. Then it fell. The ruin of its body changed the world and its bones became the land we call Dragon Pass. If one looks at the shape of the hills, one can see what remains of the dragon.

And Orlanth?

I do not know what happened to him.

This adventure is designed for use with any of three factions – the Player Characters can be Orlanthi barbarians, God Learner agents or warriors of the Empire of Wyrms' Friends (EWF). Each chapter in this adventure presents the same events and challenges from three different perspectives. If one is using this adventure with existing characters, then the characters need to be trusted allies or sworn mercenaries for one of those three factions. The adventure assumes that characters are at least Seasoned adventurers at the start of the campaign. If the characters are already Veteran (or even more experienced), the Games Master will need to adjust the number of foes and the difficulty of the tasks to challenge his players.

Synopsis

In the first section the scene is set. A clash between the barbarians and the EWF is coming. Orlanthi villages on the edge of EWF territory are becoming rebellious and the actions

of the Player Characters can sway the loyalty of these border tribes one way or the other, toward either the rebels or the Empire. As the Player Characters travel from town to town, they begin to learn of a secret cult that preserves a myth not told by the Orlanthi, a story that speaks of Orlanth's death in his battle with Sh'kharzeel, the Great Dragon.

Chapters: Sky End Stead, Along The Laughing River.

The middle section puts the Player Characters in the heart of this doomed Orlanthi rebellion against the EWF. Depending on the Player Characters' actions in the first section, the rebellion may put back the expansion of the EWF by decades, preserve Heortling culture and freedom for generations or be swiftly crushed. In any case, the Player Characters have a chance to become heroes – or traitors. They also learn more of the secret cult of Orlanth Martyred.

Chapters: The Calm Before The Storm, Ashbringer's War.

In the final section the Player Characters enter into a HeroQuest of the battle of Orlanth and Sh'kaharzeel and their actions on the Hero Plane will shape the future not only of the Heortlands but of all the world. If the God Learners can gain control of this myth, their bizarre myth-magic will give them immense power over the foundations of both the Orlanthi and EWF cultures. To command the Blood of Orlanth is to command the world!

Chapters: Sacred Time, Orlanth Martyred.

Running the Blood of Orlanth Campaign

Orlanthi Player Characters

In the Orlanthi aspect of this campaign, the Player Characters will be part of a clan in a small village in the northern reaches of Hendrikiland, between the Shadow Plateau and the Stormwalk Mountains. The clan has been weakened by the Empire of Wyrms' Friends and the clan ring is incomplete, thus pushing the characters into positions of authority despite their relative youth and inexperience. Orlanthi Player Characters should be followers of one of the Storm Tribe deities and should be at least somewhat opposed to the EWF.

The group should be a fairly typical band of Orlanthi, loyal to their beliefs and customs.

EWF Player Characters

In the EWF aspect of this campaign, the Player Characters are spies and agents of the Empire, assigned to help pacify the troublesome barbarian tribes who have not yet accepted the enlightenment of the Dragon. They should be capable of going undercover as Orlanthi if necessary, or at least of posing as travellers or mercenaries from a distant land, so they should have some points in Influence and Disguise. Delecti the Inquirer will play a role in the campaign, so having at least one magically adept character will be useful. The Player Characters' initial assignment will be to enforce draconic law in the border villages on the edge of Hendrikiland; soon, Delecti will give them the more important task of locating and destroying the God Learner Knowledge Band operating in the area.

The group should be willing to follow orders from their superiors in the EWF hierarchy but also capable of independent action. Player Characters should be loyal to the EWF philosophy and not flee at the first sign of trouble.

God Learner Player Characters

The God Learner group are partly there to forestall the expansion of the EWF into Hendrikiland but also to take the pressure off the Clanking City to the south. Currently, the Zistorite stronghold of the Clanking City is being besieged by a coalition including both Orlanthi from Hendrikiland and Wyrms' Friends, so sparking a war between those two would help the God Learner cause. The God Learner sages know a little about the rumoured 'secret myth of Orlanth' and the traitorous Delecti knows about the myth through them.

The Player Characters begin in a secret God Learner cell hidden in the mountains and will later go undercover in the Orlanthi army, just like the EWF agents. They will operate without much support from the Middle Sea Empire, so they should be adept at acting independently.

Non-Player Characters

There are a great many Non-Player Characters in this campaign for Player Characters to fight, talk to and generally interact with. Important characters will have their name printed in **bold** when first encountered and the page number in parentheses after their name will guide the Games Master to that Non-Player Character's game statistics in Appendix I: Friends & Foes. Minor Non-Player Characters do not have specific game statistics but it will be fairly obvious which generic statistics can be used if necessary (Orlanthi Commoner for the revellers in Sky End Stead's feasting hall, for example).

Other Characters

If your Player Characters are not from any of the three main factions, they can still play through the *Blood of Orlanth*. If they prove themselves to the Orlanthi, they might be adopted into the desperate clan. More likely, they can be employed as mercenaries by one of the other two factions – probably the God Learners.

SKY END STEAD

The Sons of Orlanth

Read or show the following section to the players if they are playing the Orlanthi aspect of this campaign – it provides background about Sky End.

High in the foothills of the Stormwalk mountains is the tula of the clan Howling Wolf, the land called Sky End, on the shores of Sky End Lake. In better times it was a prosperous clan but the long winter has descended on the land and there is little food. Many have died. A dozen families have crowded into Sky End Stead, sharing what little they have to survive.

The clan is dying – less than 300 are left and the warband now numbers less than 50.

*The chieftain of the clan is an old warrior, **Orlgard Severson**. His name has become his curse – his seven sons have all died and Orlgard lives on. He is like a wounded bear, hiding in his cave, yet fearsome when cornered. Much of the burden of ruling the tribe – and it is a great burden in these hard months – has fallen on **Vinya**, Orlgard's sister and **Theorl** her son. Vinya is a wisewoman and a healer, a priestess of Ernalda. With the death of his cousins, **Theorl** is the heir-apparent to Orlgard and everyone in the clan knows that **Theorl** wants to prove himself in the eyes of the warriors so that he will be acclaimed in the wapentake, the chieftainship ceremony, when Orlgard dies.*

*It is the Dark Season, when the cold winds cut like knives. Orlgard has gone into the mountains to a secret shrine where only the elders of the clan may go. **Theorl** sits in the long-house with the older warriors. It is the Dark Season and a storm is brewing...*

The Howling Wolf Clan: The Howling Wolf clan consists of around 300 Orlanthi, of which around two-fifths (120) are children. Of the rest, one-fifth are adult men capable of fighting (70), adult women (70) and the old or lame (30).

The chieftain's stead is at Sky End Lake, in the hills. Here are the new temples of the clan, where the ceremonies to Orlanth and Ernalda and the other gods of the Storm Tribe are held. Hidden in the high mountains beyond the lake is a secret shrine to Orlanth Martyred, which will play a key role in this campaign.

There are two other major homesteads loyal to Orlgard Severson: the stead of Thunder Bridge and the stead of Urling's Ford. Both lie to the south-west of Sky End. North of those two steadings is the border with the EWF. South of those steadings is the *tula* of the Laughing River clan, the clan of Aeldred the Fat. Aeldred's people dwell in the northern reaches of the Savage or Steal Forest and have weathered the long winter better than the hillfolk.

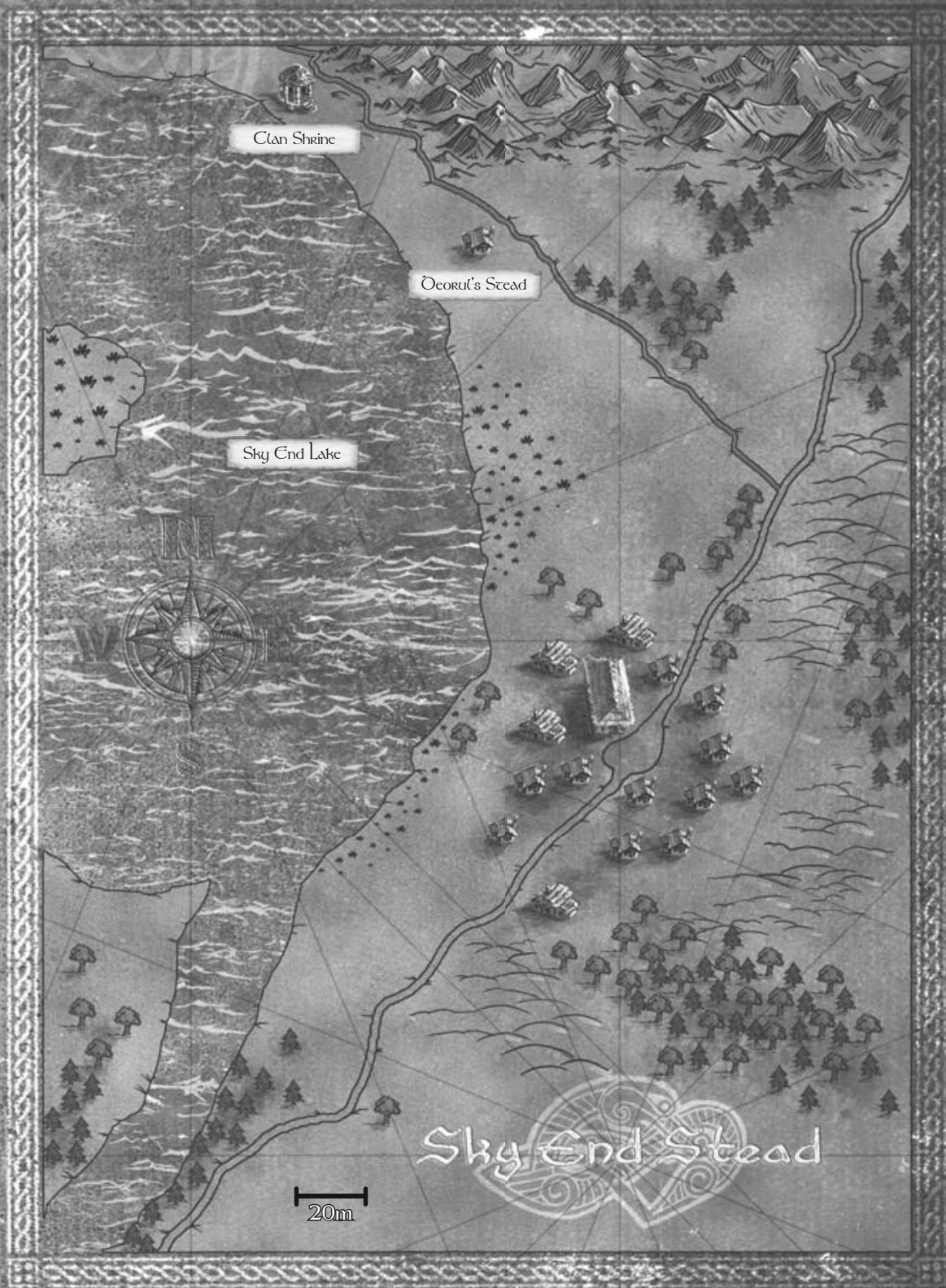
Theoretically, both Orlgard's and Aeldred's clans' *tulas* are part of the territory ruled by Androfin the Defiant (see page 103 of *Glorantha: The Second Age*) but they have little contact with the tribes to the south. In this hard time, every clan is on its own.

The warband: The fighting force of Orlgard's clan numbers around 40 warriors. Of these, about half have weapons and armour and magic worthy of consideration. The rest have cudgels or staffs or bows but are not capable of battling the EWF or a similar foe.

Orlgard Severson (page 117): Orlgard has presided over the long, slow decline of his clan. Wars and winters have taken all seven of his sons and the only living members of his family are his sister (whom he has never been close to but respects as a counsellor) and his nephew **Theorl** (whom he privately considers a fool and a braggart). If he were

But This Isn't Our Clan!

If a Games Master is running an Orlanthi campaign already, his characters are no doubt part of a clan already. If so, they can be sent on some mission to the Howling Wolf clan. In this case, the feast is held in their honour.



a younger man, he might fight against the encroaching cultural imperialism of the EWF but the clan warband is so diminished that he feels there is no hope.

King Androfin the Defiant has sent ambassadors to Orlgard in the past but will do so no longer – the king has made the difficult decision to cut off the northern portion of his campaign to save the rest. The clans of Howling Wolf and Laughing Brook are, Androfin fears, not worth fighting for, so he has abandoned them to serve as a buffer between the EWF and Hendrikiland.

Secretly, Orlgard is the Rune priest of the Cult of Orlanth Martyred. Like the clan, the cult has been reduced to only a handful of members. Orlgard no longer has faith in the cult, or in the promise of Orlanth's rebirth and the possibility of defeating dragons. It will be up to the Player Characters to restore the chieftain's strength and faith.

Vinya (page 119): Vinya is Orlgard's elder sister. She has been the power behind the throne for many years. Much of the running of the clan is in her hands and she has been preparing her son Theorl for the chieftainship ever since Orlgard's most promising offspring were slain. She

The Shrine of Orlanth Martyred

The Player Characters will not discover this for some time but the Sky End Stead holds a secret. In one version of the story of the battle of Orlanth and the dragon Sh'kaharzeel, Orlanth was mortally wounded by the monster. He lay as one dead for three days before he was restored. This is a secret known only to the elders of the clan, to those initiated into the mysteries of Orlanth Martyred.

There is a secret shrine to the north-east of Sky End Lake, where the god was taken after being mortally wounded by the dragon. Every year, the Rune priest of the cult goes to this shrine to pray for Orlanth's healing.

Most of the clan know that their clan keeps a secret – after all, most clans do. A few, such as Theorl, Wuldrick and Goldhen, know that that secret is located at Sky End Lake. Only Orlgard, Vinya and one or two others know the full secret.

is manipulative and cunning in her ambition for her son but she has recognised that Theorl is not half as clever as he thinks he is. She agrees with Orlgard that the clan cannot hope to defeat the EWF militarily and believes that accepting at least a veneer of draconism is their only hope for survival.

Theorl (page 119): Theorl is a typical Orlanthi warrior, boisterous and bold. He delights in hunting and drinking and the few warriors of the warband see him as their leader. His mother Vinya has been grooming him for the chieftainship and has arranged for him to be secretly betrothed to chieftain Aelfred's daughter, Maralis). He knows that a clash with the EWF is coming but he is more focussed on the dangers of the long winter and getting enough food for the clan than preparing for the battles ahead.

In The Hall

Orlgard has gone into the mountains to pray and his return is expected tonight. Theorl and his band went hunting earlier and returned with a fine prize of three deer. There is a feast tonight, in the long-house, to celebrate their success and the chieftain's return. Some worry that the clan can ill afford a feast and that the meat from the hunt should be salted and put away for the dark days to come but despite these objections, tonight the fires are roasting hot and the drink flows freely.

The Player Characters are all in the chieftain's hall in Sky End Stead. It is twilight and the fires are burning brightly in the hearths. Theorl and his companions have just returned from hunting and the people of the clan are trading stories and tales while the women prepare the food. Orlgard has not yet returned from 'a personal errand' at Sky End Lake (he is praying at the secret shrine). His seat is empty.

Theorl has become quite merry from the strong ale that spills from his drinking horn and demands that the Player Characters join in the storytelling. The Players can either recount a myth or tell a story from their own experiences. Theorl loves stories, especially ones in which heroes battle fearsome foes and ravish beautiful maidens and will lustily cheer or boo any tale that pleases or displeases him. There is dancing, feasting and merrymaking and lots of pointedly ignoring the harsh weather outside.

Minor Non-Player Characters present include Borglot the Brewer, who samples too much of his own ale and is a notorious drunkard; Asha, the most beautiful unmarried girl in the clan, who prides herself on her skills as a dancer and challenges the Player Characters to keep up with her; Morgail, one of Theorl's closest friends and a bully; Goldhen, a pretty girl who is said to be either insane or touched with the gift of prophecy and who is under Vinya's tutelage until she can be sent to the proper temple or cult; and Wuldric, who travelled widely in his youth but returned to the clan after losing his arm in a duel with a Dara Happan traveller who turned out to be a god (or so Wuldric claims).

Player Characters who do not get involved in the feast can pick up gossip and rumours from the old greybeards on the edge of the hall:

- *'Orlgard is too old to lead the clan in these dark days. Theorl should be the leader!'*
- *'No, Theorl's a hot-blooded fool who'd go off and bring the wyrmings down on Sky End. This is a time for wisdom, not impetuous youth.'*
- *'Ha! You think Theorl will have anything to say when he's chieftain? He's still tied to his mother's kirtle and that witch Vinya will be in charge.'*
- *'Vinya's a wisewoman! If Orlgard listened to her instead of sitting on a cold hillside freezing his bum off, we'd all be in a better situation.'*
- *'Is it true that King Androfin has forsaken us and will not send help if the wyrmings come?'*
- *'What of Aeldred the Fat? Is he still our ally?'*
- *'Ally? Ally? My grandfather killed Aeldred's father's brother, you know! Our clans have been rivals ever since the Dawn! Don't you know how we're descended from Humakt and their blood is all Barntar's?'*

DIRE NEXUS

The Player Characters enjoy the feasting for a while until the doors of the longhouse are thrown open dramatically with a clap of thunder. Icy winds howl in the open portal. A haggard figure stands there, rimed with frost. Theorl recognises him as Deorlaf, son of Deorul, a carl from a lesser stead in the hills and asks why he travels at night, in such foul weather.

'My father's farmstead is under attack! Strangers came out of the hills with burning torches and spears! We need help!'

Deorlaf does not know the identities of the attackers, as his father Deorul ordered him to ride south to Sky End Stead immediately. As far as Deorlaf knows, the attack is still going on. Theorl drunkenly roars out orders, telling his companions to get their weapons – they will go to the defence of Deorul's holding immediately! Wiser heads counsel caution but Theorl is determined to go immediately:

'So what if it's storming outside?' he shouts. 'We are Orlanthi! Storm Tribe! It is our enemies who should fear the thunder, not us!'

If the Player Characters question Deorlaf, the young man will try to describe the enemies. There were, he thinks, around a dozen of them. He thinks they were human but they kept to the shadows of the trees and just fired arrows and spells at the house. The horses were especially frightened – Deorul's horses are his pride and joy.

Before the Player Characters can leave with Theorl (or if they do not seem eager to leave with the drunken warrior, while they are in the hall), Vinya beckons them to the side of the hall. She points out that Deorul's hold is close to the path that leads to Sky End Lake and that her brother, the Chieftain Orlgard, is probably on that very path – he should be coming back any day now and she worries that the attackers at the farm are actually looking for him. She orders the Player Characters to follow the path north and look for Orlgard Severson and his honour guard.

Theorl and a dozen warriors of the warband head off to Deorul's hold. Before they get half way there, though, their initial enthusiasm and bloodlust is diminished by the freezing wind and rain. They meet with Deorul and his family, who fled the hold when it caught fire and they all turn back and return to Sky End Stead. By the time they reach the stead, Theorl and his friends are already singing songs of how they battled a hundred foes each even as the house burned around their ears. Deorul is weeping – not over the burning of his house but because of the loss of his beloved horses.

The Player Characters, meanwhile, presumably follow Vinya's directions and follow the path north into the hills.

The Cold Hills

You leave Sky End Stead behind you, passing through the gate in the ring of wooden stakes and fences that has guarded the clan since the Dawn. It is a cold, dark night but the path north is clear and easy to follow, at least initially. As soon as you get into the forest, things become trickier. There are markers to follow, though, stones carved with runes and images of the gods of your people. These will guide you safely through the dark woods.

After travelling through the dark woods for some time, the Player Characters hear shouts and sounds of combat from further up the path. Orlgard and his honour guard have indeed been attacked by the same outlaws who attacked Deorul's holding. Of the three warriors who accompanied Orlgard north to the secret shrine, two are down, unconscious and bleeding from several wounds. Orlgard stands with his back to a tree, swinging his axe to keep his attackers from reaching the wounded. His final guard, an elderly hunter called **Theogrim** (see page 118), has climbed into the tree to find a better position from which to throw his spear.

Orlgard's attackers are a band of **outlaws** (see page 130) dressed in mismatched armour (mostly scavenged from dead EWF). There is one living outlaw per Player Character. The outlaws are trying to slow Orlgard down (as will be explained shortly, the outlaw leader has already left the scene, carrying with him the Bowl of Blood that will be a major element of the campaign).

This fight should be fairly straightforward – the Orlanthi outnumber the outlaws and even wounded, Orlgard is more than a match for most enemies. Once the attackers have been dealt with and wounds tended but before the unconscious Orlanthi can be revived, Orlgard explains what is going on.

The Stolen Bowl

Orlgard Seversons leans against the tree, which is now stained with his blood, and wipes his brow.

'Those thieves tried to follow me to the lake! Normally, the entire area up there is protected by the wyter, the clan-spirit

of our people and I thought they'd just get lost in the hills or something but they must have had magic of their own! One of them stole... a precious relic from me! It is a bowl and one of our most valuable clan treasures! We chased them but their leader escaped. I don't know where he has gone.'

Given the situation, the players will almost certainly have a number of questions for the chieftain.

Who were those thieves?

'Outlaws, I'm guessing. They weren't wyrmings, anyway, and they don't look like raiders from another clan. Cowards and thieves, the lot of them!'

What did their leader look like?

'He was quite unlike the rest of them. He carried no weapons that I could see. He had a big bundle on his back and he had more magic than the rest. He stank of sorcery.'

What is this bowl?

'It is one of the secret treasures of the clan. It is called the Bowl of Blood and as chieftain its safety is my responsibility. It is normally kept... somewhere safe, up near the lake. It is a holy relic from before the Dawn. We must get it back. It looks like a wooden bowl of fire-blackened wood, carved with runes around the edges.'

Orlgard is loathe to divulge too much about the shrine but if pressed will confirm that there is a secret, sacred site up near the lake, dedicated to Orlanth (he will not mention that the aspect is of Orlanth Martyred). He will not go into details about it though.

What should we do?

'It's a very bad omen that the bowl should be stolen and if anyone else finds out, I'll lose the chieftainship for sure. We have to get it back before it's known that the bowl was ever gone.'

Paranoid players will probably assume that Vinya is behind the theft of the bowl and that she plots to reveal the loss of the bowl to force Orlgard to give up the chieftainship to Theorl. While this is not what has happened, this fear will probably colour the Player Characters' interactions with Vinya.

How will we find the bowl?

If the Player Characters have suggested searching Deorul's Hold, they can skip this section.



'The thief is too far gone to be caught on foot. No, we need to find him another way. There is a witch-woman who lives on the edge of our fula, the Witch of Ten Pines Hill. Her home is on a hill due east of here – keep the Dragon's Head star at your backs and you'll find the hill. Go to her and ask her where the Bowl of Blood has gone. I will return to Sky End Stead. Be swift! Every minute we delay, the further the thief runs!'

Orlgard is more worried and wounded than he appears – he clings to the chieftainship because he has no confidence in Theorl or any of the other warriors to lead the clan in these dark times and the loss of the bowl is a grievous blow to him. He is very, very close to just letting go and succumbing to black despair. If the Player Characters defy or argue with him, he will be furious but his fury merely hides his desperation.

Clever Players may work out that the thief was presumably one of the attackers at Deorul's Hold and that he also stole Deorul's horses. If so, they can accompany Orlgard to the burning ruins of Deorul's Hold and by morning light they can find tracks leading south. At this point, Orlgard will

send the Player Characters after the thief and there is no need to go on the side trek to the Witch of Ten Pines Hill.

Characters may also choose to take one of the outlaws alive. If they do so, they can learn that his name is Helgir and that he was one of a band of outlaws whose leader was dealing with a strange sorcerer who lived in a hill high in the mountains. They came south to steal something of value but got scattered. He thinks the sorcerer, **Jezat** (see page 130), was going down the river.

The Witch of Ten Pines Hill

By now, it is pitch dark and the Player Characters have to navigate by the stars. Orlgard's advice of keeping the Dragon's Head star at their backs is helpful. The Dragon's Head star, according to legend, is the head of Sh'kharzeel, the dragon slain by Orlanth. Orlanth threw the dragon's body down to the earth, where it became Dragon Pass and its head into heaven, where it shines to this day. Still, the Player Characters have to cross the treacherous hills and thick forest at night.

After a few miles travel, they come to a mound that rises from the forest. The trees stop abruptly at the base of the mound. At the crown of the hill is a ring of ten pine trees. At the base of the mound, the Player Characters come upon a marker stone, which marks the very edge of the clan *tula*. As soon as they step onto the hill, they leave their homeland and the protection of the clan *wyter*-spirit – but what choice do they have?

A short climb up the grassy slopes of the mound (where the grass is unnaturally short, as if recently mown) brings the Player Characters to the ring of pine trees. Clear of the forest canopy, the sky overhead is astonishingly clear and bright. Within the ring of trees, the Player Characters can see a small hut to one side and an altar stone at the very centre. They can see the light of a fire from within the hut – apparently, the Witch of Ten Pines is at home.

The Witch's Hut

The little hut is made of mud and woven branches. Bones and charms hang from the doorway and strange symbols are daubed on its walls. There are no windows and the one door has a filthy blanket drawn across it. From within, the Player Characters can hear the occasional mumbling and muttering and a strange bubbling noise.

Inside, the witch is hunched over a cauldron, stirring its contents and peering into its depths (the cauldron, by the way, contains stew for her supper; she isn't *completely* a stereotype, just *mostly* a stereotype). The little hut contains all manner of junk – dolls, clothing, woven sticks, carved images, scrolls and other occult paraphernalia. The witch herself is an wild-haired old woman, hideously ugly and dressed in rags. Despite her degenerate appearance, she speaks with the self-possession and education more suited to a queen.

She claims to have been expecting the Player Characters and bids them sit. It is small and cramped and foul-smelling. The smoke from the fire hurts the Player Characters' eyes.

The **Witch of Ten Pines Hill** has been on this hill for as long as anyone can remember. She could be a local spirit, minor goddess or just a very old woman. She has little power, save in the field of divination. She has been consulted by the chieftains from Sky End Stead in the past but always demands a high price for her advice. Tonight will be no exception.

New Rune Magic Spell: Scry Fate

Casting Time 3, Instant, Magnitude 3
Runes: *Fate*, *Truth*

The caster mutters a few cryptic words of advice.

This spell allows the caster to answer a single question by looking ahead in the flow of time. It is unreliable and inconsistent – the caster often just glimpses moments and images without context. The spell often gives the caster nothing more than cryptic clues or riddles.

If the Player Characters try to overpower the witch, they can do so easily – physically, she is just an old woman. They can physically force her to perform the divination but if they do so, she will subsequently work to aid their enemies (see The Witch as an Enemy sidebar on the opposite page). She cannot perform more than three divinations without becoming exhausted, though. More likely, the Player Characters act respectfully and tell her their plight. They need to find the thief of the bowl.

The witch tells them that she can answer up to three questions for them but at a price for each question. They can stop after each question if the price is too high. The witch is neither infallible nor omniscient but will do her best to give the impression that she is. She will state her price before each question.

Likely questions and answers from the Witch:

Who stole the bowl?

Half a man, half a man. From the south he came, from the land of bitter iron. His name is Jezat and he is friendless and cursed! Eye of ruby, heart of iron, he lusts for gold above all else.

Where is the thief now?

In the forest, following the river south. He is looking for a stranger to this land, who desires the bowl but doesn't know if yet. He'll search every village he finds until the sea swallows him.

Where is the thief going?

South, along the river. Five villages he will search but he will find his end in the sea.

How can we catch the thief?

Follow the dancing girl whose name is Siana. Follow the river.

Siana (see page 132) is the secret name of the River Solthi, which flows through the forest. Knowing this name will aid the Player Characters if they ever wish to call up the spirit of the river.

Did Vinya arrange for the bowl to be stolen?

No. She doesn't know yet and when she finds out she will weep, for her son will rule over nothing but ash.

What do we need to know?

Trust one who calls himself untrustworthy, fight one who would be your friend and live when you think you should die.

These are the prices for the Witch's answers.

First Question's Price

There is a girl in Sky End Stead. Her name is Goldhen. Bring her to me before the next Sacred Time. Promise me this and you'll have an answer.

Second Question's Price

When you find the bowl, spill the blood of an Orlanthi man in it. Swirl it around, then pour it into this pot. She hands the Characters a little clay pot. Bring it to me when you come back home. Promise me this and you'll have an answer.

Third Question's Price

My price for this is one of you. One of you will serve me for a time when all this is done. Who will swear to be mine?

See Debts To The Witch of Ten Pines on page 66, for details on what happens when the Player Characters come back to her.

Now that the Characters have a course, they can set off in search of the thief. Move onto the Along The Laughing River chapter.

Orlanthi Victory Points

Agreeing to track down the Bowl of Blood's thief and determining his direction (either from the witch or through tracking him from Deorul's Hold) is worth one Victory Point. See page 63 for more on Victory Points.

The Witch as an Enemy

If the Player Characters manage to offend the Witch of Ten Pines Hill, she will harass the characters from afar throughout the campaign. For example, she may:

- Send dreams to Hrulf in Urling's Ford or to Vigota in Sunvale, warning them not to trust the Player Characters.
- Beg a favour from Siana, the spirit of the river, making her upset the characters' boats or flood their camp.
- Warn Orlgard that the characters are treacherous/EWF insurgents.
- Warn the Nineman about the characters.

The God Learners

Read or show the following section to the Players if they are playing the God Learner aspect of this campaign – it is their introduction to the God Learner Knowledge Band. However they have become agents of the Middle Sea Empire – be they hired mercenaries, loyal Jrusteli, ambitious sorcerers – they have been assigned to a secret mission in the Heortland. They were transported by a Middle Sea trade ship to Genertala and dropped on a beach, where they are to await the rest of the Knowledge Band.

The waves crash on the beach behind you. Gulls wheel overhead in a grey sky. It is an unprepossessing place from which to start the clash of empires. Far to the south, on the island of Locsil, is the fabled Clanking City, the greatest Middle Sea outpost in this region. To the north is Dragon Pass, the heartland of the Empire of Wyrms Friends. Between them are the Stormwalk Mountains and the Savage or Steal Forest, the land of the Orlanthi barbarians.

The Orlanthi once blocked the expansion of the EWF but now the two have been united by their mutual distrust of the Zistorites of the Clanking City. Their hostilities have faded away because of this common enemy. The Clanking City is now besieged by an alliance of Wyrms Friends and Orlanthi and this siege must be lifted. If the Orlanthi can be induced to war with the Dragon again, there may yet be hope for the city of marvels.

And it is indeed a marvel that descends upon you now. The grey clouds overhead are cloven by the silver keel of a flying ship. Runes flare with arcane light upon her hull as she moves gracefully through the heavens. The ship comes to a halt above you, the force of its magical levitation hurling sand into your face as though you stand in the face of a hurricane.

A rope ladder lands nearby. You climb aboard and the ship ascends into the safety of the clouds once more. The wind of its passage erases any sign that you were ever on this lonely beach.

The Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant

The God Learner vessel, a product of Zistorite sorcery, is called the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant*. She is a mobile headquarters for operations against the Empire of Wyrms' Friends in the region, as well as for Knowledge Band investigations into the myths of the various cultures in the region. Her main purpose is to secretly ferry God Learner spies from one hiding place to another, as well as provide a quick escape route if their espionage is discovered by EWF scribes or vengeful barbarians. In a pinch, she can use her Zistorite weaponry to defend herself. She is not a warship but she is capable of holding her own in a battle. She is also warded against detection spells and hides in the thick stormclouds over the mountains to avoid being seen.

The *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* carries a dozen crew on most missions, as well as various passengers and specialists. Physically, she resembles a flying ship but instead of sails, she has a complex rigging of copper lines and spurs; when in flight, cerulean fields of crackling energy arc and dance in this magical rigging, holding the ship aloft.

The ship is controlled from a brass command throne at the rear. While seated in this elaborate apparatus, the pilot can see through the eyes of the hawk figurehead and control the vessel.

The captain of the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* is **Erid Steelhawk** (see page 126). He is not technically a Zistorite but was originally the captain of a Middle Sea sailing ship that was ambushed and sunk by pirates from Esrolia. The highest-ranking God Learner and effective head of the espionage efforts is **Rsadi the Wondrous** (see page 127), a skilled sorcerer. Her right-hand man and enforcer is **Cadamil the Hammer** (see page 126).

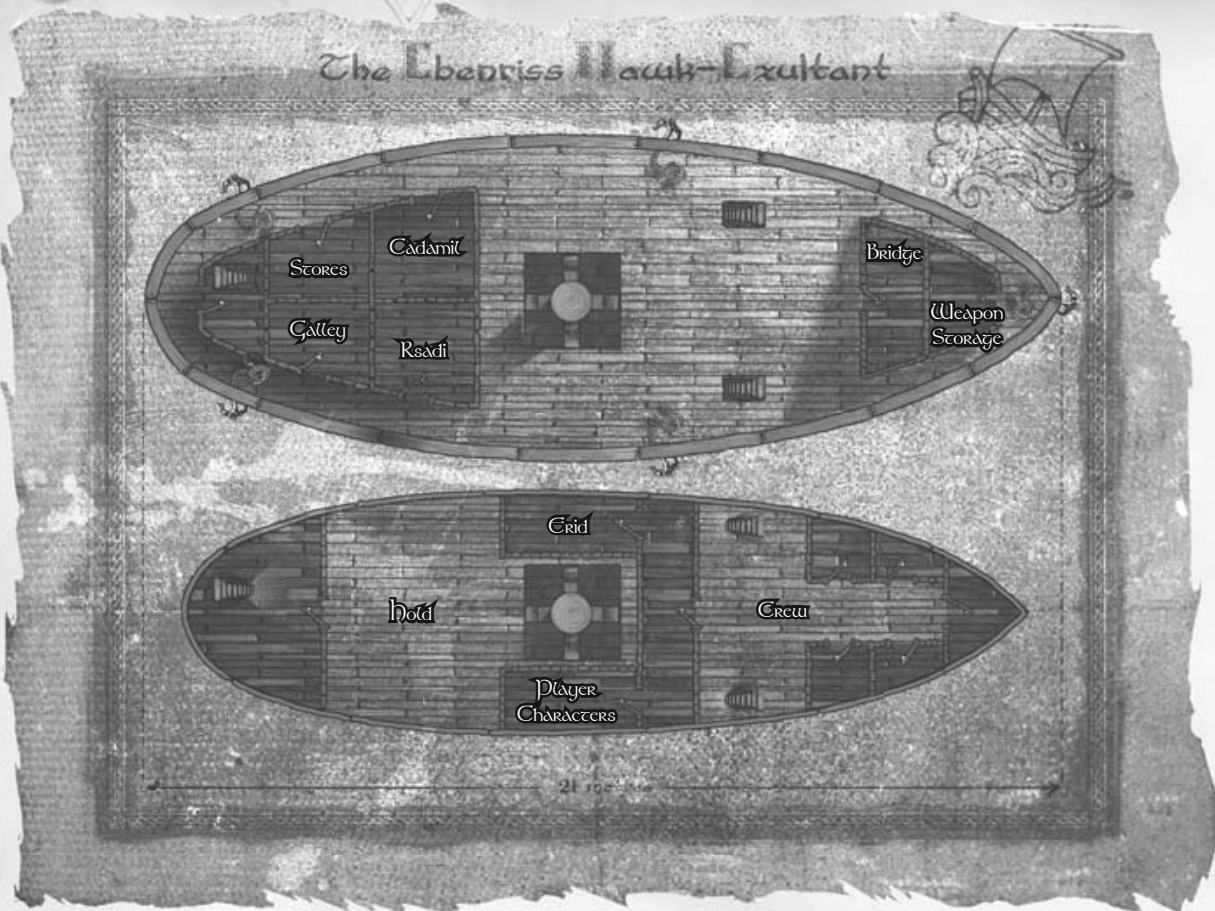
In addition to the passengers and crew, there is one other entity on board the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant*. The Zistorites produce mechanical servants. There are four such servants on board the ship, who perform menial duties like cleaning and basic repairs. One of the four, though, is a special model, a Venator-class intelligent machine. It is **Yarlech the Humble** (see page 127) and its purpose is to observe the operations on board and act to further and protect the interests of the Zistor Machine Cult.

Erid Steelhawk: Erid was born in Jrustela, half the world away. As a youth, he dreamed of flying, of seeing strange vistas and wonderful things but he proved to have little talent for sorcery. He joined the Jrusteli merchant navy and was a captain until his ship was attacked and sunk by pirates. He and a few members of his crew survived and through a series of adventures made it to Zistorwal, the Clanking City, where he took the commission to become the pilot of the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant*.

Erid was a loyal son of Jrustela and prayed to Malkion and honoured the Emperor of Land and Sea like a good son should. Since coming to the Clanking City and Genertala, though, Erid has been exposed to the dark side of the Middle Sea Empire, to bizarre sorceries and nefarious conspiracies. The wonderful Empire of his youth, a great civilisation of commerce and learning and idealism, now seems to him to be a hollow lie, an illusion to disguise the ugly truth – that the Empire is built on treachery, malicious sorcery and twisted ambition.

Erid will either convert or die during this campaign, depending on the actions of the Player Characters.

Rsadi the Wondrous: Rsadi the Wondrous has her eye on the complete and utter defeat of the Empire of Wyrms' Friends. This glorious victory will ensure her ascension to the highest strata of Middle Sea Empire society. She will be High Sorceress, the supreme magical authority in the Western World, the power behind the Seshnegi Throne. She has come a long way from the beggar-girl she once was on the sun-bleached streets of Evrowal – having won her place in the University through sheer magical skill, she proved herself in battle by aiding the Jrusteli armies in Pamaltela, then mastered the magic of God Learning when she was involved in the disastrous Goddess Switch. She is a chameleon, adopting the least threatening posture possible to make people underestimate her.



The Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant

Hull: 5

Structure Points: 50

Airworthiness: 25

Length: 21m

Beam: 5m

Capacity: 17 tons

Crew: 15 crewmen and 4 mechanical servants

Speed: 15m / 126km

Weapons: Three Lightning Cannon

Ram: No

Skill: Airshiphandling +0% or Shiphandling -40%

Weapon	Skill	Damage	Range	Load	AP/HP
Lightning Cannon	Engineering	4D6	500m	Each may only be fired once per Combat Round	4/12

During her time in the army in Pamaltela, Rsadi met a warrior and knight of the Return to Rightness Crusade, Cadamil the Hammer. Seeing that he could be useful to her plans, Rsadi used her sorcery to bind Cadamil's mind to hers. The warrior was a rising power in the Rightness Crusade and a respected commander. With Cadamil, Rsadi has access to the other sources of power in the Middle Sea Empire – the Malkoni church and the military.

Rsadi's current posting as head of a Knowledge Band raiding the Orlanthi mythos is apparently a demotion. On board the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant*, she is far from the twin centres of the Middle Sea Empire at Jrustela and Seshnela, far from the power and influence she craves. She risks being captured or killed by the EWF and for what? There are easier places to do research into the Storm Tribe pantheon, safer and more civilised places – but it is only here, in Hendrikiland, that the story of the Blood of Orlanth is known. It is only here that she can bring down dragons.

Rsadi's Plan

Rsadi was an ally and confidant of Delecti the Inquirer before he defected to the EWF. She took this defection very personally – the two had been friends and Rsadi had even entertained thoughts about the two of them ruling the world together. Before Delecti's betrayal, the two discovered the existence of a missing Orlanthi myth. At the time, it was little more than a footnote in the annals of God Learning. The Goddess Switch proved that they could effect changes in the God Plane by exchanging one deity for another; the next step would be to change a single deity by altering its myths.

With the siege of the Clanking City and Delecti's defection, the myth took on much greater political significance. If Rsadi could gain control of the myth of Orlanth and Sh'kaharzeel, she would be able to hold the threat of deicide over the Orlanthi tribes, especially the kingdom of Androfin the Defiant. With this threat, she could lift the siege of the Clanking City and win the loyalty of the Zistorite factions in the Middle Sea Empire.

More significantly, the myth also deals with one of the most important dragons. So far, the God Learners have had little success in using their techniques on their chief enemies, the EWF. As mystics, and worse, a relatively new and innovative order of mystics, the EWF have no myths to call their own, no presence in the Hero Plane to assault and manipulate. The dragonewts from which the EWF arose are just as useless to the God Learners; while they

have theistic myths that could theoretically be entered, the myths are so strange as to be incomprehensible to most humans. Some God Learners have suggested learning the draconic language and embracing the draconic mindset but there are obvious problems with *becoming* the EWF in order to destroy it. However, the Orlanthi myth of Orlanth fighting the dragon has influence over the *dragon* too, as well as Orlanth. If understood, it could give leverage over the EWF.

The common version of the myth is not especially well suited to God Learning. It is a very conventional HeroQuest, with a great deal of inertia. It can be used, certainly but it is very difficult to change. The rumoured story of Orlanth the Martyr, on the other hand, is ideal. The story is magically potent but so finely balanced that a little push would result in a very different series of events. If Rsadi could gain control of the myth, she could do more damage to the EWF than any Middle Sea Empire army. It would be a supreme act of applied sorcery, one that would win her admiration and influence in both the universities and the courts of the Empire.

The one problem with this grand design (other than the practical challenges of finding a secret Orlanthi myth, blasting through into the God Plane with RuneQuest Sight and somehow warping the myth in a way that benefits her and the Middle Sea Empire) is that Delecti knows about her plan.

Cadamil the Hammer: Twenty years ago, Cadamil's star was burning brightly. He was battling against strange monsters and rebels in the jungles of Pamaltela, leading hosts of crusading knights against the enemies of Emperor and God. Then he met one of the powerful sorcerers who were providing magical support in the war – and he was lost. Rsadi recognised his potential and secretly bound his will to hers. She can now command him telepathically and he cannot resist her commands.

Since then, Cadamil has been very successful in all his fields. Little wonder he has thrived, as a single thought from Rsadi forces him to practise swordsmanship or pray to Malkion for hours on end. He has distinguished himself on the battlefield because he no longer has a sense of self-preservation. No-one suspects that Cadamil is Rsadi's slave, as she is careful to pretend that the two are opposed. Cadamil is everything she is not – argumentative, devout, arrogant, dangerous.

His nickname 'the Hammer' comes from his approach to combat and other problems – hit them with overwhelming force.

Ideally, Cadamil will befriend the Player Characters, just so Rsadi can learn what they really think of her.

Yarlech the Humble: The *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* is a highly valuable piece of Zistorite magitechology. While the Machine Lords of that city are willing to loan it to Rsadi the Wondrous and are even willing to put it under the command of a renegade captain like Erid Steelhawk, they are not willing to let it go entirely. Yarlech is their ace in the hole, their emergency override for the ship. The automaton is programmed to observe those on board the *Ebenriss* and to take action if the ship's crew do anything that might harm the Clanking City of Zistorwal.

The Briefing

Once the Player Characters are on board the ship and have stowed their gear, one of the crew (Tarmund, one of Erid's old shipmates) brings them up to Rsadi's stateroom. This room is richly decorated with tapestries and sculptures of various Malkioni saints; the walls are lined with bookcases and maps of the world. Rsadi sits behind an imposing desk; Cadamil lounges in one corner, watching the Characters. There is a Zistorite Venator (mechanical servant built on the framework of a human skeleton) next to Rsadi, acting as her aide and secretary. This Venator is actually Yarlech the Humble.

Rsadi welcomes the Characters and introduces herself and Cadamil. Play her as a charming, affable and slightly dotty old aunt who happens to be a wizard but remember that it is just an act – Rsadi is ambitious and dangerous, a manipulator who likes to have people like or underestimate her so that they do not watch her too closely. She explains the Characters' mission:

'Well, well, now that you're here, we'd best put you to work. We're going to drop you off at one of the hidden eyries in the Stormwalk mountains. We have a small observation post there. What are we observing, you no doubt wonder? Why, anything and everything, of course, but primarily the Orlanphi barbarians. The last two years have been bitterly cold, with poor harvests. They are getting desperate and that is potentially very useful to us. If they're cornered, they're more likely to lash out and if we can convince them to turn on those cursed Wyrms cultists, then huzzah for the barbarians!'

Professionally, of course, I'm more interested in their magical reactions to the cold but that's another matter.'

If any of the Characters ask about God Learning and Rsadi's 'professional interest', she is only too happy to run off on a tangent:

'Oh, it's a little pet theory of mine about the belief structures of these tribes. Dragon Pass is a zone of very high magical significance – why, the things we could learn, if it were not for that bunch of scale-headed crazy mystics squatting in the middle of it! – and I suspect that the myth-cycles of local tribes contain an unusual potency. With a fuller understanding of their beliefs, I believe that it could be used as leverage on a large scale, that we could even open a new front against the EWF! But that's all far in the future, of course, of course. For the moment, we're just observing and learning and dabbling.'

As to the actual mission she is assigning the Characters to:

'Ah, yes. The eyrie in question, we've heard nothing from them in several weeks. They should have at least complained at me; we should have heard something from them. It looks like something's gone horribly wrong and they're all, er, well, probably...'

Cadamil leans over.

'She means, she thinks they're all dead. We're going to dump you on some godforsaken mountainside and you're going to find the eyrie, find out what happened and contact us for further orders. St. Volanc bless your swords, because you're going to need them.'

Rsadi nods enthusiastically.

'And don't forget to wrap up warm!'

Rsadi gives the Player Characters a map of the region, 500 silver coins and clothes similar to those worn by the barbarians, as well as hooded cloaks. She informs them that there is a God Learner agent in Sunvale by the name of Tholos and tells them to look to him for supplies and shelter when they reach that town.

The Eyrie

The Eyrie, high in the Stormwalk mountains, is one of several hidden God Learner posts in the region. Having a flying ship is a great advantage to such secret operations, as the ship can easily resupply the hidden posts without

anyone noticing. The Eyrie is positioned to observe the movements of both the EWF to the north of the Savage or Steal Forest and the barbarian tribes to the south. There are supposed to be three people in the Eyrie – a sorcerer named **Jezat**, **Araba** a spy and a soldier, **Kether**. All three are loyal servants of the Middle Sea Empire.

According to standard procedures, Jezat is supposed to signal the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* regularly but no report has been received from him in several days. Something must have gone wrong.

What's Gone Wrong?: Jezat knows the basics of God Learning and Rsadi's plan and had heard from Rsadi that the Howling Wolf Clan conceals something valuable. He is ambitious and greedy and decides to make a play for power on his own. He contacts a band of outlaws, desperate Orlanthi driven into the mountains by the harsh winter and offers them gold in exchange for their aid in robbing the Howling Wolves. Araba discovers his plot so he murders her. The outlaws arrive and kill Kether before the warrior can do anything.

Jezat brings the outlaws down to Sky End Stead where they attack Deorul's hold and the secret shrine. Most of the outlaws are slain or scattered by the Orlanthi warriors but Jezat manages to steal the Bowl of Blood from the shrine and flee. Chasing him down will be the major plot of the first section of this campaign for the God Learners.

The Eyrie: The Eyrie is a strange sight. The building is made from materials that were carried up by the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* and God Learner sorcery. It is an elegant little house of marble pillars and glass, built in the Justeli style. It sits on a ledge on a lonely mountainside many miles from any other dwelling. It is utterly out of place.

Inside, the Characters discover that the place has been ransacked. Everything of value has been stripped and stolen. However, there is no sign that the door has been forced or that anyone broke it. The storeroom has been emptied. The bodies of Araba and Kether lie in the snow outside, stripped of all equipment. Investigation reveals that while Kether was hacked apart by swords and axes, Araba was struck from behind by a blasting spell, probably Firebolt.



Possible Investigations

The following details the possible investigations that Player Characters of any background may engage with while at Sky End Stead. It is likely that any such investigations will cause a delay in pursuing Jezat.

The Secret Shrine: Player Characters may try to find the secret shrine that is rumoured to be located somewhere in the hills above Sky End Stead. This shrine is defended by the Howling Wolf *wyter*, which takes the form of a **wolf spirit** (see page 133) in the forested hills around the shrine.

Howling Wolf Orlanthi characters have nothing to fear from the *wyter* and may pass it with impunity. Non-Howling Wolf Orlanthi, God Learners and EWF will have much more difficulty:

The first barrier is that anyone trying to get through the hills finds themselves getting turned around or lost very easily. The characters will find paths that twist back on themselves or discover that they have gone right past the area of the shrine without seeing it. Navigating through this region requires either flying magic, a Hard (–40%) Survival test or a Difficult (–20%) Tracking test.

The second barrier is the howling of the wolf spirit. This howling strikes magical terror into the heart of those who hear it. Characters who hear the howling of the wolf must make Persistence checks or be so unsettled that they suffer a –20% penalty to all skill tests while in the forests near the shrine. The wolf will howl at least three times – more if the characters get lost in the woods.

The third barrier is the wolf itself, a powerful spirit.

Jezat had developed a protective spell to pierce the magical barriers around the shrine but the Player Characters do not have this magic. If the characters are foolish enough to risk going into the hills without it, they will run into the barriers.

The Clan Temple: The Howling Wolf clan temple to the Storm Tribe pantheon concentrates on Orlanth, Ernalda and Chalanna Arroy and is located on the shores of Sky End Lake, a short ride from the stead itself. A path runs from the stead to the temple. The temple is old and physically unremarkable, although there is a definite aura around it, a feeling of sanctity and holiness. The temples are built of wood and stone, consisting of a large central area where ceremonies are performed and a secret shrine where only the priests can go. Vinya is the chief priestess of the cult of Ernalda the Earthmother and spends much of her time in the temple, praying for an end to the winter. Orgard is effectively the chief priest of Orlanth but another old barbarian, **Forgo the Remarkably Old**, is the custodian of the temple here. Forgo is white-bearded, withered and seems quite set on dying here in the temple. This temple is of secondary importance compared to the secret shrine, which is hidden on the far side of the lake.

Player Characters who spy on Vinya's worship may notice that she includes draconic imagery as part of her worship when alone. She is not a wyrmfriend but is experimenting with their icons and rites.

When the Characters examine Jezat's room in the Eyrie, they find that while it has been hurriedly emptied, it has not been ransacked with the same brutality as the rest of the building. There is an important clue here – a map of the Howling Wolf and Laughing River clans' lands to the southwest of the Eyrie. The phrase 'The Nineman' is written next to Solthmouth, while caves outside Deepwell are marked with the note 'Spirit echo cavern'. A pile of burnt papers sits in a brazier and it appears that Jezat intended to burn the map too but it slipped from the pile before catching fire. The Player Characters can make out words like 'kaharzeel', 'bowl', 'wyter-breaking spell' and 'Delecti' amid the ashes.

To The Villages

When the Characters report back to the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant*, Rsadi considers the situation. Jezat, she thinks, has gone rogue and may even be defecting to the EWF. This cannot be allowed. The map is their only clue right now. She suspects the Nineman may be an EWF agent or spy – either way, Jezat cannot be allowed to reach him. The *Ebenriss* will drop the Characters off at the nearest village, Sky End Stead. They will follow the river south and try to catch Jezat en route. Meanwhile, the ship will fly south to Solthmouth and try to find out what this Nineman is, so they can intercept Jezat if the Characters fail.

The Player Characters are also ordered to investigate the political and military disposition of each village and if possible, to stall EWF expansion into this region. The Orlanthi clans of the mountain are important to the God Learner agenda.

Finally, with the Eyrie destroyed and Jezat's notes burned, Rsadi's research into the Orlanthi mythos has been set back. On their journey south, the Characters should gather whatever information they can on the myths and rites of the Storm Tribe gods.

The Characters may have questions for Rsadi, which she will answer in her own inimitable style.

What do we do if we find Jezat?

Well, dears, that depends on what's going on. I think he's betrayed us, in which case he should be captured if possible and killed if necessary. Find out why he fled the Eyrie first.

What was Jezat doing in the Eyrie?

Research, of course. Studying the Orlanthi mythos. God Learner magic.

How do we stall EWF expansion?

I don't know. Help the Orlanthi. Frame the EWF. Stab people and blow things up. Use your imaginations – but don't get caught!

How are the Orlanthi clans important? Does that have anything to do with Jezat betraying us?

Jezat was involved in the research into the Orlanthi but it's a long-term project and I don't see how it could factor into his betrayal. As for what we want them for – we want their secret myths, of course.

Move onto the Along The Laughing River chapter.

Encounters at Sky End Stead

The God Learner Player Characters will arrive at Sky End Stead just after Theorl has left to re-take Deorul's Hold. If the characters are disguised as Orlanthi, they will be welcomed. Outsiders will still be allowed entrance into the stead but will be treated with more suspicion. The characters will be met by guards, then presented to Vinya. With the warband gone, Vinya is unwilling to deny guest-right to a band of adventurous folk – and at any rate, she wishes to keep an eye on these newcomers and see if they are friend or foe.

It should not take long for the Player Characters to ascertain the current crisis and go to Orlgard's aid. Failing all else, one-armed Wuldrich will drunkenly proclaim that he will search out the missing chieftain and challenge the God Learners to aid him in his task.

Orlgard will not be as willing to trust the God Learners, even if they are successfully disguised as Orlanthi, but he has literally run out of choices. As long as they do not obviously associate themselves with Jezat, he will engage them to track down the Bowl of Blood for the clan.

God Learner Victory Points

Finding out that the secret shrine exists is worth one Victory Point; actually making it to the shrine is worth two Victory Points. See page 63 for more on Victory Points.

The Empire of Wyrms' Friends

You were told that this is the fifth of a dozen camps belonging to the War Dragons, here along the shores of the Engizi river. If this is so, the armies of the empire must be vaster than mortal minds can conceive, for this camp contains many hundreds of warriors. Tents of scarlet and gold ripple in the wind; you can hear – and smell! – the alarm of the thunderer dinosaur cavalry as a death king tyrannosaur stalks down to drink from the river. Wyverns wheel overhead, flying to keep warm. There are braziers everywhere in the camp and clusters of men and dragonewts around the braziers. Still, there is a chill in the air and you have heard that the cold sickens or weakens the dinosaurs.

The tents of the Dragon's Claw Host's Masters are on a small rise that overlooks the Engizi as it winds down the valley. In this serene enclave, your worries melt away as you hear the endless repeating chants of the mystics, drawing your souls into the endless glories of the dragon dream. A servant – a yelping little imp-creature from some distant land but a follower of the dragon like every other living thing in this vast camp – leads you to the most ornate and magnificent of the tents, where Telekfios Ashbringer awaits you.

You step into the tent. One side of it – the side you are on – is brightly lit by glowing crystals. Maps of Dragon Pass and the surrounding lands are spread out across a floating slab of bone. There, just outside the town of Jinful, is the Fifth Claw Holds The Unframmelled Wilds Camp. Two figures – a man and a woman, both dressed in military uniforms – are examining the maps. They glance up at you as you enter but their attention is focussed on their whispered discussion.

The other side of the tent is unnaturally dark, as if it was a deep and gloomy cavern. You can dimly perceive shapes in the shadows – the leathery arc of a wing, the ivory gleam of claws, a scaly flank, all illuminated by a fiery glow that burns and fades in time with the heavy breathing of the Ashbringer. Whatever Telekfios has become, he is hidden there in the shadows of the command tent. Two burning yellow eyes regard you from the darkness. He speaks in a mellifluous voice, warm and welcoming.

'Blessings upon you, Wyrmfriends. Welcome to Fifth Claw Holds The Unframmelled Wilds camp. I am Telekfios.'

His burning eyes glance towards the two officers at the map, first the woman, then the man.

'This is Wyrms' Claw Initiate, Mistress of Shadow and Fire and Dutiful Daughter of Dragons, Maralis the Orlanthei.' She bows to you and you catch a glimpse of an Orlanthei tattoo on the side of her neck. 'This is Wyrms' Clan Initiate and Master of Thunder and Stone, Ferule.' The man nods curtly at you.

'Maralis, these friends are to be your hands and your voices and your swords. Send them to the villages. They shall herald my arrival into the mountains.'

The awesome presence of the dragon withdraws and the far side of the tent darkens to complete obscurity.

'Have them prepared. Go now.'

Read or show the previous section to the Players if they are playing the Empire of Wyrms Friends aspect of this campaign – it is their introduction to the Empire forces that will be commanding them in the first section. However they have become agents of the EWF – be they hired mercenaries, initiates or converts – they have been ordered to report to the Fifth Claw Holds The Untrammelled Wilds camp and to offer their services to Wyrms Hand Triumphant Telektios Ashbringer, the commander of the camp.

Telektios (see page 124) has recently ascended to the rank of Wyrms Hand Triumphant and has consciously cast aside as much of his humanity as he can. He is on – or believes he is on – the fast track to Draconic transformation and believes that human concerns or emotions are weaknesses. In his dreams, the vast army at his command is nothing more than an extension of his dragon will, a sort of dragon prosthesis that he will make do with until he reaches the next level of his transformation. When his legions set fire to a town, it is as though he has breathed the dragonfire on that town. When his priests convert another host of barbarians to the true path, it is as though they have seen his scaly magnificence and bowed down before him. He sees his army, effectively, as his body, a precursor of the dragon-form that is to come. As such, he is immensely arrogant and consciously inhuman.

Maralis (see page 117) is an Orlanthi warrior-woman, a devotee of Vinga, who converted to the draconic philosophy. She is Telektios' chief advisor and spy as he deals with the troublesome Orlanthi barbarians of Hendrikiland. She appears to be a committed member of the Empire of Wyrms Friends and has risen to the rank of Wyrms Claw Initiate.

Unbeknownst to any of the other EWF in the camp, though, Maralis is still loyal to her birth culture, the free Orlanthi barbarians of the Savage or Steal Forest. Like the Orlanthi anti-hero Arkat of old, she believes that the only way to defeat her enemies is to understand them and steal their secrets. She has allies among the tribes loyal to Aeldred the Fat, her father and passes information about EWF military movements to them. She is slowly building up a network of rebels under the moniker of 'Arkat', men who will be loyal to her when the rebellion comes. This secret mission has consumed her life for many years, ever since her father entrusted it to her to preserve his clan.

Later in *Blood of Orlanth*, Maralis becomes the leader of the Orlanthi resistance.

When playing Maralis, play her as a confident, dynamic heroine. She is forceful, passionate, and quick to act.

Ferule (see page 122) is the field commander of the EWF forces in the region. He is a professional soldier, a mercenary who fought on battlefields across the world before converting to the EWF. He is a competent leader and a deadly fighter. Oddly, he has little time for mysticism despite being a dragon devotee – the Draconic philosophy has filled the void in the soul left by a lifetime of killing but practical matters like defeating the Orlanthi rebels take precedence over meditation on the divine mysteries of the Wyrms. He rations out his belief, only spending time in contemplation of the dragon when it is absolutely necessary to maintain his sanity.

Ferule is like a stone, dour and hard.

