

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons
An Official On-Line Game Accessory

Dark Sun

Villages of the Wastes



“In your travels, you’ll find villages scattered all over Athas, from islands in the Sea of Silt to peaks high in the Ringing Mountains. Usually, they stand at some site of moderate importance, such as a minor oasis, the crossroads of two trading routes, or near a flint or obsidian quarry.” - The Wanderer.

Credits

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Intro.....

The hot sun baked my parched lips and burned my already-red skin. The burning sand sent tremors of agony through my blistered feet, the protection from my leather sandals having long ago faded. Each step I took was sheer torment. My limbs were cramped from all the walking I had done, and my head pounded from the heat. Climbing this dune was no different from all the others I had traversed.

Yet I continued on, determined to struggle until the heat finally dried up my skin and I would fall, never to stand again. Then the sun would turn my corpse into a pile of white, bleached bones within a day, and these would in turn crumble to dust if they were not buried under the sand.

I had been walking for many days; I couldn't remember how long. My water had run out a few days ago, and it was a miracle that no beast had come to devourer my body. Perhaps they knew I wouldn't make much of a meal. My human body was so thin that I almost looked like an elf. Food deprivation had left me in a sorry state. Had I the strength to lift the rags covering my body, I knew I would see my ribs almost bursting from my chest.

Up and down, all day long, all around it was the same. Sand. Sometimes there was a cactus or two, but I never ventured close, because you could never trust the life that survived out here. It didn't survive by being friendly, and I had neither the strength nor the desire to fight with these vicious plants.

As I took my final steps to clear the dune, I saw in the distance what must be a mirage. My eyes were deceiving me; my head was telling me lies. There, off in the distance, in the middle of this blasted desert, was a small village! I could barely make out huts, and I even thought I saw a tree. I tried to shout, but my dry throat could not even utter a sound.

Yet the possibility of such a thing was unthinkable. And as I slowly made my way towards this most improbable destination, I knew in my heart that these would be my final steps.

Even the hope of such a thing, a village in the middle of all this sand, wasn't enough to spur my weakened limbs on.

But I must continue, lest to give in now would be an act of cowardice, even though my situation was hopeless. When your mind gives up before your body, you have lost all.

I walked a few more steps, the strength in my limbs draining fast. The dark sun overhead continued to shine, oblivious to my plight. The hot, dry desert air was still all around. Not even a slight breeze stirred the air to cool my body.

And then my body could take no more. I fell down upon the burning sand, and felt my unprotected face begin to blister. I struggled to move, but my limbs would not respond. This was the end. My struggle for survival was no more.

As darkness descended upon me, I thought I heard a cry out in the distance. I shut it out, believing it was my mind deceiving me yet again. I heard the cry once more, closer. Perhaps I was not dreaming. I tried to move my head to see, but I could not even do that. As I tried to listen once more, the darkness finally came....

I woke up when someone slapped me on the side of the head, and opened my eyes to see the hairless face of a mul staring down at me. I tried to speak, but couldn't make a sound. All that came out was a dry wheezing sound, like the death rattle of an erdlu.

I was given water, and finally I sat up. I looked around, and I was in a village! My eyes had not deceived me! That life could exist in such a barren and isolated place was a testament to the survival instinct of these people. Then I wondered, if life can exist here, where else in the wastes can it be found?.....

- Excerpt from the journal of the sage Bartamuk the Mad.

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Daro

Daro was a client village of Raam. It now serves as a stronghold for one of Raam's former templars.

Origins/History

Daro was founded over a millennium ago to handle trade filtering in through Break Shore. Over the centuries, Daro's focus has shifted from trade to agricultural administration, helping to oversee the mass of slaves working Raam's fields.

With Abalach-Re's death in Free Year 10, Raam, never truly a safe place for a templar, became even less so. Slaves, freemen, and nobles alike turned on each other, but a templar or other civil servant was still considered a common enemy by all. A few managed to take control of a portion of the city by rallying Raam's civil guard, but most simply fled.

One such templar was Avish Thira. Gathering a small group of servants and underlings, he arrived in Daro before word of Abalach-Re's death and the subsequent riots. He immediately seized command of the small garrison and instituted martial law, cutting the village off from the outside. By his swift action he managed to keep most of the chaos surrounding Abalach-Re's death outside the walls of his new home. Of course, such news couldn't be kept out forever, but by the time it arrived, Avish had Daro firmly under his heel.

The first threat to Avish's rule arrived at Daro's gates less than a week after Abalach-Re's death on the Great Ivory Plains. One of Raam's aga (commanders), holding a force of heavy crodlu in reserve, managed to retreat in good order. Unfortunately the same speed that saw them safely back to Raam separated them from the army's baggage train. Aga Nebka and his force of 60 arrived on Raam's outskirts dirty, tired, hungry, and most importantly, thirsty. Scouts informed him of the riots in Raam so he decided to detour to one of Raam's client villages for easier foraging.

Five days after Avish took control of Daro, Nebka arrived at his doorstep demanding the gates be opened. With Abalach-Re dead not only was Nebka not bound to obey Avish, Avish also lacked the magical might to force Nebka to obey, so Avish demanded that Nebka swear an oath of loyalty to him as vizier of Daro before Nebka would be allowed inside. Nebka agreed, not willing to try to take Daro with cavalry or return to the road and risk finding a less hospitable reception elsewhere. Aside from keeping Nebka's men separate from his

own, Avish has treated the aga with respect, frequently consulting him on matters of governance.

Location

Daro is an hour's walk southeast of Raam. It lies on the fringe of the fields surrounding the city along a road that follows a pass through the mountains to the village of Break Shore, on the coast of the Silt Sea. The village is surrounded by adobe walls 18' high and nearly 10' thick at their base. Two gates of mekillot ribs lashed together with giant hair rope allow passage at the north and south ends of the village. The gates hang in stone gatehouses each of which has a pair of light ballistae mounted on top.

Some of the original warehouses had been converted into barracks for the town's garrison. Raam originally supplied the garrison's equipment, including weapons and armor, with only facilities to make repairs in Daro. Avish is in great need of an armorer and weaponsmith, especially with the arrival of Nebka and his men. Should a suitable craftsman be captured on a caravan raid he can be guaranteed excellent treatment.

Daro also has approximately 90 civilians consisting primarily of packers, haulers, wheelwrights, carpenters, coopers, joiners, stablers, animal handlers, and the usual assortment of service professions seen in any well-traveled way stop. The crafts practiced by Daro's freemen are dictated by the needs of the trade caravans that pass through. Two professions notably absent are brick maker and stonemason; until recently work crews from Raam maintained the walls and buildings of Daro. This only adds to Avish's list of professionals to kidnap.

The Sated Fael is the only inn in town. Above its door hangs a sign depicting that undead of mythic appetite reclining with its belt loosened and an exhausted look on its face. The Fael (as it is more commonly called) is a large, two-story building near the southeast corner of Daro's walls. As with all businesses and residences in Daro under Avish's rule, the Fael is closed from dusk till dawn. The food is only fair and the drinks are heavily watered, but prices are still high. The Fael can sleep 20 comfortably in second floor rooms plus another 30 or so in the common room.

There are no stores in Daro where visitors can buy supplies. Goods are so scarce that everything entering Daro is considered property of the town and as such gets redistributed by Avish. His first priority is to keep his troops well supplied.

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Next are his own needs and the needs of his household, followed by the town's freemen, and then the former farm slaves.

Over time Daro had become primarily a farming community with a small bureaucracy overseeing the 200 or so slaves who worked the fields around Daro. But in the current climate of unrest, Avish sees no way to defend the fields through an entire growing season. As a result these slaves have all been either reassigned or freed (i.e. cast out). Most of those that were freed left immediately, but some stuck stubbornly to the land they had worked all their lives. Avish offers them no protection, but should they manage to grow anything he'll certainly take it.

Organization

Daro is ruled by Avish Thira, formerly a templar of Abalach-Re. He has 150 well-disciplined troops from the original garrison at his command. He keeps them loyal and their morale high with excellent bonuses, but without his magical powers his command would be in jeopardy.

Avish managed to keep things together for a few weeks after Abalach-Re's death through bluff and showmanship. When he received a cloaked visitor one night he was receptive to the message: acceptance by a new sorcerer-king. Avish was quick to accept the offer. With his spellcasting abilities restored, Avish is his old self again: a lying, manipulative, violence-prone despot. His conferences with Nebka have become less frequent and more trivial.

Avish has yet to make his new patron's identity public knowledge or even acknowledge the fact that he was without spells for a period of time. Whether he is waiting for some signal to break his masquerade or simply wishes to keep his citizenry in anxious ignorance is likewise a mystery.

Of primary concern to Avish is money. He managed to slip out of Raam with a small fortune in gems and gold but that is quickly disappearing into the pockets of his guard. Since the village doesn't produce a surplus of any trade good, Avish is forced to send out raiding parties to acquire the necessities of life.

His main source of income is in sponsoring raids into Raam. Using his knowledge of the location of templar caches of arms, coinage, and other valuables, Avish can direct parties of adventurers to the goods for a portion of the take. Granted, Avish is more likely than not to kill them afterwards and keep everything. Sometimes the cache has already been raided, but there are always takers for a treasure hunt. Alternately Avish might simply sell the location of a cache he knows to be empty or contain worthless goods.

Outside Relations

Once an administrative center and waypoint for travelers, Daro now has little contact with outsiders. Generally this contact consists of a raiding party sacking a nearby caravan or accosting a group of travelers. Occasionally though some trade still finds its way up from Break Shore.

Travelers who make it to the gates unmolested will find them closed. They'll open readily for a caravan with goods to sell, but small parties of individuals will have a harder time gaining entrance. Those with a useful skill to sell (smith, warrior, treasure hunter, mindbender, defiler, etc.) will be brought to Avish's attention. Most others will be turned away. Avish's guards are not immune to bribes, though; they're just a bit more resistant thanks to his excellent pay and vengeful nature.

Travelers who get in can stay at the Fael for the short term. More permanent additions to Daro's population will be given living quarters in one of the abandoned homes scattered around town.

The other main type of interaction Daro has with outsiders is in repulsing raids. This duty falls to Daro's garrison. Nebka's troops rarely enter such frays except at the end to harass routed foes. So far Daro's guard has fought off two honest attempts on its walls and numerous minor attacks, mainly by disorganized bands of ex-slaves.

Important Residents

Avish Thira

Male Human Templar, Chaotic Evil

AC 6 (bone ring of protection +2, Dex)	Str 12
Movement 12	Dex 16
Level 10	Con 11
Hit Points 43	Int 18
THAC0 13	Wis 11
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 17

Damage/ Attack: 1d4+1 (*boneiron* dagger +1)

Psionics Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 8

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Special Equipment: *peript of proof against poison*, silver signet ring.

Spells (3/3/3/2): 1st-*command*, *cure light wounds*, *detect magic*; 2nd-*aid*, *hold person*, *silence*, 15' radius; 3rd-*dispel magic*, *magical vestment*, *protection from fire*; 4th-*produce fire*, *free action*.

Avish Thira is the son of a silk merchant and his pampered wife. Whether or not either is still alive in the aftermath of Abalach-Re's death Avish neither knows nor cares. He left his family to join Raam's government almost 30 years ago and has had little contact with his family since.

Avish rode his scheming intellect and glib tongue up the templarate ranks quickly. But poor luck caused his rise to stall along the dead-end path of Supply. For almost a dozen years, Avish had languished as a glorified chamberlain. His duties consisted mainly of signing off on requisition forms, negotiating prices with traders, and maintaining supplies in the palace at siege-ready levels. Avish did not long mourn Abalach-Re. Commanding his own little Raam is a dream come true!

Aga Nebka

Male Human Fighter, Lawful Evil

AC 2 (scale mail, medium shield, Dex)	Str 13
Movement 12	Dex 17
Level 9	Con 15
Hit Points 77	Int 11
THAC0 12	Wis 13
No. of Attacks 3/2	Cha 15

Damage/ Attack: 1d8 (steel long sword)

Special Equipment: heavy lance, dagger, heavy crodlu with forearm blades.

Psionics Summary: PSPs 51; Wild Talent: control light
Attack/ Defense Modes: none/ MB, MBk, TW.
Power Score - 11
PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 16; MAC 10;

Taken into Raam's military at an early age, Nebka's agility saved him from the short life of a foot soldier, and his forceful personality set him above his peers. A combination of luck and skill saw him rise steadily through the ranks and kept him alive through the infrequent military campaigns Raam

participated in. Though he has nowhere near the seasoning of one of Urik's war leaders, neither is Nebka green.

Nebka chafes at Avish's leash. He and his troops are ill suited for the sedentary life of garrison duty, and Avish allows them few opportunities to exercise their abilities. Morale is poor and soon he may have to choose between his command and his oath to Avish, which he still feels bound by despite the way it was extorted.

Ninocris

Female Human Templar, Lawful Neutral

AC 10	Str 13
Movement 12	Dex 13
Level 7	Con 15
Hit Points 41	Int 15
THAC0 16	Wis 13
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 16

Damage/ Attack: by weapon

Special Equipment: over-large robes.

Psionics Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 10

Spells (3/2/2): 1st-*cure light wounds* (x3), *light*; 2nd-*charm person* or *mammal*, *speak with animals*; 3rd-*dispel magic*, *speak with dead*.

Ninocris is the cloaked stranger who returned the grace of a sorcerer-monarch to Avish. Who that monarch is remains unclear. Many rumors state that most likely Ninocris serves either Hamanu or Nibenay. But there are some who say that Ninocris is not even human. Perhaps the rumors of stirrings beneath ruined Giustenal are more than just rumors . . .

Whatever her true allegiance, Ninocris's agenda is fairly clear. In addition to indoctrinating Avish into his new patron's service, she uses her magic to maintain a modest circle of informants within Daro-both living and dead. Ninocris spends most of her time in Avish's spacious quarters, but when she does venture out into public she is always concealed in heavy, figure-smothering robes. Numerous rumors regarding Avish's mysterious guest have sprung up. The most common is that she is a powerful psionist teaching Avish to use the Way in case his priestly powers fail him again.

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Bala

Male Half-Elf Fighter/ Thief, Neutral Evil

AC 7 (leather armor, Dex)	Str 16
Movement 12	Dex 15
Level 5/6	Con 10
Hit Points 24	Int 14
THAC0 17	Wis 12
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 15

Damage/ Attack: 1d6 (bone short sword)

Special Equipment: lockpicks, short bow, 12 bone-tipped flight arrows.

Psionics Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 10

Thieving Abilities: PP 45, OL 55, F/RT 25, MS 60, HS 65, DN 25, CW 70, RL 0, FD 10, BO -5, EB 10.

Bala is just one of many spies Avish keeps on his payroll. Most lurk in the camps of other Raamin despots, but some, like Bala, work at home. Bala spends most of his time in the Sated Fael pretending to be more drunk than he really is. He tries to pass himself off as a guide to adventuring parties Avish has hired to search out a cache in Raam. He does have a fairly impressive knowledge of the streets and people of Raam, having spent all of his life there up until now and can be a valuable asset during a trip into the city. His responsibilities in such a case are to aid the hired adventurers then inform Avish of what was taken, where it might have been hidden, how good a fight they might put up, etc. when the group returns to Daro to collect the rest of their pay.

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Arla

"I had never found Draj pleasant. Its templar's 'fees' were always too steep, and their pockets seemed bottomless. In addition, the entire warrior-kill or be killed mindset-always bothered me. I am too frequently reminded of this while traveling the wastes. I like not having this shoved in my face again, especially in what humans call civilization. And Raam, pah! I have never seen a more paranoid and suspicious jukkete. And believe me elves know suspicious people, in fact I'm one of them! Kind of ironic I ended up finding myself in the winds and later returning to Draj and Raam, this time with far different goals in mind; instead of trade, I now free slaves from Tec's deplorable work farms and Abalach-Re's communes. But the slaves need somewhere to go, that is why I established Arla, and in the name of freedom, I remain its leader and protector to this day."

-Dukkoti Airhunter, founder of Arla

Origins/ History

Nestled in a small valley between mountains to the north and the Sea of Silt to the south, Arla is a small village composed mainly of former slaves. Dukkoti Airhunter, the village's founder, is an air cleric who has taken it upon himself to free the oppressed peoples of Draj and Raam as the spirits of the Air direct him.

Prior to founding Arla, Dukkoti had no where to lead the freed slaves, so many simply fled into the desert and soon met their fate. Dukkoti knew he could not continue saving lives from one tyrant only to see them taken away by the desert. So he decided to make a pilgrimage to the mountains southeast of Raam to ask the forces of Air for guidance.

While meditating on a high mountain peak, Dukkoti was discovered and attacked by a starving gith band, desperately hunting prey among the rocks. Dukkoti managed to hold his own for a while, but the giths' savagery and numbers quickly overwhelmed the air cleric. Using his last granted power, he leapt from the peak, feather falling toward ruins in the foothills below.

But the gith did not give up that easily; they sprinted down the mountain after Dukkoti. They finally pinned him with his back against the silt on one side and several ruined buildings on the others. Dukkoti prayed to the air spirits to guide his spirit to the afterlife and readied his longbow, when the gith's leader suddenly leapt onto the nearest gith and tore

him apart with his claws. This greatly demoralized the other gith, and after Dukkoti's arrow split two more gith's skulls, they broke and fled.

After the gith had fled, a lone human stepped out of a black doorway that suddenly appeared behind Dukkoti. The human introduced himself as Theis and asked the elf what he was doing on this side of the mountains. Dukkoti told the psionicist his purpose and Theis felt something he had not experienced in many, many years; he felt compassion and sympathy for the elf's cause. A friendship stronger than agafari soon grew between the two. Pulling in family favors, Theis was able to get the resources needed to rebuild the ruins and realize Dukkoti's dream. Finally, Dukkoti had a place to bring his freed slaves, rather than letting them go into the desert, which was usually a worse fate than the slavery he constantly fought against.

Location

The mountains southeast of Raam and southwest of Draj have never had a common name. The Draji call it one thing, Raamians another, the Elves call it by yet another name, merchants call it another still, and it's given a fifth name by the Gith. It is also out of the way of trade routes. So, the northeastern section of these mountains has been primarily ignored. And this is why Dukkoti chose it for his village.

Little did he know, Theis, a human psionicist of no little skill, had made his meditative cabin there. After saving Dukkoti's life, Theis had no problems helping the elf establish his village. And his cabin is still there, on a small hill overlooking the village.

Arla is very small; it has only five permanent buildings: a small tavern, three artisan's shops, and the village storage. These were all rebuilt from already existing ruins. A large pavilion tent next to the village storage serves as a meeting or festival hall. A leather worker, a stone/bone smith, and a ceramic worker make up the artisans of Arla.

There is a small silt skimmer dock, which is occasionally used by dwarven merchants. The tavern mostly caters to visiting elves, dwarves, and more "lax" former slaves. All the freed slaves (with the exception of the artisans who live in their shops) live in tents that make up the majority of the structures in Arla. There is a small, tented bazaar area that is used by elven merchants whenever they come, usually once

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every 1-2 months. A small corral holds the village's kanks whenever they are not being herded. And as in many small Athasian villages, the well lies in the center of the city.

Organization

Dukkoti Airhunter is the venerated founder and proverbial father of Arla. But his devotion to Air and his elven nature make his wanderings very prolonged. Whenever he is absent his half-elf daughter Kara, advised by Theis, rules in his place. Dukkoti's wife Mares used to lead the village in his absence, but she was recently killed by gith (see below) and Dukkoti hasn't been seen in well over four months. Kara remained in Arla and has tried to lead, but she is young and still depressed by her mother's death. Theis remained in the valley after Arla was built, and often serves as an advisor for Dukkoti and Kara.

Whenever an important decision must be made, the village is summoned to the meeting hall and a council is held, mediated by Dukkoti or Kara and Theis. The villagers, numbering about 250, voice their opinions. Dukkoti, Kara, and Theis then decide a course of action.

The village is so small that no real law enforcement is needed, everyone knows everyone else. But due to the recent gith attacks, mercenaries are occasionally hired, always through dwarven silt merchants. They are either paid in loot from dead gith or goods scavenged from ruins in the mountains and the Sea of Silt.

Outside Relations

The best asset Arla has in regard to its safety is worthlessness. As harsh as it sounds, it's true. There is almost nothing worthwhile in Arla (at least that anyone but the leaders know about). They are self-sufficient, but don't produce anything truly excessive. But they do have food, water, and weapons and this is all the justification the gith need to continually assault the village. Gith attacks fluctuate; some times it seems they will never cease, other times they are rare at best. It was during one of these recent attacks that Dukkoti's wife, Mares, lost her life defending the village. Dukkoti has fallen into a substantial depression and wandered away from the village, leaving his daughter in charge.

In regard to the city-states, either the sorcerer-kings aren't aware of Arla's existence or simply don't care. The former is far more likely, because Dukkoti is very cautious when freeing slaves and dealing with outsiders.

Arla's only real connection to the outside is the elven merchants and the dwarven silt skimmers that occasionally visit the village. They supply the village with weapons and mercenaries, the only two things the village can't really produce on its own (at least not effectively). About a year ago, a small ruin was found in an area where the silt had blown away. A decent amount of metal was discovered, which has been used to pay the mercenaries, but this has been kept under utmost security. However, word seems to have leaked out among the people, and who knows how far the rumors have spread.

Important Residents

Dukkoti Airhunter

Male Elf-Windancer Tribe, Preserver/ Air Cleric,
Chaotic Good

AC 2 (Bracer of defense, Dex)	Str 11
Movement 16	Dex 17
Level 7/8	Con 13
Hit Points 30	Int 20
THAC0 16 (13 w/ bow or thrown spear)	Wis 17
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 14

Damage/Attack: 1d6 (Spear), or 1d8-1 (Elven long bow)

Psionic Summary: PSPs 58, Wild Talent: Shadow Form
Power Score: 7

Attack/ Defense Modes: none/ MB, TW, MBk.

PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 17, MAC 5

Spells: Wizard- (4/3/2/1)
Priest- (5/5/4/2); major sphere - air, minor sphere -
cosmos

Granted Powers: Ignore air (8 rounds), gate air (2 cubic feet), refreshing breeze, feather fall, missile deflection.

Dukkoti Airhunter is a former trader for the Windancer Tribe, but after the twin disasters of a kank pestilence and a thri-kreen assault, he was forced into raiding. But his skills were in negotiation and a little preserver magic, as he was training to replace the Windancer's wizard after his death. That death came too soon, when the chatkcha of one of the hundreds of mantis warriors sealed Dukkoti's mentor's fate. Dukkoti did not have the devotion or the training to be a

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successful raider, and he fell from a rocky outcropping while in hiding during a raid and was left for dead.

He did recover but he was never able to forget what it was like, falling, flying, finally being free. This compounded with his inborn elven sense of freedom and wanderlust; he quickly sought out an air cleric to teach him the way. He was able to find an instructor and from the minute he leapt from the highest peak of the mountain that would later shield his village, his life changed forever.

He took the pact to heart, and began making raids on Draj and Raam, freeing slaves. But these slaves had nowhere to go, they could not follow Dukkoti, the desert path he ran was too harsh for many elves, let alone starving, weak slaves. So more often than not, they ended up as beggars in the city they had just escaped from or dying of exposure in the merciless desert.

After he established Arla, he almost fell at the hands of a templar during a slave "run". He felt that his clerical spells were not enough, and so he took up the path of the preserver once again, using ancient texts found in ruins that dotted Arla's surrounding mountains to expand his understanding of magic. He also has been known to perform clerical services (healing, etc.) or trade relics scavenged from the ruins to renegade and elven wizards in exchange for a little magical training. It was in one of these ruins that he found the bracers that have saved his life many a time. He has kept his non-clerical magic usage hidden from everyone except Kara, Theis, and his late wife Mares.

A tall elf, with long black hair, Dukkoti has a sense of freedom and independence unmatched by anyone else in the village. He wanders for months at a time, but will always return to Arla. His wife found this hard at first, but realized she could never tie down an elven air cleric. Recently, Dukkoti has been missing for over four months after his wife's death at the hands of raiding gith. He strode in the mountains and declared he would have vengeance or die trying. The villagers whisper that Theis knows where Dukkoti is, but that is probably just a rumor.

Kara Airhunter

Female Half-Elf, Preserver, Neutral Good

AC 8	Str 14
Movement 12	Dex 16
Level 4	Con 13
Hit Points 10	Int 17
THAC0 19	Wis 12
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 15

Damage/Attack: 1d4 (Steel dagger)

Psionic Summary: PSP's: 30, Wild Talent: Contact (Mindlink), Truthhear, Phobia Amplification

Attack/ Defense Modes: none/ TW, MBk.

PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 19, MAC 9

Spells (3/2)

Kara Airhunter is the young daughter of Arla's founder, Dukkoti Airhunter, and the freed slave, Mares. Dukkoti freed Kara's mother from the Draji slave pits, and after hearing her mother's stories, she hates Draj with a passion. Born and raised in Arla, Kara has a strong sense of freedom and free will. She is not quite as much of a wanderer as her father, but she has been known to disappear into the mountains for up to a week. Unlike most people, she was intrigued rather than frightened when she learned her father was a wizard. She has followed in his stead, and has begun the long trek along the path of the preserver. She is very close to Theis and views him almost as a second father. He has helped her develop her inborn psionic skill, but she doesn't have the focus to be a true mindbender.

At 17 years old, with hair as red as the sun, and bright blue eyes, Kara is a striking figure to say the least. Between her natural charisma and psionic wild talents, Kara is Arla's chief negotiator and trader, her skill surpassing that of even her father. "She barter's like an elf" has been the common comment from many dwarven merchants, one of the very few groups who trade with Arla via their silt skimmers. But in recent days, Kara has been very depressed due to the recent death of her mother. Theis is helping her cope, but she has lost some of the drive she used to have for leading and bartering. Unless her father returns soon, her youthful enthusiasm may disappear into the silt, like so many other things before it.

Theis

Male Human, Psionicist, Neutral Good

AC 6 (Mekillot Hide)	Str 13
Movement 12	Dex 12
Level 16	Con 16
Hit Points 89	Int 14
THAC0 13	Wis 16
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 13

Damage/Attack: 1d6 (Steel short sword)

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Psionic Summary: Psychometabolist, PSP's: 188
Clairsentience - Devotions: Danger Sense, Know Location
Psychometabolism- Sciences: Animal Affinity, Energy Containment, Metamorphosis, Poison Simulation; Devotions: Accelerate, Adrenaline Control, Body Equilibrium, Cause Decay, Cell Adjustment, Chameleon Power, Ectoplasmic Form, Photosynthesis, Reduction, Chemical Simulation
Psychoportation- Sciences: Teleport; Devotions: Dimensional Door, Pocket Dimension
Telepathy- Sciences: Domination, Mindlink; Devotions: Contact (Post-hypnotic Suggestion), Ego Whip (Invisibility), ESP, Id Insinuation (Phobia Amplification), Mind Bar
Metapsionics- Sciences: Empower; Devotions: Gird, Prolong
Attack/ Defense Modes: EW, II, PB, PsC, MT/ TS, MB, IF, TW, MBk.
PLAYER'S OPTION: #AT 2/1, MTHAC05, MAC 7

Theis was the first person in the Arla valley. Theis was a minor noble from Balic, until his older brother murdered a templar. His brother was, of course, executed, but his family was simply exiled. Instead of following his family to Nibenay, for he knew they were more harm than good, he began a pilgrimage all across the Tablelands while attempting to find within his inner self, the truth in the world.

He wandered southeast of Raam to the Sea of Silt, when he found a valley with a few ruined buildings that lay right between the mountains and the Sea of Silt. There he built himself a small mud-brick cabin and using his cause decay power, made his home match the ruins that surrounded it. He then spent many hours meditating, exploring his mind, his nexus.

One day, while meditating on a small rock rising from the Sea of Silt, he saw a large pack of Gith chasing an elf toward the coast. Having suffered several gith attacks upon his home, there was no love lost between Theis and the gith. He dominated the leader of the gith war band, and made him attack several other gith. The elf fired his long bow into the melee and without a sane leader, the gith quickly broke and fled.

Theis used his dimension door power to approach and asked the elf what he was doing so far away from the trade routes. Dukkoti told Theis of his devotion to air and his battle

against slavery. Theis saw in this elf devotion and motivation he has never seen in his own family. He saw in Dukkoti the same sense of justice and freedom that had inspired him to abandon his family name and wealth, and he agreed to assist Dukkoti in rebuilding the ruins that would become Arla.

For the first few years, Theis lead Arla, until Dukkoti's wife and later his daughter, were able to lead. He has played an essential part in defending Arla from the psionic gith leaders and chieftains, who would have otherwise decimated a village sorely lacking psionicists. In more recent days, Theis has had to essentially lead Arla, now that Dukkoti is gone and Kara is a wreck. No one knows for sure if Theis has been in contact with Dukkoti. In truth, Dukkoti asked Theis to watch over Kara and his village while he made a trek into the highest mountains to commune with the Air Spirits and petition them to help him accept his wife's death. And if he ran into any gith along the way, all the worse for them. Theis has had periodic mental communication with Dukkoti and now knows that Dukkoti has found peace again and is about to return to Arla.

Villages of the Wastes: The Ivory Triangle

Vavrek

Vavrek is a client village of the city-state of Nibenay. Located in the Fertile Crescent, it is one of hundreds of tiny farming communities that grow the food to feed the masses of Nibenay.

Origins/ History

The current village of Vavrek was founded twelve years ago, however there has been a farming community of some type on the site for hundreds of years. Whenever the village is destroyed a new group of citizens is sent from Nibenay to rebuild it.

The current village of Vavrek was rebuilt under the guidance of Sonyalah, a templar-wife of Nibenay, the previous community having been destroyed in a violent slave up-rising that had swept through the region twelve years ago. At the time Sonyalah was only 18, and had been a templar for less than a year. She was sent to rebuild the village with supplies and two score of disgruntled citizens, who were not pleased with the idea of moving to the new settlement so far from the walls of Nibenay.

Few thought the young templar would succeed, and the first few years were difficult. When the first crop failed, bandits raided the village, and many of the villager's houses collapsed due to poor construction, it seemed she had failed. Nevertheless, Sonyalah would not give up, and took measures to ensure the village's survival. She sent for a priest of earth from the temple in Nibenay to teach the villagers how to farm the land successfully. To prevent further raids, Sonyalah began cultivating relationships with the various unit leaders that patrolled the area. Through gifts and pleasantries, she convinced them to patrol the area around Vavrek heavier and stop in the village more often. The presence of these patrols has since helped to deter raiders.

After the houses were rebuilt on stronger ground, the village finally seemed as if it would survive and become prosperous. But the village was still in trouble. The guards, the visit by the priest of earth, the supplies to support the villagers during the years before the crops succeeded and the bribes to the patrol leaders all cost money. Sonyalah had borrowed heavily to finance these endeavors, and now she attempted to extract money from the villagers to pay back the loans. With the rents paid to the nobles who owned the land, and the tithe

to the city, the citizens had little left and Sonyalah's taxes threatened to bring them to starvation. The villagers grew restless. Before they turned desperate, Sonyalah strangely withdrew the taxes. Even after all these years, the citizens have never learned why or how Sonyalah supports herself and continues to make bribes to the patrol leaders.

Location

Vavrek is located in the Verdant Belt, less than a day's travel southwest of Nibenay. The Crescent Forest can barely be seen off in the distance from the village. A small stream runs from the Crescent Forest through the village to the south, where it pools into a bog a quarter mile from the village. This muddy swamp is very inhospitable, filled only with reeds and insects. The villagers avoid it, which makes it an ideal refuge for run-away slaves.

Surrounding the village on all sides are fields where the villagers grow a variety of vegetables, laid out in square plots, with soybeans being the most prevalent. The villagers use the stream to irrigate their fields and to water the few livestock kept at the villages, but they are forbidden to use the water from the stream for their own use. They have constructed a deep well in the center of the village to serve their personal water needs.

The homes of the citizens are simple one or two room houses constructed of mud-bricks. While it is traditional for Nibenese to carve stone reliefs into their architecture, the villagers of Vavrek do not have the resources to do so. Instead, a number of the villagers have carved simple images into the mud-bricks of their homes during construction. The villagers believe these crude drawings of various monsters will keep their homes safe from attack by the lions and bandits that roam the Fertile Crescent.

The buildings are laid out in a square, with a simple road that leads through the middle of the town from east to west. At the center of the village is a small open square with the village well on the south side, and the templar's residence on the north side. Sonyalah's residence is the one building in the village not made of mud-bricks, but is constructed of limestone carried from quarries near Nibenay. The two-story building is the most impressive structure in the little village. The entire front façade of the building is covered with carved images, with

Villages of the Wastes: The Ivory Triangle

a highly stylized image of the Shadow King carved above the entranceway.

During the harvest the village's crops are stored in silos. These short cylindrical buildings are located behind the templar's residence, and surrounded by a high wall. The wall was originally constructed of bone planks with leather straps, but over the past couple of years, Sonyalah has begun replacing it with a stone wall. Because the stones must be transported from Nibenay or beyond, they are expensive and the work has progressed slowly. Currently only three of the four walls have been constructed, with the original bone and leather fence standing as the last wall.

Organization

Sonyalah, a templar from the Temple of the House, makes most of the decisions for the village. She is the judge for all disputes, enforces order, authorizes any new construction, and controls the silos in which the harvested crops are stored. She only delegates authority in those areas in which she does not have the knowledge required to make an informed decision. Such is the case in regards to cultivating the fields.

Sonyalah appoints one of the farmers to the position of Overseer of the Field. The Overseer's responsibilities include determining the planting time and harvesting time, control of irrigation, and determining crop rotation. Officially, the Overseer is appointed for life. However, if an Overseer performs poorly, Sonyalah will dismiss him and appoint a replacement.

The current Overseer, Salazar, has held the position for the past four years. A middle-aged man, he has proven very skillful in managing the fields. The rest of the villagers respect him not only for his knowledge of the crops but also because he seeks advice from the other farmers and does not hold himself above the rest of the villagers.

For protection and maintaining order, two soldiers from the Nibenese army are stationed in the village at all times. Sonyalah commands them, and forces them to drill often, which they resent. The guards are bored with their assignment, and not very skilled, but their presence keeps the villagers in line. Sonyalah does not rely heavily on these soldiers. Instead, she has cultivated relations with a number of patrol captains who often pass through the area. These patrols drive off the occasional raiders, as well as hunt the lion prides that inhabit the plains.

Outside Relations

Though the village is administered by a templar of the Sorcerer-King, the Koelse noble family owns the land the village is constructed on. The citizens of Vavrek must pay rent to the Koelses of 1/4 of their harvest. As a farming community of the city of Nibenay, they pay a tax of 1/4 of the crops to the city. Excess crops are sold to Sonyalah, who purchases it on behalf of the city. The farmers are required to trade their excess crops to Sonyalah, and cannot take their goods to the market themselves. Because of this Sonyalah rarely gives them market price for their crops. In this system, most of the villagers are just above poverty. Though they may grumble, they do so in private and have accepted the conditions.

There are no slaves in the village, mainly because the villagers cannot afford them, but also due to the lack of soldiers to keep the slaves in line so far from Nibenay. Often escaped slaves use the bog south of the village as a hideaway. The villagers refuse to help such people, and report any escaped slaves they see to Sonyalah.

Important Residents

Sonyalah, Templar-wife of Nibenay, Member of the Chamber of Earth

Female Human Templar, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 6 (mekillot hide armor)	Str 10
Movement 12	Dex 9
Level 8	Con 14
Hit points 40	Int 14
THAC0 16	Wis 16
No. of Attacks 1	Chr 15

Damage/Attack: 1d8 (iron impaler)

Psionic Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 8

Priest Spells (5/5/3/2); major spheres - all

The dark haired Sonyalah is a short woman standing just over five feet tall. Slight of build and with pale skin, she appears to be a delicate woman of 30. With an easy charm and a friendly smile she puts most people at ease. In truth, she is a ruthless determined woman who refuses to let anything stand in her way. She has proven herself a skillful manager of both people and projects. Sonyalah believes that in a year or two she

Villages of the Wastes: The Ivory Triangle

will be given a promotion, which will allow her to move back to Nibenay. Currently she is looking for a trusted minor templar to take her place in Vavrek to protect her secret source of income.

While Sonyalah does make a modest income from the harvests of the village, she has developed a hidden source of funds that has been more profitable over the years. The swamp to the south of the village attracts runaway slaves seeking shelter from the numerous templar patrols. Sonyalah uses her divination magic to keep tabs on the bog, and look for escaped slaves. If she discovers any, she has them captured by the two soldiers stationed in Vavrek. Instead of sending the slaves back to their owners as required by Nibenese law, she sells them to a contact with the merchant house Tsalaxa. The slaves are transported to the Tsalaxa outpost, Fort Kalvis, to the southwest, by one of the patrol captains who is in on the scheme with her. Sonyalah even tries to encourage slaves to seek shelter in the bog. The patrols that travel throughout the area including many slave farming communities spread rumors that the bog is never searched by the patrols for escaped slaves.

The two soldiers stationed in Vavrek full time have no idea of the scheme. All they know is that they occasionally are asked to capture slaves in the bog, which are turned over to a patrol captain on a regular basis. These two soldiers' resentment of Sonyalah would lead them to turn her in if they discovered her intrigue.

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Pree Ha'em

South of the Black Spine mountains lies a small slave village built around an oasis. This village is a green dot of hope on an otherwise dry world. Here plants are grown that can survive better in the desert climate and in the future, could help sustain the lives of the many residents of Athas.

Origins/History

Pree Ha'em has existed for about seven years. Liberated slaves from a caravan taking slaves from Nibenay to Fort Inix started the village. In addition to the slaves, the small caravan was also carrying Urikian grain in wagons pulled by kanks. The slaves escaped the caravan when a stampede of three mekillots passed through them, "accidentally" crushing all of the guards but one. The slaves soon killed the caravan leader but spared the surviving guard, due to the distracting fact that one of the mekillots transformed into a pterrann. The pterrann asked that they spare the life of the guard. The slaves agreed and the pterrann introduced himself as Chensal, a devoted follower of the Path of the Druid and invited the slaves and the surviving guard to his nearby grove.

The guests ate at the grove and drank the slightly salty tasting water. They were invited to stay for another day to rest, which they did. The next day, a representative of the slaves asked Chensal if they could stay for a longer time in the grove and surrounding area, offering grain and kanks in return. The druid immediately agreed. He saw that more people were arriving and that this was going to become a permanent settlement for quite a few people. He suggested to the settlers that they call their village "Pree Ha'em" meaning "the mother's fruit" in pterrann.

Chensal taught the slaves how to build their homes and lay out the fields for their grain crop. He taught them his belief that they could all improve Athas with enough work and devotion. The old pterrann used to believe in what all other druids believed, that one day Athas would return to its former green glory, but long ago he lost that faith.

The pterrann village Chensal had previously lived in was not far from the lone dwelling of a powerful defiler. The defiler would visit the village occasionally to acquire supplies and spell components from the village market. The villagers feared him as he had already slain the few pterranns who had stood up to him. Chensal was advancing in power as he cast

spells in the fields and learned more of the way of the druid. Eventually, he felt the need to stand up to the defiler. He went to the defiler's dwelling and saw that beside the hut was a massive *tree of life*. The druid was enraged by this man's use of such a holy object for such a vile purpose and made a powerful prayer to the Earth Mother. Chensal asked that she take back the holy tree so that it could not be used for defiling magic. As he prayed, the tree became younger- branches retracting and thinning- becoming a small sapling. Finally it grew back into the ground and was dispersed into the soil.

The defiler was on a journey at the time, but with divining magic he learned what had taken place and who had done it. A few days later, when the druid returned to his village, he found the defiler near the village's well. He was holding the youngest of Chensal's children while casting a magical spell. The spell sapped the energy out of the child. All those who had seen the incident were too horror-stricken to react as the defiler left the village. Most people believed the spell to be an act of retribution against Chensal and not against the village. However, the spell had poisoned the well water, and the villagers did not realize this until many of them had fallen ill. Chensal and his wife did not drink from the well while they mourned their child and therefore were not poisoned.

Most of those who fell ill, some 200 in total, eventually died. Those pterranns who did not die banished Chensal, cursing his name and threatening him never to return. The druid left without his wife and other children and walked out of the village with his eyes to the dust at his feet. It was then that his faith crumbled.

After being guided by Earth Mother to the grove, he realized that even if he couldn't restore Athas, he could improve what existed at the time. Chensal found that the grove's water came from a flowing well and had a heavy taste of salt, apparently soaked in from the Great Ivory Plain. It intrigued the druid that the plants were flourishing around the water despite its high salt content, which generally damages plants. He realized that plants could survive without fresh water and he wanted to create other plants that didn't need water at all, but could also survive on other liquids. Thus, he settled in the grove and began studying the plants, learning how to transform them, using interbreeding and magic, into plants that could better survive in the desert climate and would one day sustain life in the desert world.

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When Mother Earth told him that a caravan leading slaves was approaching the grove, he felt compassion for them. After all, during his exile the druid was a slave of his belief preventing him from accepting the world around him, and always suffering from the sights of the scorched lands. It was then that he summoned a pair of nearby mekillots and shapechanged into one himself, freed the slaves, and with them, started the village of Pree Ha'em.

Location

Pree Ha'em is located on the border between the Great Ivory Plain and the Black Spine Mountains, about halfway between Nibenay and Fort Inix. The slave village is small, with only about 40 families, most of whom arrived at the village since its foundation. The residents live in stone huts, held together by thick layers of salt. The salt is collected and packed between the rocks and then water is poured over the salt. The sun bakes the salt hard, holding the rocks together. The village's informal leader, Alokak, has a slightly larger home. Within his house is a room that is considered the village armory, holding 20 weapons of various types.

The village is built in rings with the saltwater pool at the center. The first ring around the pool is the druid's grove; the second ring is the field where they grow crops, and finally, the houses and other buildings surround the field.

The kank stable is also in the outer ring, near the outside of the ring. The stable-master is a psionicist who lives in a building adjacent to the stables. The location of the stables allows easy access to grazing areas around the village. Every day the stable-master leads the kanks out to graze.

There is a storage house for the crops grown in Pree Ha'em. Most of the building is for grain storage but there are also clay jars of honey, and fruits and vegetables kept for a short term. The storage building is covered with clay as extra insulation from the sun's heat.

Chensal lives inside the grove. The druid prefers to sleep outside and has done so since he arrived at the grove under a thick blanket of vines.

There are no paved roads that go through the village. Instead, cleared paths run between the buildings in the outer ring connecting to one path that runs around the circumference of the fields. There are four paths through the fields: one from north, south, east and west. These paths continue through the grove and up to the pool at the center.

Organization

Idealistically the organization is socialistic, however, one of the slaves acts as an unofficial leader. Soon after the settlement of the slaves around the grove, a former gladiator named Alokak began to take charge. Alokak is a strong middle-aged mul who took advantage of the lack of leadership among the slaves. Although formally villagers are responsible for themselves, Alokak acts as a coordinator. He oversees the work done in the fields and takes charge over the division of food and water. He claims that he only gives suggestions though no one dares to ignore the strong mul's suggestions.

Alokak has a small following of villagers who act as his agents and as village guards. Five people serve Alokak; the most vigilant of all being the former caravan guard. These five are the only ones in the village that carry weapons. Each of them takes one watch, about five hours, during the day. While on watch the guard will patrol the outskirts of the village with a young person who acts as a runner in case of an emergency. While outside the village with the kanks, the stable-master is also in charge of keeping an eye out for anyone or anything approaching the village.

Each of Alokak's followers is in charge of giving weapon training to a group of men to make sure that the villagers can fight in case of attack. Most of the training is with simple farming tools, though a few of the villagers are trained with the swords and other weapons that are kept in the armory. The followers also have guard duty at the storage house, making sure no one takes more than their share of food for the day.

All the other villagers work in the field or grove. At the end of the day each family is given food, and water in the grove. Water for drinking is taken from the pool and purified, and tastes only mildly of salt.

At the beginning of each phase of the sun one member of each family gathers around the pool to discuss the village's trade matters and to hear Chensal speak of what he has learned in his research of the grove's plants. Alokak tends to dominate these gatherings but he is less controlling, due to the presence of Chensal, who acts as a councilor to the villagers.

Outside Relations

The villagers make sure to send out one caravan to Nibenay during each phase of the sun. The caravan will bring grains, seeds, and saplings of plants that Chensal has created to Nibenay, selling them at the market. Since the establishment of the village, their product has become known to many otherwise unsuccessful farmers who now rely on the new plants

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that Pree Ha'em creates. The highest demand is for "Honey Barley", a grain that is irrigated using a combination of kank honey and water. This saves water and produces a sweeter flavored grain. At times when water is unavailable, this barley can be nurtured exclusively with honey, but only for short periods.

Chensal also has adapted plants that can survive better in a kind of symbiosis. He changed a fruit tree, called a "Begro" tree, so that it would produce larger fruit. In order for the thin branches to hold the larger fruit, a "Ktenn" vine is grown beside it. The thorny vine wraps around the tree's branches strengthening them, without damaging the tree. This allows the branches to hold the weight of the fruit, while the thorns provide protection. The tree provides shade for the vine, and when the Begro fruit is ripe and falls from the tree, it cracks open and its liquid helps nourish the vine.

Since Nibenay has quite a few natural springs around the city, its farmers aren't as desperate for these new plants. Realizing this, the people of Pree Ha'em have established a trade agreement with the Nibenese trade house Shom, who have agreed to supply Pree Ha'em with plants collected from the far reaches of Athas. These plants are grown in the grove and studied by Chensal. In this way the village can continue to supply new types of plants to Shom. Shom then sells the plants that are supplied to it for quite a high price, and since many places in Athas could benefit from such plants, their demand is high.

Seeds and plants aren't the only thing that Pree Ha'em trades. They also sell Honey Barley Ale and Pree Sticks, which are a kind of thick salt-crust leaf that grows with saltwater and gets baked in the sun, making it a crispy, salty snack. Besides food, a few villagers sculpt salt crystals for sale.

Besides trading with Nibenay, the residents of Pree Ha'em all live off of their own crops. Occasionally, they'll buy wood or obsidian tools for their farming. Other than that all they need is within the village or in the surrounding area. The members of the small community don't feel a need to leave, though anyone so desiring is not prevented from doing so. Most who go with one of the three annual caravans and see the city-state soon realize how wonderful their small village is. It's not only the villagers of Pree Ha'em who visit Nibenay that learn to prefer the village, but every so often a family or single resident from the city-state comes to the village to dwell there. No one is ever turned away. They are informed that their duties are building their own dwelling and working with the community, and are adopted into the community.

Important Residents

Chensal

Male Pterran Druid, Neutral

AC 10 (leather armor, Dex)	Str 12
Movement 12	Dex 8
Level 12	Con 12
Hit Points 51	Int 15
THAC0 14	Wis 19
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 16

Damage/ Attack: by weapon

Special equipment: *ring of warmth*

Psionic Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 6

Priest Spells (9/7/6/5/2/2): major spheres - cosmos, water; minor sphere - earth

Granted Powers: concealment on guardian lands, *speak with animals*, *speak with plants*, survive without nourishment on guardian lands, *shapechange* x3.

The most prominent resident is Chensal. He seems to be quite old for a pterran but no one knows his exact age, and some say he's decades older than most pterran live to be. Whenever asked his age, Chensal just waves the question away and goes on with his work. Despite his age, Chensal looks in good health, walking straight and confidently. Anyone seeing him walking alone notices a bounce in his step. Occasionally they'll hear him quietly whistle a pterran tune. The druid dresses in white shirt and pants held up by a thick brown cloth belt. There are always a few gardening tools and gloves hanging from his belt. The latter he uses for handling new plants that could be poisonous.

Though he doesn't lead the community, all the inhabitants know Chensal on a personal level. Each new person that joins the village is soon approached by the old druid who introduces himself and welcomes the newcomer. The only exception to this friendly approach would be pterrans. Luckily, none have reached the village... yet. Chensal's dislike of other pterrans is another mystery among the Pree Ha'em community.

In general, he doesn't talk much, but whenever he does it is always in the friendliest tones. Anyone who needs

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advice or just someone to talk to can always come to the druid, who takes as much time from his work as necessary for any of the village members.

Chensal doesn't reveal much about his past, claiming that he prefers to live for today. His usual response to questions of his past is, "The Earth Mother showed me what I needed to see, as she does everyone."

Ever since his arrival, most of the druid's time is spent in the grove, conducting research on plants. He has a very extensive understanding of all aspects of plant life. His most important goal is to sustain life, so most of Chensal's work is creating plants that give fruit.

A few of the villagers apprentice with Chensal, learning the Path of the Druid and specifically plant study. These druids-in-training also act as advisors for the farming in the fields, and cast minor spells whenever needed.

