

Designed for use with the **Basic Fantasy** Role-Playing Game



KWELLEN

A GAZETTEER FOR ODYSSEYS & OVERLORDS



REALM OF KNOWLEDGE

KWELLEN

A GAZETTEER FOR ODYSSEYS & OVERLORDS

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ODYSSEYS & OVERLORDS

In the ancient times, the Gods watched over humankind. This was a golden age of learning and peace. Humans revered the Gods, living in harmony with the divine and the companion beasts. Magic flowed freely allowing the learned and the faithful to alter their forms, prevent aging, and preserve health. The wild folk were born of this time as humans and companion beasts united in love. While most of the Gods rejoiced at this development, Ragnar, the God of Conquest was jealous and appalled by the humans choosing the animal companions as mates instead of the Gods. This caused a divine war during which the Gods who agreed with Ragnar tried to kill the other Gods. The first casualty of this war was Ember, the Goddess of knowledge. When Ember died, her scholar-priests, the Keepers of the Arcane were caught in a magical backlash creating the spellscorched. This war of Gods, called the Schism, raged for 1000 years, during which time the followers of Ragnar courted the worship and love of as many humans as they could. From these unions, the Abyss-kissed were born. After a long and bloody conflict, Ragnar and his followers were defeated. The Gods who fought them dragged Ragnar's followers into the Abyss where they are believed to still be fighting to this day. Only Ragnar and Chandra, the Goddess of the moon and nature remained among mortals. Declaring a cease fire, Ragnar retreated with a small retinue of cultists to the Tower of Wretched Wroth. Chandra and her highest clerics went to the Crystal Library on the surface of the northern Moon. Mortals were left to determine their own fates. The magic that had bound the souls of humans and the companion beasts shattered, though wild folk were already numerous enough to persevere. The spellscorched taught the ways of arcane magic sparingly, protecting the art nearly to extinction. Clerics of Chandra and Ragnar spoke of worship, but most mortal kingdoms rejected all gods and magic, relying on steel and blood to determine righteousness and rulership.

Now, the mortal lands are divided. A dozen kingdoms lie scattered across the world, separated by dangerous wilds filled with bandits and monsters. The bravest mortals act as adventurers, guiding travelers between the kingdoms, killing monsters to thin their numbers, and plundering ruins in search of the lost treasures of the golden age. This is the world of **Odysseys & Overlords!**

KWELLEN

The region of Kwellen is a coastal area nested between a small mountain range and a large river called the Katharizo River. Supposedly formed from small farms that ballooned quickly into a city-state shortly following the Schism, Kwellen is a somewhat secretive society that spends its time collecting information from all places of the world, recording knowledge about all subjects, from the world-altering Schism to the proper method for cobbling a shoe. Kwellen's aim is clarity, to make known and understood the truth about history, society, and the gods.

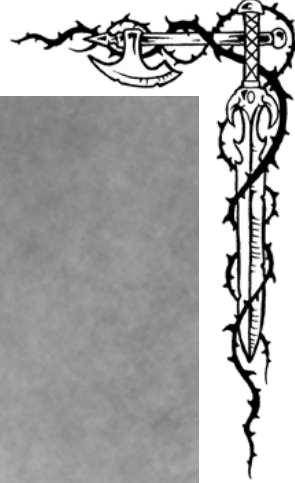
Located on the peninsula across the ocean from Chandra's Haven, Kwellen is a moderately sized region that began as isolated tribes of humans rebuilding themselves after the Schism. They might have been absorbed into other nations long ago if not for Kwellen's protector: Rania, an ancient sphinx. A strange sort of powerful wild folk born under mysterious circumstances, Rania took the developing nation of Kwellen under her lioness' paws and shielded them until they could defend themselves, and she continues to act as queen and guardian from the capital city of Colligere. Nowadays Kwellen welcomes all sorts into its arms, from human to wild folk to spellscorched, so long as they prove they can contribute to the society and help Kwellen maintain its defenses.

In this document you will find information on Kwellen's general history, its societal structure and goals, and the sphinx guardian, Rania. You will also find information on Kwellen's relations with other major nations of this setting, and its primary knowledge resource, known as The Archive.