Right Word Now (see page 123) is the noble dragonewt advisor to the Fifth Claw Holds The Untrammelled Wilds Camp. Like many of his kind, he has become disillusioned with the humans' capacity to understand the draconic way. He came to the camp in the hopes that he could guide the expansion of the Empire into the Orlanthi territory with a measure of grace but Telektios has disappointed him time and time again. Right Word Now has taken to spending most of his time in solitude, occasionally spouting a bit of draconic wisdom. He has largely given up on Telektios and believes that the commander has fallen from the path of inner wisdom in favour of physical transformation. Instead, Right Word Now is trying to guide the two Wyrms Claw Initiates down the correct road but this proves difficult. Maralis is playing the dragonewt (and Right Word Now knows this) and Ferule is not yet willing to give in to mysticism.

The Briefing

Having been dismissed from Telektios' presence, the Characters are brought by the imp (who introduces himself as Arkh) to the camp armourers and weaponsmiths, where they are issued magical bone-sung breastplates (see *Magic of Glorantha*, page 43), the ceremonial armour of the EWF officers. If the Player Characters want to requisition any other armour or weapons, they can do so here – each Player Character has a 1,000 SP credit limit with the camp's armourers and quartermasters.

Once the Characters are equipped, Maralis comes and finds them and leads them to another tent on the Host Master's

hill. On the way, she introduces herself more fully and will answer any questions the Characters might have. As they climb up the hill, a dragonewt – Right Word Now – emerges from the shadows and attaches himself to the band of Player Characters. Maralis is obviously unhappy and disconcerted by Right Word Now's presence and asks him what he is doing. *'Nothing,'* he replies. Nonetheless, he refuses to leave and follows the Characters into Maralis' tent. He sits at the back and says nothing.

Doing her best to ignore the dragonewt, Maralis unrolls another copy of the map and shows it to the Characters. The map depicts the forest lands and towns along the Solthi River, from Sky End Stead to Solthmouth. She taps the far south of the map, off the coast, where an arrow points to God Forgot.

'Our true foe is down here,' she says, *'Zistorwal, the Clanking City. The God Learners are a threat to the Great Dragon and must be destroyed for the good of the world. Between us and them are the Orlanthi tribes, my kinfolk. We don't want to destroy them; we want them as friends*

and allies. Now, we have a tentative alliance with King Androfin but it's just an alliance of convenience – he hates the God Learners just as much as we do.'

'What we're trying to do is ally ourselves with the clans along the Solthi River, the Howling Wolf and Laughing River clans. We've sent missionaries to the clans and given them supplies and magic to help them through this unnatural cold but our efforts have been sabotaged, probably through God Learner interference. Your mission is to visit these clans and do what you can to aid them and to find those who oppose our efforts. You're not to slay them unless it is unavoidable – I want to find the leaders and the God Learner spies, not foolish young barbarians who're striking out at what they don't understand.'

'We want to win their souls.'

The Player Characters may have questions for Maralis:

What can you tell us about the missionaries?

They are mystics and priests of the cult of Orlanth the Dragon. Most are Orlanthi but some are agents from other



lands. All of Dragon Pass has suffered in this long winter and our missionaries and wonderworkers have promised to aid the clans.

What should we do in the villages?

Find what needs to be done. Help them survive the winter and demonstrate the honour and glory of the Dragon That Is To Come. In each place, seek out our agents and missionaries and the enemies of the Empire.

What can you tell us about the clans?

By the source of the river, you'll find the Howling Wolf clan. They have suffered greatly in the long winter and are I suspect they are ripe for conversion.

Along the river, you'll meet the Laughing River clan. They are traders and farmers, a clever people, not warlike at all.

What should we do if we discover God Learner spies?

Find out as much as you can and deal with them if they are a clear danger to our cause. We believe the Middle Sea Empire has sent agents to stall our advance into the forest and finding those agents is much more important than killing a few pawns.

I'm going to go to Solthmouth, the largest town in the region. I'll meet you there in a few weeks, when you come down the river.

Once the Characters are ready to go, Maralis tells the them to report to Ferule, who will give them their steeds. As they leave the tent, Right Word Now finally speaks up:

'Know the enemy, know yourself. If you are the dragon, then you destroy your enemies.'

To The Villages

The Player Characters report to Ferule. He gives them a copy of the map of the region, a letter proclaiming that they are agents of the Empire of Wyrn's Friends that allows them to request aid and succour from any friends of the Empire and five hundred silver coins to cover expenses. One of the aerial EWF detachments will drop them off at Sky End Stead, the northernmost of the Solthi valley settlements.

Encounters at Sky End Stead

The EWF Player Characters will arrive at Sky End Stead just after Theorl has left to re-take Deorul's Hold. Vinya will display initial doubts about allowing the EWF Player Characters entry, but her own secret agenda should assure their acceptance.

Inside the hall, the Player Characters are obviously unwelcome. Sky End Stead is a deeply traditional stronghold, despite its current period of hard living. A fight of some sort is almost inevitable, though Vinya will break any fracas up before true damage is done. Wuldric is particularly likely to drunkenly assault one of the party.

Vinya will secretly approach them while they are at Sky End Stead. She fears that a clash between the Orlanthi tribes and the mighty Empire is coming and believes that adopting some form of the Orlanth the Dragon faith is the only way they will survive. Old Orlgard is too hidebound to adapt to a new form of his god but Theorl her son is more open-minded and... malleable. If the EWF will instruct him in their ways and give him the support he needs to become chieftain and preserve the Howling Wolf clan, both she and the EWF will benefit. What can the characters offer her?

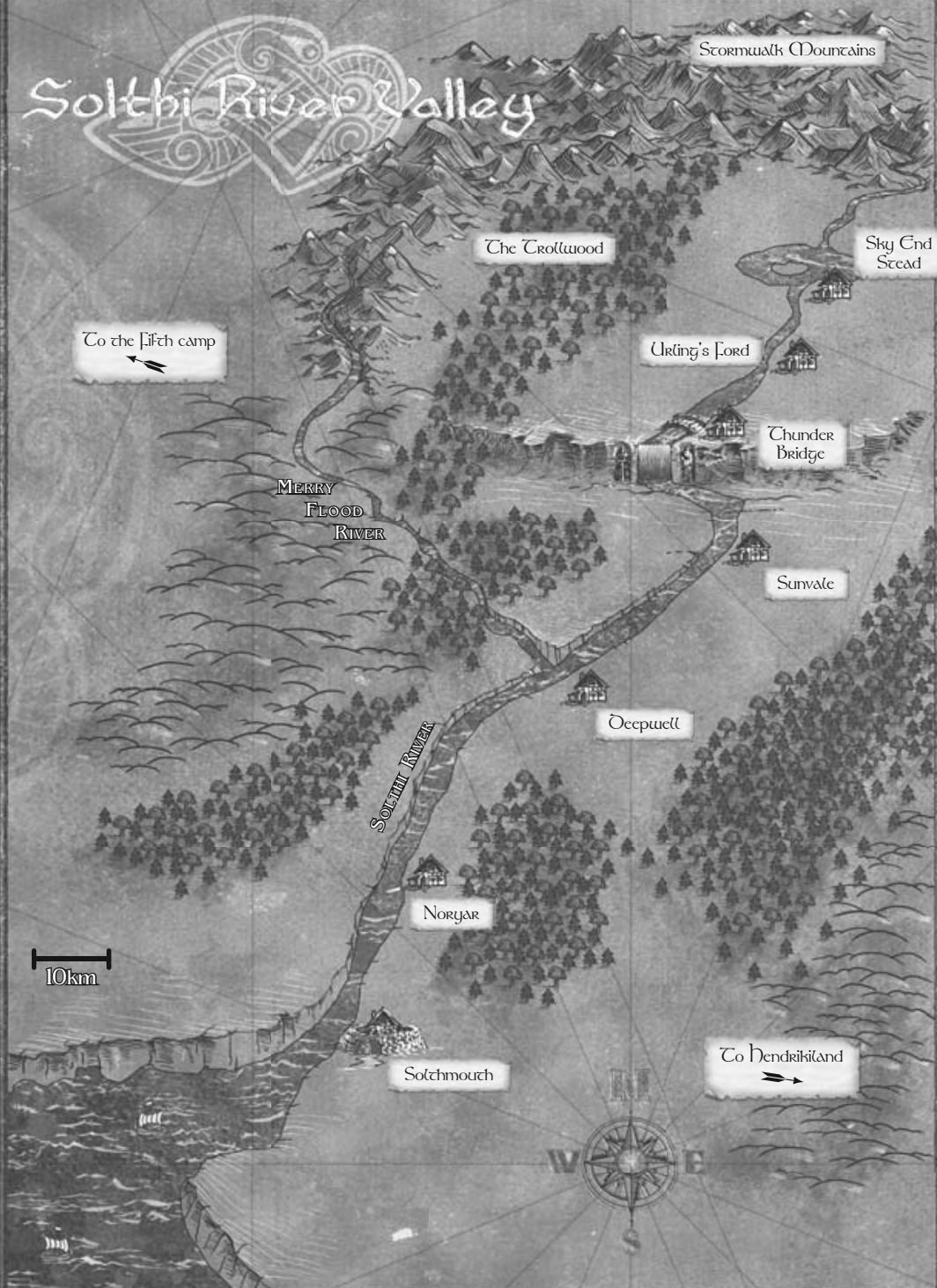
Regardless of their offer, Vinya will advise them that a show of good faith by the EWF would be an excellent idea right now, and advise them to look for the chieftain. His safe return would do much to further their standing in the eyes of the clan.

Orlgard will not trust the wyrmfriends but he has literally run out of choices. As long as they do not obviously flout his rule or traditions, he will engage them to track down the Bowl of Blood for the clan... and he will consider their draconic ways if they succeed. He is lying, but the Player Characters will probably already have Vinya or Theorl lined up as a replacement...

EWF Victory Points

Coming to an arrangement with Vinya is worth one Victory Point. See page 63 for more on Victory Points.

Solthi River Valley



ALONG THE LAUGHING RIVER

No One Can Make You Do Anything

One day, Orlanth was out hunting in the mountains when he heard a voice crying out from inside a rock. 'Help, help,' it said. Orlanth pressed his ear to the rock and shouted, 'Who are you and why do you call from inside a rock?'

'I am a spirit,' came the reply, 'and I have been imprisoned inside this rock by Valind, the Lord of Winter. He lusted after me and I rejected him and he punished me.'

Orlanth was very angry and he hurled his spear at the rock, sundering it. The spirit sprang forth and she was a rushing river, the Solthi River. The bite of Orlanth's spear can still be seen in the mountains today. Then, because an injustice had been done, he called Valind to account for himself. The god arrived in the form of the first frost of the Dark Season.

'This woman was my year-wife,' said Valind, pointing to the rushing river. 'She left me and I locked her in a rock as punishment.'

'That was the wrong thing to do,' said Orlanth, 'It is not the custom of our tribe for the wife to abandon her husband but it is worse for the husband to strike his wife, even if they are but bound together for a single year. You are both at fault but your evil was by far the greater.'

'I am a god,' said Valind proudly, 'she is of much lesser status than I, being but a lowly spirit.'

'This is my judgement,' said Orlanth, 'she will cleave to you in the cold season but the rest of the year, she shall be free and you shall not hinder or command her.'

Valind was very angry to be chastised in such a way and the river laughed at the Frost-King and counted her time of service to him to be a little price to pay to see him so humbled. That is why we call the river Solthi the Laughing River and why it sometimes freezes in the coldest of winters.

Along the Laughing River

The Villages

This chapter of Blood of Orlanth is for all three factions (Orlanthi, God Learners, EWF). Encounters that are restricted to a particular faction are noted as being so restricted. For example, an event that happens only to an EWF party will have (EWF) in parentheses.

As the Player Characters travel through the various villages and towns of the Howling Wolf and Laughing River clans, they will encounter a challenge or problem in each village.

Depending on how they act, they can sway the loyalty of a village one way or another. The disposition of each village will have great importance when Maralis starts her war against the EWF.

It is possible that the characters may skip some villages, preferring to keep chasing after Jezat instead of getting involved in local affairs.

EWF or God Learner characters may go to the villages in disguise. Many Orlanthi from Hendrikiland have

gone north to join or fight the Empire of Wyrms' Friends or in search of food and work in this harsh winter. The characters can therefore justifiably pretend to be Orlanthi travellers, as long as they demonstrate a working knowledge of Orlanthi customs.

The characters will probably be on the trail of the sorcerer Jezat, the thief of the Bowl of Blood – the only faction who did not automatically learn about Jezat and the theft in the Sky End Stead chapter was the EWF and they will be able to learn about it if they visit Orlgard.

Victory Points

The characters are trying to further the agendas of their respective factions. Their successes are tracked using Victory Points, which the Games Master should keep track of. The more Victory Points they have at the end of this section, the better prepared they will be for the coming war in the next chapter of *Blood of Orlanth*.

Timeline

It is roughly 100 kilometres from Sky End Stead to Solthmouth, which would only take around a week to walk or four or five days to ride – the trails through the hills and forest are well marked but are still tough going, especially in the stormy weather. Jezat starts ahead of the characters.

Day Jezat's Itinerary

- 1 Jezat leaves Sky End Stead. He camps in the forest.
- 2 Jezat passes by Urling's Ford.
- 3 He arrives at Thunder Bridge and asks to be allowed take the Stair. He is refused permission, so he has to go by the forest. He gets lost.
- 4 Jezat emerges from the forest. He arrives at Sunvale.
- 5 He spends this night hiding in Sunvale. He leaves by barrel. His horse is abandoned in Sunvale.
- 6 He emerges from the barrel, murders the crew of the barge and sneaks into the caves at Deepwell.
- 7 He travels through the valley.
- 8 He reaches Noryar.
- 9 He travels through the valley.
- 10 He reaches Solthmouth.

Appendix II: Travel In The Solthi Valley has details concerning how Player Characters can travel down the river. Jezat starts out mounted but loses his horse at Sunvale. The characters start out a day and a half behind

Jezat. It is most likely that the characters will not catch Jezat before Noryar or even Solthmouth but with clever play and constant progress, they might be able to intercept him on the road after Deepwell.

Common Features in Orlanthi Homesteads and Villages

All the villages the characters pass through have common features. The most important building in any village is the longhouse, which is between 20 and 30 metres long and 12 wide. The longhouse has wooden walls and a thatched roof. Half the longhouse is given over to cattle stalls; the rest is living quarters around the great hearth where the fire burns. Inside, spaces are created with curtains and hangings. Shrines to family gods and daimones are located at the ends of the hearth.

Poorer families and smaller landholders live in small, square houses usually constructed of wood but some are built of stone, a novelty imported from the lowland.

Longhouses are surrounded by work buildings – barns, more stalls, tanneries, breweries, workshops, smithies, granaries and warehouses and so forth. All but the meanest buildings are decorated – beams have their ends carved to resemble faces of gods or ancestors, walls are painted with symbols and runes, tapestries and skins adorn walls.

Communities are normally surrounded by fences and ditches to protect against raiders.

Urling's Ford

The village of Urling's Ford is in the heart of Howling Wolf territory and is almost as large as Sky End Stead – but in these dark days, that is a meagre boast. As the name suggests, the village is built on a natural ford over the Solthi river. South of the ford are some of the best farmlands and grazing lands possessed by the clan, on a natural plateau in the hills. The river cuts through this plateau in a deepening canyon; Thunder Bridge, the third Howling Wolf village, is located on the south edge of this plateau.

As the characters approach Urling's Ford, they see that the farms have suffered terribly in the winter. Frost-touched plants rot in the fields and the cattle are so thin the characters can count every rib. Gaunt faces stare at the characters as they enter the stead. There are around 60 people living at Urling's Ford or in the surrounding area.

Urling's Ford

To the
Tree of Heads



Longhouse

The Ford

20m



Along the Laughing River

What Orlanthi Characters Know

If the characters are from the Howling Wolf clan, they have been to Urling's Ford and Thunder Bridge before and may have even been as far south as Solthmouth. While travel has been restricted because of the winter, they know a little about each village before they go.

Urling's Ford is built on a ford on the river. The leader there is old Hralf. His son, Hrulf, is said to be the best fighter in the clan and the hero of Urling's Ford. People like him because he is strong and fights well but others fear him because he is more than half a beast.

Thunder Bridge is so well situated that it is a natural fortress and no-one has ever managed to attack it successfully. It is surrounded by the best farmland in the *tula*. Maybe that is why the people there are so peaceful – they do not need to fight for anything. They are merchants and farmers, not warriors. The leader there is Donal Longtalker.

Beyond Thunder Bridge is the territory of the Laughing River clan. People say they have started worshipping snakes instead of Orlanth, or calling Orlanth a snake like the EWF but others say that those are just lies – the Laughing Rivers have ever been friends, except when one is raiding them (they never manage to raid the Howling Wolves, because Thunder Bridge is such a good fortress).

The first town Players will come to is **Sunvale** and the ruler there is probably still Thandor Goldenhair, also known as Thandor Manysons. Women must watch out for their virtue when under his roof! After Sunvale is **Deepwell**. The people of Deepwell are strange and rarely talk to strangers but they are the best warriors in the Laughing River territory.

After Deepwell, one can smell the sea. Follow the river to the coast, passing through **Noryar** to **Solthmouth**, the chieftain's stead of the Laughing Rivers. Solthmouth is a big town, with lots of strange people living there. The chieftain of the Laughing Rivers is Aeldred the Fat. He was not fat when they first made him chieftain but that was a long time ago and now he is very fat indeed.

Sensible people do not go further than Solthmouth. There is nothing useful in lands beyond the Laughing River *tula*.

The characters arrive at dusk, as grey mists roll down from the hills.

The Orlanthi: There are two major Orlanthi characters of note at Urling's Ford. The first is **Hralf** (page 116), the leader of the folk here. He is an old friend and vassal of Orgard. Hralf's main concern is the preservation of his stead and family in the long winter and he worries that the Orlanthi have offended the gods.

The other character is his son **Hrulf** (page 117), one of the best warriors in the clan. Hrulf is an outspoken foe of the Empire of Wyrms' Friends and a devotee of Urox the Berserker God. He is a giant of a man, the most feared warrior in the stead and perhaps in the whole Howling Wolf clan. Hrulf is very confrontational and argumentative. When dealing with Orlanthi Player Characters, he will do his best to show that he is stronger and tougher than they

are and will look for any signs of weakness or cowardice on their part as he believes that the weaker members of the clan must be sacrificed to save the rest. When dealing with EWF or God Learners, he is even crueller and more confrontational – the characters have been given hospitality by his father and he will respect that but he will do everything he can to provoke the Player Characters into attacking him and thereby sacrificing the protection of their guest rights. He will also look for any sign or clue that outsiders are attempting to damage the clan.

Everyone at Urling's Ford knows Hrulf and knows that he is a devotee of Urox, the Chaos-Smasher.

EWF: There is no EWF presence in Urling's Ford. Up until a few days ago, though, there was a patrol here. They went with Hrulf to drive off a band of invading brood but the Orlanthi abandoned them and let them die. This is a

terrible thing for a worshipper of the Storm Bull to do, as the Storm Bull is opposed to Chaos and the broo are the spawn of Chaos.

God Learners: There are no God Learners in Urling's Ford.

Others: The only major Non-Player Characters near Urling's Ford are the nest of broo led by **Jaghash of the Burning Eyes** (page 132), a powerful mutant. These broo have come down from the mountains to hunt and are preying on the clan and their cattle. They were driven off by Hrulf and the EWF but Hrulf then slew the wounded survivors of the EWF group.

Jaghash wants revenge and to destroy the Uroxi. Hrulf's unjust killing of the EWF soldiers gives the broo the opening he needs; Hrulf has sinned and the broo can exploit this sin.

Events at Urling's Ford

THE CHARACTERS ARRIVE

Again, if the characters present themselves at Urling's Ford openly, they must go through the Orlanthi guest rite. It is important to run through this scene in each encounter, so do not skip over it – it will be a plot element later in the game and highlights who the important people in each village are.

Once the characters have introduced themselves and been welcomed by Hralf, they are offered a place to sleep.

Hrulf is not present when the characters arrive at the stead. He returns during the night. Characters who sleep lightly will be awoken by the tread of the giant as he enters and stalks through the hall carrying a gleaming axe in one hand. If the characters challenge him, Hrulf will not strike the first blow but will appear ready for a fight. Hralf will awaken and calm his son down before blood is shed, though.

HUNTING FOR JEZAT

If the characters ask about Jezat, they learn from a villager that Hrulf muttered something about seeing a rider pass by the clan borders a day or two ago, no doubt some Wyrmlicker spy from the north-west. No-one else saw the rider, nor was Hrulf forthcoming with any details.

If the characters ask Hrulf, he will growl and suggest that the characters are in league with such spies. The characters will

have to win his trust before he will tell them anything more – *'Why should I tell you anything? What are you to me?'*

EWF characters have no chance at all of winning Hrulf's trust, nor do God Learners who openly declare themselves to be God Learners. Orlanthi or those in Orlanthi disguise do have a chance – see *Winning Hrulf's Trust* on page 31.

(EWF OR ORLANTHI) Helping The Clan

EWF characters may volunteer to aid the clan in some fashion, to improve relations between the Empire and their cherished neighbours, the Orlanthi. Hralf will be quite surprised by this and will tell the characters that another group of wyrmfriends visited the stead only a few days ago. From his description of the soldiers, the characters can recognise that they must have been sent from one of the other military camps along the border, not the Fifth Claw Holds The Untrammelled Wilds camp. Hralf says that the EWF arrived just before a band of broo attacked an outlying farm. The soldiers volunteered to go with Hrulf to drive off the broo but only Hrulf returned.

Hrulf said nothing but many people in the stead think that the EWF were actually behind the broo attack. How convenient that the soldiers showed up just before the broo came! No doubt that if the EWF men had survived, they would have demanded that everyone in Urling's Ford start worshipping snakes instead of Orlanth!

In any event, the broo have been driven away and there is no need for outside help – unless the characters are supremely powerful priests or wizards who can drive away the winter and make the crops grow?

(GOD LEARNERS) Following Hrulf

Seeing as everyone in the village mentions that Hrulf is a worshipper of Urox the Storm Bull, inquisitive God Learners may wish to investigate this cult. Hrulf is the only devotee – he was trained in a temple in the east but has set up his own shrine to the god somewhere in the woods. He visits it alone, so the characters will have to follow Hrulf through the woods.

Following Hrulf requires a Stealth test, opposed by Hrulf's Perception. If Hrulf discovers the characters following him, he will angrily turn on them and chase them back to Urling's Ford. If the characters manage to follow Hrulf through the woods and streams, they come to the Tree of Heads (see page 31).

The Orlanthi Hospitality Rite

Visitors to the clans who announce themselves openly will go through this rite in each of the villages:

Questioner: Are you friend or foe?

Answer: Friend.

Questioner: I am (questioner's name and title). What is your name?

Answer: Stranger's name.

A pause ensues as the questioner tries to remember if he has heard of the stranger, to let his truth-detecting magic (if any) work and to see what his companions have to say. If no lies are detected and no one knows a reason why the stranger ought to be sent away, he is welcomed.

Questioner: You can have my hospitality. I offer you water.

Answer: I will not steal from you, fight you or say bad things about you.

At this point, the host has met all hospitality requirements. If the stranger offers any insult or violence to his host, he breaks faith and angers Orlanth. In practical terms, the questioning is broken off at this point as the watchmen or guards bring the visitor – no longer a stranger – to the chieftain. Of course, the chieftain may recognise this person before the questioning is over. Even so, the stranger will continue to identify himself so that everyone knows who he is. This is a combination of boasting and news reporting.

The chieftain has no obligation to offer more than water: generosity is a virtue but the chieftain must always look out for the clan's collective welfare. In the current harsh conditions, the characters are unlikely to be offered anything more – if they are given more than water and shelter, they are being highly honoured.

If the chieftain chooses to continue the ritual, he is by definition being generous.

Questioner: Are you our friend (a specific rather than general question)?

Answer: Yes and here is why... (explains reasons for friendship).

Questioner: Then you can have a blanket.

If the stranger explains why he should be treated as a friend, the chieftain gifts him with water and a place to sleep in the hall (where there is fire). This level of guessting includes a meal, commonly of cheese and bread.

Questioner: Are you a kinsman (or like a kinsman in importance)?

Answer: Yes and here is why... (explains reasons for kinship).

Questioner: Then you can have meat.

Anyone who satisfies the chief that he deserves this much is doing well and receives the same honours as one of the chieftain's thanes or kinsmen.

Questioner: Are you a great person?

Answer: Yes and here is why... (explains reasons for greatness).

Questioner: Then you can have salt.

Guests of the salt sit at the same high table as the chieftain. No higher honour exists for a guest, except for the host to serve him, as is done to kings, or to serve the host as a member of his own household.

Questioner: Are you willing to work for us?

Answer: Yes and here is why... (explains why he would be an asset to the community).

Questioner: Then you can live among us.

This is the ultimate gift to a visitor who is not of their blood. It is what Orlanth did, many times, when he welcomed other gods into the Storm Tribe.

(Orlanthi) Winning Hrulf's Trust

Orlanthi characters can try to win Hrulf's trust. If they account for themselves well in a practice combat with the giant or if they demonstrate honour, then Hrulf will at least be willing to talk to them. If they reveal that they are chasing a stolen relic of the clan, Hrulf will be furious that the men of Sky End Stead are so weak that they let outsiders take the Bowl of Blood but he will confirm that he saw a man who resembled the thief riding south.

The Broo Attack

While the characters are in Urling's Ford they hear shouts and screams from the edge of the stead. Rushing out with the other few warriors at the hall, they see a band of hideous creatures in the distance, vanishing into the treeline. They are obviously broo, the Chaos-touched, and they have just snatched a child from a cottar-family. There is one broo per Player Character, including their leader Jaghash, so with Hrulf the characters outnumber the broo by one.

Hrulf acts immediately, grabbing his axe and his armour from the longhouse and setting off in pursuit. If the characters are going to win his trust or aid the clan, they will obviously have to go with him in pursuit of the broo and the stolen child. If the characters are slow to move, the weeping mother of the kidnapped child will stagger up to them and beg for their aid. She is Elala and her stolen son is a young boy called Hroth.

Hunting The Broo: The characters will easily catch up with Hrulf, as the big man has trouble making good time through the thick woods where the broo are hiding. By contrast, the monsters seem to have little trouble making their way through the trees. An easy (+40%) Tracking check allows the characters to follow the trail of the monsters.

The characters may wish to ask Hrulf about his previous encounter with these broo. He says there were more of them last time but he and the other EWF soldiers slew half a dozen of the beasts. They fled and he thought the monsters would leave the Howling Wolf lands entirely having suffered such a crushing defeat.

The broo seem to be taking an unusually circular route, as if leading the characters back to a point nearer the village. Hrulf looks increasingly uneasy as the hunt goes on. Characters who tried following Hrulf earlier will realise that the broo are heading for Hrulf's shrine to Urox the Chaos Foe.

If the characters realise this, they can head the broo off by going straight to the shrine instead of following the broo's wild chase. In this case, they can ambush the broo at the Tree of Heads. Otherwise, the chase will continue until the broo reach the Tree of Heads.

The Tree of Heads: Finally, the broo lead the characters into the clearing where Hrulf has his secret shrine to Urox. It is an alarming site – a thorny tree grows in the centre of the clearing and many sacrifices and talismans hang from the tree. Many of these talismans are in fact heads. The characters see animal skulls and broo heads but the freshest trophies are five human heads, still wearing their EWF dragon-helms. The symbols of Urox, runes of Beast and Death and the horns of the great Storm Bull are clearly visible on the tree.

When the broo reach the shrine, they stop and wait for Hrulf to arrive. The lesser broo form a protective wall around their leader Jaghash and the kidnapped child.

When Hrulf arrives, he angrily challenges the broo, shouting that this clearing is sacred to the Chaos Foe and they cannot come here. Jaghash replies in a silky voice that is bizarre coming from his twisted, monstrous mouth. *'You allowed us to come here, Uroxi. You betrayed those who fought by your side. You broke the guest right. You broke the law and now Chaos rules your soul.'*

The broo gestures at the severed heads and they begin to twitch and then to speak, whispering *murderer traitor murderer Chaos-friend*. Terrified and confused, Hrulf drops to his knees.

'I can redeem you, Hrulf,' says Jaghash. 'Slay these strangers who have witnessed your shame and I shall give you this child and you can return home a hero. Reject Chaos, and the child dies, and these fools die, and you die, and your soul shall wander the earth homeless and unclaimed for all eternity!'

It is up to the characters to act now. If they do nothing, Hrulf either goes mad and attacks them (if they are EWF or God Learners) or stands there for a few rounds (if they are Orlanthi), then throws himself into the combat, trying to hack Jaghash apart. If the characters can persuade Hrulf to act, either by pointing out that a child is in peril or that Urox demands that he fight Chaos, or even just shouting at him to pull himself together and hit a broo, then he will join in the fight immediately.

Broo statistics can be found on pages 107–108 of *RuneQuest*. Jaghash's statistics can be found on page 132.

If the characters are EWF, their dead companions will aid them in this fight. Empowered by the magical power of the Urox shrine and the presence of Chaos, a golden light begins to glow in the eye-sockets of the severed heads once the fight begins. 1D6 rounds later, flames begin to pour from the mouths of the heads and 1D3 rounds after that, a blast of flame shoots out and strikes Jaghash, doing 2D6 points of damage to a random location. Hroth, if he is still held by the broo, is uninjured by this magical attack. The flames set the tree on fire, burning the shrine.

Once the broo are defeated, the characters need to decide what to do with Hrulf. If he is still alive, the warrior is terrified and confused; he must have angered Urox by slaying the EWF unjustly but the EWF are enemies of the Orlanthi! What should he do? He submits to the judgement of the characters.

The right thing to do, according to Orlanthi law, is to make amends by paying the *weregild* (blood price) of the EWF soldiers. Hrulf slew an officer and five soldiers – in Orlanthi terms, this is worth at least 85 cows and maybe as much as 150 or more, especially as the victims were slain while they were friends of the hearth. The clan certainly does not have such a treasure to spare; they might be able to pay this price but it would mean the coming months would be much, much harder. It will also destroy the morale of everyone in Urling's Ford if the characters reveal Hrulf's crime.

If the characters search the tree, they find a saddlebag hanging from a branch. It was taken from one of the EWF by Hrulf and hung up as an offering. The bag contains a gilded box containing 200 silver coins, a gift for Orlgard as an offering of friendship to the Sky End Stead. It was sent by Maralis the Orlanthi. Under the coins is a note identical to the one sent to Hrulf (see *Arkat's Letter*, opposite).

If the characters search the broo, they find a talisman of fire-blackened bone hanging around one of Jaghash's necks. This stone bears an odd circular mark, superimposed on the Rune of Chaos. The broo was a worshipper of the Chaos entity called the Sleeper and this is its emblem (see page 94).

(ORLANTHI) ARKAT'S LETTER

Before the characters leave the village, Hralf calls them into his house and speaks to them privately. He tells them that before the EWF soldiers went off hunting the broo, their commander gave him a gift, an ornate jar of scented oil from some distant land, as an offering of friendship. Curiously, Hralf found a secret compartment in the base of the jar, containing a scrap of paper. He shows it to the characters:

'The storm is coming. Lay in supplies and muster your fyrd, for the day of battle will soon be at hand. You shall know the hour when the dragon chokes on a mouth full of fire. Know me as, Arkat.'

This note was sent by Maralis the Orlanthi (see page 117). Hralf does not know what to make of it but he is sure the EWF soldiers did not know it was in the jar.

Victory Points

Rescuing the child is worth one Victory Point to any group.

Orlanthi: If the characters win Hrulf's friendship, it is worth one Victory Point. If they come up with a way for Hrulf to atone for his sins that does not involve his death or the payment of a crippling *weregild*, that is worth an extra Victory Point.

EWF: If the characters win Hrulf's friendship, it is worth one Victory Point. If they forgive Hrulf's *weregild*, that is worth an extra Victory Point.

God Learners: If the characters win Hrulf's friendship, it is worth one Victory Point. If they can convince him that fighting the EWF is not a sin and that he did the right thing in murdering the EWF soldiers, that is worth an extra Victory Point.

Thunder Bridge

The characters will hear Thunder Bridge long before they see it. The Solthi river plunges over the edge of a precipice, falling over 200 feet before crashing into the pools below. A staircase, known simply as the Stair, has been cut into the stone cliff alongside the waterfall – this is the only way up the cliffs if one wants to avoid a detour of several miles through thick forests and steep hills. Two huge figures are carved into the cliffs alongside the Stair – these twin giants are depictions of Humakt and Issaries. Thunder Bridge is therefore an excellent natural fortress against armies from the valley below. Added to this blessing are the fertile hinterlands behind the stead; if it were not for the religious significance of Sky End Stead, Thunder Bridge would certainly be the chosen seat of the clan chieftains.

The main village is located about half a mile back from the falls, while the fort is built atop the cliffs. In peacetime, the fort lies empty but today it is manned. As the characters approach Thunder Bridge, they see that the winter has struck the farmlands here just as hard as at Urling's Ford. The crops are rotting in the fields and the cattle are thin and scrawny. Frost and woe are all around.

The Orlanthi: The leader of the village is **Donal Longtalker** (page 116), a well-educated and clever Orlanthi. His nickname is a fitting one, as Donal never uses one word when he can use seven and never says what he means when he can wrap it in poetry and metaphor instead. Still, he is well-loved by his people and is a loyal friend to Orlgard and the Howling Wolves.

The chief priest in the village, who wields more influence than Donal, is **Rangor Blessplough** (page 118). He is a devotee of Barntar, the Orlanthi farmer-god. As Thunder Bridge has more cottars and farmers than any other Howling Wolf settlement, Rangor's word here is – or was – law.

Donal's younger brother **Daven Longsword** (page 115) is advocating that the clan needs to raid the cattle of the Laughing River clan down the valley. Daven shares his brother's talkative nature but speaks more loudly with his sword. He is hungry for glory.

EWf: Soon after the characters arrive, an EWf priest arrives at the base of the falls and climbs the Stair. He is a Converter called **Yalish of the Dawn** (page 125) dedicated

to bringing the draconic philosophy to the heathens. He travels with a bodyguard, **Growling Jake** and a servant/translator/guide/cook/jester/thief/major-domo **Little Lok** (see page 123 for both).

Yalish's mission is to convert the tribes by using his Dragon Magic to undo the effects of the harsh winter. While the EWf has been experimenting with various spells to banish the Two-Year Winter, none have proved universally efficacious. Still, Yalish believes that he can banish the winter on the little plateau of Urling's Ford and Thunder Bridge. He is a fervent believer in the rightness of his cause, which wins him few friends among the Orlanthi priesthood.

Growling Jake is a sword for hire from Esrolia. He has little interest in philosophy or religion – the EWf have gold and can pay him, so he will keep Yalish alive.

Little Lok is actually a spy for Telektios, sent with the Converter to observe the Orlanthi barbarians in case they need to be crushed in a future war.

God Learners: There are no God Learners at Thunder Bridge.

Others: There are no other Non-Player Characters involved in the events at Thunder Bridge.

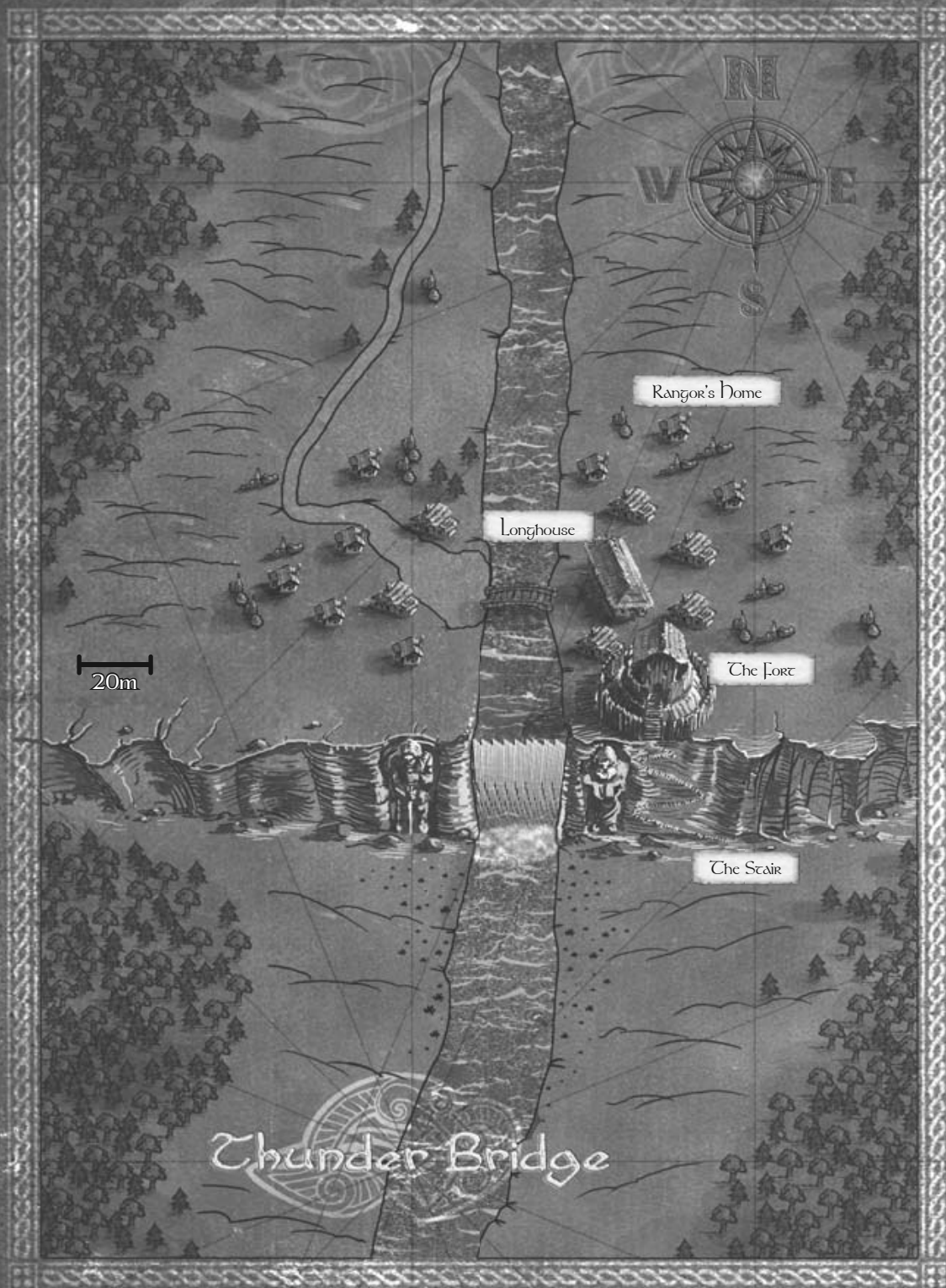
Events At Thunder Bridge

THE CHARACTERS ARRIVE

The characters arrive at Thunder Bridge and are greeted first by Daven (who is acting as chief guard) and if they prove themselves friendly, by Donal. The fare offered at Thunder Bridge is even more meagre than at Urling's Ford and even honoured guests are given only bread and water. There are more mouths to feed here at Thunder Bridge than at either of the other steads and less food to share between them.

Investigating

If the characters ask about Jezat, Daven confirms that a stranger passed through their lands a few days ago. He asked to be allowed down the Stair but Rangor mistrusted something in the stranger's demeanour and forbade the guards to allow him passage. The stranger took the long route around, through the thick forest and a farmer found the stranger's horse wandering through the fields. The horse has since been slaughtered and eaten. It seems that



the characters are catching up with the thief and if they can take the Stair down instead of taking the long way around, they can gain several hours on Jezat.

However, the characters will not be permitted to go down the Stair, not until after the raid on the Laughing River clan. Donal is worried that if anyone goes down the Stair, they will warn the Laughing Rivers at Sunvale.

Once Yalish and his entourage arrives, the characters can question them. Little Lok will tell the characters that he saw a man matching Jezat's description along the Laughing River. He was drinking from the river using a wooden bowl. Lok said the man looked worried and haunted, and hid from Growling Jake and Yalish.

The Mustering

As the characters are investigating, they will see more and more warriors come in from the outlying farms. It is obvious that Donal is mustering his warriors and he will admit this openly if asked. The lower valley, in the territory of the Laughing River clan, has suffered much less in the long winter than the Howling Wolves. Donal intends to raid the cattle herds of Sunvale, to take enough head of cattle to bring Thunder Bridge through the winter safely.

Rangor the priest has warned that the omens are against war, so there will first be a council of the weaponthanes and warriors to decide what should be done. The council will take place this evening. The characters will be permitted to attend and even to speak – Donal Longtalker needs all the support he can get in the face of Rangor's objections. While both Donal and Daven agree that a raid is necessary, Donal will let Daven do most of the talking – as leader of the stead, he must appear neutral until a decision is made.

If the characters appear influential or powerful, they may be approached by Daven Longsword or Rangor Blessplough before the council begins.

The Council

The council takes place in the fort atop the cliffs. Daven Longsword speaks first:

'We can starve or we can fight! The Laughing River clan owns many fat cows and they laugh at us freezing our arses off on this mountain while they sell their souls to the wyrmlickers and feast on mutton and beef every night! They have been our friends in the past but where are they

now? Brothers, the plough and the sheepfold have failed us – let's see what sword and spear can do!'

Rangor the Priest speaks next:

'I have watched the crows in the sky. I have looked into the entrails of lambs. I have listened to the trees. I have prayed to Barntar and his father for guidance and I say to you, bloodshed will only bring more bloodshed. This is our land, atop the mountain. It will provide for us and preserve us, if only we have faith. Tighten your belts! Draw closer to the fire! Have faith and the land will provide!'

'I have dreamed of a glorious spring, when hope is renewed and the valleys are green again. It is coming. It is coming. Do not strike out at those who have always been our friends just because your bellies are empty. Every drop of blood you shed will just make the winter colder.'

Finally, Donal himself speaks:

'I have spoken to Thandor, the headman of Sunvale. He says they can spare no food but I saw their herds and they have many cattle. He will not make a gift of them to us, nor will he trade, so war is our only recourse.'

The assembled Orlanthi are divided between the two approaches – there has never been a strong tradition of warriors among the people of Thunder Bridge but something has to be done. If the characters want, they can speak out in favour of one approach or the other.

Before a final decision is made, a guard enters the fort and says that three men have just climbed the Stair from the valley below and wish to address the council. Donal allows them in. The three visitors are the Wyrmfriends Yalish, Growling Jake and Little Lok. Yalish speaks to the assembled Orlanthi.

'I am Yalish. I bring you hope. The Dragon has seen how you suffer, how the cold wind bites and how thin your herds are. You have endured much, but rejoice! I have Dragon Magic that will bring life back to your farmlands!'

Rangor is furious.

'These are Wyrmfongued lies! Would this madman turn the year upside down and shuffle the seasons? His magic is not our magic, his gods are not our gods! Eat of his lies and Barntar will forsake you!'

Yalish does not reply directly but merely puts his hands together and mutters a spell. A warm glow spreads out from his body and suddenly flowers blossom on the stone walls of the fort. Everyone is very impressed with this display of magical power.

Donal realises he will not gain enough support for an attack until the objections of the priests have been dealt with. He raises his hands and announces:

'If there is another way, we should take it. Tomorrow at dawn, let Rangor Blessplough and this newcomer Yalish show us what the gods intend. If neither can prove the rightness of their cause, then let us put our faith in our own courage and strength instead!'

Getting Ready For The Duel: After the debate, Rangor retreats to his home in the village to prepare, while the three EWF go to a little outhouse put aside for guests.

Whom do the characters support? Presumably, they will attempt to aid one of the factions. Most likely, EWF characters will want Yalish to succeed, Orlanthi will favour either Rangor or Donal and God Learners will favour Rangor but have to support him indirectly.

If the characters ask Yalish what he plans, the mystic says that they can best aid him by finding those villagers who are willing to add their magical power to his ritual. The more people who are willing to add their psychic strength to Yalish, the more powerful he will be (the EWF is a 'magic pyramid scheme' after all). This requires Influence tests and roleplaying – if the test succeeds, the Orlanthi is at least willing to listen to Yalish. If the test fails, the Orlanthi becomes opposed to the EWF. Give the characters bonuses or penalties to their Influence attempts based on the Players' roleplaying. Sample Orlanthi to talk to include:

Aesk: A humble farmer, who just wants a ray of hope that he can survive. He has endured two years of the worst winter he can remember and Rangor's preachings have done nothing for him. If Barntar the Dragon can do better than Barntar the God, he will call Barntar a dragon. All he wants is the promise of a better spring.

Berngal: Berngal is a rich landowner and a trader, an initiate of Issaries. He has many friends among the Laughing River clan and has enough food and wealth to see himself through the winter. He is more worried about a conflict with the mighty EWF and has been waiting for a chance to convert.

Miach: Miach is a young warrior but now on the eve of battle, his courage has failed him. He wants the blessing of whatever god or dragon he can get...

Brica: Brica is a new bride, married to Miach. She is willing to do whatever she can to avoid the raid, for fear of losing her new husband in battle.

Igerna: Igerna is one of the most influential women in the village. She is the midwife, an initiate of Chalana Arroy and her voice carries almost as much weight as Rangor. For the characters to convince her, they will have to highlight the common trends between the draconic version of the goddess and traditional worship.

Verecunda: Finally, Verecunda is ambitious and opportunistic. If it seems that the new way of the EWF is better and that she can profit from it, she will agree to it.

If the characters want to support Rangor and the traditional Orlanthi, they can approach the priest of Barntar and offer their aid. Rangor will tell them that what he really needs is a sacrifice – there is a wild boar in the forest that would be an excellent offering to the god. Finding the boar in the forest requires a Difficult (–20%) Tracking or Survival roll – each roll takes one hour, so the characters could be running around the woods all night in the dark (at night, the penalty is increased to –40% unless the tracker can see in the darkness). The characters need to *catch* the boar, not kill it – it must be brought back to Rangor so he can sacrifice it in the temple tomorrow.

Duelling Priests

The next day, in the hour after dawn, the Orlanthi gather at the temple of Barntar for the duel of the priests. Both will attempt to work their magic to prove their gods are the stronger and offer the greater hope for the clan. Rangor goes first.

Rangor uses Bless Crops (see page 75 of *Cults of Glorantha volume 1*), while Yalish commands his spirit ally to bring warmth and life to the land, breathing on it with the breath of life as a dragon breathes death. They are trying to bring fertility and life to frozen soil in the depths of winter, which means that the land has an effective Resistance of 75%. Both priests will spend Magic Points to overcharge their spells. Each Magic Point spent overcharging a spell reduces the Resistance by 5%.

If the characters capture the boar from the forest, Rangor sacrifices it to help power his spell, overcharging the spell by 1D6 Magic Points.

If the characters manage to convince Orlanthi to convert, each convert overcharges Yalish's spell by one Magic Point.

If either spell succeeds, the effect is dramatic. The ground cracks as the ice breaks and green shoots begin to push themselves from the frosty soil. A warm wind begins to blow, bringing with it the smells of spring. The cattle are drawn to the new growth and begin to graze hungrily.

If both spells fail, Donal Longtalker gets his way and the warriors go to raid the Laughing Rivers.

If Rangor's spell succeeds and Yalish's fails, the people rally to the old gods. Donal orders Yalish to leave, a scuffle breaks out and unless the characters aid in getting Yalish to safety down the Stair, the overexcited Orlanthi attack and kill the three EWF. Note that Donal just told the outsiders to leave, nothing more – this is the action of a religiously charged mob.

If Rangor's spell fails and Yalish's succeeds, the old Orlanthi priest seems to age twenty years overnight. He retreats to the temple of Barntar, supported by his acolyte and shuts the doors. The Orlanthi crowd around Yalish. Many want to be initiated on the spot into the dragon cult. Stone-faced, Donal Longtalker has to formally ask Yalish to stay in the village and offers him a place in the longhouse.

If both spells succeed, the assembled crowd rejoices as the whole area around the stead suddenly thaws and blossoms. The people are happy but Rangor is furious. He starts throwing spells at Yalish, who responds in kind. Unless

the Player Characters intervene, a magical war breaks out between the two, with Yalish winning and killing Rangor with a Lightning Strike. The crowd are furious and turn on Yalish – again, unless the characters help get him down the Stair, he will be lynched.

The Raid

If neither spell succeeds, the only option left is the raid. Deven Longsword quickly assembles a raiding party of two dozen warriors. If the characters want to come along, they are welcome. The party first prays to Orlanth for a blessing, then climbs down the Stair and crosses the border into Laughing River territory. Their goal is a winter paddock on the edge of Sunvale.

The raiders are spotted as they cross a stream called the Est, a tributary of the Solthi river. By the time the raid reaches the paddock, there are ten Laughing River warriors waiting for them. Normally, such raids are a ritualised affair with little bloodshed, but the long winter has added a keen edge of desperation to the battle – both sides will fight until badly wounded for the cattle.

The battle between the two groups takes place on the edge of the paddock – the Laughing River warriors use the fence as cover, hurling spears and stones at the invaders. The Howling Wolves send one group, including the characters, to engage the defenders while the rest break through the fence and steal cattle.

Use the Orlanthi warrior statistics on page 113 for both groups.



Victory Points

EWf: If Yalish wins the duel of the priests, EWf characters get two Victory Points. They gain an extra Victory Point if they convert at least four Orlanthi.

God Learners: If Yalish loses the duel, the God Learners gain two Victory Points. They get an extra Victory Point if they sabotage his efforts.

Orlanthi: If Orlanthi characters back Rangor and he wins, they gain two Victory Points. They get an extra Victory Point if the raid does not happen.

All: If the raid happens and the characters accompany the raiders, they gain one Victory Point. If they distinguish themselves in the battle, they gain an extra Victory Point.

Along the Laughing River

After the raid departs, the characters are free to go down the Stair and on to Sunvale. Characters who went with the raid who want to go to Sunvale should probably go in disguise.

As soon as the characters climb down the stone Stair, they come to another line of *tula* markers – they have passed through the length of Howling Wolf territory and are now crossing into the larger holdings of the Laughing River. The Solthi is doing little laughing here, as it thunders through the falls and plunges into the pools. This is a potent magical site and a good place for Siama to appear if she has not appeared in the campaign thus far.

The lower valley has suffered much less in the long winter than the high hills of the Wolves. It is more sheltered and gets more sun, so the Laughing River clan has thrived. The clan is over three times larger than the Howling Wolves, with a bigger fighting force – not that they need it. The Laughing Rivers are, it seems, on the verge of assimilating into the Empire of Wyrms' Friends. There are EWf priests and philosophers in every town and stead.

After the Stair, the Solthi river flows more gently and it is possible to take a boat down the river.

Sunvale

The village of Sunvale is in the heart of the Laughing River's farmlands. East and west of this fertile valley are high paddocks and vales where the herds winter. Over 500 people live in and around the village. It is protected by an earthen wall and ditch. The town has temples to Orlanth the Dragon and other dragon gods, as well as a small shrine to the old gods which is tolerated, although only the older Orlanthi attend ceremonies there.

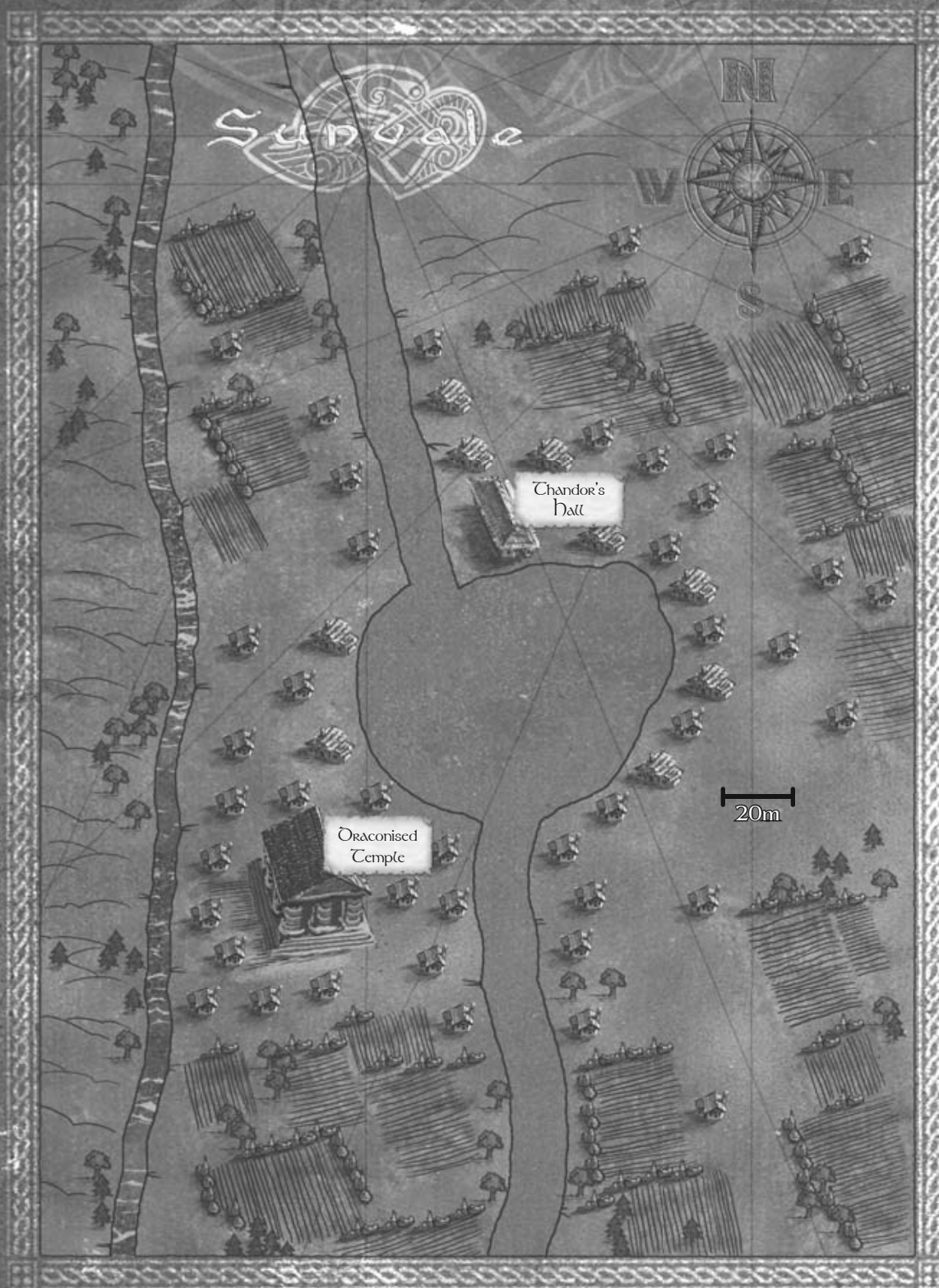
The Orlanthi: The rich town of Sunvale is ruled by **Thandor Manysons** (page 118). Thandor is not at all like the common conception of an Orlanthi thane – he is suave and urbane and wears fine clothes and perfumes imported from distant lands. He apparently welcomes the presence of the EWf in his stead but he has received messages from the mysterious Arkat which suggest great changes are coming. He is also something of a rake; he has never married for more than a year (the Orlanthi have a tradition of the year-wife or year-husband, a temporary trial marriage that normally serves as preparation for a greater commitment) and will attempt to seduce any comely female characters, regardless of culture.

A more traditional figure is **Hendrik** (page 116), the best warrior in the village. He has spoken several times against the 'perversion' of Orlanthi traditions and it is only because of his long-standing friendship with Thandor Manysons that he has not been exiled or at least condemned for his beliefs.

Both Thandor and Hendrik are preparing for Arkat's uprising against the EWf. They have been stockpiling food and training warriors but they need to buy time until Arkat can prepare the rest of the Laughing Rivers territory. Therefore, Thandor has ingratiated himself with the EWf representatives and pretends to be loyal, while Hendrik acts as a distraction, being so obviously opposed to the Empire's expansion and ranting about the old ways and the perversion of traditions that no-one notices Thandor's real preparations for rebellion.

The arrival of **Vigota the Prodigal** (page 125) has thrown their plans into confusion. Vigota has the gift of prophecy and Thandor worries that she will be able to magically see through all his deceptions. Even worse, she is supernaturally beautiful and refuses to let Thandor bed her. Hendrik believes that Vigota must be murdered before she gives them away but Thandor will not have murder done under his roof.

Along the Laughing River



EWf: Of the inhabitants of Sunvale, most are now worshipping their gods in Draconic form. The old ways are still honoured but cults of Orlanth the Dragon or Ernalda the Dragon are now more popular. Thandor Manysons has publicly endorsed the cult but has not converted himself.

The chief priest in the village is Vigota the Prodigal, who lived in Sunvale as a young woman before travelling north. There, she was initiated into the EWF and became a priestess. She has returned to the land of her birth to bring the truth to her people. She has the superhuman charisma of a wyrmfriend and her magic has added to the fertility of the valley. She also has the gift of prophecy and has predicted the arrival of Jezat into the town. Her prophetic visions come upon her quite suddenly and she has no control over them. She is an innocent and a true believer in the Draconic way. However, if threatened, she has the Lightning Strike spell prepared.

She is assisted by an emissary from the Fifth Claw Holds The Untrammelled Wilds camp, an officer named **Dajai** (page 122). He senses that there is danger in the Laughing River clans, that they are still in enemy territory. Androfin the Defiant may have agreed not to contest the Solthi river valley but his traditionalist Orlanthi cults still have many adherents in this barbarian hinterland. Dajai is very protective of Vigota and believes that she is the best tool the EWF have for assimilating the barbarians. He is a true believer in the Wyrms' Friend cause and delights in demonstrating his inhuman skill at martial arts.

God Learners: The only God Learner in Sunvale is an Orlanthi spy, **Tholos**. He was in the employ of the spies in the Eyrie and his instructions were just to watch the town and the progress of the EWF. He is a black-hearted rogue whose loyalty has always been to the highest bidder. Currently, the Middle Sea Empire has gold to spare. Tholos is a servant in Thandor's hall.

Others: The other visitor to the village is a diplomat from the east, from the clan of the **Snow Alynx**. This clan in Hendrikiland is under the rule of King Androfin the Defiant. The messenger's name is **Colmar** and he has been sent to trade with Thandor Manysons for cattle and other supplies. Colmar has come under cover of secrecy, as his liege lord is opposed to the EWF.

Relationships in Thandor's Hall

The web of Non-Player Character relations and motivations in the hall can get quite complex, so here is a quick reference:

Thandor and **Hendrik** want to hide their plots against the Empire. Thandor allies with the mysterious Arkat. They want to remove the threat of Vigota's prophetic powers but Thandor does not want to kill her.

Dajai knows that someone in the village is an enemy of the EWF and suspects Hendrik. He wants to protect **Vigota**. Vigota, the prophetess, just wants everyone to rejoice in the coming of the Great Dragon.

Tholos (page 127) is a servant in Thandor's hall and a spy for the God Learners. He wants to hide the signs that Jezat passed through town, kill Vigota and frame Hendrik.