Alokar Kel

Male Mul Gladiator, Lawful Evil

AC 7	Str 19
Movement 12	Dex 14
Level 7	Con 20
Hit Points 92	Int 14
THAC0 11	Wis 14
No. of Attacks 2	Cha 13

Damage/ Attack: 1d6+5 (carrikal)

Special equipment: *chain mail shirt* (acts as a breastplate for armor bonus), carrikal with intricately carved handle (specialized with carrikal).

Psionic Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 10

Alokar is an unattractive mul, tall and muscular like most muls. He wears his steel chain mail shirt and loose gray pants that are cut just above the knees. His arms and legs are adorned with a wide variety of tattoos. The gladiator's expression is always hard, and his face often bears a scowl. His dark red carrikal is worn at his side. Alokar never cleans this weapon and the blood has soaked into it over the years.

The former gladiator arrived at the grove with the first of the slaves. He realized that Chensal had no intention of being an actual leader and knew that the villagers would be looking for one. Alokar began giving orders to people, relying more on intimidation and myths of his past rather than

charisma. He would tell villagers who should do which jobs, how they should do them, and when they should do them. Since no one ever has opposed him, Alokar continues his self appointed job of leadership. He has little tolerance for the peaceful life that most of the Pree Ha'em villagers prefer. He does not trust Chensal and believes the druid is hiding a fortune of wealth brought with the caravans the village sends out each season. Chensal tolerates Alokar since he hasn't done any direct harm... yet.

The villagers know very little of Alokar's past. The most that they have heard is that he was a swift killer in the arena of Nibenay, yet the crowds loved him. None know why he was sent with the slave caravan. Alokar doesn't like revealing much, so most people just accept him as their leader and don't ask questions.

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Tairek's Lot

Just north of the Windbreak Gap between the Windbreak and Black Spine Mountains lies a small "village" protected by deception and driven by treachery and vengeance, where the hapless stranger can get ... an education.

Origins/History

Tairek's Lot was founded only about three years ago, in the Year of Guthay's Defiance of the 190th King's Age, or Free Year 8, by the calendar of Tyr. The story of the underground village is really the story of its most prominent resident and pseudo-ruler, Harjaz Tairek. Once a brilliant architect in the near-by city-state of Nibenay, Tairek was a respected citizen for his considerable constructions and renovations of many of the city's famously carved buildings and sculptures. However, despite his great wealth and success, Tairek, who always has considered himself a genius, was tortured by the fact that although he was a brilliant artisan, he was not a noble or templar, and therefore legally could not read. Often in the company of nobles, Tairek easily taught himself to read, which was bad enough, but he foolishly passed the skill on to his slaves, and was soon caught.

The penalty for teaching slaves to read in Nibenay is death, but Tairek luckily had a daughter who had recently become a templar, and the cilops sigil she gave him saved his life. Instead, he was enslaved, and sent into the Naggaramankam. At the time, many of Nibenay's scholar slaves had just been assigned the new project of discovering why the Messenger comet had not arrived. When a miscommunication between templars supervising the slaves caused a distraction, Tairek managed to escape.

Tairek realized that even free, he was as good as dead, and he aimlessly fled the city, loosely following the road northeast, perhaps hoping to make it to Cromlin. In an unbelievable stroke of good luck, he noticed a small ruin in the distance off of the road, and upon investigating, found a basement of several rooms, including a hidden well. Deciding this was the perfect hiding place from Nibenay and his templars, Tairek began gathering other outcasts to join him, and had the surface ruins demolished to make the settlement virtually invisible to most travelers.

Location

Tairek's Lot is about a half-mile or so from the midway point of the road between Nibenay and Fort Isus, making it 15 miles from Nibenay, 20 following the road. Tairek's Lot is also about 10 miles from the Blackspine Mountains, in an area of the stony badlands. The true village is reconstructed in underground ruins, with one circular central room with a stairway and a well connected by tunnels to five smaller circular rooms. Tairek has had these rooms expanded from their original sizes, and had all of the ancient stoneworking shored up and restabilized.

There are scrub grass patches around the village; enough to sustain a little bit of grazing, but not enough to support a village. Much of the time, villagers have tents set up over and around the entrance, while several small herds of domestic beasts are allowed to graze in the vicinity. The herds supplement the village lifestyle, but are mainly kept under Tairek's control.

Organization

Tairek's Lot is extremely small for a village, and is really more of a tribe of outcasts at no more than 50 members. Fortunately, the size makes it less noticeable. Harjaz Tairek cares only for revenge against Nibenay, and he originally intended to achieve this, ironically, by the same act he was enslaved for—spreading literacy throughout the northeastern Ivory Triangle. Since Nibenay prizes secret knowledge above all else, Tairek reasoned that general education was the easiest way he could strike back at him. Originally, Tairek worked by leading escaped slaves and small bands of widows and orphans to his ruin. He said it was because these desperate people were easily taught. Truthfully, he was initially intimidated by more fearsome societal outcasts.

However, as the small population grew, he realized the harsh terrain meant alternative means would be needed to sustain the village, beyond the limited number of livestock they could keep and still maintain general secrecy. Tairek made several trips to the trade village of Cromlin, noted for outcasts and societal dissidents, and eventually gathered about two dozen brigands and thieves, whom he considered manageable, and who conduct raids of caravans passing near the village.

Tairek delegates authority only to Gelsa Pierceyes, a human psionicist. To date, she is the only slave captured from

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raids that Tairek has not ordered murdered upon capture. There is currently much debate over this in the village; many raiders feel reselling captured slaves (or captured slavers who would then become slaves) could make a good profit for the village, but Tairek's (justifiable) fear of any raid victims revealing his secrets prevent this. Raiders generally try to attack caravans with few slaves, and no one has any problem killing merchants alone.

Overall, life in Tairek's Lot is probably much harder and less rewarding than it would be in a city-state or true client village, but most of its residents have no-where else to go.

Outside Relations

About a year and a half ago, Tairek began encouraging limited raiding on traders traveling the nearby road, but only on merchants headed to or from Nibenay. If other parties pass by, and see the tents of the village, Tairek and the others pose as a Nibenese client village, and spread rumors of gith raiders from the mountains (which is partially true anyway). If templars or soldiers from Nibenay are nearby (or worse, the real gith), the tents are collapsed and covered over with sand, and the entire village takes refuge underground.

Travelers who stumble across the village will be welcome in the village if they can prove that they are not from Nibenay. Visitors will find that Tairek's Lot has little to offer strangers, other than a safe haven to rest for the night and a little water. Though they may be able to gain something even more valuable. Tairek still offers to teach others how to read and write, in his effort to strike back at Nibenay and his templars.

Important Residents

Harjaz Tairek

Male Human Thief, Neutral (Evil)

AC 6 (Dex)	Str 8
MV 12	Dex 18
Level 7	Con 13
Hit Points 27	Int 19
THAC0 17	Wis 11
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 11

Damage/Attack: 1d4 (bronze dagger)

Thief Skills: PP 25; OL 25; F/RT 10; MS 29; HS 24; DN 15; CW 60; RL 90; FD 20; BO 47; EB 50

Psionic Summary: PSP 51; Wild Talents: Invisibility, Mindlink

Attack/ Defense Modes: None/ TS, TW

PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 15; MAC 6

Proficiencies: Water find (18); Reading/Writing (20); Artistic Ability-Architecture (11); Engineering (15)

Tairek is in his early forties and has a fairly unassuming Nibenese appearance: a round face, tan skin, and straight black, graying hair which he keeps shaven to within an eighth of an inch. In Nibenay, excessive clothing is considered to be a sign of shame, so Tairek wears only a white cloth "skirt" and thick sandals, which would have been considered a state of undress beyond his station back in his home city-state.

Tairek is intrinsically tied to the village of his name, and he commands the respect of all, even the Cromlin brigands. He is intelligent enough to realize that sooner or later Nibenay will discover him, and in fact, he is surprised no one has seen through the underground village's ruses yet. He also fears the same gith that plague the whole Gap, which the village uses as a scapegoat for their own raids.

Part of Tairek's success can actually be attributed to his extreme arrogance. He is inclined to be overcautious, because he believes his efforts to spread literacy and knowledge and the raids on small caravans, are a legitimate thorn in Nibenay's side. In reality the sorcerer-king has never even heard of him and even his templars are mostly ignorant or complacent of his activities.

Tairek is friendly enough to strangers as long as they are not in the service of Nibenay, and he is always eager to teach anyone bound to or from that city-state to read and write. However, he is not above killing anyone who threatens to reveal the village's presence or the underground well. If travelers are desperate for water, Tairek sometimes sells drinks to them for a few ceramics, as long as he can hide where the water is coming from.

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Gelsa Pierceyes

Female Human Psionicist, Lawful Evil

AC 10	Str 10
MV 12	Dex 10
Level 10	Con 14
Hit Points 35	Int 11
THAC0 16	Wis 20
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 18

Damage/Attack: 1d6+2/ (wrist razor)

Psionic Summary: PSPs 53;

Disciplines: Clairsentience, Psychokinesis, Psychoportation, Telepathy
Clairsentience-Sciences: clairvoyance, clairsentience, precognition; Devotions: all-around vision, danger sense, know location, poison sense, psionic sense, feel sound
Psychoportation - Sciences: teleport; Devotions: blink, dimensional door
Telepathy-Sciences: mindlink; Devotions: awe, ESP, life detection, send thoughts, sight link
Psychokinesis - Devotions: control light, control sound
Attack/ Defense Modes: MT, EW, II, PsC, PB/ MBk, TS, MB, IF, TW
PLAYER'S OPTION: # AT 3/2; MTHAC0 11; MAC 7;

Gelsa is a very attractive young woman, in her early twenties, with honey colored skin and short, fair hair (rare on Athas). Tairek has explained Nibenese dress customs to Gelsa, and she wears the exact same outfit as he does (nothing but a white skirt and sandals) not realizing how presumptuous this would be of Tairek even in his own city-state.

Gelsa is a native of Raam, where civil unrest grew so great that she was captured and sold into slavery despite her considerable powers. However, she was freed by the raiders of

Tairek's Lot, and in an unprecedented move, Tairek allowed her to live, and freed her, provided she remain at the village. Since that time, well over a year ago, Gelsa has willingly used her powers to aid Tairek, primarily by warning him if threats approach, and by manipulating the Cromlin brigands to ensure Tairek remains in charge.

Tairek has declared Gelsa his adopted daughter, having disowned his true daughter whom he hates for not helping him more when he was sentenced to slavery. Tairek is sometimes quite abusive in this relationship, but Gelsa's loyalty never waivers, even though she is bitter and impatient with everyone else. It could be that as a lost orphan, distant from everything she has known, Gelsa actually sees Tairek as a fatherly figure.

Though everyone in Tairek's Lot can read Gelsa is the only one who helps Tairek teach others. She has nothing but contempt for both the herders and the brigands, and would fully enslave their minds if she had the power (many of the more rebellious raiders are virtually controlled by her as it is).

The Cromlin Brigands

Human Male Fighters (4th level); AC 6 (chitin scale mail); MV 12; THAC0 17; # Att. 1; Dmg/Att 1d6 (spears) or 1d6-1 (bone short swords); AL CN or CE; ML 12; MAC 8

Gathered from Cromlin and the surrounding area, these brigands are the hopeless scum of Athas "saved from lives of ignorance" by Tairek. About half of the village is composed of these raiders. Many have actually reformed and married the widows and girls that Tairek had previously brought to his village. Others have little appreciation for Tairek, but are quite happy with the prime raiding location. They have regularly tried to displace the old architect, only to be put back in their places by Gelsa, or Harjaz himself, who, while hardly a warrior, did manage to escape from Nibenay, and is more formidable than the raiders may think.

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Turg's Inlet

One simple law governs life in the desert: only the strongest survive. This truth is no more evident anywhere than near the Sea of Silt. The scouring winds, high cliffs, and choking drifts of sand make this region so deadly that only the hardiest of fools would dare to erect a home here.

So it is that the half-giant village of Turg's Inlet prospers where no other race could bear to live: directly on the shores of the Silt Sea. These huge ex-warriors live peaceful lives as farmers and spawn-trappers, reaping bounty from the great gray sea they have come to love.

Origins/ History

The story of Turg's Inlet began when a gladiator named Turg decided to escape from bondage. One day the idea of fighting for the entertainment of strangers lost its appeal to the half-giant. During his subsequent flight from Nibenay he slaughtered more than a third of the guards manning the slave pens.

Turg had heard myths of half-giant villages by the Sea of Silt, so he went there to see for himself. The half-giant ranged the cliffs and coasts from Giustenal to Bodach without meeting another of his kind. He did make one friend on his journey. In a crumbling ruin atop a cliff overlooking the Silt Sea, a brown-clothed elf invited Turg to sit by his fire, for talk and a meal of silt spawn.

Turg stayed at the ruin for several days to learn about the elf. His name was Uulagan, he was a silt priest, and this was his shrine. When Turg asked for a demonstration of silt-magic, Uulagan considered the request, then became quite excited. He immediately gathered his spawn-trapping net and guided Turg to a low inlet in the nearby cliffs.

Uulagan's plan was simple. He claimed to possess the ability to summon silt spawn with a magical song. Unfortunately, he was completely helpless to their attacks while singing. But if Turg was to wade into the silt near the inlet's mouth, and Uulagan was to climb into the shallower silt behind him, the elf believed Turg could net the summoned spawn as they entered the channel. If he missed, Uulagan would be torn to pieces by the sharp-toothed creatures, but the elf seemed pleased with the odds. Turg was dubious, but he himself had little to lose, so he accepted. Uulagan's song worked, and the half-giant's netting abilities proved formidable. The pair feasted on silt spawn that very night.

The next morning, Turg decided to dedicate the rest of his life to the trapping of spawn. He slowly conceived an entire operation of half-giant spawn-trappers under the joint command of Uulagan and himself. The half-giant returned immediately to Nibenay on a mission to convert others to his cause.

It is a frightening testament to half-giant psychology that Turg returned within less than one week, leading a small army of over two-dozen half-giants, all of whom had quit their jobs as royal guards and soldiers to help oversee the fulfillment of his bizarre vision. Thus, the spawn-trapping village of Turg's Inlet was founded.

Location

Turg's Inlet is located on the west coast of the Silt Sea, about forty miles southeast of Giustenal. Uulagan's crumbling ruin serves as the centerpiece of the village, high on the crest of the cliff. The half-giants have added a dozen massive huts made from stacked slabs of rock, sprawled around the ruin and down the side of the hill. The ruins now seem tiny and insignificant, dwarfed by the simple but huge half-giant dwellings.

The half-giants see no need for village walls, as they are more than capable of defending their homes with force of arms. They actually bait and trap predators just beyond the boundaries of the village, hoping to supplement their spawn-oriented diets.

Each stone hut is home to one or two half-giants. They furnish their lodgings sparsely, with a bed for each resident, a few chairs, and perhaps a chest in which to store their spawn-trapping equipment while they sleep.

The ruins atop the cliff are normally occupied by Uulagan, the elven silt priest. His crumbling home is open to the sky, and the eastern wall has been knocked down to allow a good view of the Silt Sea. The place is devoid of furnishings, decorations, and personal affectations. Uulagan spends most of his time here, in his bare shrine, meditating over the grayness of eternity. The only real exceptions are when he hunts, and when Turg's half-giants demand he perform a spawn summoning at the inlet.

On a clear day, the inlet is actually visible to the south of the village, slicing a deep trench into the surrounding barrens. The bulky forms of the half-giants can be seen here,

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wading in the channel with harpoons or hauling great nets to the shore. They also harvest an unusual variety of edible siltweed that grows along the coastline.

A natural spring hidden in the cliffs provides just enough water to sustain the small settlement of half-giants. This water is stored in large waterskins made from the sack-like hides of silt spawn.

Organization

The state of organization in Turg's Inlet depends entirely on how well Turg can motivate the other half-giants on any particular day. There has been a slow attrition in the hamlet's population of late, as the fickle half-giants grow bored with the idea of catching baby silt horrors. Turg still holds true to his original vision of a unified half-giant village, but he is finding it progressively harder to hold the attention of his fellows.

Half-giants have poor concepts of identity, and they constantly seek new role models. The restricted social environment of the village has thus been causing quite a bit of stress in its inhabitants. Once the villagers have impersonated Turg, Uulagan, and each other, who else is left? This half-giant 'cabin fever' is making many of the spawn-trappers irritable, depressed, and even violent. Occasionally one picks up and leaves in the middle of the night, without a word of warning to his companions. This troubles Turg immensely.

The mantle of leadership sits crooked in Turg's Inlet, unbeknownst to the half-giants, who consider Turg to be the village's chieftain and founder. Uulagan thinks otherwise. The silt cliffs were his long before some idiot half-giant came along, dragging half of the Nibenese army with him. Uulagan owes his true loyalties to para-elemental silt, and Turg's village can go and get eaten by the Dragon for all he cares. Fortunately, the elf is too fearful of the enormous half-giants to express these opinions out loud. Nevertheless, it is only a matter of time before Uulagan and Turg have an unpleasant confrontation. This will no doubt come as a complete surprise to the half-giant, who still believes Uulagan enjoys his company.

Outside Relations

Being the industrious half-giant that he is, Turg took the liberty of announcing his enterprise to a few small-time traders during his return trip to Nibenay. The merchants have been pleased with his stock so far, and Turg's Inlet now conducts a fairly lucrative trade in spawn meat and siltweed.

They have even been known to sell tentacles to the Sky Singer elves, for use as illegal spell components.

The rise of boredom amongst the half-giants has triggered an unusual phenomenon, which Turg has only recently noticed. Whenever anyone visits the Inlet, be they trader or stranger, they immediately gain the attention and admiration of every half-giant in sight. The big spawn-trappers all begin to impersonate the visitor, who rarely seems flattered. In fact, they usually leave as quickly as possible. Each such incident is followed by the departure of another disillusioned half-giant.

Turg is thus becoming quite reluctant to let visitors into his village. He meets with traders in the western barrens, and until recently he chased most other people away on sight. The half-giant population has continued to diminish, forcing Turg to reconsider his options.

The chieftain has finally come up with a working solution, or so he thinks. The next time a group of visitors endear themselves to his staff, they will be forced to stay in the village. With fresh faces to entertain them, Turg's half-giants will never have an excuse to leave him again.

Important Residents

Turg

Male Half-Giant Gladiator, Lawful Neutral

AC 5 (carru hide armor)	Str 23
Movement 15	Dex 14
Level 8	Con 20
Hit Points 152	Int 10
THAC0 11	Wis 13
No. of Attacks 2	Cha 14

Damage/ Attack: 2d4+8 (stone-tipped harpoon)

Proficiencies: harpoon specialization, armor optimization.

Psionics Summary: PSPs 53; Wild talent: immovability.

Power Score-15

Attack/ Defense Modes: none / IF, TW, MBk.

PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 17; MAC 10

Turg is broad of back and strong in muscle, with none of the flab that hangs from other half-giants. His skin is leathery and tanned from days spent working beneath the

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crimson sun, and he wears his hair long, like most of the local half-giants, to help keep the silt from blowing in his eyes.

Turg was born into slavery, and he actually enjoyed gladiatorial fighting for the first years of his life. This changed after he accidentally killed one of his trainers, impaling the man on a harpoon. The subsequent flogging did not trouble the half-giant, but the solitary confinement drove him to the brink of insanity. He escaped one week after his release back into the main pens.

Turg has never been happier than he is now, working toward his own goals and ends. In a way, the half-giant has come to connect the village with the development of his own identity. He feels that it justifies his existence, which was essentially worthless before he stumbled upon Uulagan and the inlet. This is why Turg is so terrified at the disintegration of his small band. Without them he will be nothing more than another lost half-giant, roaming the wastes in search of a friend.

Turg's winning personality and driving ambition were the primary reasons for the village's erection, but the stress of leadership has destroyed these qualities in the half-giant. He resents the other villagers for their infrequent desertions, trusting only Uulagan and Guz completely.

Visitors will find Turg to be friendly and accommodating at first. This opinion is likely to change when they discover that he will not let them leave the village. If they do not humor him after that revelation, he gives them reason to dislike him even more.

Uulagan

Male Elf Silt Cleric, Neutral

AC 6	Str 14
Movement 19	Dex 20
Level 8	Con 13
Hit Points 39	Int 16
THAC0 18	Wis 17
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 10

Damage/ Attack: 1d4 -1 (stone dagger)

Psionics Summary: PSPs 44; Wild Talent: danger sense.
Power Score-14
Attack/ Defense Modes: none/ TS, MB, TW.
PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 16; MAC 7

Priest Spells (5/5/4/2) 1st-*command, cure light wounds, entangle, light, sanctuary*; 2nd-*aid, barkskin, know alignment, speak with animals, wyvern watch*; 3rd-*conjure lesser silt*

elemental, curse of the black silt, hold animal, snare; 4th-spawn song, warriors of silt.

Granted Powers: Ignore silt (8 rounds), gate silt (2 cubic feet)

Uulagan's slim figure is often lost in the shadows of the larger half-giants around him. He dresses in a simple brown wrapping and sandals, and his hair is bleached gray by the endless winds of the Silt Sea. Apart from an occasional glint of daring in his eye, Uulagan is very unassuming.

Not even Turg knows where the elf came from or what he did before coming to the Sea of Silt. His brown wrappings denote him as a tribeless elf, but he has never deigned to tell the half-giants how he lost his tribe, or even if he had one in the first place.

Uulagan enjoys the solitude of his own thoughts and prefers his own company. Even the most rigid misanthropes get lonely once in a while, however, and this was the elf's reason for inviting Turg into his ruin. If he had known the half-giant would become a permanent fixture, he never would have made the offer.

Uulagan resents Turg and his half-giants for spoiling the solace of the cliffs. He hates the whole idea of the spawn-trapping operation, and burns with hidden anger each time that Turg makes him sing a spawn song. The elf's patience is running thin, and lately he has been entertaining fantasies of purging the half-giants from the village with his silt spells. He might have done so already, if he were not quite so fearful of the big warriors.

Turg has completely spoiled Uulagan for other visitors. The elf is snappy and bitter, with no patience for anyone or anything but his silt. He might consider talking to those offering to clear his home of the half-giants. Otherwise, he ignores all those who attempt to befriend him.

Guz

Male Half-Giant Fighter, Neutral Good

AC 8 (mekillot hide breastplate)	Str 21
Movement 15	Dex 10
Level 7	Con 19
Hit Points 126	Int 13
THAC0 14	Wis 13
No. of Attacks 3/2	Cha 13

Damage/ Attack: 1d6+4 (flint-tipped spear)

Special equipment: spawn-trapping net

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Psionics Summary: PSPs 41; Wild Talent: combat mind.
Power Score-9
Attack/ Defense Modes: none / MB, TW, MBK.
PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 17; MAC 10

While he is getting on in years, Guz still cuts an impressive figure. His belly is ever so slightly rounded, but his thick arms and legs are still pure muscle, and the deep-trenched wrinkles around his eyes could easily be attributed to a life by the Silt Sea. The middle-aged half-giant is mainly given away by a large bald-patch crowning his ring of graying braids.

Guz was once a military hero in the elite ranks of the Nibenese half-giant infantry. He distinguished himself in many daring attacks on the headhunters of Gulg, in both the Crescent Forest and the Ivory Triangle. All of this was worth nothing to him after his forced retirement from the army. The great warrior was suddenly coerced into the life of a cheap mercenary, barely earning enough ceramic bits to survive. This all changed the day he met Turg Spawn-Catcher.

Guz and Turg became fast friends, recognizing the same pioneering qualities in each other that they possessed in themselves. With no better prospects for the future, Guz was more than happy to join Turg in his trek back to the Sea of Silt.

Today, Guz is Turg's most loyal follower. He no longer shares the need for self-discovery that burns in his younger brethren, and would be quite happy to spend the remainder of his life trapping spawn in the inlet.

Guz is usually quite pleasant and relaxed. He enjoys talking about the good old days, especially after a hard day of silt farming. The half-giant's perfect manners are betrayed only when his competency is brought into question. He is very self-conscious about his age.

Villages of the Wastes: The Tyr Region

Eru's Rest

Eru's Rest is a small, quiet village located in the sand dunes of the Great Alluvial Sand Wastes north of the road between Silver Springs and Tyr; it has a population of only thirty ex-slaves and freemen.

Origins/ History

An escaped mul slave-gadiator named Eru, owned by the Tyrian noble house of Kavac, founded this village nearly ten years ago. The oasis that now bears his name was the first and last stop on his journey after fleeing Tyr with the blood of his overseer and trainer still on his hands, and became a shelter for him when he became lost in the wilderness. It provided him with water and enough food to survive alone in the desert for many years, and now provides for those with whom he shares its bounty.