HISTORY

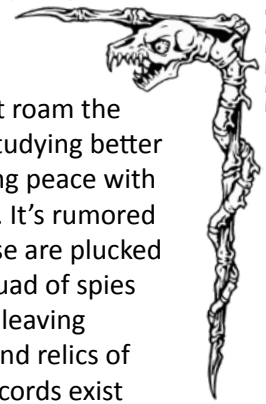
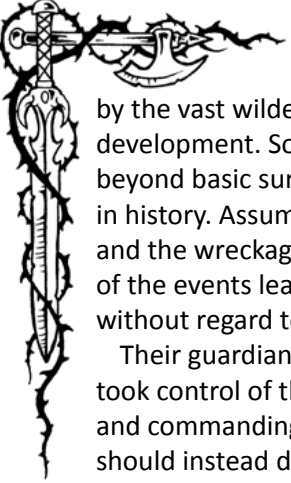
Shortly after the Schism, when the people of the world were recovering from its damage, a few small groups of humans settled on the edges of the world's southern continent, on the far east coast where fishing was plentiful and a river, eventually named the Katharizo River, could be used to help water and irrigate new crop lands. For some time, the society stayed small, until their food stores grew enough to support larger families and the population started to expand. With this expansion, however, came threats from the outside. Monsters preyed on this new society and they tucked themselves between the river and the nearby mountains to protect themselves. They were stifled again, this time by outside forces, and they feared that their new nation would fizzle before it could truly flourish.

Though records of the incident are varied and conflicting, it's generally agreed that this is when Rania first emerged. Claiming to be a wanderer of the southern continent after the Schism took its toll on her, she found and protected this new society from outside threats and acted as their guard. Now shielded and without worry of being overtaken



CHANDRA'S HAVEN





by the vast wilderness, the people focused on inward development. Soon they had time to explore technology beyond basic survival and started to cultivate an interest in history. Assuming they might avoid mistakes of the past and the wreckage of the Schism, they recorded all memory of the events leading up to it. Soon they simply recorded, without regard to how useful the information might be.

Their guardian Rania encouraged this and she quickly took control of the people, naming their land “Kwellen,” and commanding that those people uninterested in labor should instead devote themselves to society through information, keeping close tabs on developments in their land and others. They also welcomed wild folk and spellscorched that were without home on the southern continent, strengthening themselves in this diversity. Thus, a nation of scholars was born, and a library was built to house the catalogue of records as Kwellen continued to grow and gain strength.

OVERVIEW

Rania, a giant sphinx, rules as queen and guardian of Kwellen. She lives in the capital city Colligere, watching over the library that houses the nation’s extensive historical and technological records. Known simply as “The Archive,” the library forms the basis of Colligere’s and, more loosely, Kwellen’s societal structure. People are raised from a young age to prize information and learning above all else. Children too young to help their families in jobs of physical labor instead attend public schools, where they learn the basics of history and technology in Kwellen and elsewhere in the world. Once old enough, children decide if they would rather continue learning or prefer to focus on labor and diverge from there. Though some healthy competition exists, Rania is careful not to let praise for one type of work overshadow the other, constantly playing a balancing game between necessary farming and military work, and the scholars she so treasures.

Colligere is at the base of the delta of Katharízo River, protected on one side by the water and on the other by a mountain range. It was first built when the people of Kwellen, in reverence to their sphinx protector, constructed houses near her newly erected archives. Those houses became multistory buildings and a city spiraled out from there, with the Archive at its heart.

Other, smaller cities dot the river all the way down to the coast, where a port and ships were built to let the people of Kwellen learn about and explore the sea. In a few years they had a respectable naval force that now crosses the oceans to trade and learn from nations in the northern continent, primarily the far side of Chandra’s Haven. In the past they also traded with Estria, but they were quickly deemed a nation of monsters and human betrayers, and both sides withdrew contact.

Kwellen has a small military. It could not sustain itself in prolonged war, but it’s enough to keep their borders

protected and keep the vicious monsters that roam the lands at bay. Many scholars in Colligere are studying better methods for defending against or even making peace with such creatures, but so far have had little luck. It’s rumored that select soldiers who show enough promise are plucked by Rania herself and urged to join an elite squad of spies who perform less savory work on her behalf, leaving Kwellen to find and take prized information and relics of the Schism to bring back to her. No official records exist of such a spy network, but rumors abound of what their missions might be and how they might be interacting with other nations under the noses of the general populace. Some people in Kwellen fear that Rania’s callous hunger for knowledge will soon earn them a bad reputation with the world at large.