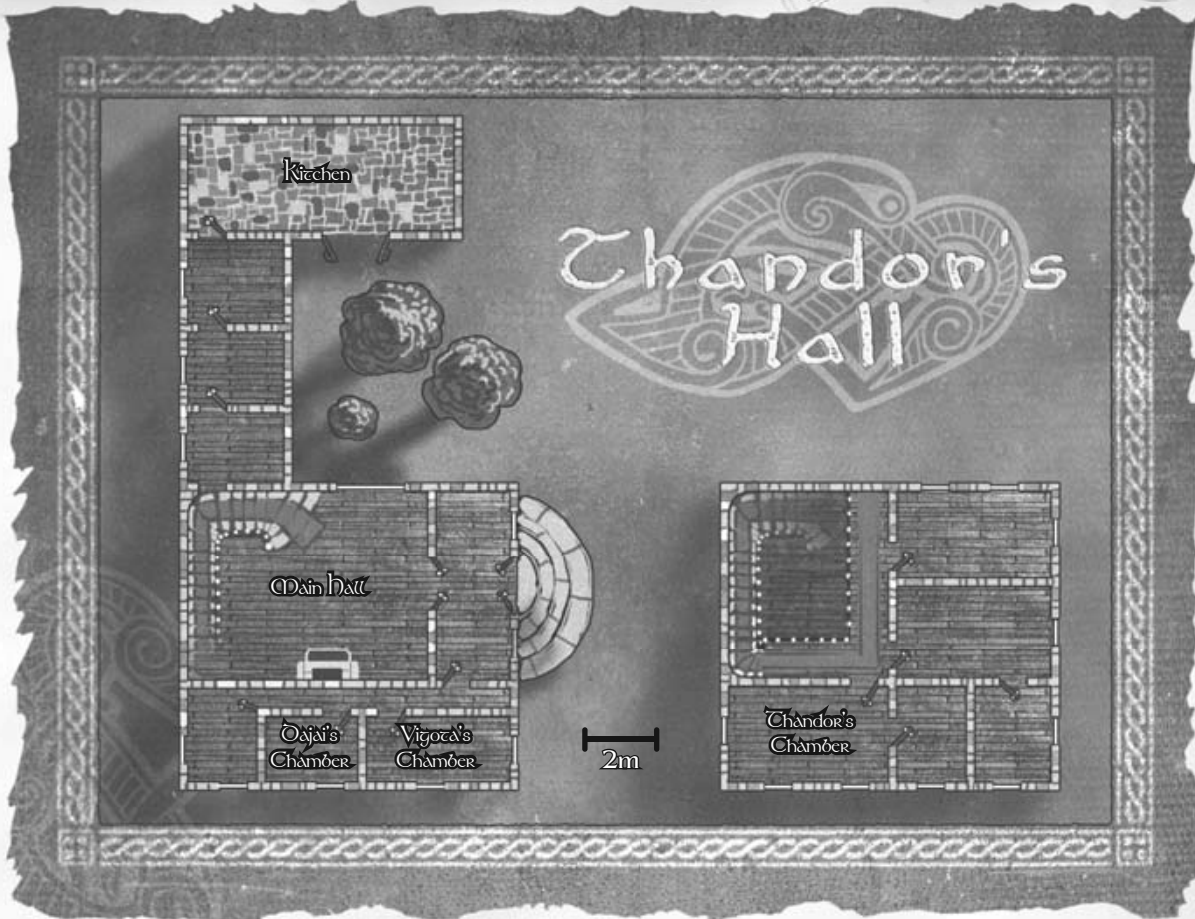
Events in Sunvale

BEFORE THE CHARACTERS ARRIVE

Jezat's arrival in town was prophesied by Vigota the Prodigal, who foresaw that a man bearing an unknowable treasure was coming to Sunwell. She confided this prophecy to Thandor and was overheard by Tholos the spy.

When Jezat arrives, Tholos warns him of this prophecy and he panics. He orders Tholos to kill Vigota, then creeps down to the docks and stows away inside a barrel of ale, using a Skin of Life spell to enable him to survive in the barrel until he is clear of the village. Tholos has yet to put his plan into action.

Furthermore, Dajai has received a message from Ferule, warning of a possible threat to the EWF's efforts in the region. Ferule has intercepted a mysterious communication intended for the lord of Deepwell Town, down the river, from a figure calling himself 'Arkat'. He believes that this Arkat is a God Learner agent controlling a network of spies throughout the Solthi river valley and has instructed Dajai to look into it. Dajai has contacted Thandor for aid in searching for these God Learners.



ARRIVAL

As usual, the characters arrive and must present themselves to the local ruler. Thandor Manysons is considerably more florid and effusive in his greetings. EWF characters can present themselves openly and be welcomed, as Sunvale is dominated by Draconic culture. God Learners, on seeing the Draconic imagery and icons that are displayed prominently around town, may choose to avoid presenting themselves entirely – there are enough traders and cottars coming in and out for them to slip in unnoticed.

After the characters arrive, if they seem interesting, Thandor invites them to dine with him.

(EWF OR ORLANTHI)

The Council of Thandor

EWF characters and Orlanthi characters who have demonstrated nobility and discretion will be invited to attend a private council. Thandor is present, as are Vigota

and Dajai. Thandor languidly introduces his EWF friends and explains that the characters are here precisely because they are newcomers to the town.

A servant brings the characters whatever they want to eat before the private council begins. The granaries and storehouses of Sunvale are well-stocked and the characters are fed like royalty. The servant, a pinch-faced Orlanthi, is Tholos the spy; after serving, he leaves the hall and lurks outside, listening at a spy-hole.

Thandor says 'It seems that we've got something of a problem in Sunvale, some insidious conspiracy against the new order of things. Dajai informs me that I can't trust anyone from the village, not even my oldest friends. So...'

Dajai explains 'I have received intelligence from the Empire that there is a network of enemy spies in this region, minions of the herefical God Learner sect. Someone here in Sunvale is an agent of the enemy, an agent of some villain

who is calling himself 'Arkat'. It is well known that the God Learners have a fascination for that diabolist – they are fearing Ratios asunder looking for Arkat's magic.

The lady Vigota has the gift of prophecy. She sees as the dragon does, soaring above linear time. She has graciously agreed to divine what must be done. Milady?"

Vigota is staring out of a window, a distant light in her inhumanly beautiful eyes. 'I suppose there are worse ways to die than drowning in beer,' she murmurs.

'Vigota!' says Dajai sharply.

'Oh, yes. Thandor! Your foes are close at hand and you break bread with them! Look to your own hall, Father of Many, before you look upon the Dragon That Is To Come!'

Thandor looks more amused than alarmed by the prophecy. 'In my own hall, is it? Well, I'd guess you have a theory about that, Dajai.'

Dajai turns to the characters. 'There is a warrior in this town, Hendrik. He speaks out against our presence here. He is an enemy-'

'By 'speaks out', you mean he called you a great number of crudely amusing names, right Dajai?' laughs Thandor. 'I must confess that I did not know Hendrik had such an imagination!'

Dajai scowls at the interruption. 'He is the most likely candidate for this 'Arkat.' We must investigate and we need your aid. I want you to pose as fellow agents of this Arkat and speak to Hendrik. Find out who else in Sunwell is an enemy of the Empire, so that peace may be preserved.'

If the characters ask, Dajai can show them the letter his agents intercepted. It reads:

'The storm is coming. Lay in supplies and muster your fyrd, for the day of battle will soon be at hand. You shall know the hour when the dragon chokes on a mouth full of fire. Know me as, Arkat.'

Colmar's Petition: Colmar, the emissary from the Snow Alynx clan, arrives soon after the characters. Colmar is

an elderly initiate of Issaries, the best diplomat they had to send. His mission is to trade gold for food – the Snow Alynxs are suffering in the long winter and need to buy cattle and grain. Colmar's offer is exceedingly generous, even in these famine times.

Thandor promises offhandedly that he will consider the offer. Colmar will remain in Sunvale for several days, petitioning anyone and everyone in the hall for aid in persuading Thandor. He will approach first Hendrik, then Vigota and Dajai and finally the Player Characters. Thandor will continue to refuse Colmar's offers, though, which should make the characters suspicious.

Vigota is quite fascinated by Colmar, believing him to be the one she spoke of in her prophecy about 'a man bearing an unknowable treasure' coming to Sunwell. She will urge Thandor to accept Colmar's offer, as the 'unknowable treasure' is surely worth more than a few cows and sacks of grains. Thandor refuses Colmar's offer because of the letter he received from 'Arkat.' This letter, which he keeps hidden in his bedchamber in the hall, instructs him to keep enough supplies to feed an army, because soon all the armies of the valley will be mustered to fight the enemy.

(Orlanchi) Thandor's Plea

If the characters have proved themselves no friends of the EWFriends, then Thandor will speak to them secretly. He will reveal that he and Hendrik are conspiring against the EWF with Arkat and that he needs to somehow deflect Dajai's suspicions. He will ask the characters to sabotage Dajai's investigations by finding some scapegoat. If Dajai tries to accuse Hendrik, the results will be inevitably disastrous – either Dajai will kill Hendrik, depriving Sunvale of one of its best warriors and Thandor of his most valued friend, or else Hendrik will slay Dajai and bring the wrath of the Empire down before they are ready.

(God Learners) Meeting Tholos

God Learner characters can track Tholos down easily enough – he is one of the servants of Thandor Manysons and resides in Thandor's hall. The characters will have to be circumspect in how they approach him, though, as it would be highly unusual and suspicious for a servant of Tholos' humble rank to get visitors from out of town.

Once the characters do make contact with Tholos, he will bring them to a shack outside Sunvale where they can speak privately. They will quickly discover that he is an unpleasant and treacherous sort of person. He tells the characters that

he was originally sent to spy on the EWF activity in the villages and he has done exactly that. He can tell them all about Dajai and the prophetess Vigota, about how the cults of Orlanth the Dragon and Ernalda the Dragon has taken over from the old ways but there are still a few in the village who cling to their traditions, including Hendrik and Thandor. From what he has heard, Tholos believes that all of the Laughing Rivers towns have been assimilated into the EWF and that Aelfred the Fat, the Laughing Rivers chieftain, is allying himself with the Empire.

Tholos can also inform the characters about Dajai's suspicions that there is an agent of Arkat in Sunvale and how Dajai believes that Hendrik is that agent. He is worried that Dajai's search for conspiracies will uncover Tholos and the God Learners, not just Arkat.

If asked about Jezat, Tholos says that Jezat arrived in the town a few days ago. He made contact with Tholos and hid him in one of the cellars of the hall to rest. Soon after Jezat arrived, Vigota made a prophecy about a man who carried an unknowable treasure coming to Sunvale. When Tholos mentioned this to Jezat (it was common gossip in the hall), he panicked and ordered Tholos to help him escape and then to kill Vigota. Tholos helped him escape by sealing him into a cask of beer which was then shipped downriver to Deepwell. He has not done anything about killing Vigota yet – just hiding Jezat was enough of a risk and now he believes the characters (as representatives of the God Learners) owe him. At least, they should aid him in assassinating Vigota.

Initially, Tholos assumes that Jezat was obeying the orders of his superiors and that Jezat's unexpected appearance in Sunvale was a part of some greater scheme. If the characters tell him that Jezat has gone rogue, Tholos will be alarmed and terrified and attempt to cravenly ingratiate himself with the characters.

Investigating Jezat

Asking around town and making an Easy (+20%) Influence check allows the characters to discover that a beggar arrived in Sunvale a few days ago. The characters can trace his movements to the back door of Thandor Manyson's hall, where beggars are given scraps and alms. After that, there is no sign of him.

What happened was that Jezat arrived at the hall and Tholos brought him inside and hid him in the cellar. If the

characters search the cellar, they find several large barrels of beer, as well as a blanket and some travel-stained clothes. The cellar is half-empty and it appears that barrels were recently removed from it. Any servant can tell the characters that Thandor sent several barrels downriver to Deepwell two days ago on board a barge.

(EWF OR ORLANTHI) Investigating Hendrik

Hendrik is easy to investigate – the warrior is well known in the village and makes no secret of his opposition to the EWF. He spends his days training the young men of Sunvale in the arts of combat or patrolling the boundaries of his friend Thandor's holdings. If the characters follow him for long enough, he will eventually go to the traditionalist shrine of Orlanth, where the old gods are worshipped. There, he will be joined by Thandor but they will not discuss 'Arkat' or any conspiracies against the Empire in public – while Hendrik is part of the resistance against the assimilation of the Orlanthi by the Empire, he conspires only in private conversations and in secret.

If Hendrik discovers that the characters are following him, he will be furious and turn on them. If they are Orlanthi, he will berate them for being lickspittle toadies to the wyrmfriends; if they are EWF, he will call them invaders and inhuman monsters. Either way, he will do his best to appear to be a paranoid, violent, dangerous and traditionalist Orlanthi – admittedly, he is all those things but he presents an even more exaggerated front to draw attention away from Thandor.

(EWF OR ORLANTHI) Investigating Tholos

Observant characters may discover the strange behaviour of Tholos. If the characters follow Jezat, they may discover how one of the servants hid the God Learner in the cellar. Tholos will also be spying on the characters, so they might notice him when he tries to follow them.

If discovered, Tholos will try to explain his presence by saying that he is just a servant going about his duties and that is simply a co-incidence that he seems to be following the characters. He will beg their forgiveness and prostrate himself before them like a craven cur, hoping to embarrass them into ignoring him. Tholos has no pride to hurt. If they ask around, the characters will learn that Tholos was once a hunter and trader but came to Thandor's hall a few months ago and took over his uncle's job as servant. Tholos met the God Learners at the Eyrie while out hunting. They can also learn that Tholos owns a shack outside town.

If the characters search Tholos' shack, they find a few clothes and personal possessions. The only unusual thing is a shelf of herbs and medicines, including several poisons. A Hard (–20%) Perception test lets the characters notice a section of earth outside the cabin that has recently been disturbed. Digging there unearths Tholos' cache of God Learner gold – a bag containing 50 gold coins, all of which have the beauty and precision of coins stamped in the Clanking City.

(GOD LEARNERS) FRAMING HENDRIK

Tholos will urge the characters to use Dajai's suspicions to the advantage of the God Learner cause. Dajai thinks that Hendrik is conspiring with the mysterious Arkat – why not manufacture proof and plant it in Hendrik's house? Tholos leaves how this can be accomplished up to the characters. Hendrik's house is close to the chieftain's hall; he lives there with his wife Gudrun and his sons Hendar and Thadrik.

Once the characters have planted proof of Hendrik's complicity in the conspiracy, they need to arrange for Dajai to discover it.

(EWE OR ORLANTHI) FRAMING HENDRIK

If Tholos has to frame Hendrik on his own, he does this by bringing a cask of wine from the cellars of Thandor's hall to Hendrik's house, claiming that it is a gift to honour the warrior's skills. While there, he hides a fake letter from Arkat beneath the cask.

The Notes from 'Arkat'

The characters may encounter two notes from 'Arkat' in Sunvale – the real one, hidden in Thandor's chamber and the false one planted by Tholos to frame Thandor.

The Real Note:

The storm is coming, and you shall be our shelter. Gather what supplies you can, for soon our warriors will be hungry for more than battle. You shall know the hour when the dragon chokes on a mouth full of fire. Know me as, Arkat.

The False Note:

The time has come to strike! Kill the wyrmlickers, then report back to me! Arkat!

Tholos then approaches the characters and says that he saw a letter in Hendrik's house and while he did not read it, he did see the name of Arkat on it. If possible, make it appear that Tholos is giving the Players a hint. Tholos is, he says, too lowly and too afraid of the mighty Hendrik to speak out against him but if the characters search Hendrik's house, then they will find the note.

(GOD LEARNERS) ASSASSINATING VIGOTA

Tholos will also urge the characters to assassinate the prophetess Vigota, as she could reveal them at any time. Tholos can get the characters into the hall secretly at night and tell them where the guards are. They could also assassinate Vigota when she presides over ceremonies in the temple. When in public, Vigota is accompanied by Orlanthi guards; in the hall, she is often in the company of Dajai.

(EWE OR ORLANTHI) ASSASSINATING VIGOTA

If Tholos has to assassinate Vigota on his own, he begins by going to his shack outside town. There, he retrieves a vial of poison and slips its contents into Vigota's meal at dinner. This poison has a Potency of 70 and deals 2D6 points of damage to the Abdomen if eaten. As Tholos serves her meal, he whispers 'Hendrik sends his regards' into her ear. She smiles in confusion, then begins to eat.

The Second Council of Thandor

If any or all of the following events happen, then Thandor calls a second council:

- Hendrik is accused of being in league with Arkat.
- Tholos is accused of being a God Learner spy, or in league with Arkat.
- Vigota is assassinated and Hendrik is accused of the crime.
- Vigota is assassinated and Tholos is accused of the crime.
- Thandor is being accused of being in league with Arkat.

If Tholos is accused of either crime, Thandor will hand the servant over to Dajai for Draconic justice (ritual disembowelment) – the thane is pleased that suspicion has passed from Hendrik. The punishment is carried out immediately in the hall.

If Hendrik is accused of being in league of Arkat, Thandor has no choice but to hand him over to Dajai. Thandor does beg a favour from Dajai, though – let Hendrik be questioned by Dajai's commanding officer and given a chance to atone and convert. Dajai agrees and says that Hendrik will be sent downriver by boat to Solthmouth, where Maralis will judge him (Maralis is secretly 'Arkat').

However, if Hendrik is accused of murdering Vigota, Thandor thinks the worst of his old friend and hands him over to be disembowelled on the spot. He orders the guards to gag Hendrik immediately, lest he blaspheme further against the Cosmic Dragon (and before he can turn on Thandor and reveal the thane's conspiracy).

Finally, if Thandor is accused of being in league with Arkat, he smiles a rogue's smile and draws his sword. He attacks Dajai, as does Hendrik and all the other warriors. If the characters are Orlanthi or God Learners, the battle is over quickly – Dajai is killed and Vigota captured. Thandor looks down at the hacked-apart corpse of the dragon officer and frets that he has broken the guest-right and brought a curse down on his head but it could not be helped. Now, war will come to Sunvale.

If the characters are EWF members when Thandor is accused, they will have a fight on their hands. There are two Orlanthi in the hall per Player Character, plus Thandor, Tholos and Hendrik. The characters have Dajai and Vigota on their side. If they are lucky and skilled, they can fight their way out of the hall and flee Sunvale. They will run into Ferule's patrol outside town (see *Ferule's Patrol*, right).

Victory Points

EWF: If Tholos is uncovered as a traitor, the characters get one Victory Point. If Hendrik is slain, they get one Victory Point. If they know that Thandor is conspiring with Arkat, they get one Victory Point.

God Learners: If Vigota or Dajai is slain, the characters get one Victory Point. They do not get any extra Victory Points for killing both. If Hendrik and Thandor also survive, the characters get another Victory Point.

Orlanthi: If Tholos is uncovered as a spy, the characters get one Victory Point. If Hendrik survives, the characters get another Victory Point. If they discover that Thandor is in league with Arkat, they get another Victory Point.

All: If Thandor's conspiracy is uncovered and Sunvale is attacked, no Victory Points are obtained from Sunvale.

An Intermission

As the characters travel down towards Deepwell (probably along the Solthi river), they will run into members of their respective faction. This scene is to remind the Players of the overarching plot and inform them of events elsewhere.

Orlanthi: The Storm Dream

One night, as the characters are travelling, a fierce storm blows down from the mountains. It echoes in their dreams; the characters dream of soaring like sylphs in the skies above Dragon Pass. The clouds take on the shape of gods and demons; Orlanth rises from the thunderhead and towers over the mountains, ten thousand feet tall. He wrestles a dragon made of fire and smoke, stabbing it with a spear of lightning.

Then, as the gods duel, the characters see a figure clinging to the scales of the dragon. She rides the storm winds of the dragon's passage over the land, creeping ever closer to the monster's throat. She is dressed in an EWF uniform but has Orlanthi tattoos. She reaches the monster's throat, just as Orlanth's lightning lance strikes. The dragon explodes in fire, an explosion that consumes the whole sky.

The characters hear a voice, whispering 'When the storm comes, look to the south for treachery, to the north for glory, to the west for leadership and to the east for hope when hope is lost.'

When the characters awaken, there are three runes lying on the ground near their camp (choose from Air, Dragon, Fate, Law, Luck, Man, Mastery, Metal or Spirit).

EWF: Ferule's Patrol

EWF characters encounter a large patrol under the command of Ferule. The patrol consists of 100 soldiers, as well as dinosaurs and a detachment of Dragonewt warriors. Ferule welcomes the characters and asks them to report on what they have discovered thus far.

Ferule also informs the characters that Maralis the Orlanthi is in Solthmouth, finalising a truce between her father Aelfred and the EWF. They are to continue with their mission, then report to her. If the Solthi valley can be pacified and this truce agreed upon, the siege of the hated Zistorite Clanking City can be intensified. A fleet of dragonships has been constructed at Karse for the use of the Fifth camp; these ships will be stocked and crewed from Solthmouth soon.

If the characters are fleeing Sunvale, Ferule's army will protect them from any pursuing Orlanthi. The army then proceeds to stomp Sunvale into the ground. The siege of Sunvale will continue into the next section of this campaign but starting the war early will greatly aid the EWF. Ferule orders the characters to press on to Solthmouth with all speed, to explain to Aelfred why they are crushing his most valuable village at the same time they are supposed to be concluding a treaty with him.

If the characters wish, Ferule gives them riding renders (velociraptors) to replace their horses. They can also re-equip if they are missing weapons or armour. Finally, the dragonewt Right Word Now is willing to instruct the characters in draconic mysticism if they wish – the characters may either gain the Draconic Illumination skill (see *Magic of Glorantha*) or one free Improvement Roll for Draconic Illumination if they already have the skill.

God Learners: Tidings from the Sky

The *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* descends from the sky above the characters. When the characters climb aboard, they are greeted by Erid – he dropped Rsadi back to the Clanking City, while Cadamil investigated matters in Solthmouth. Erid then went back north to rendezvous with the characters. Firstly, he asks them to report on their progress in catching Jezat and in sabotaging EWF expansion into the valley. He asks them to closely describe their encounters with wyrmfriends like Yalish and especially Vigota – Erid's fascination with the Dragon is growing. The automaton Yarlech prowls the decks while Erid talks to the characters.

He has little to report – Cadamil will meet them in Solthmouth at an inn called *The Dragon's Head*. The siege of Zistorwal continues but the machine-sorcerers there have produced many new and wondrous weapons and Erid has samples to give the characters. Each character can take one of the following items:

Powerblade: This weapon gives a +5% bonus to hit and inflicts +2 points of damage. It glows and hums when being wielded. Any melee weapon can be a powerblade (powerspear, poweraxe and so forth).

Mimetic Cloak: This grey cloak blends with its surroundings, giving a +10% bonus to the wearer's Stealth skill.

Helm of Mental Fortitude: The Helm of Mental Fortitude is engraved with protective symbols that deflect hostile spells, giving a +10% bonus to Persistence tests to resist magic and mind-altering effects.

Shattergun: A shattergun is a metal tube, around half a metre long. When the user holds it and spends a Magic Point, it fires a bolt of magical energy. Effectively, it is a weapon that is powered by the user's psyche and so never runs out of ammunition. The Shattergun uses the Crossbow skill to hit.

Augmentation Web: An augmentation web consists of a network of silver tubes connected to a vial of bubbling green liquid. When activated, the silver tubes embed themselves into the user's major arteries (causing one point of damage to all locations). After this damage has healed, the augmentation web becomes active. Once per day, it gives a +5% bonus to all skill tests for 1D6 rounds.

Other Zistorite items are described in the *Clanking City* sourcebook if you have it.

After equipping the characters, the *Hawk-Exultant* takes to the skies again and heads for Deepwell. En route, the ship is intercepted by a flight of wyvern riders from the Fifth camp. There are five wyverns, each carrying a trollkin slave rider. The *Hawk-Exultant* has its own weapons, which the characters can man alongside the crew. If any of the Wyverns manage to land on the deck, though, it will be up to the characters to drive them off.

Each round, roll Erid's Shiphandling score against the trollkin's Riding. If any of the trollkin manage to beat Erid, that wyvern manages to land on the deck and attacks. Wyverns that have not caught the ship can be attacked using the ship's artillery. The ship's crew have Engineering scores of 50%.

Wyverns: *RuneQuest*, pages 121–122.

Trollkin: *RuneQuest*, pages 118–119. These trollkin have a Riding score of 40%.

Weapon	Skill	Damage	Range	Load	STR/DEX	ENC	AP/HP
Shattergun	Crossbow	1D8	50 ft	—	—/—	—	2/6
Armour	AP	ENC	Locations	Total Skill Penalty			
Helm of Mental Fortitude	5	1	Head	–5%			

Once the aerial attackers have been dealt with, Erid will drop the characters off outside Deepwell. The Players may wish to take advantage of the added mobility of the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* by flying downriver after Jezat's barge. If they do so, they can find the barge easily enough; it is drifting down the river and all the crew are dead – Jezat emerged from his hiding place and blasted it with spells. The characters will have to pick up his trail in Deepwell.

Deepwell

The village of Deepwell is the oldest Orlanthi settlement in the valley. People have lived here since well before the Dawn. The well that gives the village its name is not a well at all – it is a series of half-flooded caves near the riverbank and is a holy place to the Orlanthi. Young men must spend a night in the caves, in prayer and preparation, as part of their initiation into the Cult of Orlanth.

Everyone knows that Orlanth battled the Dragon Sh'kharzeel and hurled its body down upon the world and that Dragon Pass came from its bones. What only the Runepriests know is that when he did this, a little fragment of the dragon's identity survived in the caves of Deepwell, a ghostly spark of draconic awareness. The young men go into the caves to face the echo of the dragon, to face that primal foe in mimicry of Orlanth. Only the Runepriests know this – and Jezat, who studied and stole the lore of the Runepriests and knows of the caverns.

Jezat killed the two crewmen on the barge using his spells then abandoned the boat. He let it drift into Deepwell while he crept into the village and then into the caves.

The Orlanthi: The leader of the village here is **Brandig the Bold** (page 121), an accomplished chief. He has converted to the draconic faith but insists that the young men of the village must continue to go into the cave, as their forefathers did, to confront the dragon. Unlike the other Orlanthi leaders in the Laughing River clan, Brandig has not been contacted by Arkat and has no idea that a rebellion against the Empire of Wyrms' Friends is coming. He is trying to make the best of the current situation, preserving what he sees as the essential elements of Orlanthi culture.

One of the traditionalist priests driven out by the EWF is a priestess of Ernalda called **Dagunda** (page 115). She has hidden in the Deepwell Cave and encountered Jezat as he

went by. Dagunda has been blind her whole life and so hid in the cave, which she knows well, instead of risking the wilderness. She is young and nervous, unwilling to go far from her home.

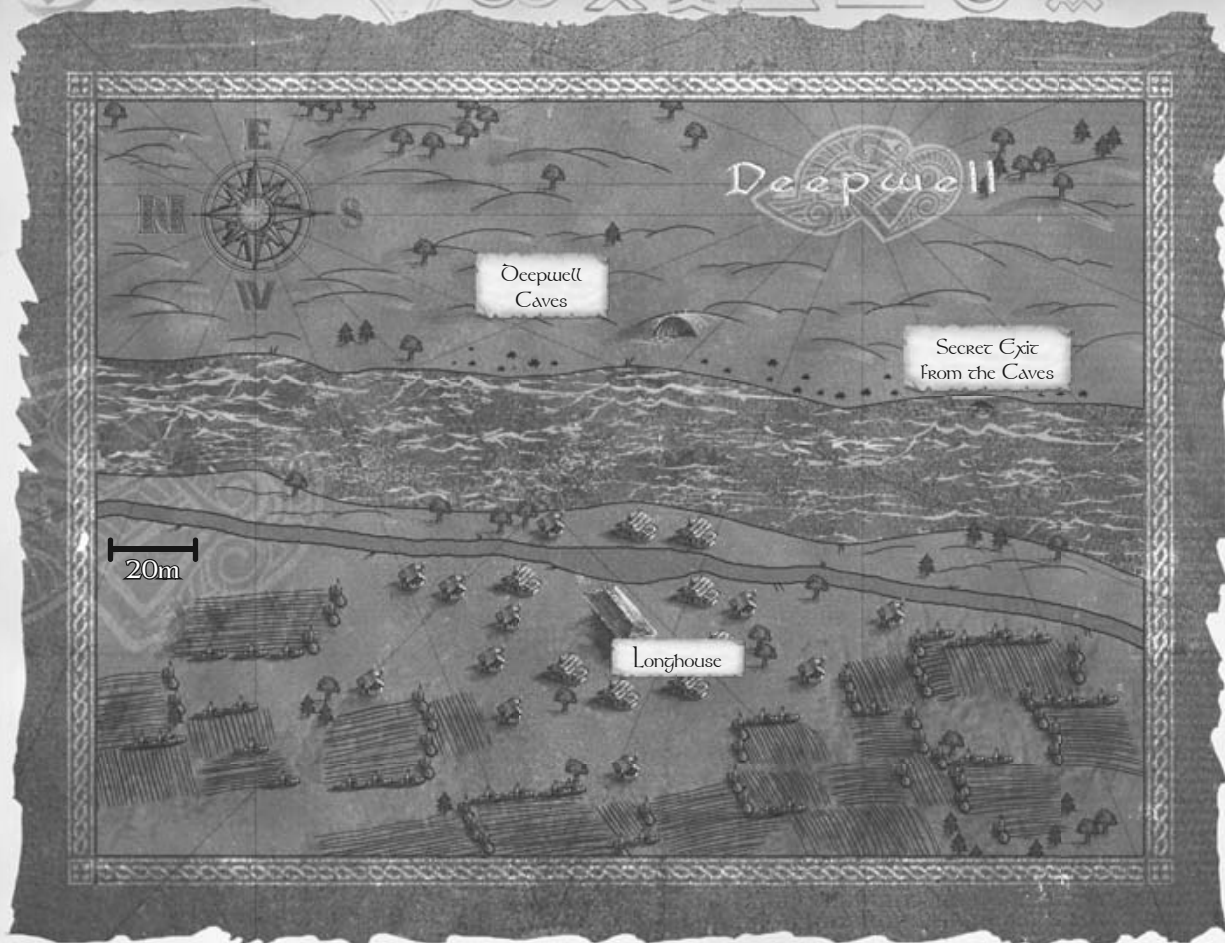
The other major Orlanthi Non-Player Characters in the village are **Harbard**, **Orsain** and **Thalad**, a trio of youths from the village who are of an age to be initiated into the cult by passing through the caves. All three are nervous, eager to prove themselves and excited by the prospect of danger. Harbard is the biggest and the de facto leader of the three and thinks that he will be a great warrior. Orsain is the most superstitious, quick to jump at shadows and to think the worst. Thalad has listened most closely to the preaching of the dragon priests and has begun to seek out his own draconic nature. See **The Youths** on page 114.

EWf: There are two Wyrms' Friends in Deepwell; the priest **Vastyr Brightshadow** (page 125) and the agent **Galana the Blade's Child** (page 122).

Vastyr is of the War Dragon faction within the Empire and practices a philosophy of 'convert or die'. He drove the traditionalist priests of the Storm Tribe out of Deepwell by demonstrating his magical superiority. He tolerates Brandig's rule over the village but would prefer to replace the Orlanthi warrior with someone more pliable. His name, Brightshadow, comes from the inhuman heat of his shadow; it is enough to burn wood or scorch grass if he stands in one place too long. He sleeps on a marble slab, as a normal bed would catch fire.

Galana is of the Above and Beyond faction and believes that obsessing over conversion or warfare is a distraction from contemplation and enlightenment. However, wiser and more enlightened souls than her have assigned her to the fringes of the Empire to aid the conversion efforts and to keep watch for dangers. Currently, her main role is to keep Vastyr from burning down any more temples or offending the Orlanthi too much. She is unlikely to play a major role in events in Deepwell at this stage but she will play a greater role in the Battle of Deepwell (page 74).

God Learners: There are no God Learners in town, except for Jezat.



Events in Deepwell

The Characters Arrive

As usual, the characters arrive and introduce themselves to the leaders of the settlement – Brandig and the EWF members. Brandig is especially interested if the characters mention they have come downriver from Sunvale, as hunters found a barge upriver with two dead crew on board and Brandig will want to know if the visitors know anything about this bizarre crime. The characters will also hear about the barge from the common people in Deepwell.

Investigating Jezat

The barge is the obvious place to start. It has run aground about a kilometre upriver. The two crewmen were both obviously murdered in a very similar fashion to Araba at the Eyrie (see page 17) and both have large blackened blast marks on their chests. The barrel where Jezat was hiding has been burst asunder from the inside. Jezat slipped overboard before the boat ran aground. The characters can use Tracking or ask around town to find his trail.

If they ask around town, a drunken old cottar called Hengvold will tell them – and anyone who will listen – that he saw the devil sneak out of the forest and go down the Deepwell Caves, no doubt to wake the Worm Who Eats The World who lives in the cave.

The Initiation

At twilight, on the day the characters arrive, several people gather on the banks of the river on the opposite bank to the Deepwell Caves. Three youths – Harbard, Orsain and Thalad – stand knee-deep in the running water. Their families and friends and the other traditionalists stand around them. With the Orlanthi priests gone, it falls to Brandig to perform the ceremony. He takes the role of Orlanth in the ritual, arming the youths and confirming them as his house-carls.

As Brandig is helping Orsain put on his shield, Vasyr arrives. 'What barbaric nonsense is this?' he roars.

Peace, Vastyr Brightshadow. These are young warriors of the clan, being taught how to fight and face their fears,' replies Brandig wearily.

'Do not deceive the dragon, Brandig.' The river begins to steam where Vastyr's shadow touches it. 'These are the foolish rites of the old ways. This is not enlightenment. Look at those children you call warriors! They quiver, they shake, they don't know what they are doing! They do not have the discipline of the dragon, which is the path to true enlightenment!'

'They want to be initiated in the old way and the new, Vastyr. They acknowledge that the Gods are Dragons and the Dragons are Gods, just as you taught us. They chant in the language of the newts, just as you taught us. They meditate on their draconic nature, just as you taught us – but I will teach them to fight, as my father taught me. The old way and the new, together.'

Vastyr narrows his eyes. He turns to the three youths. 'Do you fear darkness? Do you fear cold? Do you fear death?' Before they can answer, he turns to the crowd and raises his arms. 'The dragon has come to deliver you from all these things! The darkness is in your own souls, which can be illuminated only by dragonfire! The cold is the cold of the grave, which can be driven away by the blood heat of the dragon! Death is unknown to the dragons, who rise and rise again!'

If the characters are EWF, Vastyr points to them and says, *'These are true followers of the Draconic Way – they have no fear of darkness or cold, for their souls are dragon souls. They will go into the caves and shame the Orlanthi who cling to ignorance!'*

If the characters are Orlanthi or other, they can volunteer to accompany the youths into the caves. This scene is a clash between the old way and the new – Vastyr wants to demonstrate the utter superiority of the draconic way, while Brandig just wants to quietly honour the customs of his forefathers.

If the characters participate in the ceremony, Brandig will ceremonially arm each of them, as follows. He will quickly prepare the characters by whispering to them the answers to the questions before continuing the rite.

Questioner (Brandig): I am chieftain of this fort. Do you have the courage to take up arms and fight in my service?

Answerer: I do.

Questioner: Do you fear darkness?

Answerer: No, for I have looked upon the dawn.

Questioner: Do you fear Chaos?

Answerer: No, for I know the straight path home.

Questioner: Do you fear death?

Answerer: No, for I have lived well.

Questioner: What do you want of me?

Answerer: A helm.

Questioner: Take this helm and wear it proudly. You will know the secrets of the storm. What else?

Answerer: A shield.

Questioner: Take this shield and bear it well. You will be the shield against danger. What else?

Answerer: A sword.

Questioner: Take this sword and find glory. You shall slay the greatest of foes and bring hope to the world. What else?

Answerer: Wisdom.

Questioner: In that cave is our greatest treasure and greatest fear. Go now and return with the dawn.

The characters and the three youths are then brought across the river by boat and sent down into the caves.

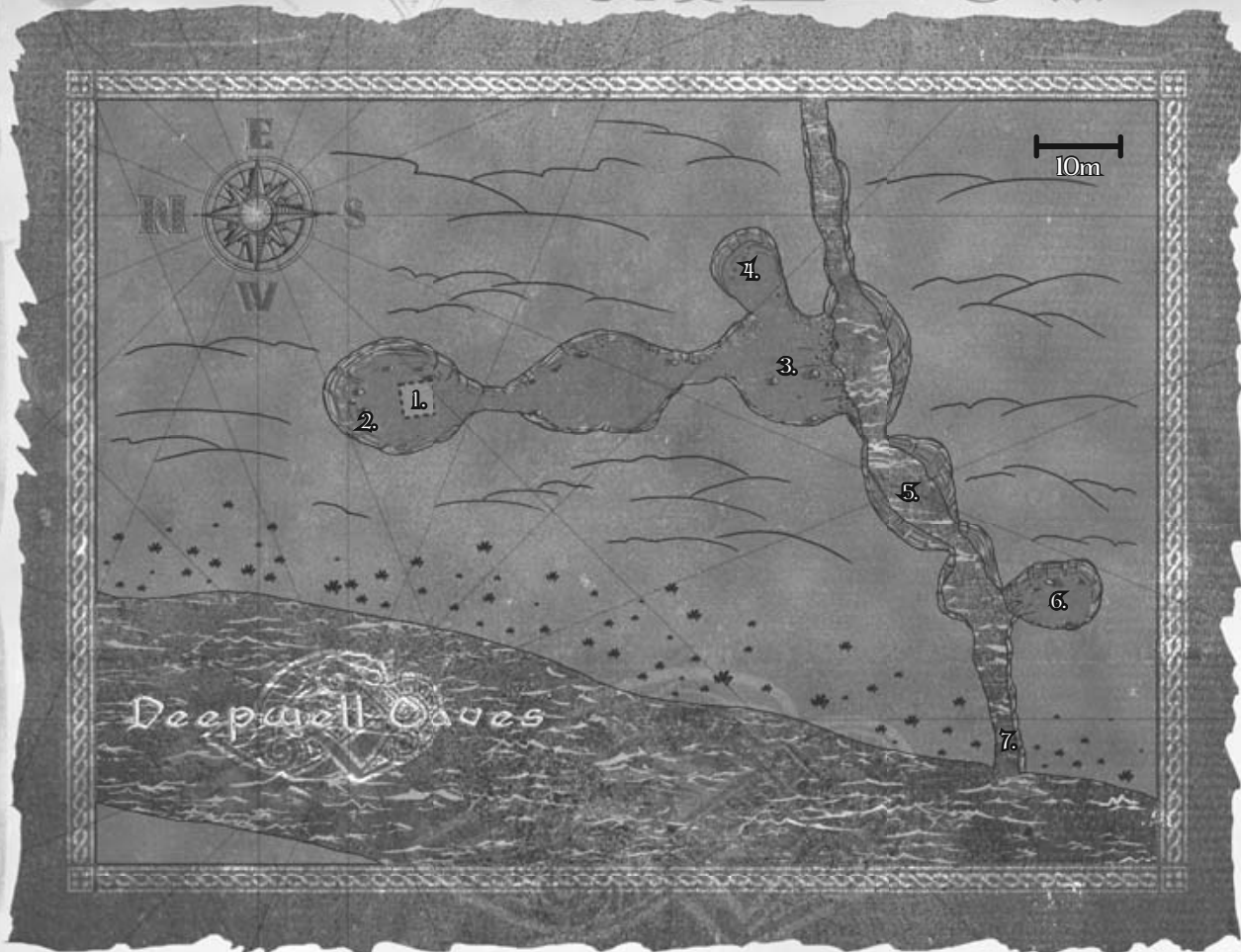
The Deepwell Caves

1. Entrance: The entrance to the cave is via a steep shaft, five metres deep. A rope hangs down; characters can make a difficult (–20%) Athletics test to climb down without the rope, or a hard test (–40%) to climb up. The keeper draws the rope up during initiation ceremonies.

The Caves

The Deepwell Caves lie on the opposite side of the river to the town. They are holy and no-one is allowed enter them save for the priests (who were banished by the EWF) and those who are being initiated. The caves are guarded by a keeper night and day – Jezat got past the keeper by using the Slumber spell (*Magic of Glorantha*, page 51). As far as anyone knows, there is only one entrance into the caves.

The cave network is quite extensive, although the deeper caves are below the water table and are therefore flooded.



2. The Cave of History: It is almost pitch black in this cavern, save for a little light that spills down the entrance shaft. If the characters have their own light source, or if they feel the stone around them, they discover that the walls are covered in carvings. They can discern a sequence of images, with runes associated with each image.

3. The Cave of Initiation: Most initiates find their way into this cave from the Cave of History. It is a round cave, with water flowing through one half of it. It is customary to sit in this cave and listen to the stream and contemplate the darkness.

4. Side Cave: These little cave is mostly ignored in the ceremonies and initiations but in the last few weeks, it has become home to Dagunda. See **Dagunda's Tale**, below.

5. Flooded Caves: There are several caves that are entirely flooded by ice-cold water. The underground stream that flows through these caves connects to the Solthi. Swimming

through these caves requires an Athletics test to reach the river without drowning, or a hard (–40%) Athletics test to reach the secret cave.

6. Secret Cave: If the characters somehow reach this cave, they discover the burial site of an Orlanthi chieftain who lived centuries ago in the dawn times. His magical war sword has survived and can be taken by the characters – it is an exquisite, penetrating weapon which means that opponents suffer –10% on parry tests against it (see page 66 of the *RuneQuest Companion* for more details). It also contains the Metal and Death runes, which the wielder can automatically attune to.

7. Hidden Exit Tunnel: This tunnel leads to the Solthi river.

Remember that it is pitch black in the caves – see the Vision rules on page 86 of *RuneQuest*. Importantly, close combat attacks suffer a –60% penalty and Movement is halved.

The Carven Images

The First Image

A dragon in the sky, breathing fire and devastation

Runes: Death, Shadow, Dragon

The Second Image

Orlanth in his hall

Runes: Air, Law, Mastery

The Third Image

The dragon brings forth a terrible host of monsters.

Runes: Dragon, Fertility, Fire

The Fourth Image

Orlanth at the head of his clan warband.

Runes: Mastery, Luck, Metal

The Fifth Image

Orlanth battles the dragon.

Runes: Fire, Metal, Death

The Sixth Image

Orlanth falls from the sky.

Runes: Air, Darkness, Death

The Seventh Image

Orlanth hides in a cave.

Runes: Darkness, Shadow, Fire

The Eighth Image

Warriors protect the cave from dragons.

Runes: Darkness, Metal, Man

The Ninth Image

Orlanth lies on board a boat. Warriors are rowing and a large cat sits on the ship's prow.

Runes: Death, Balance, Water

The Tenth Image

Orlanth lies on a bier, the dragon's head at his feet.

Runes: Death, Air, Fertility

Along the Laughing River

The three Orlanthi Non-Player Characters will stop in the Cave of History or the Cave of Initiation and wait for the Player Characters to take the lead. There is plenty of scope for roleplaying here:

Harbard will try to prove himself the equal of any of the Player Characters, inquiring of their past deeds and boasting about his own accomplishments (which are limited to hunting and mock-fighting and a single cattle raid against the EWF).

Orsain is the most nervous of the three and will worry about monsters and ghosts long before the Echo of the Dragon shows up. He is also paranoid – if the characters are EWF, he will suspect they are there to sabotage their initiation and when they find Dagunda, he will blurt out that they have come to murder her.

Thalad is on the path of Draconic Illumination and is the most sensitive to the presence of the Echo. He will be best disposed towards EWF characters and will highlight the virtues of the Empire – peace, immortality, enlightenment, the friendship of the elder races, the incorporation of the old Orlanthi ways into the new magic of the dragonewts.

Dagunda's Tale: When the characters make contact with Dagunda and she confirms they are not nasty EWF out to kill her, she tells them what happened in the cave since she arrived. She has been hiding here for some weeks, occasionally sneaking out to get food and hold cult ceremonies. Yesterday, someone crept into the cave. She heard him bumping around in the Cave of History and assumed it was some Orlanthi youth being initiated. Then she sensed something strange and powerful (the Bowl of Blood relic, although she does not know this), a presence like a manifestation of a clan spirit, but greater, more divine. She went to investigate and encountered someone who was definitely not Orlanthi.

The stranger hurled a spell at her but it only scorched her. She fled back to her cave and hid. She does not know what happened to the stranger but ever since that bizarre encounter, the cave has felt odd, as if there is something lurking here. Something *alive*...

The Echo of the Dragon: When Jezat brought the Bowl of Blood into the cave, it was the psychic equivalent of sounding a war-horn inside the cave. The presence of an Orlanthi relic in a cave that has strong associations with

the dragon that Orlanth slew has awoken echoes of the dragon. These echoes take the form of a draconic spirit, formed from the waters of the river and the darkness of the cave. It calls itself **Es'kaleel, The Echo of the Passing of the Wurm** (see page 131). It is a fragment of Sh'kaharzeel's sentence, a bitter remnant of the dragon.

The spirit manifests at a dramatically appropriate moment in the characters' sojourn in the cave. Its attitude towards the characters depends on their faction. It will recognise the draconic nature of any wyrmfriends present and speak in Auld Wurmish to them. It will be unfriendly towards the Orlanthi, especially any who are part of any Cult of Orlanth, as it associates them with the death of its progenitor. God Learners just confuse it – it has no context to place them in.

The spirit will initially be threatening towards the characters and hiss at them. It senses the blood of the enemy in the cave – where are the characters hiding it? Where is the murderer-god? Where is Orlanth?

If the characters are able to calm the spirit down and convince it that they are not the ones with the Bowl of Blood and are not allies of Orlanth, Es'kaleel will speak to them more favourably. It will hiss that the enemy lay here as one dead, while the other children of the dragon tried to avenge their parent. It will speak of anger and suffering, of the majesty of the dragon being brought low by upstart barbarian gods, of the damage done to the Great Cycle. It will speak of *revenge*.

Enlightened characters may argue that revenge and hot blood are not aspects of the dragon and that the spirit has lost its way, that it is committing wrong action by the lights of the Empire. They may persuade the dragon that it must return to the path of rightness by moving on to its next incarnation and stop clinging to revenge. If so, the dragon spirit departs, leaving the characters with a blessing (+10% to their Draconic Illumination skill).

If the characters agree that the dragon spirit deserves revenge, it demands that they deny Orlanth in this sacred place. Ordain and Thalad agree; Harbard and Dagunda refuse and the dragon attacks them. If the dragon's thirst for revenge is sated, it gives the characters a taste for Jezat's blood, which gives them a +20% to all Tracking attempts and a +10% to all resistance tests against the God Learner's spells. It also temporarily lowers the water level in the caves, letting the characters walk to the secret exit into the Solthi

River. Especially good roleplaying may allow the characters to convince the dragon that its anger should be directed towards Jezat, who bears the relic of Orlanth and that it should aid them in hunting him down, in which case it gives the same benefits as above without demanding the deaths of the Orlanthi.

The characters may be able to come to a compromise with the dragon spirit, letting it remain in the cave as a challenge to future Orlanthi initiates, or as a tutelary spirit to the new Draconic versions of the Orlanthi pantheon. The characters can also just fight the spirit, banishing it – Dagunda conveniently has the Spirit Bane spell.

After The Initiation

At dawn, the rope is lowered into the entrance cave and the characters can leave the cave. Orlanthi characters who spent the night in the cave get one free Improvement Roll which can be used on any POW or CHA-based skill. God Learners get nothing save whatever secrets they take from the carvings in the cave.

Victory Points

EWf: If the characters demonstrate the courage and enlightenment of the EWF by entering the cave, they get one Victory Point. If they deal with the dragon spirit without killing it, they get one Victory Point. If they do not anger the Orlanthi by killing anyone or profaning the cave, they get an additional Victory Point.

God Learners: God Learners get one Victory Point if they undergo the Initiation ceremony, one Victory Point if they destroy or trick the dragon spirit and one Victory Point if they find the carvings in the Cave of History.

Orlanthi: Orlanthi get one Victory Point for undergoing the initiation, one Victory Point if they defeat or trick the dragon spirit and one Victory Point if they stand up to EWF cultural imperialism.

Noryar

The characters can smell the sea and hear the cries of gulls as they approach Noryar. They have left the barbarian wilderness of the Savage or Steal Forest and are now in the more settled arc of civilisation around the bay of

Choralinthor. The buildings here are often stone, not wood, and are larger and more impressive than any structure save the temples in the Howling Wolf lands. There are folk here who are clearly not from Hendrikiland and some are not even from Kethaela.

When the characters enter the town, they see draconic symbols everywhere. Noryar has entirely converted to draconism. All is peaceful here, even serene. Folk meditate on the Cosmic Dragon. Whisperings of Auld Wyrmmish can be heard in the streets and many have split their tongues to aid them in speaking the dragon language. The eerie inner light of illumination shines within some of the people of Noryar.

Observant characters will see that not everyone in Noryar has embraced the dragon. There are some, especially the older generations, who do not have split tongues, who do not paint the Dragonewt rune on their foreheads or send their prayer energy to the dragon shrines. Unlike the other towns the characters have passed through, Noryar does not have a single charismatic Wyrmmfriend who is forcing the new way on the people, nor is there a distinct enclave of Wyrmmfriends within a larger Orlanthi population. Here, the new way and the old are intermingled, even within a single family.

When the war comes, there will be terrible kin strife in Noryar.

The Old Way Traditionalists: Note that these are specifically 'Old Way Traditionalists,' not Orlanthi. In Noryar, the existing Orlanthi culture has been so co-opted by the EWF that is necessary to denote these characters as being specifically Old Way, as opposed to just Orlanthi. Their leader is **Asrela**, a former devotee of Vinga who has taken up her javelin again to speak out against the perversion of tradition. She has many enemies in town but she is rallying the loyalist warriors of the town in preparation for Arkat's rebellion.

Wyrmmfriend Orlanthi: The most senior Orlanthi in town is the brother of Aeldred the Fat. He is **Hordred Wyrmmfriend**, former Hordred Halfhand. He was missing a hand but thanks to his increasing mastery of draconic techniques, he has managed to regrow his severed limb. It is a scaly claw instead of a real hand but it works well enough. Hordred is immensely proud of his favourite niece, Maralis the Orlanthi, and will ask the characters for news of her and tell stories of her youthful exploits and adventures.

The most senior priest is **Faeltris the Healer**, a committed wyrmfriend of the Converter faction. He is an elderly man, his porcelain skin lit from within by the power of his holy soul. He is unfailingly kind and always seeks to resolve situations with the least fuss and uproar. His frail body and monk-like demeanour conceal his manipulative ways.

There is also a military officer of the War Dragon faction, **Seran the Laugher** (page 124). His name is a mockery of him; Seran never laughs. He is a vicious, psychotic monster who is furious to be assigned to this peaceful village when he could be, say, grinding Sunvale into the dust or besieging Thunder Bridge. If the characters are EWF, Seran will question them angrily – they spoke to Telektios Ashbringer recently, did they mention Seran? Did the commander explain why Seran has been *exiled* to this *barbarian cesspool*?

God Learners: There are no God Learners in Noryar.

Others: There is a band of duck mercenaries, the **Billhook Brotherhood**, living just outside Noryar. They number a dozen and are led by **Dhrek Billhook**, an infamous warlord. They fought against King Androfin in a recent EWF-sponsored campaign and have retreated to their farm outside Noryar to rest and recover their strength.

Events in Noryar

If the characters are close on Jezat's heels, they can catch up with him in Noryar. Otherwise, they will catch up with him in Solthmouth and the conflict in Noryar will be between Hordred and Asrela.

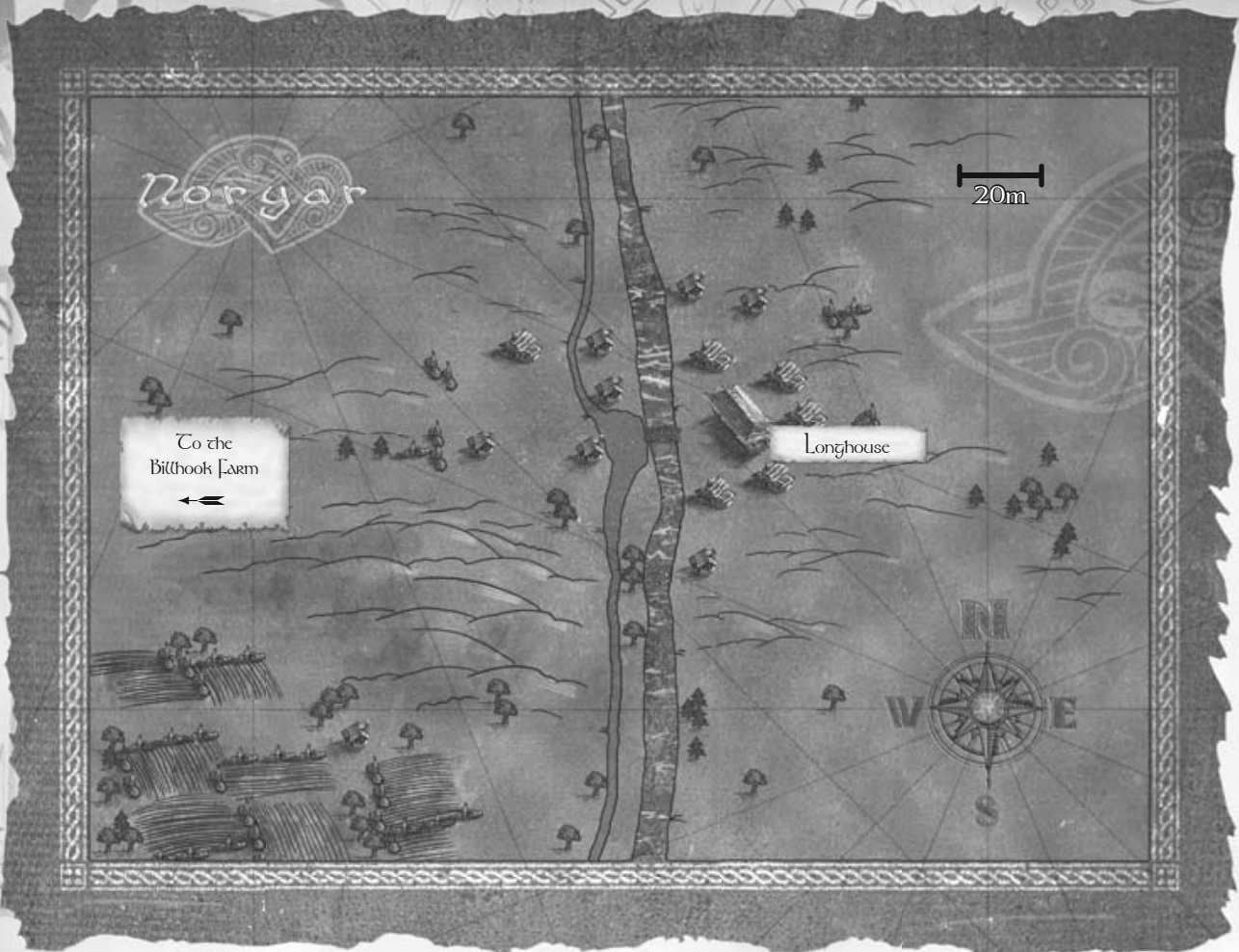
The Characters Arrive

The characters will be presented to Hordred as normal but their introductions will be watched by Asrela, who has enough status in town to be present in the hall when strangers arrive.

Investigating Jezat

If the characters are hot on Jezat's heels, then asking around gives them an immediate clue – a man matching Jezat's description arrived in town earlier that day and was last seen heading for the Billhook Farm outside of town.

If Jezat is well ahead of the characters, then he bypassed Noryar entirely and headed straight to Solthmouth, so the characters will not be able to get any information about him here.



(EWf) Following Asrela

EWf characters will be contacted by Faeltris the Healer soon after arriving in Norgar. He will explain that there is growing dissent and that Asrela is at the heart of it. Hordred has spoken privately to Faeltris and said that it may be necessary to arrest the spearmaiden but Faeltris fears that Asrela has her own agents and spies among Hordred's men. He therefore wants the characters to follow Asrela and find proof that will enable her arrest.

Asrela intends to hire the fearsome Billhook Mercenaries and has a bag of gold sent by 'Arkat' to facilitate this. The gold was sent from the coffers of the Fifth camp itself, so every coin is freshly minted and stamped with the symbols of the EWf. She has hidden this gold in a hollow tree outside town. If the characters follow her discretely, they will see her go to this tree, retrieve the gold and head to Billhook Farm.

(Orlanthi, Possibly Godlearners)

MORE FROM ARKAT

Other characters will be contacted by Asrela soon after they present themselves. She will speak to them to determine their attitude towards the Empire of Wyrms' Friends; if the characters convince her that they are opposed to the Empire, then Asrela will mutter a quick prayer to Vinga for luck and guidance, then show them a letter from Arkat. It is the same letter that was sent to other leaders and chieftains (see page 32 for text).

Asrela will then give the characters a pouch of gold (some 20 gold coins), stamped with the marks of the EWf. She will tell the characters that she wants to hire the Billhook Brotherhood, a band of duck mercenaries who live outside of town.

The Siege of Billhook Farm

There are three possible variations on this siege – either Jezat is at the farm, or Asrela is at the farm or the characters are allied with the ducks against EWF attackers.

In the first two cases, the characters will be ones besieging the farm; in the latter, the characters will be fighting alongside the valiant duck mercenaries. There are twice as many ducks as there are Player Characters in the first two versions; in the third, there are as many ducks as Player Characters.

The farm is quite well fortified – the main two-storey farmhouse is made of heavy stone and is surrounded by low stone walls. At any time during the day, there are 1D4 ducks in the farm or out sparring in the yard; the rest are in the farmhouse.

Approaching the Farm: The ducks do not want visitors. If the characters approach the farm openly, they will be challenged by one of the mercenaries and ordered to get off the ducks' land. If the characters claim they want to deal with Dhrek, the duck's commander and show they have gold, they will be escorted to the farmhouse to meet with Dhrek.

If they are just looking for Asrela or Jezat, the ducks reiterate their demand for the characters to leave; they will not show anyone into the farmhouse while Asrela or Jezat is there.

If the characters try to sneak in past the vigilant ducks, it is time for plenty of Stealth tests! If the characters are spotted, the ducks will quack the alarm and the Billhook Mercenaries will attack the characters.

The EWF Attack The Farm: If the characters are trying to hire the mercenaries for Asrela, they are escorted upstairs in the farmhouse to Dhrek. There, they can haggle with the canny old duck commander. He is a cynical, hardbitten mercenary, the veteran of dozens of wars and skirmishes. He left his home in Dragon Pass because he did not want to convert to the Draconic Way but he is not above fighting for the EWF – their gold is as good as anyone else's and they had more of it up until this Two Year Winter.