The other villagers are the only survivors of a caravan lost to the claws of gith raiders. Eru, having been a former slave himself, felt some empathy for their plight, and led them to the oasis.

Of the thirty-odd group, the majority had been slaves, the rest freemen. The slaves stayed at the oasis because they did not wish to return to a life of slavery. The freemen stayed out of fear after a half-dozen attempted to leave and were killed by Eru and the other slaves in order to protect their new-found freedom.

Location

Eru's Rest is located north of the road between Tyr and Silver Springs, nearer to the latter. A full day's march over miles of sandy dunes and dangerous barrens is required to reach the road; thus, for reasons of survival, the villagers only leave the oasis in groups.

The oasis proper is little more than a large puddle, no more than thigh deep, surrounded by a thin skirt of hardy desert grass. In fact, if not for Eru, the sands would likely have swallowed the oasis within the last decade.

Though Eru's long term plans include increasing the size and bounty of the oasis, it will be a long time before these plans reach fruition, and so for the time being it remains barely enough to support the villagers in their daily water requirements.

The village itself lies a short distance from the oasis. This is so as not to frighten away the small wildlife, which the

villagers find easier to hunt and trap in the sands near the oasis. Even so, the oasis does not provide everything the village requires, and small parties often travel to the barrens to hunt the animals there.

The domiciles of the villagers are large tents of poorly cured hide, haphazardly erected in the shade of twin, worn, rock-pillars that thrust twice a man's height into the air above the surrounding sands.

The tents are never far from the others out of necessity, as the entire village is often needed to face the dangers that the desert throws at them, be it sandstorms or desert beasts. Similarly, none of the tents are meant to be permanent constructions, since most sandstorms require the tents be dug out, moved, and erected again.

Organization

At first, the former slaves turned to Eru for leadership, most never having tasted freedom before and uncertain of how to act or behave. The mul, however, was uninterested in leadership. Eru, content instead to concentrate on protecting and maintaining the oasis, rejected the mantle of leadership and told the people their only true master was the desert and themselves.

The few freemen left from the slaughter following the group's introduction to the oasis stepped into the resulting leadership void, recognizing their own survival was at stake. They suggested the village govern itself with a Senate, like the Senate of Tyr. Each villager would have a say in any decisions that affected the group, with majority rule. The slaves agreed, thinking it the best plan.

Even so, and despite Eru's disinterest in the position, the simple mul is considered the de facto leader of the village and his word is always deferred to when he chooses to give it during the nightly "Senate" meetings. The villagers have few hard and fast rules. Most are related to simple survival and protection of the village's location - rules that even the freemen obey, accepting their lot and new lives. This does have its benefits for them, greater freedom than offered in the city-states being the most obvious of these.

Tasks, such as guard duty, hunting, and other village necessities are filled either by volunteers, or are appointed by the accepted task-leader. Certain individuals often volunteer for particular tasks time and time again and so earn a sort of accepted leadership status, becoming task-

Villages of the Wastes: The Tyr Region

leaders. One example is the young half-elf, Kereth, who always volunteers to go raiding and, much to his own delight, has become the lead man in raids.

Though it is seldom a problem, those who consistently fail to do their work are looked down on, often shunned by the others and eventually confronted with the threat of violence. However, it rarely escalates to this level, as Eru often steps in and attempts to remedy the situation by attempting to match tasks to individuals while not alienating the other villagers. Sometimes it works, and sometimes he crosses his arms and glares threateningly. Those who continue to not contribute would be treated exactly as those who tried to leave, though there has been no need for this since the initial foundation of the village and the establishment of what passes for its laws.

Outside Relations

Though the village could earn money or goods by selling the water from the oasis to merchants not wishing to pay the exorbitant prices at Silver Springs, Eru's primary concern is protecting the oasis, and he has forbidden the sale of water to outsiders.

First, the oasis is too small to support any more than twenty to thirty people, which it is currently doing, and would quickly dry up if used as a rest-stop by caravans, in which case both the village and, more importantly to Eru, the oasis would quickly vanish. Second, Eru does not wish word of his continued existence to somehow reach his former masters. He still fears they would send slave-hunters to retrieve him and execute him (or worse, put him back in the gladiatorial pits away from his beloved oasis and its freedom).

Thus, the village survives primarily on its own wits as well as some occasional trade with passing caravans, and finally, through raiding. However, the "raiders" of Eru's Rest do not target caravans, only other raiders. It should be noted that while Eru does not go raiding, he does not disapprove.

Due to their lack of equipment and training, the villagers would originally lie in wait for stragglers from bandit groups who had just struck a caravan, and then attack the stragglers en masse with hurled stones, sometimes succeeding, sometimes being forced to flee.

With success behind them and better equipment gained from past raids, the villagers have grown bold enough to prey upon whole bandit groups and encampments, utilizing traps and elaborate ruses to gain victory. In addition to this, individual villagers or small groups travel a short section of the road between Tyr and Silver Springs posing as travelers or pilgrims and trade goods with passing caravans. Often this is water, items taken during raids that are not needed by the village, and various other materials in exchange for needed goods, such as food, cloth, leather, and giant-hair rope.

There is also current talk of the village hiring itself out as guards to caravans between Silver Springs and Tyr, despite

Eru's protests to this course of action, fearing it would draw unwanted attention to the oasis and, eventually, him. There is also an attempt to tame a local wild kank herd, or steal their young or eggs, so that the village might become even more self-sufficient and able to provide more of their own food.

Important Residents

Eru

Male Mul Gladiator/ Druid, Neutral

AC 7	Str 21
Movement 12	Dex 17
Level 7/2	Con 19
Hit Points 68	Int 13
THAC0 16	Wis 17
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 17

Damage/ Attack: 1d6+5 (quarterstaff)

Psionics Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 8

Priest Spells (4): major spheres - cosmos, water

Granted Powers: concealment while on guarded lands

The ex-slave gladiator Eru is the most notable resident of the village. Though he was a gladiator in his past and still practices with his weapons, since discovering the oasis he has turned away from a lifetime's study of personal combat and showmanship. Instead, he has now devoted himself to the oasis and its protection and begun following the path of the druid. Eru is part of the oasis, heart and soul, and rarely leaves it, for the oasis is his guarded land. His eventual, perhaps impossible, goal is to turn it from a mud-hole amid the sands into a lake of pure water surrounded by trees and all manner of life.

Villages of the Wastes: The Tyr Region

Kereth the Swift

Male Half-Elf Ranger, Chaotic Good

AC 7	Str 12
Movement 12	Dex 17
Level 3	Con 15
Hit Points 23	Int 12
THACO 18	Wis 16
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 15

Damage/ Attack: 1d6 (spear)

Ranger Abilities: MS 32, HS 25.

Psionics Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 9

Kereth the Swift, a former slave, is the young half-elf behind much of the village's latest raiding strategy. Recently he was responsible for a successfully executed plan that included attacking a group of raiders as they were hitting a caravan carrying silk and fabric. In the process, his plan saved the caravan and earned the villagers a swiftly paid debt of gratitude from the merchants, though the villagers were forced to take coin which they plan on trading for food and water with other caravans.

Upon their return to the village, this same plan also drew the ire of Eru. The mul fears the tale might draw unwanted attention to the village, despite Kereth's lies to the merchants. Lately, leadership confrontations between Kereth and Eru have grown, though others in the village have yet to take sides.

Villages of the Wastes: The Tyr Region

Nalod Springs

Nalod Springs is a little known stop over for weary travelers and caravans, off the main travel route and hidden by a 120 foot tall 1,600 foot long rocky outcropping. Nalod Springs is a very large compound. Sandy red glazed 3' x 3' x 3' bricks make up the 9' to 12' wall that surrounds the little community. Six buildings and a large tree can be seen from outside the compound; the buildings are made of smaller brick with similar colors. The entrance to the compound is in the northwestern wall or actually lack of wall, an opening roughly 25' across. The ground has been compacted rock hard by the caravan wagons and beast of burden pulling them. To the south of the entrance along the wall is a large stack of 25 wall bricks, more than enough to close the opening in the wall.

Origins/History

The springs were found by an adventuring party many years ago. As the group got older and decided to settle down they returned to the springs and started building. There was and still is the original resident of the springs who lives peacefully with Nalod and company. Kone is a mul druid who claims the springs as his guarded lands. When Nalod and his band arrived they spent many long nights explaining to the druid that they were not going to harm the springs, that in fact they planned to make it their home and defend it with their lives. After a few trials of trust, an uneasy bond was formed between the druid and the new residents. Now many years later Kone and Nalod's band have a strong bond of friendship. Nalod's band consists of Nalod, his wife Diamonti, Valmer, and Colok.

Location

Nalod Springs is located roughly 10 miles east of Fort Skoni and 5 miles south of the trade route between Fort Skoni and Silver Springs. Hidden deep in the Great Alluvial Sand Waste, this little known stop over has saved many a caravan masters' hide.

Nalod Springs is a walled compound surrounding six buildings, three craters brimming with water, a large tree, and very large animal pen. The closest building to the entrance is 10' tall, 12' wide, 55' long, and made of sandy red brick. There are several doors along the length of the south wall of the building. At any given time 1d6+1 "slaves" wearing gray cotton robes are housed in this building.

To the south of this building is an animal pen that encompasses the entire western end of the compound and the

smallest of the three craters brimming with water. This crater is called Mud Hole because the muddy ground surrounding it. The crater rises about a foot or two off the ground and gives off a slight sulfur smell. The water temperature is between 60° F-80° F and is drinkable. Mud Hole has enough water for two mekillot, 20 erdlu, 40 kank, or any combination per day. The crater can be drained but will refill over night. The pen itself is roughly 90' x 100' with a wooden post driven in the ground about every 10 ten the exposed part of the post are 6 to 8 feet tall. The posts are tied together at three different heights with giant hair rope. The first at 1' then at 3' and 5' there is roughly 1000' of giant hair rope being used. There are always 4 kank here, that belong to Nalod and company.

The northeastern corner of the compound is taken up by a large brick building used to house visitors. This building is roughly 10' tall, 45' wide, and 35' long. There is one large room with two comfortable beds, a small table and four chairs. Three identical rooms that have six standard beds and a large table with six chairs make up the rest of the building. The rooms and linens are always kept clean.

South of the visitors' building is the kiln. This adobe furnace is large enough to fire the wall bricks. All the materials for making and glazing the bricks are located here.

South of the kiln is Colok's home, a 7' tall, 25' wide, 25' long brick building. His home is also his shrine to the Element of Earth. This building and furniture are all sized for a dwarf.

Taking up the southeastern corner of the compound is Nalod and Diamonti's home. A two story brick building, the entire northwest corner being a patio with many padded chairs, tables, and shade. The first floor has a large kitchen that is used to prepare food for all the residents and visitors. The second floor is Nalod and Diamontis' private quarters.

West of Nalod's home is another two story brick building; this is Valmer's house. The first floor holds his library and a small kitchen and pantry. The second floor holds his lab and bedroom.

There is a small 15' by 15' fenced-in garden just west of Valmer's. This is where he and his "slaves" tend to herbs, flowers, and vegetables for at least 2 hours a day.

North of the garden is a large 30' high tree with branches reaching 12' out and a trunk 8' in diameter. The trunk is twisted and the bark is gray and scaly giving the tree its name: serpent wood. The leaves are almost a foot long and 4 inches wide. Kone the druid resides in the tree and quietly observes what is happening in the compound.

North and east of the serpent wood is the largest of the three craters roughly 35' in diameter and rising up to 6 feet

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off the ground. This is Great Ash. The water is boiling hot and gives off a strong sulfur smell. Anyone reaching into the water receives 1d4 hit points of damage per round. West of the first is the second crater about 15' in diameter and rising 3 feet off the ground is Little Ash. The water is not boiling but is still hot and smells of sulfur. The water from all of the craters is drinkable when cooled.

Organization

Nalod has complete control of the springs. He will listen to any suggestion that is reasonable. It is said that he rules with a loose fist, however, the three companions will always give way to any direct command of Nalod's. The only exception being the druid, Kone, who does whatever he chooses and answers to no one. Kone will never directly interfere with Nalod unless the springs are in danger. Kone rarely interacts with any of the inhabitants unless directly called by one of the four companions. Nalod is a fair half-elf who's only desires are to live out his days in peace and raising a family. He has no tolerance for destructive or aggressive behavior. He will deal with anyone fairly and give aid to those that need it. However, he will not let himself or his companions be taken advantage of.

Outside Relations

Nalod Springs is basically self-sufficient. They do offer services to travelers and small merchant caravans. They will water and feed most beasts of burden. The cost varies per animal: mekillot 20 cp per night, inix 5 cp per night, heavy crodlu 3 cp per night, erdlu/crodlu 1 cp per night, and kank 5 bits per night. Nalod will never pen more animals than Mud Hole can handle.

Nalod also offers lodging. He can house two officers and eighteen soldiers comfortably in the visitors' quarters. Extra cots and linens can be brought in, to squeeze up to six officers and 54 soldiers into the visitors' quarters. Nalod will not place visitors in any other buildings. Nalod charges 1 cp per person per night, 2 cp per person in the officer's room. For an extra 1 cp two meals can be had per person. Also for 2 bits per piece of clothing laundry can be cleaned. All visitors are welcomed to bathe in Little Ash. Nalod will tell anyone how refreshing the water is. The meals will include all the water you can drink, a healthy portion of meat, fresh baked bread, and a mug of broy.

Nalod will tell all visitors that the compound is neutral ground and he will not tolerate any violence from them. If a group gets out of line he will ask once that they leave. If they won't he will gather his companions and expel the troublemakers. If this leads to blood shed, Nalod will claim all goods from the trespassers as the Springs' property to be divided up as he sees fit. Nalod has a great memory and will rarely

allow a person back into his compound once they have caused problems.

Nalod will make purchases from caravans for anything the compound might need. He is a harsh tradesman and usually ends up with the best end of the deals.

The true business of Nalod Springs has nothing to do with travelers at all. The "slaves" that perform all of the mundane tasks are really students that have come to learn from Diamonti or Valmer. Diamonti is a powerful psionicist. Valmer is a preserver of some skill. At any given time there is 1d6+1 students staying at the springs. In exchange for their training they agree to work as "slaves" for the time they are there. The students act as slaves to prevent drawing extra attention from the visitors. Diamonti will take her students through the day and night around the compound and beyond for lessons. The majority of students will be there for Diamonti's training. Valmer teaches the preserving way of magic to anyone who will come to him. He also instructs on growing plants, tending gardens, and cooking as well. Occasionally a student will come to Colok to learn of the power of earth and possibly make the pack with the element. The companions are very careful when taking on new students and will run them through a series of test to see if they are lying. Recently they had to kill a spy that was searching for rogue preservers.

Important Residents

Nalod

Male Half-Elf Ranger, Neutral Good

AC 1 (studded leather armor +2, Dex)	Str 17
Movement 12	Dex 19
Level 12	Con 16
Hit Points 76	Int 14
THAC0 8	Wis 15
No. of Attacks 3/2	Cha 17

Damage/ Attack: 1d8+2 (obsidian long sword +2)

Ranger Abilities: MS 99, HS 92.

Psionic Summary: PSP 46; Wild Talent- Psychic messenger
Power Score-12

Attack/ Defense Modes: none / TS, MB, IF.

PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHACO 14; MAC 7
(mental armor class proficiency).

Priest spells (2/2/1): minor sphere - earth

Nalod is a male half-elf, 6 feet tall, 190 pounds, with blue eyes, and black wild flowing hair that hangs past his

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shoulders. He normally wears blue silk shirts and brown cotton breeches. He will always wear his obsidian long sword (+2 magical) and a steel dagger. If he has to gear up for a fight he will put on magical studded leather (+2 AC) and his other obsidian long sword.

Nalod takes everything seriously: fighting, bartering, and even having fun. He is deeply in love with his wife, Diamonti, and desires to have a large family. Valmer and Colok are his most trusted friends. Now in his later years he is tired of fighting and adventuring. He only wants a quiet life with his friends and family. Nalod is not easily deceived and is cautious in his dealing with outsiders. He will not tolerate any acts of aggression by anyone while in the compound. He calls it "neutral ground" and tells all visitors to leave their personal problems outside the walls. He will not hesitate to throw out one person or an entire caravan. If it comes to bloodshed the companions have been able to defend the springs from most things. There have been a few times when Kone has had to aid in the defense of the springs with his powerful magics.

Nalod is the bastard child of an elf and Tyrian prostitute. His mother wanted nothing to do with him and sold him into slavery. He was purchased by a herdsman and raised like his son. Nalod spent his youth around animals and is very proficient in their dealings. In his teenage years his "father" was killed and he was left to fend for himself. Returning to Tyr he grouped up with Diamonti, Valmer, Colok, and some others. This group adventured all over the Tablelands and beyond. After years of that life they decided to settle down and make an "honest" living.

Nalod has two large jhakars for pets. Tip and Kip they are always close by and will attack anyone who attacks any of the companions. They also guard the compound at night.

Diamonti

Female Human Psionicist, Neutral Good

AC 9	Str 11
Movement 12	Dex 15
Level 14	Con 16
Hit Points 48	Int 19
THAC0 13	Wis 16
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 14

Damage/ Attack: 1d6 (staff)

Psionic Summary: PSPs 147

Telepathy - Sciences: Domination, Mass Domination, Mindwipe, Psychic Surgery; Devotions: Awe, Empathy, ESP, Inflict Pain, Invincible Foes, Sight Link, Sound Link, Truthear, Ego Whip (Identity penetration), Mind Thrust (Mind bar).
Psychokinetic - Sciences: Disintegrate, Telekinesis; Devotions: Animate Object, Ballistic Attack,

Control Body, Deflect, Inertial Barrier, Static Discharge.

Metapsionic - Sciences: Empower; Devotions:

Psychic Blade, Psychic Drain, Receptacle

Attack/ Defense Modes: EW, II, MT, PsC, PB/ IF, MB, MBk, TS, TW

PLAYER'S OPTION: # AT 2/1; MTHACO 7; MAC 1 (mental armor proficiency), .

Diamonti is a human woman, 5'8" tall, and 120 pounds with bright blue eyes and blonde hair that hangs in a pony tail to her waist. She wears multi-color silk robes and carries a bone staff with an obsidian orb in the end. She also has a steel dagger at her belt at all times.

Diamonti is very laid back. She rarely raises her voice or does anything rash. She loves Nalod and would follow him into the jaws of the Dragon. She has the deepest respect for Valmer and Colok. She spends much of her time teaching her students and meditating. She enjoys writing and reading and has a small library of short stories and poems as well as a few historic works. She is always on the look out for any text that she might purchase from visitors. She spends most of her free time in developing psionic items. Her staff is her masterpiece. It can reproduce many of her psionic powers and has an enormous PSP battery.

Diamonti was born a daughter to a Tyrian noble and was sent to the University of the Mind in Tyr. After completing her training she decided to be an adventurer. During this time she met Nalod, Colok, and Valmer. They have been inseparable ever since.

Colok

Male Dwarf Earth Cleric, Chaotic Neutral

AC 4 (scale armor +2)	Str 21
Movement 6	Dex 12
Level 11	Con 20
Hit Points 74	Int 11
THAC0 12	Wis 19
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 12

Damage/ Attack: 2d4 +6 (obsidian maul +2)

Psionic Summary: PSPs 60; Wild Talent- Share Strength.

Power Score-16

Attack/ Defense Modes: none/ MB, IF, TW.

PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHACO 15; MAC 5 (mental armor proficiency).

Priest Spells (8/6/5/5/2/1): major sphere - earth, minor sphere - cosmos

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Granted Powers: Ignore earth (11 rounds), gate earth (5 cubic feet), eliminate tracks, encasement, meld into stone, enchanted saving throws (+2 vs. earth), endure.

Colok is a male dwarf, 4'8" tall, and 230 pounds. He has black eyes without pupils, and is completely bald. Normally Colok wears earthen colored robes and sandals. His holy symbol is a large topaz on a headband he always wears. If he has to prepare for a fight he will wear inix scale armor (+2 magical), a two-handed obsidian maul (+2 magical), and 2 iron warhammers.

Colok is a light-hearted and generally good-natured fellow. He spends much of his time working the kiln making bricks for the compound walls and buildings. He has also started making pottery and has several pieces for sale to anyone interested. He makes flasks of varying sizes, pots, bowls, and mugs. His home is also his shrine to the Element of Earth. He will speak at length about the wonders of Mother Earth and how all things must come from the land. He will not hesitate to defend the compound or to remove unwanted visitors. His current focus is the protection of the compound and the springs.

Colok was born in Kled and after making his pack with the Element of Earth he decided to spread the word. His travels brought him to Tyr where he teamed up Nalod and the others. He has had great success with this group and he has been able to use his powers to help many people.

Valmer

Male Human Preserver, Lawful Neutral

AC 2 (Bracers of AC 4, Dex)	Str 12
Movement 12	Dex 16
Level 13	Con 16
Hit Points 53	Int 19
THACO 14	Wis 14
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 13

Damage/ Attack: 1d6+2 (staff+2)

Psionic Summary: PSPs 61, Wild Talent: Dimension Door
Power Score-15
Attack/ Defense Modes: none/ TS, IF, MBk.
PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHACO 14; MAC 6 (mental armor proficiency)

Wizard Spells (5/5/5/4/4/2): 1st - *armor, magic missilex2, shocking grasp, sleep*; 2nd - *detect psionics, invisibility, cerulean shock, levitate, stinking cloud*; 3rd - *hold person, infravision, fireballx2, haste*; 4th - *confusion, dimension door, polymorph self, psionic dampener*; 5th - *avoidance, wall of force, teleport, cloudkill*; 6th - *globe of invulnerability, chain lightning*.

Valmer is a human male, 6'2" tall, and 180 pounds with silver hair and brown eyes. Gray robes and sandals. He carries an agafari quarterstaff (+2 magical), at all times and has a black iron ring (Ring of Regeneration), brass bracers (Bracers of Defense AC 4), and a steel dagger.

Valmer is quiet and keeps to himself. He prefers the company of his pets and plants to that of actual people. He has grown very fond of Diamonti, even though he would never show it. He will do anything to keep her safe. He spends much of his time training students in the art of preserving magic. When not teaching he works in his garden and in his lab.

Valmer was born in Tyr. His father was a preserver and taught him the path of the preserver. After having too many close calls with the local templars he decided to leave town. That's when he met up with Nalod and company. He has deep respect for Nalod and Colok.

Kone

Male Mul Druid, Neutral

AC 9 (Dex)	Str 20
Movement 12	Dex 15
Level 12	Con 17
Hit Points 86	Int 14
THACO 10	Wis 15
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 16

Damage/ Attack: 1d6+6 (bone mace+3)

Psionic Summary: PSPs 59, Wild Talent- Phase
Power Score-14
Attack/ Defense Modes: none / TS, MB, IF.
PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHACO 15; MAC 8 (mental armor proficiency),

Priest Spells (8/6/5/3/2): major spheres - cosmos, water

Granted Powers: Concealment when on guarded lands, speak with animals, speak with plants, live without water or nourishment on guarded lands, shape change.

Kone is a male mul, 6'0" tall, 300 pounds, with no hair, and brown eyes. When seen Kone wears green and gray robes and sandals and carries a bone mace (+3 magical).

Kone is serious about keeping the springs from being harmed. These are his guarded lands and he shares them with Nalod and his friends. Kone doesn't interact with the companions unless the springs are in danger or if directly asked by one of the four.

Little if nothing is known about Kone simply because he won't tell anyone. He has used his powerful magic to heal and defend the companions in the past.

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Powder River Village

A small village at the western edge of the Tablelands, sheltered by the foothills of the Ringing Mountains, Powder River Village is defined by a dry barren riverbed that carves its way past the northern edge of the town. A medium-sized village, Powder River has managed to survive in the hostile Athasian desert for over eighty years, gradually expanding and becoming a stop for the nomads and dune traders of the region. Powder River sustains itself through trade, selling crafts and goods, and through hunting and gathering amongst the rocky badlands surrounding the village.

Origins/History

Powder River Village was founded almost five generations ago when the Dustback nomad tribe settled down and gave up their ways as hunter-gatherers. The tribe had been a successful one, and its numbers began to swell, and eventually the tribe leaders decided to give up the nomadic life and settle. After a difficult start, the village managed to take hold, and eventually established itself as a presence in the area. Freemen and a few ex-slaves from Tyr started to trickle in, and soon Powder River Village became a stop for dune traders.

