

5E

RUINS OF SYMBAROU



The Promised Land

EXPLORE THE RUINS OF SYMBAROU IN THIS INTRODUCTORY SETTING BOOK
FOR THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR ROLEPLAYING GAME.

RUINS OF SYMBAROU

THE PROMISED LAND

An adventure for the Ruins of Symbaroum setting
Version 1.00

PROJECT LEAD, WRITING AND EDITING:

MATTIAS JOHNSON HAAKE, MATTIAS LILJA, JACOB RODGERS

COVER AND ILLUSTRATIONS:

MARTIN GRIP

MAPS:

TOBIAS TRANELL, JOHAN NOHR

GRAPHIC DESIGN AND LAYOUT:

CHRISTIAN GRANATH

PROOFREADING:

BRANDON BOWLING

CONTRIBUTIONS:

ROBIN HAGBLOM, ULF MÖLLER

PRODUCT IDENTITY NOTICE: The following items are hereby identified as Product Identity, as defined in the Open Game License version 1.0a, Section 1(e), and are not Open Content: all trademarks, proper names (characters, place names, etc.), new rules, classes, items, backgrounds, places, characters, artwork, sidebars, and trade dress. Open Game Content: The Open content in this book includes material taken from the Systems Reference Document. No other portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without permission.





CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Six years ago, after having published games in the Sci-Fi and Post-Apocalyptic genres, we finally came together to design the roleplaying game of our dreams: Symbaroum. The decision to publish in both our native Swedish and in English was made long before launch, and it did not take long before we saw translations into Italian, French, German, Spanish, and most recently Portuguese.

1 RUINS OF SYMBAROU M

NOW THE TIME has come to make the dark, wondrous world of Symbaroum more accessible in another sense. Being role-players ourselves, and having published games before, we knew from the start that the kind of game mechanics you enjoy is a matter of taste and preferred play style. And even though the original game is gaining more and more attention, attracting more and more players, we have long pondered the prospect of bringing the setting of Symbaroum to the most popular roleplaying game system ever created – thus welcoming those who are hesitant to learn a completely new rule set to the Kingdom of Ambria and the vast forest of Davokar.

In a sense, this Starter PDF can be seen as a proof of concept, or a trial-balloon – meant to provoke a reaction from you, the potential players, from within the established Symbaroum community as well as from the broader family of tabletop roleplaying gamers. From another perspective, it can be seen as the result of a process that has taken more than two years; it has been a dance of two-steps-forward-one-step-back, searching for the perfect way to align the game concept to the OGL while still staying true to what Symbaroum is: gritty, deadly and full of dark mysteries. Of course, the fact that the systems share some similarities to begin with has made the dance both more enjoyable and less strenuous.

So, now it is your turn to contribute! We hope to meet you at conventions, on the Free League forum and other social media platforms where Symbaroum is discussed; we hope that you will help us evaluate this concept and tell us what you would like to see in the future. Our intention is clear: we want to adapt much of the original Symbaroum game line to the 5E OGL. But let's flood the dance floor and keep on dancing, two-steps-forward-one-step-back – together we can make this marriage between the wondrous world of Symbaroum and the most popular game mechanics of our time into something really special!

Happy gaming!

TEAM FREE LEAGUE PUBLISHING

Feedback Wanted!

You are most welcome to the Free League forum, to share your experiences, report typos and offer comments to the design team. Head over to [forum.frialigan.se], scroll down and you will find the section called *Ruins of Symbaroum (5E OGL)*.



Welcome to the Ruins

THE SETTING FOR *Ruins of Symbaroum* is the northern lands where that ancient empire once ruled, now consumed by the dark forest of Davokar and peopled by barbarian tribes of humans, stray goblins, massive ogres, dangerous elves, hungry trolls and mysterious dwarves. Only recently has human civilization returned to the north-lands: years after defeating the Dark Lords, Queen Korinthia has decided to guide her people to their ancestral homelands. The south was destroyed: tens of thousands had died; the maimed and broken were beyond count; the land was ravaged by death magic; there was famine and infertility.

Before the return of the Queen and her people, the region up north had been controlled by warring barbarian clans and before that by the prosperous city-state of Lindaros. According to legend, Lindaros suffered the wrath of the celestial powers, resulting in an infectious bleeding disease that wiped out its entire population. This occurred about two hundred years ago, after which it took more than a century before the nomadic clans of the region dared approach the contaminated ruins.

Soon after the decisive last battle against the Dark Lords, Korinthia's troops reached the region in the north. At Lindaros they encountered a small barbarian settlement. After a siege that lasted only three days the barbarian chieftain of Kadiz bowed before their superior power and the work of rebuilding Lindaros commenced — a task carried out mainly by thousands of prisoners of war and “volunteers,” newcomers from the dead land of old Alberetor.

The Queen did not join the refugees until seven years after the war's end. When she did, she declared that her new realm would be called Ambria, “the shining,” and the increasingly restored capital was to be renamed Yndaros in honor of Korinthia's father, the hero king Ynedar.

Three years later the Queen's armies also managed to overwhelm the barbarian warlord Haloban and his clan warriors — a triumph affording Korinthia the opportunity to start exploring and harvesting the ample riches of Davokar. Much has happened over a short period of time, so there has been no room for subtleties. Disobedient barbarians have been killed, banished or imprisoned by Korinthia's soldiers; the obedient ones have been used for labor under slave-like conditions. The latter also holds true for many of Korinthia's own subjects, namely all those who came from the south without personal riches or sought-after skills. If anyone bothered to keep count of how many people have died in the process of building Ambria the final score would be in the tens of thousands. But no one does. To those who are alive nothing counts but the remarkable result. Although the restoration of Yndaros is far from finished the city has grown to enormous proportions, and at the same time Korinthia's knights have conquered all land between the mountains in the south and the woods in the north. Now the nobles of Ambria are starting to plan for new conquests, in the north and in the west.

Seven years ago the uncrowned king of Ambria's treasure-hunters, Lasifor Nightpitch, established the town of Thistle Hold. The construction was largely financed by the reward Lasifor received for an armful of dried twilight-thistle — a rare herb, allegedly powerful enough to aid the gravely ill Abesina, mother of Queen Korinthia. Ever since then, Mayor Nightpitch's walled settlement has acted as a safe haven for Ambrians exploring Davokar, a forest full of natural resources and rich remnants of long lost civilizations; also a forest full of rampant abominations, dark-minded creatures of otherworldly origins and a band of wardens most unwilling to welcome the damage inflicted by human explorers.

The Land

THE REGION KORINTHIA is determined to conquer is dominated by Davokar, a forest that in itself is as varied as a continent. Traversing the woods from Thistle Hold to its northern edge would take weeks, if not months, and on the way one would have to face beasts as well as hostile elves, blight-stricken abominations and treacherous nature.

South of Davokar a rolling landscape of fertile plains stretches out. Where they are not plowed by Ambrian farmers, they are covered by pale green grass or small groves where the birds and beasts of the lowlands find shelter. This is Ambria, a kingdom divided into seven duchies encircling a domain ruled by the Church of Prios, the Sun God and the Giver of Laws. The Grand Duchy of Korinthia is by far the largest, just as the capital city of Yndaros is larger than Thistle Hold, Ravenia and the high seat of the Sun Church, Templewall.