Dhrek will initially demand 100 gold for his services but the characters can bargain him down easily enough. A successful Evaluate test lets a character guess that 20 gold is plenty; an Influence test against Dhrek's Persistence or

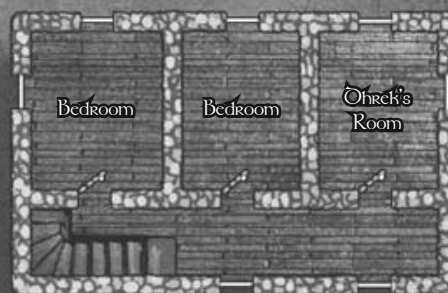
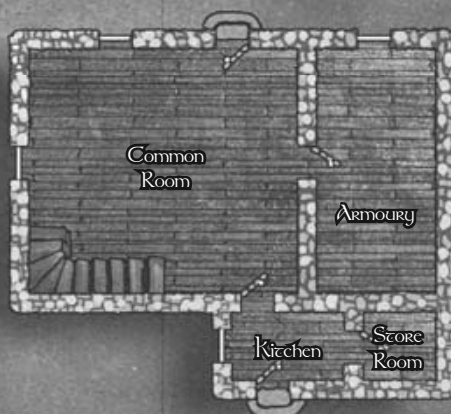
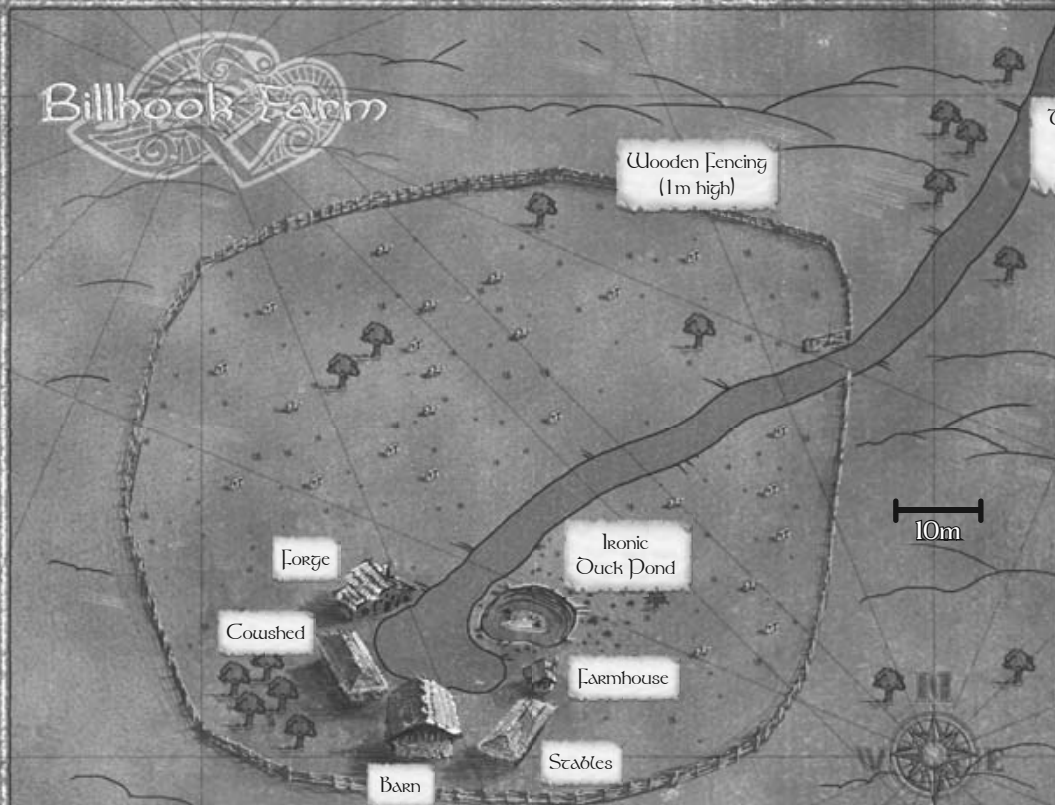


telling him about the rumoured coming rebellion is enough to convince him. If the characters roleplay especially well, they might be able to get him below 20 gold and keep the excess for themselves.

Suddenly, the characters hear the panicked lowing of the cattle and the thunder of a stampede. Something has spooked the cows; moments later, they hear the quacking of a duck alarm. Looking out the window, the characters see several EWF soldiers and dinosaurs approaching the farm, commanded by Seran the Laugher. Dhrek curses and orders the characters to prepare for a fight. If asked, he tells the characters that he and Seran quarrelled in a previous campaign against King Androfin the Defiant and that the EWF officer swore revenge.

Fighting at the Farm: The ducks will retreat to the farmyard and try to hold all the buildings there, using the barn and stables as cover against missile attacks from the farm. If pressed, they will fall back to the farmhouse and try to hold the doors and windows of the structure against attackers.

Billhook Farm



Billhook Farmhouse

If the EWF are the attackers, then Seran begins by loosing his velociraptors, which charge into the farmyard, hungry for duck-meat. When the ducks retreat to the farmhouse, Seran tries to bottle them up in there, then sets fire to the thatch. He intends to roast the ducks alive and the characters with them.

If the characters are the attackers, their target (Asrela or Jezat) will stay behind a protective line of ducks, using spells. Jezat favours the Firebolt spell, while Asrela has the fearsome Hurl Javelin.

Note that the ducks are mercenaries and will not fight to the death if they can avoid it. Dhrek and his ducks are survivors and may be swayed by the offer of mercy or better pay. Jezat is especially vulnerable to being bought out, as he has very little gold on him and is hiring the ducks based on the promise that the Nineman will pay them. Characters hunting for Asrela could even retreat from the battle and report back to Hordred the Wyrmfriender, telling him that they followed the dissident to the duck farm where she tried to hire mercenaries.

All the ducks' statistics are on page 129.

Reporting Back: If the characters arrive at the farm after Jezat, they can keep going on to Solthmouth to retrieve the Bowl of Blood.

If they are chasing Asrela, they can either report back to Hordred that she was hiring mercenaries, or they can search her corpse and find the letter from Arkat and the bag of EWF gold.

If they are working for Asrela, she urges them to leave Noryar immediately, before the EWF investigates the failed attack on the farm (and, if the characters killed him, the death of Seran the Laughter).

Jezat, at last...

The renegade God Learner will beg not to be handed over to Rsadi. *'She does terrible things! Malkion have mercy, slit my throat now rather than let her lay a spell on me.'* He will tell the characters whatever they want to know, including the following:

- ◊ He stole the Bowl of Blood from Sky End Stead. It is an Orlanthi cultural artefact, one connected with the myth of the Death of Orlanth that Rsadi has been researching. According to the myth, Orlanth died in the battle with the dragon Sh'kaharzeel but was somehow returned to life.
- ◊ Yes, he betrayed the others at the Eyrie and murdered them. He was ambitious and foolish.
- ◊ The Nineman is a broker in magical artefacts who lives in a cave under Solthmouth. Jezat was so exhausted by the chase that he sent the Bowl onto the Nineman by messenger while he recuperated in the duck farm. He has spent the last week fleeing the characters, not to mention swimming in frozen rivers, clambering around cellars and caves and sitting inside a barrel of beer. That was the worst bit.
- ◊ He has a spell designed to break the magical protections of the secret shrine at Sky End Stead. He will give the characters a copy of this spell, if only they spare his life.

If the characters slay Jezat before capturing him, then one of the surviving ducks can tell them that the sorcerer hired some Orlanthi boy, Falkor, to ride south to Solthmouth with a bundle for the Nineman.

Victory Points

EWF: If the characters are able to find proof of Asrela's dissent, they get one Victory Point. If they find the letter from Arkat and the gold, they get another Victory Point.

God Learners/Orlathi: If the characters are able to hire the ducks, they get one Victory Point. If they kill Seran the Laughter, they get another Victory Point.

All: If the characters leave Noryar with the Billhook Brotherhood well disposed to them, that is worth another Victory Point.

Capturing Jezat this early in the game is worth four Victory Points to anyone.

Solthmouth

The growing town of Solthmouth has prospered in this Two Year Winter, as traders from across the bay land here to offload grain and other foodstuffs for the market of the EWF. It does not look like an Orlanthi town at all; it could be an outpost of some greater empire, with its walls and big townhouses and markets and temples to strange gods. Many of the people are soft and fat and none it seems are softer and fatter than the chieftain, **Aeldred the Fat**.

Some people call Aeldred the king, in fact – if King Androfin has ceded all claim on the Solthi valley to the Empire, they will have Aeldred as king instead! The chieftain has not accepted this title but many of the common folk seem willing to give it to him by acclamation. There are many Orlanthi warriors in town and relatively few EWF soldiers but there is no sign of any dissent.

The harbour is thronged with ships. Most are fishing boats and merchantmen but beyond them are a dozen large warships floating at anchor in the bay and flying Dragon Empire banners. They glow red and gold in the sun; the air is chill and crisp and the sea is calm.

Orlanthi: The most notable Orlanthi in town is obviously Aeldred the Fat, chieftain of the Laughing Rivers clan. There is no simple longhouse or traditional fort for him; no, a man of his... magnitude needs a full-scale castle of Pelorian design. He holds the allegiance of many warriors and thanes, and visitors to his court have come from as far afield as Esrolia and Dara Happa.

Intrigue in court is dominated by rumours about Aeldred and King Androfin. The King of Hendrikiland is opposed to further Wyrmfriend expansion and fosters the old ways and traditionalist forms of worship in his domain. Still, he has allied himself with the EWF to besiege the Clanking City. Androfin has – according to rumour – ceded the Solthi valley to the Empire and Aeldred has seemingly accepted the inevitability of bowing to the wyrmfriend hegemony.

Aeldred has a great many sons and daughters. His eldest son and acknowledged heir is **Aelholt**, also known as Aelholt the Thin.

EWF: The other great dignitary in Solthmouth is **Maralis the Orlanthi**, the renegade daughter of Aeldred. Before she ran away to join the dragons, Maralis was one of

Aeldred's favourite children. She and her estranged father have been closeted in council for the past few days and the fleet in the harbour has been taken as a sign that they have come to some agreement.

God Learners: The only God Learner of note in Solthmouth is **Cadamil**, whom Rsadi sent to investigate and intercept Jezat.

Others: Lurking in a sea-cave beneath Solthmouth is **Zugat Ate-Nine-Men**, a Dark Troll who has dwelt here for many decades. Zugat, called the Nineman by clients, is a broker in magical relics, talismans, runes and secrets. She has bargained with sorcerers and shamans and wizards in the past; the ongoing magical war between the EWF and the God Learners promises to be fantastically profitable for her but she has yet to make contact with suitable clients on either side. Jezat learned of the troll's existence but kept it a secret from Rsadi.

Events in Solthmouth

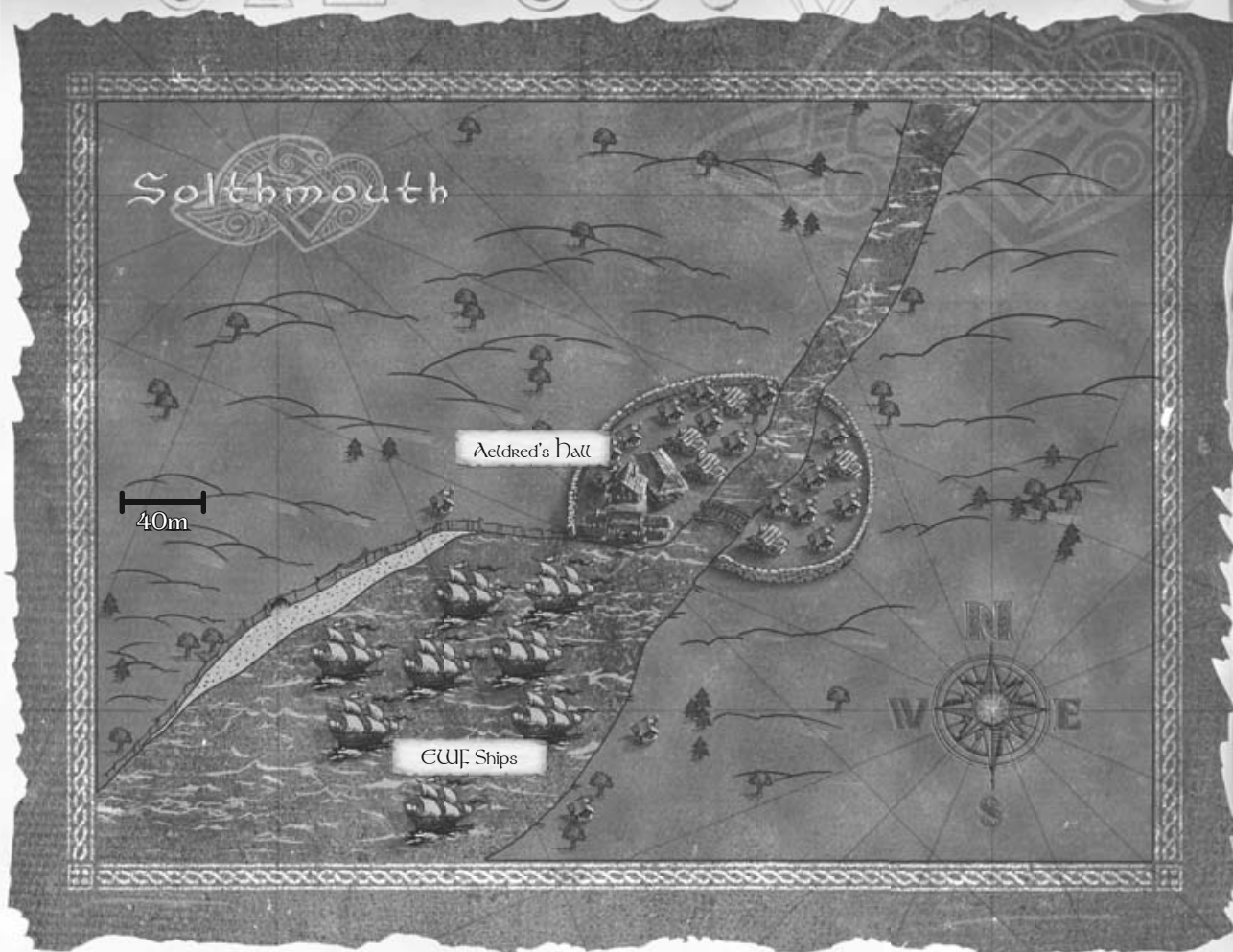
INTRODUCTION

The characters may wish to present themselves to the chieftain, as they have done in other settlements. However, Aeldred is a far more important and busy ruler than the petty lordlings and thanes from the upland steadings, so the characters will have to join a long queue of petitioners, supplicants, diplomats and spies. Solthmouth is apparently on the verge of submitting to the EWF, if those ships in the harbour mean anything.

If the characters wait to be presented and do not pull rank, they will sit in the rain outside Aeldred's castle for 2D4 hours before Aeldred finally finds the time to give them five minutes. If the characters want, they can attempt to use Influence to skip the queue and present themselves as emissaries of Chieftain Orgard of the Howling Wolves or as EWF officers (or, if they want to really risk exposure, as God Learners).

(EWF OR GOD LEARNERS) Aeldred the Fat

When outsiders finally get to talk to Aeldred, the corpulent chieftain welcomes them and offers them food (if they are EWF, he is especially generous but also a little mocking, saying that he has heard of the suffering and hunger in the north). If they ask about the current situation and the presence of the EWF ships, he will simply invite them



Along the Laughing River

to the feast that night to celebrate his daughter's return to Solthmouth and tell them that they should attend to whatever business they have in town first.

(Orlanthi) Aeldred The Fat

When presented to Aeldred, Orlanthi characters will be taken aside and brought into the chieftain's private chamber. There, Aeldred will question the characters closely, asking them their opinions of the villages upriver, especially the Howling Wolf ones and of what they have seen of the people. Are they accepting of the new religion or do they still cling to the old ways? How many now follow the Draconic Path?

Aeldred is probing for information about how much support he will get for his rebellion but the characters may interpret his questions as those of an EWF quisling.

If asked about his relationship with King Androfin, Aeldred will shrug his beefy shoulders and say that Androfin has done what must be done – the king is caught between the dragons and the machines and it is better for him to ally with the other foes of the Clanking City than to stay at war with the EWF. In hard times, kings and chieftains must make hard decisions, choices that are not always understood by the common folk – but Androfin is an honourable man and it has always been the prerogative of the Orlanthi to find ways to survive when all hope seems lost.

(EWF) Maralis

EWF characters will be brought to see Maralis the Orlanthi. She will greet them and question them about their adventures thus far. Her main aim in questioning the characters is to determine how honourable and trustworthy they are and how committed they are to the Empire of Wyrms' Friends. In a few hours, Maralis is going to betray the EWF and have

every Wyrms' Friend in Solthmouth killed – she wants to know now whether the characters are worth saving. If they strike her as being honourable, just and not too fanatically committed to the Draconic Way, she will secretly order the Orlanthi to spare their lives.

(God Learners) Cadamil

Cadamil, Rsadi's proxy warrior, has been in Solthmouth for a week. He investigates the Nineman when Rsadi is telepathically manipulating him and glories in his temporary freedom from Rsadi by getting very, very drunk at other times (as an added bonus, Rsadi can feel his hangovers through their bond). The characters will run into him if they visit any of the dockside inns. Cadamil's triple personality (his original, the committed Rightness Crusader; his current, the drunken sot; and the artificial, driven, perfect knight created by Rsadi) should shine through in his interactions with the characters. He switches from drunken maunderings about past campaigns in Umathela to being completely focussed on the problem of locating Jezat in an instant.

Cadamil has discovered that the Nineman lives in a cave near Solthmouth and while most people in the town know about her, few are willing to talk about her and none are willing to challenge her. Cadamil was waiting for the characters to show up before investigating further.

(EWF or Orlanthi) Tracking Down Jezat

God Learner characters will be told of the location of the Nineman's cave by Cadamil but other characters will have to make their own investigations.

Several hours before the characters reach Solthmouth, the sorcerer arrives in town and heads straight down to the shore. He sees the EWF ships at sea, panics and spends the next few hours clambering around the rocks and coves of the bay, looking for the Nineman's cave. The characters can track Jezat down by asking the locals and making a few

bribes; alternatively, they can get help from Aeldred or Maralis if they convince the rulers of the importance of tracking down the God Learner.

Eventually, all investigations should lead to the Nineman's cave. If the characters are able to get to Jezat ahead of time, they can ambush him as he enters the cavern; otherwise, they will have to deal with both the Nineman and Jezat.

The Nineman's Cave

The Nineman's cave is located on the coast, a short distance outside Solthmouth. It winds its way into the cliff-side and is partially flooded. At the entrance are several fishing nets and spears, as well as animal skulls and runes of warding and death, indicating that unwelcome guests should turn back. Inside, it is quite dark; the troll can see in the darkness and has no need for torches or magical illumination.

The Nineman lives with her three trollkin offspring, whom she treats as slaves. The three consider her to be their goddess and will drown themselves if she dies.

The main cave is crammed with junk of all sorts, from wreckage salvaged from ships to looted temple artefacts to scrolls to bones. There is little of worth here but buried under the debris is a sack containing Man and Communication runes, 350 silver pieces and a small talking statue that purports to be a relic of St. Gerlant. The statue can teach all the basic Sorcery spells (from the *RuneQuest Companion*) but cannot advance the skill of anyone who already knows them and intersperses its tuition with long lectures on Malkioni beliefs and proper behaviour. The Nineman also has a bag of gold on her, which will be used to pay for the Bowl of Blood if Jezat brings it. This bag contains 40 gold pieces.

Dealing With The Nineman: If the characters charge into the cave, swords swinging and spells blasting, the troll will fight back and do her best to kill them. The Nineman is a dangerous and canny foe, especially on her home ground.

Life After Jezat

If the characters manage to capture or kill Jezat in Noryar, the Bowl of Blood reaches Solthmouth in the hands of a young Orlanthi messenger named Falkor. The boy's body is found floating the harbour by Cadamil before the characters arrive; Falkor finds the Nineman and gives her the bowl, then the troll kills Falkor.

The characters can attempt to bargain with the Nineman for the return of the Bowl. She will accept either access to magical technology from the Clanking City, a promise of protection and aid from the EWF or at least 100 gold. The troll is quite amoral and will help the characters capture or kill Jezat if they agree to her terms.

Jezat, exhausted and crazed by the long pursuit, wants the troll to help him kill the characters far more than he wants



Along the Laughing River

that sack of gold coins. He will turn on the characters if it seems that they are persuading the Nineman to hand over the bowl, hurling Firebolt spells at them.

The Feast

Almost everyone in Solthmouth is invited to the feast; carls and other dignitaries can attend the feast proper, in Aeldred's castle, while the commoners celebrate on the streets with dancing and music. It is a celebration of many things: the end of the Dark Season and the coming of the storms; the return of Maralis to her home; life, even as this Two Year Winter seems determined to stretch into a third year with no end in sight. There is a wild mood on the streets of the port town tonight.

In the feast-hall in the castle, Maralis sits at her father's right hand. Her slim, athletic figure, dressed in the silken robes and bone-sung armour of the Dragon is quite a contrast to Aeldred's massive bulk but there is an undeniable facial

resemblance. There are several other EWF dignitaries present also, mostly philosophers, merchants and naval captains but few soldiers or guards.

EWF characters will encounter one familiar face during the feast – the dragonewt Right Word Now is lurking around wherever the characters are, his inhuman features hidden by the heavy cowl of a dark cloak. If the characters try to talk to him, he raises his fingers and gestures for silence – he is here to observe, not act, for the moment.

During the feast, Aeldred rises with great effort, lifts a wine cup and shouts, 'Friends! This is a happy day, a joyous day! My daughter has returned to me and we are united in a common cause, a common purpose.'

He hands the cup to Maralis, who also stands. 'My kin! Long have I been gone from the banks of the Laughing River! Long have I wandered in the north, among the Wym's

Friends, learning their ways, learning the new way of thinking and praying. I have fought their enemies, ridden the dragons, commanded their legions and stood in the heart of their ever-changing cities. Now, I come to Solthmouth with a fleet of ships, with many wyrmfriends and mystics and warriors. I come to you as Wyrms' Claw Initiate Maralis, the daughter of dragons.

But I was Aeldred's daughter first.

*I am Maralis the Orlanthi and like Arkaf of old, I learned the ways of my enemies – so I could destroy them! And I have learned this of dragons – **they burn!***

There is a series of titanic explosions from the harbour, as several of the EWF ships erupt in magical fire. The others are stormed by Orlanthi attackers. In the feast-hall, all is chaos as the Orlanthi draw swords and attack the unarmed Wyrms' Friends. Maralis herself leads the attack, first in the feast-hall, then out on the streets.

The rebellion has begun.

(EWF) The Escape

EWF characters have to flee through the streets – there is a huge mob of Orlanthi out for wyrmfriend blood. As they run, they encounter the cloaked figure of Right Word Now, who beckons them over. *'Those who do not embrace the dragon will be consumed by it,'* he hisses sadly, *'now come. Telektios will have need of you in the storm that is to come.'* He leads the characters to a rooftop and a trio of wyverns swoop down from the skies above and carry them away. The wyverns bring the characters to the Fifth Claw Holds The Untrammelled Wilds camp, where Telektios Ashbringer awaits them.

The characters may choose not to go with Right Word Now. If they stay and Maralis has decided that she can trust them, she will invite them to join her rebellion and the characters can play through the rest of the campaign as honorary Orlanthi. If Maralis has decided that she cannot trust the characters, they will be hunted down and killed unless they flee back to the Fifth camp.

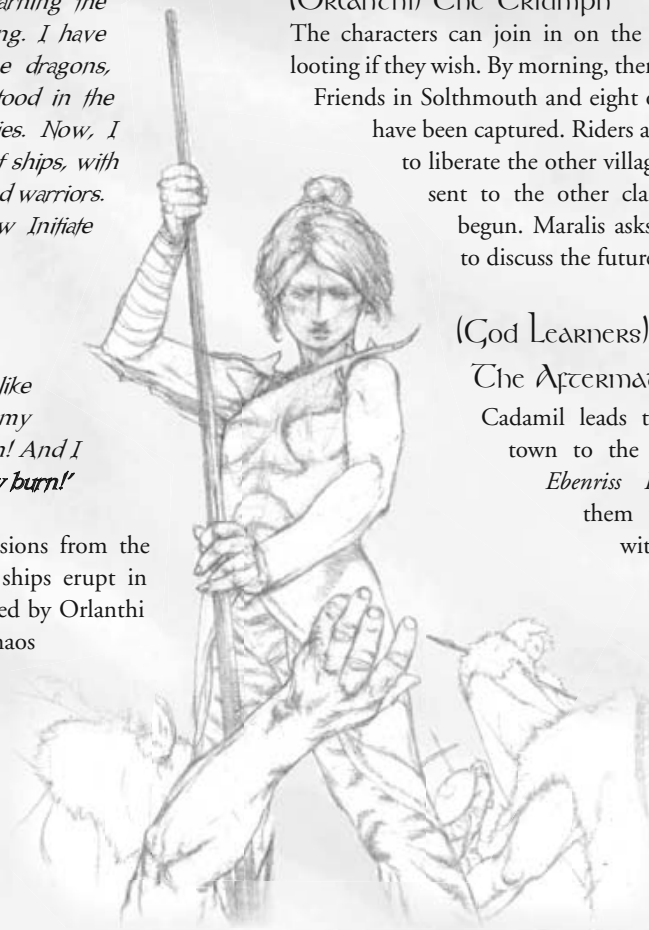
(Orlanthi) The Triumph

The characters can join in on the orgy of violence and looting if they wish. By morning, there are no living Wyrms' Friends in Solthmouth and eight of the twelve warships have been captured. Riders are already going north to liberate the other villages and word has been sent to the other clans that rebellion has begun. Maralis asks to see the characters to discuss the future.

(God Learners)

The Aftermath

Cadamil leads the characters out of town to the sea-coast, where the Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant picks them up. Rsadi is ecstatic with the news that the Orlanthi have rebelled – it will make her grand design all the easier...



Victory Points

All: Getting the Bowl of Blood is worth five Victory Points.

The Bowl of Blood

This relic of Orlanth is a humble wooden bowl, slightly stained from long use. It can cast the Divine spells Heal Body (magnitude 3) and True Spear once per day each. To be healed, the user must fill the bowl with pure river water and drink from it. The water picks up a slight reddish colour from the stains in the bowl, making it look like blood as it is drunk. To bless a spear, the bowl must be filled with pure river water and an initiate of a cult of Orlanth must ritually bless the weapon with water from the bowl. As with healing, the water gains a bloody tint during the ritual.

THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM

How We Learned To Hate

A dragonnewt parable:

A man asked a dragon, 'What is time?' and the dragon replied, 'the span of your life.'

An elf asked a dragon 'What is time?' and the dragon replied, 'the turning of the seasons.'

A dwarf asked a dragon 'What is time?' and the dragon replied, 'not enough.'

A troll asked a dragon 'What is time?' and the dragon replied, 'suffering.'

A dragon asked a dragon 'What is time?' and the dragon did not reply.

The rebellion of the Orlanthi clans in the Solthi Valley has begun. Aeldred the Fat and his allies have refused to submit to the Empire of Wyrms' Friends and their new way and have taken up arms against the dragon legions. Maralis, formerly a member of the Wyrms' Friends Empire, is the rebel's general, their champion and their icon. She knows the tactics and magics of the Empire and how to defeat them. The Orlanthi have a scant few hundred warriors against the dinosaurs, the dragons, the slave hosts and the potent spells of the Empire but they have courage and faith in their gods – faith in Orlanth Dragonslayer!

Behind the scenes, concealed by the storm clouds that gather over Dragon Pass, fly the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* and the sorceress Rsadi, agents of the Middle Sea Empire of the God Learners. They manipulate events in the mortal world, aiding the Orlanthi in their hopeless show of defiance, bringing the barbarians ever closer to the point when they will have to turn to the gods – and then, only then, will the God Learners strike.

Adding Up Victory Points

The Victory Points won by the characters in the previous chapters affect how successful the initial rebellion is. In each village, the characters have the opportunity to move the loyalties of the various villages one way or the other, strengthening the positions of the Empire or the rebels. God Learners and Orlanthi are both trying to undermine the Empire of Wyrms' Friends, so the more Victory Points they obtain, the weaker the EWF begins the conflict and the stronger the Orlanthi become. However, a high number of God Learner Victory Points means that the Orlanthi need more outside help, which the God Learners will be able to provide.

The characters' Victory Points determine where the early battles in the war take place and the first challenges they must deal with.

Victory Points Earned	Orlanthi/God Learners	Starting Rebel Warriors
0	Disaster. Maralis' rebellion has virtually no support beyond Solthmouth. Sunvale is crushed and captured by Ferule's patrol before the war even starts; Noryar & Deepwell support the EWF. In the north, Orlgard's chieftainship is challenged.	100+
1–5	Failure. Maralis gets little support. Sunvale is besieged; Noryar & Deepwell declares for the EWF. In the north, Orlgard's chieftainship is challenged.	150+
6–10	Partial Success. Maralis' rebellion gets support from the Laughing Rivers clan. Sunvale is besieged; Deepwell joins the rebellion, Noryar does not. In the north, Orlgard's chieftainship is challenged.	170+
11–15	Success. Maralis' rebellion gets support from the Laughing Rivers and other clans. Sunvale is besieged. Noryar and Deepwell join the rebellion. Orlgard's chieftainship is not challenged.	200+
16–20	Victory! Maralis' rebellion gets support from the Laughing Rivers and other clans and the fortress of Thunder Bridge joins her. Sunvale is not besieged. Orlgard's chieftainship is not challenged.	250+
21+	Complete Victory! Maralis gets wholehearted support from all the clans in the region and a wave of dissent flows north, throwing the EWF borderlands into chaos.	300+

Victory Points Earned	Empire of Wyrms' Friends	Rebel Warriors
0	Disaster. Maralis gets wholehearted support from all the clans in the region and a wave of dissent flows north, throwing the EWF borderlands into chaos.	300+
1–5	Failure. Maralis' rebellion gets support from the Laughing Rivers and other clans and the fortress of Thunder Bridge joins her. Sunvale is not besieged. Orlgard's chieftainship is not challenged.	250+
6–10	Partial Success. Maralis' rebellion gets support from the Laughing Rivers and other clans. Sunvale is besieged. Orlgard's chieftainship is not challenged.	200+
11–15	Success. Maralis' rebellion gets support from the Laughing Rivers clan. Sunvale is besieged; Deepwell joins the rebellion, Noryar does not. In the north, Orlgard's chieftainship is challenged.	170+
15–20	Victory! Maralis gets little support. Sunvale is besieged; Noryar & Deepwell declare for the EWF. In the north, Orlgard's chieftainship is challenged.	150+
21+	Complete Victory! Maralis' rebellion has virtually no support beyond Solthmouth. Sunvale is crushed and captured by Ferule's patrol before the war even starts; Noryar and Deepwell support the EWF. In the north, Orlgard's chieftainship is challenged.	100+

Successful EWF characters have convinced the barbarian tribes that the new way is superior.

The Rebellion and Rebel Warriors: At the very least, Solthmouth, Sunvale and several other settlements join Aeldred's rebellion. Maralis gets more or fewer warriors depending on how many Victory Points the characters have.

Noryar & Deepwell: These two villages could go either way. Noryar's populace has mostly converted to the new way but the characters' actions there may have inspired Asrela and her band of rebels to lead a rebellion. Deepwell leans towards the traditional but the strong personality of Vastyr Brightshadow may keep the Orlanthi there in line.

Sunvale: The rich town of Sunvale is key to the rebels' plans. In this Two Year Winter, control of food supplies will decide any conflict in the valley. Maralis does not have a chance of defeating the Wyrms Friends by force of arms alone – if she can draw out the war, though, and starve the attacking forces, she can make the war too costly for the enemy. Sunvale, with its rich farmlands and granaries, will make all the difference. Depending on how well the characters do, Sunvale may join the rebellion immediately, be besieged or even be conquered before the war begins.

Thunder Bridge: The Howling Wolf fortress of Thunder Bridge is also vital to the rebels' plans. Whoever holds Thunder Bridge can dictate movement in the central river valley and use the upper reaches of the valley as an unassailable bolt hole. The Orlanthi leader at Thunder Bridge, Donal Longtalker, is sympathetic to the rebels'

cause and may join with them immediately, depending on the characters' actions, or he may need further persuasion.

Sky End Stead, Urling's Ford and Orlgard's Chieftainship: Orlgard's chieftainship was put in peril when the Bowl of Blood was stolen. His ambitious nephew Theorl and his sister, the manipulative priestess Vinya would both like to see him replaced. It is possible that the characters may be able to push Orlgard's standing one way or the other in the eyes of his clan.

Orlanthi

Orlanthi characters at Solthmouth will be contacted by Aeldred's followers and asked to attend Maralis. They are led into Aeldred's hall; the bodies of the murdered Wyrms Friends have mostly been cleared away and Maralis has exchanged her bone-sung armour for traditional Orlanthi garb. She has been anointed by the temple of Vinga and her brow is marked with symbols of that cult. She explains to the characters that she and her father have been plotting against Wyrms Friend encroachment for some time and says that this Two Year Winter is their best chance to stop the dragon cult from engulfing all of Hendrikiland. King Androfin supports them as best he can and if all the warriors of the Solthi valley rise to aid them, they can draw a line against the wyrm here and now.

Maralis begs them to return to Sky End Stead and bring her greetings to the chieftain of the Howling Wolves and ask him to send his warband to Thunder Bridge. She

Troop Strength

The Howling Wolves have 70 warriors; the Laughing River clan has around 200, divided among the various settlements as follows:

Sky End Stead: 30

Urling's Ford: 15

Thunder Bridge: 25

Sunvale: 50

Deepwell: 20

Noryar: 30

Solthmouth: 100

Every one of these warriors has leather armour, helm, spear and sword; roughly a fifth also have horses or other riding beasts. Almost all have some magic – a

little Divine Magic, or an integrated Rune or just some unusually useful Folk Magic, and often a mix of all three. Many are formidable spellcasters in their own right. Depending on how successful Maralis' rebellion is, she will gain extra support from neighbouring clans and wandering Orlanthi. More will join as the war continues.

The Empire of Wyrms' Friends forces available to the Fifth Claw Holds The Untrammelled Wilds camp are as follows:

250 human soldiers

30 dragonwts

150 trollkin slaves

20 wyverns

100 dinosaurs of various breeds

intends to use that fort as the lynchpin of her defence of the valley. She urges the characters to ride back to Sky End Stead immediately, skirting around potential trouble spots like Noryar or Sunvale. She is mustering her forces at Solthmouth but the battles with the EWF will take place further up the valley.

The characters can get back to Sky End Stead without incident.

If the characters have the Bowl of Blood: They are greeted as heroes when they return to Sky End. They are feasted as best the Howling Wolves can afford and Orlgard brings the Bowl back to the secret shrine in the hills, where the characters are initiated into the Cult of Orlanth Martyr.

If the characters do not have the Bowl of Blood: Their return is much more subdued. Orlgard, in particular, looks like a broken man. He still brings the characters to the secret shrine to be initiated into the cult but he presides over the ceremony in a bitter, aggressive way, as if castigating the characters for their failure by showing them what they have lost.

The Initiation

The characters are brought to the secret shrine in the hills by Orlgard. The path leads through misty woods, where ancient carved stones loom from the shadows of the trees and the tracks of wolves can be seen in the mud. The path

ends on the shores of the Sky End Lake but – bizarrely, impossibly – there is now a small island in the centre of the lake, an island that is only *there* if you approach the lake from this hidden, sacred path. It is obvious that the characters are treading on the borderlands of the otherworld.

A small boat waits to take the characters across the lake to the secret shrine. As the characters cross the lake, Orlgard tells them the story of Orlanth the Martyr.

When Orlanth fought the Dragon, it wounded him with a terrible poison. He lay as one dead in the Deepwell Cave, until his followers found him and bore him to this island where Chalana Arroy herself brought healing magic. The spawn of dragon besieged the isle, hungry for revenge but Orlanth's warriors fought them off for three days and three nights. On the third day, Orlanth rose from his bed, his wounds healed and hurled the dragon's head into the heavens, where it rests to this day.

At this point, Orlgard points into the skies overhead, where the star of the dragon's head can clearly be seen.

This story teaches us that even gods may die. Life and death are two sides of the same coin now, ever since Humakt made a new thing and called it Death. We must risk all we hold dear, as Orlanth did. We must trust to the skills of our fellows and shield our brothers, as Orlanth did. And we must fight for life, as Orlanth did.

The boat reaches the island and Orlgard brings the characters to the stone bier at the centre. There, he bids the characters to lie down. He takes a stone flask from a chest and makes each of them drink a draught of some bitter liquid from it. Each character must immediately make a Resistance check against POT 50 poison. If the poison does not take effect fully, the character merely experiences mild lethargy of the limbs and a sense of weariness. Characters fully affected by the poison become paralysed and feel as if they are dying. It seems as though the night turns to day and again to night three times, the sun and the stars wheeling overhead.

Orlgard then asks the characters *'Do ye desire to live again?'* Presumably, they each answer yes and Orlgard asks them in turn *why* they want to return to life – what drives them, what have they left to do? When the characters answer, he bleeds them (into the Bowl of Blood, if the characters recovered it, or onto the ground if they did not), thinning their blood and undoing the effects of the poison.

The characters are now Initiates of the Cult of Orlanthi Martyr and get the associated benefits (see page 137).

Debts To The Witch of Ten Pines: If the characters owe debts to the Witch of Ten Pines, these must now be repaid. The first debt, the task of bringing the young girl called Goldhen to the witch, can be repaid easily. The girl's parents, Huan and Glorana, are simple farmers and are quite overawed by both the characters and the fabled Witch. The witch wants the girl before the next Sacred Time, so the characters have the whole of the Storm Season to persuade the parents to send her. The Witch wants the girl as an apprentice and servant; when the Witch dies, Goldhen will become the next Witch of Ten Pines.

The second debt can only be repaid if the characters retrieved the Bowl of Blood. If they did not, the Witch demands one of them serve her for a year and a day. This servitude, and the servitude incurred by the third debt, will take place after the campaign and what they involve is up to the Games Master.

The Council: See page 70 for details on the next actions of the Howling Wolves.

The next chapter assumes that the characters are fighting against the Empire of Wyrms' Friends, probably under Maralis' command.

God Learners

The *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* picks the characters up outside Solthmouth and soars north. The whole of the Solthi valley is laid out beneath them, from the sandy beaches to the thick forests and twisted hills. The ship carries them to the Eyrie to rendezvous with Rsadi the Wondrous. The sorceress is overjoyed with the prospect of a war between the Orlanthi barbarians and the EWF. The longer the God Learners can prolong it, the more they can learn about the barbarians' magic.

If the characters have the Bowl of Blood: Rsadi lifts the battered wooden bowl as if it were the heart of the holiest of Saints, in a reliquary of crystal and gold. *'Oh,'* she breathes, *'what a pretty thing is it. Simple, humble, not grand at all but in this vessel, a Goddess caught the blood of God...and we shall catch them both! You have done well – but this is but a fool. Next, we need a place to stand!'*

If the characters do not have the Bowl of Blood: Rsadi is upset but at least Jezat is dead. *'The bowl's just a fool. It would have made things easier, but the important thing is knowledge. Tell me, what have you learned of the Orlanthi? Do you know their secrets, their stories?'*

The Debate: While Rsadi examines the bowl and analyses whatever the characters learned on the journey, Erid and Cadamil discuss the coming war. Erid believes they should attempt to infiltrate the EWF and sabotage the Wyrmsfriends; Cadamil echoes Rsadi's plans to support the Orlanthi directly. Erid argues that the Orlanthi are barbarians who cannot hope to stand against the might of the EWF for long. Perceptive characters might be able to pick up on his increasing admiration for the Draconic Way.

Let the characters put forward their ideas and plans but Rsadi will quash any suggestions of infiltrating the EWF – she wants to avoid alerting Delecti the Inquirer, her old master. She orders the characters and Cadamil to prolong the war between the Orlanthi and the EWF for as long as possible by aiding the Orlanthi, buying her time to complete her preparations and research for storming the barbarians' myths.

For the duration of the war, Rsadi will remain in the Eyrie beyond Sky End Stead, studying the barbarians' myths and preparing to storm the Orlanthi Hero Plane. The *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* will fly around the valley, dropping the Player Characters off at places where they can aid the rebels.

exactly what Rsadi plans. She was never able to conceal her thoughts from me. Telekfios, the valley is yours. Conquer it as you see fit.'

Delecti walks out of the tent and vanishes. Ferule looks shaken; from the tone of his voice, Telekfios is absolutely furious but unable to speak against the archmage. The commander roars, 'We have a war to win! Maralis' rebellion must be crushed. Ferule, consider your strategies. Solfhmouf is mine. Go now!'

Ferule's Commands: Ferule tells the characters that he intends to use them as a quick-reaction squad to deal with problems. They have travelled through the valley; they know its terrain and the Orlanthi homesteads.

Minions, Resources and Fighting The War

In the next section of *Blood of Orlanth*, the characters will be heavily involved in the war between the two civilisations. As part of an army, the characters can get whatever non-magical weapons they need, along with armour, mounts and other such things. They can also get followers and guards – see Appendix I for statistics for common soldiers.



ASHBRINGER'S WAR

Violence is Always an Option

This is how a man fights for his home:

When the danger is little, it is the clan's warriors, the weaponthanes and the chieffain and his advisors, the clan ring, who go out to battle it. They fight the danger with swords and spells. When the danger is great, the clan's warband goes out to fight it. The warband is made up of the best warriors from each stead. When the danger is very great indeed, all the adults of the clan who can carry a spear or chant a battle-spell go to fight – this force is known as the fyrd. This only happens at the worst of times, when things are very, very bad indeed. Pray you never see such times.

In a battle, first comes the Chieffain's Fight. If the matter can be decided by the contest of champions, this is good. Next comes the warrior's fight, when the best warriors fight in groups. Then comes the warband's fight, when the two warbands try to break each other – and if that doesn't work, then everyone fights and most likely, everyone dies. One champion, a handful of weaponthanes, the warband, then the fyrd – at each step, a man will try to sacrifice as little as possible, because peace is better than war. We are a sensible people – better to lose the battle at the cost of a single hero than win the battle at the cost of every one of your brothers and sons.

Sorcerers do not fight. They skulk, and plot, and poison with words and spells.

*This is how a dragon fights: **with all-consuming fire.***

This section of the adventure covers the Player Characters' actions during the war for the river valley. If one looks at the map, the EWF forces begin at the Marzeel River and neutral Hendrikiland starts in the Syphon River valley. All the territory between those two borders is disputed between the EWF and the rebels. One way or another, the war will be over by the end of the Storm Season – **eight weeks from now.**

Lots of different battles and encounters are described in this chapter. Not all of these battles will be fought – the front lines will move back and forth, so some disasters will never happen. Other tragedies, though, are inevitable: Maralis the Orlanthi must perish for the third section of *Blood of Orlanth* to happen. The relative successes of the factions (God Learners, Empire of Wyrms' Friends and rebel Orlanthi) are tracked using Victory Points. The Victory Point total from the last section of the campaign carries over to this one.

In this section, the Victory Point total cannot go below zero or above 25.

The characters *gain* the listed Victory Points if the battle or encounter goes their way and *lose* the Victory Points if it goes against them.

The Empire of Wyrms' Friends has the edge in numbers and magic. Between the legions of slaves, the dinosaurs, the aerial squadrons of wyverns and the awesome power of Draconic Mysticism, fighting the EWF to a standstill is virtually impossible. Maralis' Orlanthi know the terrain of the valley and the dragon's tactics and they have the strength and magic of their Storm Tribe ancestry but they are still heavily outnumbered and outgunned. To reflect this, the Orlanthi and God Learners *lose* zero to three (1D4–1) Victory Points every phase and the EWF *gain* zero to three (1D4–1) Victory Points every phase.

Which Battles and Encounters Happen?

Just like the first section of *Blood of Orlanth*, some encounters are tagged as being only for one faction or another. So, an encounter may be marked as being entirely for (EWF) or (Orlanthi/EWF) or some combination. Alternatively, specific sections of an encounter can be so marked: for example, while any of the three factions can be involved in the Siege of Sunvale, the EWF besiegers will obviously be doing very different things to the Orlanthi defenders.

There are four phases to the war, each one lasting two weeks; at least one encounter will take place in each phase. Pick the most appropriate encounters from each phase for the group and their current situation. The actions of the Players should take precedence over the Victory Point totals – for example,

according to the charts, the rebels only attack the Fifth camp in the last phase of the war and then only if the Orlanthi have 21 or more Victory Points (which is exceedingly unlikely). However, if the characters want to lead a raid on the Fifth camp when the Orlanthi are losing the war, let them. The Games Master should increase the number of EWF defenders, though, as conditions do not favour such a bold assault.

Even if a particular encounter is not run for a particular group, it still happens elsewhere in the valley but the Victory Points for it are ignored.

Most encounters can only happen once. Encounters marked with a * can happen multiple times.

Several possible encounters are listed; run at least one in each phase and run extra ones if the scope of the campaign permits it. Where possible, let the Players drive the action – if EWF characters go out hunting for Orlanthi allies to intercept, run the encounter '*King Androfin's Gift*' even if it is out of phase.

The Course of the War

The Orlanthi tactic is to stall the EWF for as long as possible, harassing the Wyrmfriend forces from the forests and holding the twin strongholds of Solthmouth and Thunder Bridge. If the Orlanthi do well in the war, the EWF are gradually pushed back to the Marzeel river and the Orlanthi may even attack the Fifth Claw Holds The Untrammelled Wilds camp. If the EWF do well, the Orlanthi lose one village after another until they fall apart in clan rivalries and fear. On the fringes, the God Learners try to support the Orlanthi through a series of devious schemes.

The main Orlanthi stronghold throughout the war is Aeldred's town of Solthmouth but the battle there is a stalemate for many weeks. The Players will only rarely be involved in the siege of Solthmouth but it is a constant factor in the war.

Resolving Battles and Encounters

Most encounters will be resolved through the characters' actions as normal. The outcomes of larger conflicts, such as the clash of armies, can just be narrated by the Games Master based on the characters' earlier actions; for example, if the EWF Player Characters manage to kill an Orlanthi commander before the battle starts, the EWF forces beat the Orlanthi forces. If they do not manage to kill him, the barbarians beat the EWF.

(Any) The Howling Wolves Take Counsel

If the Player Characters are Orlanthi, run '*The Chieftain of the Howling Wolves*' first if that event has come up.

The clan ring of the Howling Wolves meet in Sky End Stead to discuss the war in the southland. Present at this council are Orlgard (if he is still chieftain), Theorl, Vinya, Forgo, Hralf of Urling's Ford and his son Hrulf and Donal Longtalker. If the characters are also friends of the Howling Wolves, they can attend the council.

Hrulf and Donal Longtalker both argue that the Howling Wolves should join the rebellion – the Empire of Wyrms Friends intends to force the Draconic Way on all the valley. Hralf thinks that religious wars have never been the Orlanthi way, that men should be allowed to worship as they would and that war would distract them from the more pressing matter of 'not starving to death'. Let those who would worship the dragon worship the dragon and those who would keep to the old way keep to the old ways. Hralf even suggests that the Howling Wolves could raid Sunvale for cattle, taking them up the Stair. Depending on past actions of the Player Characters, Vinya may support anything from a secret alliance with the EWF to joining the war, depending on what is best for her son Theorl. Theorl wants a chance to prove himself worthy of becoming chieftain.

Orlgard's decision will be based on the advice of his council. The Player Characters' words have a weight equal to their Victory Point total; the other people present have a weight of 10 points each. If the Player Characters do not intercede, the pro-war faction of Hrulf and Donal is outvoted by the anti-war group of Hralf, Forgo and Vinya. Donal declares that he will join with the rebellion anyway, regardless of Orlgard's wishes. The characters can use roleplaying or Influence to gather more support for their side.

Victory Points: Five

(Orlanthi) The Chieftain of the Howling Wolves

Synopsis: Orlgard is challenged by Theorl for leadership of the Howling Wolves.

Orlgard's standing has been damaged by the events in the valley, so much so that the clan loses faith in his leadership. When a chieftain is challenged in this fashion, a vote is

Phase One

The First Two Weeks of Storm Season; The Dragon Breathes In

Orlanthi/God Learner VPs...	EWV VPs...	Possible Encounters
Automatic		(Any) The Howling Wolves Take Counsel (Orlanthi/God Learners) God Learner Weapon Smuggling
0-5	21+	(Orlanthi) The Chieftain of the Howling Wolves (Any) The Siege of Sunvale (Any) The Battle of Deepwell
6-10	16-20	(Orlanthi) The Chieftain of the Howling Wolves (Any) The Siege of Sunvale (Any) Breaking Noryar
11-15	11-15	(Orlanthi) The Chieftain of the Howling Wolves (Any) Fortifying Thunder Bridge (Any) The Battle of the Crossings
16-20	6-10	(Any) Fortifying Thunder Bridge (Any) The Battle of the Crossings (Any) King Androfin's Gift
21+	0-5	(Any) Fortifying Thunder Bridge (EWV) The Rebellion Spreads* (Any) King Androfin's Gift

taken to decide who becomes the new chieftain. Every adult in the clan has a single vote; the vote is normally done by acclamation (everyone who supports one candidate shouts and the loudest shout wins). If there are two candidates who have roughly equal followers, a spearhead is cast into a basket by every voter and the candidate with the most spearheads in his basket wins.

Theorl begins the challenge, saying that Orlgard is too old and listing the chieftain's failings. Sacred relics have been stolen; bandits have attacked a house very close to the clan's temples; the other settlements barely pay attention to Sky End Stead and in this harsh winter, they need all the tribute they can get in order to survive. Theorl promises a new, more vigorous style of leadership and insists that he will not lead the clan into a futile war with the Wyrms' Friends. There will be no dragonfire in Sky End Stead.

Many believed that Donal Longtalker would oppose Theorl but he does not come to the council – he is going to take Thunder Bridge into the war no matter what. Unless one of the characters opposes Theorl or convinces Orlgard to stand once more, Theorl becomes chieftain. If a character does oppose Theorl or convince Orlgard to stand, the election is decided through a combination of roleplaying, an opposed Influence check between Theorl and the other candidate and the characters' Victory Points. Add the difference between their Influence check results to the character's Victory Points and give a bonus of up to 20 points for roleplaying. If the characters' total is 50 or higher, Theorl is defeated.

Victory Points: Three

(Any) The Siege of Sunvale

Synopsis: A running battle in the farms of Sunvale

Sunvale, surrounded by farms and green pastures, is the richest town in the Laughing River lands. The harsh Two Year Winter and the resulting lack of food mean that control of Sunvale's full granaries is a priority for both sides. As soon as the war starts, Ferule takes a detachment of 40 horse-mounted soldiers (EWV Cavalry, page 120) and five dragonnewts mounted on thunderers (triceratops dinosaurs), as well as a dozen renders (velociraptors, see page 121) and heads straight for Sunvale. If EWV



Phase Two

The Height of the Storm Season; The Dragon Reaches Forth Its Claw

Orlanthi/God Learner VPs...	EWV VPs...	Possible Encounters
Automatic		(God Learners) A Strange Visitor (Orlanthi) The Muster (EWV) The Power of the Dragon (Any) The Trollwood
0–5	21+	(Any) The Battle of the Crossings (Any) The Siege of Thunder Bridge (Any) Breaking Noryar (EWV) Draconic Justice
6–10	16–20	(Any) The Battle of the Crossings (Any) Air Superiority (Orlanthi/God Learners) Spreading Chaos (EWV) Draconic Justice (God Learners) Delecti's Horrors
11–15	11–15	(Any) The Battle of the Woods* (Any) Air Superiority (EWV) Draconic Justice (God Learners) Delecti's Horrors
16–20	6–10	(Any) King Androfin's Gift (EWV) The Rebellion Spreads* (God Learners/Orlanthi) Spreading Chaos (God Learners) Delecti's Horrors
21+	0–5	(Any) King Androfin's Gift (EWV) The Rebellion Spreads* (Orlanthi/God Learners) Crossing the Marzeel ¹ (Orlanthi/God Learners) Spreading Chaos (God Learners) Delecti's Horrors

¹It is necessary for the Orlanthi to take the fight to the EWV if they are to achieve the best possible outcome at the end of the war.

A Strange Visitor	Page 81	King Androfin's Gift	Page 80	The Howling Wolves	Page 70
Air Superiority	Page 85	Maralis' Death	Page 98	Take Counsel	
Attacking the Fifth Camp	Page 99	Maralis is Challenged	Page 94	The Muster	Page 81
Breaking Noryar	Page 75	Solthmouth Burns	Page 98	The Night of Fire	Page 99
Crossing the Marzeel	Page 90	Spreading Chaos	Page 86	The Power of the Dragon	Page 81
Delecti's Horrors	Page 90	Supply Worries	Page 97	The Rebellion Spreads	Page 80
Desperate Measures	Page 94	The Battle of Deepwell	Page 74	The Siege of Sunvale	Page 71
Draconic Justice	Page 87	The Battle of the Crossings	Page 79	The Siege of	Page 84
Dragons Are Like Cows	Page 97	The Battle of the Woods	Page 90	Thunder Bridge	
Erid's Betrayal	Page 91	The Breath of the Dragon	Page 88	The Trollwood	Page 82
Fortifying Thunder Bridge	Page 78	The Chieftain of the	Page 70	The Wedding	Page 93
God Learner	Page 77	Howling Wolves		The Wolf Time	Page 97
Weapon Smuggling				Vinya's Bargain	Page 96

Phase Three

The Storm Breaks; The Dragon Wakes

Orlanthi/God Learner VPs...	EWf VPs...	Possible Encounters
Automatic		(God Learners) Erid's Betrayal (Orlanthi) The Wedding (EWf) The Breath of the Dragon
0-5	21+	(Any) The Battle of the Woods* (Orlanthi) Maralis is Challenged (Orlanthi) Supply Worries (God Learners/Orlanthi) Desperate Measures (EWf) Vinya's Bargain
6-10	16-20	(Any) The Siege of Thunder Bridge (Orlanthi/EWf) Supply Worries (Orlanthi/EWf) The Wolf Time (EWf) Vinya's Bargain (God Learners/Orlanthi) Desperate Measures
11-15	11-15	(Orlanthi/EWf) Supply Worries (Orlanthi/God Learners) Spreading Chaos (Orlanthi/EWf) The Wolf Time (EWf/Orlanthi) Supply Worries
16-20	6-10	(Any) The Battle of the Crossings (Orlanthi/EWf) The Wolf Time (Orlanthi/God Learners) Crossing the Marzeel ¹
21+	0-5	(EWf) Supply Worries (EWf) The Rebellion Spreads* (Orlanthi/God Learners) Dragons Are Like Cows

¹It is necessary for the Orlanthi to take the fight to the EWf if they are to achieve the best possible outcome at the end of the war.

Phase Four

The Storm Ends; The Death of Dragons

Orlanthi/God Learner VPs...	EWf VPs...	Possible Encounters
Automatic		(Any) Maralis' Death
0-5	21+	(Any) Solthmouth Burns (Any) The Night of Fire
6-10	16-20	(Any) The Battle of the Woods* (Any) The Night of Fire
11-15	11-15	(Any) The Siege of Thunder Bridge (Any) The Night of Fire
16-20	6-10	(EWf) The Rebellion Spreads* (Orlanthi/God Learners) Dragons Are Like Cows (Any) The Night of Fire
21+	0-5	(Any) Attacking the Fifth Camp

characters are present, they can take Ferule's place and command the assault. There are around 50 Orlanthi warriors in Sunvale (10 scouts, 30 warriors and 10 honour guard, page 113).

If Orlanthi characters are present, they can aid Thandor Manysons and Hendrik in the defence of the town. Hendrik's stratagem is to post scouts outside in the woods to warn of the approach of the enemy. Most of his warriors will be waiting inside the town, behind a hastily-dug ditch filled with stakes to stop cavalry charges.

Approaching Sunvale: The EWF forces are spotted by Orlanthi scouts as they approach. The scouts attempt to draw the horsemen into the thickets of forest near the town, where the woodcrafty scouts can kill the Wyrmfriends. There are four trios of scouts in the woods. One scout is under orders to run to Sunvale to sound the alarm and gather the troops, while the other two harass and slow the enemy as much as possible.

If Ferule is in command, he orders the bulk of his forces to head straight for Sunvale. Players may adopt different tactics.

The Charge: When Ferule sees the staked ditch surrounding the town, he puts his dragonnewts on thunderers to the fore. The dinosaurs are so well armoured they can easily smash aside the stakes and collapse the ditch, opening a path into the town.

Once the ditch is breached, the rest of the cavalry follow, sweeping into the town. Hendrik and Thandor Manysons retreat to Thandor's longhouse with the surviving two dozen warriors and hold out there as long as they can. A pair of thunderers is set to smashing down the doors of the hall; once the door is breached, the dragonnewts are sent in to capture Thandor. He leaves the velociraptors in reserve, watched over by a few riders.

Fighting on the Streets: The battle is a bloody one, especially if any of the velociraptors get loose and start attacking the common folk. Ferule's priorities are to capture Thandor Manysons and Hendrik and to secure the granaries; if he cannot do these things, he will try to kill the Orlanthi nobles and burn the granary.

Victory Points: Five if the granary is captured; Three if it is denied to the enemy.

(Any) The Battle of Deepwell

Synopsis: The two sides clash over the small town of Deepwell, currently held by the EWF.

Vastyr Brightshadow has set up a vicious, oppressive theocracy in the village, backed up by 20 recently arrived EWF soldiers. Anyone who holds to the old ways is imprisoned in the Deepwell Cave until he admits the primacy of the Draconic Way. Brandig, the former leader of the community, has been imprisoned here, along with a dozen of his warriors. The Deepwell cave is guarded night and day by four heavily armed EWF elite soldiers.

Meanwhile, Galana the Blade's Child is attempting to infiltrate the Orlanthi, as per Telektios' orders, so she can get close enough to assassinate Maralis. She has disguised herself as an Orlanthi woman, Hara, and intends to free the prisoners in the cave in order to establish her credentials as an Old Way Traditionalist. While Telektios has approved this plan, the commander has kept it secret from others, including Vastyr and the Player Characters – he wants Maralis killed out of a desire for revenge.

EWF: EWF characters are assigned to help Vastyr keep order in Deepwell. They are in command of the occupying forces but the priest is technically their superior. During their time in Deepwell, they will face the following situations:

- ⦿ A man, Eran, clings to the Old Ways, refusing to let his children have their tongues split so they might learn Auld Wyrnish. His wife, Adana, is willing to do anything as long as it ensures her children get fed. She contacts the characters and asks them to take her children away and put them in Vastyr's care.
- ⦿ A group of youths deface an icon of Orlanth the Dragon hanging outside the temple. Vastyr wants the characters to punish the boys appropriately; he suggests scarring their faces.
- ⦿ A shipment of food from the Fifth camp arrives. There is barely enough for the EWF soldiers but a mob of hungry Orlanthi peasants gathers, demanding the magical bread of the dragons. What do the characters do?
- ⦿ The characters hear rumours that an Orlanthi priestess, Dagunda, is conducting ceremonies in the forest. This is true if Dagunda survived (see page 51); otherwise, it is a false rumour spread by Galana the Blade's Child in

her guise as Hara. Vastyr orders the characters to hunt down and make an example of this priestess. When the characters search the forest, they find a group of five Orlanthi peasants (plus Dagunda if she is still alive) worshipping at a hastily-made shrine. The peasants will not put up much of a fight, as Hara wants to be arrested and thrown into the Deepwell Cave.