Six years ago a new danger arose that threatens to wipe Powder River Village off the dune trader's maps. The Tempest Reapers, a tribe of over three hundred bloodthirsty savages, moved into the area southeast of the town and immediately began preying upon the villagers. The town has increasingly been forced to concentrate on defense and repelling the frequent attacks, rather than growing and developing itself. (For more information on the war with the Reapers, see **Outside Relations** below.)

Location

Powder River Village is tucked away into the badlands and rocky barrens south of Tyr, and is about two days travel away from the city. A small swatch of clear terrain surrounded by badlands, the village grounds are well defended, thanks to both natural and man-made defenses. The following is a list of key locations and buildings in the village area.

The Bridge - Constructed from old sandstone blocks, this arched bridge spans the dusty riverbed that gives the village its name. The keystone on each side features a carving of a spearhead and sandal, the symbols of the village. The bridge is usually patrolled by four to six warriors, who also maintain a small campsite on the far side of the bridge for night watch. Most with something to trade will do their business here, as soon

as the guards summon a negotiator from the village to broker the deal; although some more trusted or valued trade partners will be invited into the village to bargain over a sack of broy. When the rare caravan passes by, there is a wide clearing that can serve as a canversai on the far side of the bridge.

The Breakwall - A long high mound of packed sand and rock, the Breakwall guards Powder River Village's vulnerable southwestern flank. Sharpened stakes bristle along the length of the man-made wall, capable of impaling anyone attempting a reckless charge. Some of these stakes have been turned into grisly standards, displaying the skulls and tattered clothing of the Tempest Reapers. Bramblevine grows in patches along the outside edge of the Breakwall, but the villagers take care to keep it from growing over onto the other side. Four guard campfires line the wall, and ten warriors keep regular watch. Because of the frequent skirmishes by the raiders, most of the villagers tend to stay away from this area.

Common Grounds - This clearing is located near the center of Powder River Village, and it is here that the tribe has most of its meetings. In the center is a bonfire pit, and woven blankets and mats are sometimes set out around it for meetings. The Common Grounds are used for a wide variety of purposes, and is a popular play area for the village children.

The Fields - To the southeast of the village, past the Field Gate, are the town's croplands. There, the villagers grow a variety of grains and other stable foods. Unfortunately, the fields are separated from the village and are the most vulnerable area in the whole village. Raids by the Tempest Reapers often destroy the fields, forcing the villagers to start over from bare ground. Irrigation is a crude affair, requiring a bucket line from the well to the fields. Powder River's fields are not nearly fertile enough to sustain the community, but fortunately its hunters and traders provide enough to keep it going. The villagers hope one day to develop truly successful farmland, but for now they concentrate on maintaining the current village.

Powder River - A broken channel carved into the badlands by water eons ago, Powder River is a dry riverbed filled now with silt and sand. The riverbed is about ten feet deep, but its sides are fairly steep and almost five feet of sand fills the bottom. The villagers occasionally venture down into the riverbed, but a few hidden sinkholes exist, and most stay out of it. Powder River curves up towards the north for a while, then disappears into the mountains. Going south from the village, the riverbed becomes shallower after a few miles, and eventually becomes completely filled with alluvial sands.

The Shieldwall - A large rock outcropping shielding the southern edge of Powder River Village, the Shieldwall is one of the many small foothills of the Ringing Mountains. The Shieldwall is bare rock, dotted by sparse shrubbery and small

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trees towards the base. The headman of Powder River Village makes his home on the Shieldwall, but the rock is too steep and jagged to climb beyond the point of his dwelling. The Shieldwall continues southwest for a few hundred yards beyond the map, and then ends.

The Divvy Shack - This open tent is just four sturdy poles and a heavy canvas roof. Three firepits sit in the center of the divvy shack, with smokeholes above them in the tent. It is here that the tribe stores its meat and food, hanging from hooks and cords attached to the roof. Hunters returning from their task hang the meat here to be cooked or smoked, and then divided amongst the tribe in a communal meal. It is this sharing that gives the divvy shack its name. Because its fields are in such a poor state, Powder River relies heavily on its hunters and gatherers to sustain its populace; regular hunter-gatherer parties leave every other day to keep the town's food supply in stock.

The Field Gate - A small gatehouse looking east towards the field, this mud-brick building houses up to eight guards. Arrow slits are the only opening on the eastern side, but a small porch overhang offers shade on the western wall. The field gate is composed of three massive tree trunks that, lying flat, are as high as an elf's shoulder. The village purchased them at great expense from a Forest Ridge tribe almost two generations ago, and hauled them across the alluvial sands to Powder River. Two are lined up with the gatehouse, supported by posts and a mound of sand. The third is a few yards back, and through great effort can be rolled forward to block off the Field Gate.

Headman's Dwelling - Carved into the side of the Shield Wall, the Headman's aerie offers a sweeping view out over the village of Powder River. The Headman's home is larger than the other buildings in the village, with two floors and several rooms. Though it could hardly be called luxury, the Headman's dwelling is considerably better furnished than the rest of the village. About half of the Headman's dwelling is actually built into the rock, but the exterior part is furnished from adobe mud-brick. The Headman's dwelling also contains

a meeting hall, usually used by the Headman's council. In a crisis, it can be fortified against attackers in the village below.

Overlook Tower - This thirty foot high pinnacle of rock rises up over most of Powder River Village, and serves as a watch post and observation tower for the village. Carved stone steps lead up to the summit, where a small covered crow's nest allows for an unobstructed view of the town below. In case of emergencies, there is a signal firepit at the top of the tower, and two lookouts usually are stationed here.

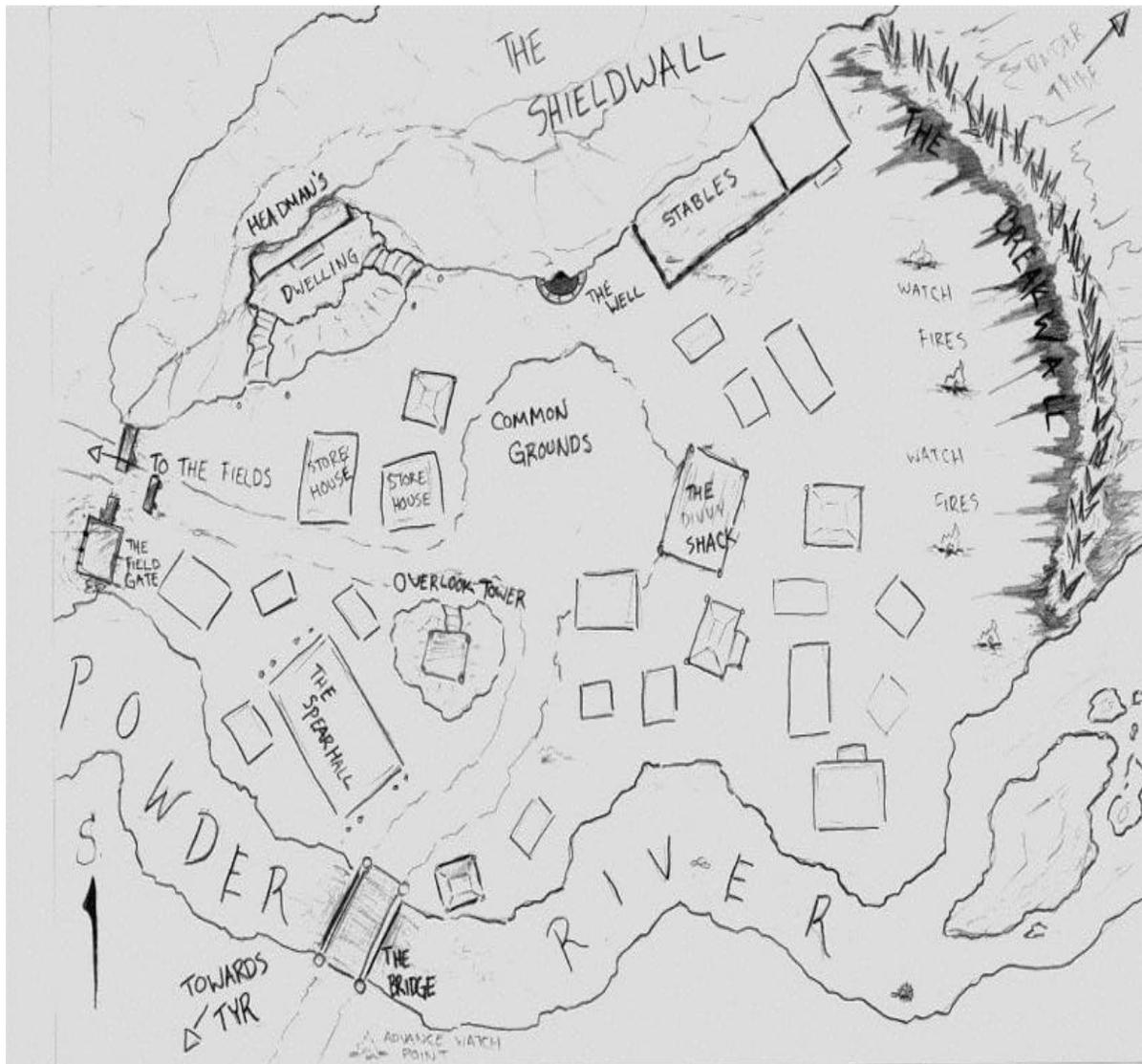
The Spearhall - A large adobe brick building, the Spearhall's two entrance doors are decorated with four totemic war standards, with spears as the poles. The Spearhall serves as the armory, makeshift barracks, and meeting hall for the warriors and guards of Powder River Village. The Spearhall is also an organization, to which all warriors in the village belong, and all members carry at least one spear to be used at ceremonies. The warriors elect a captain, who leads them in war council and in battle; the current First Spearman is Dukos, a mul warrior who fled to Powder River from Tyr after Kalak's death.

Storehouses - These two mud-brick buildings house the tools, dry foodstuffs, and other miscellaneous stores of Powder River Village. Though the doors are not usually locked, the Headman does have a key to do so. One guard watches each storehouse.

Stables - This building and cleared field is where the people of Powder River Village keep their animals, mostly erdlu and aprigs, plus a few kanks. The village also has five crodlu, usually used by scouts or warriors during special cases. The villagers usually let the erdlu run free during the day, and herd them back into the stables at sundown.

The Well - A trickling pool of water fed from a deep underground spring beneath the Shieldwall, the Well is made of bricks and usually guarded by three warriors. During dry spells, the water may sink down as much as ten feet, but the well has never gone dry in the history of Powder River.

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Organization

Powder River Village is still small enough so that it does not experience too much political tension. The leader of the village is known as the Headman, a position based upon leadership and negotiating skills that usually is held by one of the elder males. The Headman controls the village, usually speaks for it in negotiations with outsiders, and directs the actions of the town. The Headman cannot abuse his power, though, because he rules only by the consent of the villagers. Each Headman determines their own style for managing the village, but most choose to pick a council of advisors to aid them in decision-making and administrative processes. The position of Headman can be held until death, or an unpopular leader

could be ousted within months of assuming control. The current Headman is Aiter Budak.

The other major organization in Powder River is the warrior cult of the Spearhall, a brotherhood of all the hunters and warriors in the village. The First Spearman of the Hall is usually the most powerful warrior present, but power rarely equals brute force. Skilled hunters, quick strategists, and wise old gladiators are all good candidates for the leadership of the Spearhall. Although it is technically possible, the First Spearman is rarely also Headman of the village, simply because the two duties require too much work to manage them both effectively. The mul Dukos holds the position of First Spearman for now.

Villages of the Wastes: The Tyr Region

Outside Relations

The village of Powder River has thus far managed to both escape the notice of the major powers of the Tablelands and managed to attract the notice of the nomads and stragglers that help add to its ranks. It does conduct moderate trade with Tyrian merchants, selling goods and wares in exchange for food and occasionally iron.

The villagers of Powder River are typically suspicious of outsiders; while dune traders and some nomad bands are welcomed, most others are turned away from the town's walls with curt formality.

In fact, the defenses are there for a reason: namely, the Tempest Reapers, a tribe of bandits and savages that operate to the southeast of the town and have made hell for the villagers for the past six years. The raiders' attacks have escalated slowly from the initial small bands of three to five thieves up to whole war parties of fifty or more, charging towards the town wailing like dwarven banshees. Attacks come on a frequent basis, often once a week or more often, and usually ended in a stalemate with a handful of dead on either side. The frequency of these attacks has put the town on a martial edge, always wary of a coming attack. So far, the past four of the Spearhall's leaders have fallen to a raider's sword.

The tribe and the village have become locked into a blood feud, each side determined to break the other and avenge their fallen dead. Any travelers suspected of being associated with the Reapers are likely to be killed on sight, with little chance for self-defense. Conversely, anyone who has made enemies of the Tempest Reapers can count the village of Powder River as a friend.

Important Residents

Headman Budak

Male Human Fighter, Neutral Good

AC 8 (erdlu leather)	Str 8
MV 12	Dex 10
Level 2	Con 13
Hit Points 10	Int 14
THAC0 20	Wis 16
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 16

Damage/Attack: 1d6+1 (ceremonial spear+1)

Psonian Summary: PSP 18; Wild Talent - Empathy

Power Score-16

Attack/ Defense Modes: none / MB.

PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 20; MAC 9

A grizzled old hunter-gatherer, Aiter Budak was born in Powder River Village and is determined to die there as well. Headman Budak can trace his lineage back to the first inhabitants of the village, but his ancestry has little to do with his position as headman of the village. He has held the post for the past five years, since the death of the previous headman at the hands of raiders.

Budak is a pragmatic, stubborn man, but is widely respected for his fairness and wisdom in settling disputes. He didn't ask to be headman, but he didn't turn down the position either. His leadership has not been challenged yet, and Aiter Budak doesn't worry about such things, anyway.

Headman Budak has set three goals for himself, and he is determined to accomplish them. First is to finally defeat the Tempest Raiders and put an end to their threat to his people. He and Dukos, the First Spearman, work together at all opportunities to coordinate the villagers in defense of the town.

Budak's second goal is to improve the farmland of Powder River Village. There are times when the town teeters dangerously with starvation, and even after eighty years it cannot yet be truly considered self-sufficient. Bands of hunter-gatherers, of which Budak was once a member, still comb the surrounding land, looking for supplements to the town's food supply. The current Headman is determined to change that.

The final goal of Aiter Budak is to finally establish Powder River Village as a fixture in the Tablelands. Its somewhat isolated location has left it off the important maps of the Tablelands, and it has long been overshadowed by the nearby presence of Tyr and the surrounding client villages. Headman Budak is determined to establish a regular trade route through Powder River. While his goals are all lofty, no one can ever claim that they saw Aiter Budak fail at a task he set his mind to.

Aku the River-Resurrector

Male Human Priest of Water, Chaotic Neutral

AC 10 (tunic)	Str 12
MV 12	Dex 11
Level 7	Con 16
Hit Points 31	Int 8
THAC0 16	Wis 14
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 7

Damage/Attack: 1d6+1 (Carrikal)

Psonian Summary: PSP 62; Wild Talent - Project Force, Telekinesis

Power Score-44

Attack/ Defense Modes: none / MB, TW, MBk.

PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 17; MAC 10,

[Aku is unaware of his psionic ability.]

Villages of the Wastes: The Tyr Region

Priest Spells (5/3/2/1): major sphere - water; minor sphere - cosmos

Granted Powers: Ignore water (7 rounds), gate water (1 cubic feet), quench thirst, resistance to water (+2 saving throws vs. water), body of water.

A disheveled middle-aged man with crystal blue eyes and tattered robes, Aku the River-Resurrector is a widely recognized figure throughout Powder River. Aku is not a native to the village, but is known and usually makes his home there.

Most villagers consider this unkempt priest of water to be at least half crazed. He has a constant strained quality about him, as though he is just about to burst into action. His voice sometimes takes an unhinged tone, especially whenever someone mentions the river. Aku is not truly deranged, however - he is simply driven.

Aku has made it his life's goal to return Powder River to its ancient glory, to see water flowing between its banks. He has been at it for almost ten years now, and has gotten no further than when he started. He often disappears for weeks at a time, withdrawing up into the mountains where the Powder River gets its source, lost in meditation and prayer. Aku is likely to analyze strangers solely upon their commitment to the element of water, and whether they could help him in his quest.

Aku absolutely refuses to use his powers as a priest to create water. In fact, he only summons his patron element for use in worship ceremonies. If asked, he will mutter that others should "look to the river... look to the river for all your water." Aku believes that if enough people turn to the river for their survival, the ancient waters will flow again and his life's quest will be complete.

Dukos, the First Spearman

Male Mul Gladiator, Neutral Good

AC 4 (mekillot hide, dex, gladiator bonus)	Str 19
MV 12	Dex 15
Level 8	Con 17
Hit Points 67	Int 11
THAC0 9	Wis 7
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 13

Damage/Attack: 1d6+5 (Iron Lance of the Spearhall [iron spear +2])

Psionic Summary: PSP 28; Wild Talent - Combat Mind
Power Score-7
Attack/ Defense Modes: none/ TS, TW, MBk.
PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 17; MAC 10

A powerful dark-skinned mul gladiator who escaped the arena of Tyr during the chaos following Kalak's death, Dukos has come to consider Powder River his new home. A year and a half ago, Dukos was elected First Spearman, a role that he accepts with great pride. Though he is reluctant to admit it, Dukos' skills are essentially limited to battle, and so he enjoys having a position in which he feels he can be useful. Dukos has lasted longer than most other First Spearman due to his considerable fighting skills and a little bit of luck; the Tempest Reavers never seem to be out in full force when he heads the battle charge, a fact which frustrates him to no end. He has become obsessed, to the point of sleeplessness, with Larakk, the half-giant leader of the Tempest Reapers. Dukos is determined to vanquish him in mortal combat, and avenge the failures of past Spearman.

Villages of the Wastes: The Tyr Region

Menka's Gate

Marked by a free standing "gate" made of weathered, carved rock, this small settlement is based around a small oasis, nestled in the sand dunes of the deep desert. About three dozen trees mark the area of the oasis.

Origins/ History

A human trader known as Menka found Menka's Gate approximately 25 years ago. He stumbled upon the oasis after losing his mount to a predator, and barely escaping himself. He crawled into the oasis that was nestled in amongst the dunes and drank his fill of water. Shortly after, stretched out in the shade of several of the large trees, he looked up with blurry eyes and beheld a freestanding stone arch. It looked to him like a gate. He approached it and could see that at one time, the rocks that formed the archway had been carved with imagery, but time and weather had ground them down to mere hints of shapes and pictures. Perhaps it was the effects of the sun that had unbalanced his mind, or his sudden arrival at a shaded oasis after baking in the desert, but Menka immediately decided that this was some gateway to a paradise.

The oasis was a little known place slightly off the trade routes between Raam and Urik, so unless caravans were low on water and knew of the place, they would usually not go off the beaten path to find it. However, as years passed, occasional caravans did come and go from Menka's Gate. As they came, Menka would tell them of the paradise he had envisioned beyond, and explained how one day this gateway would open up and let them journey through. Of course this is all fancy or insanity on his part, but it seems dreams of paradise are infectious, for over the years, caravans have carried his words far and now a gathering of some 32 people live at the small oasis awaiting the day that the portal to paradise will open...

Location

The oasis is located 5 miles off the main trade route between Raam and Urik, about 1/3 of the way from Urik. The only real structure at Menka's Gate is the archway itself. Made from solid granite, the gateway has withstood thousands of years, though its intricate carvings have been washed away by time. The oasis is marked, however by a considerable complex of tents that are spread about the oasis like a maze. The area ten feet around the gate is always kept clear of tents and items, though people are permitted to walk up and touch the archway as long as they show the proper reverence. Children are not allowed to play near the arch.

The oasis survives primarily with food from small gardens about the village. Their diet is supplemented by trade with passing caravans. Also, the tents have surrounded the archway, so they charge small amounts for visitors to pass through and view the archway. Menka refuses to charge for water at the oasis, since he thinks desperate people may cause a fight, but he does ask for donations if people seek protection at the oasis.

Organization

The closest thing to a leader of the community is Menka, though he is more like a preacher. He constantly preaches about preparedness for Paradise and patience until the day that the portal opens. Other than that, the village looks out for its own but has no strict leaders.

The other 32 people are all dreamers from other villages or cities that heard of Menka's Gate to Paradise and came looking. They are weak-willed enough to have been convinced to stay after hearing Menka's speeches. After several years of this, they have become quite loyal to Menka and would do nearly anything he asked. They have assorted craftsman skills, but are mostly farmers. There are two rangers here that lead hunts into the desert and help protect the village. A couple ex-gladiators are also here and act as guardians.

The people here spend at least three hours listening to Menka's preaching, every other day or so. He preaches about how people must remain humble, be good, and continue to believe in Paradise. The paradise he describes is of lush cool land with large areas of water, where no predators dwell. He often cites the fact that this oasis has no predatory plants, and this is "Proof" of the Paradise awaiting beyond the gate.

Outside Relations

It is often visited by curious caravans passing by, and caravans have been known to charge slightly more to go "out of their way" to drop by Menka's Gate. The life here is very calm and sedate. People work hard to protect the oasis and grow food, but otherwise it is quiet, and peaceful. The odd caravan that has stayed that has gotten rowdy has been asked nicely to be quieter. Aside from fiercely protecting Menka's gate and their food, the people are shy and non-provoking. They are very peaceful, though they keep to themselves and will defend what they have viciously. They are kind to visitors, though tend to treat them as if they were children who had not yet

Villages of the Wastes: The Tyr Region

been enlightened. All in all, most visitors consider it a creepy encounter.

Important Residents

Menka

Male Human Trader, Lawful Neutral

AC 8 (leather armor)	Str 12
Movement 12	Dex 13
Level 9	Con 16
Hit Points 47	Int 17
THACO 16	Wis 12
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 18

Damage/ Attack: 1d6-1 (bone short sword)

Items: Ring of Empathic Link - empathic link is a hybrid of the empathy psionic, but the users gets a link with the target and actually makes the target feel what the person wearing the ring feels. This often results in sympathetic feelings towards the wearer.

Thief Skills: PP 25, OL 20, FRT 5, MS 10, HS 5, DN 25, CW 60, RL 40, FD 50, BO 45, EB 20;

Psionic Summary: PSP 44, Wild Talent- empathy

Power Score-12

Attack/ Defense Modes: none / TS, MB, IF.

PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHACO 15; MAC 9 (mental armor class proficiency).

Menka is pretty crazy, but he's also quite charismatic. He doesn't refute anyone who speaks out against his belief in the gate, but rather gives them pitying looks and tells them that he will wish he could have convinced them when he is in Paradise. Menka has the wild psionic talent of empathy that he unknowingly uses to manipulate people to accept his beliefs. Since he can feel the empathy towards them, he can better manipulate them.

Villages of the Wastes: The South

Alador

In the wastelands east of the Mekillot Mountains blooms a desert rose. The village of Alador was founded by a templar who in a rare moment of insight discovered compassion for those who toiled under him. Those slaves he freed have created a new life for themselves in Alador.

Origin/History

Alador is a slave village founded about eight years before the downfall of Kalak. The founder, a formerly ruthless Tyr templar named Micayon, was charged with the task of transporting a caravan of slaves from Balic to Tyr for the construction of Kalak's great ziggurat.

Leading a routine reconnaissance patrol, Micayon stumbled across a half-dozen ruined merchant wagons. Investigating further, Micayon discovered an unusually large band of belgoi responsible for the attack. They were holding the survivors as prisoners. Thinking to add the prisoners to his slave caravan, Micayon ambushed the belgoi while they were preoccupied, arguing over how to divide a small human baby for the evening meal. The battle was fought over the child's hoarse, pathetic cries.

The belgoi defeated, Micayon picked up the infant and its crying stopped. The baby fixed its eyes on the templar and suddenly Micayon's wild talent, *Empathy*, awakened. He felt a flood of emotion from the infant. Intense love...for him.

Micayon's mind reeled from the impact. When he returned to the caravan, he was assaulted by the misery and hatred of the slaves. He wanted this torrent of emotion to stop. One way he knew how to stop it was to end their suffering, by freeing the slaves.

Micayon led a slave revolt against the other templars and guards of the caravan and diverted his caravan far from Tyr. The templar settled the slaves at the base of a tall, isolated plateau where he discovered an oasis that was nearly invisible from a distance.

The village has grown from the original 168 slaves to a current population numbering over 300 individuals. Almost half of these are under the age of 20 and are children of the original slaves.