The region is framed on two sides by towering mountains - the wild and majestic Titans to the south and the Ravens to the east, growing taller and steeper the further south one travels. Aside from some mining

colonies and the monastery of the Twilight Friars south of Yndaros, the Ambrians have yet to establish any noteworthy settlements in the mountains. Instead they have become a refuge for robbers, free-thinkers and rebellious barbarians.

And as for the dwarven realm of Küam Zamok, its inhabitants appear to be totally indifferent to humans, with the exception of the few families that, for reasons unknown but wildly debated, have settled down in Yndaros.

The climate is colder and more humid compared to what the Ambrians are used to. Damp winds from the southern oceans climb over the Titans and are not the least embarrassed to drown Ambria in heavy rains, especially during the autumn. The winters are cold, with snow covering the streets of Yndaros for a month or two, or even longer during the winters that the barbarians call Istaros, when arctic winds sweep down from the north, so cold that hearths which are allowed to go out can barely be brought back to life and the blood freezes in anyone who dares venture outside for longer than it takes to collect more firewood.



The Ways of Life

SINCE LONG BEFORE the arrival of Korinthia and her subjects, the land north of the Titans was home to a motley array of creatures with diverse customs and complicated relationships to one another. The arrival of the Ambrians destroyed the precarious balance that existed and has since changed everything. The following is an overview, giving generalities, though any particular individual might hold their own unique views and outlook.

PEOPLE

In broad terms Davokar and its surroundings are inhabited by three distinct groups of people — Ambrians, barbarians and the Elder Folk (elves, goblins, ogres and others). Each of the subgroups feels they are more or less independent, but there are commonalities among individuals of each major group.

The Ambrians all stem from the dead realm Alberetor south of the Titans. The Great War made them tough but also forced them to become disciplined and organized,

in terms of their military, bureaucracy, trade relations and division of labor. In short: the war has civilized the Ambrians as a people, even though it may have brutalized many of its individuals.

The Ambrians are capable and experienced when it comes to waging wars, but they are also characterized by a profound spirituality and an aptitude for refined skills and nuanced knowledge. They are a people bent on conquest and ownership; they always strive for more and better, whatever it concerns. Nature is regarded as a resource, filled with supplies which can make life more comfortable, or in any case more tolerable, and many Ambrians would willingly risk life and limb in the hope of finding treasure, knowledge or rare goods which could secure them a comfortable future.

The barbarian clans have lived in greater harmony since the arrival of the Ambrians. It is thought that the clan folk are descendants of Symbaroum, the civilization that ruled the region up until a millennia ago. There are differences between the clans in terms of lifestyle and customs, but in the end they have much in common. What



1 RUINS OF SYMBAROU M

they share is probably best symbolized by the witches, the spiritual leaders of the clans and advisors to the chieftains. Under the guidance of the witches, the barbarians are fully aware that they are living in and dependent upon nature for their safety and survival. And they have all borne witness to what happens when one does not respect the taboos dictated by the Huldra, the head of all witches who lives on Karvosti alongside the High Chieftain.

Finally, there is the vague category called the Elder Folk, including elves, dwarves, goblins, trolls, ogres, changelings and others. Most see themselves as nature's children, rather than its owners or rulers. There are of course exceptions, such as the many goblins who have developed a taste for Ambrian abundance, and the dwarven families living in Yndaros who have elevated the collection of wealth to almost an art form.

But by and large, the Ambrians and the Elder Folk are very dissimilar in this respect. The disagreement, not to say animosity, is most apparent in the conflicts between Korinthia's subjects and the elves of Davokar. With reference to a treaty that supposedly was signed by many human lords around the time of Symbaroum's fall, the wardens of the woods demand that all Ambrians stay clear of the forest. They even claim that an ancient alliance called the Iron Pact gives them the right to slay any human who violates the terms of the treaty — a claim that Korinthia and her knights scoff at and which no determined treasure-hunter takes seriously.

SPIRITUALITY

Of all the changes wrought by the Great War, the most radical was the sun god Prios' transformation from one of many accepted deities to being recognized as the One. Where the Dark Lords represented darkness and death, Prios came to symbolize the light of Alberetor and the life-giving power of the sun. Or as Jeseebegai, First Father of the Sun Church, has expressed it: *"In the abyss, in absolute darkness, was the spark which gave hope to the world, the spark which in the care of we Ambrians will make Prios blaze as never before."*

Today Prios is recognized as the Giver of Laws or as the One, and almost all Ambrians adhere to His commandments, as conveyed by the priests and theurgs of the Sun Church. Prios is said to be everywhere beneath the heavens and humans are tasked with cultivating His creation. Sadly,

man has neglected this duty for a long time, which in turn means that Prios has lost much of His strength, so much in fact that He is dying. But according to the sermons there is still hope. If humans strive to correct the error of their ways — if they work harder, extract more crops from the soil, harvest more and richer resources from the forests and mountains, colonize more of the wilds — then Prios will grow strong again.

In the quest to honor and strengthen the Sun God, Davokar has a vital role to play. The wild, unruly forest is considered to be the perfect example of what happens when humans refrain from doing what they are obliged to do. Davokar must be cleansed, its potency disciplined and its resources cultivated. It is to advance that quest that the Curia, the high council of the Sun Church, sends missionaries as well as explorers into the depths of Davokar, and why they have already established a temple on Karvosti, the age-old Thingstead of the barbarian clans.

In the shadow of Prios the abolished deities live on, gods that actually bear a striking resemblance to the deities of the clans. Concerning the religious beliefs of the barbarian folks, many theurgs and learned masters have tried to describe and categorize the gods, spirits and divine beings worshiped in Davokar. So far they have not succeeded. Some clans worship deities similar to the gods banished by the Ambrians. For instance, the serpent god Uron revered by the Gaoia clan shares features with the Ambrian Earthmother; the Baiaga clan's bloodwolf Arex is clearly related to the Ambrian Pathfinder; and the spider Oroke, who is worshiped by many, has some qualities in common with the Executioner.

But among the clans you will also find those who worship their ancestors, holy grounds, beasts and sheer monstrosities like the bestial Blood-Daughter of the clan Saar-Kahn. The same discrepancies show in rituals, from collective prayer sessions to more deadly customs — as when clan Enoai allow themselves to be bitten by venomous spiders, in order to get closer to Oroke.

The Elder Folk appear to have a more relaxed approach to spiritual matters. Instead of worshiping or praying to divine beings they seem content with showing gratitude towards the spirits which, according to them, inhabit all aspects of nature. They give thanks to the stream for letting them traverse the rapid waters unharmed. They offer their gratitude to the hazel for letting its nuts fall to the ground. They whisper thank



1 RUINS OF SYMBAROU M

you to the deer for allowing itself to get trapped. It is said that Elori, the elven emissary in Yndaros, was asked about his beliefs during a visit to Queen Korinthia's court. His exact response is obviously only known to those present, but according to rumor he replied with an insult: *"It is a vain presumption to think that the world would care about being worshiped or that it would listen to prayers; it is a presumption which mirrors man's own desire to be worshiped and his expectation that he can force his will upon the world."*

CULTURAL PRACTICES

Ambrians as well as barbarians are storytellers. The barbarian folk value a good narrator almost as highly as a skilled warrior, and the High Chieftain on Karvosti always has one or two select storytellers living in his fortress. Aside from the telling of stories, the leisure activities of the clans tend to involve weapon games and rituals paying homage to nature. Under the guidance of the witches all barbarians are careful to show gratitude towards the forest that feeds them and teaches them humility. In that, as in most other cases, the storytellers play a vital role — especially when it comes to cautionary tales that account for what may happen if one violates the taboos dictated by the Huldra.