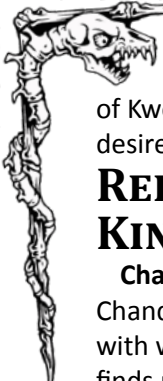
A portion of the military serves as explorers. Bearing Rania’s crest, they venture to the Untamed Gauntlet to find secrets of the past hidden in the wilderness, in abandoned cities or monster caves. They tend to butt heads with the Equite tribe of Centaurs and any natives of Estria positioned along the borders.

THE ARCHIVE

The Archive was first built by Rania as a way of recording farming methods and crop rotations for the people of then-unnamed Kwellen. However, her thirst for knowledge and desire for expansion led her to demand that her new charges write down any and all information they knew—about the Schism, about their lives, anything. If they didn’t know how to write, Rania taught them herself. Soon they needed an official building for the archives, from which the city of Colligere spiraled out to become Kwellen’s capital.

Now the Archive serves as a repository for knowledge, and also a business. Kwellen functions as information brokers to the rest of the world, trading knowledge and secrets for goods and resources, including offering to preserve and protect precious knowledge for those that feel it may be at risk. It’s also a school; they produce books for use in Kwellen cities to educate youth, and the most privileged of children learn from scholars at the Archive itself. Those that prove themselves capable enough are hired as official scribes and inventors, working to record any and all information that comes through Kwellen’s borders. There is more emphasis on recording than on creating, but the rare individual does exist that experiments with new technologies to serve Kwellen’s larger needs.

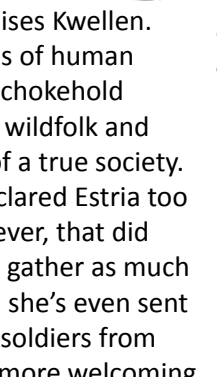
As a culture Kwellen lacks in more creative endeavors. Pottery exists because it is useful and certain records are kept on baked clay, and tapestries or paintings can function as a pictorial display of history. However, art done solely for individual indulgence is rare, and it’s emphasized that such energy is best put towards advancing Kwellen needs. At best, creative arts are encouraged to be used as luxury items to trade with other nations. Some sections



of Kwellen feel this is stifling and seek ways to fulfill their desires without offending their guardian Rania.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER KINGDOMS

Chandra's Haven: Kwellen has good relations with Chandra's Haven. They were one of the first nations with whom they established trade, and Chandra's Haven finds use in the information that Kwellen can provide. In exchange for goods and Writs of Salvage, Kwellen offers spies and investigative services. Some in Chandra's Haven think Rania is an unfit leader, being a wildfolk, but the Council and Chamber have come to the mutual agreement that the nation is too far away and too useful to bother them trying to change it.



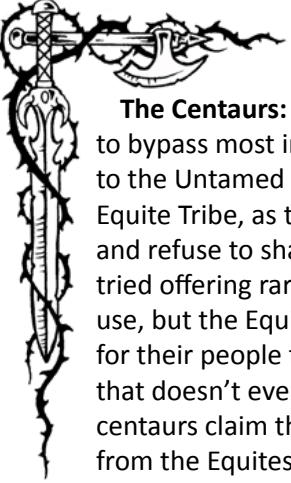
Estria: This 'perfect human society' despises Kwellen. Estria knows that Kwellen began with tribes of human farmers, and they believe that Rania has a chokehold on the people, forcing humans to live with wildfolk and spellscorched in a blasphemous mockery of a true society. After initial contacts turned sour, Rania declared Estria too hostile to have formal relations with. However, that did not stop her trying to send spies there and gather as much information as she can from them. It's said she's even sent people to Estria specifically to steal strong soldiers from the Knights of Estria, offering a better and more welcoming life in Kwellen. Rania denies such claims.

The Collective: Rania doesn't know of The Collective, but she knows there is a place on the oceans where, when her people sail there, the ship is either lost completely or gets so turned around that the sailors hobble back home much later than expected, starving and speaking of strange illusions on the water. Rania is determined to find out what's being hidden in the sea above Chandra's Haven and will not accept 'no' for an answer.

The Isle of Dragons: Kwellen's only communication with the Isle of Dragons is when Rania once spoke with a dragon on a small island off its coast. The dragons, knowing her power, believe she should have been exiled like them after the Schism. But since they technically can't leave, they have no power to subdue her. Rania herself dances between wanting to help the dragons regain their freedom and potentially win access to their treasure troves, and leaving them, knowing what their strength could do to the world. She doesn't speak of the dragons to Kwellen citizens.

Gianthome: As untrustworthy as they are of strangers, Gianthome has little relationship with Kwellen. Rania has heard of Giant raiders in the Untamed Gauntlet and wonders if their strength would benefit Kwellen, but these are only ponderings.