Location

The major part of the village is positioned in the shade of an enormous and jagged outcrop of stone that juts out of the desert sands. This outcrop of stone is located roughly 30 miles east of Gulg where the stony barrens meets the rocky

badlands, about 10 miles away from the main road from Altaruk to Gulg.

The top of the outcropping is level and can easily hold several hundred people. From a bird's eye view, this "plateau" is bean-shaped. It slightly hugs around the oasis. Due to this position, Alador receives only half the usual amount of sunlight during the day. In addition, the environment is always cool and the wind calm since the outcrop shields the village from winds and sandstorms.

The oasis can comfortably support a population of about 800-900 people. As the population increases, the villagers construct buildings of adobe that scale the side of the plateau, and that are accessible through a system of ladders.

Among the places of interest are the *Desert Rose*, which serves as the inn and general store. *Loralune's Medicines Charms & Trinkets* is run by the chief midwife and medicine woman. The *Ten Blades* is the village's finest weapons and armor store. *Zana's Livestock* raises erdlu, pack animals, mounts, and war mounts. Finally, at the top of the plateau, the village maintains a sentry post where the sun priest, Sol Hokat, keeps his shrine.

Organization

A council of former slaves headed by Micayon governs Alador. Meetings are chaotic affairs and usually degenerate into loud arguments. All meetings are conducted in the village tavern, the *Desert Rose*. All villagers are free to attend and participate.

When Alador is attacked, the villagers defend themselves at the walls built around the oasis. If that fails, they will gather all the supplies possible and ascend the plateau to make a stand.

Outside Relations

The village is somewhat isolated. It doesn't hide its existence, but neither does it encourage visitors. Outsiders are allowed to pass through and stay for a short while, but they are never allowed to settle permanently, not even escaped slaves. Only in special cases, such as marriage, are outsiders allowed to remain. The village may also invite outsiders with special needed skills to live there.

Woods and skins are imported from Gulg, obsidian from Urik, small amounts of iron from Tyr, and diverse foodstuffs from several locations, mostly Altaruk. The main exports include clay bricks, surplus food, sculpted figurines,

Villages of the Wastes: The South

fetishes, and most importantly, weapons fashioned from the imported materials.

Over the past five years, Alador has become a clandestine weapons market. Outlaw groups that may not be able to openly purchase large quantities of weapons in the city-states can purchase them here; no questions asked. These include raiders, slaves, thri-kreen, numerous elven tribes, gith, and sometimes the Veiled Alliance. They also cater to legitimate concerns (such as merchant houses) that do not wish to draw attention to the fact that they are stockpiling weapons. A third of the population is trained in weaponsmithing and armoring.

At any given time, several agents or personalities (sometimes in disguise) from various groups and city-states may be in Alador with their bodyguards. Templars and warriors who are in the market for quality weapons may also be here. The floating population typically numbers around 40-50 people. Woe to any defiler who sneaks inside. If caught, defilers (and preservers) are executed.

Having suffered from lightning fast raids in the past, the village requires all able-bodied adults to carry weapons and train regularly in the militia. Primary dangers to Alador are ironically potential customers: raiders. Humans, gith, elves, thri-kreen and giants have all attacked the village in its weaker, early history. Alador immediately ceases trade with any groups that attack it. Raiders will discover that their rivals receive excellent weapon deals. Consequently, the number of raids is steadily declining.

Important Residents

Micayon

Human Male Templar, Lawful Neutral

AC 5 (hide armor, shield)	Str 15
Movement 12	Dex 10
Level 10	Con 16
Hit Points 53	Int 16
THAC0 15 (16 Light crossbow)	Wis 18
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 14

Damage/Attack: 1d8-1/ 1d12-1 (Bone long sword), 1d4-1/ 1d4 -1 (Obsidian-tipped quarrels)

Psionic Summary: PSPs 63, Wild Talent: Empathy
Power Score-18
Attack/ Defense Modes: none / MB, IF, TW
PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 16, MAC 5

Micayon is 54 years old. He stands 6'3" tall with graying black hair, and steel-gray eyes. His beard and

mustache are always well groomed and he affords the best clothing his income allows. Micayon looks back on his templar years with nostalgia. He is very much a man of creature comforts with a taste for wielding power. He keeps his Tyr templar uniform and armor in good repair.

Micayon struggles with a habit of assuming authority and is uncomfortable in the freewheeling governmental style of Alador. The other villagers view him with amusement; a bureaucrat forced to be a commoner. He is highly arrogant, but principled and cultured.

Being the one of the handful of villagers who can read and write, he is the primary negotiator for the village. He also performs the same functions for Alador that he performed in Tyr: an administrator and an accountant.

Zamora

Female Half-Elf Level Preserver/ Bard, Neutral Good

AC 2 (Armor Spell, Dexterity)	Str 13
Movement 12	Dex 18
Level 7/ 8	Con 13
Hit Points 27	Int 19
THAC0 15	Wis 15
No. of Attacks 3	Cha 16

Damage/Attack: 1d3-1/ 1d2-1 (Bone darts)*

Psionic Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 8

Wizard Spells (4/3/2/1)

*Coated with Type E Poison, Death/20

Zamora is a middle-aged woman about 44 years old. She stands 5'9" tall with black hair and violet eyes. She is the innkeeper of the *Desert Rose*, a rather large tavern and inn (often the whole village will congregate there). She maintains a general store off to the side of the *Rose* and serves on the village council.

A former slave, she had been arrested for being a witch, and was sold to Micayon to be used as slave labor on the Tyrean Ziggurat. Despite her good standing, if the village folk ever discovered she was a mage, she could be chased out by a mob. Some villagers suspect her, such as Loralune. Micayon keeps her secret and quietly discourages the idea of her being a mage if it ever comes up. She has no contacts with any Veiled Alliance.

She enjoys singing for the villagers, telling stories, and giving sweets to children; especially since this wins goodwill in the village and on the council. Weekly dances are held at her tavern. Zamora offers traveling minstrels free room and board

Villages of the Wastes: The South

plus tips for every night they perform at her venue. She often sits with them at the dinner table and exchanges stories.

She recently convinced the villagers to hire a mindbender (a psionicist) to act as healer, diviner, advisor, and to help train the militia wild talents. If the villagers find someone suitable they will offer room, board, and a small income.

Zamora has three barmaids helping her. They are Asterra, Charise, and the elf-maiden Nyneva. Nyneva serves secretly as an apprentice.

Mikastor

Male Human, Lawful Good

AC 2 (Braxat Hide, Dex)	Str 17
Movement 12	Dex 19
Level 0	Con 17
Hit Points 8	Int 15
THACO 20 (18 w/ Short bow)	Wis 14
No. of Attacks 1 (Bone long sword)/ 2 (Short bow)	Cha 14

Damage/Attack: 1d8/ 1d12 (bone long sword), 1d6-1/ 1d6-1 (bone-tipped flight arrows)

Psionic Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 10

This is the infant that Micayon rescued from the belgoi. He is a strong youth about 19 years old, brown hair, black eyes. Mikastor is eager to leave the village and intends to hire himself out to any good employer. He is militia trained, but wishes to complete his training as one of the legendary warriors of the waste (a ranger). So far, he has met no one qualified to teach him.

Despite his youth, Mikastor is quite competent. He can read, write, and perform mathematical calculations. He can survive in the desert and locate water. He is quite capable of serving as a weapons-bearer, or he can serve as a shield-bearer to protect spellcasters and psionicists. If equipped with a pole-arm, he can take occasional pokes at the enemy from behind the melee line. Also, he can serve as a lookout, spotting new approaching dangers whenever his companions are caught up in an intense battle.

Lamorion

Male Dwarf Fighter Lawful Neutral

AC 3 (Rasclinn Hide, Armor Optimization)	Str 21
Movement 6	Dex 12
Level 7	Con 20
Hit Points 87	Int 13
THACO 10	Wis 16

No. of Attacks 2

Cha 8

Damage/Attack: 1d4 +8/1d4 +7 (steel war hammer)

Psionic Summary: PSPs 37, Wild Talent: Heightened Senses
Power Score-20

Attack/ Defense Modes: none / MB, MBk, TW

PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHACO 17, MAC 8

Lamorion is a middle-aged dwarf with a sharp tongue. He stands 5' tall and is quite dusky with coal black eyes.

He runs the *Ten Blades* for the village, manned by at least 30 men and women aides. Lamorion has created a comfortable life for his family here. He is the chief weaponsmith, armorer, and bowyer/fletcher. He has trained about a third of the villagers to help fulfill the contracts that Micayon negotiates.

This dwarf was one of the most valuable slaves that Micayon was carrying in the slave caravan to Tyr. Lamorion hails from a long line of dwarven weaponsmith slaves. His focus and passion is to develop new weapons. He can be hired to create almost any unusual and uncommon weapons and armor (such as from the *Gladiator's Handbook*) all at premium prices and only if the necessary materials are available.

Such is his skill that 1-2 weapons of quality can be found in his store at any given time; usually made of bone, wood, or obsidian. These weapons grant a +1 to hit OR to damage, but not both. They sell for 2-5 times the normal price. Lamorion can finish any weapon or armor project (but not a weapon of quality) in half the time it takes anyone else. In short, he is profoundly focused and is a master of his craft.

Lamorion is also extremely rude. He will miss no opportunities to ridicule other people over their weapons and armaments ("I've never seen such a piece of crap!") unless he crafted them personally, no matter what their actual quality, even if they're steel or magical.

Lamorion is polite only when he wants something. What does he want? Lamorion loves to ask warriors to "try out" his new weapons. ("Those monsters will never know what hit 'em!") Micayon has (wisely) declined all of the dwarf's offers to outfit the village militia with his "modern" weapons and this frustrates Lamorion to no end. During council meetings, Lamorion's contribution when discussing any threat to the village is always inevitably the same ("We need new weapons!").

Almost without fail, he will approach visiting warriors. Unfortunately, 90% of his new weapons tend to be impractical and/or malfunction. Some are so bizarre that even gladiators sometimes cannot figure out how to use them. In particular, Lamorion wants to perfect his spring loaded spears tips and sword blades that shoot off at the hilt guard. If only he can find some warriors to try them out...

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Lamorion is occasionally hired by psionics and templars who wish to empower weapons and armor. His skill is more than adequate to help them. However, it depresses him if he is asked to use his skills to make anything "normal" ("Ho-hum...another sword and spear."). He constantly pressures his clients to apply their power to something "innovative." Unless he is under strict supervision, Lamorion occasionally takes liberties with the projects of minor clients and builds "improvements" into them without telling them.

Contracts for Lamorion's personal work is constantly back-ordered. He demands payment up front (for materials) and some clients have to wait up to two years. Steel weapons of quality can go up to 20 times the normal cost. It is rumored that House Wavir wants him back badly.

Loralune

Female Human Chaotic Neutral

AC 9 (Dexterity)	Str 11
Movement 12	Dex 15
Level 0	Con 13
Hit Points 4	Int 15
THACO 20	Wis 9
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 10

Damage/Attack: 1d4-1/ 1d3-1 (Bone dagger)

Psionic Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 10

Loralune runs *Loralune's Medicines, Charms, and Trinkets*. She is an old, crabby woman who serves as the local herbalist, tailor, midwife, and fortuneteller. Her store carries a wide array of herbs, curative medicines, salves, and clothing. She is gossipy, jealous, and insecure. She will charge double prices for those she dislikes. Currently on her bad side is Zamora who recently convinced the village council to hire someone professional as a healer (i.e. someone better than her).

Nyneva

Female Elf, Chaotic Good

AC 5 (Leather breastplate, Dexterity)	Str 13
Movement 18	Dex 19
Level 0	Con 13
Hit Points 4	Int 16
THACO 20	Wis 9
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 17

Damage/Attack: 1d6-1/ 1d8-1 (Bone short sword)

Psionic Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 9

Nyneva is a barmaid at the *Desert Rose*. The Dragon destroyed Nyneva's elf tribe two decades ago and she was orphaned. Later, she was mysteriously found on Zamora's doorstep. The good-hearted half-elf woman adopted her. Nyneva is now a beautiful maiden, who stands 5'10" with amber hair and silver eyes. Now 20 years old, her elven blood sings to her to wander the world and, like Mikastor, she is getting desperate to leave the village.

Nyneva is Zamora's secret apprentice, both in sorcery and the thieving arts. In addition, her militia training has given her excellent fighting skills. The time is fast approaching when she will become a full-fledged fighter/ preserver/ thief. When that time arrives, she will leave Alador.

She feels intimidated by elven tribes and is extremely insecure as to how they might view her; an elf raised by humans. She tends to go too far in trying to win their approval, particularly elven males. She has yet to learn that most elves simply don't care about her or anyone else outside their tribe.

Only Zamora's watchful eye prevents her from being taken advantage of. The inn mistress deeply wishes that Nyneva would display better judgement, but she realizes that for some people the best teacher is the "school of hard knocks."

Sol Hokat

Human Male Sun Priest Chaotic Neutral (Evil)

AC 2 (Braxat Hide, Dexterity)	Str 15
Movement 12	Dex 17
Level 11	Con 16
Hit Points 59	Int 9
THACO 15	Wis 18
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 9

Damage/Attack: 1d8-1/ 1d8-1 (Bone Scimitar)

Psionic Summary:

PSPs 56; Wild Talent: Control Light

Power Score-9

Attack/ Defense Modes: none / TS, MBk, TW

PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHACO 15, MAC 6

Spells: (5/4/4/3/2/1); major sphere - sun *; minor sphere - cosmos

Granted Powers: Minor resistance to sun light, enhanced saving throws (+2 vs. sun, heat, or fire), ignore sunlight (11 rounds), gate in a beam of sunlight.

* For those without access to Earth, Air, Fire, and Water accessory, substitute the fire sphere.

Sol Hokat is an old man, long driven crazy by his devotions to the sun lords. Living at the top of the plateau (his

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shrine), he often stares down angrily upon the villagers ("Heretics, all of them!").

Being a sun priest, he believes that living in the shade is blasphemy. He is constantly scheming how to give the villagers more sun exposure, so they can receive its "blessings" ("I'll blow up the mountain someday!"). The village regularly sends sentries to the top of the plateau to watch the horizons for approaching danger. These unfortunate soldiers are forced to listen to endless hours of sermons. Villagers see Sol Hokat as harmless. Ultimately though, they may be wrong.

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Thilon's Camp

Thilon's camp is located in the Stony Barrens, along the road from Celik to Balic. The settlement does not have a permanent location, consisting only of tents. The tribe moves every month to avoid detection, although they are always in the vicinity of the two oases that exist along the road.

Origins / History

This small village was named after its founder, a former mul gladiator turned mercenary. Thilon was born in the slave pens of Tyr. He and his partner in the arena, a half-elf named Naydil, left the city after Kalak's death and the freeing of all slaves of the city. Hiring themselves out as caravan guards, they traveled back and forth between Balic and Tyr. After a year of this, they decided to head further south, and ended up in the city of Celik.

Upon arriving, they began to work for the merchant House of Mareneth, the ruling faction of the city. They got jobs helping to reclaim parts of the city from the surrounding ruins. After several of these forays, Thilon and Naydil were placed in a small group assigned to clear a dangerous section of the ruins. It was rumored that a tembo had made its nest there, and Thilon requested more men for the assignment. The house of Mareneth rejected his request, judging that they did not need the extra support. Upon entering the ruins, the group found that the rumors were correct, and they engaged the tembo. They fared very badly against it. Naydil was killed, and Thilon was badly wounded. He made his way back into the city, where the merchant house of Mareneth had their healers work on him. After regaining his health, he found that there was a price to be paid for this help. He became an indentured servant in the city. Thilon felt that the expedition sent into the ruins was undermanned, and blamed the house of Mareneth for the death of his partner and friend Naydil. Since that day, he was very unhappy working to further the goals of the house of Mareneth. They were sending him on frequent trips into the ruins, in order to clear more of the area. On one of the expeditions to the ruins, he found a *portable hole*, and managed to conceal it from the others.

After four years of this work, he judged that he had sufficiently repaid the house of Mareneth; however the terms of the contract were eight years of service. Thilon was very displeased with this, and on one of these forays, convinced his new partners to kill the leader of the expedition and journey northward with him. They planned on raiding the passing caravans along the road. Drawing on his previous experiences in the area, Thilon led his new followers northward. They set up their camp in the vicinity of two oases along the road. They became raiders in the area, especially targeting caravans of

House Mareneth journeying northwards. The tribe is able to store barrels of water from the oases in Thilon's *portable hole*, as well as other loot from their raids. This makes for easy transportation and storage.

The tribe originally consisted of about 20 people. However, Thilon returned to Celik after setting up his base of operations. He entered the city under cover of darkness, and got in contact with several friends he had made during his stay there. They had all showed displeasure with being indentured servants, considering themselves little better than slaves. He gathered 15 people, and led this group through one of the smaller gates adjacent to the ruins. They murdered the guards and made their way back to Thilon's camp. This group of men and women has had much success in raiding small caravans journeying along the Celik-Balic trade route.

Location

The village of Thilon has no permanent structures. Instead, it consists of multiple tents to house the inhabitants. They are all dyed to match the surrounding terrain, and this serves as their first line of defense. Thilon and his tribe take great pains to remain concealed from any outsiders. Every month they move their camp several miles in any given direction. Thilon's *portable hole* helps greatly in these moves, being able to provide easy transportation for much of their supplies. The camp always stays within five miles of one of the two oases, and try to remain as close as possible to both. The tribe sends out groups every few weeks to leave evidence of other settlements several miles distant, in order to throw off the trails of searchers. Regardless of the position of their camp, it is always arranged in the same way, with the tents in a ring surrounding a common area. Their largest tent is used as a stable, and this is within the circle as well. This stable houses the tribe's *crodlu*. They currently own twenty of the beasts. They also own five *kanks*, which are used both as beasts of burden, as well as providing a supplement to the tribe's food supply by producing globes of honey.

Organization

There is no question that Thilon rules the settlement. The core members of the settlement all originated from Celik, and they are loyal to the person they view as their liberator. Thilon is the undisputed leader of the tribe; however, he is smart enough to realize that loyalty can be fickle if a member is mistreated. His general policies around the camp are geared towards equality between all other members of his camp.

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However, he tends to favor a member he is closer to if an argument breaks out around camp, thus adding another incentive for people to remain on good terms with him. Most members in the tribe are happy with their lot in the camp, seeing it as a huge step up from their time as servants in Celik. The few that are not happy wisely keep their mouths shut about it.

Members of the camp are all expected to help with the various day to day activities required to keep the camp running. These tasks are generally assigned to people who are more skilled in a specific area. Examples of such activities include the care and grooming of the camp's animals, cooking, keeping watch around camp, clean up to minimize the difficulty of moving, etc. Members who have belonged to the camp longer generally receive picks on the jobs they want; however, if they are found to be slacking on the job, they will quickly be reassigned. If a member objects to his assigned task, he or she can ask Thilon for reassignment. If they do not have a valid reason for the change, he quickly rejects their request.

Outside Relations

Thilon's Camp maintains itself by raiding passing caravans. Any loot that they acquire is stored for several months. After the merchandise has had several months to become less "hot," Thilon and several of his men take a portion of it and journey to Balic. Thilon's *portable hole* is used to transport the majority of these, although they do bring a kank or two along to maintain the illusion of goods being carried. Once there, they will sell the stolen goods and buy needed weapons and supplies for the camp. They are also working to acquire more *crodlu* for the tribe, in order to become more mobile than they currently are. Thilon is also actively training his men in fighting from the backs of the *crodlu*. As of now, approximately twenty of his men are fully proficient in fighting with lances and swords from the backs of the *crodlu*.

Thilon's Camp has recently come into conflict with a tribe of gith known as the Black Fangs. This tribe has taken up raiding in the same area as Thilon and his men. Although Thilon has lost several men in skirmishes that have ensued, he has gained a powerful ally because of this fight. A gith fire cleric by the name of Muduk has defected to his camp. The chief of the gith tribe considered him a rival, and Muduk feared for his life. He ran from his tribe, and journeyed to Thilon's camp. Although he was not welcomed with open arms at first, the men have slowly grown to trust him, as he has proven his worth to the tribe many times during raids and skirmishes.

Thilon is trying to expand his operations. In order to do this, he realizes that he needs new blood in his tribe. His main method of recruitment has been to free indentured servants from Celik. He will enter the city disguised as a herdsman with several of his men. His companions are always people who knew several individuals who were discontent with

their position in Celik. They will contact these people and offer them freedom if they wish to join the tribe. Thilon then smuggles these men out in his *portable hole*.

Thilon's camp only attacks smaller caravans. At any given time, Thilon usually has several men at one of the two oases, posing as traders. In actuality, they are scouting for a suitable target to raid. The tribe always attack with overwhelming force, with usually ninety to ninety-five percent of the men participating in the attacks. They attack suddenly, and fade away just as fast. If they come across a slave that looks like he has the ability to fight, they may offer him a chance to join them. If he does not accept on the spot, they will leave him in the ruins of the caravan along with any other slaves. If he does accept, he is kept under close watch for the next several months, although this is done inconspicuously. Older members are quick to welcome the newcomers into the fold, as they realize a happy member is a productive member.

Important Residents

Thilon

Male Mul Gladiator, Lawful Evil

Armor Class 1 (Hide armor)	Str 22
Movement 12	Dex 18
Level 9	Con 17
Hit Points 98	Int 14
THAC0 8	Wis 12
No. of Attacks 3/2	Cha 16

Damage/Attack: 1d8+8 (Steel long sword - specialized)

Psionic Summary: PSPs 24; Wild Talent: Combat Mind
Power Score-10

Attack/ Defense Modes: none / TS, IF, TW

PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 16, MAC 10

Thilon was born in the Tyr slave pits, and received training as a gladiator there. He is short for a mul, standing only 5' 6". He is incredibly well built for his size however, rippling with muscles. His body bears many scars from his days as a gladiator. He dresses in loose pants and rarely wears a shirt. He bears a deep hatred for the merchant house of Mareneth, as he blames them for the death of his former partner and closest friend. As a result of this, he will go out of his way to target their caravans, even if they are slightly larger than his normal targets. This is cause for concern among his men, yet whenever they bring it up, he generally laughs it off, saying their fears are unjustified. He has dreams of crippling the house of Mareneth so badly that they cannot function any longer, although with his band of fifty or so men, he has no chance of being anything but

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a minor annoyance. Still, with his active recruitment, and the loyalty he commands among his men, his camp of raiders could someday become a cause of major concern for the merchant house.

Muduk

Male Gith Fire Cleric, Lawful Evil

Armor Class 6	Str 13
Movement 10	Dex 14
Level 7	Con 11
Hit points 38	Int 12
THAC0 16	Wis 18
No. of Attacks 2	Cha 16

Damage / Attack: 1d4/1d4 (claws)

Priest Spells (3/3/2/1): 1st - *Elemental Bonding, Cure Light Wounds, Command*; 2nd - *Flame Blade, Create Holy Symbol, Hold Person*; 3rd - *Conjure Lesser Fire Elemental, Create Smoke*; 4th - *Produce Fire*

Granted Powers: Ignore fire (7 rounds), Gate fire (one cubic foot), affect normal fires, cleansing flame, control flame.

Muduk used to be a member of the Black Fang gith tribe. The chief of the tribe feared that Muduk was a threat to his power, and planned on killing him. Muduk was attacked, and barely escaped with his life. He fled the tribe, vowing revenge. He sought out Thilon's camp, the group of raiders who his tribe had been fighting, and offered his services in exchange for membership into the tribe. Thilon saw the potential for a powerful ally, and offered him shelter and a place to recuperate. It took several months, however he has slowly become accepted in the camp, even forming friendships with several members. He has proven very useful, both in the camp's fight against the gith as well as raids on caravans. He does not hesitate to use his spells in battle, and his healing has saved more than one member of the camp's life. He has grown to enjoy his place within the camp. His hatred for the Black Fang remains unabated, however, and he constantly urges for an attack on them whenever possible.