- ⑥ A girl in the village, Deirdre, has awoken to her draconic nature and spontaneously breathed out a gout of flame. The flame set two houses alight. No one was injured but the people in the village, including her family, are now terrified of the girl and she has been threatened and struck by her neighbours. She is terrified by these changes. Vastyr, on hearing about this, thinks that Deirdre should immediately be taken from her home and brought to the temple so she might meditate on her draconic evolution further.
- ⑥ A band of six Orlanthi warriors tries to break into the Deepwell Caves to free the prisoners there. The Orlanthi warriors creep into the village at night, cross the river and attack the guards. Their rescue plan is a simple one – kill the guards, open the cave, then run for the hills under cover of darkness.

Orlanthi: Orlanthi characters are sent by Maralis to free Deepwell. The village is only lightly defended by the Empire of Wyrms' Friends, so a small group of heroes should be able to topple the draconic rule there. When the characters arrive at Deepwell, they soon discover that those who oppose the EWF are being imprisoned in the caves and that all dissent is crushed by the 20 soldiers under Vastyr's command.

Orlanthi characters in Deepwell may get involved in any of the first four encounters described in the EWF section above. They also face their own unique challenges:

- ⑥ One of the EWF soldiers, Calar, is sleeping with an Orlanthi woman named Brilda. The other Old Ways Traditionalists frown on this relationship but the pair are genuinely attached to each other. Brilda is likeable and kind but the characters will need to deal with Calar if they are going to free Deepwell.
- ⑥ The relics and treasures from the temples to the Storm Tribe gods have been plundered and piled in the new Draconic temple. They must be stolen back!

- ⑥ Brandig and a dozen of his warriors are imprisoned in the Deepwell Caves. There are four guards watching over the cave entrance. How can the characters free the Orlanthi prisoners?

God Learners: God Learners face the same challenges as the Orlanthi, with one added factor – Rsadi really wants to get a good look at the carvings in the Deepwell Cave (see page 51), as she believes they are important to her researches. She will permit the characters to bring the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* into Deepwell to deal with the EWF garrison if they need the flying ship's firepower.

Victory Points: Three if Deepwell stays in EWF hands/ is liberated; Two if Galana the Blade's Child manages to infiltrate the Orlanthi forces.

Seran the Laugher

If the despotic EWF soldier Seran the Laugher survived the previous section, the Player Characters will be told that he was knifed to death in his bed by a servant on the night the rebellion began. In fact, he left Noryar to ride off and conquer Solthmouth with his personal bodyguard. He barely made it a mile down the road before being defeated by a gang of barbarians. His bodyguards were slain; Seran fled into the woods and may show up again in the encounter *'King Androfin's Gift'*.

(Any) Breaking Noryar

Synopsis: Noryar has converted wholly to the Draconic Way and not joined the rebellion. Its position close to Solthmouth makes it a vital asset to the Wyrmfriend forces and a knife pointed at Aeldred the Fat's throat.

All three sides in this conflict need to seize the initiative if they intend to hold Noryar. The town is lacking in defences. Except for a few shallow ditches and unimpressive fortified houses, Noryar is open to attack and the fallow or empty fields around it offer to impede the march of enemy forces.

Knowing the importance of holding Noryar and so dividing the rebel's stronghold of Solthmouth from the north, Telektios sends his fastest troops to seize the town – a flight of ten wyverns, each bearing a pair of EWF elite soldiers. These 20 EWF troops have been ordered to hold

The Wall of Impenetrable Fire

The Wall of Impenetrable Fire comes in the form of ceramic dragon-shaped jars, each of which has an ivory stopper in its mouth. Each jar contains a viscous, glowing liquid that resembles liquid fire. Removing the stopper allows a very thin stream of this substance, which can be used to mark a line, to drip out of the jar. If a ring or other closed figure is drawn with a line of the liquid, it catches fire and creates a wall of flame three metres high and one metre thick. Anything that passes through this flame takes 3D6 fire damage to all locations.

The fire is sustained by prayer energy. Every hour, Magic Points must be paid by those within the fire. If these points are not spent, the flame begins to diminish. The number of points to be spent varies depending on the size of the area enclosed by the Wall.

Area Enclosed	MP cost per hour/per day
Very Small (single room)	5/120
Small (Small Enclosure)	10/240
Average (Large House)	15/360
Large (Castle or Fort)	25/600
Very Large (Village)	50/1,200
Huge (City)	200/24,000

There are around 200 people in Noryar. Given it takes eight hours of sleep to restore a person's Magic Point total to full, there are more than 1,200 Magic Points available in the town each day – but not everyone is loyal to the Wyrmfriends...

The ceramic jar is the focus for the prayer energy used to sustain the Wall. Those providing the Magic Points must meditate and focus on the jar. If the jar is broken, the wall fades.

the town against all attackers and have brought with them an experimental alchemical weapon to aid their efforts – the Wall of Impenetrable Fire. EWF characters who are placed in command of this operation will be briefed by Telektios on the use of the Wall.

The EWF plan proposed by Telektios is for the wyverns to land outside Noryar and hastily draw a fiery fence around the whole town. The village then holds out, safe behind the fire, until EWF soldiers arrive from the Fifth Camp to reinforce the town and cut off Solthmouth.

Meanwhile, Maralis knows about the Wall of Impenetrable Fire and sends agents north to deal with it. If the Player Characters are involved, she sends them; otherwise, her agent is her younger brother, **Aelrik**. Her agent is ordered to get into Noryar and destroy the jar if the Empire succeeds in establishing the Wall.

Drawing the Wall: As soon as the rebellion begins, Maralis sends a group of 40 warriors north from Solthmouth to seize Noryar. They arrive in the farms outside the town around the same time as the wyvern riders do. Battle ensues – the EWF try to hold off the Orlanthi while the Wall of Fire is drawn.

One of the EWF wyverns flies off to draw the ring around the town, while the others battle the Orlanthi. Drawing the ring requires 10 successful Riding or Throwing tests; each test takes one minute to complete. If the Wall is drawn, the wyvern riders retreat into the town. If the Orlanthi succeed in stopping the Wall, the battle turns to fighting on the streets of Noryar.

The Fiery Siege: If the Wall is drawn, the EWF need to hold out until reinforcements arrive. It will take four days for the reinforcements to arrive from the Fifth camp.

For EWF characters, the challenge here is motivating the people of Noryar to channel their psychic energy into the ceramic jar to keep the wall burning. The Orlanthi leader Hordred Wyrmfriend can help them rally the people but the characters must convince him of the rightness of their cause first. Hordred is caught between his personal belief in the rightness of the Draconic Way and his oaths to his brother Aeldred. He wants to believe in dragons but the thought of his brother and his family being executed for treason gives him pause. He is especially furious and ashamed by how Maralis has betrayed the Empire and wants to know how his favourite niece, that cherished child who made him so proud by joining the EWF, could have turned against the Draconic Way.

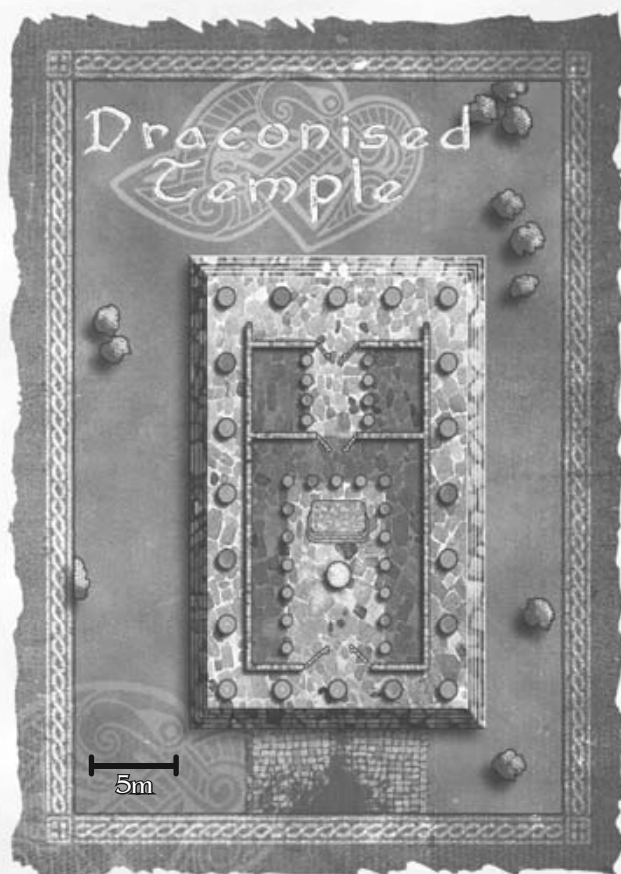
The common people are confused and terrified; those who believe in the new way will look to the EWF characters for guidance and leadership, while those who hold to the old way will look to Orlanthi characters or to Asrela. The characters will need to organise some sort of rota to keep the Wall sustained.

If Asrela survived the earlier events in Noryar, she has since gathered her few allies and attempted to purge the town of EWF agents. If the Billhook Brotherhood survived, she has

recruited them and brought them into the town. If she is dead, the characters still have to contend with Aelrik. Both Asrela and Aelrik will try to spread dissent and rumours, whispering that the rebels will take Noryar before the EWF soldiers can reach the town.

Under normal circumstances, there are enough Magic Points available from EWF sympathisers in the town to sustain the Wall for 1D3 days. If the characters manage to capture Asrela/Aelrik, add a +1 to this total. Convincing Hordred of the rightness of the Draconic Way is worth another +1 to the total. If the Wall holds for four days, the characters have held Noryar.

Orlanthi or God Learner characters trapped inside Noryar can do the opposite – they can try to spread belief in the Old Ways or at least spread doubt in the Draconic Way. Bringing up memories of the hated Seran the Laugher is a good strategy. They can also try to get to Hordred and convince him to oppose the EWF.



Sabotage: The ceramic jar must be placed somewhere in the heart of Noryar, where it can be prayed over by the common people. The obvious place to keep it is in the Draconic Temple, watched over by the priest Faeltris the Healer but EWF characters may prefer to put it somewhere safer. Faeltris suggests putting a wyvern or two to watch over the jar.

Asrela's tactic, if she is still alive, is to storm the temple with a mob of traditionalists (or with the ducks, if they are still alive). Aelrik's tactic is to persuade his uncle Hordred to bring Aelrik in as a servant, giving him a chance to smash the jar.

Victory Points: Noryar is worth four Victory Points.

(Orlanthi/God Learners) God Learner Weapon Smuggling

Synopsis: Rsadi the Wondrous attempts to ingratiate herself with the rebels by providing them with advanced Zistorite weapons.

The First One Is Free... If the Player Characters are God Learners, Rsadi orders them to make contact with a suitable group of Orlanthi and make them an offer – the Middle Sea Empire will tacitly support the Orlanthi's bid for religious and cultural freedom with advanced Zistorite weapons. The Player Characters must choose one of the Orlanthi leaders and convince him to accompany the characters back to the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant*. The flying ship will then go south to the fabled Clanking City and collect these weapons.

If the characters are Orlanthi, they are sent by Maralis or Theorl (who has been contacted by the God Learners) and ordered to meet someone named Cadamil at a high peak in the forest. Cadamil claims to be able to aid the rebels; the characters are to investigate this offer and decide if it is worth the risk.

The Flight South: If the Orlanthi representatives agree to fly south, the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* descends from the sky and picks them up. The *Hawk-Exultant* soars over the thick forests and mist-shrouded hills of Hendrikiland, then rises above the clouds as it crosses into the Bay. A few day's flight brings the archipelago within view – and the characters get their first glimpse of the siege of the Clanking City.

The Clanking City: The machine city is fully detailed in the *Clanking City* sourcebook and Games Masters should refer

to that if the characters spend more time in Zistorwal. The city is besieged by an alliance of many peoples, including the Empire of Wyrms' Friends and the armies of King Androfin. From the skies, the characters can see elements of this siege – dream dragons and wyvern bombers, dinosaur riders and hosts of rune-wielding barbarians, troll armadas and bizarre fire-hurling siege engines. A magical force shield protects the city from assault. It flares actinic blue when missiles strike it and requires an incredible amount of magic to maintain but the shield has held proof against the weapons of half-a-dozen races for months, while the Zistorite weapons rain down fire on the besiegers.

Arriving in the Clanking City is a bizarre experience for Orlanthi characters (and can be quite disturbing even for citizens of the Middle Sea Empire). Sprawling machine-factories of steel and rune-etched brass constantly clatter and churn, building *themselves*. The common people live in terraced houses of brick and iron in the shadow of the mechanical colossi. The sound of gears drowns out the noise of the siege. The air tastes of blood and iron and sulphur and electricity. There are Zistorite machines everywhere and many of the people have mechamagical implants – artificial limbs, crystal eyes, silver plates implanted in chests or skulls.

After landing, servant-machines and engineers swarm around the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* as the city welcomes back its beloved child-ship and repairs any damage she has suffered. A strange figure waits at the dock, a man who is also a beautiful machine. This is Shingallion, the Mech-Lord of the Clanking City (see *Magic of Glorantha*, page 94). He is the most 'enhanced' Zistorite in existence, having converted over 90% of his human body into mechanical parts. He has removed his heart and replaced it with a clockwork engine; his mind is a thing of crystal and light and sparking electricity. He speaks in cold, passionless tones, like the ringing of a silver bell. The decision to supply Zistorite weapons to the Orlanthi rebels was one taken by the God Learners in distant Jrustela and was made without consulting the Mech-Lord. Shingallion is unwilling to give weapons to the barbarians – after all, King Androfin is part of the alliance besieging the city. To illustrate this, Shingallion drives the characters in a horseless carriage to the walls of Zistorwal so they can see the siege up close. He then demands that the characters justify *why* the Zistorites should aid them.

Shingallion asks the God Learners why they think he should aid these particular barbarians. Can they give

him a guarantee that the weapons will not be turned on the Clanking City? What if the weapons fall into the hands of the Empire of Wyrms' Friends? If the characters try to abstain from taking responsibility by saying they are just following Rsadi's orders, Shingallion asks them if they trust Rsadi.

Shingallion asks the Orlanthi about their relations with King Androfin. The barbarian King has apparently given up any claim on the Solthi Valley to avoid disrupting the alliance against the Clanking City – but surely this is base barbarian trickery! Can the Orlanthi characters swear that the weapons will never be turned on Zistorwal? Will they abjure any loyalty to King Androfin?

If the characters are able to convince Shingallion of their trustworthiness, he orders that weapons be loaded aboard the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant*. Most of these weapons are 'simple arcane augmentations – ever-sharp swords, lightning javelins, imperishable armours'. Shingallion also offers the characters a free mechamagical implant each, which he will personally install before they return to the war. If the Games Master does not have that book, assume that an implant can give a +10% bonus to any one skill or a +2 to any one statistic. The characters can also take any one of the items described on page 46 if they have not already obtained such a boon.

Victory Points: If the characters succeed in convincing Shingallion to give them the weapons, they receive five Victory Points.

(Any) Fortifying Thunder Bridge

Synopsis: The Orlanthi prepare the ancient fort of Thunder Bridge for the coming war. EWF agents can spy on these preparations.

Thunder Bridge is almost unassailable from the ground. To the east and west lie broken, rocky hillsides choked with thick woods and undergrowth. A man might be able to hack his way through this terrain but there is no way an army could get through. The only easy approach is up the cliffs via the Stair – but anyone climbing the Stair can be pelted with boulders, javelins and arrows from the fort at the top.

From the air, though, is a different matter. The ring-fort was built to resist raiders, not dragons or flying foes and the EWF controls the air with its dinosaurs and wyverns. Donal Long-Talker has long considered this problem and

as the leaders of the rebellion gather at Thunder Bridge, he puts his plans into action. The fortifications of Thunder Bridge involve five separate parts:

- ⑥ There is a secret path through the woods to the west. This path leads through the Trollwoods. If the fort is to be secured, this path needs to be hidden. Characters may volunteer to go through the woods and conceal or block the path, which leads onto the encounter of *'The Trollwood'* (see page 82).
- ⑥ Secondly, one of the walls of the old fort is weak and crumbling and must be rebuilt. In the Two Year Winter, there were more pressing matters to attend to than fixing the fort, so hasty repairs must be made now. If the EWF were to learn that one wall of the fort was weaker than the rest, the fort would be compromised.
- ⑥ Thirdly, Donal has several initiates and priests of Orlanth and he wants them to prepare the Flight divine spell (see *Cults of Glorantha volume I*, page 84). To aid their meditations, the priests need an Air rune. If the characters have such an item, the priests can prepare their spells. If they do not, Donal knows where there is a griffon nest containing such a rune. The griffon nest is atop a tall, jagged outcropping in the forest and the characters will need to somehow defeat or trick the pair of adult griffons to get to the nest. Griffons are described on page 114 of the *RuneQuest* rulebook.
- ⑥ Next, Donal needs to reinforce the fort's defences. Boulders and javelins are lined up on the wall of the fort, as well as pots of boiling oil. The warriors of Thunder Bridge are made to train with these weapons every day. Bags of caltrops are prepared, to be scattered on the Stair should they be needed.
- ⑥ Finally, Donal wants to awaken the magic of the two carved gods flanking the stair. The Twin carvings depict Humakt and Issaries. Issaries' presence emphasises the nature of Thunder Bridge as a crossroads for trade; Humakt is there as a warning to those who would bring war up the Stair. Both carvings are magically potent but their power has not been evoked for generations and is said to carry a heavy cost. Donal calls for volunteers who are willing to climb down the cliffs and activate the carvings. Doing so requires a Hard (−40%) Athletics check to reach the carved image, followed by the volunteer spending 1D6 points of permanent POW.

The carving of Issaries gives the benefits of the Trade rune to all those who dwell at Thunder Bridge, so long as the person who activated the carving is present. The carving of Humakt gives the benefits of the Death rune. Furthermore, the person who activated the carving can see through the carving's eyes at will. These benefits last until the next Sacred Time.

EWF characters can observe the preparations or attempt to sabotage them.

Victory Points: +1 per preparation made or prevented.

(Any) The Battle of the Crossings

Synopsis: The battle lines are drawn on the Solthi River.

The Fifth Claw Holds The Untrammelled Wilds camp lies to the west of the river; most of the farmlands and settled places are to the east. With Solthmouth solidly in rebel hands and the upper stretches of the river impassable due to the speed of the current, the fords south of Sunvale become important. If the Orlanthi can hold the crossing, the river becomes the dividing line between Orlanthi and Dragon territories.



A direct confrontation of this sort favours the Empire but the Laughing River clan intend to call upon the spirit of the river, Siama, to even the odds a little.

To capture the crossing, Telektios sends 50 EWF soldiers supported by a dozen dinosaurs including a captive Death King (tyrannosaur) commanded by Right Word Now (see page 123) himself. If the characters are assigned to this duty, the command of the force falls to them. Otherwise, the dragonnewt Right Word Now commands.

Opposing the EWF is an Orlanthi force of 10 Orlanthi Warriors and 20 farmers (Commoners), with no clear leader unless the Player Characters take charge. They have many small canoes and rafts and plan to shoot arrows at the EWF as the enemy tries to cross the river. A Laughing River holy man called Toe-In-The-Water is hiding on the east bank, trying to summon up Siama. Each round, there is a cumulative chance that he is able to cause a sudden flood. This chance rises by 1D6% each round. The Orlanthi plan, such as it is, is to keep the EWF fighting in and around the ford until Toe-In-The-Water's spell goes off. Spotting Toe-In-The-Water requires getting across to the east bank and making a successful Perception test to spot the strange, muddy figure crouched in the reeds.

If the characters met the spirit Siama earlier in the adventure, she may manifest, drawn by Toe-In-The-Water's spell. Depending on their previous interactions with her, this may augment or damage Toe's spell. If the spell goes off, anyone in the river must make a Boating or Hard (-40%) Athletics check to avoid being swept away. The difficulty of this check rises by 10% each round, to a final difficulty of -100% as the river suddenly surges. Toe-In-The-Water is carried away, drowned by his beloved river.

Victory Points: Four

(Any) King Androfin's Gift

Synopsis: Despite his public decree that he has renounced the Solthi River valley, King Androfin secretly supports the rebellion and the establishment of a buffer state against the EWF on his northern border. Therefore, he sends many of his warriors to serve Maralis. If it is discovered that these are King Androfin's men, events will go very badly for him.

Some 200 well armed Orlanthi warriors (some with mail and spears, others with weapons looted from downed

Zistorite war machines or slain EWF dragonnewts) cross the backwards-flowing Syphon River and march towards the Laughing River lands, towards the rebellion.

Orlanthi/God Learners: For these factions, this is an easy encounter. King Androfin's men, led by a famed warrior named Harp the Dragonkiller, arrive at some place in the southern valley – Sunvale, Deepwell, Noryar or Solthmouth, wherever the characters happen to be – possibly in the nick of time to save the day or win a battle. Harp is a mercurial figure, capable of great mirth and great sorrow. He laughs as he chops off heads and composes elegies on the lyre to his fallen foes.

EWF: If the EWF Player Characters are anywhere in the southern valley, they can be drawn into this encounter. A bedraggled, haggard, starving figure lurches out of the forest and confronts the characters. It is Seran the Laughter, whom they may have encountered in Noryar a few weeks earlier. Back then, Seran was an arrogant, cruel warlord; now, he is on his own and running from the barbarians.

He tells them, once given food and drink, that he has been on the run since his bodyguards were killed by rebels in Noryar. Depending on where this encounter takes place, he may have run in completely the wrong direction to get back to the Fifth Camp. He does have one piece of useful information – he saw a large band of Orlanthi soldiers marching up from the south-east. They did not seem to be rebels but he cannot be sure. He urges the characters to help him investigate.

Sneaking up on King Androfin's men is not easy. They are all experienced warriors. They have scouts moving ahead of their main column, post watches at night and so forth. If the characters manage to gather information about these new warriors, they can overhear conversations between guards or spot clan tattoos and symbols.

Victory Points (EWF only): One point for discovering that the new warriors are from King Androfin; another point if they bring undeniable proof back to Telektios, which he can pass onto the EWF.

(EWF) The Rebellion Spreads

Synopsis: Emboldened by the success of Maralis' rebellion, other recently converted Orlanthi clans revolt.

The Player Characters are not involved in this encounter but they will hear about it – loudly – from Telektios. Word

is coming in of more Orlanthi rebellions on the edges of Dragon Pass. Regions who recently knelt before the Dragon are now rising up once more, rekindling the traditionalist worship of Orlanth and the other gods. While such... throwbacks are not unheard of, this wave of rebellion was definitely inspired by Maralis' defiance.

Other armies are putting down these rebellions before they spread, so reinforcements to deal with the situation in the Solthi valley are limited for the moment.

Victory Points: None

(God Learners) A Strange Visitor

Synopsis: While aboard the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant*, the characters receive a strange visitor. This encounter can take place elsewhere but it is especially effective on board the flying ship.

The characters are on board the *Hawk-Exultant*, recovering from wounds or studying the progress of the rebellion, when they hear a knock at the window... while the ship is in flight. Floating calmly outside is a stern-featured man; bald, with a beard and moustache and dressed in an ornate jacket and dragonhide boots. He gestures for the characters to open the window and let him in but this is a mere courtesy – Delecti the Inquirer is quite capable of swatting the ship from the sky.

If the characters attack Delecti, he does just that, temporarily disrupting the magical field that allows the ship to fly, sending the *Hawk-Exultant* plummeting down. He cancels his spell before it hits the ground, then returns to the characters, confident that he has their attention. If the characters summon Rsadi, she counsels caution but is willing to talk to her old mentor; if Delecti was hostile, he would be throwing spells already.

'Good evening,' says the sorcerer-lord, *'you have heard of me. I am Delecti. I bring you a gift.'* He produces the Bowl of Blood and hands it to the nearest character.

Delecti *wants* Rsadi's plot to succeed – to a degree. He wants the God Learners to penetrate the secrets of the myth of Orlanth the Martyr; he wants the Hero Plane opened, because he can turn it to his own ends, as will be seen in the last section. The Players will no doubt mistrust Delecti's intentions but the sorcerer does not care. To him, the Player Characters are just tools.

Once the characters accept the Bowl, Delecti says *'My friends will not permit the barbarians to cling to the old ways. If you try to stop us, my friends will destroy you. I have given you what you need to meddle in the world of myth – let reality attend to itself.'* He then departs as calmly as he arrived.

Victory Points: None

(Orlanthi) The Muster

Synopsis: The Orlanthi warriors gather at Thunder Bridge and Solthmouth.

Ever since the call to arms went out from Solthmouth, the clans of the valley have been gathering their forces. Men have taken their spears from where they hang on the wall and girded themselves in armour. Old men shake off the weariness of long years and go to war. Young men, eager to prove themselves, grip their spears with sweat-slick hands. Experienced warriors, veterans of a hundred raids and petty wars, look warily to the skies and watch for dragons. Runes of war and death are taken from hiding places and secret chests, their dread power awakened once more.

They gather at Solthmouth and at the fortress of Thunder Bridge. This is the first time Orlanthi characters will be able to see just how many allies they have. It is also an excellent opportunity to distribute any Zistorite weapons obtained earlier.

Optionally, this is a time for the characters to get to know Maralis better. Ideally, she is drawn to one of the male characters; Maralis has been effectively trapped inside the Wyrms' Friend Empire for years and she has gone from there to a bloody war. She has had no time to be herself in a long time and a strong, sympathetic Orlanthi man to remind her of the old ways would be welcomed. Having one of the characters in a relationship with Maralis will also make the third section of *Blood of Orlanth* much more resonant.

Victory Points: None

(EWF) The Power of the Dragon

Synopsis: The EWF prepares to crush the upstart rebels in the Solthi River valley.

While the characters are in the Fifth Camp, they hear the sound of thunderous leathery wings beating. A shadow passes over them, then another and another and another. Dream dragons and wyverns are descending from the sky all around the camp. Soldiers dismount from the backs of the dragons

and form into ranks. Siege weapons and strange creations of dragonbone and congealed blood are unloaded and readied. An extra 200 soldiers have been sent to reinforce the camp.

Ferule approaches the characters and tells them that Telektios wants to see them in his tent. As usual, half the tent is shrouded in magical darkness, while the near half is brightly lit by the winter sunlight streaming in from outside. Telektios Ashbringer bids the characters and Ferule to sit and outlines his plans for winning the war.

'Maralis has betrayed us – not because she rallies our foes against us, or because she knows our tactics or our numbers but because she has denied the primacy and truth of the Draconic Way.' Telektios' deep reptilian voice seems hesitant, almost shocked. *'This is the battle we must win – not the battle of fire and swords, that victory is certain. The Orlanthi cannot stand against the forces at our command. No, it is the battle of belief we must win. We must show the barbarians that the old ways are flawed and wrong, that Maralis turned her back on a better way out of cowardice or misplaced loyalty or foolishness. We must show them that our way is better than theirs'*

'And if they do not understand, then we shall burn them.'

Telektios' eyes focus on Ferule for a moment. 'Wyrms' Claw Initiate Ferule Stonebreaker is a blunt instrument. Thus far, we have concentrated on smashing the rebellion, dividing them, holding what towns are loyal to us and besieging the others. This is good – strength is a virtue of the dragon.'

'But you must be more than a blunt instrument. You must demonstrate wit and fire.'

Telektios intends to send the characters into Orlanthi territory with Right Word Now to broker peace with the leaders of the various villages. They are to ignore Maralis and Aeldred, who are too closely tied to the rebellion to listen to reason. The characters can discuss this proposed stratagem with Telektios now and choose which, if any, of the leaders they will approach. This leads onto the 'Word of the Dragon' encounter later.

Victory Points: None

(Any) The Trollwood

Synopsis: The trolls who live to the north-west of Sky End Stead could be useful allies and the characters are sent to court them.

The troll tribe here is called Ezrokausz, which translates as 'the trolls who live here'. Their leader and mother is Gundaghuz, who is also the mother of Zugat Ate-Nine-Men in Solthmouth. Her tribe consists of a score of dark trolls and a good number of enlo slaves. The Orlanthi have battled the uz in the past in many bitter wars. The EWF have taken many trollkin as slaves, although the Wyrmfriends do treat their slaves quite well. As for the God Learners, the trolls have an instinctive dislike of sorcery and find the smell of Middle Sea people distasteful. However, the trolls would be useful allies in this war.

EWf: Ferule suggests that the characters visit the Trollwood to the north of the valley and make an alliance.

Orlanthi: Orlgard is a legend among the trolls – in his youth, he slew many of them. He remembers their strength and numbers and suggests that in these dark times, yesterday's foe can be today's ally.

God Learners: Rsadi comes across a reference to the troll tribes in the notes retrieved from the Eyrie and sends the characters to make contact.

Approaching the Trollwood: The domain of the trolls is clearly marked with grisly signposts – skulls hang from trees, branches are matted together with some sort of tar into the shapes of bizarre symbols and runes are scratched into bark or stone warning of death and trouble ahead. If the characters press on openly, they soon hear the sound of drums heralding their approach, as they are spotted by trollkin watchmen hidden in the trees. If the characters want to approach secretly, pit their Stealth against the Perception of the trollkin in the trees (40%).

The main troll camp is in a cave network in the hillside. The nocturnal trolls sleep in the caves by day and emerge at night to hunt and work. If the characters approach during the day, the trolls will assume they are hostile and will prepare to fight in the caves. If the characters approach at night, the trolls will realise that the characters either have a proposal for them, or are very stupid. Either way, the characters will be brought before Gundaghuz.

Troll Combat Tactics: The troll caves are the tribe's home and fortress. If attacked, their tactic is to have the trollkin slaves flee back to the caves, leading the attackers back there. If the enemy is stupid enough to enter the caves, the trolls are on their home ground and the narrow confines of the tunnels mean that each troll will only face a single foe

at a time, a match-up that favours the troll. Gundaghuz will use her *darkwall* spells on particularly dangerous foes. If the enemy is unwilling to enter the caves, the trolls wait until nightfall, then send parties through the side tunnels to flank the enemy.

Winning the Friendship of the Trolls: Gundaghuz is willing to at least listen to the characters' proposal. The tribe needs money, after all. Bargaining with Gundaghuz is resolved using an Influence test, modified by the Players' roleplaying and their performance in several tests. Gundaghuz has five dark troll sons, each of whom administers one test.

- **The Challenge of Storytelling:** The first challenge is issued by Gunhagar, who fancies himself to be the wittiest and most urbane of the trolls. He will tell three brief stories and one of the characters will tell three brief stories and the trolls will be the judges of which tale is the most entertaining. This is resolved by three opposed Influence tests, modified by the Player's roleplaying and creativity (−20% for a boring story, +20% for an entertaining one). Gunhagar's stories are, firstly, the tale of how Argan Argar beat up the volcano god Lodril; next, how Zorak Zoran hit a Chaos monster so hard it did not know if it was coming or going, so it ended up eating its own tail; and finally, how a band of foolish humans once came to a troll lair and how they all got eaten.



- **The Challenge of Strength:** The second son, Gundaman, issues the challenge of strength. The first challenge is to lift a large rock and carry it from one side of the clearing to the other, a Simple (+20%) Athletics test. Next, the challenge is to carry a huge burning log. This requires an Athletics test to move it one metre and the log must be dragged five metres from one fire to another. The character can keep trying but the log has no easy hand-grips and inflicts one point of fire damage to each of the characters' arms for each attempt.
- **The Challenge of Meat:** The trolls have a huge larder of salted meat and preserved fungi. Gungada challenges one of the characters to eat with him, to show that the trolls are strong because they have so much food. The meal starts out with sheep, cow, pig and deer – all uncooked – then moves on to stranger foods – beetles, grubs the size of a man's leg, dinosaur chops, then oddly tender and flavoursome pork-like flesh (human). All the meat is covered in strange sauces, ranging from mushroom stew and cave-spider venom to quail vomit or congealed darkness. To pass the challenge of meat, the character must keep eating. This requires one Simple (+20%) Resilience test to eat all the conventional meats, one average Resilience test for eating the exotic meats and one Difficult (−20%) test for eating human flesh.
- **The Challenge of Dance:** Gundaghuz's son Gundagar prides himself on his agility and stamina. He challenges one of the characters to dance with him. The tests can be made using Dancing or Athletics at a −20% penalty. The dance starts out easily, with a Simple (+20%) test. Then Gundagar leads the character across the edge of the bonfire, requiring an average check – failing this check means the character takes 1D6 points of fire damage to each leg. The final dance goes through the caves in pitch darkness, giving a penalty of −40% unless the character can see in the darkness.
- **The Challenge of Magic:** The final challenge is from Gunzugat, the twin brother of Zugat Ate-Nine-Men. He has three fearsome and impressive spells: He will use Co-ordination to juggle flaming brands, then Speedart to throw the brands so quickly they fly high into the air, then Slow to stop the characters from moving out of the path of the falling brands. The characters must come up with a demonstration of magic that is more impressive than this show.

Convincing Gundaghuz to aid the characters requires an Influence test, at a penalty of -100% and modified as follows:

- ◉ Good roleplaying from the Players: +20%
- ◉ For every challenge passed: +10%
- ◉ Impressive gifts for the trolls: +20%
- ◉ Payment for the trolls of at least 20 silver pieces per dark troll per day: +/- 5% per silver piece above or below 20.
- ◉ (**EWF**) Promising the trolls that any trollkin taken as slaves are returned to the tribe: +20%
- ◉ (**Orlanthi**) Promising the trolls that the Orlanthi will not attack them for five years: +20%
- ◉ (**God Learners**) Promising the trolls that the God Learners will never meddle in their myths: +20%

Victory Points: Three

(Any) The Siege of Thunder Bridge

Synopsis: The Empire of Wyrms Friends attempts to shatter the Orlanthi rebellion at the fortress of Thunder Bridge.

If the Empire of Wyrms Friends takes Thunder Bridge, the Howling Wolf *tula* will be virtually defenceless and the Empire will have free reign from Urling's Ford to Deepwell. If Thunder Bridge endures, the Howling Wolf lands will stay safe and the Empire will be pinned down in the upper valley. Thunder Bridge and Solthmouth are the twin lynchpins of the rebellion.

By this stage in the war, Thunder Bridge has at least 60 defenders, commanded by Donal Longtalker and Daven Longsword. It is also possible that several of the other Howling Wolf Non-Player Characters, like Theorl, Hrulf or even Orlgard are present. To besiege the fortress, Telektios dispatches Ferule, commanding 150 soldiers, 50 trollkin cannon fodder and a dozen wyverns, together with alchemical bombs and siege engines.

The Stair is on the east side of the river and the besiegers are coming from the west. The Orlanthi have plenty of scouts on the east side, so the further north the besiegers cross from the west side to the east, the less warning the fortress will get.

EWF: While Ferule commands the siege, the Player Characters will be asked for their suggestions and tactics on how to assault Thunder Bridge. While the fort at the top of the Stair is a primitive and old-fashioned castle and no

match for the siege weapons brought from the Fifth Camp, the Stair is a formidable natural barrier. To get to the fort, the besiegers will have to cross a raging river, then climb a steep staircase up a 70-metre cliff.

Ferule's initial tactics involve sending scouting parties up through the woods on the western side of the cliffs to see how many Orlanthi are in the ring fort. He then intends to use large dinosaurs to ford the river as far north as possible, just beyond the swirling plunge pool at the base of the falls. While the infantry climb the Stair as swiftly as possible, wyverns will bomb the ring fort.

Orlanthi: Similarly, while Donal Longtalker commands the fortress, the characters can participate in the council on how best to resist the siege. Donal's plan is a simple one – throw stones and boiling oil down at anyone trying to climb the stair, fire arrows and javelins at flying foes.

God Learners: God Learners can either ally themselves with the Orlanthi or come up with their own strategies to aid the defence. They have the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* at their disposal for this encounter.

The Battle for Thunder Bridge: The fortress always has the following defences:

- ◉ The raging river
- ◉ The 70-metre Stair
- ◉ The walls of the ringfort

Depending on the events of *'Fortifying Thunder Bridge'*, the following factors may be in play:

- ◉ The secret path through the western woods.
- ◉ One of the fortress walls may be weaker than the rest.
- ◉ Donal may have a dozen flying warriors.
- ◉ The fort may be well stocked with stones, boiling oil, caltrops and other projectiles.
- ◉ The two statues may be activated, giving every warrior in the ring fort the power of the Death rune.

The Raging River: Crossing the river is the first challenge. Ferule's plan is to use a huge apatosaurus to form a temporary dam. If the characters are Orlanthi or God Learners, they can come up with their own way to foil this. If they are EWF, the problem is an Orlanthi archer in the ring fort who shoots flaming arrows down to spook the dinosaur. The archer has a Bow skill of 70%; each successful hit requires a Riding check from the dinosaur's rider, who

can be a Player Character or a dragonewt handler (Riding 50%). The bowman will also fire at the temporary wooden bridge that will be built in the dinosaur's lee.

The Secret Path: There is a secret path running through the hills to the west of Thunder Bridge on the borders of the trollwood. If Orlanthi characters have not secured this path, the EWF will send a party of scouts up past the Stair to spy on the ring fort's defences.

If the characters try following the path and *'The Trollwood'* encounter has not yet been run, it can be run now as the characters find a side path to the troll's den.

The War in the Air: The EWF has a dozen wyverns; the Orlanthi defenders may have a dozen flying warriors. A single man is no match for a wyvern but the Orlanthi do have the advantage of surprise and mobility – the warriors under the effect of a Flight spell move at only three metres a round but have much more agility than a wyvern. The Orlanthi tactic, therefore, is to wait until the wyverns come in on a bombing run, then shoot up straight towards the oncoming beasts and attack them, three or four Orlanthi to each wyvern. It will take several passes for the barbarians to deal with all the wyverns.

The wyverns that are not attacked by the Orlanthi will drop alchemical bombs on the ring-fort. Maralis has warned the people in the fort about these bombs, so they are at least somewhat prepared but the clinging, searing fire is hard to defend against. The bombs have a splash radius of two metres; any character caught in the bomb's area of effect must make a Dodge test. If the test fails, the character takes 2D4 points of fire damage to 1D4 random locations.

If the characters are not involved, the bombing runs kill 3D10 of the 60 defenders.

The Stair: Under normal circumstances, it would take at least half an hour to climb the zig-zagging Stair up the cliff face – and that is without the Orlanthi in the ring fort above hurling missiles and arrows down. When the EWF soldiers climb the Stair, they will take hideous losses. Each round, there is a 5% chance that a character is hit by a missile from above, inflicting 1D6 damage to a random location unless the character dodges. When the soldiers are close to the upper tiers of the Stair, the Orlanthi start dropping boiling oil; characters in the van in the army suffer 1D4 heat damage to all locations unless they make successful Dodge tests.

If the characters are not present, the climb up the stairs costs the lives of 1D10 EWF soldiers for every five Orlanthi left in the ring fort.

Besieging the Ring Fort: The final phase of the siege is a bloody battle between the EWF and the Orlanthi in the ring fort. The Stair ends at the gates of the fort and there is but a narrow lip of land between the walls of the fort and the edge of the cliff, a lip of land that quickly becomes slick with blood and severed limbs. If the characters are not involved, the resolution of the battle comes down to luck – multiply the number of surviving Orlanthi by three, and compare it to the number of surviving EWF soldiers as if they were opposed skills.

If the EWF know about the weak rear wall and if they can get a few warriors up past the fort (either by wyvern, or by the secret path in the woods, or by treachery or by braving the gauntlet of the Stair and ring fort), they can breach the fort there, giving a +10% bonus to the opposed roll to resolve the siege.

If the characters are involved, they can lead the attack and push events one way or the other, battling EWF champions or hunting down Donal Longtalker and the other warriors.

It is possible that the battle ends inconclusively, with the EWF retreating to lick their wounds or try again with more bombing runs and new tactics. A conclusive Orlanthi victory is unlikely unless the Player Characters are involved and do something impressive and cataclysmic (like, say, capturing the alchemical bombs and using them to collapse the Stair on top of the EWF army). A conclusive EWF victory means that the ring fort is captured along with the village of Thunder Bridge; the few Orlanthi survivors flee to Urling's Ford but the lack of defensible terrain on the Howling Wolf tula means that the war becomes a foregone conclusion.

Victory Points: Seven, for a conclusive result. The EWF lose three points or the God Learners/Orlanthi gain three points for a stalemate.

(Any) Air Superiority

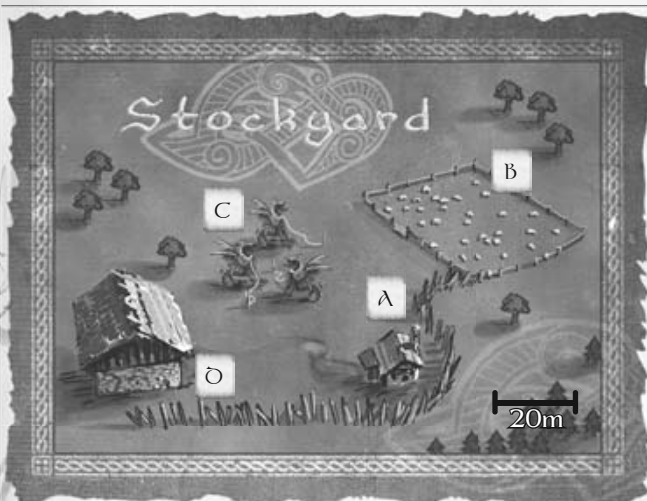
Synopsis: The battle for the valley takes place in the air.

The Empire of Wyrms Friends controls the skies above the Solthi River valley. The *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* has to shy away from the wyvern patrols and dragons in the clouds, while the Orlanthi have no flying forces except for the Flight spells of the priests.

Each of the three sides have their part to play in this contest for control of the skies.

Orlanthi: Maralis knows that as long as the EWF control the skies, the rebellion's ability to move freely in the valley will be severely curtailed. The Orlanthi need to have their own flying mounts if they are to fight the enemy in the air. There are two possibilities – capturing some of either the Empire of Wyrms' Friends' wyverns or the wild griffons of the mountains.

If the characters investigate, they quickly find that the wyverns need a lot of meat; between the rapacious wyverns and the dinosaur mounts, the Empire of Wyrms' Friends has had to establish stockyards close to the front lines. The characters can sneak into one of these stockyards to steal mounts.



- A – Fortified house
- B – Sheepfolds
- C – Three tethered wyverns
- D – Dinosaur stables

Resident in the fortified house is a dragonewt commander, four human guards and half a dozen trollkin slaves and animal tenders. The stables contain six renders. Riding the wyverns requires a Hard (–40%) Riding check; the characters can also intimidate the trollkin slaves into chauffeuring them.

Once the characters steal the wyverns, they need to fly them back to Orlanthi-held territory. They will be pursued by a trio of EWF soldiers mounted on more wyverns.

If the characters fail to acquire flying mounts, they can get a ride on the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant*.

EWF: The characters are called to help investigate the theft of three wyverns from a stockyard behind EWF lines. According to the dragonewt commander, Hunger Like Ice, the beasts were stolen during the night and must be retrieved. The guards saw nothing, nor did the trollkin slaves. It seems, though, that the guards were drunk on trollkin-brewed mushroom beer and hence were relying on the trollkin to keep watch.

What happened was that three Orlanthi rebels, Haskind, Edwulf and Farad, made a bargain with the chief of the trollkin slaves, Luguz. If the trollkin helped the Orlanthi steal the three wyverns, the Orlanthi would transport the trollkin off to the mountains.

Over the next two nights, the trollkin vanish in threes as the Orlanthi swoop down, grab the trollkin and fly them to the Trollwood in the north of the valley, thus fulfilling their half of the bargain. Observant characters may catch the Orlanthi wyverns returning or bring their own wyverns and chase the Orlanthi thieves.

God Learners: If the God Learners are working closely with the Orlanthi, Maralis contacts them with a proposal. She wants to use the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* as a troop transport, moving small brigades of Orlanthi warriors to positions on the west side of the river (as a prelude to the 'Spreading Chaos' event). Erid is worried about letting so many barbarians onto his ship and argues that the rebels could be plotting to hijack the *Hawk-Exultant*. He wants the characters to ride along with the rebels as added insurance.

This is an opportunity for the God Learner characters to roleplay with the Orlanthi barbarians. The leader of this group of warriors is Voskandor, a veteran from King Androfin's war against the Empire. He is wary of being on board a Zistorite vessel and is eager to question the characters about their thoughts on the Machine City.

Victory Points: Two

(God Learners/Orlanthi) Spreading Chaos

Synopsis: The Orlanthi barbarians attempt to disrupt the Empire of Wyrms' Friends supply lines.

As the war grows more intense and more reinforcements are sent to the Fifth camp, the pressure on the rebellion grows. Open battle favours the enemy, so the characters must spread chaos behind enemy lines and block their supply routes.

The food and supplies for the Fifth camp are shipped down the Engizi River to the town of Jintul, where they are offloaded at the docks and then brought by dinosaur beasts of burden to the Fifth camp, which lies on the shores of the tributary Marzeel river. The camp also receives regular shipments of supplies from the port city of Karse.

Jintul has joined the Empire of Wyrms' Friends and the town is thriving on the presence of the military camps along the river. The place is packed with weapons sellers, alchemists, mercenaries, smiths and prostitutes. It is a brash, larger-than-life town, where a man's worth is determined largely by his skill with a sword. On the edges of the town, the dragon priests try to pick up converts but Jintul has embraced the rapacious, war-hungry aspect of the dragon instead of the more spiritual components.

From the docks of Jintul, the Fifth camp gets basic foodstuffs, cloth and uniforms, leather, medical supplies from the dragonnewt alchemists, bone weapons and dinosaurs.

Karse, down the river, is a notoriously decadent town. Anything and everything is for sale there. It is morally corrupt or even unholy in the eyes of a dozen religions. Karse is a strange and crowded city – trolls from the ominous Shadow Plateau, God Learner agents, traders from Caladraland with their bright eyes and smell of spices, imperious matriarchs from Esrolia, atheists from the islands running gambling dens, city-born Orlanthi urchins running underfoot, strange spirits who sell their immaterial bodies for a few coppers – all can be found here.

From the port of Karse, the Fifth camp gets fresh fruit and vegetables, preservative spices including salt, metal weapons and fittings and picked fish and meat.

To spread chaos, the characters need to deal with the following challenges:

Getting Past Enemy Lines: This is easily done if the characters have a flying mount or can hitch a ride on the God Learners' flying ship. Otherwise, they will need to obtain EWF uniforms or travel documents (requiring them to mug a few suitably-sized guards or make forgeries) or sneak past the patrols.

Investigate The Supply Lines: This is not especially hard – Karse and Jintul are both booming because of the military trade and the river is crowded with barges.

Sabotage The Supply Lines: Possibilities include poisoning some of the foodstuffs, scuttling ships or barges to block the river, spreading the rebellion to Jintul or spreading rumours of a coming EWF takeover in Karse.

As soon as the characters' plans are put in motion, the EWF will send a patrol to investigate. This patrol will be led by Viskenos Wyrmsen, a Wyrms' Claw Initiate and master of the EWF secret police in this region. He is a skilled detective and a cunning foe with an unerring eye for detail.

Escape: The characters have to get back to Orlanthi territory before they are captured.

Victory Points: One to five, depending on how much chaos the characters spread.

(EWF) Draconic Justice

Synopsis: As the EWF re-conquers rebel territory, the characters have to impose martial law and justice upon the barbarians.

This encounter can take place in any of the villages involved in the war – Deepwell, Noryar and Sunvale are all good candidates. Alexios, the Wyrms' Face Initiate placed in charge of the village contacts the characters when they are nearby and asks them to sit in judgement over a number of controversial cases. Alexios, a thin nervous man, is unwilling to sit in judgement himself.

In each of the cases, the characters must somehow balance justice with the needs of the EWF. They can set whatever punishments or forfeits they wish – this is effectively a wartime court and they have absolute power.

- ◉ An Orlanthi girl, Egraine, claims to have been raped by an EWF soldier before the rebellion began. She is now pregnant and is demanding that she be given some recompense so she can raise the child. She did not report this crime before the rebellion because she mistrusted the previous EWF authorities in the village but surely the characters are kind and fair-minded and will not leave her and her child-to-be to starve. If the characters inquire, they find that the girl's family are dead and many in the village think she was prostituting herself to the EWF soldiers before the rebellion began.

- ◉ A farmer reports that EWF wyverns ate all his cows and he wants compensation. If the characters make inquiries, they can easily find out that, officially, there were no wyvern flights near that particular herd but it is not uncommon for hungry beasts to just land and feed. It is also possible that the cows were slaughtered and eaten by the rebels. The belief among the common folk is that the monsters of the empire are always hungry and high-uncontrollable, so not paying compensation would look bad.
- ◉ An old man, Heldon, is dying and wishes the traditional funeral rites to be performed, instead of the draconised version. His family disagree and want him buried in the new way to make his soul more pleasing to the dragon-gods. The argument has gone on for long enough that an appeal has been made to the administrator, who has passed it onto the Player Characters.
- ◉ During the rebellion, one family of draconised Orlanthi stayed true to their beliefs and were ostracised and mistrusted by the rebels. They ended up locked in their house, where the father of the family, Kerrit, went mad and forcibly split the tongues of his children so they could better speak Auld Wyrnish. When a neighbour called Olsman heard about this, he broke into the house and slew Kerrit. The children, who can now only speak in very limited Auld Wyrnish, demand a weregild for the slaying of their father. Kerrit claims he did it to protect the children from a madman. Many of the villagers agree that Kerrit is in the right and mistrust 'the dragon-children'.
- ◉ A notorious outlaw and bandit king, the Forest Cat, has been captured. The Forest Cat raided the EWF and other travellers alike and once even took a ship to God Forgot to rob one of the casinos there. He is a charming, devil-may-care rake – and he was caught sleeping in a tree by a wandering patrol. This is actually all part of a cunning scheme on the part of the Forest Cat. He discovered that Alexios was actually sent to the borders of the EWF because the young initiate was found guilty of taking bribes in his native Dara Happa. To hide this shame, his family arranged for Alexios to be sent to Hendrikiland. The Forest Cat waylaid a messenger who was bringing a letter from Alexios to his father, complaining about his 'exile' in the wilderness.

The Forest Cat allowed himself to be captured so he could get close enough to Alexios to blackmail the administrator

and arrange for various treasures and supplies to be placed somewhere that the bandits could then raid. The Cat is therefore shocked to find that the characters are sitting in judgement, not Alexios. He expected to be put in prison, which he can easily escape from. The Cat's crimes are many and varied, mostly theft and banditry.

If the characters threaten to put the Cat in prison, he tries to convince them to let him go in exchange for the blackmail letter.

Victory Points: For each judgement the characters make that shows the wisdom and power of the EWF, they get one Victory Point. For each one they make that shows them to be cruel and oppressive, they lose one Victory Point. It is possible for a judgement to fall into both categories.

(EWF) The Breath of the Dragon

Synopsis: The characters get a chance to bring the dragon's power to the valley.

The Great Dragon Project aims to construct a continent-spanning dragon. His wings are mountains, his belly the wide plains of Dara Happa, his spine the Oslir river. The volcanoes of Caladraland are his crested head and his fiery maw.

Four strange visitors arrive at the Fifth Camp, along with a great many guards and dragonewts. One of the four the characters recognise instantly – it is Delecti the Inquirer. He introduces the other three as She Who Is Sight, She Who Is Thirst and He Who Is Speech. They are all powerful Draconic mystics, senior architects of the Great Dragon Project. Delecti lets He Who Is Speech explain what they are doing here.

The Great Dragon is not yet complete but already there have been portents of his birth. The waters of Ice Bay have become incredibly violent, for they were thrashed by his tail. An earthquake was the shifting of the dragon's mighty limbs in Dara Happa, while a landslide in the Rockwood mountains revealed leathery wing membranes beneath the stone. As the Dragon nears completion, these signs of life must be cherished and strengthened. Now, a storm is coming: a perfect storm, mystically speaking. It has the potential to be the Breath of the Dragon. If the storm is guided, the Great Dragon will inhale the storm winds then exhale a gust of magic. This will be the strongest sign yet that the Empire of Wyrn's Friends is approaching the perfection promised by Vistikos One-Eye.

According to She Who Is Sight's divinations, the storm will make landfall at Solthmouth and run up the river valley. The three mystics have brought a magical chakra-stele with them. If this is placed somewhere where it can catch the force of the storm, it will aid the Great Dragon's first breath. The mystics want the characters to plant the chakra-stele somewhere suitable. The closer it is to the river mouth, the better; the closer it is to a place of mystical power, the better and the more people who breath in and out when the stele is activated the better.

If the characters point out to the mystics that the mouth of the river is under rebel control, the mystics appear confused and blank. Delecti explains that such petty, mundane matters are below the awareness of the trio. The Dragon is All; the barbarians are Nothing.

If the characters consult with Telektios, the commander is irritated by the interruption. He considers the three mystics to be useless cowards. Their mystic power is undeniable but they refuse to use it, preferring to wander around the Empire's hinterlands with theodilates and crystals looking for 'the right rocks'. The time of the Great Dragon is still years ahead and it cannot be born when there are still Orlanthi living literally right under its nose. Just stick the stele somewhere downriver and be done with it.

If they consult with Right Word Now, the dragonewt says sadly that people who forget how to breathe become rocks and that it is folly to teach a rock to breathe when you are forgetting it yourself. Still, the trick is to keep breathing.

Placing the Stele: The chakra-stele is a crystal globe four feet in diameter, engraved with the runes of Air and Dragon. Golden statues of dragonnewts support the globe. The whole thing requires three people to carry it. It is up to the characters where they wish to put the stele. The best place for it is Solthmouth, in the temple to Orlanth but that is obviously rather difficult. The stele only needs to be in place at the height of the storm, so the characters could just sneak into the town and plant the stele under the cover of darkness.

Alternatively, they could put the stele somewhere under EWF control, or somewhere that is more lightly defended. The effect of the stele varies depending on where it is placed and how many people are breathing in tune with it. This means that putting it in an EWF-loyal village is advantageous, as the people there will breathe and channel their worship energy into the stele.

The stele has a base 10% chance to channel the storm into the Great Dragon, modified according to the Stele Placement table.

Stele Placement Table

Location	Modifier
North of Thunder Bridge	-20%
Near Thunder Bridge	-10%
Near Sunvale	+0%
Near Deepwell	+10%
Near Noryar	+20%
Somewhere on the coast	+30%
Solthmouth harbour	+40%
Solthmouth	+50%
Near a shrine	+10%
Near a temple	+20%

Nearby Breathers	Modifier
0	-20%
1-3	-10%
4-10	+0%
11-20	+10%
21-50	+20%
51-250	+30%
250-1,000	+40%
1,000+	+50%

If the characters are near the stele when the storm hits and the storm is successfully channelled, they are suddenly mystically *aware* of the whole river valley and the air that rushes through it. Their awareness expands for a moment, as if their minds spanned a whole continent, a whole age of the world. The characters can choose what effect the First Breath of the Great Dragon has on the Solthi River valley. Options are:

- ❖ **The Breath of Wrath:** The storm doubles and redoubles in strength, lashing the Orlanthi strongholds. Solthmouth is flooded; the cliff at Thunder Bridge partially collapses, destroying half the ring fort. Dozens are drowned or crushed. Strangely, the effects of the devastation are much stronger on the Orlanthi side of the river.
- ❖ **The Breath of Life:** Sea Season seems to come early to the valley. Over the next few days, flowers bloom and lambs and calves are born. The winter snows vanish from the lowlands and the farms suddenly burst with green life. Here, at least, the Two Year Winter has given way to the most bountiful spring in memory.

- ◉ **The Breath of Wisdom:** Over the next few days, many Orlanthi lay down their arms and willingly join the Empire of Wyrms' Friends. Children are born with forked tongues; the wind rushing through the trees seems to speak in Auld Wyrmmish. The dragonewt Right Word Now is especially happy.
- ◉ **The Breath of Water:** Siana, the spirit of the Solthi Valley, becomes a dragon spirit. The river turns on the Orlanthi, throwing their boats off her back and flooding their lands. Siana swims up the Marzeel river to report to the Fifth camp, eager to aid the EWF.
- ◉ **The Breath of Fire:** A firestorm rages through the valley, setting the woods alight. Several buildings are set alight in the villages; many die. Ash snows down for the next few days and chokes the valley.

Victory Points: Whichever breath the characters choose, they get seven Victory Points if the storm is channelled into the Great Dragon.

(God Learners) Delecti's Horrors

Synopsis: Delecti the Inquirer wants the God Learners to open a gate to the Hero Plane and investigate the Orlanthi myths; he does not want them foiling EWF activities in the valley. Therefore, he dispatches his minions to drive them away.

This encounter can take place as part of another encounter, especially one that the characters are dealing with easily thanks to their Zistorite weapons or the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant*. Alternatively, Cadamil can send the characters to ambush an EWF caravan of prisoners. The caravan is transporting a dozen captured Orlanthi, who are chained to a pair of carts. There are six human guards and six trollkin slaves; both carts are drawn by dinosaurs.

The minions (see page 131) fly down from the sky, goutts of green fire bursting from their mouths.

There is one minion per Player Character. One of them flies down and challenges the characters, hissing *'thiiiss iss not your war! Leave the barbarianssss to their fate! Their doom iss certain! Go and wait like jackalssss for their myfthsss – their afterlife is yourssss. Their livessss... are ourssss!'* The creatures refer to Delecti as their 'father'. They will not attack if the Player Characters immediately retreat and stay out of the valley until the war is over.

Victory Points: Two

(Any) The Battle of the Woods

Synopsis: EWF and Orlanthi forces clash in the thick woods surrounding the river valley.

This encounter can take place several times, as the two forces struggle for supremacy. It is not one of the key battles of the war for the Solthi River valley – not every conflict is a significant one. Roll on the appropriate table for the characters' opposition.

The Battle of the Woods

Roll d%	Orlanthi Forces	EWF Forces
1–20	1D4+1 warriors	2D4 soldiers
21–40	2D4 warriors	2D4 soldiers, 1D6 trollkin slaves
41–50	2D6 warriors, 1D4 shadow cats	2D4 soldiers, 1D3 renders
51–60	2D6 warriors, 1D6 cavalry	2D6 soldiers, 1D6 trollkin slaves, 1D3 renders
61–70	3D6 warriors, 2D6 cavalry	3D6 soldiers, 2D6 trollkin slaves, 1D3 renders
71–80	3D6 warriors, 2D6 cavalry, 1D6 shadow cats	3D6 soldiers, 2D6 trollkin slaves, 1 death king
81–85	Hendrik (see page 116), 1D6 honour guard, roll again	Dajai (see page 122) or Viskenos Wyrmsen (see page 125), 2D4 elite, roll again
86–90	Theorl (see page 119), 1D6 honour guard, roll again	Right Word Now (see page 123), 2D4 elite, roll again
91–95	Orlgard (see page 117), 2D6 honour guard, roll again	Ferule (see page 122), 3D6 elite, roll again
96+	Roll again twice	Roll again twice

Victory Points: Two

(Orlanthi/God Learners) Crossing the Marzeel

Synopsis: The war is going so well that the Orlanthi must decide if they are going to push beyond the traditional boundaries of Hendrikiland.