Among Ambrians storytelling takes many different forms. The bards and poets who perform in taverns, restaurants and inns are very popular, but the same can be said about prominent actors, dancers and artists. Within all these art forms portrayals of the Great War are common. Another popular theme involves tales about individuals who have pleased Prios, so-called Lightbringers or Martyrs. However, in recent years a new topic has begun to appear on the Ambrian stage: tales of Davokar — of fortune-hunters who have found their fortune; of heroic encounters with arch trolls and lindworms; of rich treasure chambers found in overgrown ruins. Additionally, the Ambrian storytellers have made it their business to visit their barbarian colleagues to learn popular stories from them, including the ancient poems attributed to the legendary Huldra Aroaleta.

Aside from the Ambrians making use of more forms of storytelling, there is another significant difference between the groups: while almost all barbarians take part in the rites of the witches and listen to tales told

around the fire, the Ambrian people are divided into a number of sub-groups. The nobles have their own venues for dance, theater and music, and love to cover their walls in grandiose tapestries with themes from battles or nature. Merchants and craftsmen often visit the same salons, where they place themselves according to fortune and stature since the prices vary depending on where you sit. Free, laboring Ambrians listen to tales told in the taverns while thralls, serfs and commoners in the countryside have to settle for the tall tales told by their elders as they assemble for the evening meal. Of course there are exceptions, but the principle can hardly be questioned: the subjects of Korinthia are undoubtedly stratified in terms of both assets and interests.

AREAS OF CONFLICT

You might be forgiven for thinking that the core conflict is between Ambrians and the Elder Folk with the barbarians caught in between, but there are lots of individuals who do not fit that mold — Ambrians who join the elves in their ambition to keep Davokar in peace as well as singular barbarians, elves, changelings and ogres who have made their homes in Ambria.

Nevertheless, the general climate of the region is one of open conflicts, characterized by the Ambrian ambition to explore and exploit Davokar and the reluctance of the Elder Folk to let them do so. Presently, Queen Korinthia's people seem to be the unchallenged rulers of the plains between the mountains and the forest, and it would probably take an all-embracing pact between the barbarians and elves to change that. But in the woods the balance of power is more even. The Queen's army has a hard time functioning with full efficiency in the forest, while local knowledge and experience provide their counterparts with a great advantage. Furthermore, the Ambrians have a hard time confronting the horrors of Davokar on a unified front. Special interests linked to factions, blood or personal gain are often given priority at the expense of the common good, not least when it comes to managing and distributing information, resources and treasure found in the woods.

Instead of contacting factions like Ordo Magica or the Queen's Rangers, many dukes and barons have initiated collaborations with barbarian or goblin chieftains. And the wizards, scholars and Rangers tend to act in a similar

fashion - better to pay the locals for help than to divide any profit or advances with other Ambrians. The only exception to this is the Sun Church, whose representatives are unwilling to mix with so called "*creatures of the night*." On the other hand, they engage in missionary

campaigns and can in that way utilize the knowledge and skills of converted goblins, barbarians and ogres. In other words, to give a clear cut and straightforward account of the relationship between the peoples of the region is both difficult and fundamentally misleading.





THUS SPOKE AROALETA

"... and at the dawn of days was Wyrtha, the power that creates.
Where Nothing had reigned supreme, Wyrhta gave life to All;
shaped here and there, spawned now and then,
formed the one and in chorus the other.
And where attraction arose,
the wild thrived and multiplied...

... but out of the untamed Wielda appeared, the power that rules:
the power of willful violence, that bends here and there,
that curves now and then according to ideals and cravings;
that harvests the one and rejects the other.
With time, Wielda's appetite grew,
and the birth was inevitable...

... because violence begets hate begets Wrath, the power that reacts.
Born of Wielda's hunger for Wyrhta's design, Wrath is everywhere and nowhere,
always close where mother meets mother,
always mounting in strength with the force of the violence.
The arrival of the black fruit is fated,
as inescapable as terrible...

... and it happens, has happened, will happen again,
that Wrath grows boundless, furious, blind in her hunger.
It happens that the blackness grows flesh and spirit and the sharpest of claws,
that the fruit sheds seeds that poison the first,
in the aim to suppress the second.
Then dies All..."



MAP COVERING THE KNOWN PARTS OF
Ambria & Davokar

DRAWN BY CARTOGRAPHER
TABEO CRANEPLUME

0 |-----| 100 KM

SCALE 1:4 000 000



SAAR-KAHN

VARAKKO

GAOIA

ENOAJ

GODINJA

YEDESA

BAIAGA

ZAREK

Sevona

VOLGOMA

Serand's Pyramid

Sun Temple

The Ruin City of Odaban

BLACK PITCH MIRE

The Columns of Haganor

VAJVOD

Karvosti

Earth Towers of the Black Leech Rift

KARCHAR

ODAIOVA

Melima

Karo's Fen

EANOR

Thistle Hold

THE MARSHES
NEW BERETOR

NEW BERENDORIA

Kurun

NARUGOR

Templewall

Kastor

Ravenia

KASANDRIEN

PRIOS DOMAIN

SERAGON

Agrella

YNDAROS

DOUDRAN

THE TITANS

VELOMA

YNDARIEN

MERVIDUN

NOORA

Mergle

Redina

Kilam Zamob





CHAPTER TWO

New Rules

In adapting the world of Symbaroum to the world's most popular roleplaying game, we've tried to walk a middle road — keeping familiar 5E skills and abilities, while providing new races, backgrounds, classes and feats to fit our setting the best. Due to the corruptive nature of the world, spellcasting also works differently — you might find it more flexible but also more dangerous at the same time.

In every case when a rule is not provided in this guide, things work the same as they do in the core rules. This means, for example, that there are almost no changes to the combat and exploration rules. We do provide some new rules for shadows and corruption, along with a new system for rest. This sampler provides an abbreviated look at the new rules, providing just two races with a few backgrounds each and three new classes with one or two approaches (subclasses). We've got exciting plans for many more races, backgrounds and approaches in the future.

2 RUINS OF SYMBAROU M

WE PROVIDE FULL rules for the races and rules for the classes up to level 6. We also provide pregenerated characters for those who want to get started playing the included adventure immediately. This gives you enough information to play through our suggestions here and perhaps even introduce your players to other adventures already released for the Symbaroum Roleplaying Game.

A FINAL NOTE: These rules have been carefully crafted to evoke the feeling of Symbaroum and its dangerously dark setting of Davokar. But any GM is always free to add in another race or class from the core rules or other

sources if that will improve your group's enjoyment of the game. You'll want to spend a few moments considering how the rules for Shadow and Corruption might affect the new character but your fun is of foremost importance.

CHALLENGE

While we use the 5e tools for Challenge ratings and create our monsters to work within that system, it is rare that the characters will see a 'fair fight'. Instead, they are much more likely to see a smaller number of combats, each more deadly than those within the average adventure.