Hrit

Female Jozhal, Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 3	Str 8
Movement 18	Dex 14
Level 4	Con 12
Hit points 24	Int 14
THAC0 17	Wis 16
No. of Attacks 1 or 2	Cha 13

Damage/ Attack: 1d6 (bite) or 1d4/1d4 (claws)

Priest Spells: (5/3/2)

Psionic Summary: PSPs 27; Wild Talent: Conceal thoughts
Power Score-16
Attack/ Defense Modes: none / TS, MB.
PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 19; MAC 9

By far the strangest member of the camp, Hrit came to the camp under unusual circumstances. She and her family were caught sneaking into a caravan, intent on stealing a minor magical bauble. The rest of her family was killed as they tried to escape, however she was captured. The caravan master decided she would make a good sale to the arena of Balic. Thilon and his men raided the caravan, and did not know what to make of Hrit. They thought her to be a new breed of erdlu, and were taken aback when she began to speak to them. Hrit begged them to free her. Thilon did so, and Hrit decided to join the group for a time. The rest of her family had been killed, and she did not know of any other families in the area. She hoped to find magical items to further her collection during the camp's raids. She had several private discussions with Thilon in the weeks to follow, and convinced him that she would make an excellent addition to the camp. Hrit serves as an excellent scout for the camp, with her fast speed and camouflage. She never engages in direct combat, instead using her spells to attack or create diversions. She will always cast detect magic sometime during the battle, and attempt to take any magical item she sees. If she sees one, she will attempt to pocket the item in the aftermath of the raid. If someone else gets to it first, she casually attempts to trade for it, generally saying it reminds her of a toy from childhood or other innocent story. She takes great pains to conceal her desire for magic items from the other members of the camp. As of this time, her collection consists of a *luckstone* and a jar of *keoghtom's ointment*.

The following is what a standard raiding party conducted by Thilon's camp consists of. Thilon makes full use of the spells and psionics of both Muduk and Hrit. Common tactics involve Hrit casting *silence 15' radius* on the caravan master so he cannot give orders to his men, followed by other diversionary spells. Muduk will summon fire to scare the caravan's mounts.

Standard Crodlu Rider Raiders (20):

F4; AL LE; AC 6 (hide); MV 12; HP 25; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (light lance) 1d8-1 (bone long sword) 1d6 (short bow); SA Charge; SD nil

Standard Foot Raiders (20):

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F4; AL LE; AC 6 (hide); MV 12; HP 25; THAC0 17; #AT
1; Dmg 1d8 (bone long sword) 1d6 (short bow); SA nil; SD nil

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Dubok

Dubok is a small, mostly human village, whose ancestors were Balic slaves. They tend to be good-natured people, whose greatest pride is their freedom, and they'll do everything to protect it.

Origins/ History

The story of the village began almost hundred years ago, when a young earth cleric named Yal Hamtchuk, during his years of apprenticeship, felt the "call of the stone." The call led him to find the crater in which the village of Dubok is situated today.

It's unclear if the spring that now quenches the thirst of the villagers was present when Yal first came to the location. The legend tells that Yal entered the crater in some sort of a trance and started digging the ground with his bare hands. On the third night he found something glistening in the dark. Yal instantly knew that this was what he was looking for, and when he removed the stone from its place, a spring started flowing. It's probably just a fairy-tale, but the spring is real. That doesn't mean that the people of Dubok live in abundance, and can be careless with their water supply. It just means that they won't die of thirst.

The majority of Dubok's population is descendent from slaves, which by pure luck found the site some 80 years ago. An elf tribe attacked the caravan that was transporting them from Balic to Tyr. In the heat of the battle, the slaves managed to escape into the desert. But for the slaves newfound freedom had its cost. Without weapons and water, the majority of them didn't last too long. Those that were lucky to survive long enough had nearly died from thirst, and when they discovered the crater, the small spring was their salvation. Yal helped them heal their wounds, and the slaves stayed, indebted to him.

After that, the village started to grow while maintaining its secrecy. Out of the original 25 slaves who survived the elven raid and the perils of the Athasian desert, the village has grown to include approximately 120 Dubokians.

Location

Dubok is situated about 30 miles south from Altaruk. As previously stated, Dubok is inside a crater in a region of stony barrens. Though the crater doesn't look like a natural occurrence, its inhabitants are not particularly concerned by that fact. It is concavely shaped, with diameters of about 90 yards at the top, and 70 yards at the bottom. The drop is about fifteen yards to the bottom of the crater. The walls are not very

steep, and because of that they're easily crossable by most villagers.

Most of the "houses" in the village are just little niches carved into the walls. Luckily for the Dubokians, the walls of the crater are mostly formed out of the sandstone, so shaping them into habitable spaces was not an impossible task. Niches vary in depth, but most of them are about ten to fifteen feet deep, with just bunks and some personal items of the inhabitants. There are about fifty of those niches scattered around the walls of the crater, with rope ladders connecting them.

There is just one deep corridor cut in the wall, which leads about ten yards into the dark, and then to the small altar upon which is placed a glowing pebble. The corridor is not guarded, and visitors can enter freely. About the 25% of time the village elder Yal can be found here. Visitors may notice that except for him, no other person enters the corridor.

On the bottom of the crater are four stone huts. One is considered a public hall, the second a hospital, the third a sort of public bath (-which consists of one big bathtub, and two holes in the ground that serve for "waste disposal"), and fourth a food and water storage. There is of course the well, which is now surrounded by a nicely made low wall of polished stone, and a crane and a bucket are hung above the well.

Over the village hangs a long line (actually it is giant hair rope, a very expensive item for a small village) that by the means of a special mechanism, connects the bottom of the crater with its top. On the line is hooked a large basket that serves for transporting goods and people.

Over the whole crater is laid a linen cloth, whose upper side is colored into the patterns that resembles the rocky terrain. The tarp serves several purposes. First, it lessens the heat of the sun during the day, and second and more importantly, it camouflages the village from aerial predators. Of course, Athasian predators are very cunning, so the villagers maintain a band of guards, just in case. They are stationed in several well-hidden guard posts that look over the village and the erdlu coral. The coral is just opposite of the upper portion of the elevating mechanism, and is also covered with camouflaging cloth.

Organization

Although Yal is still considered the village elder, nobody will bother him with day-to-day problems. That kind of job is passed onto his foster son Kiro. Yal will only intervene if the village is in serious danger. Kiro is still quite young and inexperienced, and sometimes loses his temper when he feels overwhelmed by the job. Dubokians are aware of his faults, but

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they love and honor him, and will usually respect his judgment. So except for a few quarrels, the village is pretty harmonious.

For practical purposes, Dubok is organized into several groups (herders, craftsmen, hunter/gatherers). There are no leaders of each group, because every villager is free to pursue the job he or she wishes, so changing jobs is a pretty common occurrence in Dubok. Of course, there are prominent people whom members of each group consider their leader, or at least are looked upon as advisors for specific problems. Some of these are detailed in important residents section below.

Outside Relations

Because the village was founded by the escaped slaves, Dubokians will be weary of strangers. It is next to impossible to approach the village without being noticed. In cases of a small number of visitors, a group of ten to fifteen hunters will confront them. If the visitors don't show any signs of hostility, they will be admitted to the village, but will be constantly guarded. But if they do start to show violent behavior, well, they probably wouldn't have much time to regret it.

In its history Dubok has never confronted a large hostile group, so they don't have a devised tactic for such a case. If the need arises about 100 villagers can more or less proficiently wield some kind of weapon, and they'll fight to the last one to protect their freedom.

Once the visitors are inside the village, and they don't seem to pose any threat, they'll be treated politely. But, although Dubokians may be polite to the point of annoyance, they'll not let the visitors outside the village once they've gotten into it. In that case, the only way the visitors can leave Dubok is by obtaining the trust of the village elder. Dubokians cannot let untrustworthy people outside the borders, because their lives depend on it remaining a secret.

Nevertheless, villagers can't completely shut themselves from the rest of the world. Because of its location in the wastelands Dubokians are not capable of raising crops, and they can't feed themselves with just one small herd of erdlus, or with what hunters find and hunt down in such desolate terrain. So they maintain trade, but with only one elven tribe - the Gravesands.

Nobody in the village knows very much about the elves (except maybe Yal, but he refuses to talk about that subject), or why they've chosen such an unusual name. There are several theories that circulate around the village. Some say the elves are specialized grave looters, running in and out of towns with wealth they stole from noble's cemeteries. Some say they have a special, savage way of dealing with enemies and traitors which involves burying them alive in the sand. And then, there are some who speculate that the tribe, deep in the sandy wastes to the south, made its home in the remains of the ruins of the older age, where some noble heroes of Athas were

laid to rest. Who knows, maybe all of them are true? But still, it's strange that the elves, which are not known for the reliability, are keeping the location of Dubok secret. The trade that villagers maintain with the elves is not of great proportions, and the villagers do not get any monetary gain; it just adds a little variety to their table. The elves usually buy erdlu meat and water, and sell grain, vegetables, and wine to the villagers. Actually, it's unclear why the elves, except for water, even come to the village, because there are no products in Dubok that are not available in other parts of Athas. There is a rumor that they too are somehow indebted to Yal, though he remains secretive upon that matter.

Important Residents

Yal Hamtchuk

Male Human Earth Cleric, Neutral Good

Armor Class	9	Str	9
Movement	12	Dex	15
Level	12	Con	8
Hit points	41	Int	14
THAC0	15	Wis	17
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	16

Damage/ Attack: 1d4-1 (bone dagger)

Psionic Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 8

Priest Spells (6/5/5/3/2/2); major sphere - earth; minor sphere - cosmos.

1st - *magical stone, cure light wounds, detect evil, detect magic, detect poison, strength of stone*; 2nd - *dust devil, aid, slow poison, charm person, goodberry*; 3rd - *meld into stone, stone shape, cure disease, remove curse, dispel magic*; 4th - *rejuvenate, stone of sharpening, sand warriors*; 5th - *conjure elemental, spike stones, transmute rock to mud*; 6th - *stone tell, transmute water to dust*.

Granted Powers - Eliminate tracks, encasement, meld into stone, enhanced saving throw (+2 vs earth), endure, ignore earth (12 rounds), gate earth (6 cubic feet).

Yal is still considered the village elder, but he lacks patience for mundane things. He is a very old man but it does not show on his appearance, so he can usually pass as a 60-year-old. Yal can be found strolling around the village, but he won't be recognized unless visitors are quite sure that he is the man they're looking for. His large hooked nose might give him away. Other than that, he may pass as any of the older members of the

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village. His drab clothing does not set him apart from the rest of villagers.

Yal is not a man of many passions. His only true passion is love for this place, which is really the driving force that still keeps him alive. He manages to see the beauty in this stony, desolate crater that seems hidden to all other eyes. He can describe the color of every little pebble in his shrine. Eventually, he did realize that without a successor all this beauty would be lost. Yal had never married or even had a love affair: his love for earth fulfilled him completely. He was never much good with humans or complex feelings. Sure, he loved them, like any other living creature, but at the same time he couldn't stand them. No matter, when he reached a conclusion that all may be lost when he is gone, he was already much too old for having a child, but then Fate mixed her cards. Kiro was a small baby when he lost both of his parents, so Yal took him in and treated him like his own. It might not be such a good idea to have an earth cleric- babysitter, but it seems that after all Yal did a good job, and he's proud of his son.

When it comes to dealing with strangers, Yal will be more detached than most of the villagers, so obtaining his trust might not be such an easy feat. He would be grateful if someone would help him with the child Keela, though.

Kiro Hamtchuk

Male Human Earth Cleric, Chaotic Good

Armor Class 7	Str 12
Movement 12	Dex 17
Level 4	Con 12
Hit points 26	Int 9
THAC0 19	Wis 13
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 16

Damage/ Attack: 1d4-1 (bone dagger)

Psionic Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 10

Priest Spells (3/2): 1st - *magical stone, cure light wounds, bless*
2nd - *dust devil, goodberry*

Granted Powers - encasement

If the visitors insist on the "take me to your leader" routine, they'll probably encounter Kiro, Yal's foster son. It's quite amazing how Kiro, even though he is not of the same blood, really looks like Yal. He also possesses his stepfather's blank, vacant stare and his big nose (he's a bit touchy about that). Kiro is the person that really runs the village. Although somewhat inexperienced, he usually manages to get the job done. He is a cleric in training, and his stepfather expects that someday he'll become the next guardian of this shrine. Kiro is

still not certain if that is the future he would like. If the visitors ask him to join them (and obviously, if they earned his trust), he'll gladly leave. His stepfather would not have any complaints about it. Yal would like Kiro to experience some of the world before returning to tend to the shrine.

Tadik

Male Dwarf Gladiator, Lawful Good

Armor Class 6 (studded leather, optimization)	Str 16
Movement 6	Dex 12
Level 8	Con 19
Hit points 72	Int 13
THAC0 13	Wis 14
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 11

Damage/ Attack: by weapon type (obsidian short sword, steel wrist razors, chatkcha-- specialized in all 3 weapons)

Psionic Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 10

Tadik is a dwarf, one of the few original settlers of the crater that is still alive. He is a walking history book of this place, but he knows nothing of great importance for visitors, unless they're really interested in the blood lineage of Dubok's inhabitants. But, even as he knows the full history of almost every Dubokian, if the subject of conversation turns to his past, he'll suddenly become grim, and he'll try to politely excuse himself and walk away. Tadik actually tries to deceive himself. He was a gladiator in Balic, and much to his dread, he had to kill people to stay alive. And that fact really reflected on his otherwise cheerful character. Dead faces still haunt him in his dreams, and he would do anything to redeem himself. Tadik also serves as the village's engineer and armorer. The elevator system that hangs over the village is his design, which he proudly states every now and then. He also sells bone and obsidian weapons, and leather armor.

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Stireve

Female Half-Elf Ranger/ Psionicist, Neutral Good

Armor Class 5 (studded leather armor)	Str 14
Movement 12	Dex 16
Level 6/6	Con 16
Hit points 31	Int 12
THAC0 15	Wis 16
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 7

Damage/ Attack: by weapon type (short bow, bone short sword)

Psionic Summary: Dis 3 / Sci 3 / Dev 11; PSP 48

Clairsentience - *Sciences*: clairvoyance, detection, object reading; *Devotions*: danger sense, know direction, see magic, know location, safe path, see sound, all round vision, know course

Psychometabolism - *Devotions*: chameleon power, displacement

Telepathy - *Devotions*: contact (send thoughts)

Attack/ Defense Modes: MT, PB, EW / MBk, TS, TW.

PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 15; MAC 9.

Stireve is considered one of the best guards in the village, and is usually thought of as their commander, though she will gladly shun that notion. She is a small, middle-aged, half-elven woman, and as all half-elves, tends to be a loner. She never sleeps inside Dubok, but somewhere near the erdlu coral. During the days she can usually be found at her guard post, unless she has gone off hunting in the desert. If the travelers try to find the village on their own, she will be most likely the one who first notices them, no matter how hard they tried to conceal themselves.

Keela

Female Half-Elf Defiler, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 8 (leather armor)	Str 7
Movement 12	Dex 16
Level 1	Con 12
Hit points 4	Int 16
THAC0 20	Wis 14
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 18

Damage/ Attack: 1d4 (sling stone)

Psionic Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 9

Wizard Spells (1): 1st - *Cantrip*

Keela is a half-elven child, about 13 years of age. She never met her father (he was probably one of the traders that passes through the village), and her mother was her only support in the world. Unfortunately, Keela's mother passed away about a year ago. Her mother was one of the village hunters at that time, and it's not so unusual that some of them never return from their forages. From that time, despite the village care, Keela is pretty much on her own. That event turned Keela from cheerful child into a grim and very malicious one. She doesn't even play with the kids of her own age, but spends most of her time walking through the countryside around the village.

It is not quite sure how she gained the basics of magical ability. She's still hiding her knowledge, though Yal already knows what she is up to. Yal is very worried for her. His job as a cleric is to protect his shrine from every kind of defiler, but he cannot bring himself to be cruel to Keela. She is still a child and her mother was one of the most respected members of the village, so he nevertheless feels obliged to protect her. He hopes that in time she'll change her ways: not that he likes preservers, but he considers them a lesser evil. Right now he is dumbfounded. If she grows in power he could be forced to kill her. Even exiling her doesn't seem like a good idea. If the visitors get somehow entangled in this mess, they could end up leaving the village only one way... with a little companion.

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Segovara

The village of Segovara was a client village of Balic, located southeast of the city, across the Silt Sea estuary. What few outside of the village realize yet is that the village of Segovara is no more.

Origins/ History

Sponsored by the merchant house of Rees, twenty years ago, Segovara was built far from the city-state of Balic to manufacture leather goods. From the beginning the village was a success, at least for the merchant house, because it had secured a contract to supply leather goods, mostly belts and boots, to the Balican army. With this contract, they have made large profits on the sales of the Segovaran leather goods.

Despite the prosperity enjoyed by the merchants of Rees, life was harder on the residents of the village. The surrounding terrain is very bleak. With no water source, the village could not support itself. The villagers relied completely on caravans to deliver supplies of food and water to the village. If a caravan was delayed or could not get through, it meant the villagers would go hungry and thirsty. If the caravans ever stopped, it would mean starvation for the villagers.

Unfortunately for the villagers, in Free Year 10 that is exactly what happened. With the turmoil of the civil war in Balic, House Rees was unprepared and found itself struggling to gain control over a portion of the city. In the struggles that followed, the caravan to Segovara was forgotten.

The villagers waited for the caravan, but as the days slipped by and the water dwindled, their hope began to run out. One by one the villagers began to perish from the lack of water. Now only the dead inhabit the village of Segovara, still waiting for the next Rees caravan.

Location

The village of Segovara is situated in a rock gully, more than a day's travel from the Silt Sea, surrounded by rocky barrens. The walls of the canyon rise to a height of over 100', and provide shade to villagers, as well as shielding the village from the occasional silt storms that threaten the area. The gully runs southeast to northwest. It can only be entered safely down the easily sloping southeast end. Elsewhere the walls are too steep to descend safely except by a skilled climber.

The village is mainly a collection of huts, built by the three dozen villagers over the years. Those on the northwestern end are the original structures built when the village was first founded. This group of ten huts are very crude,

built with thin walls and stretched leather skins used as roofs. Most of these decrepit huts had been abandoned by the time of the village's demise and a couple of these huts have collapsed from neglect.

The newer buildings of the southern end are sturdier. Here the villagers constructed newer homes of thick mud-bricks. Because of the narrowness of the ravine, the houses are built against its walls, leaving space for a small road down the middle of the gully. Some of these buildings are wider than others, sticking out into the narrow street. Because of this and the fact that the canyon is not straight, the road makes sharp twists and turns that prevent wagons or even pack animals from using the road. Even the villagers found it crowded, and the occasional visiting elves often complained of having been overcome with claustrophobia in the narrow street.

Midway down the gully, seeming to mark the boundary between the newer and older sections, are the two largest buildings in the village. On the right wall is the only multi-story building in the village, the warehouse. The warehouse is three stories high, but is not very wide and clings to the gully wall for support. Here the villagers stored their raw materials and skins to be turned into leather goods, as well as the finished goods that were waiting for a caravan to take them back to Balic. When the next caravan arrives from Balic, they will discover the warehouse almost empty.

Across from the warehouse is the home of the local merchant representative. Evitius Rees was the local member of House Rees, whose duty it was to run the village. His house is the largest in the village, with eight rooms, and large enough to have a small slaves quarters attached to the side. Evitius was the only villager to be wealthy enough to own slaves, having three house slaves to wait on him and his family.

The Rees residence shows signs of damage, and inside a couple of the rooms have been gutted by fire. At one point the villagers became desperate and mobbed Evitius's house when it appeared that the caravan would not come. The mob killed Evitius and his family, and set fire to their bodies. Their charred remains still lie within the building.

The bodies of the rest of the villagers lie where they collapsed. A few of those who died first have been buried in a small plot near the entrance to the gully, but most died in the homes, typically in bed. Only a couple of bodies lie on the streets.

Organization

When it was a thriving village, Segovara was run by a representative of Rees. At the time of the village's demise,

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Evitius Rees was the overseer of the village. Evitius was responsible for managing the number of items produced as well as ordering the supplies needed for the village's survival, and conducting business as a representative for the rest of the villagers with the Rees caravans that visited the settlement.

Outside Relations

The only outside relations the villagers of Segovara had and will still have in the future are with the caravans of House Rees. A caravan would come from Balic and deliver raw materials, food, and other supplies to the villagers, and return to Balic with finished goods. However, none have been to the village since the middle of Free Year 10.

With the situation in Balic having calmed down, House Rees has planned to send a caravan to Segovara in the next few days. When the caravan arrives to find the village dead, the villagers will rise as undead. As the sun goes down that night the villagers will rise as faels and attack the members of the caravan. Blaming House Rees for their deaths and seeing the caravan as representing the merchant house, they will kill and eat all its members. After the living have been consumed, the undead villagers will be left to haunt the ruins, attacking any creatures that happen upon the village.

Important Residents

Villagers, Faels (35): INT 12; AL Chaotic evil; AC 6; MV9; HD 6+3; hp 36; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/2d6; SA see below; SD +1 or better to hit; MR Nil; SZ M; ML 16; XP 975; DSMCII/ 44; Special: Bite- If the bite causes 6 hp of damage, there is a 25% chance the fael has bitten off a portion of its victim the size of a hand. If 9 hp of damage there is a 25% chance it has bitten off a portion of the victim the size of an arm. If the fael causes 12 hp of damage there is a 25% chance it has bitten off the head of its victim, automatically killing him. Undead Power: Resistance to turning, the faels are turned as 9 HD monsters. Undead Weaknesses: vulnerability to sunlight, bound to village limits.

Psionic Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 10

The bodies of the dead villagers will lie dormant until a caravan from the Merchant House of Rees arrives at the village. Once the sun has set, their bodies will animate. Seeking out the members of the caravan they will attack to kill. At first the fael will attack individually or in small numbers, but if they encounter strong resistance, they will begin attacking in a mob.

When first awakened, the fael of Segovara will be emaciated, almost skeletal in appearance, with dried cracked

skin barely covering their bones. All are dressed in simple peasant garb, a loose fitting toga. The fael have no need for weapons or other equipment, instead using their teeth and claws in combat.

The faels are unable to leave the village of Segovara, and anyone who manages to flee the village can escape the undead creatures. Sunlight is harmful to the fael, causing 1d6 points of damage for each round of exposure. During the day, the fael tend to remain indoors to avoid the sun, but they can move around the village if they choose. The high walls of the canyon shield the village, and only for a couple of hours around midday does sunlight actually fall on the village.

Evitius, Dhaot, 6th level Trader: INT 12; AL Chaotic neutral; AC 3; MV 9; HD 6; hp 28; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg see below; SA illusions; SD see below; MR nil; SZ M; ML 14; XP 650; DSMCII/22; Special: incorporeal; can only be harmed by magical weapons. Invisibility at will. Cast at will the following: spectral force, hallucinatory terrain, dream, and nightmare.

Psionic Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 10

Evitius is the one former resident of Segovara who may help anyone visiting the village. Since his death at the hands of the other villagers far from his home in Balic, Evitius has become a dhaot. He longs to be buried in his family's mausoleum back in Balic, and cannot rest until he is. Until then he is bound to the area immediately around his body.

Evitius cannot communicate with the living except through his illusions. One way he may seek to communicate would be to make it appear that his charred body moves. He may create an illusion of his charred body and try to communicate through it. Anyone seeing this could easily mistake the illusion for an undead monster. Or Evitius will recreate the scene of his death. Since the scene would be from Evitius's point of view it will be very confused, with a mob of angry faces, shouting too loudly to be heard and wielding torches. If anyone tries to sleep in the vicinity, Evitius will fill their dreams with images of his family's mausoleum in Balic, and of his little girl crying to be let in.

If visitors befriend Evitius and consider taking his body back to Balic, he will help them against the faels. Though his illusions are not effective on undead, he serves as an invisible scout and gives warning of fael attacks. If visitors refuse to help Evitius, he will turn his anger on them, and use his powers to prevent them from leaving. He can use his hallucinatory terrain ability to make it appear that the canyon walls collapse, closing the exit.

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Cwalu

Cwalu is a small village of about 100 feral dwarves in the Sea of Silt region.

History

Cwalu was established thousands of years ago by a group of dwarves who migrated from a region whose name is now forgotten. The village was prosperous for awhile, until the Sea of Silt expanded cutting the village off from the rest of the world. Since then the villagers have believed that some catastrophic disaster swallowed the rest of the world, leaving the dwarves to be the last humanoid survivors. For an eternity now, the village has had to endure starvation and constant war with the hej-kin. As a result of the war, the desperate dwarves have become cannibalistic savages.

Location

The village is located in the northern end of the Mountains of the Sun at the bottom of a huge cliff, next to an ancient mine. Most of the village is built close to the mountainside, giving the dwarves a defensible position against the hej-kin. Many of the buildings in the village are small stone huts. Each hut usually is occupied by eight dwarves.

In the center of the village is a round stone reservoir. This reservoir is about 8 feet in diameter, and 4 feet deep. In this reservoir is water that was transported from the underground springs found all over the Mountains of the Sun.