The river Marzeel is the boundary of the Empire of Wyrms' Friends – if the rebels choose to go beyond the river, they



turn a local rebellion into a war on the whole Empire. Maralis is loath to challenge the Empire, as it goes beyond the original scope of the plan she and her father Aeldred created. However, if the characters are ambitious and have won the respect of the other Orlanthi through heroic deeds, they can lead the rebellion across the river.

Victory Points: Crossing the Marzeel will alert the Empire of Wyrms' Friends to the danger posed by the Orlanthi rebellion, *reducing* the Orlanthi's Victory Points by 1D6. If the Orlanthi do not cross the Marzeel, though, the events of 'Dragons Are Like Cows' or 'Attacking the Fifth Camp' cannot happen and the Orlanthi cannot achieve a better result than 'stalemate' when the war winds down at Sacred Time (see page 100).

(God Learners) Erid's Betrayal

Synopsis: Erid Steelhawk has been fascinated by the philosophy of the Draconic Way and has become disenchanted with the God Learners. This comes to a head when he discovers that Cadamil is being magically controlled by Rsadi the Wondrous.

This encounter occurs when the Player Characters have just come back on board the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant*, after some other encounter. Cadamil is in Rsadi's study, poring over maps of the valley and reports of the war. The dozen crew are on deck or manning the lightning guns. The characters are expected to report to Cadamil to inform him of the latest events in the rebellion. One of the crew enters and serves drinks to Cadamil and the Players and as he leaves, he whispers to one of the characters that the captain wishes to see all the characters in his quarters.

The drink served to Cadamil is poisoned. This poison will not take effect until after the characters leave Cadamil's presence.

Erid closes the cabin door immediately after the last character enters. Have the characters make Perception tests – any character who succeeds notices that Erid is obviously nervous, constantly throwing glancing to the side, as if he expects Cadamil to walk through the bulkhead. A character who gets a Critical success notices a small carved dragon statuette by Erid's bunk. 'We need to talk,' says the captain, 'Cadamil isn't who you think he is. He's Rsadi.'

Erid explains that he believes Rsadi is telepathically controlling Cadamil. Erid heard rumours about the sorceress using others as pawns before but dismissed them as the sort of exaggerated paranoid stories that cling to powerful God Learners. He now fears he was wrong to dismiss these tales, because Rsadi knows things about the running of the ship that he only told Cadamil. He was an ordinary Justelan merchant mariner and trader, an honest follower of Malkion. Now, ever since his shipwreck, he has been steeped in the shadows and treachery of the God Learners. He is disillusioned with the Middle Sea Empire. All of Erid's fears and doubts come tumbling out – by prolonging the war, the God Learners are just going to get all the Orlanthi killed; the Empire of Wyrms' Friends has done more good than harm in the valley and given a choice between the treachery of the God Learners, the inhuman horror of the Zistorites and the beauty of dragons... how do the characters know what is right?

If the characters roleplay well, they can bring Erid back from the brink of despair and treachery. They have to convince Erid that the Middle Sea Empire is a good and noble institution, that he is mistaken about Rsadi and that they are not doing more evil than good. If they manage all this, Erid smiles wanly and says, *'You're right. You're right. I only wish I had confided in you earlier... before I poisoned Cadamil.'* The characters may attack Erid at this point or rush to Cadamil's aid.

If the characters go to Cadamil's aid they find the warrior face down in Rsadi's study on the brink of death. He can be saved only by a spell that cures poison or a Very Hard (–60%) Healing check.

If Erid is convinced that he was mistaken, he commits suicide by climbing to the top deck and hurling himself to the valley below. He leaves his Air Rune (a feather encased in crystal) behind, tied to the railing.

If the characters attack Erid, he shouts for aid and 2D6 crewmen arrive 1D4+1 rounds later. Erid has weapons hidden all around his cramped cabin. The crew are loyal to Erid and Cadamil will have died by the time the characters get to him, so it is likely that the characters will have to slaughter or incapacitate the crew to seize the ship. If possible, Erid lets the crew fight the characters and runs to the command throne to take control of the ship.

If the characters ignore or dismiss Erid's fears, he goes to the command throne and locks the door to the bridge. He

then shouts and orders all hands to the deck. Once the crew (and possibly the characters) are assembled on the deck, he turns the flying ship upside down and changes course so the ship is heading for EWF territory and the Fifth Camp. The crew fall to their deaths – Player Characters may make Acrobatics or Athletics tests to grab onto a spar or railing before they too fall overboard. The ship stays upside down for 2D4 rounds; characters must make Simple (+20%) Athletics checks to hang on, or they can use Acrobatics or Athletics to climb to the nearest stairs down to the lower decks. To seize control of the ship, the characters will need to get through the heavy door to the bridge. This door is Hard (–40%) to break down and the lock is Hard (–40%) to pick.

When the characters get into the bridge, they see that Erid has taken his knife to his tongue, splitting it in two. Blood gushes down his face and he seems to be illuminated from within by an eerie light. He hisses at them in Auld Wyrnish and shouts that he will bring them to the light of the dragon. The characters have no choice but to fight him but Erid will send the ship spinning towards the ground rather than surrender.

Once Erid is dealt with, one way or the other, the characters will have to take control of the ship. Yarlech the Humble, the Zistorite automaton assigned to watch over the ship, will appear and aid the characters in flying the ship. In its toneless voice, it will instruct them in the basics of controlling the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant*.

Rsadi contacts the characters by magic soon after they take the *Ebenriss*, ordering them to come to the Eyrie as soon as possible. If possible, hint that she wants a replacement for Cadamil...

Victory Points: None

It All Goes Wrong...

If the characters fail to take control of the ship, the Games Master can have Yarlech the Humble emerge from a cupboard on the bridge and execute Erid.

If *all* the characters fall overboard, Yarlech can have the ship loop around and catch them as they fall.

If the characters steal the flying ship, they have effectively left the campaign and are off on wacky adventures.

(Orlanthi) The Wedding

Synopsis: As the war enters its closing stages, Maralis attempts to cement her alliance.

This encounter can take two forms. If one of the Player Characters has grown close to Maralis, she impulsively proposes marriage to the character when they next meet – they may be dead on the morrow, so why not live for tonight? Alternatively, if none of the characters are suitable matches for the warrior princess, her long-standing betrothal to Theorl can be used. In the first option, she marries for love; in the second, she marries to tie the Howling Wolves closer to her rebellion.

Either way, the characters will be guests at the wedding, which is to take place at Sky End Stead.

*Stand always together, two are better than one.
Life is short, time is long. Life flees before us.
Take what you hold, make use of it.
This makes you better than gods.*

– from the traditional Heorfling wedding ceremony

The ceremony is presided over by Vinya and Orlgard. Vinya looks distinctly uncomfortable if she is marrying another man to her son's betrothed and nervous if it is her son getting married, as if she is afraid that the big oaf will mess everything up. The feast to celebrate the union of the two is relatively meagre, unless the war is going very well – if the tide had turned against the rebels, there is little meat and most guests just get dry bread and are happy to have it. If the war is going well, though, the characters feast on captured Wyrmfriend supplies and even tasty roast dinosaur.

The quality of the wedding banquet is not the only thing that depends on how well the characters are doing.

0–10 Victory Points: If the Orlanthi have 10 or fewer Victory Points, then treachery is afoot. Vinya, Theorl's mother, is convinced that the rebellion is doomed and that the only hope lies in appeasing the Wyrm. Therefore, she has instructed some warriors to wait in the room given to the bride and groom. These warriors are to ambush Maralis and her new husband while they are in bed together and smuggle them out of Sky End Stead while everyone else is drunk.

If the ambushers succeed in capturing Maralis and her husband, they leave Sky End Stead and ride across the *tula* to a waiting flight of three wyverns accompanied by riders. The alarm is raised in Sky End Stead by the howling of a wolf, which Orlgard recognises as the clan *wyter* – the protective spirit of the *tula*. The other characters can chase the ambushers across the *tula*; if they succeed in stopping the kidnapping, the three ambushers (Morgail, Gerrid, Fronthas) confess that Orlgard commanded them to hand the bride and groom over to the EWF. This is a lie to discredit Orlgard and force a wedge into the rebel alliance.

If the characters fail to stop the kidnapping, Maralis still escapes – she knows the command words that wyverns respond to from her time in the EWF and so is able to seize control of one of the beasts and fly it back to Sky End Stead, landing naked in the centre of the settlement. The groom, unless he escapes himself, will be brought to the Fifth camp and questioned. Maralis will try to rally the other characters to mount a rescue – see 'Dragons Are Like Cows' for rules on raiding the Fifth Camp.

11–15 Victory Points: At this level, the wedding goes off without any notable events. The plan of forcing the EWF to a stalemate seems to be working.

16+ Victory Points: At this level, the heroism of the characters is acknowledged by the clan *wyter*. During the feast, a huge supernatural wolf-spirit pads into the hall and licks the groom's hand. All the characters feel a sudden rush of power as the wolf blesses them. Each of the Player Characters may draw on the power of the Howling Wolf once, giving them one of the following benefits:

- ◊ The power to howl, causing Fear as per the Divine spell on page 16 of the *RuneQuest Companion*.
- ◊ The power to heal one major wound instantly, recovering all Hit Points lost from that Hit Location.
- ◊ The power to transform into a wolf. While in wolf form, the character has the physical statistics of a wolf but keeps his own INT and POW. The character can stay in wolf form as long as he wishes before reverting to his normal shape but can only transform into a wolf once.

Victory Points: None

(Orlanthi) Maralis is Challenged

Synopsis: Maralis is challenged by the Orlanthi leaders. The characters need to decide whether they support her or not.

This event happens only if the war is going badly for the Orlanthi barbarians. It takes place in Thunder Bridge, if that fortress still stands, or in Solthmouth or Sky End Stead. Maralis' challenger is one of the other Orlanthi leaders (perhaps even a Player Character, if they are unhappy with how she is running the war). Good candidates are Orlgard, Donal Longtalker, Thandor Manysons or Harp the Dragonkiller.

The challenger lists all of Maralis' failures and mistakes – using a conspiracy to launch her rebellion, which meant that half the warriors in the valley knew nothing of the coming war until it was upon them; trying to starve the enemy out, when the Orlanthi are starving themselves; allying with the Middle Sea Empire instead of trusting in the Storm Gods – but the underlying message is clear: *You are not Orlanthi*. Some whisper that Maralis is actually a secret Wyrmfriender, sent to undermine Old Ways Traditionalism in the valley, while others say that she is just misguided and foolish.

The challenge further argues that the best tactic now is to melt away into the forests east of the valley, to turn bandit and harass the EWF instead of trying to hold the Solthi River against them.

If Maralis' position is to be saved, one or more of the characters must make a speech to the assembled Orlanthi warriors defending Maralis and the rebellion. This is resolved by an opposed Influence test. The character gets a bonus equal to the number of Orlanthi Victory Points and a bonus of up to +20% for good roleplaying.

Once the character has spoken, the assembled warriors vote. Whichever side wins the Influence check carries the vote.

Trial by Combat: If the challenger is defeated but the difference between the Influence tests is less than 25%, or if the challenger wins but the players object to this result, a trial by combat is held. If one of the characters wishes, he can stand as champion; otherwise, it is a battle between Maralis and the challenger. The trial is not to the death, merely to submission.

If Maralis is defeated, the war continues but her support collapses.

Victory Points: Five if Maralis wins outright – Orlanthi or not, she is the best leader for this war. Three if she wins with a trial by combat. None if she is replaced with another leader.

(Any) Desperate Measures

Synopsis: With the war going against their Orlanthi pawns and her own minions mostly dead, Rsadi sends the characters on a dangerous mission into the heart of the Stormwalk mountains.

High in the mountains dwell powers ancient and terrible. These entities have no place in any God Learner taxonomy, nor do the Orlanthi speak of them, save in secret stories told only to the initiates of certain Chaos-fighting cults. Rsadi has discovered the location of one of these powers and intends to loose it upon the Wyrms' Friends. She needs the characters to do the actual grunt-work of entering the unholy tomb and loosing the Chaos spawn within, which she refers to as the Sleeper.

If the characters are Orlanthi, they are contacted by Cadamil who explains that the God Learners have discovered something in the mountains that could tip the war back in the rebellion's favour. If the characters are willing to help, they should gather their supplies and follow him at dawn tomorrow. The 'something', he explains, is a relic from ancient times, a sleeping power that can be awakened and turned on the enemy.

If the characters are God Learners, they can just go straight to the tomb, although they may want to recruit some barbarian cannon-fodder (or, rather, tentacle-fodder) first.

If the characters are EWF, Right Word Now tells them to take wyverns and follow the river north, until they reach the mountains, then fly until they reach the broken place. There, they will fight Chaos. Go, now! By the time the EWF characters arrive, the *Ebenriss* will have departed but a group of God Learners will be on the mountain attempting to open the tomb of Chaos.

The Tomb of Chaos: The *Ebenriss* soars into the mountains, into the thick clouds. There, high above the headwaters of the mighty Marzeel river, is a truncated mountain. Its peak was sheared away aeons ago by some tremendous force, leaving a jagged ruin in its place – collateral damage from the Age of Terror. The *Ebenriss* drops the characters off at the edge of this broken ground. Rsadi tells the characters



that according to her calculations and the hints she has put together from various myths, the Sleeper should be in the very heart of the mountain. When the creature is freed from its long slumber, Rsadi believes that it will spill down the mountainside and follow the Marzeel river. The flying ship will pick the characters up again here when they have released the Sleeper.

The terrain on top of the mountain is bizarre, all twisted rocks stained with fantastic colours. The thick mist means that visibility is down to only a few dozen feet and makes everything seem oddly muted and unreal. In some places, sulphurous fumes pour out of cracks in the rock and hot mud hisses against the cold mountain air.

The first things the characters discover are stone cairns, piles of stones raised over fallen bodies. If they open any of the cairns, they discover each one contains the remains of a broo. Most are skeletons or just piles of slime and dust but some are fresher corpses. It appears broo have been coming here for many centuries to die, as if this lonely mountain were some sort of Chaos burial ground. In fact, these broo were killed by supernatural guardians of the mountains, who manifest as floating spheres of whitish light like will-o-the-wisps. These entities are the **Bright Eyes**, who were set to watch over the Sleeper. The floating spirits cannot communicate with mortals normally but they have a spokesman, an outcast rock mostali who calls himself (or itself) **Aranc, the Carver of Headstones**. Aranc has one of the Bright Eyes, which glows brightly from within, inside his head. He is also crazy. He is dressed in a leather apron and furs and has various tools strapped to his belt. Oddly, he carries a large rectangular piece of clear crystal or glass. This is his tombstone, which he carries with him at all times.

Aranc left his mostali community when he was accused of Individualism. He is obsessed with death and with making memorials for the dead. The mostali attach no importance to death. As they see it, the individual passes and is replaced, while the group continues their endless work to right the world. Aranc believes that the dead must be remembered for their own deeds. Raising cairns over the dead broo is just for the purposes of hygiene – his real purpose here is to carve memorials for all sentient beings. He has started with dead gods. He invites the characters to view his work, which is guided by the Bright Eyes. The dwarf explains that the Bright Eyes are souls who followed gods that were destroyed in the Age of Terror. Without a god to guide them, they lingered in the world and swore revenge on Chaos.

If asked about the Sleeper, the dwarf frowns and admits that there is a Chaos creature buried in the mountain, magically sealed there by some lost power aeons ago. The broo come here sometimes, drawn by it and try to free it. When they do, they get destroyed by the Bright Eyes. Broo are dumb, after all, and no sensible creature would try to free this thing.

Memorials to Dead Gods: If the characters follow the dwarf, he shows them his memorials, which are all six-metre tall blocks of translucent crystal. Each crystal contains many different images of the god and different images can be seen from different angles. These are holographic tombstones for dead gods. Few of the gods are known to the characters. Most are incomprehensible entities doing bizarre things and not even Aranc can explain them.

The one memorial that is of importance is that of the dragon Sh'kaharzeel, who was slain by Orlanth. If the characters examine this tombstone, they get glimpses of the saga of the dragon's death. The dragon and Orlanth battle in the skies. Orlanth slays the beast but is poisoned and falls from his chariot and is pursued by the dragon's children. Orlanth's warriors hunt for their fallen lord and discover Orlanth hiding in a cave. They bring him to a healing temple in a lake and defend him while the poison is leached from his body. Orlanth then cuts the dragon's head from its corpse and hurls it into the sky.

The Seal: In the middle of the garden of tombstones is a metre-wide circle of black stone, mirror-smooth, reflecting the stars above even when the sun is at its height. This is the seal placed on the Chaos entity. It can be opened easily, just by prising it up.

If the characters are Orlanthi and God Learners and want to go along with this desperate scheme, they can start opening the seal. Aranc will shout at the characters to stop and will even attack them if he has to. The Bright Eyes cannot physically hurt the characters (unless the characters are creatures of Chaos) but they can attack in their own unique way. There are 1D4 Bright Eyes per Player Character present. It requires a Very Hard (–60%) Athletics check to open the seal.

If the characters are EWF, the four-man God Learner archaeological team is already present and busily engaged in opening the seal. The Bright Eyes will not intercede in this battle, although Aranc will aid the characters. The four God Learners are **Cadamil** (if he is still alive), a sorcerer called **Kaelit**, the scholar **Beloc** and the strongman **Dicarnazar**. The latter two will keep trying to open the seal while Cadamil and Kaelit fend off any interference.

If Aranc is slain, either by the characters, the God Learners or the Sleeper, his last act is to cut the tombstone from his back. The characters may notice that it now depicts his life and death in imperishable crystal.

If The Seal Is Opened: Something with far too many tentacles and mouths begins to crawl out of the pit. The Sleeper is weak from centuries of imprisonment and starvation, so it can be driven back into the pit if the characters act immediately.

If the characters stand and fight, the Bright Eyes fly into the characters' weapons, causing them to glow brightly. The weapons are temporarily imbued with the power to fight Chaos, giving anyone using them a +20% bonus to their weapon skills and inflicting an extra 2D6 damage every time they strike a Chaos creature. If the Sleeper suffers a Major Wound, it will withdraw.

If the characters flee, they can race back to the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* or their wyverns. There are two dangers on the way back. Firstly, if the characters are responsible for freeing the Sleeper, the Bright Eyes will harass the characters, trying to stun them as they run so they get eaten by the Sleeper. Secondly, the Chaos monster's presence causes the brood corpses in the cairn to spontaneously reanimate as zombies, so the longer the characters linger on the mountain, the more zombies they have to contend with.

If the Sleeper is freed, it does as Rsadi predicted and slithers down the mountainside, leaving a trail of destruction and lifeless soil behind it. It will wreak havoc in the fertile Marzeel valley and run straight into the EWF camps.

Victory Points: Seven for the Orlanthi/God Learners if the horror is freed; The EWF lose seven if the horror is freed or gain three if they keep it from being released.

(EWF) Vinya's Bargain

Synopsis: Vinya contacts the Empire of Wyrms' Friends and asks for their aid in saving the Howling Wolves.

Vinya is convinced that the war is lost and that the EWF will soon retake the valley. She contacts the EWF characters secretly, coming to them in disguise when they are in the river valley. If they have not met her already, she introduces herself and explains who she is. She worries for her son Theorl, who will no doubt be executed even if he survives the war.

Her offer is a simple one – she will accept the draconised version of her faith and exhort the Orlanthi to do likewise. She will also aid the characters in dealing with Maralis – Vinya has several allies and minions in Maralis' army and can aid the characters in disguising themselves as Orlanthi warriors. She will vouch for the characters, allowing them to enter the Orlanthi fortress (at Thunder Bridge or Solthmouth, whichever one is still intact). Then they can assassinate Maralis. In exchange, she wants promises that the Howling Wolves will be allowed to keep all their land, that they will be given food to survive the long winter and that her son Theorl and his friends and followers will be spared.

If the characters agree, they will need Orlanthi disguises and names. Vinya suggests that the most likely tale that the rebels will believe is that the characters are wandering Orlanthi adventurers and Old Way Traditionalist sympathisers who heard of the rebellion and came to help. She gives them the name of an Orlanthi warrior, Deorul, who is a leader of guards at the Orlanthi fortress. If they tell Deorul that Vinya sent them, he will accept them.

If the characters agree to this plan, they can experience the remaining parts of the war as Orlanthi. Alternatively, they can just send an assassin (or act themselves) to deal with Maralis, using Vinya's stratagem.

Victory Points: Three

(Orlanthi/EWF) The Wolf Time

Synopsis: As starvation stalks the land, bandits become more common.

The characters are ordered (either by a leader like Maralis or Orlgard or by Telektios) to investigate reports of a group of bandits operating in the woods west of the Solthi. These bandits have been stealing supplies and raiding farms; they must be dealt with.

If the characters ask the Orlanthi cottars on the isolated farms along the western banks of the river, they learn that the bandits have their lair somewhere along the stream known as the Merryflood, a tributary of the Solthi river. Following the Merryflood upriver leads to a small lake, where the bandits have their lair on a crannog (artificial island). The little island has a few huts on it, surrounded by a wall. It's connected to the mainland by a single narrow bridge.

The Bandits: There are 15 bandits, as well as a dozen or so non-combatants living in the crannog settlement. They are led by an Orlanthi deserter, ideally one the characters have met before. Good candidates are **Brandig the Bold** of Deepwell (see page 121), the **Forest Cat** (see page 129) or **Wuldric** (see page 119).

The Orlanthi deserter's followers are all deserters from the war, a mix of Orlanthi barbarians and Empire of Wyrms' Friends. They all grew tired of the war and banded together to carve out a petty little domain for themselves. The bandit leader will welcome the characters if they approach the crannog openly – he has been waiting for a chance to argue the rightness of his position. He claims that the war is grinding towards an inevitable and bloody conclusion and that no god or dragon is worth dying for. The Old Ways and the New are both just ways of living and the war brings only death.

Dealing With The Bandits: There are several ways the characters can deal with the bandits:

- ⊗ *Mass Slaughter!* Combat-oriented characters can just attack the bandits and deal with them using brute force.
- ⊗ *Ambush!* The characters can escort a supply caravan through the wilderness and wait for the bandits to attack.
- ⊗ *Negotiation!* The characters may be able to persuade the bandit leader to rejoin the war on the winning side, if they offer a suitable bribe.

Spoils of the Bandit Camp: If the characters loot the bandit camp, they find plenty of stolen food and supplies, along with 2,000 silver coins.

Victory Points: Two if the bandits are no longer a problem for the Player Character's side. An additional two if they are recruited to fight for the Player Character's side.

(Orlanthi/EWF) Supply Worries

Synopsis: The demands of war and the long winter means that starvation threatens the armies.

This event can happen to either the Orlanthi or the Empire of Wyrms' Friends, or even both. Ideally, it happens when the characters are in command of a body of troops or when they are visiting a camp or fort. The army has almost run out of food. The soldiers turn to the characters – what is to be done? The characters need to somehow provide supplies for the warriors. What do the characters do? Options are:

- ⊗ Slaughter the dinosaurs, horses or wyverns and eat them.
- ⊗ Dismiss many soldiers, letting them turn bandit and make their own way.
- ⊗ Raid the enemy for food.
- ⊗ Take food from the peasants and let them starve.
- ⊗ Raid a neutral clan or city for food.
- ⊗ Send a ship to get food from a neutral city.

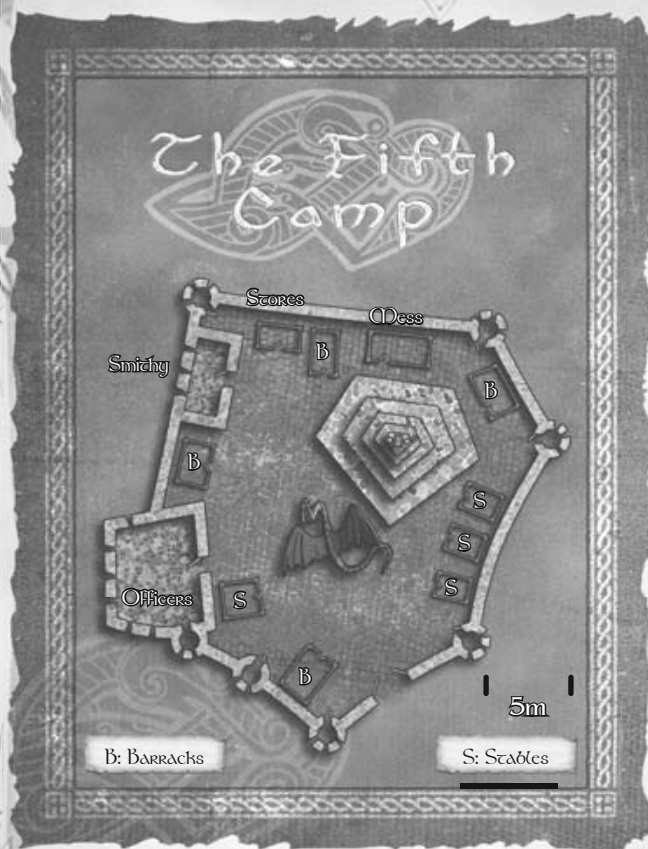
This encounter is a moral and logistical challenge for the characters. The easiest option is to take food from the peasants to feed the army. Other choices, like slaughtering the mounts, dismissing soldiers or attacking a neutral clan will affect the course of the war. Raiding the enemy may not work if the enemy has no food either, as will happen at six to 20 Victory Points for either side, and requires a successful raid in any case. Waiting for fresh supplies to be delivered may take too long. What do the characters do?

Victory Points: Zero to four, depending on what the characters do.

(Orlanthi/God Learners) Dragons Are Like Cows

Synopsis: Maralis leads a raid on the Empire of Wyrms' Friends with the intent of raiding their magic.

During her time with the EWF, Maralis learned of the aims of the Wyrms' Friends – worship energy from the low-ranking followers is transmitted to the Wyrms' Eye



Ascendants in the heart of the Empire. There are various methods to transmit such energy and the Empire is constantly researching ways to improve them. Currently, the prayers from the region including the Solthi River valley are being channelled through a golden ziggurat located on the Marzeel river near the Fifth camp. It is, of course, heavily guarded – but if it could be sabotaged, that could be the perfect blow to convince the EWF to leave the Orlanthi alone. The plan is to steal the Empire's prayer energy in a manner akin to a religious cattle raid!

Crossing the Marzeel: All the bridges across the Marzeel river are heavily guarded by the EWF. Characters will have to either disguise themselves as EWF, or ford or swim the wide river.

Entering the Fortress: The fortress is heavily guarded – there are 20 elite EWF soldiers on the walls. Coiled in the courtyard is a wyrm called the August Master of the Limbless Dance (see *RuneQuest* page 120). This creature spends most of its days sleeping and meditating but can be awoken if the alarm is raised.

Stealing The Prayer Energy: To steal the prayer energy, the characters need to get to the golden ziggurat in the centre of the temple. A crystal globe atop the ziggurat is used to transmit the energy. If the characters smash this globe (AP 3, 10 HP), they can deny the accumulated prayer energy to the EWF. If they can enact an Orlanthi religious rite atop the globe (requiring a successful Lore (appropriate theology) roll and 2D6 minutes), the energy is 'tainted' with Storm Tribe beliefs and serves to fuel the Orlanthi gods instead.

Victory Points: Two for breaking the globe, four for stealing the energy.

(All) Maralis' Death

Synopsis: The Orlanthi warrior is slain.

Maralis must die, or at least be severely wounded, for the third part of the *Blood of Orlanth* to work. Therefore, it is up to the Games Master to arrange for her death. Ideally, it should happen in the presence of the Player Characters but not in a situation where they have a chance to save her or to capture her corpse. Here are some possibilities:

- She dies battling one of the EWF Player Characters in the attack on Solthmouth, Thunder Bridge or the Fifth Camp.
- She is slain battling Ferule or Telektios in the attack on Solthmouth, Thunder Bridge or the Fifth Camp.
- She is assassinated by the Player Characters, who manage to sneak into an Orlanthi fortress with or without Vinya's help.
- She is assassinated by Galana the Blade's Child, who manages to infiltrate the Orlanthi forces at Deepwell.
- She is murdered by Theorl or poisoned by Vinya in an attempt to appease the EWF.
- She is killed when Telektios burns the valley in the night of fire.

Victory Points: None

(Any) Solthmouth Burns

Synopsis: The Empire of Wyrms' Friends finally exerts its power to destroy Solthmouth.

The siege of Solthmouth has dragged on long enough. In the heart of the Empire, one of the Original Twelve mystics stirs in his endless meditations on his dragon nature and he thinks of fire.

And Solthmouth *burns*.

It begins as an orange haze in the air over the town, like a mist touched with the colours of sunset. Over the course of an hour, the haze descends, becoming a thick orange fog. The air grows strangely cold and the mists grow thicker and thicker. Then, like a trick of the light, the fog turns to fire. The whole town catches fire, from the sturdy city walls to Aeldred's castle.

If Orlanthi Player Characters are unlucky enough to be in Solthmouth when the fog becomes fire, they might still survive. The fog does not change all at once but they will have to flee the city immediately, with the very air catching fire around them.

EWf Player Characters may be sent to the siege of Solthmouth to tidy up after the fire burns and to ensure that the Orlanthi commoners who flee the city are captured and interrogated to ensure they are not enemies of the Empire.

Victory Points: None

(Any) The Night of Fire

Synopsis: Telektios Ashbringer brings fire to the valley.

Telektios, the commander of the Fifth camp, has taken little direct action in the war thus far. The mystics of the Empire of Wyrms' Friends do not exert their powers if possible; power feeds on power, so every iota of it must be cherished. Now, Telektios has reached a new level of Draconic Evolution, a new step on his own twisted path towards perfection.

In short, he has become something like a dragon. He is not a true dragon, nor even a dream dragon, but a bizarre hybrid. His once-human body is warped and twisted into an approximation of the draconic form. His features are half-way between wyrm and man. His internal fires are burning through his body and he sloughs burnt scales and ash when he moves. Every moment of his existence is blessed agony. He is too strange to live but too stubborn and convicted to die. Instead of trying to perfect his soul, like other mystics, he has perfected his body, becoming a killing machine.

Now, he takes flight. In dragon form, he flies into the Solthi River valley and spits down fire at the Orlanthi villages and fortress. Thunder Bridge burns, Sky End Stead burns. He soars above Solthmouth and vomits flame.

Ideally, EWf characters should only see Telektios from a distance and he should be described as if he is a full-fledged dragon. It is only in the next section that they see he has not attained draconic perfection but is something new, desperate and strange.

The characters are unlikely to have any defence against the Night of Fire but this is not a full-scale military attack on the Orlanthi. It is simply an orgy of terror and destruction. Unless the characters are somehow able to drive Telektios away, his attack will severely demoralise the Orlanthi.

Victory Points: 1D6 for the EWf or -1D6 for the other factions.

(Any) Attacking the Fifth Camp

Synopsis: The Orlanthi launch an attack on the Fifth camp.

The Orlanthi have reached the Fifth camp. Shocked by the speed of the rebellion, the EWf break and run from the barbarian hordes and the Orlanthi loot the camp's war machines and weapons. Dinosaurs break free and run amok. Ferule and the last of his loyal troops, including Right Word Now, make a desperate stand at the command tent.

Telektios rises up from the ruins of the camp and soars into the sky, escaping the rebels but the rest of the EWf are scattered and slain. The Orlanthi have won.

Victory Points: Aren't important any more. The rebels have scored a complete victory. For the purposes of the HeroQuest (see page 103) consider them to begin with 25 Victory Points.

SACRED TIME

When We Could No Longer Stand

This is the Sacred Time, when the world stops.
This is the Sacred Time, when the gods draw close.
This is the Sacred Time, when life comes from death.
This is the Sacred Time, when sacrifices are made.
This is the Sacred Time; today, you will not bear arms.
This is the Sacred Time; today, you will remember.
This is the Sacred Time; today is always today.
This is the Sacred Time.
It has always been and will always be,
Outside the cycle of the years, outside death and
diminishment.
This is the Sacred Time.
This is the Sacred Time.
This is the Sacred Time; today, you are sacred.

Regardless of the events of the war, Maralis is dead or dying. There is but one way to save her – the HeroQuest of Orlanth the Martyr. Her body is taken to the secret shrine at Sky End Stead by her loyalists and prepared for the mystic journey into the Otherworld. The final section of the *Blood of Orlanth* campaign deals with that HeroQuest and its ramifications.

Orlanthi

As Maralis' allies and champions during the war, the characters are asked to perform the quest. It is a comparatively simple HeroQuest in terms of actions but is difficult to complete unless one possesses great skill and courage. The characters are instructed on the quest by Orlgard, if he still lives; if he does not, then an eccentric old priest called Forgo instructs them.

The characters cross Sky End Lake in a little boat, taking Maralis' body with them. They catch a glimpse of a huge wolf prowling in the forests surrounding the lake – this is the watchful spirit of the clan, protecting this most sacred place. The characters' guide explains that the HeroQuest will recreate the myth of how Orlanth fought the dragon Sh'kaharzeel, how he nearly died but was healed and restored to health.

Maralis is laid down upon the stone bier on the island while Orlgard (or Forgo) begins to chant the Lay of Orlanth Martyr. Dozens of torches flicker into light around the shores of the lake, as the people of Sky End Stead arrive and lend their prayers and support to the HeroQuest. The mists roll in and the mundane world begins to fade as the characters begin their transit to the Hero Plane.

And then Telektios arrives...

The War Is Over. Who won?

Orlanthi/God Learner VPs...	EWV VPs...	Results of the War
0–5	21+	EWV triumph. The rebellion is wiped out and the whole valley is forcibly converted to the Draconic Way. King Androfin's declaration of religious freedom and Old Way Traditionalism in Hendrikiland is looking a lot shakier...
6–10	16–20	EWV victory. The rebellion is largely destroyed, although bandits and Traditionalists continue to resist the EWV. The Wyrms' Friends manage to capture most of the Solthi River valley.
11–15	11–15	Stalemate. The Orlanthi have bought themselves a few months, at most. Soon, the eye of the dragon will turn back towards the rebellious barbarians.
16–20	6–10	Extended Stalemate. The EWV commanders believe that the barbarians are not worth the trouble of a military conquest, given they have fought so well. While the EWV continues to send missionaries to the barbarians, the threat of conquest and forcible conversion has receded.
21+	0–5	Rebel victory. The EWV retreats in disorder and a wave of copycat rebellions spreads like wildfire. It will be five years at least before the Empire makes up the ground it has lost this Storm Season.

God Learners

However the war went, the God Learners have won, as Rsadi crows to the Players. *'The Orlanthi will now fall back on their myths, because that's all they've got left. They'll open the door to the Hero Plane and we will step through it.'*

She explains her scheme to the characters. When the barbarians begin their HeroQuest, the God Learners will hijack it. The primary goal is to obtain a sample of Orlanth's blood when he is bled to let out the poison. However, they are also to do what they can to map the boundaries of the myth. How far can it be pushed? Can they threaten the 'life' of the mythological Orlanth by letting the god die? Can they use the myth as a weapon against the EWF?

If none of the characters are sorcerers with the God Learner HeroQuesting magic and the RuneQuest Sight, then Rsadi suggests that they use a magical technique she has pioneered. She can cast a spell that will temporarily permit her to cast spells through another person, letting her advise and aid the characters from outside the Hero Plane. She will suggest that she cast this spell on the most powerful and skilled character. This is the same magic she used on Cadamil to possess him, so the characters may be loath to agree to this ritual. If a character agrees, then Rsadi casts the *queen's gambit* spell on him, at Magnitude 5.

If the characters do not have such things already, Rsadi provides Orlanthi costumes for the characters – they will be acting as Orlanth's warriors and bodyguards in the myth, so they must look the part.

The next step is to get close enough to the secret shrine to open a HeroQuest gate. As the support of the community is vital to gathering the energy for a HeroQuest, taking the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant* is not an option. The characters will have to sneak through the forest, possibly running afoul of the *wyter* spirit. If they captured Jezat and got his copy of Break Wyter, they can get past the clan spirit easily by casting that spell. Otherwise, they will have to battle the Wolf Spirit (see page 133). Rsadi will accompany them so she can open the gate for them to step through. She will remain in the mortal world.

Alternatively, it is possible to open a HeroQuest gate from the Deepwell Caves, as they are a part of the myth of Orlanth the Martyr too.

Rsadi opens the gate (using the Open HeroQuest Gate spell from *Magic of Glorantha*) and the characters step through, fading from view...

New Sorcery Spell: Queen's Gambit

Casting Time 10, Duration Special

This spell may only be cast on a single living creature and creates a magical link between the caster and the target. The caster may only have one such link active at a time. When the spell is cast, the caster must dedicate an amount of POW equal to the Magnitude of the spell. This POW is restored when the Queen's Gambit ends.

The spell has two main benefits. Firstly, the caster may telepathically communicate with the target at will. The target may reply to the caster but cannot initiate a telepathic conversation. Secondly, the caster may cast one Sorcery spell per 24-hour period through the link. The Magnitude of the spell must be less than or equal to the Magnitude of the Queen's Gambit. The Magic Points for the spell cast through the link are paid by the caster, not the linked pawn but any penalties to the casting check (such as armour penalties) are worked out as if the pawn were doing the casting.

Queen's Gambit lasts for a number of days equal to the caster's POW but can be dismissed by the caster at will. If the pawn dies while the spell is active, the caster must immediately make a Resilience check. If this check fails, the caster suffers 2D6 points of damage to the head, ignoring armour.

Empire of Wyrms' Friends

The characters have found their way back to the Fifth Camp, or to another EWF camp if the rebels won. Telektios summons them – he appears restless and angry. *'The barbarians are doing something. I can taste it. I can feel it in my bones. I can see it in the flames.'*

Telektios' glowing red eyes fixate on the characters. *'They cannot destroy the dragon in this world, so they turn to the Otherworld. Orlanth defeated Sh'kaharzeel once. They are trying to recreate that victory, that insolent defiance. I will not tolerate it! The dragon is immortal, invincible!'*

'I will be the dragon!'

He throws off the tent, revealing himself in all his twisted, half-dragon grandeur. If the characters saw him during the night of fire, from a distance, they now realise just how far Telektios Ashbringer is from the draconic ideal. His half-dragon, half-human form is burning up from within. Acidic blood drips from joints that simply do not fit together.

He orders the characters to climb onto his back. Together, they will deal with this threat. Telektios will not take no for an answer – if the characters refuse to accompany him, he picks them up in his claws and flies off towards Sky End Stead. He flies faster than the wind, faster than the sound of thunder. He arrives at twilight as the Orlanthi assemble on the shores of the lake, as Maralis' body is laid on the bier. Telektios plunges towards the mist-shrouded island... and the characters find themselves in the Hero Plane.



Foes on the Hero Quest

The characters are now on the Hero Plane, as is Telektios. Their enemies, too, are on this HeroQuest.

Player Characters	Other Questers
Orlanthi	God Learner Machines, Sh'kaharzeel
God Learners	Orlanthi Troubleshooters, Sh'kaharzeel
Empire of Wyrms' Friends	Orlanthi Troubleshooters, God Learner Machines, Sh'kaharzeel

In all cases, the Player Characters take the roles of Orlanth's bodyguards.

God Learner Machines: Rsadi has since obtained more help from the Clanking City and has sent a group of Mimic Machines into the Hero Plane to interfere with the quest. These are specially designed automata, created to function on HeroQuests.

Orlanthi Troubleshooters: These warriors enter the Hero Plane in a desperate attempt to foil Rsadi's plan after the God Learners 'hijack' the original HeroQuest. They are led by Orlgard, if he is still alive, accompanied by one Troubleshooter per Player Character. These Troubleshooters show up at the Seventh Station.

ORLANTH MARTYRED

There Is Always Another Way

Gods do not die like mortals do.

Mortals die when they stop changing. Gods die when they change.

HeroQuesting

HeroQuesting is a dangerous task. Not only does a traveller in the Hero Plane face gods and demons and monsters of all kinds, he must also keep to the rules of the myth he travels in. He must do as the story dictates or he will fail the quest and be forcibly ejected from the Hero Plane.

The quest is divided into several Stations. The characters must complete each of them in turn. If they are defeated, or if they fail the requirements of that Station, they will bring their quest to an end. The characters do have a measure of grace – they can deviate from the myth a little bit. The characters' standing in the Hero Plane is measured by their Victory Points. They lose Victory Points whenever they fail a Station. If they run out of Victory Points, then the quest ends.

Deliberately Deviating From The Myth

While Orlanthi characters *should* be trying to get through the myth with a minimum of deviations and errors, both the EWF characters and the God Learners have their own aims in the quest. The best times for such changes are at the Eighth and Ninth Stations, at the climax of the story. God Learners can take a sample of Orlanth's blood at any point in the scenario but the most mystically potent blood is that bled from the god in the Eighth Station.

If a character deliberately deviates from the myth, instead of just failing to perform his assigned role, the HeroQuest begins to collapse. The God Learners have the Maintain HeroQuest spell which lets them keep going even after breaking the rules of a quest but other characters have only a few rounds to find an interpretation of their old roles that fit with their actions. For example, the characters are supposed to be Orlanth's bodyguards. If a character refuses this duty and stays behind at the First Station, he will be

ejected from the HeroQuest within a few rounds unless he does something that fits with the myth (say, going to Yinkin and joining the crew of the boat that rescues Orlanth in the Seventh Station).

The First Station: Hospitality

The mists clear and you find yourselves standing on a grassy plain, under a bright sun. The colours are more vibrant than you have ever seen before, the air fresher, the sky bigger. The world is young.

Ahead of you, you see a kingly steed on a hill. There is a longhouse of golden wood roofed with greed lead, surrounded by many outhouses and workshops.

As you approach the steed, a man rides out to greet you. He wears armour of golden scale and he carries a long spear in his hand. He raises his spear and flames run along the tip.

He reaches you and his eyes flash brighter than the sun. His voice is like music. 'Are you friend or foe?'

The characters have been challenged by **Elmal** (see page 133), the guardian of Orlanth's steed and God of the Sun. If the Players remember the Orlanthi Hospitality Rite from page 30, they can answer Elmal's questions easily. The questions are:

Questioner: Are you friend or foe?

Answer: Friend.

Questioner: I am Elmal, son of Yelm, sworn companion of Orlanth. This is his steed. What is your name?

Answer: <NAME>

Questioner: You can have my hospitality. I offer you water.

Answer: I will not steal from you, fight you or say bad things about you.

Questioner: Are you our friend?

Answer: Yes, and here is why.

Orlanth ODartured

Questioner: Then you can have a blanket. Are you a kinsman?

Answer: Yes, and here is why.

Questioner: Then you can have meat. Are you a great person?

Answer: Yes, and here is what I have done.

Questioner: Then you can have salt. Are you willing to work for us?

Answer: Yes, and here are my qualifications.

If the characters deviate from the pattern, which they should have learned from their trek through the Orlanthi villages, they lose one Victory Point per question answered incorrectly. If the characters insult or challenge Elmal, or attack him, then they must fight him. Elmal will give the characters a chance to surrender the first time he inflicts a Serious Wound and he will offer to yield if they inflict a Serious Wound on him. If they slay Elmal, the HeroQuest ends.

If the characters prove themselves friendly – or prove that they are warriors so skilled they can defeat Elmal Yelmson – then they are welcomed into the stead.

The Feast-Hall

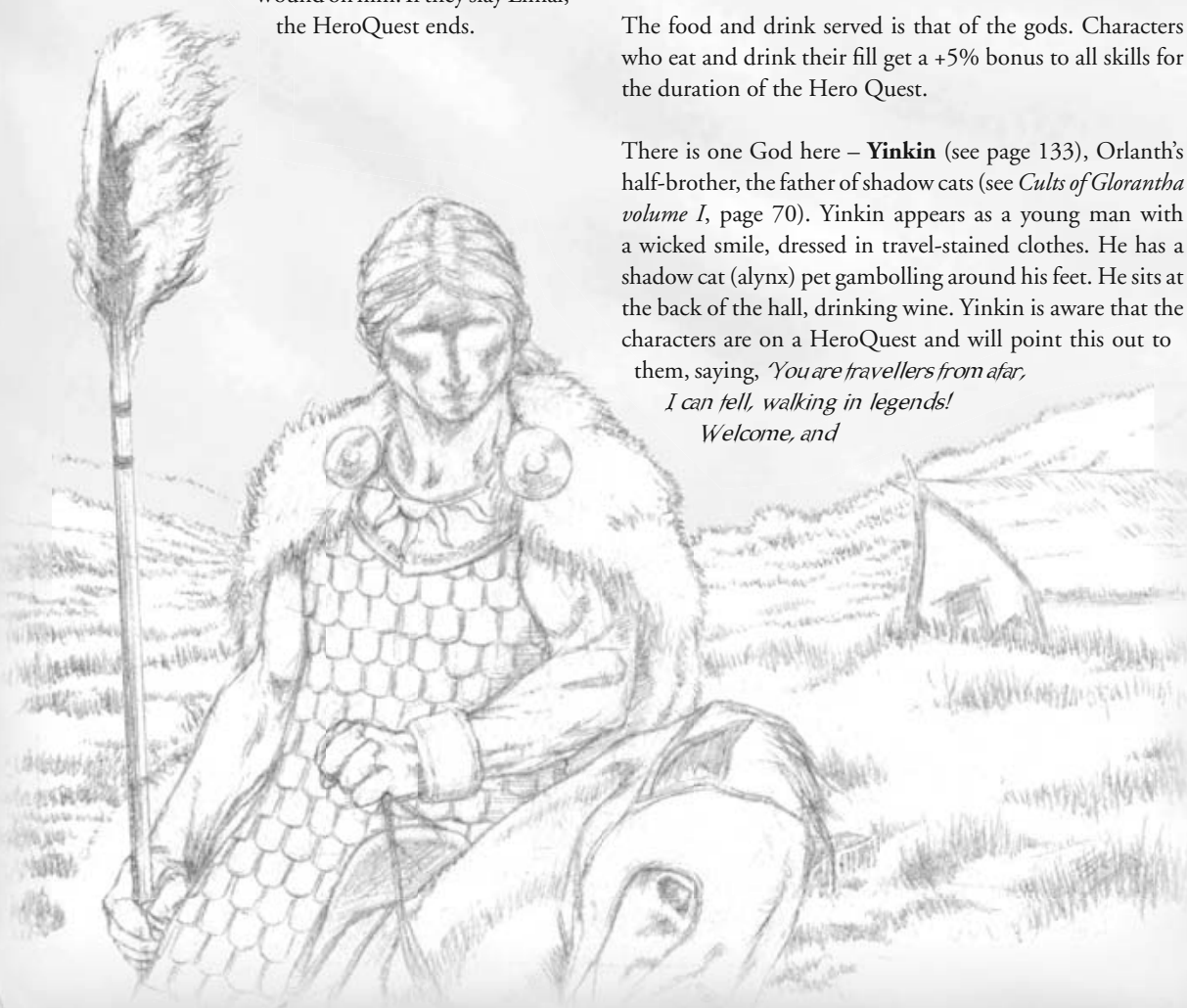
Inside, there are many people sharing bread and meat at the trestle tables. It is dark inside the hall, hot and dark. As the characters press through the crowd, they glimpse familiar faces. The Orlanthi dead are here, all those who fell in the war with the Empire of Wyrms' Friends but also those who died in earlier years. If the characters are Orlanthi, their parents and ancestors are here. If they are Wyrms' Friends, they meet the people they slew in battle. These images are not actually the souls of the honoured dead, any more than the watchman was 'really' Elmal but they are aspects of them, echoes in the Hero Plane and they do share some of their memories.

The food and drink served is that of the gods. Characters who eat and drink their fill get a +5% bonus to all skills for the duration of the Hero Quest.

There is one God here – **Yinkin** (see page 133), Orlanth's half-brother, the father of shadow cats (see *Cults of Glorantha volume I*, page 70). Yinkin appears as a young man with a wicked smile, dressed in travel-stained clothes. He has a shadow cat (alynx) pet gambolling around his feet. He sits at the back of the hall, drinking wine. Yinkin is aware that the characters are on a HeroQuest and will point this out to them, saying, *You are travellers from afar,*

I can tell, walking in legends!

Welcome, and



good luck to you! If you would honour my brother, keep to the path!" A character who jokes and drinks with Yinkin will attract an alynx companion in the mortal world after the HeroQuest.

Once the characters have spoken to the dead and to Yinkin, the wide doors of the hall are flung open and Orlanth enters. Lightning flashes from the clear sky behind him. He strides in, proud and tall and glorious. He looks a little like each character's father and a little like what they imagine themselves to be at their best moments. He also has a certain recklessness that reminds them oddly of Maralis. Orlanth marches to the top of the hall and leaps with a single bound onto one of the tables, spinning in the air as he does so. He slams the butt of his spear onto the table, sending a roll of thunder through the hall.

'Warriors! The dragon has preyed on our flocks and seared the forests with fire! It is time to slay it! Who's with me?'

If the characters do not shout their agreement immediately, they lose 1D6 Victory Points.

The Second Station: Provisioning

Without any detectable transition, as though in a dream, you find yourselves outside in the yard, where young men spar and practice with spear and sword. Orlanth stands high in his chariot of silver, girded in bronze and leather. 'Warriors! Arm yourselves! We're going dragon hunting!'

A voice deep as the grave speaks from behind you. 'You will need weapons.'

Turning, you see a warrior dressed like Orlanth, but where Orlanth is bright and bold this man – this god – is cold and dark. He has a sheathed sword in one hand and a bundle of spears in the other.

The characters are about to be given arms by **Humakt**, the God of Death and Severance. This section of the quest is commemorated in the coming-of-age rites of the people of Deepwell (see page 49) and if the characters listened to those rites, they will know how to respond properly.

Questioner (Humakt): Orlanth is chieftain of this fort. Do you have the courage to take up arms and fight in his service?

Answerer: I do.

Questioner: Do you fear darkness?

Answerer: No, for I have looked upon the dawn.

Questioner: Do you fear Chaos?

Answerer: No, for I know the straight path home.

Questioner: Do you fear death?

Answerer: No, for I have lived well.

Questioner: What do you want of me?

Answerer: A helm.

Questioner: Take this helm and wear it proudly. You will know the secrets of the storm. What else?

Answerer: A shield.

Questioner: Take this shield and bear it well. You will be the shield against danger. What else?

Answerer: A sword.

Questioner: Take this sword and find glory. You shall slay the greatest of foes and bring hope to the world. What else?

Answerer: Wisdom.

Questioner: Do not ask Death for wisdom. Wisdom is the province of the living. The dead have no questions.

If the characters' answers are poor or disrespectful, they lose one Victory Point per question.

The helm, shield and sword given by Humakt are magical.

This is the Storm Helm. It will catch the howling winds and the dark clouds shall be your wings. The lightning will be your road into the skies. With this helm, you can battle dragons.

The Helm allows a character to fly at his normal movement speed but only in stormy weather.

This is the Dragon-Proof Shield. While you bear it, no venom nor spell will bite you.

The Shield gives a +20% bonus to all Resistance tests as long as it is held.

This is Daughter-of-Death, the shadow of my sword. Put your spirit into her and she will slay any foe she touches.

The Sword lets a character spend one Magic Point to add one point of damage to a blow. The Magic Points must be spent before the damage is rolled and up to five Magic Points may be spent on a single attack.

The characters do not need to use these weapons and armour in battle but they must accept them from Humakt to complete this station.

The Third Station: Obedience

Humakt, the warmaster of the Storm Tribe, turns to Orlanth. Humakt hands the sheathed sword to his chieftain and Orlanth pulls it from its scabbard and waves it aloft. 'This is Death,' he roars, 'my sword! To battle!'

The assembled warriors shout in approval and Orlanth gestures to the sky. Storm clouds gather above the stead as if a black cloak is being drawn across the heavens. It begins to rain, then to pour, a torrential, icy cold cloudburst that seems to wash away all your past doubts and fears. Lightning crashes down, two parallel strikes on the horizon that crackle between earth and sky and hang there as dancing columns of white fire. 'Now fly!' roars Orlanth.

And you fly.

The two columns of lightning mark the boundaries of a gateway into the Land of Dragons, where the Wyrms Sh'kaharzeel makes its lair.

The Storm Helms bear the characters aloft, following after Orlanth's flying chariot. There are other warriors in Orlanth's train, other heroes of the barbarians' myths. Below them, spread out like a tapestry of gemstones, is Genertela. As they fly, Orlanth reins in his winged horses and drops back to speak to the characters.

'Through yonder gate lies the Land of Dragons,' says Orlanth. 'And if they close the door behind us, we'll all be trapped in the Land of Dragons and get eaten. I charge ye to hold the gate against the wyrms, to be our rear guard until the dragon is slain. Will ye do this?'

If the characters agree, then Orlanth warns them of the treachery of dragons. *'Remember, dragons are cunning and treacherous. They may call out in mimicry of my voice, or lie to you or try to gull you with illusions. You will know me truly by the thunder and by no other sign. Do you understand?'*

If the characters refuse Orlanth, the HeroQuest ends.

The Fourth Station: Defence

As you approach the twin columns of lightning, you see between them a realm of dancing, twisting colour, a gulf of madness and fire. This must be the Land of Dragons that Orlanth spoke of. You can see lesser dragon-spirits coiling and writhing around the columns, gliding on the hot updrafts.

'To battle!' shouts Orlanth and he leads his warriors on a wild charge, smashing past the dragons and leaping into through the gate!

As the characters approach the gate, they see several bright shapes circling the lightning columns – they are small dragons, the **Sons of Sh'kaharzeel** (see page 133). Orlanth leads his warriors in a wild charge, smashing through the dragons and flying through the gate. The characters are left to hold the door for the Orlanthi host.

Orlanthi/God Learners

Orlanthi or God Learner characters will have to battle the dragons to hold the gate open. The dragons are trying to unravel the magic of the gate. There are two dragons per Player Character. The dragons are unravelling the gates by flying down and grabbing a 'thread' of lightning, then pulling it free of the column. To grab hold of a thread, a dragon must make a successful claw attack. The dragon must then take a Grapple action to pull the thread out and spend a third action (and make a successful Athletics check) to break the thread. If ten threads are removed from the columns, they are destroyed and the HeroQuest is failed. A character or dragon who flies into a lightning column takes 2D6 damage to a random location.

This should be a spiralling, chaotic battle, as the dragons circle around the columns or try to draw the characters away from the gate so other dragons can destroy it.

If the Orlanth or God Learner characters allow the gate to be brought down, the HeroQuest is over.

Empire of Wyrms' Friends

If the characters are EWF soldiers, the dragon spirits approach them curiously. *'You are not Storm Tribe,'* says one wyrm. *'You have draconic nature in your souls! What*



is this?' If the characters respond in Auld Wyrnish, the dragon smiles. *'It is good to see you here. Beyond is Dragon Country, where you cannot go, not yet. But here, in this sky, the souls of men and dragons soar on the same wind.'*

As the characters fly with the dragons, they notice a pair of strange brass machines hovering by the columns of lightning. These are the **Mimic Machines** (see page 126) sent by the God Learners. The machines are displaying draconic faces, so the dragon spirits do not recognise the machines as intruders on the HeroQuest. The Mimic Machines are attaching specially constructed God Bombs to the lightning columns, with the intent of spiritually collapsing the link between the dragons' myths and the mortals' myths. This is an attack on the underpinnings of the EWE.

The God Bombs are iron spheres surrounded by an armature of rune-engraved clockworks. They contain a critical mass of spiritual negation, harvested from the atheists of God Forgot. When detonated, they collapse the Hero Plane for leagues around them, rendering it inert and meaningless. Normally, such a result would be useless to the God Learners but in this context, it is ideal.

When spotted, the Mimic Machines simultaneously turn keys in the casings of the bombs and shove one bomb into each lightning column. The bombs slowly fall through the columns, hitting the ground twenty rounds later

unless they are each intercepted by a character. Remember, a character flying into a column causes 2D6 damage.

The God Bombs are activated and deactivated by keys, which are held by the Mimic Machines. If a character kills a Mimic Machine, he can take the key and fly down to disable the corresponding bomb.

The dragons are creatures of myth and so cannot perceive the Mimic Machines as anything other than fellow dragons. The characters may be able to persuade the dragons to aid them in the battle against the Machines, or they may find themselves battling both dragons and machines.

The Fifth Station: The Fall of Orlanth

You hang in the heart of the storm for a timeless instant, watching the colours beyond the gate churn. Then you hear Orlanth's voice roar from the far side of the gate. 'Friends! The dragon is slain! Come through and help me cut off its head!'

The characters have secured the gate and driven off its defenders. Now, as Orlanth warned, the Wyrms are trying to lure them through. If the characters pass through the gate, the quest ends.

The first trick the dragons try is to pretend to be Orlanth victorious and ask the characters to come through to share in the victory.

If that fails, the dragons again mimic Orlanth's voice, and shout out *'Help me! The dragon's stung me, deep into my vitals! I'm dying! If your oaths mean anything to you, if ever you honoured and loved me, come through and aid me!'*

If that fails, then the dragons stop pretending to be Orlanth and use their own serpentine, inhuman, monstrous and yet compelling voices. *'The barbarian god is defeated. I have my claws at his throat. If you would save him, then come through and face me!'*

Again, if the characters go through the gate, the HeroQuest is over for them.

If they hold true to Orlanth's commands, they complete this Station of the quest and Orlanth emerges precipitously from the Lightning Gate.

The Sixth Station: The Battle of the Sons

Suddenly, the swirling colours on the far side of the gate shift and churn, as if they have swallowed something unpleasant. Lightning flares in the depths of the colours in silent bursts of incredible power. You listen intently for the sound of thunder, for the sign that Orlanth promised.

One heartbeat. Two. Three.

Then something explodes out of the gateway, shooting faster than the wind, a falling star. You catch a glimpse of Orlanth clinging to his flying chariot as he rushes past you. He is bleeding from a thousand wounds and has lashed himself to the chariot with the reins with the last of his strength.

As he passes you, you are rocked by the sound of thunder. It sounds like the noise the ships made when they exploded in Solthmouth Bay, but a thousand times louder.

Orlanth is falling. What do you do?