Shadow

EACH LIVING CREATURE possesses a Shadow, an aura around them that can be seen by those with the talent to perceive such things. In the world of Symbaroum, no one possesses a singularly bright-white Shadow, instead most folk have a shifting pattern of muted colors and grayness, representing a hard life full of sacrifices and suffering. Those who would brave the forest of Davokar or serve the Queen boldly might have brighter, more vibrant and more complex Shadows, but for those heroes who choose to fight against the evil nature of the world, gaining Corruption is inevitable. As Corruption increases, a Shadow becomes darker, more twisted and tainted.

Natural beasts have green, red and white shadows or sometimes another bright primary color. Civilized creatures have gold, silver, copper or sometime other metallic shades. Corrupted creatures have dark shadows: blight beasts or nearly-corrupt creatures are black and purple while less blight-stricken beings exhibit a slight change in their colors, like corroded copper, blackened silver, sickly green, red with streaks of rust or white with flakes of ashen gray.

SHADOW AND ALIGNMENT

The underlying theme of *Ruins of Symbaroum* is the struggle between nature and civilization, between creativity

and discipline — and what happens when (humanity mainly) cultivates nature; in this fantasy we imagine that nature lashes out in the form of Corruption, blight-marks, abominations and a darkening of the land. It is very much a matter of belief, action and feedback, but less about clear-cut good and evil. We do not think you need alignments to play in this world. You can of course use them, if you want to; it's not incompatible, just not necessary for the world to make sense.

New Feat: Shadow-sight (Human only)

Some humans are sensitive to the ethereal echoes of a person's Shadow and, when concentrating, can see them. If you take this feat, you can spend a bonus action and take 1D4 temporary Corruption to discern a creature's Shadow, and judge it to be normal, blight-stricken, blight-marked or thoroughly corrupt (see page 21).

You need to succeed with a Wisdom (Insight) roll versus the target's Charisma (Deception). If you fail, you see the creature's normal shadow, as it looked before suffering any corrupting influences (see Shadow above).

Corruption

POWER CORRUPTS, AND in *Ruins of Symbaroum* quite literally so. A fundamental principle is that when nature is cultivated or violated it grows dark and vengeful – and strikes back! The darkness that comes alive in this way feeds off and can continue to infect its surroundings. Since Mystics bend and warp nature according to their will, they are constantly threatened by Corruption. This principle is mirrored in the concept of Shadows and in creatures like abominations and the undead.

Corruption starts at 0 and increases from there. Most Corruption gathered is temporary, your character struggles against a dark foe, or uses non-permanent magic and their Shadow temporarily grows darker. However, sometimes you will gain permanent Corruption, usually by

taking up a powerful magical item or by exceeding your Corruption Threshold.

For non-Mystic characters, your Corruption Threshold is equal to the total of your proficiency bonus plus your Charisma modifier, as the influence of a darkening Shadow makes most people gloomy and morose. So the formula is:

CORRUPTION THRESHOLD = (your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier), minimum 2.

During the course of the game, you will gain temporary Corruption. You might also start with a certain amount of permanent Corruption, due to your equipment or mishaps in the past. Your starting Corruption value can never be lower than your permanent Corruption score.

1d20	MARK OF CORRUPTION
1–2	No mark, but you gain a point of permanent Corruption. Erase all current temporary Corruption.
3	Thirst for warm blood, must drink warm blood every day to not be thirsty.
4	Taste for cadavers, must feed on something rancid every day to avoid starvation.
5	Fangs, or nails in the shape of claws or talons.
6	Taste for raw meat, must feed on fresh meat every day to avoid starvation.
7	Discolored skin, blemishes and severe rashes.
8	A festering wound that does not heal.
9	Eyes that actually blacken with anger, hunger or lust. Reduce temporary Corruption by 1.
10	Boils in mouth and throat, that burst at inappropriate times. Reduce temporary Corruption by 1.
11	Speaks in an unknown evil-sounding language while sleeping. Reduce temporary Corruption by 1.
12	Degeneration of sight; relying on other senses instead, like smell and touch. Reduce temporary Corruption by 1.
13	Cold as a corpse or feverishly hot without any signs of sickness or disease. Reduce temporary Corruption by 1.
14	Drawn to tainted artifacts and evil places while sleepwalking. Reduce temporary Corruption by 1.
15	Veins that bulge black when experiencing anger or other strong emotions. Reduce temporary Corruption to half, rounding down.
16	A birthmark that with imagination may look like a dark rune or an evil symbol. Reduce temporary Corruption to half, rounding down.
17	A faint odor of decay follows you, despite you feeling healthy. Reduce temporary Corruption to half, rounding down.
18	Dark streaks in the blood, visible when you bleed. Reduce temporary Corruption to half, rounding down.
19	Breath that stinks of sulfur. Reduce temporary Corruption to half, rounding down.
20	Eyes that glitter in the dark. Reduce temporary Corruption to half, rounding down.



If your total Corruption (temporary plus permanent) exceeds your Corruption Threshold, you must make a Corruption check, to see if you can bear so much darkness. Roll a D20. If the result is within the amount by which your current Corruption exceeds your Threshold, you will gain a mark of Corruption (see table on page 19). The mark fades once your total Corruption is reduced to below your Corruption Threshold.

EXAMPLE: *Mira's ogre mystic Grumpa has been casting several spells in a desperate bid to escape some unwise hunters. Grumpa's Corruption Threshold is 7 and Mira's last casting brings her current Corruption to 10. She rolls a D20, and 10 - 7 equals 3, so if the die shows a 1-3 then Grumpa will gain a mark of Corruption.*

You only make a roll when you gain new Corruption and that new Corruption exceeds your threshold. If you receive the same mark of Corruption then it can either intensify or your GM can choose another result for you.

CORRUPTION AND SHADOW

As you gain Corruption, your Shadow changes. Temporary Corruption darkens your Shadow, muting any color that it once possessed.

The category listing in the table below indicates how the theurgs of Prios would judge a person's Shadow, based on their *holy smoke* ritual (see page 40). Permanent Corruption affects it in the following ways:

PERMANENT CORRUPTION	CATEGORY	EFFECT
1 point or more	Blight-stricken	Visible to those who can see Shadows as black spots moving within the Shadow.
At half your Threshold or higher	Blight-marked	Your Shadow is covered with darkness, causing great concern for those who can see it.
Beyond your Threshold	Thoroughly Corrupt	Your Shadow becomes completely black and your character must become a NPC as you are overwhelmed by the burdens you bear.

Rest

IN RUINS OF *Symbaroum* there are three kinds of rest that the characters can take:

- ◆ **A SHORT REST**, which requires one hour of light effort, no more than sitting and talking, tending to wounds and the like. During a short rest you can spend Hit Dice to recover hit points. After completing a short rest, you reduce your temporary Corruption by your proficiency bonus. You can spend a Hit Die in order to reduce your temporary Corruption by your Proficiency Bonus again. (You can continue to do this as long as you have Hit Dice to spend and temporary Corruption to reduce.)
- ◆ **A LONG REST**, which requires around eight hours, six of which must be spent sleeping and the other two in light activity, such as

being on watch, reading, or conversing with others. At the end of a long rest, you regain hit points equal to your Hit Die (e.g. 8 for d8 Hit Dice) plus your Constitution modifier. Reduce your temporary Corruption by twice your Proficiency Bonus. You can spend Hit Dice to recover more hit points or reduce temporary Corruption.