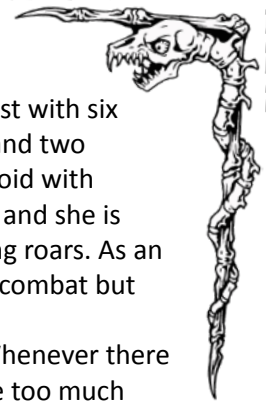




The Centaurs: People from Kwellen uses Writs of Salvage to bypass most interaction with centaurs on their journeys to the Untamed Gauntlet. They sometimes clash with the Equite Tribe, as the Equites revere magic and arcane arts, and refuse to share their secrets with outsiders. Rania has tried offering rare artifacts or written records they could use, but the Equites would as soon use their own resources for their people than meddle with relations to a nation that doesn't even reside on the same continent. Some centaurs claim that Rania sent spies to steal knowledge from the Equites and will attack Kwellen people on sight.

THE SPHINX

Armor Class:	18
Hit Dice:	9**
No. of Attacks:	2 claws/1 bite
Damage:	1d8/1d8/3d8
Movement:	40' Fly 80' (15')
No. Appearing:	1
Save As:	Fighter: 9 (as Hit Dice)
Morale:	10
Treasure Type:	H
XP:	1100



The sphinx Rania is a large mammalian beast with six limbs—a quadruped body shaped like a lion, and two massive feathered wings. Her head is humanoid with dark skin and a crown of braided dreadlocks, and she is capable of both complex speech and terrifying roars. As an intelligent creature she prefers diplomacy to combat but fights when her people are in danger.

Rania rarely leaves her home in Kwellen. Whenever there is a force on Kwellen's borders reported to be too much for the local military, Rania flies from Colligere to deal with it herself. Due to her size and need for flight, Rania prefers to battle in open spaces. If a threat comes from near Kwellen's riverbeds or the mountains, Rania stalks her targets and uses endurance hunting to drive them towards flat plains where she can openly strike. Rania attacks with her claws and avoids biting except for especially dangerous targets that need to be dealt with swiftly.

No one is sure where Rania came from. Some say she's of the same origins as the dragons, others claim she's a wild folk that grew in power after stealing artifacts in the aftermath of the Schism. Some even whisper that she's Ragnar's daughter, a twisted product of his jealousy of animal companions that were bound to humans. Rania herself often speaks in riddles and refuses a straight answer when asked about her origins. Her only concerns are that of the present, of increasing Kwellen's power as a nation and collecting as much knowledge about the truths of the world as possible, so she might protect her people and prevent another event like the Schism from happening again.

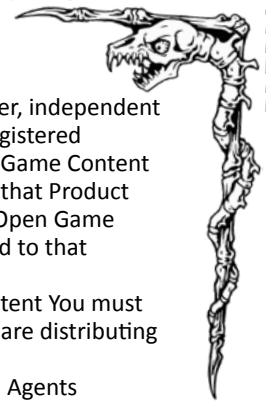
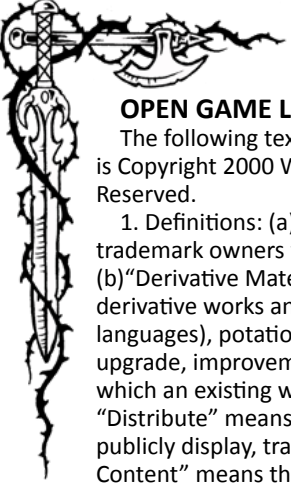
CHANDRA'S HAVEN



KWELLEN

COLLIGERE

KABHARZO RIVER



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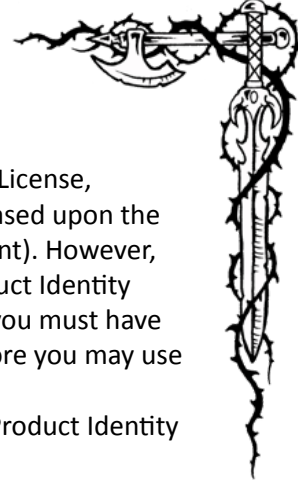
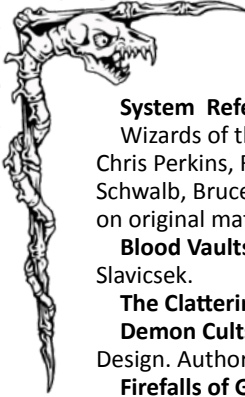
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