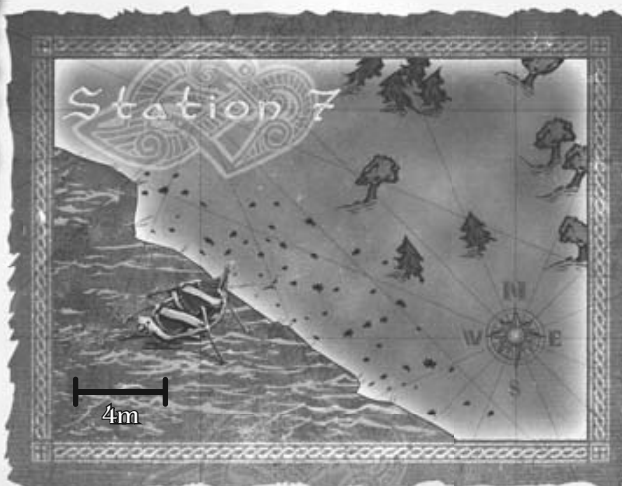
Orlanth has just had his battle with the dragon and it was effectively a draw. Both gods are dying.

The characters presumably follow Orlanth down, racing after him on the storm winds. Orlanth is falling towards the Deepwell Cave. When the characters land, they find a trail of blood leading from the river to the cave. Mortally

wounded, Orlanth has taken refuge in the cave. Unlike the real version of the cave, the mythic version has a tunnel leading down from the surface to the Cave of History.

Wyrmfriend characters can enter the cave immediately. Other characters must face more **Sons of Sh'kaharzeel** (see page 133). These young dragons are here to destroy Orlanth. The dragons fly down from the sky, having chased after the characters from the Lightning Gate. There is one dragon per Player Character.

The characters can either battle the dragons on the surface or retreat into the Deepwell Cave and fight them there. Orlanth lies bruised and unconscious in the Cave of Initiation (see the map on page 50). Each point of damage done to Orlanth by the dragons costs the characters one Victory Point; if they run out of Victory Points, Orlanth dies and the Hero Quest ends.



The Seventh Station: The Rescue

You descend into the dark cave. Orlanth lies on the cold stone, pale as death. His blood pools on the floor and wells up from between his fingers as he tightly grasps his sword.

From above, you hear the creak of oars and shouting voices. Someone is coming.

A cat bounds down the stairs and mews at you.

The smiling traveller from Orlanth's hall follows the cat down the stairs. Yinkin glances at his brother's bloodied corpse and shouts, 'Quick! We can yet save Orlanth! This is getting to be a habit for me!'

He helps you carry the god up the stairs, to where a grey boat waits on the Solthi River. Solemn-eyed warriors are her crew.

Orlanthi

Orlanthi characters immediately notice that the crew on the riverboat are not actually human – they are Mimic Machines pretending to be Orlanthi. If the characters do not intervene, the Mimic Machines will attempt to drain Orlanth's blood using needles during the voyage upriver. If the characters do intervene, the Mimic Machines will fight back.

There are four **Mimic Machines** (see page 126) on board the ship.

Yinkin will stay out of the fight initially. His alynx pet will sniff at the Mimic Machines, then run back to Yinkin, warning him that the crew are in fact Machines, at which point he will join the battle on the characters' side.

God Learner/Empire of Wyrms' Friends

When Empire of Wyrms' Friend or God Learner characters climb out of the cave, they see the boat is crewed by familiar faces. They are led by Orlgard and are in fact **Orlanthi Troubleshooters** (use the statistics for Orlanthi Warriors from page 113), sent into the myth to stop the characters from intervening.

God Learner characters simply have to battle the Orlanthi warriors. Empire of Wyrms' Friends characters have an added complication.

Orlgard (or another suitable Orlanthi Non-Player Character) raises his sword. *'You trespass in our myths, wyrmlickers. Now, you shall die.'*

As Orlgard and his warriors advance on you, you feel a strange scratching sensation inside your chests, as if something is trying to burst free.

All EWF characters may make a Draconic Illumination check (if they are using the skill from *Magic of Glorantha*; if not, they may simply make a Persistence check). If successful, the characters spontaneously transform into Noble Dragonnewts for the rest of the HeroQuest, gaining a +D6 bonus to all DEX, CON and CHA and a +2D6 bonus to SIZ, STR, INT and POW. Successful characters also gain three points of natural armour in all locations.

Yinkin will not intercede in this battle but will instead pick up Orlanth's corpse and vanish into the shadows while the characters are fighting. If possible, he will steal the ship and flee upriver, heading for the Eighth Station; otherwise, he will just run along the banks.

The Sword That Is Death

Clever Players may pick up Orlanth's sword and use it in battle. This weapon is Death and is extremely powerful. It is a war sword that gives a +20% bonus to the characters' 1H Sword skill, inflicts an extra 2D6 damage and automatically integrates the Death rune into the user at no POW cost. Only the character who picks up the sword the first time gets the free Death rune, but they retain it even after the HeroQuest ends.

The Eighth Station: Healing of Orlanth

You return to where you began, to the lake high in the hills, surrounded by forests and rushes. It is neither day nor night here but a grey netherlight that seems to well up from the lake to be reflected by the clouds overhead. Will-o-the-wisps dance in the shadows of the forest.

Orlanth lies on a bier on the island in the centre of the lake. A hooded figure kneels beside him. You catch a glimpse of a knife in the figure's hand.

The characters can arrive here either by accompanying Yinkin on board the grey boat or just by heading north from the Seventh Station – like a dream, distance is meaningless in the Hero Plane.

The hooded figure is **Chalana Arroy** (see page 133), the Orlanthi healing goddess. She has the Bowl of Blood in one hand and a knife in the other. If the characters are Orlanthi, she casts back her hood and greets them with a sad smile.

The hooded woman runs her fingers over Orlanth's wounded body, then stops when she finds one wound that is deeper and more encrusted with dragon-spittle and ichor than the rest. 'Here is where the dragon slung him,' she says, 'the wound must be bled to let out the poison.' She takes a knife and begins to make a cut...

Then something huge and terrible explodes out of the lake, rising above you like a wave. It is a dragon...or the wreck of a dragon. It is Sh'kaharzeel, the dragon slain by Orlanth but at the same time it is something else. You can see the torn and stabbed body of Sh'kaharzeel but overlaid on that, you can also see the strange twisted dragon-thing that brought fire to the valley. It is Sh'kaharzeel but it is also Telektios Ashbringer.

'THE BLOOD!' he roars. 'GIVE ME THE BLOOD, THAT I MAY LIVE AGAIN!' When he speaks, every word is agony for him. You can see the wounds Orlanth inflicted spurt hot dragon-blood and it is only by sheer will alone that Telektios holds the dragon's body together.

Chalana Arroy holds the knife poised over Orlanth's infected wound and looks to you for guidance.

What do the characters do?

The healer will take no part in the battle, except for trying to heal Orlanth. She needs to make three successful Healing tests in a row to cure the god. Each test takes an entire round to complete. Characters can also help with this, making their own Healing tests, but one character needs to accumulate all three consecutive successes. This should be relatively simple but Telektios will attack whoever is doing the healing. Characters can attempt to parry Telektios' attacks that are aimed at the healer.

Telektios automatically loses one Hit Point each round from each Hit Location, representing the crumbling of his body.

Orlanthi

Orlanthi characters need only defend Chalana Arroy until she can heal Orlanth. The characters must hold Telektios back until she has done her work.

If Orlanth is cured, the reborn god leaps from the bier, takes Death from its scabbard (or from a Player Character if one of the characters borrowed the sword), then chops off the dragon's head and hurls it into the sky. The HeroQuest is successfully completed.

God Learners

The aims of the God Learners are mainly to map this myth and to foil the EWF plans. An ideal solution for them is to let Orlanth die but also deal with Telektios by outlasting him. Alternatively, they can just grab the Bowl of Blood and run, fleeing from the dragon until Telektios crumbles away. The HeroQuest ends when Telektios dies.

Empire of Wyrms' Friends

Wyrms' Friends face the hardest choice here. They can easily force Chalana Arroy to give the blood to Telektios but do they? If the characters speak to Telektios, he 'explains' his plans.

'GIVE ME THE BLOOD! I SHALL DRINK OF ORLANTH'S POWER AND I SHALL BECOME SH'KAHARZEEL! THE DRAGON SHALL NEVER DIE! I WILL BE THE DRAGON, IMMORTAL! INVINCIBLE! MAKE THAT WITCH BLEED THE BARBARIAN LIKE A STUCK PIG AND LET ME QUENCH MY THIRST! QUICKLY!'

This is quite at odds with the Draconic Way, not to mention sanity, but the Players may choose to support Telektios. If

they want to aid him, they need only wait for Chalana Arroy to bleed Orlanth, then give the Bowl of Blood to Telektios. Doing this ends the HeroQuest.

If the characters want to stop Telektios but still aid the Wyrms' Friend empire, they can let Orlanth die but not give the Blood to Telektios. The HeroQuest ends when Telektios dies.

Returning To The Mortal World

There are two ways the characters can return to the mortal world.

Firstly, if they successfully complete the HeroQuest, they automatically return to the mortal world, reappearing in the same place they were when they entered the quest (which means EWF characters find themselves falling into Sky End Lake). They also gain magical benefits, as described in *Blood of Orlanth* to the right.

Secondly, if they failed the HeroQuest, they are ejected from the Hero Plane. Failing a HeroQuest carries with it magical backlash, in the form of a curse:

Orlanthi characters have failed their god. They suffer a -20% penalty to all social interactions with other Orlanthi and cannot spend Fate Points or get Divine Intervention until they atone.

God Learners are given a taste of the mythological wrath that will one day destroy their empire. Each character loses 1D4 points of POW permanently.

EWF characters have ensured the primacy of the Orlanthi over the dragon. They suffer a -20% penalty to all social interactions with other EWF members and cannot spend Fate Points or get Divine Intervention until they atone.

Furthermore, one of the rival groups may have completed the HeroQuest successfully and get the benefits described.

Blood of Orlanth

The effects of the HeroQuest vary depending on what happened on the Hero Plane.

The God Learners Get Orlanth's Blood

With Orlanth's blood, the God Learners have what amounts to a master key to the Orlanthi myths. The blood makes it far easier to get into the Hero Plane. Over the next few years, the God Learners continue to maraud and pillage across the Storm Tribe's stories. The Hendrikiland rebels are slowly demoralised as the God Learners leech away their magic.

Rsadi's star continues to rise within the God Learners as she leads this assault on the Orlanthi myths. If one of the characters had *queen's gambit* cast upon him, then Rsadi will cast *dominate human* through him on himself, slowly building up a link like the one she had with Cadamil.

The characters will be rewarded by the Middle Sea Empire when they return home – they have conducted a successful Spirit Raid into the Orlanthi mythworld. They will have their pick of assignments within the Middle Sea Empire and can easily parlay their newfound prestige into a noble title, backing for a trading cartel or assignment to further prestigious Spirit Raids. They will also be rewarded with a fortune in gold (at least 10,000 silver each) as well as access to God Learner sorcery schools.

Orlanth Dies

If Orlanth dies in the myth, his death reverberates through the spiritual realms. The courage of the Solthi rebels fails and the Empire of Wyrms' Friends continues to spread through Hendrikiland. Their spirit is broken and the loss of the valley is a grave blow to the Orlanthi cause in general. On a more mundane level, Maralis dies of her injuries.

Telektios is Allowed to Die

If Telektios is allowed to die, or by some miracle convinced not to embody Sh'kaharzeel, then all is as it was. Sh'kaharzeel remains the animating force behind the dragonewt cities in Dragon Pass. Dragons never die and immortality denies the endless spiritual progress inherent in the Draconic Way.

EWF characters who allow Telektios to die automatically gain +10% to their Draconic Illumination skill (see *Magic of Glorantha*). They also win the respect of the dragonewts; Right Word Now will guide their advancement in the Empire.

Telektios is Slain

If Telektios is slain while embodying the dragon Sh'kharzeel, the results are disastrous. Normally, draconic myths cannot be accessed by HeroQuesters but in his overweening pride, Telektios provided a bridge between the Orlanthi myths and those of the dragons. The 'death' of Sh'kharzeel has a similar effect to the death of Orlanth – it is a huge blow to the Wyrmfriend supporters of Telektios and the a blow to the morale of the EWF overall. A series of earthquakes rocks the valley, many recent local converts reject the Draconic Way and the seemingly boundless energy of the Empire fades in the area.

Telektios Drinks The Blood

If Telektios is allowed to drink the Blood of Orlanth, the effects are even worse. He cements his relationship with Sh'kharzeel, effectively merging with the dragon. Telektios' soul is a mere mote compared to the awesome majesty of the divine dragon but this pollution of one of the true dragons is deeply offensive to the dragonewts. The Cult of Telektios quickly springs into being; Telektios retains enough self-awareness to offer a short-cut to enlightenment, as he is a human soul in touch with a dragon.

Characters who aid Telektios in drinking the Blood can become leaders of the new Cult, gaining Rune priest or Runelord status without having to fulfil the prerequisites.

Orlanth Is Saved

If Orlanth is saved, the HeroQuest is completed successfully, as it is meant to be. Spiritually, this is uplifting for the Orlanthi tribes. The barbarians are given renewed faith and determination to resist the EWF.

More importantly, Maralis is returned to full health. She is also discovered to be with child – either from a liaison with a Player Character, Theorl or a mystical being depending on previous events in the campaign. As one of the most wanted criminals in the Empire, she decides to flee Hendrikiland and go to Ralios to raise her child in peace and she will need the characters to escort her there safely.

From her lineage, Alakoring Dragonbreaker will be born in years to come.

Telektios
Ashbringer



APPENDIX I: FRIENDS AND FOES

Orlanthi Rebels

The clans of the Solthi valley hold to the old ways. Only the richest farmsteads have full-time warriors. These warriors are the honour guards of the local chieftain, or are weapon-thanes (knights) and members of the clan ring. The bulk of the Orlanathi fighting forces are just ordinary folk who take up spear and shield when danger threatens and the chieftain calls them forth.

Orlanthi Scouts

Hunters and Outriders

Characteristics: STR 10, CON 12, SIZ 10, INT 10, POW 9, DEX 12, CHA 9

CA: 2 **DM:** -1D2 **SR:** +11 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 9

Skills: Athletics 26%, Dodge 6%, Language (Theyalan) 60%, Lore (Animal) 20%, Perception 34%, Persistence 19%, Resilience 31%, Riding 25%, Stealth 41%, Survival 29%, Tracking 30%

Atk: Shortspear 41% (1D8 damage, 2 AP) or Shortbow 31% (1D8 damage)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Leather trews and shirt (-6% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on all locations except head)

Equipment: Shortspear, shortbow, 10 arrows, leather armour, 3D6 copper pennies

Orlanthi Warriors

Armed Farmers and Loyal Friends.

Characteristics: STR 13, CON 13, SIZ 12, INT 10, POW 9, DEX 10, CHA 10

CA: 2 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +10 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 9

Skills: Athletics 25%, Dodge 23%, Language (Theyalan) 60%, Perception 24%, Persistence 19%, Resilience 37%, Stealth 5%, Survival 29%, Throwing 22%

Atk: Shortspear 43% (1D8 damage, 2 AP) or War Sword 48% (1D8 damage, 4 AP) or Target Shield 33% (1D6 damage, 8 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Leather trews and shirt, heavy leather cap (-8% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on all locations, 2 AP on head)

Equipment: Leather armour, shortspear, battleaxe, target shield, 1D6 silver coins

Orlanthi Honour Guard

Adventurers, Weapon-Thanes and Experienced Warriors

Characteristics: STR 15, CON 13, SIZ 13, INT 11, POW 12, DEX 12, CHA 13

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D2 **SR:** +11 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Skills: Athletics 9%, Dodge 16%, Language (Theyalan) 61%, Language (Tradetalk) 11%, Lore (Tactics) 11%, Perception 28%, Persistence 22%, Resilience 40%, Riding 8%, Throwing 16%

Atk: War Sword 44% (1D8 damage, 4 AP) or Shortspear 44% (1D8 damage, 2 AP) or Kite Shield 39% (1D6 damage, 10 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: Leather trews, ringmail shirt, metal helm (-18% Skill Penalty, 1 AP to each leg, 5 AP to head, 3 AP elsewhere)

Equipment: War sword, shortspear, armour, kite shield, 4D6 silver coins.

Runes Integrated: Roll 1D10. 1: Metal, 2: Air, 3: Fertility, 4+: none

Unless otherwise specified, all the Non-Player Characters listed in this appendix use the standard humanoid Hit Location table:

D20	Hit Location
1-3	Right Leg
4-6	Left Leg
7-9	Abdomen
10-12	Chest
13-15	Right Arm
16-18	Left Arm
19-20	Head

Hit points are shown in each profile like so:

5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5
L. Leg / R. Leg / Abdm / Chst / L. Arm / R. Arm / Hd

All skill ratings include all bonuses and penalties from armour, weapons, dedicated POW and integrated runes.

Orlanthi Commoners

Simple farmers, cottars, non-combatants

Characteristics: STR 10, CON 10, SIZ 10, INT 10, POW 9, DEX 10, CHA 9

CA: 2 **DM:** -1D2 **SR:** +10 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 9

Skills: Athletics 28%, Dodge 8%, Driving 29%, First Aid 15%, (Theyalan) 60%, Lore (Animal) 30%, Perception 44%, Persistence 19%, Resilience 35%, Stealth 13%, Survival 49%

Atk: Spear 28% (1D8 damage, 2 AP) or Sling 18% (1D6 damage)

Hit Points: 4 / 4 / 5 / 6 / 3 / 3 / 4

Armour: Leather treads (-2% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on legs)

Equipment: Shortspear, sling, leather treads, 3D6 copper pennies.

Orlanthi Cavalry

Average horsemen but doughty warriors

Characteristics: STR 13, CON 13, SIZ 12, INT 10, POW 9, DEX 10, CHA 10

CA: 2 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +10 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 9

Skills: Athletics 25%, Dodge 23%, Language (Theyalan) 60%, Perception 24%, Persistence 19%, Resilience 37%, Riding 40%, Stealth 5%, Survival 29%, Throwing 22%

Atk: Spear 50% (1D8 damage, 2 AP) or Target Shield 25% (1D6 damage, 8 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Leather treads and shirt, heavy leather cap (-8% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on all locations, 2 AP on head)

Equipment: Leather armour, shortspear, shield, 1D6 silver coins.

Youths

Initiates in the Deepwell Cave

Characteristics: STR 12, CON 12, SIZ 12, INT 10, POW 12, DEX 11, CHA 13

CA: 2 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +10 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Skills: Acrobatics 5%, Athletics 28%, Boating 12%, Dodge 1%, Driving 22%, Evaluate 10%, First Aid 10%, Influence 23%, Language (Theyalan) 60%, Lore (Animal) 25%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 10%, Lore (Plant) 10%, Lore (World) 10%, Perception 27%, Persistence 22%, Resilience 34%, Riding 32%, Sing 13%, Sleight 3%, Stealth 16%, Survival 52%, Throwing 3%, Tracking 40%, Unarmed 6%

Atk: Spear 51% (1D8 damage, 2 AP) or Shortbow 51% (1D8 damage)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Leather treads and shirt (-6% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on all locations except head)

Equipment: Leather treads, leather shirt, shortspear.

Aeldred

The Fat, Chieftain of the Laughing River

Characteristics: STR 15, CON 14, SIZ 17, INT 16, POW 12, DEX 10, CHA 16

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D4 **SR:** +13 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Skills: Acrobatics (10%) 0%, Athletics 20%, Boating 20%, Dodge 8%, Driving 22%, Evaluate 46%, First Aid 16%, Influence 96%, Language (Theyalan) 81%, Language (Tradetalk) 50%, Lore (Animal) 16%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 56%, Lore (Plant) 16%, Lore (Tactics) 56%, Lore (World) 30%, Perception 64%, Persistence 52%, Resilience 56%, Riding 22%, Shiphandling 36%, Sing 16%, Sleight (10%) 0%, Stealth (8%) 0%, Survival 36%, Throwing (10%) 0%, Unarmed (15%) 0%

Atk: Valind's Dowry (weaponblessed x3, warrior's x2 war sword) 95% (1D8+3 damage, 4 AP) or Kite Shield 50% (1D6 damage, 10 AP)

Hit Points: 7 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 6 / 6 / 7

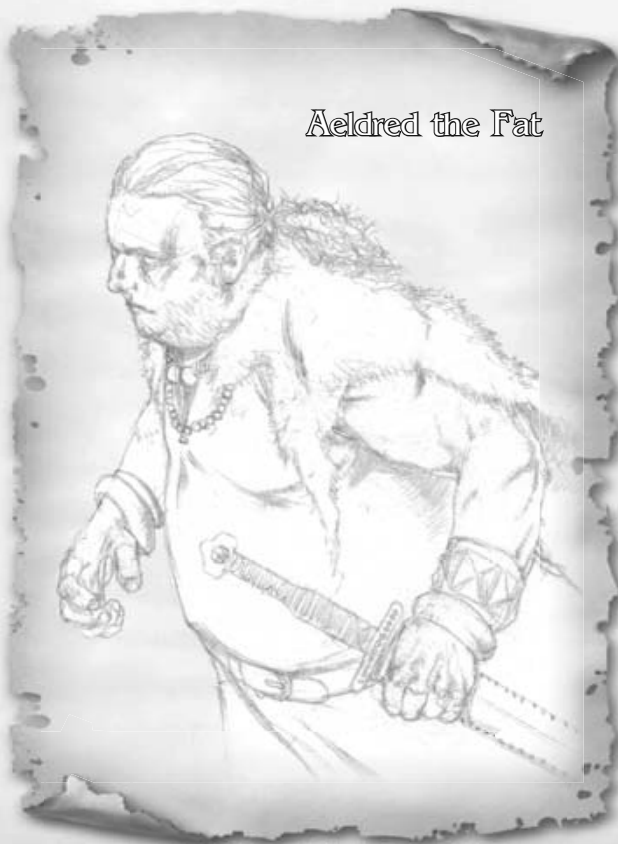
Armour: Bulwark, nimble ringmail shirt, helmet (-15% Skill Penalty, 4 AP to all locations except legs, 5 AP on head)

Equipment: 'Valind's Dowry,' ancestral sword of the Laughing River clan, exquisite armour.

Legendary Abilities: Heroic Aura

Runes Integrated: Luck, Harmony, Fertility

Aeldred the Fat



Aelric

Son of Aeldred, Brother of Maralis, Sent to Noryar

Characteristics: STR 10, CON 10, SIZ 9, INT 15, POW 12, DEX 13, CHA 14

CA: 3 **DM:** -1D2 **SR:** +14 **Move:** 5m **MP:** 12

Skills: Acrobatics 3%, Athletics 35%, Boating 20%, Dodge 4%, Disguise 34%, Driving 22%, Evaluate 15%, First Aid 15%, Influence 44%, Language (Theyalan) 65%, Language (Tradetalk) 35%, Lore (Animal) 15%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 15%, Lore (Plant) 15%, Lore (World) 15%, Perception 52%, Persistence 32%, Resilience 32%, Riding 25%, Sing 14%, Sleight 3%, Stealth 29%, Survival 27%, Throwing 3%, Unarmed (10%) 0%

Atk: Warrior's War Sword 38% (1D8 damage, 4 AP) or Dagger 13% (1D4+1 damage, 4 AP)

Hit Points: 4 / 4 / 5 / 6 / 3 / 3 / 4

Armour: Bulwark, nimble ringmail shirt, leather treds (-10% Skill Penalty, 1 AP to each leg, 4 AP to all other locations except head)

Equipment: Exquisite ringmail shirt, leather treds, warrior's war sword.

Runes Integrated: Motion

Rune Magic: Mobility (Magnitude 2)

Asrela

Last free Orlanthe in Deepwell

Characteristics: STR 15, CON 13, SIZ 10, INT 10, POW 14 (4), DEX 15, CHA 12

CA: 3 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +12 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 4

Skills: Acrobatics 1%, Athletics 26%, Boating 15%, Dodge 31%, Driving 24%, Evaluate 10%, First Aid 10%, Influence 37%, Language (Theyalan) 80%, Lore (Animal) 25%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 10%, Lore (Plant) 10%, Lore (Vinga Theology) 40%, Lore (World) 10%, Perception 44%, Persistence 24%, Resilience 37%, Riding 20%, Sing 12%, Sleight 3%, Stealth 16%, Survival 24%, Throwing 51%, Unarmed 1%

Atk: Keen Shortspear 66% (1D8+1 damage, 2 AP) or Javelin 51% (1D6 damage, 1 AP) or Longbow 36% (2D8 damage)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 6

Armour: Bulwark, nimble ringmail shirt, helmet (-15% Skill Penalty, 4 AP to all locations except legs, 5 AP on head)

Equipment: Greater shortspear, exquisite ringmail shirt, helmet, leather treds., 4 javelins, longbow, 10 arrows.

Divine Magic: Hurl Javelin (Magnitude 10)

Dagunda

Fugitive Priestess

Characteristics: STR 8, CON 13, SIZ 9, INT 12, POW 16 (13), DEX 8, CHA 14

CA: 2 **DM:** -1D2 **SR:** +10 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 13

Traits: Blindness (-40% to all attacks and skill checks involving vision)

Skills: Acrobatics 8%, Athletics 26%, Boating 8%, Dodge 9%, Driving 23%, Evaluate 12%, First Aid 27%, Healing 12%, Influence 54%, Language (Theyalan) 82%, Lore (Animal) 22%, Lore (Orlanthe Theology) 42%, Lore (Plant) 22%, Lore (World) 12%, Perception 30%, Persistence 28%, Resilience 33%, Runecasting (Spirit) 62%, Riding 18%, Sing 14%, Sleight 8%, Stealth 13%, Survival 15%, Throwing 8%, Unarmed 8%

Atk: Dagger 26% (1D4+1 damage, 4 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: None

Equipment: Dagger.

Runes Integrated: Spirit, Earth

Rune Magic: Second Sight, Spirit Bane, Spirit Screen (Magnitude 1)

Divine Magic: Heal Body (Magnitude 3)

Daven Longsword

Cattle Raider

Characteristics: STR 13, CON 15, SIZ 10, INT 12, POW 12, DEX 14, CHA 12

CA: 3 **DM:** -0 **SR:** +13 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Skills: Acrobatics (14%) 0%, Athletics 21%, Boating 13%, Dodge 18%, Driving 22%, Evaluate 12%, First Aid 12%, Influence 37%, Language (Theyalan) 62%, Lore (Animal) 17%, Lore (Plant) 12%, Lore (Tactics) 17%, Lore (World) 17%, Perception 29%, Persistence 22%, Resilience 42%, Riding 40%, Sing 12%, Sleight (14%) 0%, Stealth 3%, Throwing (14%) 0%, Unarmed 4%

Atk: Keen War Sword 80% (1D8+1 damage, 4 AP) or Target Shield 34% (1D6 damage, 8 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Ringmail shirt, leather treds, heavy leather cap (-16% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on each leg, 2 AP on head, 3 AP on all other locations)

Equipment: Greater war sword, exquisite ringmail shirt, leather treds, helm, target shield.

Donal Longtalker

Leader of Thunder Bridge

Characteristics: STR 10, CON 13, SIZ 11, INT 13, POW 15, DEX 10, CHA 16

CA: 2 **DM:** -0 **SR:** +11 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 15

Skills: Acrobatics (10%) 0%, Athletics 18%, Boating 10%, Dodge 17%, Driving 25%, Evaluate 23%, First Aid 13%, Influence 66%, Language (Theyalan) 83%, Lore (Animal) 18%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 13%, Lore (Plant) 18%, Lore (World) 23%, Perception 48%, Persistence 35%, Play Harp 46%, Resilience 33%, Riding 16%, Sing 36%, Sleight (15%) 0%, Stealth 4%, Throwing (10%) 0%, Unarmed 8%

Atk: Warrior's Shortspear 53% (1D8 damage, 2 AP) or Target Shield 48% (1D6 damage, 8 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Ringmail shirt, leather trews, heavy leather cap (-16% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on each leg, 2 AP on head, 3 AP on all other locations)

Equipment: Greater shortspear, ringmail shirt, leather trews and heavy leather cap, target shield.

Runes Integrated: Earth, Harmony

Harp the Dragonkiller

King Androfin's Weaponthane

Characteristics: STR 16, CON 15, SIZ 15, INT 10, POW 12, DEX 12, CHA 10

CA: 2 **DM:** -1D4 **SR:** +11 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Skills: Acrobatics (12%) 0%, Athletics 22%, Boating 16%, Dodge 27%, Driving 22%, Evaluate 10%, First Aid 20%, Influence 40%, Language (Theyalan) 80%, Lore (Animal) 10%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 10%, Lore (Plant) 10%, Lore (Tactics) 30%, Lore (World) 15%, Perception 27%, Persistence 42%, Resilience 42%, Riding 38%, Runecasting (Metal) 46%, Runecasting (Fertility) 36%, Sing 30%, Sleight (12%) 0%, Stealth (12%) 0%, Survival 32%, Throwing (12%) 0%, Unarmed 5%

Atk: Weaponblessed (x2) Baleful Keen (x2) War Sword 92% (1D10+6 damage, 4 AP) or Keen (x3) Shortspear 62% (1D8+3 damage, 2 AP) or Parrying Kite Shield 52% (1D6 damage, 10 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Armour-blessed, bulwark, nimble ringmail skirt and armour-blessed, bulwark (x2), nimble ringmail shirt, helm (-16% Skill Penalty, 4 AP on each leg, 5 AP on all other locations)

Equipment: Exquisite ringmail skirt, marvellous ringmail shirt, marvellous warsword, kite shield, marvellous spear.

Runes Integrated: Metal, Fertility

Rune Magic: Bladesharp (Magnitudes 1, 2 and 4), Heal (Magnitudes 1, 2 and 4)

Hendrik

Orlanthi Loyalist of Sunvale

Characteristics: STR 15, CON 16, SIZ 14, INT 10, POW 11, DEX 15, CHA 12

CA: 3 **DM:** +1D2 **SR:** +13 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 11

Skills: Acrobatics 3%, Athletics 38%, Boating 15%, Dodge 34%, Driving 21%, Evaluate 10%, First Aid 10%, Influence 22%, Language (Theyalan) 82%, Lore (Animal) 15%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 10%, Lore (Plant) 10%, Lore (World) 15%, Perception 41%, Persistence 21%, Resilience 56%, Riding 19%, Sing 12%, Sleight 3%, Stealth 4%, Survival 25%, Throwing 3%, Tracking 25%, Unarmed 8%

Atk: Keen Shortspear 68% (1D8+1 damage, 2 AP) or Kite Shield (1D6 damage, 10 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: Bulwark leather trews, ringmail shirt, heavy leather cap (-12% Skill Penalty, 2 AP on legs and head, 3 AP on all other locations)

Equipment: Ringmail shirt, heavy leather cap, greater leather trews, greater shortspear, kite shield.

Hralf

Leader of Urling's Ford

Characteristics: STR 12, CON 11, SIZ 10, INT 14, POW 12, DEX 11, CHA 14

CA: 2 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +12 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Skills: Acrobatics (11%) 0%, Athletics 45%, Boating 12%, Dodge 23%, Driving 22%, Evaluate 14%, First Aid 14%, Influence 34%, Language (Theyalan) 84%, Lore (Animal) 19%, Lore (Plant) 15%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 14%, Lore (World) 24%, Lore (Tactics) 24%, Perception 36%, Persistence 22%, Resilience 33%, Riding 10%, Sing 24%, Sleight (16%) 0%, Stealth (16%) 0%, Survival 36%, Throwing (11%) 0%, Tracking 44%, Unarmed (12%) 0%

Atk: Keen (x2) War Sword 75% (1D8+2 damage, 4 AP) or Target Shield 55% (1D6 damage, 8 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Leather trews, ringmail shirt, helm (-18% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on each leg, 5 AP on head, 3 AP on all other locations)

Equipment: Exquisite war sword, leather trews, ringmail shirt, helm.

Hrulf

The Chaos-Smasher

Characteristics: STR 17, CON 16, SIZ 18, INT 10, POW 11 (10), DEX 10, CHA 8

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D4 **SR:** +10 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 10

Skills: Acrobatics 2%, Athletics 29%, Boating 17%, Dodge 34%, Driving 21%, Evaluate 10%, First Aid 10%, Influence 18%, Language (Theyalan) 60%, Lore (Animal) 30%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 10%, Lore (Urox Theology) 40%, Lore (Plant) 15%, Lore (World) 10%, Perception 36%, Persistence 21%, Resilience 42%, Riding 13%, Runecasting (Beast) 31%, Sing 8%, Sleight 2%, Stealth 9%, Survival 41%, Throwing 2%, Tracking 40%, Unarmed 19%

Atk: Battleaxe 1H 59% (1D6+1 damage, 3 AP) or Target Shield 19% (1D6 damage, 8 AP)

Hit Points: 7 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 6 / 6 / 7

Armour: Leather trews and shirt, heavy leather cap (–8% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on all locations, 2 AP on head)

Equipment: Leather armour, 2 battleaxes, target shield.

Runes Integrated: Beast

Rune Magic: Strength (Magnitude 3)

Divine Magic: Impede Chaos

Maralis The Orlanthi

'Arkat'

Characteristics: STR 12, CON 16, SIZ 12, INT 15, POW 16, DEX 19, CHA 19

CA: 4 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +16 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 16

Skills: Acrobatics 13%, Athletics 35%, Boating 12%, Dance 33%, Dodge 41%, Draconic Illumination 30%, Driving 26%, Evaluate 15%, First Aid 15%, Influence 49%, Language (Theyalan) 85%, Language (Auld Wyrnish) 20%, Lore (Animal) 15%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 15%, Lore (Plant) 15%, Lore (World) 20%, Lore (Tactics) 65%, Martial Arts (46%) 40%, Perception 36%, Persistence 25%, Resilience 46%, Riding 39%, Sing 19%, Sleight 13%, Stealth 11%, Survival 34%, Throwing 11%, Tracking 15%, Unarmed 11%.

Atk: Keen Warrior's Shortspear 90% (1D8+1 damage, 2 AP) or Keen Warrior's Longbow 77% (2D8+2 damage)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Armour-blessed, nimble, bulwark (x2) leather trews and helm, bonesung breastplate (–6% Skill Penalty, 5 AP on arms and legs, 6 AP on all other locations)

Equipment: Exquisite leather trews and helm, bonesung breastplate, exquisite shortspear and longbow, 10 arrows.

Runes Integrated: Luck, Air, Fertility

Rune Magic: Endurance (Magnitude 1), Good Fortune (Magnitude 2), Heal (Magnitudes 1 and 2)

Draconic Spells: Sense Surface Thoughts, Fiery Claws

Orlgard Sevenson

Chieftain of the Howling Wolves

Characteristics: STR 14, CON 12, SIZ 14, INT 10, POW 16, DEX 13, CHA 16

CA: 3 **DM:** +1D2 **SR:** +11 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 16

Skills: Acrobatics 15%, Athletics 29%, Boating 24%, Dodge 41%, Evaluate 40%, First Aid 10%, Influence 66%, Language (Heortling) 40%, Language (Theyalan) 80%, Lore (Animal) 15%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 10%, Lore (Plant) 10%, Lore (Orlanth Martyred Theology) 90%, Lore (World) 20%, Perception 46%, Persistence 26%, Resilience 38%, Riding 26%, Runecasting (Air) 24%, Runecasting (Light) 24%, Runecasting (Luck) 44%, Sing 26%, Sleight 18%, Stealth 6%, Survival 26%, Throwing 5%, Unarmed 6%

Atk: Keen Warrior's Battleaxe 1H 74% (1D6+2 damage, 3 AP) or Kite Shield 77% (1D6 damage, 10 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: Leather trews and shirt, heavy leather cap (–8% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on all locations, 2 AP on head)

Equipment: Leather armour, exquisite battleaxe, kite shield.

Runes Integrated: Air, Law, Light, Luck

Rune Magic: Extinguish (Magnitude 2), Light, Good Fortune (Magnitude 1)

Divine Magic: None prepared. Access to Consecrate, Heal Body, Heal Wound, Outlaw, Resurrect, Spirit Block, Summon Moot and True Sword

Orlgard
Sevenson



Rangor Blessplough

Priest at Thunder Bridge

Characteristics: STR 9, CON 11, SIZ 14, INT 12, POW 16 (7), DEX 9, CHA 11

CA: 2 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +10 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 7

Skills: Acrobatics 9%, Athletics 28%, Boating 9%, Dodge 5%, Driving 15%, Evaluate 12%, First Aid 37%, Influence 51%, Language (Theyalan) 82%, Lore (Animal) 22%, Lore (Orlanthi Theology) 62%, Lore (Plant) 17%, Lore (World) 17%, Perception 15%, Persistence 35%, Resilience 35%, Riding 16%, Runecasting (Fertility) 49%, Runecasting (Earth) 19%, Runecasting (Law) 32%, Runecasting (Plant) 31%, Sing 11%, Sleight 9%, Stealth 10%, Throwing 9%, Unarmed 9%

Atk: Staff 10% (1D8 damage, 3 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: None

Equipment: Staff

Runes Integrated: Earth, Fertility, Law, Plant

Rune Magic: Clear Path (Magnitude 1), Fanaticism, Heal (Magnitudes 1, 2 and 3)

Divine Magic: Bless Crops (Magnitude 3), Command Bull (Magnitude 3), Plough Strong (Magnitude 3)

Thandor Manysons

Lord of Sunvale

Characteristics: STR 12, CON 13, SIZ 13, INT 12, POW 15, DEX 13, CHA 17

CA: 3 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +13 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 15

Skills: Acrobatics (13%) 0%, Athletics 35%, Boating 12%, Dance 13%, Dodge 10%, Driving 25%, Evaluate 12%, First Aid 12%, Influence 67%, Language (Theyalan) 82%, Lore (Animal) 17%, Lore (Plant) 12%, Lore (World) 32%, Perception 62%, Persistence 65%, Resilience 36%, Riding 23%, Sing 37%, Sleight (13%) 0%, Stealth (18%) 0%, Survival 22%, Throwing (13%) 0%, Unarmed (12%) 0%

Atk: Shortspear 15% (1D8 damage, 2 AP) or Warrior's (x2) War Sword 65% (1D8 damage, 4 AP) or Target Shield 35% (1D6 damage, 8 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: Bulwark leather trews, nimble (x2) chainmail shirt, helm (-20% Skill Penalty, 2 AP on each leg, 5 AP all other locations)

Equipment: Exquisite war sword, exquisite chainmail shirt, shortspear, target shield, leather trews, helm.

Runes Integrated: Truth, Mastery

Theogrim the Honour Guard

Orlgard's Last Defender

Characteristics: STR 15, CON 12, SIZ 14, INT 10, POW 10, DEX 11, CHA 12

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D2 **SR:** +11 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 10

Skills: Acrobatics 9%, Athletics 24%, Boating 15%, Dodge 16%, Driving 20%, Evaluate 10%, First Aid 20%, Influence 32%, Language (Theyalan) 60%, Lore (Animal) 20%, Lore (Plant) 15%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 10%, Lore (World) 10%, Perception 25%, Persistence 30%, Resilience 37%, Riding 34%, Sing 22%, Sleight 11%, Stealth 30%, Survival 30%, Throwing 9%, Tracking 30%, Unarmed 15%

Atk: Short Sword 69% (1D6 damage, 3 AP) or Target Shield 24% (1D6 damage, 8 AP) or Longbow 54% (2D8 damage)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: Leather shirt (-2% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on chest and abdomen)

Equipment: Leather shirt, target shield, short sword, longbow, 10 arrows.



Vinya and
Theorl

Theorl

Ambitious Howling Wolf Warrior

Characteristics: STR 16, CON 13, SIZ 16, INT 10, POW 13, DEX 10, CHA 13

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D4 **SR:** +10 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 13

Skills: Acrobatics 2%, Athletics 28%, Boating 16%, Dodge 32%, Driving 23%, Evaluate 10%, First Aid 10%, Influence 53%, Language (Theyalan) 60%, Lore (Animal) 10%, Lore (Plant) 25%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 10%, Lore (World) 10%, Perception 28%, Persistence 23%, Resilience 36%, Riding 20%, Runecasting (Metal) 25%, Sing 13%, Sleight 10%, Stealth 34%, Survival 33%, Throwing 10%, Tracking 40%, Unarmed 18%

Atk: Short Sword 57% (1D6 damage, 3 AP) or Target Shield 42% (1D6 damage, 8 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: Leather trews and shirt, heavy leather cap (–8% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on all locations, 2 AP on head)

Equipment: Leather armour, short sword, target shield.

Integrated Runes: Metal

Rune Magic: Bladesharp (Magnitudes 1 and 2)

Toe-in-the-Water

Wildman of the Woods, Friend to Siamia

Characteristics: STR 10, CON 11, SIZ 8, INT 15, POW 15, DEX 10, CHA 16

CA: 2 **DM:** –1D2 **SR:** +13 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 15

Skills: Athletics 40%, Boating 35%, Dodge 22%, First Aid 25%, Language (Theyalan) 65%, Lore (Animal) 25%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 25%, Lore (Plant) 20%, Perception 45%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 35%, Runecasting (Spirit) 50%, Runecasting (Beast) 50%, Runecasting (Water) 50%, Stealth 34%, Unarmed 28%

Atk: Longbow 20% (2D8 damage)

Hit Points: 4 / 4 / 5 / 6 / 3 / 3 / 4

Armour: None

Equipment: Longbow

Runes Integrated: Beast, Water, Spirit

Rune Magic: Bestial Enhancement (Magnitude 3), Second Sight, Water Breath (Magnitudes 1 and 4)

Vinya

Howling Wolf Priestess

Characteristics: STR 10, CON 11, SIZ 11, INT 15, POW 15 (7), DEX 12, CHA 14

CA: 2 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +13 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 7

Skills: Acrobatics 12%, Athletics 32%, Boating 10%, Dodge 11%, Driving 17%, Evaluate 15%, First Aid 40%, Healing 50%, Influence 74%, Language (Heortling) 85%, Language (Theyalan) 80%, Lore (Animal) 25%, Lore (Ernalda Theology) 65%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 15%, Lore (Plant) 25%, Lore (World) 15%, Perception 35%, Persistence 37%, Resilience 23%, Riding 24%, Runecasting (Earth) 41%, Runecasting (Fertility) 41%, Sing 14%, Sleight 12%, Stealth 16%, Survival 22%, Throwing 22%, Unarmed 20%

Atk: Dagger 32% (1D4+1 damage, 4 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: None

Integrated Runes: Earth, Fertility

Rune Magic: Heal (Magnitudes 1, 2 and 3), Protection (Magnitudes 1 and 2)

Divine Magic: Soul Sight (Magnitude 5) and Dismiss Magic (Magnitude 3) prepared; access to all common Divine Magic

Wuldric

One-armed warrior of Sky End Stead

Characteristics: STR 14, CON 12, SIZ 15, INT 10, POW 12, DEX 10, CHA 15

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D2 **SR:** +10 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Skills: Athletics 38%, Dodge 24%, First Aid 40%, Influence 55%, Language (Theyalan) 60%, Language (Tradetalk) 30%, Language (Jrusteli) 20%, Lore (Tactics) 40%, Lore (World) 50%, Perception 47%, Persistence 22%, Resilience 54%, Tracking 40%

Atk: War Sword 48% (1D8 damage, 4 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / – / 6 (missing left arm)

Armour: Leather trews, heavy leather cap, breastplate (–16% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on each leg, 2 AP on head, 6 AP on chest and abdomen)

Equipment: Leather trews, breastplate, leather cap, war sword.

Empire of Wyrms Friends

The Empire of Wyrms Friends is driven by expansion and conquest. To rise in influence and understanding, a Wyrmfriend must recruit more members, which means expanding into new lands and new cultures. The imperial warriors, therefore, have quickly evolved into an effective and fast-moving invasion force. Warriors are paid in magic and plunder.

EWF Soldier

Rank and File of the War Dragon

Characteristics: STR 10, CON 10, SIZ 10, INT 10, POW 12, DEX 10, CHA 12

CA: 2 **DM:** -1D2 **SR:** +10 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Skills: Athletics 22%, Dodge 7%, Draconic Illumination 10%, Evaluate 20%, Influence 32%, Language (Theyalan) 60%, Language (Auld Wyrmmish) 10%, Martial Arts (10%) 2%, Perception 32%, Persistence 32%, Resilience 37%

Atk: Shortspear 52% (1D8 damage, 2 AP) or Polearm 42% (1D8+1 damage, 3 AP) or Shortsword 42% (1D6 damage, 4 AP) or Kite Shield 42% (1D6 damage, 10 AP)

Hit Points: 4 / 4 / 5 / 6 / 3 / 3 / 4

Armour: Leather treads, ringmail shirt, heavy leather cap (-8% Skill Penalty, 1 AP to each leg, 2 AP to head, 3 AP elsewhere)

Equipment: Armour, spear, shield, polearm or shortsword.

EWF Cavalry

Mounted on Horses or Dinosaurs

Characteristics: STR 11, CON 12, SIZ 10, INT 12, POW 13, DEX 12, CHA 10

Skills: Athletics 14%, Dodge 9%, Draconic Illumination 22%, Evaluate 22%, Language (Theyalan) 62%, Language (Auld Wyrmmish) 12%, Lore (Animal) 30%, Martial Arts (22%) 14%, Perception 45%, Persistence 33%, Resilience 40%, Riding 47%

Atk: Shortspear 55% (1D8 damage, 2 AP) or Kite Shield 55% (1D6 damage, 10 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Leather treads, ringmail shirt, heavy leather cap (-8% Skill Penalty, 1 AP to each leg, 2 AP to head, 3 AP elsewhere)

Equipment: Armour, spear, shield.

Draconic Magic: Command Reptile

EWF Elite

Shock Troops of the War Dragon

Characteristics: STR 16, CON 14, SIZ 12, INT 12, POW 12, DEX 12, CHA 14

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D2 **SR:** +12 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Skills: Athletics 46%, Dodge 23%, Draconic Illumination 24%, First Aid 32%, Influence 34%, Language (Theyalan) 62%, Language (Auld Wyrmmish) 30%, Lore (tactics) 32%, Martial Arts (52%) 30%, Perception 54%, Persistence 42%, Resilience 81%

Atk: Klanth 56% (1D6+2 damage, 5 AP) or Spear 46% (1D8 damage, 2 AP) or Target Shield 46% (1D6 damage, 8 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Ringmail skirt, helm, bonesung breastplate and vambraces (-22% Skill Penalty, 3 AP to each leg, 5 AP to head, 6 AP elsewhere)

Equipment: Armour, spear, klanth, shield.

Runes Integrated: Dragon

Draconic Magic: Eye Membranes (Magnitude 2), Draconic Strength (Magnitude 3), Draconic Regeneration (Magnitude 1)

Dragonewt Shock Troops

Warriors of the Right Way

Characteristics: STR 20, CON 18, SIZ 18, INT 14, POW 12, DEX 10, CHA 14

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D6 **SR:** +12 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Skills: Athletics 60%, Dodge 30%, Influence 40%, Language (Auld Wyrmmish) 64%, Perception 40%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 70%

Atk: Klanth 70% (1D6+2 damage, 5 AP) or Kite Shield 50% (1D6 damage, 10 AP)

Equipment: Klanth, kite shield.

Dragonewt Shock Troops Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-2	Tail	6/8
3-5	Right Leg	6/8
6-8	Left Leg	6/8
9-11	Abdomen	6/9
12	Chest	6/10
13-15	Right Arm	6/7
16-18	Left Arm	6/7
19-20	Head	6/8

Armour: Scaly hide (no Skill Penalty)

EWF Missionary

Spreading the Word of the Dragon

Characteristics: STR 10, CON 10, SIZ 10, INT 12, POW 12, DEX 10, CHA 16

Skills: Athletics 30%, Dance 24%, Dodge 32%, Draconic

CA: 2 **DM:** -1D2 **SR:** +10 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Illumination 24%, Evaluate 24%, Influence 52%, Language (Theyalan) 70%, Language (Auld Wyrnish) 30%, Perception 40%, Persistence 56%, Resilience 37%

Atk: Short Sword 50% (1D6 damage, 4 AP)

Hit Points: 4 / 4 / 5 / 6 / 3 / 3 / 4

Armour: None

Equipment: Shortsword

Death King (Tyrannosaur)

Characteristics: STR 52, CON 47, SIZ 42, INT 3, POW 13, DEX 10, CHA 3

CA: 2 **DM:** +2D12 **SR:** +6 **Move:** 5m **MP:** 13

Traits: Breathe Flame (2D6 damage, one/day), Night Sight

Skills: Athletics 90%, Perception 50%, Resilience 95%, Tracking 50%

Atk: Bite 60% (1D10 damage)

Death King Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-2	Tail	10/18
3-5	Right Leg	10/18
6-8	Left Leg	10/18
9-11	Abdomen	10/19
12-15	Chest	10/20
16	Right Claw	10/10
17	Left Claw	10/10
18-20	Head	10/18

Armour: Leathery hide (no Skill Penalty)

Anyone who witnesses a tyrannosaur killing frenzy is subject to -40% to all Persistence tests whilst in the dinosaur's vicinity.

Render (Velociraptor)

Renderers are pack hunters, forming groups of between three and five when found in the wild. They like forested areas and the jungles of Fethlon; the forests of northern Dragon Pass crawl with the creatures. Although capable of carrying riders, dragonewts prefer their demi-birds to velociraptors which are easier to control. Mental commands

are not a problem; it is the controlling leaping, spinning and slicing nature of velociraptors that proves difficult, applying a penalty of -20% to the Ride skill when the creature is fighting.

Characteristics: STR 26, CON 14, SIZ 26, INT 4, POW 13, DEX 14, CHA 3

CA: 3 **DM:** +1D12 **SR:** +9 **Move:** 5m **MP:** 13

Skills: Athletics 40%, Perception 50%, Resilience 80%, Tracking 45%

Atk: Bite 40% (1D8 damage) or Kick 35% (1D6 damage) or Claw 65% (1D4+1 damage)

Render Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-2	Tail	5/8
3-5	Right Leg	5/8
6-8	Left Leg	5/8
9-11	Abdomen	5/10
12-15	Chest	5/11
16	Right Claw	5/7
17	Left Claw	5/7
18-20	Head	5/8

Armour: Leathery hide (no Skill Penalty)

Brandig the Bold

Leader at Deepwell

Characteristics: STR 14, CON 12, SIZ 11, INT 10, POW 12, DEX 11, CHA 14

CA: 2 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +11 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Skills: Acrobatics (11%) 0%, Athletics 23%, Boating 14%, Dance (11%) 0%, Dodge 13%, Draconic Illumination 11%, Driving 22%, Evaluate 25%, First Aid 25%, Influence 59%, Language (Theyalan) 60%, Language (Auld Wyrnish) 10%, Lore (Animal) 15%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 10%, Lore (Plant) 10%, Lore (Tactics) 20%, Lore (World) 10%, Perception 42%, Persistence 32%, Resilience 34%, Riding 26%, Sing 14%, Sleight (11%) 0%, Stealth 4%, Survival 22%, Throwing (11%) 0%, Unarmed 2%

Atk: Keen Warrior's Battleaxe 1H 68% (1D6+2 damage, 3 AP) or Klanth 13% (1D6+2 damage, 5 AP) or Kite Shield 53% (1D6 damage, 10 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Nimble (x2) ringmail shirt and skirt, helm (-12% Skill Penalty, 5 AP on head, 3 AP on all other locations)

Equipment: Exquisite ringmail shirt and skirt, exquisite battleaxe, helm, klanth.

Dajai

Wyrmfriend Bodyguard

Characteristics: STR 13, CON 15, SIZ 12, INT 14, POW 15, DEX 15, CHA 10

CA: 3 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +16 **Move:** 5m **MP:** 15

Skills: Acrobatics 39%, Athletics 7%, Boating 13%, Dodge 39%, Draconic Illumination 49%, Driving 25%, Evaluate 14%, First Aid 14%, Influence 30%, Language (Theyalan) 64%, Language (Auld Wyrnish) 24%, Lore (Animal) 14%, Lore (Dragon Pass) 14%, Lore (Plant) 14%, Lore (World) 29%, Martial Arts (80%) 59%, Perception 64%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 35%, Riding 19%, Sing 10%, Sleight (15%) 0%, Stealth 22%, Throwing (15%) 0%, Unarmed (18%) 0%

Atk: Parrying Klanth 53% (1D6+2 damage, 6 AP) or Dagger 53% (1D4+1 damage, 4 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: Bulwark full bonesung armour (-21% Skill Penalty, 7 AP to all locations)

Equipment: Greater bonesung armour, greater klanth.

Runes Integrated: Motion, Disorder

Draconic Magic: Dragon Claws (Magnitude 3), Sight from the Marked Palms (Magnitude 2)

Ferule

The Stone-Breaker

Characteristics: STR 18, CON 15, SIZ 15, INT 12, POW 12, DEX 13, CHA 14

CA: 3 **DM:** +1D4 **SR:** +12 **Move:** 5m **MP:** 12

Skills: Acrobatics (13%) 0%, Athletics 42%, Boating 18%, Dance (43%) 29%, Dodge 29%, Draconic Illumination 44%, Driving 22%, Evaluate 37%, First Aid 32%, Influence 64%, Language (Theyalan) 82%, Language (Auld Wyrnish) 12%, Lore (Animal) 22%, Lore (Kethaela) 32%, Lore (Plant) 22%, Lore (Tactics) 52%, Lore (World) 22%, Perception 44%, Persistence 52%, Resilience 52%, Riding 51%, Sing 14%, Sleight (13%) 0%, Stealth 14%, Throwing (13%) 0%, Unarmed 34%

Atk: Warrior's Greataxe 97% (2D6+2 damage, 3 AP) or War Sword 62% (1D8 damage, 4 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: Armour-blessed, nimble, bulwark full bonesung armour (-14% Skill Penalty, 8 AP to all locations)

Equipment: Exquisite bonesung armour, greater greataxe, war sword.

Runes Integrated: Motion, Death

Draconic Magic: Inspiration (Magnitude 2)

Galana the Blade's Child

Lethal Assassin

Characteristics: STR 11, CON 15, SIZ 10, INT 12, POW 14, DEX 16, CHA 14

CA: 3 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +14 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 14

Skills: Acrobatics 20%, Athletics 24%, Boating 11%, Dance 35%, Dodge 50%, Disguise 44%, Draconic Illumination 26%, Driving 24%, Evaluate 22%, First Aid 12%, Influence 39%, Language (Theyalan) 62%, Language (Auld Wyrnish) 12%, Lore (Animal) 12%, Lore (Dragon Pass) 12%, Lore (Plant) 12%, Lore (World) 27%, Perception 31%, Persistence 29%, Resilience 39%, Riding 29%, Sing 14%, Sleight 60%, Stealth 70%, Streetwise 28%, Throwing 15%, Unarmed 10%

Atk: Weapon-blessed Keen Warrior's Klanth (1D6+6 damage, 5 AP) or Warrior's Dagger (1D4+1 damage, 4 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Armour-blessed, bulwark, nimble leather shirt, treads and heavy cap (-1% Skill Penalty, 3 AP on all locations, 4 AP on head)

Equipment: Armour-blessed exquisite leather armour, weapon-blessed exquisite klanth, greater dagger.

Runes Integrated: Shadow

Draconic Magic: Sight from the Marked Palms (Magnitude 2)

Ferule the
Stone-Breaker



Crowling Jake

Cynical Mercenary

Characteristics: STR 15, CON 15, SIZ 12, INT 11, POW 10, DEX 13, CHA 7

CA: 3 **DM:** +1D2 **SR:** +12 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 10

Skills: Acrobatics (13%) 0%, Athletics 5%, Boating 15%, Dodge 17%, Driving 20%, Evaluate 11%, First Aid 11%, Influence 17%, Language (Theyalan) 61%, Lore (Animal) 21%, Lore (Plant) 21%, Lore (World) 21%, Perception 21%, Persistence 30%, Resilience 60%, Riding 22%, Sing 7%, Sleight (13%) 0%, Stealth 15%, Throwing (13%) 0%, Unarmed (25%) 0%

Atk: Crushing Ball and Chain 57% (1D6+2 damage, 4 AP) or Target Shield 47% (1D6 damage, 8 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 54

Armour: Chainmail shirt, leather trews, helm (-26% Skill Penalty, 1 AP to each leg, 5 AP to all other locations)

Equipment: Greater ball and chain, target shield, chainmail shirt, leather trews, helm.

Hordred

Once Half-Hand, Now Wyrn-Friend

Characteristics: STR 14, CON 11, SIZ 10, INT 12, POW 13, DEX 11, CHA 13

CA: 2 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +11 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 13

Skills: Acrobatics (11%) 0%, Athletics 19%, Boating 14%, Dodge 15%, Draconic Illumination 11%, Driving 23%, Evaluate 12%, First Aid 12%, Influence 53%, Language (Theyalan) 62%, Language (Auld Wyrnish) 12%, Lore (Animal) 12%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 12%, Lore (Plant) 12%, Lore (tactics) 12%, Lore (World) 17%, Martial Arts (11%) 0%, Perception 30%, Persistence 28%, Resilience 39%, Riding 24%, Sing 13%, Sleight (11%) 0%, Stealth (16%) 0%, Survival 25%, Throwing (11%) 0%, Unarmed 3%

Atk: Warrior's War Sword 54% (1D8 damage, 4 AP) or Warrior's Shortsphear 54% (1D8 damage, 2 AP) or Kite Shield 59% (1D6 damage, 10 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 54

Armour: Bulwark, nimble ringmail shirt and skirt, helm (-16% Skill Penalty, 5 AP on head, 4 AP everywhere else)

Equipment: Exquisite ringmail, greater war sword, greater shortsphear.

Draconic Magic: Draconic Regeneration (Magnitude 1)

Little Lok

Telektios' Spy

Characteristics: STR 9, CON 14, SIZ 8, INT 14, POW 12, DEX 15, CHA 12

CA: 3 **DM:** -1D2 **SR:** +14 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Skills: Acrobatics 20%, Athletics 29%, Boating 9%, Dodge 57%, Driving 22%, Evaluate 49%, First Aid 24%, Influence 22%, Language (Theyalan) 54%, Lore (Animal) 24%, Lore (Plant) 24%, Lore (World) 14%, Perception 66%, Persistence 22%, Resilience 31%, Riding 27%, Sing 12%, Sleight 65%, Stealth 72%, Streetwise 24%, Throwing 15%, Unarmed 9%

Atk: Dagger 34% (1D4+1 damage plus poison, 4 AP) or Shortsphear 34% (1D8 damage, 2 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: None

Equipment: Dagger, shortsphear, six doses of wyvern venom (see *RuneQuest*, page 91).