- ◆ **AN EXTENDED REST**, which requires at least 24 hours in a safe place where you can sleep, relax and tend to your wounds without threat of interruption. At the end of the extended rest, you regain all of your hit points and Hit Dice and reduce your temporary Corruption to 0. Extended rests often mark the end of an adventure, or at least a significant break in the action.



CHAPTER THREE

Races

The world of Symbaroum contains a great number of different kinds of folk, all living together in fairly close proximity in the northern regions. There are many humans, both Ambrians and barbarians, a few dwarves, ogres, many goblins, elves and changelings (elf-children substituted for stolen babies, who at first appear human but grow into their elven features). Due to space limitations, we have decided to focus on goblins and humans for this first adventure.

Note: In *Ruins of Symbaroum* your hit points and Hit Dice are based on your race, not your class.

Goblins

Little is known about the origin of goblins, but their presence in the southern outskirts of Davokar is quite obvious. The tribe that left the darkness of Davokar to settle down close to Thistle Hold swarms and makes such a racket that they have become quite unpopular among the town's human populace. Their fiery temperament and strange ways of socializing have contributed to the disapproval: "Hide the Boot," "Tame the Ogre," "Trim the Thistle," "Tighten the Temple" and "Want a Smack, Molok?" are party games that outsiders are reluctant to even watch.

THE LIFE OF a goblin is short — a goblin is considered a youngster at the age of five, adult at ten and an elder at the age of twenty. To meet a thirty-year-old goblin is a rarity, as most of them voluntarily return to seek a lonesome death in Davokar before then. Meeting one who is forty is all but unheard of. The truth of the goblin lifecycle is even more remarkable, though few humans know it — when goblins feel the pull of the forest not all of them die. Some are changed, becoming trolls or ogres.

The only reason goblins are tolerated in Thistle Hold is that they are practical when it comes to doing dirty work like draining marshes, emptying latrines and flailing about on scaffolding. Thanks to that, a gibbering horde of sinewy goblins flows into the town every morning to work hard at a

number of heavy, dangerous or thankless tasks. Come nightfall, they are once again driven away, and a bunch of uncharacteristically silent goblins march back to their beds in simple huts of straw and clay.

Some goblins stray from this pattern, mainly treasure-hunters and goblins employed in the households of wealthy individuals in Thistle Hold. A dozen or so goblin younglings can also be found in the convent school in the capital city, where a handful of extremely patient monks have committed themselves to saving whatever soul resides inside the wild whelps. The most renowned goblin to represent both of these phenomena is Garm Wormwiggler, brought up at the convent school to later become a successful treasure-hunter.

Goblin Traits

ALL GOBLINS ENCOUNTERED share a set of inborn tendencies and features.

- ◆ **ABILITY SCORE INCREASE.** Your Dexterity score increases by 2. Increase any other ability score by 1.
- ◆ **AGE.** Goblins are adults at 10 and few remain in human lands past their 30th year.
- ◆ **SIZE.** All goblins are under four feet in height and average around 50 pounds. Your size is Small and you have a D6 Hit Die. At first level you have 6 hit

points plus your Constitution modifier. When you gain a level in any class, you gain an additional Hit Die and 4 (1D6) plus your Constitution modifier hit points.

- ◆ **SPEED.** Goblin strides simply cannot match the length of those of bigger races. You have a base speed of 25 feet.
- ◆ **DARKVISION.** Accustomed to the gloom of Davokar and underground mines, you have superior vision in dark and dim conditions. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.
- ◆ **PARIAHS.** Goblins are poorly treated in society and have disadvantage on Charisma checks with other races. However, the insular tendencies of goblin society provides advantage on Charisma checks when interacting with another goblin.
- ◆ **SURVIVAL INSTINCT.** While goblins are a loud and fractious race, they have a powerful will to survive. You can take either the Dodge or Disengage actions using your bonus action. You also gain proficiency with the Stealth and Survival skills.
- ◆ **LANGUAGES.** Goblins usually speak the local human language, either Ambrian or Barbarian. Some near Davokar speak the language of trolls or elves as well.

Goblin Names

GOBLIN NAMES ARE varied and it is hard to see any clear naming conventions. It is also common for goblins to change their names or add a syllable depending on what they experience in life. If one were to attempt to point out something general regarding their names, it would be that the length of the names usually goes hand-in-hand with the bearer's rank - the longer the name, the higher the status within the tribe.



Goblin Names

GOBLIN MALE NAMES: Alfbolg, Barra, Goltas, Illefons, Ler, Rosti, Shigg, Tengel, UI.

GOBLIN FEMALE NAMES: Aa, Fosa, Guhula, Hugalea, Tulga, Udelia, Ufa, Wamba, Yla, Yppa.

Goblin Backgrounds

THE FOLLOWING BACKGROUNDS are suitable for goblin characters. Both can also be used for humans, especially members of the barbarian tribes that were captured by Ambria.

LABORER

You are a day laborer, tolerated in town while you are working but then forced to take your rest in either a central resting area or outside the village. Think about the kind of work that you might do? Do you have any friends inside town? Do you have a hated enemy among the other laborers? Are you saving your scant coin for the future, or do you spend it on drink and entertainment as soon as you get it?



- ◆ **SKILL PROFICIENCIES:** Athletics
- ◆ **TOOL PROFICIENCIES:** Carpenter's Tools or Mason's Tools
- ◆ **EQUIPMENT:** A kit to match your tool proficiency, thick working clothes and 1D6 + 4 gold pieces.



FEATURE: TIRELESS WORKER

You are used to long days of physical work with little opportunity to rest. As long as you do not have any levels of exhaustion you have advantage on any saving throws to avoid gaining exhaustion.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Laborers are some of the lowest members of society and are often ill-treated. But they are also easily ignored and a quick-eared and quick-witted person can learn much while they work.

1D6 PERSONALITY TRAIT	
1	I make friends easily, I don't have time or energy to fight anyone unless they truly do me wrong.
2	I've heard rumors of great opportunities outside of the village and yearn to leave.
3	I like to be proud of my work and am sensitive to critique.
4	This is just a job and I look forward to when I don't need to work anymore.
5	I like farm (or work) animals more than most people. They're more trustworthy.
6	I don't understand humans very well at all, but I do like money and food.

1D4 IDEAL	
1	TRADITION. My family has always worked here. I feel obligated to my employers, at least for now.
2	ENTERTAINMENT. Almost everything I do is for my own sense of fun or to make others laugh.
3	OPPORTUNITY. It's my right to try my own way, even if it fails.
4	PRIDE. I can say that I've accomplished something when I go to the forest to die.

1D4 BOND	
1	I'll take any amount of punishment to keep my fellow workers out of trouble.
2	I actually feel something towards my employers. They're nicer than most humans.
3	I had one old hand who showed me the ropes. I wonder where they are now?
4	I used to have a great love, but they had to leave long ago. I miss them.

1D4 FLAW	
1	I'm so used to meanness that if you show me a kindness I'll take it too far.
2	I really don't understand that other races don't share our sense of humor or tolerance for pain.
3	I'm not really one for plans, or planning, or following instructions exactly.
4	There is no reason to argue today about what I did yesterday.

CONVERT

The teachings of the Giver of Laws say that all are worthy of salvation and your teachers made every effort with you. Eventually, they were successful, or at least you began to give them the answers that they wanted to hear. And you've learned amazing things from the Sun Church — history and theology that your people never knew. You've become interested in what dark secrets lie in other old places...