A ruined wall that surrounds the village was once used for defense. The dwarves now use stones from the wall to construct their homes, craft tools, and make weapons. This has caused the wall to become useless for their defense, but it still has plenty of stones left for building materials.

In the back of the village there is an ancient mine. The main use now for the mine is to hide the children during a major attack. Sometimes the dwarves will take stone out of the mine for making tools or weapons. However the dwarves do not venture too far into the mine because of a superstition, in which they believe that dwarven spirits who used to work in the mine still inhabit it.

Organization

Due to the hostile environment, the leadership of the village has evolved into a dictatorship based on the strongest warrior of the village who possesses the mightiest axe. At any time another dwarf can kill the leader and take the axe, making him the new leader. The leader then appoints his second, who

helps him in his duties. The metal two-handed axe has no special powers, but is the only metal object left in the village, making it a symbol similar to a crown. This system has lasted for thousands of years and seems to keep the dwarves alive.

The current leader of the village is Gefyllan.

Gefyllan is respected by the other dwarves because he brought the village many victories against the hej-kin. His second is a cunning dwarf named Bručan. Bručan's biggest responsibility is to locate the underground springs and to kill any hej-kin that might be there.

Outside Relations

The dwarves of Cwalu have never known anything other than their enemies. This causes them to attack anyone who is not from the village. A dwarven visitor might be able to get them to talk before they try to kill him. The dwarves have a lot of unusual myths concerning the days before the Dragon. Most of the time the dwarves are at war with the spiders and hej-kin that inhabit the mountains. Unfortunately they are losing the war and may not hold out much longer.

Important Residents

Gefyllan

Male Dwarf Fighter, Neutral

Armor Class 9 (skin)	Str 21
Movement 6	Dex 10
Level 8	Con 16
Hit Points 65	Int 12
THAC0 10	Wis 10
No. of Attacks 2	Chr 8

Damage/Attack: 1d10+7 (two-handed metal axe)

Psionic Summary: PSPs 53; Wild Talent - accelerate
Power Score-14
Attack/ Defense Modes: none / MB, IF.
PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 17, MAC 10

Gefyllan is about 4 feet tall, and is bald (like all dwarves) with dark blue eyes. He was born into the harsh environment of the Mountains of the Sun. All his life he knew nothing but survival and death. For 35 years Gefyllan fought the spiders and hej-kin, growing in power. Finally about 10 years ago, urged by his friend Bručan, Gefyllan killed the leader

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of the village and took the axe for himself. He now rules the village through both respect and fear. Gefyllan is determined to exterminate all the spiders and hej-kin in the area. Unfortunately the dwarves have been trying to do this since the founding of the village, so it doesn't look like it is going to happen anytime soon. A lot of his decisions are made with the advice of Brucan. This leads some of the villagers to believe that Brucan is the true leader, but no one would dare say this out loud for fear of Gefyllan's wrath.

Brucan

Male Dwarf Fighter, Neutral

Armor Class 9 (skin)	Str 14
Movement 6	Dex 8
Level 5	Con 10
Hit Points 34	Int 17
THAC0 17	Wis 16
No. of Attacks 1	Chr 14

Damage/Attack: 1d6 (bone spear)

Psionic Summary: PSPs 49; Wild Talent - dimensional screen
Power Score-7
Attack/ Defense Modes: none / TS, IF.
PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 18, MAC 8

Brucan is about 3 feet 4 inches tall, with shifty green eyes. Since he was a child he has been fascinated by the legends of a dwarven kingdom lost in the past. This fascination has fueled Brucan's lust for power. The only problem is he is very weak compared to other dwarves, giving him a disadvantage. Due to his vast intellect, which is very unique and seldom found in the village, he has been able to place and keep Gefyllan in power. He is manipulating Gefyllan into helping him get rid of the spiders and hej-kin, then he hopes to dispose of Gefyllan. This will allow him to declare himself the new dwarven king. Unfortunately for Brucan the war is not going in the dwarves' favor, so he might have a long wait. Other than dreaming of ultimate power, Brucan helps find water to keep the village well supplied.

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Sakkakog of the Spirit Lake

Sakkakog is a small halfling village built on the shore of the Spirit Lake in the Forest Ridge. It is the largest of the many villages lining the lake which make up the Kree'a tribe. During the day it would present a rather average sight if not for the local halfling custom of planting flowers in the mossy thatching of their roofs, which in certain seasons transforms the village into a phantasmagoric idyll.

Origins/History

The founder of the tribe, Kree, was a great halfling warrior who led his tribe on a journey across the Forest Ridge. The exact details of this journey have been lost in time, but it is known they were trying to escape from a great evil. The night they reached the Spirit Lake and saw it glowing with its radiant brilliance they took it as a sign which gave them hope and strength. That night they stopped running and Kree faced the evil that was pursuing them. In the glorious battle that followed, both Kree and the evil being killed each other - the halfling sacrificing himself for his people. His body was floated on a flower-covered barge where it sank in the middle of the lake. The Kree'a people have worshipped and lived on the lake ever since.

Location

The village lies on the edge of the Spirit Lake, a lake that seems like any other during the day - dotted with halfling fishermen and swimmers. But at night it is a different story. As the moons of Athas shine upon the lake it glows with a dancing white radiant light. No halfling is permitted in the lake during its mystical display. The halflings believe the light is the ghosts of their ancient ancestors. Scholars from other lands say it is the moonlight reflecting off a special kind of algae which grows in the lake. Their whole culture and customs revolve around the lake. Only the bodies of the greatest halfling chiefs and heroes are laid to rest within its waters, and once a year all the surrounding villages release flower-covered barges onto the lake in a ceremony to honor Kree.

The village of Sakkakog is rather simple itself, its water temple being the only prominent feature. To the halflings, water and the lake represent life itself, so the village water clerics are given the most respect in the tribe. The temple itself is built right on the shore, and looks like most of the other buildings in the village except for the fact it is much larger. Inside, a vast wall painting depicts the story of Kree and his people. The building also contains a blessed pool of crystal clear water where most of the ceremonies are performed.

Organization

There is no true leader in Sakkakog; unity and equality are the ways of life. Every action a halfling does is for the good of the tribe. Hunters - no matter how hungry - bring game back to camp where it is divided up among members of the tribe. If anyone were considered to be the leader it would be Ereme, the water cleric who is looked upon like a father figure by the other halflings. This will change if the newcomer, Siog, has his way.

Outside Relations

There is a primitive form of trade between the Kree'a and other halfling tribes, but they are mainly self-sufficient. The lake provides all they need. There has been very little contact with non-halfling races, although some travelers occasionally stop by for dinner (if you catch my drift).

Important Residents

Ereme

Male Halfling Water Cleric, Neutral Good

Armor Class	6 (hide armor)	Str	10
Movement	6	Dex	14
Level	10	Con	12
Hit points	45	Int	13
THAC0	13	Wis	17
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	12

Damage / Attack: 1d6 (bone quarterstaff +1)

Psionics Summary: PSPs 45; Wild Talent - enhanced strength
Power Score - 14
Attack/ Defense Modes: none / TS, MB, IF.
PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 16; MAC 8

Priest Spells (6/6/4/3/2): major sphere - water; minor sphere - cosmos

Granted Powers: Ignore water (10 rounds), gate water (3 cubic feet), healing draft, resistance to water, body of water, spark of life

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Ereme is an elderly halfling who has gotten a little clumsy in his old age. Despite this he is very wise, and old-fashioned.

The head water cleric performs rituals and spells for the tribe. He is often asked for his wisdom, and is looked up to by his fellow halflings. He does not assume leadership, however, and lives only to serve the lake and its people. As yet he does not approve of the changes Siog wants to make.

Ereme was born and raised on the lake. He has never left the lands of his people. This has caused him to develop a viewpoint that the world revolves around the lake and its culture.

Siog

Male Halfling, Fire Cleric/ Psionicist, Lawful Neutral

Armor Class -1 (hide armor, cloak of protection +4, Dex)	Str 12 Dex 17
Movement 6	Con 18
Level 13/ 13	Int 15
Hit points 57	Wis 18
THAC0 11	Cha 12
No. of Attacks 1	

Damage / Attack: 1d6+1 (metal short sword +1)

Priest Spells (8/8/7/5/2/2): major sphere - fire; minor sphere - cosmos

Granted Powers: Ignore fire (13 rounds), gate fire (7 cubic feet), enflame, affect normal fires, cleansing flame, control flame, protection from flame.

Psionics Summary: Dis 4/Sci 7/Dev 18; PSPs 145
Clairsentience - Devotions: Danger sense
Psychokinesis - Sciences: Detonate, Telekinesis;
Devotions: Control Sound, Inertial Barrier,
Levitation, Molecular Agitation, Molecular
Manipulation.
Psychometabolism - Sciences: Metamorphosis;
Devotions: Body Weaponry, Cannibalize,
Chameleon Power, Heightened Senses.
Telepathy-Sciences: Domination, Mindlink, Probe,
Psychic Surgery; Devotions: Awe, Conceal
Thoughts, Daydream, ESP, Invisibility, Life
Detection, Send Thoughts, Sight Link.
Attack/ Defense Modes: EW, II, MT, PsC, PB/IF,
MB, MBk, TS, TW
PLAYER'S OPTION: #AT 2/1; MTHAC0 8;
MAC 7,

Siog has a very powerful appearance, with a constant look of determination and strength in his eyes. He is very

arrogant and idealistic, and believes he should lead the village, being the most worldly and cultured.

Siog is a halfling scholar who has returned to his tribe hoping to change their primitive ways. He hopes to change the view of the city-states that his people are nothing but uncivilized savages. Siog wishes to advance halfling civilization so that the merchants of the tablelands will consider them equals. He wants to combine a society with a working government with the traditional moral values of his tribe. So far he has had little luck.

"My name is Siog, I am a halfling who was brought up in Tyr far from my homeland. I left my tribe when I was young due to disgust of their cannibalistic ways. Much later I came to miss the forest and my family. To know and understand my halfling brothers and sisters better, I left behind "civilization", and walked into the tangled shadows of the Forest Ridge west of the Ringing Mountains. For eighteen months I lived with them as an adopted member of the tribe. Here in the Forest Ridge my family had lived in harmony with nature for an incalculable number of years. ...and had survived longer than any other race for one simple reason: they respected nature, the living world from which they drew their sustenance. They gathered, hunted, and consumed only what they needed, and never killed an animal or even a plant without reason. Now I am to become a part of that living world, a complex organism, whose every element plays an honest, essential role in biological balance. I would be one small link in the great chain of life webbing the forest together.

I am simply learning the hard way to appreciate their unique life-style, their high moral values, their noble dignity, their spiritual understanding, and their natural wisdom."

Huguhan

Female Halfling Psionicist, Neutral Good

Armor Class 6 (hide armor, Dex)	Str 12
Movement 6	Dex 15
Level 8	Con 13
Hit points 30	Int 18
THAC0 18	Wis 15
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 14

Damage / Attack: 1d6-1 (bone short sword)

Psionics Summary: Dis 3/Sci 4/Dev 13; PSPs 73

Clairsentience - Sciences: Aura Sight; Devotions: All-round Vision, Danger Sense, Feel Sound, Know Location, See Sound.

Psychoportation - Sciences: Summon Planer Creature, Teleport, Teleport Other; Devotions: Astral Projection, Blink, Dimensional Door, Dimension Walk, Phase, Teleport Trigger
Telepathy - Devotions: ESP, Life Detection.

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Attack/ Defense Modes: II, MT, PsC, PB/IF, MB, MBk, TS.
PLAYER'S OPTION: # AT 3/2; MTHAC0 13;
MAC 8

She is young and pretty. Huguhan has only one hand, as a result from a sloth encounter. Because of her disability her husband rejected her as a suitable wife and left her.

Her rejection by her husband caused Huguhan to become bitter towards men, and is very suspicious and untrusting towards all males. The only exception is Siog, with whom she has fallen deeply in love. But Siog is driven so strongly by his vision, and consumed by his work, that he is blinded to how much she cares for him.

Huguan is a halfling woman banished from her tribe for rejecting the traditional ways. She came to the spirit lake and is lying low. She has sided with Siog because of his view on female rights. Traditional Kree'an culture sees females as not much more than servants.

Kree - the true spirit of the lake, Wraith; AL NG; AC 2; MV 9; HD 9; hp 56; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 + Special; SA animate object, inhabit body, chill touch; SD +2 or better weapon to be hit; MR nil; SZ S; ML 14; XP 4,000; MC2

Psionics Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 7

Little is known about him, but Kree still exists as a wraith at the bottom of the lake. He has sworn to protect the lake and his tribe for all eternity. It is said he sometimes makes an appearance at the yearly flower-barge ceremony, where he gives wisdom and hope to his people. The only other time he would emerge from the lake would be to save the Kree'a from destruction.

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Khum

Khum (khood) is a small dwarven village hidden in a valley of the Ringing Mountains north of Tyr and almost directly due west of Urik, situated near large stone and obsidian quarries, as well as an active volcano.

Origins/History

Khum was founded many generations ago (by human standards). The dwarves have been quarrying stone and obsidian there ever since, selling both the quarried rock and products made from it to the city-states. It is not known if the dwarves migrated to this area from someplace far away or if they once lived in a great city under the mountains nearby, as some of their legends state.

Location

Khum, located as it is within the Ringing Mountains, is accessible only by a steep mountain trail peppered with guarded checkpoints established by the dwarves. There are a number of false trails which loop back on themselves, lead to dead-ends or traps such as deadfalls. Only the dwarves of Khum know how to safely and correctly find and follow the trail to Khum.

On the outer slopes of the mountains the dwarves of Khum have built a small trading outpost. Though usually manned only by a score of warriors and tradesmen, some villagers maintain homes here, and dwarven herders from the desert utilize the small market to sell their meat and other animal products to the village or interested merchants.

Included within this outpost are a pen for kank and inix, a rest home for weary merchants, an administration and counting house for all business transactions, a few small homes, and a small open-air market used by the merchants to sell their spare items. The buildings here are similar to those of a human city, built of stones carved and carried from the quarries within the mountains.

Within the valley stands the village of Khum, set into the dark stone. The dwarves have either carved their homes into the mountainside or constructed them on the lower region of the valley's floor. The homes exist fully within the cliff-faces or underground, hollowed out of the rock or developed from naturally existing caverns. There are no buildings or structures similar to what one would find in the city-states, only these cliff or ground hollows, consisting of no more than two rooms: an outer common room facing the valley, and a private inner room surrounded by the rock. There is little variation in this, no matter the relative social status of the dwarf.

The only larger structures tend to be communal structures, such as the Clan Hall, a private, pillared chamber where the Elders meet, and the Earth Temple, a series of undeveloped caverns near the village which the earth clerics have claimed as sacred to Elemental Earth.

Above the valley, the sky is usually gray or black with the belching of an ancient volcano, though the dwarves rarely have problems with ash or smoke and are in no danger from eruptions due to their distance from the crater. However, the volcano does taint the ground water nearby, and the hot springs that provide the dwarves of Khum with water must be cleansed of sulfur and other toxins by the earth clerics before it can be considered drinkable. Alternately, ice and snow daringly brought down from the treacherous mountain peaks also serves to provide the village with some of their water, as does trade.

The quarries around which the village is built are located further within the valley. The main rock quarry consists of a vast, many-tiered scar plunging down into the blackness of the mountain bedrock. Other smaller quarry sites are scattered nearby, some abandoned, some still in use.

Organization

The settlement follows the orders of the clan leader, and council of ruling elders, those dwarves who survive until their two-hundredth year. The clan leader makes all important decisions, but the clan elders serve as advisors and confidants to him, and unlike in the city-states, there is little politicking among the advisors.

In like dwarven fashion, among the workers everyone has a job to do and everyone does it - be it quarry worker, stone cutter, overseer, sled-puller, hauler, craftsman, trader, banker, watchman, herder, cleric, elder, or clan-leader, among others, and each dwarf works stubbornly to fulfill their focus. There are some dwarves who refuse to abandon a quarry long after others have given up because they have focused upon excavating a particular section of rock.

Work in the quarries is hard, but the dwarves developed an organized method for quarry. First, the rock is cut from the quarry, then other dwarves pull or carry it back to the village where the best of it is kept and shaped into various items and trinkets for trade, while the rest is put aside for later sale. Finally, both shaped items and raw materials are carried by foot through the steep mountains to the trading outpost, where it is loaded onto waiting caravans and sold for goods or coin.

Workers injured while quarrying are always provided for as long as it takes them to recover, as the thought of a banshee haunting the area fills the dwarves of Khum with

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dread. Workers injured too severely for the clan's earth clerics to heal are pitied, never scorned due the fate awaiting them at death.

Wealth means little in the village, as the village prospers or dies as a whole. Status, however, takes the place of wealth, and those considered more focused, more able and better workers are looked upon with greater respect than those not so blessed. Despite this, there is little to differentiate any particular villager's home from another's, even the contents of the homes are similar. Everything is stable, structured, organized and predictable, just the way it has always been, just the way the dwarves like it.

Outside Relations

As they have for generations, the dwarves quarry obsidian and stone from the Ringing Mountains, then sell it to the human merchant caravans waiting at the outpost. Once again, stable, constant, and terribly predictable, just the way the dwarves like it.

Tyr commonly trades with the dwarves of Khum for stone, obsidian and craftwork, sending foodstuffs in return (farming is difficult, if not impossible in the thin mountain soil) as well as other items. And though Urik relies on its own obsidian quarries, it pays well for the stone and crafted items of Khum. Khumish craftwork can also be found in some of the other city-states, passed from trader to trader, increasing in price the further from Khum it travels.

Halfing raiders are an occasional problem, striking from hidden paths in the mountains as they do, and occasionally, bandits attempt to waylay caravans or sneak into Khum itself, but the dwarves of Khum have driven them back time after time.

Additionally, a small group of aaracokra has taken up residence on one of the peaks overlooking the valley, and thus far there has been no trouble between them and the dwarves. The dwarves remain standoffish towards this group, not having initiated any relations with them, and the Elders hope the birdmen will move on. Beyond this, the dwarves of Khum have little contact with the outside world.

Important Residents

There are four notable villagers among the two hundred living in the village and its outlying trading post.

Khennum, the Ancient, (250 years old)

Male Dwarf Fighter, Lawful Neutral

Armor Class 10	Str 9
Movement 6	Dex 7
Level 13	Con 13
Hit points 87	Int 10
THAC0 8	Wis 18
No. of Attacks 2	Cha 15

Damage/ Attack: 1d6 (staff)

Psionics Summary: PSPs 60; Wild Talent - Precognition

Attack/Defense Modes: none/ IF, MB, TS

Power Score-13

PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 14; MAC 7

The current leader of Khum is an ancient dwarf named Khennum. His eyes are fading, his limbs have grown weak and clumsy, and his hearing has gone bad (he uses a specially devised horn placed to his ear in order to hear), but he is a wise, if stoically traditional leader, as well as extremely grouchy. Though he has earned the surname 'the Ancient', no one dares call him this to his face, for despite his poor hearing, he somehow manages to hear anyone speaking ill of him in his presence and thumps them with his staff of office.

Jorham the Questor

Male Dwarf Earth Cleric, Neutral Good

Armor Class 10	Str 17
Movement 6	Dex 13
Level 4	Con 16
Hit points 21	Int 10
THAC0 19	Wis 19
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 14

Damage/ Attack: 1d6-1 (stone club)

Psionics Summary: PSPs 27; Wild Talent - Danger sense

Attack/Defense Modes: none/ TS, TW

Power Score-16

PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 19; MAC 6

Priest Spells (6/4): major sphere - earth; minor sphere - cosmos

Granted Powers: meld into stone

The dwarves of Khum revere the Earth, and a number of clerics of earth live in and provide for the village. One of these priests even serves as an elder. However, it is Jorham the Questor who invites the most interest. Jorham is a

Villages of the Wastes: Beyond

young cleric of earth taken to falling into prophetic sleeping-fits. His surname comes from his dedication to earth and the travels and journeys he makes into the mountains in response to the visions he receives during his fits.

In the past, his visions have led him to find new trails to water sources high in the mountains, new locations to mine, and the understanding of how to put to rest the banshee of a fallen water bearer. Lately, his visions have focused on a lengthy trip through the mountains and deep into the earth, into a forgotten city. He has no idea what this means, though he believes it is the ancient city from which the dwarves of Khum supposedly long ago migrated.

Though incredibly wise, and a benefit to the village, Jorham is seen as a wildcard due his un-Khumish habit of wandering, exploring and suddenly changing his mind. The dwarves of Khum think it just isn't right, and he should behave the way all the other dwarves do...predictably.

Roth-eye

Male Dwarf Magma Cleric, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 10	Str 15
Movement 6	Dex 12
Level 3	Con 15
Hit points 23	Int 13
THAC0 20	Wis 16
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 9

Damage / Attack: 1d8-1 (obsidian axe)

Psionics Summary: PSPs 34; Wild Talent - Alter features, Cell adjustment

Attack/Defense Modes: none / MB
PLAYER'S OPTION: MTHAC0 19; MAC 9

Priest Spells (4/3): major sphere - magma *; minor sphere - cosmos

Granted Powers: +2 saving throws versus heat, fire, or magma.

* For those without access to Earth, Air, Fire, and Water accessory, substitute the fire sphere.

As occasionally happens, a dwarven priest has turned from the worship of earth to the worship of magma, lured by the promises of power from the spirits of magma. A small, crude shrine to these spirits lies hidden near the volcano, attended only occasionally by the small number of faithful magma worshippers.

The actual face of the leader of this small cult has never been seen, as he wears a black mask, and he keeps his real name a secret, calling himself Roth-eye when the cult holds worship ceremonies. As the other cultists masquerade as earth

clerics, they are certain Roth-eye does the same, but cannot guess his identity.

Roth-eye's eventual plans are to displace the earth clerics and gain control of the quarries, feeling that magma has and will provide much more to the people of the village than earth has. He desires to make Khum a power in the region, and move the dwarves from their seclusion.

Quig, the Beggar

Male Dwarf, Neutral Good

Armor Class 10	Str 12
Movement 4	Dex 5
Level 0	Con 16
Hit points 8	Int 15
THAC0 20	Wis 15
No. of Attacks 1	Cha 8

Damage / Attack: by weapon type

Psionics Summary:

PLAYER'S OPTION: MAC 10

Visitors to Khum may notice a small figure slumped against the side of a building or passed out somewhere in plain sight, dressed in rags and a tattered hood. Quig is an unfortunate dwarf injured while working in the quarries. Unable to return to work towards fulfilling his focus due to his twisted back and leg, which the earth clerics could not fully heal, Quig has turned in his pain and self-depreciation to drunkenness and beggary. This state of affairs can only lead to his death, a time the villagers fear for the horrible consequences it will bring. In fact, it is likely that he will be driven out before that day arrives.

Villages of the Wastes: Credits

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Nels would like to dedicate this article to to everyone who has sought to keep Athas alive over all these ages. Thanks again.

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Well this is it, the first Dark Sun® On-Line Release. The release of this project represents another rebirth for the Dark Sun Campaign World, as the World goes on-line officially. I would like to thank Wizards of the Coast, for allowing this. My thanks goes out to all of the authors for their contributions, and to the other members of the Burnt World of Athas editing team, whose ideas and suggestions helped bring this project together.
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Colin Cookman (that's Obsidian online) is a 17 year old DM of a Dark Sun campaign that he doesn't play nearly as often as he'd like. His web page, at <http://meteu.octoraro.org/~obsidian/> features several independent net projects dedicated to Hamanu's realm, the eternal city-state of Urik.

Gabriel Cormier

Introduction

<http://personal.nbnet.nb.ca/shadows>

I'm happy to be a part of this next chapter in the saga of Dark Sun®. Hopefully this project will show that there is still interest around the world for Dark Sun®. It's been a fun job editing the villages of fans for the blasted world of Athas. Once again, thanks to Wizards for keeping DS alive through the official web site, and for agreeing to let the fans carry on until the rebirth. Thanks to the BWOA team for all the help.

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Raven is a freelance artist and writer, as well as a certified computer technician (among other things). He lives with his sorcerer-queen girlfriend, two feral halfling children and a cat.

He dreams of someday ruling his own city-state, and in preparation for that day, practices instilling fearful obedience in said feline."

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I'm 28 years old and live in North Las Vegas Nevada. I've played AD&D since I was 13 and I feel Dark Sun is the best campaign setting. I'm married and work as a land surveyor for the City of North Las Vegas.

Nathan Paziuk
Menka's Gate
For all my crazy friends.