Runes Integrated: Shadow

Right Word Now

Dragonewt Advisor

Characteristics: STR 13, CON 16, SIZ 14, INT 20, POW 20, DEX 13, CHA 15

CA: 3 **DM:** +1D2 **SR:** +16 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 20

Skills: Acrobatics 13%, Athletics 27%, Boating 13%, Dance 13%, Dodge 14%, Disguise 55%, Draconic Insight 45%, Driving 30%, Evaluate 25%, First Aid 20%, Influence 60%, Language (Auld Wyrnish) 70%, Language (Theyalan) 30%, Lore (Animal) 20%, Lore (Plant) 20%, Lore (Dragon Pass) 40%, Lore (World) 35%, Martial Arts 53%, Perception 85%, Persistence 80%, Resilience 36%, Riding 33%, Sing 15%, Sleight 18%, Stealth 39%, Throwing 13%, Unarmed 13%

Atk: Klanth 61% (1D6+2 damage, 5 AP)

Equipment: Klanth

Right Word Now Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-2	Tail	3/6
3-5	Right Leg	3/6
6-8	Left Leg	3/6
9-11	Abdomen	3/7
12	Chest	3/8
13-15	Right Arm	3/5
16-18	Left Arm	3/5
19-20	Head	3/6



Armour: Scaly hide (no Skill Penalty)

Runes Integrated: Communication, Trade

Draconic Magic: Brand Traitor, Command Reptile, Draconic Regeneration (Magnitude 1), Dragon Flight, Sense Surface Thoughts, Universal Deflection (Magnitudes 2 and 4).

Dragonewts use the Draconic Insight skill to cast draconic magic instead of Draconic Illumination. For further details see *Dragonewts: A Guide to the Eraussarr*, although this text is not necessary to play *Blood of Orlanth*.

Seran

The Laugher

Characteristics: STR 14, CON 12, SIZ 15, INT 11, POW 14, DEX 13, CHA 13

CA: 3 **DM:** +1D2 **SR:** +12 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 14

Skills: Acrobatics (13%) 0%, Athletics 6%, Boating 14%, Dodge 27%, Driving 24%, Evaluate 11%, First Aid 11%, Influence 33%, Language (Theyalan) 61%, Language (Auld Wymish) 11%, Lore (Animal) 11%, Lore (Dragon Pass) 11%, Lore (Plant) 11%, Lore (Tactics) 36%, Lore (World) 26%, Perception 55%, Persistence 34%, Resilience 69%, Riding 41%, Sing 13%, Sleight (13%) 0%, Stealth (11%) 0%, Throwing (13%) 0%, Unarmed (19%) 0%

Atk: Warrior's Greatsword 71% (2D8 damage, 4 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: Full suit of bone-sung plate (-21% Skill Penalty, 6 AP on all locations)

Equipment: Full bone-sung armour, greater greatsword

Telektios Ashbringer

Would-be Dragon

Characteristics: STR 40, CON 20, SIZ 30, INT 16, POW 22, DEX 10, CHA 18

CA: 2 **DM:** +2D8 **SR:** +14 **Move:** 5m, fly 10m **MP:** 22

Traits: Breathe Flame (3D6 damage, one/hour), Dark Sight, Formidable Natural Weapons

Skills: Acrobatics 40%, Athletics 80%, Dance 40%, Draconic Illumination 40%, Driving 28%, Evaluate 36%, First Aid 16%, Influence 58%, Language (Theyalan) 86%, Language (Auld Wymish) 30%, Lore (Animal) 16%, Lore (Draconic Philosophy) 56%, Lore (History) 36%, Lore (Plant) 16%, Lore (Tactics) 36%, Lore (World) 26%, Perception 58%, Persistence 62%, Resilience 72%, Sing 18%, Sleight 10%, Survival 38%, Throwing 10%, Unarmed 40%

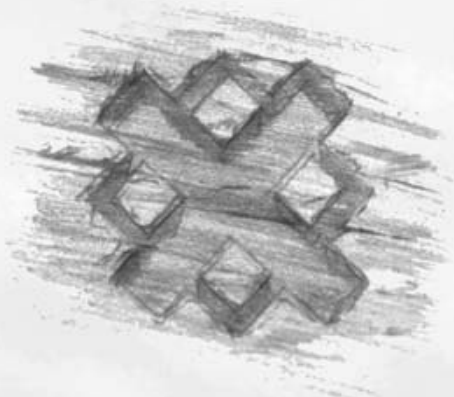
Atk: Claw 85% (1D8 damage, 6 AP), Bite 40% (1D10 damage, 4 AP)

Telektios Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-2	Right Leg	8/10
3-4	Left Leg	8/10
5-7	Abdomen	8/11
8-10	Chest	8/12
11-12	Right Arm	8/9
13-14	Left Arm	8/9
15-16	Right Wing	8/9
17-18	Left Wing	8/9
19-20	Head	8/10

Armour: Undraconic scales (no Skill Penalty)

Runes Integrated: Dragon



Vastyr Brightshadow

Arrogant Wyrmfriend Priest

Characteristics: STR 11, CON 15, SIZ 12, INT 15, POW 17 (12), DEX 10, CHA 15

CA: 2 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +13 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Skills: Acrobatics 10%, Athletics 21%, Boating 11%, Dance 55%, Dodge 18%, Draconic Illumination 50%, Driving 22%, Evaluate 35%, First Aid 15%, Influence 60%, Language (Theyalan) 85%, Language (Auld Wyrmmish) 25%, Lore (Animal) 15%, Lore (Storm Dragon Theology) 45%, Lore (Plant) 15%, Lore (World) 30%, Perception 42%, Persistence 42%, Resilience 57%, Riding 21%, Runecasting (Dragon) 41%, Sing 15%, Sleight 10%, Stealth 23%, Streetwise 27%, Throwing 10%, Unarmed 11%

Atk: Klanth 46% (1D6+2 damage, 5 AP) or Target Shield 31% (1D6 damage, 8 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: None

Equipment: Klanth, target shield.

Runes Integrated: Dragon

Rune Magic: Dragon Breath

Divine Magic: Lightning Strike (Magnitude 5)

Draconic Magic: Draconic Regeneration (Magnitude 1)

Vigota the Prodigal

Wyrmfriend Prophetess

Characteristics: STR 10, CON 11, SIZ 10, INT 12, POW 18 (12), DEX 13, CHA 17

CA: 3 **DM:** -1D2 **SR:** +12 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Skills: Acrobatics 13%, Athletics 33%, Boating 10%, Dance 13%, Dodge 13%, Draconic Illumination 37%, Driving 22%, Evaluate 12%, First Aid 17%, Martial Arts 43%, Influence 52%, Language (Theyalan) 62%, Language (Auld Wyrmmish) 45%, Lore (Animal) 22%, Lore (Dragon Pass) 12%, Lore (Storm Dragon Theology) 57%, Lore (Plant) 22%, Lore (World) 12%, Perception 29%, Persistence 42%, Resilience 33%, Riding 24%, Runecasting (Man) 24%, Sing 17%, Sleight 13%, Stealth 18%, Survival 24%, Throwing 13%, Unarmed 10%

Atk: Martial Arts 43% (1D3 damage)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: None

Equipment: None

Runes Integrated: Dragonewt

Divine Magic: Soul Sight (Magnitude 2), Lightning Strike (Magnitude 4)

Draconic Magic: Draconic Prophecy (Magnitude 4), Sight from the Marked Palms (Magnitude 2)

Viskenos Wyrmsen

Chief of Imperial Secret Police. Oh, and he's a ninja.

Characteristics: STR 12, CON 16, SIZ 12, INT 16, POW 14, DEX 14, CHA 12

CA: 3 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +15 **Move:** 5m **MP:** 14

Skills: Acrobatics 42%, Athletics 23%, Boating 12%, Dodge 55%, Driving 24%, Draconic Illumination 45%, Evaluate 46%, First Aid 36%, Influence 67%, Language (Theyalan) 84%, Language (Auld Wyrmmish) 30%, Lore (Animal) 16%, Lore (Plant) 16%, Lore (World) 51%, Martial Arts (74%) 67%, Perception 95%, Persistence 69%, Resilience 40%, Riding 51%, Runecasting (Truth) 23%, Runecasting (Motion) 23%, Sing 12%, Sleight 22%, Stealth 65%, Throwing 7%, Tracking 66%, Unarmed 5%

Atk: Keen Warrior's Klanth 46% (1D6+3 damage, 5 AP) or

Parrying Dagger 49% (1D4+1, 5 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: Armour-blessed, nimble (x2) full bone-sung

armour (-7% Skill Penalty, 7 AP to all locations)

Equipment: Exquisite bonesung armour, exquisite klanth,

greater dagger.

Runes Integrated: Truth, Motion

Rune Magic: Mobility (Magnitude 5), Oath of Ordeal

Draconic Magic: Draconic Strength (Magnitude 3), Fire Claws (Magnitude 3), Eye Membranes (Magnitude 2), Draconic Regeneration (Magnitude 1)

Yalish of the Dawn

Converter Priest

Characteristics: STR 10, CON 14, SIZ 12, INT 14, POW 16 (10), DEX 10, CHA 15

CA: 2 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +12 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 10

Skills: Acrobatics 10%, Athletics 20%, Boating 10%, Dance 30%, Dodge 8%, Draconic Illumination 23%, Driving 20%, Evaluate 24%, First Aid 14%, Influence 60%, Language (Theyalan) 64%, Language (Auld Wyrmmish) 34%, Lore (Animal) 14%, Lore (Storm Dragon Theology) 74%, Lore (Plant) 14%, Lore (Dragon Pass) 14%, Lore (World) 29%, Perception 24%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 74%, Riding 20%, Runecasting (Law) 24%, Sing 15%, Sleight 10%, Stealth 8%, Streetwise 30%, Throwing 10%, Unarmed 10%

Atk: Dagger 30% (1D4+1 damage, 4 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: None

Equipment: Dagger.

Runes Integrated: Law, Dragon

Divine Magic: Lightning Strike (Magnitude 4), Command Spirit (Magnitude 2)

God Learners

The God Learner Empire seek to understand and categorise the world around them, so that they may turn it to their advantage. While they are known for their sorcerers and magical skill, one should not underestimate the influence they can wield with the mundane wealth of their trading empire.

Cadamil

The Hammer

Characteristics: STR 16, CON 17, SIZ 16, INT 14, POW 13, DEX 14, CHA 14

CA: 3 **DM:** +1D4 **SR:** +14 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 13

Skills: Acrobatics (14%) 0%, Athletics 39%, Boating (16%) 0%, Dodge 22%, Driving 2%, Evaluate 24%, First Aid 14%, Influence 34%, Language (Jrusteli) 84%, Language (Theyalan) 14%, Lore (Animal) 14%, Lore (Pamantela) 14%, Lore (Plant) 14%, Lore (Tactics) 34%, Lore (World) 29%, Perception 27%, Persistence 23%, Resilience 45%, Riding 6%, Shiphandling 14%, Sing 14%, Sleight 14%, Stealth (18%) 0%, Streetwise 27%, Throwing (16%) 0%, Unarmed (21%) 0%

Atk: Keen Warrior's War Sword 70% (1D8+4 damage, 4 AP) or Kite Shield 65% (1D6 damage, 10 AP)

Hit Points: 7 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 6 / 6 / 7

Armour: Armour-blessed, nimble (x2) chain shirt, coif, trews (–21%, 7 AP to all locations)

Equipment: Armour-blessed exquisite chain, exquisite war sword, kite shield.

Legendary Abilities: Duellist (+1 Parry, +10% 1H Sword skill when parrying)

Runes Integrated: Metal, Stasis

Erid Steelhawk

Captain of the *Ebenriss Hawk-Exultant*

Characteristics: STR 13, CON 16, SIZ 14, INT 16, POW 14, DEX 17, CHA 15

CA: 3 **DM:** +1D2 **SR:** +16 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 14

Skills: Acrobatics (27%) 0%, Airshiphandling 59%, Athletics 15%, Boating 33%, Dodge 18%, Driving 25%, Evaluate 26%, First Aid 16%, Influence 35%, Language (Jrusteli) 66%, Language (Theyalan) 16%, Lore (Animal) 16%, Lore (Plant) 16%, Lore (World) 31%, Perception 50%, Persistence 54%, Resilience 35%, Riding (31%) 0%, Shiphandling 76%, Sing 15%, Stealth (13%) 0%, Throwing (17%) 0%, Unarmed (13%) 0%

Atk: Magic War Sword 80% (1D8 damage, 4 AP) or Dagger 80% (1D4+1 damage, 4 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: Magic chain mail equivalent to a coif, shirt and trews (–35% Skill Penalty, 5 AP to all locations)

Equipment: Magic sword, dagger, magic chain armour.

Runes Integrated: Air, Water

Rune Magic: Water Breath (Magnitude 1)

Both of Erid's magic items are mass-produced wondrous devices from the Clanking City. The Chain Mail can shrink down to single metal chains around his neck, wrists, waist and ankles. It takes three rounds for the armour to transform itself into chains or to expand from single chains into full armour.

Erid's sword can charge itself with electricity, dealing an extra 1D4 points of damage on a successful hit or 1D6 if the target is wearing metal armour. Activating this power costs the wielder one Magic Point and the sword remains charged for 1D6 rounds. The power can be activated as part of an attack action.

Mimic Machines

Characteristics: STR 20, CON 15, SIZ 12, INT 10, POW 10, DEX 13, CHA 5

CA: 3 **DM:** +1D4 **SR:** +12 **Move:** 6m (flying) **MP:** 10

Traits: Construct, Fly, Mythic Image

Skills: Disguise 100%, Lore (Appropriate Theology) 40%, Lore (Hero Plane) 40%, Perception 70%, Persistence 100%, Resilience 80%

Atk: Appropriate Weapon 100% (1D8+2 damage, 4 AP, although this can vary)

Mimic Machine Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1–3	Right Leg	6/6
4–6	Left Leg	6/6
7–9	Abdomen	7/7
10–12	Chest	8/8
13–15	Right Arm	5/5
16–18	Left Arm	5/5
19–20	Head	6/6

Armour: Brass and iron body (no Skill Penalty)

Construct: As non-living creatures, Mimic Machines do not lose combat actions when they suffer Serious Wounds. They are immune to disease, fatigue and poison. They do not eat, drink, breathe or sleep unless such action is mythically appropriate.

Fly: Mimic Machines can magically levitate.

Mythic Image: When on the Hero Plane, Mimic Machines blend into the myth. Other creatures of myth perceive the Mimic Machines as fellow mythic creatures, not intruders.

Rsadi the Wondrous

God Learner Sorceress

Characteristics: STR 10, CON 9, SIZ 7, INT 20, POW 20, DEX 10, CHA 15

CA: 2 **DM:** -1D2 **SR:** +15 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 20

Skills: Acrobatics 10%, Athletics 20%, Boating 10%, Dodge 13%, Driving 30%, Evaluate 30%, First Aid 20%, Influence 45%, Language (Jrusetli) 90%, Language (Theyalan) 80%, Lore (Animal) 20%, Lore (Orlanthi Theology) 30%, Lore (Timinit Theology) 20%, Lore (Malkioni Theology) 20%, Lore (Plant) 20%, Lore (Kethaela) 20%, Lore (World) 35%, Manipulation (Magnitude) 50%, Manipulation (Duration) 50%, Manipulation (Range) 50%, Manipulation (Targets) 50%, Manipulation (Combine) 50%, Perception 55%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 29%, Riding 30%, Sing 15%, Sleight 10%, Throwing 10%, Unarmed 10%

Atk: Dagger 35% (1D4+1 damage, 4 AP)

Hit Points: 4 / 4 / 5 / 6 / 3 / 3 / 4

Armour: None

Equipment: Dagger, sorcerer's equipment

Runes Integrated: Fate, Mastery, Truth, Communication

Sorcery: Break HeroQuest¹ 50%, Dominate (humans) 60%, Fly 50%, Maintain HeroQuest² 40%, Mystic Vision 50%, Open HeroQuest Gate¹ 40%, Sense HeroQuest Gate¹ 40%, Spiritual Projection 40%, Tap Power 60%, Telepathy¹ 40%, Queen's Gambit³ 40%

¹*Magic of Glorantha*

²*Jrusetla*, although not required to play *Blood of Orlanth*.

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Rsadi the
Wondrous

Tholos

God Learner Spy

Characteristics: STR 14, CON 11, SIZ 12, INT 13, POW 11, DEX 14, CHA 10

CA: 3 **DM:** +1D2 **SR:** +13 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 11

Skills: Acrobatics 13%, Athletics 32%, Boating 14%, Craft (cooking) 13%, Dodge 10%, Disguise 30%, Driving 21%, Evaluate 13%, First Aid 13%, Influence 45%, Language (Theyalan) 83%, Lore (Animal) 13%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 13%, Lore (Plant) 18%, Lore (World) 18%, Perception 30%, Persistence 26%, Resilience 32%, Riding 22%, Runecasting (Shadow) 48%, Sing 10%, Sleight 11%, Stealth 56%, Survival 13%, Throwing 8%, Unarmed 8%

Atk: Dagger 42% (1D4+1 damage plus poison, 4 AP) or Longbow (2D8 damage plus poison)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Leather shirt and treads (-6% Skill Penalty, 1 AP to all locations except the head)

Equipment: Dagger, longbow, 20 arrows, leather armour, six doses of wyvern venom (see *RuneQuest*, page 91).

Runes Integrated: Shadow

Rune Magic Spells: Cover of Night (Magnitude 4)

Yarlech The Humble

Killing Machine

Characteristics: STR 25, CON 18, SIZ 16, INT 15, POW 10, DEX 13, CHA 4

CA: 3 **DM:** +1D8 **SR:** +14 **Move:** 5m **MP:** 10

Traits: Formidable Natural Weapons, Life Sense, Night Sight

Skills: Athletics 100%, Engineering 60%, Dodge 80%, Perception 100%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 70%, Shiphandling 60%, Unarmed 100%

Atk: War Sword 100% (1D8 damage, 4 AP) or Unarmed 100% (1D3 damage, 4 AP)

Equipment: War sword.

Yarlech Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	7/7
4-6	Left Leg	7/7
7-9	Abdomen	8/8
10-12	Chest	9/9
13-15	Right Arm	6/6
16-18	Left Arm	6/6
19-20	Head	7/7

Armour: Bronze and brass exoskeleton (no Skill Penalty)

The Unaligned

These are various groups in the valley who take a role in the adventure but are not part of the warring armies.

Ambushers

Sent to kidnap Maralis. Woefully outclassed.

Characteristics: STR 11, CON 10, SIZ 11, INT 10, POW 10, DEX 10, CHA 9

CA: 2 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +10 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 10

Skills: Acrobatics 13%, Athletics 39%, Dodge 28%, Language (Theyalan) 60%, Language (Tradetalk) 10%, Mechanisms 18%, Perception 45%, Persistence 20%, Resilience 30%, Sleight 18%, Stealth 42%, Unarmed 39%

Atk: Short Sword 39% (1D6 damage, 3 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Leather trews (-2% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on legs)

Equipment: Short sword, leather trews, 5D6 silver coins.

Aranc

The Carver of Headstones

Characteristics: STR 16, CON 18, SIZ 6, INT 15, POW 10, DEX 10, CHA 6

CA: 2 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +13 **Move:** 3m **MP:** 10

Skills: Athletics 39%, Craft (Stonecarving) 100%, Dodge 39%, Evaluate 80%, Language (Theyalan) 62%, Lore (Religion) 54%, Lore (History) 40%, Lore (World) 42%, Perception 70%, Persistence 90%, Resilience 90%, Stealth 29%

Atk: Penetrating (x2) Dwarf-Forged Hammer 69% (1D8+1 damage, 3 AP) or Keen (x2) Dwarf-Forged Chisel 39% (1D4+1 damage, 2 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Light, nimble (x2) chain shirt, trews and coif (-21% Skill Penalty, 5 AP on all locations)

Equipment: Marvellous chain armour, hammer, chisel.

Aranc's tools give a +20% bonus to any Craft checks involving stone-working, and can cut through any stone with ease. Furthermore, when used in combat, if the attacker succeeds with both a Hammer and a Chisel attack on the same target in the same round, then the target's armour is smashed into pieces. A character must learn the Chisel skill to use the weapon in combat.

Bandits

Raiders and Thieves

Characteristics: STR 11, CON 10, SIZ 11, INT 12, POW 9, DEX 10, CHA 9

CA: 2 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +11 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 9

Skills: Athletics 25%, Boating 25%, Dodge 23%, Language (Theyalan) 62%, Language (Tradetalk) 12%, Perception 44%, Persistence 19%, Resilience 29%, Stealth 28%, Tracking 22%

Atk: Shortspear 50% (1D8 damage, 2 AP) or Bow 50% (2D8 damage)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Leather trews and shirt (-6% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on all locations except head)

Equipment: Leather armour, bow, 10 arrows, shortspear, 3D6 silver coins.

Big Nose

Outlaw; The Clue Is In The Name

Characteristics: STR 10, CON 15, SIZ 10, INT 12, POW 14, DEX 13, CHA 10

CA: 3 **DM:** -1D2 **SR:** +12 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 14

Skills: Acrobatics 10%, Athletics 35%, Boating 20%, Craft (weaponsmith) 12%, Dodge 15%, Driving 24%, Evaluate 17%, First Aid 12%, Influence 20%, Language (Theyalan) 62%, Lore (Animal) 22%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 12%, Lore (Plant) 22%, Lore (World) 12%, Perception 56%, Persistence 34%, Resilience 34%, Riding 19%, Sing 10%, Sleight 15%, Stealth 35%, Survival 46%, Throwing (13%) 0%, Unarmed 32%

Atk: Shortspear 55% (1D8 damage, 2 AP) or Short Sword 15% (1D6 damage, 3 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Leather trews and shirt, heavy leather cap (-8% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on all locations, 2 AP on head)

Equipment: Shortspear, short sword, leather trews, leather shirt, heavy leather cap, 20 silver coins.

Dhrek Billhook

Commander of the Billhook Brothers

Characteristics: STR 15, CON 16, SIZ 12, INT 14, POW 16, DEX 13, CHA 7

CA: 3 **DM:** +1D2 **SR:** +13 **Move:** 3m **MP:** 16

Traits: Excellent Swimmer

Skills: Acrobatics (13%) 0%, Athletics 42%, Boating 25%, Dodge 40%, Driving 15%, Evaluate 14%, First Aid 14%, Influence 27%, Language (Duck) 64%, Language (Theyalan) 14%, Lore (Animal) 14%, Lore (Plant) 14%, Lore (Tactics) 54%, Lore (World) 24%, Perception 30%, Persistence 26%, Resilience 37%, Riding 29% (13%), Sing 7% (0%), Sleight 23% (7%), Stealth 41% (25%), Throwing 13% (0%), Unarmed 15% (0%)

Atk: Keen Greatsword 67% (2D8 damage, 4 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: Bulwark ringmail shirt, helmet (–16% Skill Penalty, 0 AP on legs, 5 AP on head, 4 AP all other locations)

Equipment: Greater greatsword, greater ringmail shirt, helmet.

Runes Integrated: Death

Billhook Brothers

Duck Mercenaries

Characteristics: STR 11, CON 13, SIZ 8, INT 10, POW 10, DEX 11, CHA 9

CA: 2 **DM:** –1D2 **SR:** +10 **Move:** 3m **MP:** 10

Traits: Excellent Swimmer

Skills: Acrobatics (11%) 0%, Athletics 16%, Boating 21%, Dodge 22%, Driving 20%, Evaluate 10%, First Aid 10%, Influence 29%, Language (Duck) 60%, Language (Theyalan) 10%, Lore (Animal) 10%, Lore (Plant) 10%, Lore (World) 20%, Perception 20%, Persistence 20%, Resilience 28%, Riding 15%, Sing 9%, Sleight 5%, Stealth 7%, Throwing (11%) 0%, Unarmed (11%) 0%

Atk: Bill¹ 51% (1D6+1 damage, 2 AP) or Battleaxe 1H 51% (1D6+1 damage, 3 AP) or Target Shield 28% (1D6 damage, 8 AP) or Longbow 35% (2D8 damage)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Ringmail shirt, helm (–16% Skill Penalty, 3 AP on all locations except legs, 5 AP on head)

Equipment: Ringmail armour, helm, bill, battleaxe, target shield, longbow, 10 arrows.

¹The polearm, not the beak.

Forest Cat

Notorious Trickster Thief.

Characteristics: STR 14, CON 13, SIZ 10, INT 16, POW 14, DEX 17, CHA 15

CA: 3 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +16 **Move:** 5m **MP:** 14

Skills: Acrobatics 48%, Athletics 69%, Boating 14%, Dodge 53%, Driving 24%, Evaluate 21%, First Aid 16%, Influence 55%, Language (Theyalan) 66%, Language (Tradetalk) 16%, Lore (Animal) 16%, Lore (Hendrikiland) 56%, Lore (Plant) 16%, Lore (World) 16%, Perception 75%, Persistence 37%, Resilience 37%, Riding 28%, Sing 15%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 58%, Survival 60%, Throwing 14%, Unarmed 14%

Atk: Dagger 57% (1D4+1 damage, 4 AP) or War Sword 47% (1D8 damage, 4 AP) or Keen (×2) Longbow (2D8+2 damage)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: Nimble (×2) ringmail shirt, leather trews (–4% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on each leg, 3 AP on chest, abdomen and both arms, 0 AP on head)

Equipment: Exquisite ringmail shirt, war sword, dagger, exquisite longbow.

Runes Integrated: Motion, Luck

Remember, the Forest Cat will have no armour or weapons when on trial.

Gundaghuz

Mother of Many Trolls

Characteristics: STR 30, CON 16, SIZ 25, INT 15, POW 15, DEX 10, CHA 10

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D12 **SR:** +13 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 15

Traits: Dark Sight, Earth Sense

Skills: Athletics 50%, Dodge 35%, Influence 60%, Language (Theyalan) 15%, Language (Tradetalk) 15%, Perception 60%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 70%, Runecasting (Darkness) 40%, Stealth 70%, Survival 50%

Atk: Really, *Really* Big Club 80% (1D10+3 damage, 3 AP)

Hit Points: 9 / 9 / 10 / 11 / 8 / 8 / 9

Armour: Tough troll skin (no Skill Penalty, 3 AP on all locations)

Equipment: Really, *really* big club.

Runes Integrated: Darkness

Rune Magic: Darkwall

The Sons of Gundaghuz

She has a big family...

Characteristics: STR 17, CON 10, SIZ 20, INT 8, POW 10, DEX 10, CHA 10

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D6 **SR:** +11 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 10

Traits: Dark Sight, Earth Sense

Skills: Athletics 40%, Perception 40%, Resilience 40%, Stealth 30%, Survival 40%

Atk: War Sword 50% (1D8 damage, 4 AP) or Kite Shield 30% (1D6 damage, 10 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: Troll skin (no Skill Penalty, 1 AP on all locations)

Equipment: War sword, kite shield.

Each son also has a particular skill:

Gungada: Resilience 60%

Gundagar: Dancing 60%

Gunhagar: Influence 60%

Gunzugat: Runecasting (Motion) 60%, Spells: Slow, Speedart, Co-Ordination

Jezat The Thief

Renegade God Learner

Characteristics: STR 10, CON 12, SIZ 11, INT 15, POW 15, DEX 13, CHA 12

CA: 3 **DM:** -0 **SR:** +14 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 15

Skills: Acrobatics 13%, Athletics 23%, Boating 30%, Disguise 30%, Dodge 33%, Driving 25%, Evaluate 30%, First Aid 30%, Influence 32%, Language (Jrusteli) 85%, Language (Theyalan) 80%, Lore (Animal) 15%, Lore (Plant) 15%, Lore (Orlanthi Theology) 15%, Lore (World) 30%, Manipulate (Magnitude) 40%, Manipulate

(Duration) 40%, Manipulate (Range) 40%, Manipulate (Targets) 40%, Perception 30%, Persistence 45%, Resilience 27%, Riding 28%, Sing 12%, Sleight 13%, Stealth 22%, Throwing 13%, Unarmed 10%

Atk: Short Sword 33% (1D6 damage, 4 AP) or Dagger 33% (1D4+1 damage, 4 AP)

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: None

Equipment: Short sword, dagger, the Bowl of Blood

Sorcery: Animate Stone 60%, Break Wyter 40%, Form/Set Fire 50%, Firebolt 60%, Haste 52%, Skin of Life 60%, Slumber 50%, Treat Wounds 50%

Outlaws

Hired Swords of Jezat the Thief

Characteristics: STR 11, CON 13, SIZ 13, INT 10, POW 9, DEX 12, CHA 9

CA: 2 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +11 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 9

Skills: Acrobatics 8%, Athletics 39%, Boating 11%, Dodge 5%, Driving 19%, Evaluate 10%, First Aid 10%, Influence 19%, Language (Theyalan) 50%, Perception 34%, Persistence 19%, Resilience 37%, Riding 23%, Sing 9%, Sleight 12%, Stealth 20%, Survival 29%, Throwing 8%, Tracking 30%, Unarmed 17%

Atk: Hatchet 64% (1D6 damage, 3 AP) or Target Shield 59% (1D6 damage, 10 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: Leather trews and heavy leather cap (-4% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on each leg, 2 AP on head)

Equipment: Armour, 2 hatchets, shield, 2D6 silver coins.

Rorl the Reaper

Savage Outlaw

Characteristics: STR 15, CON 12, SIZ 15, INT 10, POW 10, DEX 11, CHA 9

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D2 **SR:** +10 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 10

Skills: Acrobatics (11%) 0%, Athletics 30%, Boating 20%, Dodge (6%) 0%, Driving 20%, Evaluate 10%, First Aid 10%, Influence 19%, Language (Theyalan) 60%, Perception 40%, Persistence 20%, Resilience 37%, Riding 10%, Sing 9%, Sleight (11%) 0%, Stealth 25%, Survival 20%, Throwing (11%) 0%, Unarmed (15%) 0%

Atk: Battleaxe 1H 49% (1D6+1 damage, 3 AP) or Target Shield 24% (1D6 damage, 8 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: Ringmail shirt, leather trews, heavy leather cap (-16% Skill Penalty, 1 AP on each leg, 2 AP on head, 3 AP on all other locations)

Equipment: Ringmail shirt, leather trews, heavy leather cap, battleaxe, target shield, 50 silver coins.

New Sorcery Spells

Firebolt

Casting Time 1, Instant, Resist (Dodge)

This spell conjures a small bolt of magical fire that causes horrendous burns to a target. For every two levels of Magnitude, the spell does 1D6 points of magical fire damage to a single randomly rolled hit location.

Break Wyter

Casting Time 2, Concentration, Resist (Persistence)

This spell banishes an Orlanthi clan spirit for as long as the caster concentrates.

Zugat Ate-Nine-Men

Troll Magic Broker

Characteristics: STR 22, CON 12, SIZ 20, INT 15, POW 15, DEX 10, CHA 10

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D8 **SR:** +13 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 15

Traits: Dark Sight, Earth Sense

Skills: Athletics 40%, Dodge 40%, Influence 50%, Language (Theyalan) 15%, Language (Tradetalk) 15%, Perception 60%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 60%, Runecasting (Magic) 40%, Runecasting (Fire) 50%, Stealth 70%, Survival 50%

Atk: War Sword 70% (1D8 damage, 4 AP) or Kite Shield 40% (1D6 damage, 10 AP)

Hit Points: 7 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 6 / 6 / 7

Armour: Troll skin (no Skill Penalty, 1 AP on all locations)

Equipment: War sword, kite shield.

Runes Integrated: Magic, Fire

Rune Magic: Ignite, Fireblade, Countermagic (Magnitudes 1, 3 and 5)

Monsters

Bright Eyes

These entities are lost souls dating back to the Age of Terror. They look like floating globes of ghostly light.

Characteristics: STR –, CON –, SIZ –, INT 10, POW 10, DEX –, CHA 10

CA: 2 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +20 **Move:** 10m **MP:** 10

Traits: Dark Sight, Night Sight, Memory Attack

Skills: Dodge 30%, Perception 20%, Stealth 40%

Atk: Memories 30% (special damage)

Hit Points: 10

Memory Attack: If a Bright Eye touches a Chaos creature, the Chaos creature suffers 2D6 points of damage and the Bright Eye is temporarily exhausted and vanishes. If a Bright Eye attacks a non-Chaotic creature, that creature must make a Persistence check. If the check fails, the creature suffers a momentary vision of how the Bright Eye died. This versions are generally horrific and nigh-incomprehensible; few of the Bright Eyes were human when they lived and they died battling the worst horrors of Chaos. Therefore, seeing this vision of death stuns a victim and it misses its next action. This exhausts the Bright Eye and it vanishes.

Delecti's Horrors

Delecti's Minions are nightmares in flesh. They are made from human corpses with dinosaur and wyvern parts surgically grafted to them, turning them into something like artificial winged dragonnewts. They are the result of the sorcerer's experiments in accelerated Draconic enlightenment. The Minions are failures in terms of enlightenment but are still useful for killing people.

Characteristics: STR 16, CON 16, SIZ 16, INT 8, POW 5, DEX 7, CHA 3

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D4 **SR:** +7 **Move:** 6m **MP:** 5

Traits: Breathe Flame (2D6 damage, one/day), Formidable Natural Weapons, Night Sight, Tail Lash, Undead

Skills: Acrobatics 40%, Athletics 80%, Dodge 20%, Language (Theyalan) 30%, Language (Auld Wyrnish) 10%, Perception 40%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 80%

Atk: Claw 60% (1D6 damage, 4 AP) or Bite 40% (1D8 damage) or Tail Lash 50% (1D4 damage)

Delecti's Horrors Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1	Tail	4/5
2–3	Right Leg	4/7
4–5	Left Leg	4/7
6–8	Abdomen	4/8
9–11	Chest	4/9
12–13	Right Arm	4/6
14–15	Right Wing	2/5
16–17	Left Arm	4/6
18–19	Left Wing	2/5
20	Head	4/7

Armour: Leathery hide (no Skill Penalty)

Tail Lash: ×3 damage for the purposes of knockback.

Undead: Undead creatures are immune to disease, fatigue and poison. Unless otherwise specified they do not need to eat, drink, breathe or sleep.

Es'kaleel The Dragon Spirit

The Echo of the Passing of the Wyrn

Characteristics: STR –, CON –, SIZ –, INT 10, POW 20, DEX –, CHA 10

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D2 **SR:** +20 **Move:** 20m **MP:** 20

Traits: Dark Sight, Night Sight

Skills: Dodge 30%, Influence 10%, Lore (Animal) 10%, Lore (Plant) 10%, Lore (Spirit World) 10%, Lore (World) 10%, Perception 30%, Persistence 40%, Sing 10%, Stealth 30%, Unarmed 10%

Atk: Spectral Bite 30% (1D6 damage)

Hit Points: 20

Jaghash

A Vile Broo

Characteristics: STR 16, CON 16, SIZ 18, INT 16, POW 12, DEX 10, CHA 10

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D4 **SR:** +13 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 12

Skills: Athletics 50%, Dodge 40%, Perception 60%, Resilience 50%, Runecasting (Chaos) 30%, Sleight 35%, Stealth 20%, Survival 50%, Tracking 50%

Atk: Head Butt 50% (1D6 damage) or War Sword 60% (1D8 damage, 4 AP) or Target Shield 30% (1D6 damage, 8 AP)

Hit Points: 7 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 6 / 6 / 7

Armour: Chain shirt and horns (−20% Skill Penalty, 0 AP on each leg, 3 AP on head, 5 AP on all other locations)

Equipment: Chain shirt, war sword, target shield

Runes Integrated: Chaos

Rune Magic: Skybolt

Siama

Spirit of the Laughing River

Characteristics: STR −, CON −, SIZ −, INT 15, POW 15, DEX −, CHA 20

CA: 3 **DM:** +1D4 **SR:** +35 **Move:** 15m **MP:** 15

Traits: Dark Sight, Night Sight, Manifest, Water Travel, Water Control, Entrancing Song

Skills: Dodge 55%, Influence 40%, Lore (Animal) 15%, Lore (Plant) 15%, Lore (Spirit World) 35%, Lore (World) 45%, Perception 50%, Persistence 35%, Sing 80%, Stealth 55%, Unarmed 40%

Atk: Drowning Touch 40% (1D3 damage plus special)

Hit Points: 15

Siama's shape is highly mutable – while she always appears as if she was made from the water of the river, she can assume any appearance she pleases. Her gender is similarly inconstant, but all the Orlanthi myths refer to her as female and she has a marked preference for a feminine shape.

Drowning Touch: When roused to anger, Siama can create water in the lungs of anyone she touches. The damage from her attack is always applied to the chest location and anyone harmed by it must make a Resistance test or lose their next Combat Action coughing up water.

Manifest: Siama can spend five Magic Points to take on human form until the next dawn. In human form, she has STR 10, CON 10, SIZ 10 and DEX 20. If slain, she becomes a spirit again.

Water Travel: Siama is the Solthi River and can instantaneously travel to any point on the river by spending one Magic Point.

Water Control: Siama can alter the flow of the river, making it flood, run dry, move more quickly or slowly or even run backwards.

Entrancing Song: Anyone who hears Siama sing must make a Persistence check opposed by her Sing. Those who fail are temporarily entranced. Singing costs Siama three Magic Points per target.

The Sleeper

The Sleeper is a Chaos entity dating back to the time before the dawn. It is a multicoloured mass of tentacles and mouths, dripping ichor and slime as it writhes forward.

Characteristics: STR 40, CON 30, SIZ 50, INT 0, POW 20, DEX 7, CHA 1

CA: 2 **DM:** +2D6 **SR:** +7 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 20

Traits: Earth Sense, Formidable Natural Weapons, Grab and Devour

Skills: Persistence 100%, Resilience 70%, Unarmed 50%

Atk: Tentacle 50% (1D6 damage, 6 AP) or Bite 60% (1D20 damage)

Sleeper Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1–10	Main Body	6/50
11–12	Tentacle	6/14
13–14	Tentacle	6/14
15–16	Tentacle	6/14
17–20	Maw	6/14

Armour: Rugose hide (no Skill Penalty)

Grab and Devour: If the Sleeper grapples a foe, it will drop him into its mouth next round for a bite attack at +40%.

Sons of Sh'kaharzeel

These are dragon spirits who exist only on the Hero Plane. They resemble small dragons but they have bones of earth and wings of cloud and their eyes are burning stars.

Characteristics: STR 24, CON 20, SIZ 19, INT 10, POW 10, DEX 10, CHA 13

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D12 **SR:** +10 **Move:** 8m (flying) **MP:** 10

Traits: Night Sight, Breathe Fire (1D6)

Skills: Athletics 70%, Dodge 30%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 60%

Atk: Bite 60% (1D8 damage)

Sons of Sh'kaharzeel Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-2	Tail	4/9
3-4	Right Hind Leg	4/9
5-6	Left Hind Leg	4/9
7-8	Hindquarters	4/10
9-10	Forequarters	4/10
11-12	Right Wing	4/8
13-14	Left Wing	4/8
15-16	Right Front Leg	4/9
17-18	Left Front Leg	4/9
19-20	Head	4/9

Armour: Mythic dragonhide (no Skill Penalty)

The Wolf Spirit

The Howling Wolf Wyter

Characteristics: STR -, CON -, SIZ -, INT 12, POW 20, DEX -, CHA 15

CA: 2 **DM:** +1D4 **SR:** +27 **Move:** 20m **MP:** 20

Traits: Dark Sight, Night Sight, Horrific Howling

Skills: Dodge 82%, Evaluate 12%, Influence 25%, Lore (Animal) 12%, Lore (Plant) 12%, Lore (Spirit World) 12%, Lore (World) 12%, Perception 32%, Persistence 40%, Stealth 82%, Tracking 50%, Unarmed 15%

Atk: Spectral Bite 85% (1D4 damage)

Hit Points: 20

Horrific Howling: Characters who hear the howling of the wolf must make Persistence checks or be so unsettled that they suffer a -20% penalty to all skill checks while in the forests near the shrine.

Gods

Chalana Arroy

Goddess of Healing

Characteristics: STR 14, CON 15, SIZ 10, INT 15, POW 30, DEX 20, CHA 20

CA: 3 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +17 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 30

Traits: Can restore 1D4 Hit Points per Magic Point spent to any person within sight

Skills: First Aid 150%, Healing 150%, Lore (Plant) 120%, Perception 70%

Atk: None

Hit Points: 5 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 4 / 4 / 5

Armour: None

Runes Integrated: Fertility, Harmony

Elmal

Son of the Sun

Characteristics: STR 18, CON 20, SIZ 14, INT 10, POW 20, DEX 13, CHA 30

CA: 3 **DM:** +1D4 **SR:** +12 **Move:** 4m **MP:** 20

Skills: Athletics 100%, Dodge 70%, Perception 100%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 80%

Atk: Spear of the Sun 120% (1D8 damage plus 1D8 fire damage, 2 AP) or Shield of the Sun 100% (1D6 damage, 10 AP)

Hit Points: 7 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 6 / 6 / 7

Armour: Elmal's Bright Armour (no Skill Penalty, 5 AP on every location)

Equipment: Spear of the Sun, Shield of the Sun, Elmal's Bright Armour

Runes Integrated: Light, Truth

Yinkin

God of Cats

Characteristics: STR 15, CON 18, SIZ 10, INT 13, POW 20, DEX 25, CHA 20

CA: 4 **DM:** +0 **SR:** +14 **Move:** 6m **MP:** 20

Traits: Formidable Natural Weapons

Skills: Acrobatics 100%, Athletics 100%, Dodge 120%, Influence 90%, Perception 70%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 60%, Stealth 150%, Survival 110%, Unarmed 90%

Atk: Claws 90% (2D6 damage, 4 AP)

Hit Points: 6 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 5 / 5 / 6

Armour: None

APPENDIX II: TRAVEL IN THE SOLTHI VALLEY

Weather

Along the *Laughing River* takes place during the Dark Season, when rain and snow are common. *Ashbringer's War* takes place during the Storm Season, which is stormy. The weather in this region is very changeable – roll on the Weather table each day. A Hard (–40%) Survival text can predict the next day's weather with 75% accuracy).

Solthi River Valley Weather

Weather (1D6)	Dark Season	Storm Season
1	Dry	Dry
2	Rain	Rain
3	Rain	Rain
4	Snow	Snow
5	Snow	Storm
6	Storm	Storm

Dry: No game effects.

Rain: –20% to ranged attacks and Acrobatics tests. –10% to vision-based Perception tests. –5% to Fatigue tests.

Snow: –10% to ranged attacks and Acrobatics tests. –10% to vision-based Perception tests. –10% to Fatigue tests.

Storm: –40% to ranged attacks. –20% to Acrobatics and Athletics tests, –30% to all Perception tests. –10% to Fatigue tests

Wilderness Encounters and Travel

Between villages, the characters will have to travel through the semi-settled lands of the two clans. The Orlanthi have cleared and farmed some of the wooded valleys but much of the land is still wild.

Rather than using the conventional *RuneQuest* rules for travel, use the Average Travel Time in Days table. Mounted characters can get from one settlement to the next in roughly half the time, as can boats going downriver.

The easiest and clearest route is to follow the course of the Solthi River. The river is too fast and steep to safely use as a waterway until Thunder Bridge; after Thunder Bridge, the characters can take boats instead of going cross-country.

These travel times can be skipped, or the Games Master can drop in side quests and other adventures between visits to the towns. Bear in mind, though, that the characters will be eager to press on with their pursuit of Jezat the Thief.

Average Travel Times in Days

	The Eyrie	Sky End Stead	Urling's Ford	Thunder Bridge	Sunvale	Deepwell	Noryar	Solthmouth	Fifth Camp
The Eyrie	—	1	2	3	5	6	7	8	7
Sky End Stead	1	—	1	2	4	5	6	7	6
Urling's Ford	2	1	—	1	3	4	5	6	5
Thunder Bridge	3	2	1	—	2	3	4	5	4
Sunvale	5	4	3	2	—	1	2	3	3
Deepwell	6	5	4	3	1	—	1	2	3
Noryar	7	6	5	4	2	1	—	1	4
Solthmouth	8	7	6	5	1	2	1	—	5
Fifth Camp	7	6	5	4	3	3	4	5	—

Travel Encounters

These encounters are by no means necessary, though they can add spice to otherwise uneventful journeys. Any result of 9 to 19 will only occur once as described – while a similar encounter may occur again, the Games Master should alter the details to make sure the players do not get the feeling of *deja vu*!

Trollkin Marauders

'Marauders' is probably too strong a word. If they are obviously outclassed by the Player Characters, they will hide rather than fight. If they do attack, they will flee once one of them has been killed. Standard trollkin statistics (see page 118 of *RuneQuest*).

Starving Bear

Big, angry and vicious, this bear will attack the Player Characters on sight. Standard brown bear statistics (see page 106 of *RuneQuest*).

Band of Broo

Looking to initially capture someone, for use as a sacrifice in one of their deep woods rituals. That said, if one or more are killed, they will fight to the death. Standard broo statistics (see page 107 of *RuneQuest*).

Escaped Dinosaur

A rogue render that has a bridle and riding gear, but no rider. 10% chance the errant rider (an EWF cavalry rider, see page 120) is hot on its heels, trying to bring it to bay.

30% chance it is already feasting on the freshly-slain carcass of a roe deer (–30% to Perception tests while it feeds). If it notices the Player Characters, it will attack. Use the statistics for the render on page 121.

Pack of Wolves

On the hunt, but not stupid. Will attempt to pick off straggling Player Characters or pack animals but will refuse to engage in a prolonged combat. Standard wolf statistics (see page 120 of *RuneQuest*).

A Wyvern

This is a wild wyvern hunting for fresh meat, though the Player Characters may well mistake it for an ally (if EWF) or an aerial spy (if Orlanthi or God Learners). Will swoop down and attack the creature with the greatest SIZ. It will break off its attack if it suffers more than 12 Hit Points of damage in total. Standard wyvern statistics (see page 121 of *RuneQuest*).

Orlanthi Refugees

The characters come upon a family of Orlanthi peasants from a remote farmhouse, heading south because of the Two Year Winter (or the war). The 'head' of the family is a young orphan, Farik; his parents are dead and he is now the eldest male who must care for his younger siblings and cousins. He has five other children under his care. All are starving; they beg the characters to help get them to safety. Use the statistics for Orlanthi Commoners on page 114.

Travel Encounters

D20	Travel Encounter
1–3	Trollkin marauders, one per Player Character.
2	Starving Bear.
3	Band of 1D3+2 broo.
4	Escaped dinosaur.
5–7	Pack of 2D4 wolves.
8	A wyvern.
9–10	Orlanthi refugees.
11–12	Orlanthi farmstead.
13	Orlanthi hunting band.
14	Orlanthi warrior band.
15–16	Wyrmfriend patrol.
17	Dragon missionary.
18–19	Jezat's cronies.
20	Pick one of the above or determine a new, unique event (such as a natural disaster, a chance meeting with Siam the river spirit or the discovery of a rune).

Orlanthi Farmstead

The characters come upon an Orlanthi farmstead in the wilds. A cottar called Diarmuid lives here; he likes solitude. He is secretly a vile thief and robber; he will offer the characters hospitality, then try to murder them while they sleep in his barn. If the characters search his house, they find 300 silver pieces and a pile of skulls buried beneath his floorboards. Use the statistics for Orlanthi Honour Guard on page 113 for Diarmuid.

Orlanthi Hunting Band

The characters come upon a band of half-a-dozen youths from the nearest of the villages, out hunting in the forest. One of the group, Esnalia, has been gored by a boar and is unconscious and severely injured. Worse, she is the only member of the band with any worthwhile healing magic (an integrated Fertility rune and knowledge of a Magnitude 2 Heal Rune Magic spell). If the characters aid the group and save her, the youths will aid the characters in turn when they arrive at their village. Use the statistics for Orlanthi Commoners on page 114.

Orlanthi Warrior Band

The characters encounter a band of four warriors from the nearest village. They are led by a canny devotee of Vinga named Shalla Deadeye. They are out hunting trollkin (or, if the war has started, EWF). Their attitude towards the Player Characters reflects that of the nearest village, though they are committed against the EWF and as such may be exiles at the moment, depending on the Player Characters' actions in that village. Use the statistics for Orlanthi Warriors on page 113.

Wymfriend Patrol

This patrol is ranging ahead of the main EWF force at the camp. It is commanded by Zoras the Singer, a wymfriend who is known for his talent at singing in the draconic tongue. Zoras commands a dozen soldiers and a Render dinosaur named Discord, who is psychically bonded to him. Most of the rest of the soldiers are mercenaries from the Leftarm Isles. Zoras' orders are to search for insurgents or enemy spies. If the Player Characters are EWF, he will offer them whatever aid he can. Orlanthi will be challenged and questioned to ensure they are not enemies of the Empire; God Learners will be killed if discovered. Use the statistics for EWF Soldiers on page 120, though Zoras has a Sing skill of 70% and a Language (Auld Wymrish) skill of 53%.

Dragon Missionary

The characters come upon a missionary from the EWF, Carajak the Smiler. He is a young Orlanthi who has converted to the EWF and is now a priest of Orlanth the Dragon. He has returned to the lands of his people as a wandering preacher to spread the worship of the draconised god. The characters could just meet him on the road, or as he flees a band of Orlanthi traditionalists who are trying to lynch him. Even if he is being lynched, Carajak retains his gentle good humour and abiding faith in Orlanth the Dragon. Use the statistics for the EWF Missionary on page 121, though Carajak also has an integrated rune of Communication, which boosts his Influence to 62% and gives him the Language (Tradetalk) skill at 12%.

Jezat's Cronies

If the Player Characters have lost Jezat's trail, or somehow managed to avoid learning about the theft of the Bowl of Blood from Sky End Stead, the Games Master can have them run into two of the outlaws from the band, **Rorl the Reaper** (see page 130) and **Big Nose** (see page 128). These two rogues were with Jezat when he stole the bowl but have since become separated from the sorcerer. They are bitter and angry, and are heading down the river to catch Jezat and extract the gold he promised them. They know that Jezat is heading to Solthmouth to meet with someone called the Nineman.

The River Spirit

The spirit of the river Solthi, whose secret name is **Siamia** (page 132), has been stirred by the events in Sky End and by the comings and goings of so many strangers along her banks. The spirit will follow the characters if they are following the course of the river. Siamia is curious and playful but as a water spirit she is mercurial and prone to anger when provoked. She is also adaptable and quick to learn. Orlanthi characters who know her secret name can benefit from her friendship, as she can carry messages up or down the river or even speed or hinder the progress of a boat. Other characters can win her friendship if they indulge her games or make sacrifices to her. Some of Siamia's games include:

- Taking on human form and trying to seduce one of the characters.
- Floating strange items down the river, typically items taken from those who have drowned in her waters.
- Playfully flooding the characters' camp.
- Babbling in tune with the characters' songs or conversations.

APPENDIX III: ADDITIONAL CULTS

Orlanth Martyr

Orlanth the Mortal, the Hero

The cult of Orlanth Martyr honours the self-sacrifice and vulnerable nature of Orlanth. According to the central myth of the cult, Orlanth lay on the brink of death after his battle with Sh'kaharzeel. The cult is about the acceptance of, but also the defiance of death. The cult also commemorates the Lightbringer's Quest, which was inspired, it is said, by Orlanth's own journey to the underworld as he lay dying.

Cult ceremonies focus on healing and rebirth, on the return of the sun at the end of the year and the passing of kingship on through death.

The cult was always a marginal one and has dwindled in the years since the Dawn. In the Second Age, it survives only in a few isolated places, such as Sky End. Some of the cult's rituals have been passed onto those of Orlanth the King, Orlanth the Adventurous and Chalana Arroy. There are no remaining cult temples – the only shrine is the island on Sky End Lake.

Runes: Death, Air, Fertility

Type: Storm, Death

Pantheon: Orlanth

Worshippers: Adventurers, mourners, hopeless and lost folk

Worshipper Duties: Honouring sacrifices, fighting lost causes

Guardian (Initiate) Membership

Requirements: Standard

School Skills: Athletics, Boating, First Aid, Healing, Lore (Orlanth Theology), Perception, Riding, 1H Sword, Spear, Shield

Rune Spells: Bladesharp, Hand of Death, Heal, Thunder's Voice

Common Divine Magic: Consecrate, Dismiss Magic, Excommunicate, Exorcism, Heal Body, Heal Wound, Lightning Strike, Resurrect, Soul Sight, Spirit Block, True Sword

Mourner (Acolyte) Membership

Requirements: Must have suffered a Major Injury or died.

Martyr (Rune priest) Membership

Requirements: Must have a Healing and Lore (Orlanth Theology) of 90% or higher; must have suffered a Major Injury or died in the service of one's kin.

Special Divine Magic: Renew Hope

Special Benefits

Initiates of the Cult of Orlanth Martyr gain one Hero Point if they pray at a shrine. This Hero Point can only be spent to turn a Major Injury into a Serious Injury. If the Hero Point is not spent within 1D6 days of praying, it vanishes.

Telektios Ascendant

The Man Who Became A Dragon

This cult does not yet exist in Glorantha – it springs into being only if Telektios Ashbringer successfully merges with the mythic representation of the dragon Sh'kaharzeel during the HeroQuest.

The cult is effectively a short cut to draconic illumination and preaches that men should behave as rapacious, power-hungry dragons and take what they desire. Most initiates of the Wyrms' Friend Empire try to find the draconic nature within their own souls; the cult turns this around and says that one's soul already has draconic nature and it is only by unfettering the soul and acting on one's own emotions and desires that this draconic nature can be expressed.

The Cult of Telektios is seen as a hideous aberration by the dragonewt allies of the Empire. Dragonewts behave in strange, random ways but always in accordance with Right Action (see *Dragonewts: Guide to the Eravsshar*). Humans

have no such conception of Right Action – and this bizarre cult claims that all human desires are Right Action. To those humans who struggled with draconic illumination before, the cult's easier way proves very appealing.

Runes: Dragon, Man, Mastery

Followers: Those seeking an easier route into the draconic mysteries; marauders and pillagers

Ashmarked (Initiate) Membership

Requirements: Standard

Cult Skills: Dodge, Draconic Illumination, Language (Auld Wyrnish), Influence, Martial Arts, 1H Sword, Knowledge (Military Tactics)

Rune Spells: Dragon Breath, Versatility, Thunder's Voice

Dragon Magic: Spells of up to Magnitude 2

Ashbringer (Acolyte) Membership

Requirements: Must have conquered at least one sizeable town or region for the Wyrms' Friend Empire, converting at least 100 people to the Wyrmfriended philosophy.

Dragon Magic: Spells of up to Magnitude 4

Ashpriest (Runepriest) Membership

Requirements: Must have conquered at least one nation for the Empire of Wyrms' Friends, converting at least 1000 people.

Dragon Magic: Spells of up to Magnitude 8

Ashking (Runelord) Membership

Requirements: Must have conquered at least one nation for the Empire of Wyrms' Friends, converting at least 5,000 people.

Dragon Magic: Spells of any Magnitude

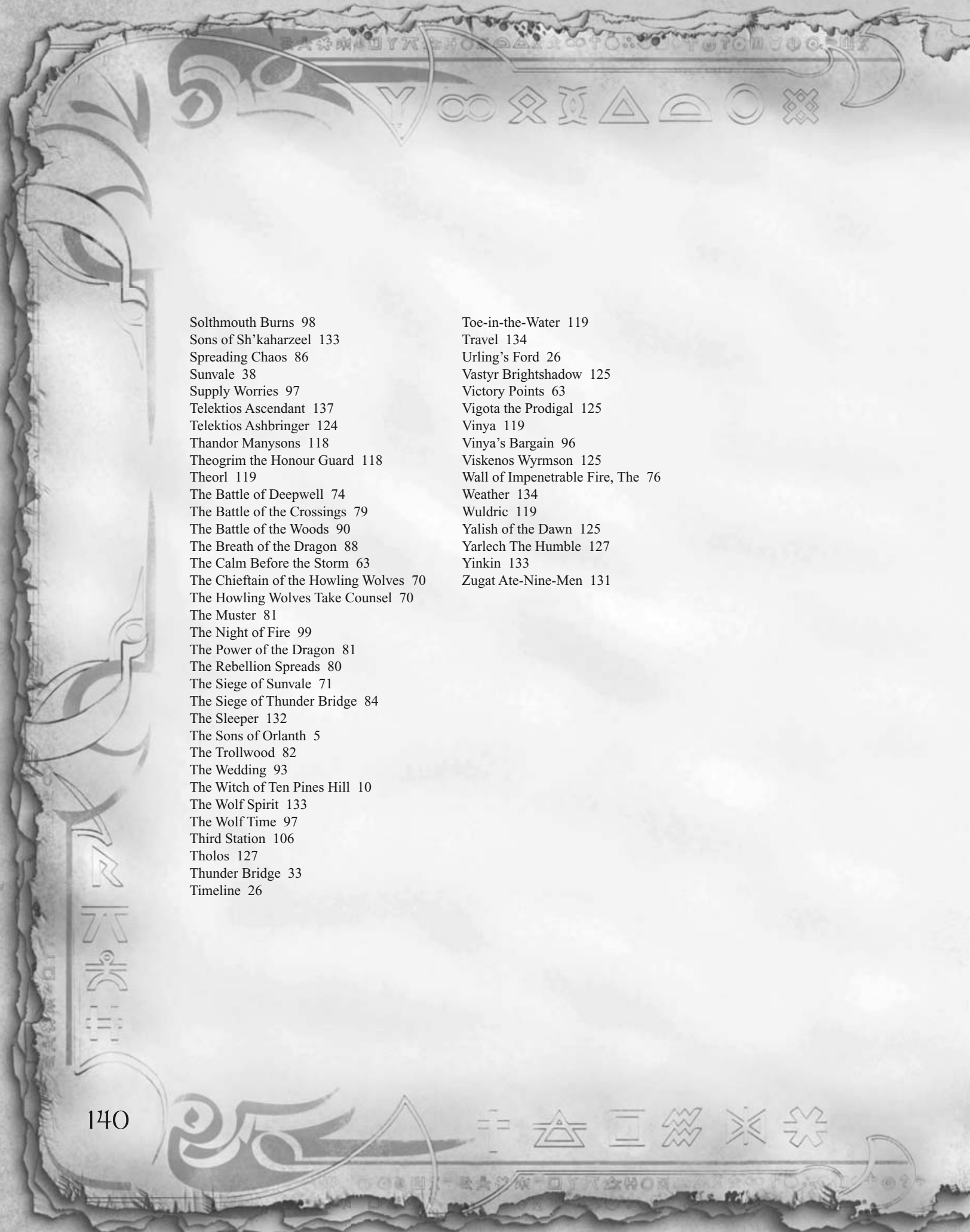
Special Benefits

The Draconic Illumination scores of the members of the Cult of Telektios Ashbringer are not limited by their Martial Arts or Dance scores. However, if they roll a critical success on any Draconic Illumination test, they lose 1D6 points of Draconic Illumination instead of one point (see *Magic of Glorantha*, page 27).

Ashbringers get a +10% bonus to Influence when dealing with other members of the EWF, except for dragonewts. Instead, the Ashbringers suffer a -10% penalty to Influence when dealing with dragonewts. For Ashpriests, this increases to +/- 30%; for Ashkings, +/- 50%.

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THE SECOND AGE

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It starts as a journey down the Solthi river in pursuit of a thief. Orlanthi barbarians, imperialistic Wyrmfriends and even the mysterious and power-hungry sorcerers of the God Learner empire clash in their search for a mystic artefact, and the Player Characters are thrust into the middle of a sudden and ferocious war.

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To use this supplement, a Games Master will require *RuneQuest*,
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