- ◆ **SKILL PROFICIENCIES:** History or Religion
- ◆ **TOOL PROFICIENCIES:** Calligrapher's Tools or Cartographer's Tools
- ◆ **EQUIPMENT:** A kit to match your tool proficiency, religious robes, and 4D6 + 11 silver pieces.



FEATURE: MEMBER OF THE CHURCH

If given the chance, you can prove yourself to be a member of the Sun Church and gain shelter there for yourself and your companions. Unfortunately, some of the faithful are not as open-minded as your teachers and the GM might require you to make a DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check in order to receive healing or other Church services.

Money in Ruins of Symparoum

The most common coins in Ambria are the thaler (a gold piece), the shilling (a silver piece) and the orteg (a copper piece).

For ease of play, you can use the listed prices in the core rules. But you might want to express the cost in thaler instead of gold pieces, for example charging 2 thaler for clothes, instead of 2 gp. When making a character, you can gain money by your selection of race, your background and your class. This represents whatever money your family was able to give you, plus what you have earned in your new profession so far.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Goblin converts exist in two worlds: they are still goblins, with short lifespans and a nonhuman sense of humor, but they have been taught the ways of Prios and some of them see his teachings as a great opportunity for them to gain status in the new kingdom.

1D6 PERSONALITY TRAIT

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | I repeat back things that you say to me. I'm not trying to be annoying; I want to make sure I understand. |
| 2 | I'm always frowning and being very serious. I am trying hard to not be a goblin, in other words. |
| 3 | Let me tell you about all the great things I have learned! |
| 4 | I am very open-minded. If my teachers could accept me, I can accept anyone. |
| 5 | I think that everyone should be given the same chance I was. |
| 6 | I go to sleep every night with many doubts and fears in my mind. |

1D4 IDEAL

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | FAITH. I am truly devoted to the Giver of Laws and have no pretenses about my beliefs. |
| 2 | POWER. The humans say that the Sun God is the chief god now. The humans have many victories to prove this, so I choose to believe them. |
| 3 | THE WORD. What is written cannot be changed or undone. That is power. |
| 4 | TRUTH. I think everyone should be honest. Lies dishonor the Lawgiver. |

1D4 BOND

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | I would do anything to keep my teachers safe. |
| 2 | I feel like I have a personal connection to Prios. |
| 3 | Despite my new life, I still remember my family. |
| 4 | I have a huge regret from my earlier life and would do almost anything to set it right. |

1D4 FLAW

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | I am a passionate believer and often seek to prove others have less faith than me by pointing out minor errors in their prayers or other rituals. |
| 2 | I am suspicious of my human teachers. Why are they so nice to me? |
| 3 | Deep down inside, I still wonder if this is real. |
| 4 | I'm only pretending and going through the motions. |

Humans

According to the scholars of Ordo Magica, the people of Ambria and Davokar are descendants of the same tribe, although the barbarians and the Queen's Folk hardly consider themselves so closely related. Queen Korinthia's claim to Ambria, the land south of Davokar, is motivated by her ancestral connection to the region, and even the most novice of Ambrian linguists can explain in what ways the gibbering speech of the barbarians and the melodious tongue of the Queen's Folk are similar. More disputed are claims saying that the two peoples originate from the same stem, rooted in the old and long forgotten empire of Symparoum, the ruins of which hide deep within Davokar.

WHATEVER THE CASE, there are significant differences between the two peoples in a cultural sense. The Ambrians abandoned their blighted homeland Alberetor twenty years ago, to settle down in the well-preserved ruins of Lindaros. On their journey they brought along their architecture, knowledge, economic system and social hierarchies. Thanks to its discipline the Ambrian army outmatches the barbarian clan warriors when they meet in the open fields, but in the woods where the skill of the individual becomes a decisive factor they are more evenly matched. That, coupled with the advantage of having greater local knowledge, has so far kept the Ambrians from entering very deep into the forest — with the exception of treasure-hunters, religious fanatics searching for lost sun temples and free settlers hoping to escape the Queen's control.

Since the days of old, the barbarians have been ruled by chieftains, but have enjoyed much greater independence and freedom compared to the chastened crofters and peasants in the south. Nor do the barbarian leaders seek to enforce a strict or rigid way of life upon their subjects. The witches, the spiritual leaders among the barbarians, rule

with a light hand in the form of taboos and general rules — revere nature, never abuse it and avoid the darker parts of the forest. The clans lead their lives independent from one another, with the occasional exception of skirmishes over resources in the border regions. By tradition, the clan leaders answer to the High Chieftain on the plateau of Karvosti, but he is in reality more of an arbitrator between feuding clans than a strong ruler. However, the High Chieftain is expected to lead the united barbarians to repel any invaders, particularly the Ambrians, if it ever comes to open war.

This possibility, a united barbarian resistance commanded by the High Chieftain, gives the Queen and her advisors nightmares, and would explain why the Ambrians officially are so cautious regarding Davokar. Since the battle in Year 10, when Korinthia's troops attacked and destroyed Haloban and his Jezites, only the Templars serving the Sun Church have made any outright attacks against barbarian settlements. Most infamous is their assault on Karvosti in Year 16 when they attempted to seize the plateau with force of arms — an attempt which ended in a discouraging defeat.

Human Traits

ALL HUMANS START with the same basic features and then select a culture: either Ambrian or barbarian.

- ◆ **ABILITY SCORE INCREASE.** Your Strength score increases by 2. Increase Dexterity, Constitution or Charisma by 1.
- ◆ **AGE.** Humans reach adulthood in their late teens and live less than a century without magical assistance.
- ◆ **SIZE.** Humans vary widely in height and build, from barely 5 feet to well over 6 feet tall. Regardless of your position in that range, your size is Medium and you have a d8 Hit Die. At first level you have 8 hit points plus your Constitution modifier. When you gain a level in any class, you gain an additional Hit Die and 5 (1d8) plus your Constitution modifier hit points.
- ◆ **SPEED.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

AMBRIAN

- ◆ **EDUCATED.** Your Intelligence score increases by 1.
- ◆ **CONTACTS.** Ambrians are very sociable and end up knowing many folk. You might have served in an organization or traveled far and wide. With a successful DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check you can find out about a person in your chosen faction who should be able to help with a specific question or precarious situation. The contact may not be directly



3 RUINS OF SYMBAROU

Ambrian Names

AMBRIAN MALE NAMES: Aro, Beremo, Demeon, Edogai, Gadramei, Iasogoi, Jomilo, Karlio, Malliano, Peonio.

AMBRIAN FEMALE NAMES: Abesina, Elindra, Elionara, Levia, Mehira, Ordelia, Revina, Suria, Variol, Vidina.

available - that depends on the GM's judgement of your faction.. When it comes to specifying a faction for the character's contact, suitable options include: a barbarian tribe, the Queen's Army, the Queen's Rangers, witches, Ordo Magica, the Church of Prios, a noble house or treasure hunters.

AMBRIAN NAMES

Female Ambrian names usually end with -a while male names end with -o, but there are many exceptions since their native kingdom was so extensive. One distinct exception is that the names of most Ambrian nobles end in -gai, -goi or -mei. The use of the letter "x" is uncommon but exists and the letter "j" is replaced by the letter "i" in almost every case. The vowels e and i are used frequently.

Save the nobles with their houses, the people of Ambria do not use family names. However, particularly remarkable or famous individuals can be given a sort of honorary surname, relating to whatever makes them noteworthy. A couple of examples are Lasifor Nightpitch, Mayor of Thistle Hold, and the treasure-hunter Lysindra Goldengrasp.

BARBARIAN

◆ **BUSHCRAFT.** You can survive on meager resources and are used to finding food and shelter in harsh terrain. With a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check, the character can find enough food and water to feed themselves while being on the move in the wilderness or among Davokar's ruins. If the character is part of a small group (up to five individuals), food and water can be found for them as well (increase the DC for the check by one for each additional person other than yourself), but that will take much more time. The group cannot be on the move during that time.

◆ **WORLD-CANNY.** Your Wisdom score increases by 1.



BARBARIAN NAMES

Just like the Ambrians, barbarian female names usually end with -a, while male names tend to end with -mar, -mon or -mer. It is customary that every other letter is a consonant and a vowel; double vowels are common, while double consonants are almost never used. Like the Ambrians, barbarians tend not to use the letter “j,” changing it to a “y” instead. The greatest difference between the two people is the barbarians’ love for the vowels a, o and u.

Barbarian Names

BARBARIAN MALE NAMES: Adelar, Gadramon, Haloban, Konarad, Lothar, Odaban, Rábaiamon, Taran, Tharaban, Vikomer.

AMBRIAN FEMALE NAMES: Adela, Aloeta, Eferneya, Elmea, Elda, Galoma, Horosa, Karona, Verama, Yagaba.

Human Backgrounds

THE FOLLOWING BACKGROUNDS are most suitable for human characters from Ambria, as befits the included scenario. However, you could use them with a barbarian, as some tribes have been conquered by Ambria’s superior military forces.

FAITHFUL OF PRIOS

While the average citizen of Ambria gives due deference to Prios as the Lawgiver, you have sought a deeper connection to your god. Even as a youngster you were taught the ways of the Sun Church. You must choose how to serve Prios: will you teach the masses as a Liturg? Or work miracles in his name as a Theurg? Will you bring his teachings to the uncultured as a Templar? Or keep his priests safe as a Twilight Friar?



- ◆ **SKILL PROFICIENCIES:** Religion
- ◆ **TOOL PROFICIENCIES:** Brewer’s Kit or Herbalism Kit
- ◆ **EQUIPMENT:** A kit to match your tool proficiency, priestly vestments and 2D6 + 3 gold pieces.



FEATURE: SHELTER OF THE FAITHFUL

As a servant of Prios, you command the respect of the common folk, and can perform the religious ceremonies needed in everyday life. You and your adventuring companions can expect to receive free healing and care

at a temple or other established presence of Prios, but you must provide any material components needed for spells. Those who share your religion will support you (but only you) at a modest lifestyle.

You might also have ties to a specific home temple and a residence there. This could be the temple where you used to serve, if you remain on good terms with it, or a temple where you have found a new home. While near your temple, you can call upon the priests for assistance, provided the assistance you ask for is not hazardous and you remain in good standing with your temple.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

The Faithful are shaped by the experiences in the temples of Prios and his teachings. Such duties are rigorous, providing a common set of knowledge that unites the faith and supports the kingdom. Despite your religious upbringing you are still human and subject to human frailties and flaws.

1d6	PERSONALITY TRAIT
1	I idolize a champion of Prios and constantly refer to their deeds and teachings.
2	My ancestors supported the Church and it is my time to give it my service.
3	I was always destined for the Church and thus take it for granted.
4	I was lost before the Church found me and now I finally feel at home.
5	I want to help the less-fortunate and the Church seems the easiest way to do that.
6	I like the respect that I receive when I am in my formal robes.

3 RUINS OF SYMBAROU M

1d4 IDEAL

- 1 **CHARITY.** I will help those in need, despite whatever cost I must pay.
- 2 **JUSTICE.** The words of the Lawgiver provide the foundation for a life worth living.
- 3 **LEADERSHIP.** We must be the beacon that saves humanity from the evils of the world.
- 4 **PURITY.** Prios is the guiding light on the path to a righteous life, all other ways are sinful.

1d4 BOND

- 1 Everything I do is for the common people.
- 2 I want to impress the Church's superiors.
- 3 My family brags about me and my missions.
- 4 I want to leave behind my past and Prios helps me forget.

1d4 FLAW

- 1 I judge others harshly and myself even more severely.
- 2 I can be blind to my faults, despite hearing them from others.
- 3 In order to present an open nature, I forgive all transgressions even when I should not.
- 4 This way was chosen for me, I am very melancholy about my life because of this.

NOBLE LINEAGE

You are a member of the nobility of Ambria, however minor in station. You might be the third or fourth child of a baronet, your parents or grandparents granted a small measure of land for their service in the war and as the family grows and the land-plot remains the same size, your future becomes more uncertain. Or you might be descended from a once-great house that no longer possesses any wealth other than your good name and intent to restore your family to its rightful place. You've decided to embrace a life of service or adventure, hoping to make a name for yourself and win rewards just like your forebears.

- ◆ **SKILL PROFICIENCIES:** History or Persuasion
- ◆ **TOOL PROFICIENCIES:** Calligrapher's Supplies, Gaming Set or Musical Instrument

- ◆ **EQUIPMENT:** A kit to match your tool proficiency, a signet ring, wax, paper and 3D6 + 50 gold pieces.



FEATURE: PRIVELEGED

You are a noble by blood and are therefore given advantages that others simply cannot have or must pay for to obtain, with either gold or hard work. You get a second chance to succeed when taking on social challenges within your own society, and you do not have to roll the dice for routine requests.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Some members of the noble houses are still within living memory of the service that awarded them titles. Others are ancient houses of Alberetor, the lost kingdom of the south, and have always held positions of privilege and pride.

1d6 PERSONALITY TRAIT

- 1 I am a good friend but a fierce enemy. Do not wrong me, or I shall have my vengeance on you.
- 2 I believe in the teachings of the Giver of Laws: All have their rightful place under the sun, but the laborer in the fields is as necessary to society as my service to the kingdom.
- 3 I tend to be blind to the needs of others and idealistic in my expectations.
- 4 I use my station to get rewards but then often pass them to others.
- 5 I tend to overcorrect myself and stammer when in new situations.
- 6 Both the pen and the sword are weapons; you just have to choose the right one.

1d4 IDEAL

- 1 **RESPONSIBILITY.** I owe my service to my betters just the same as the common folk owe service to me. I protect the common folk, just as the kingdom protects me.
- 2 **TRIAL OF ARMS.** Prios ensures that the just are victorious.
- 3 **NOBILITY.** I must serve as an example to all of how to conduct oneself.
- 4 **ORDER.** The world must make sense or my birth-right is in question.

1d4	BOND
1	My family name must not be tarnished; it may be all that I have at present, but I will make it known throughout the kingdom.
2	I have a favorite relative that I admire and look up to at all times.
3	I place my faith in my wargear and companions.
4	I view Queen Korinthia as blood kin and will do anything to defend her.

1d4	FLAW
1	I did not venture forth from my family's land by choice, instead I embarrassed them and they made me leave.
2	I often act haughty and feel that my station demands respect at all times.
3	I am too eager to see every concern as right vs. wrong; good vs. evil.
4	I revel in the comforts of a noble's life.

SCHOLAR OF ORDO MAGICA

You are a scholar, seeking the secrets of the universe, both magical and mundane. For they are often intertwined, and the philosophy of your order requires investigation, experience and evidence, which often puts you at odds with those who put all of their faith in Prios. But Ordo Magica is nothing if not practical, its leaders know that without the thaler of the nobles and the protection of the Sun Church and the Queen's forces it could not safely seek out answers to its questions.



- ◆ **SKILL PROFICIENCIES:** Arcana
- ◆ **TOOL PROFICIENCIES:** Alchemist's Supplies, Painter's Supplies or Tinker's Tools
- ◆ **EQUIPMENT:** A kit to match your tool proficiency, thick robes and 8 + 2d6 gold pieces.



FEATURE: PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE

When you encounter a new task, there's a chance that you have already performed something similar long ago. You can declare that an Intelligence ability check reminds you of a previous experience and gain

advantage on that check. You cannot use this feature again until you take a long or extended rest.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

The students of Ordo Magica sometimes seem aloof and uncaring. This is primarily because they have a different outlook on life. When your master is centuries old, your connection to the common folk is strained.

1d6	PERSONALITY TRAIT
1	When I leave the halls of Ordo Magica, I am certain that I am no longer among equals.
2	I like to be thought of as the smart one and often over-explain things.
3	I don't like conflict and so I try to broker peace among my friends.
4	If I know that I'm right about something I'll say so, it doesn't matter how it affects others.
5	I have a hard time keeping secrets.
6	I brag about what I've done to help others.

1d4	IDEAL
1	KNOWLEDGE. Learning something new justifies any expense or danger.
2	RATIONALITY. Emotions have no place in decision-making.
3	DISCOVERY. Only by pressing at the boundaries of knowledge can something new be learned.
4	SECRETS. I love being the only person in the world to know something.

1d4	BOND
1	A warrior once saved my life when I faltered. Now I make sure that they are always safe.
2	I owe my sanity to my teachers here. Otherwise the darkness would have consumed me.
3	I am responsible for the others, they don't understand what I do.
4	I will do anything to advance the power of the Order.

1d4	FLAW
1	I find it hard to explain my ideas and often get frustrated and expect people to just follow along.
2	I am easily distracted by new information.
3	I don't have any sense of self-preservation when given the chance to explore.
4	I tend to think myself smarter than others even when it's obviously not true.



CHAPTER FOUR

Classes

The following classes are provided for use in *Ruins of Symbaroum* and are just a sampler of the system. Future products will expand upon them. Note that our Races and Classes are designed to work together — a Symbaroum goblin has additional features that make up for their D6 Hit Die! We have provided class-specific Hit Dice information as well, just in case you want to import the classes into your own setting without the races.

Mystic

It is widely accepted that the world does not only consist of matter, and it is obvious to everyone that there are individuals who can manipulate the flows of both material and non-material energies. The use of mystical powers is in no way commonplace, not in Ambria, nor among the barbarians. But it is common enough for many cultures to have formed traditions around it.

THERE ARE MANY sources of mystical power in the world. These can be tapped by one who understands the underlying laws of nature or through alliances with the light of the heavens, the spirits of the forest or the darkness of Corruption. Some Mystics consider themselves to be scholars of reality and existence; others would claim they are part of a pact that offers them an intimate relationship with the source of their power.

MYSTICS AND THE RACES

Changelings and humans dominate the domain of the mystical, at least according to public opinion. The stories told by the witches of the barbarian clans are spread far and wide and it is near impossible not to notice the influence of Ordo Magica when in Ambria. The theurgs who worship Prios are a less obvious group since they tend to keep to the temples or move among the faithful, but the Lawgiver is known to bless some of his champions with extraordinary powers.

Mystics among the goblins are shamans, bound to no mystic tradition but earning high status among their own kind with their home-brewed theories regarding the world and its spirits. Changelings often have the mystical gift – those who grow up among the barbarians are sent away to train with the witches, while changelings in the slums of Ambria become self-taught mystics without any specific tradition. Ogres with the mystical gift may seem like a rarity, but Ordo Magica has documented at least a few cases since the Ambrians arrived in the region.

CLASS FEATURES

As a mystic, you have the following class features:

HIT POINTS

- ◆ **HIT DICE:** If you are not using your race to determine Hit Dice, your Hit Die is a d8.
- ◆ **HIT POINTS AT 1ST LEVEL:** If you do not use your race to determine hit points, you have 8 + your Constitution modifier.
- ◆ **HIT POINTS AT HIGHER LEVELS:** If you do not use your race to determine hit points, you gain 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per mystic level after 1st.

PROFICIENCIES

- ◆ **ARMOR:** Light armor
- ◆ **WEAPONS:** Simple weapons
- ◆ **TOOLS:** None
- ◆ **SAVING THROWS:** Intelligence, Wisdom
- ◆ **SKILLS:** Choose three from Arcana, History, Insight, Investigation, Medicine, and Religion

SHADOW

As a reminder, your Corruption Threshold is equal to twice your proficiency bonus plus your spellcasting modifier, to a minimum of 2. See your Mystic Approach for more information.

EQUIPMENT

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- ◆ (a) a shortbow and quiver of 20 arrows or (b) a quarterstaff
- ◆ (a) a scholar's pack, or (b) an explorer's pack
- ◆ Leather armor, two daggers, and a component pouch
- ◆ 1 + 4D6 gold pieces

SPELLCASTING

You are a wielder of arcane powers, drawing on unseen forces to bend the world to your will. However, such changes are not without a price and mystics face a constant threat of gaining Corruption that can ruin their body and soul. For more about Corruption, see page 18–21.

CANTRIPS

At 1st level, you know six cantrips of your choice from the spell list for your mystic approach. When you cast most cantrips (see Favored Spells, below) you gain 1 point of temporary Corruption.

LEVELLED SPELLS

You know two 1st level spells from the spell list from your mystic approach. When you gain a level in mystic you learn another spell, which can be any spell on your list, up to your current maximum spellcasting level as shown on the Mystic table.

CASTING A SPELL

To cast a spell you take an appropriate action and gain temporary Corruption. A cantrip causes 1 point of temporary Corruption while a leveled spell causes 1D4 plus the spell's level points of Corruption.

EXAMPLE: *Mira's ogre mystic Grumpa casts message, a cantrip, and gains 1 point of temporary Corruption. Later, Grumpa uses knock, a 2nd-level spell. She now adds 1D4+2 points of temporary Corruption.*

Some spells allow you to cast them using a higher level spell slot. You can cast up to your maximum spellcasting level as long as you pay the additional Corruption cost.

SPELLCASTING ABILITY

Your mystic approach determines your spellcasting ability, which affects your Corruption Threshold, spell save DC and your spell attack modifier:

- ◆ **CORRUPTION THRESHOLD** = (your proficiency bonus × 2) + your spellcasting ability modifier
- ◆ **SPELL SAVE DC** = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your spellcasting ability modifier
- ◆ **SPELL ATTACK MODIFIER** = your proficiency bonus + your spellcasting ability modifier

FAVORED SPELLS

There are certain spells that a mystic has studied extensively, to the point that they can mitigate the corrupting influence of the familiar magic. At 1st level, you can select 2 cantrips and 1 leveled spell. When you cast a favored cantrip you gain no Corruption, and when you cast a leveled favored spell you gain Corruption equal to 1 plus the level of the spell. When you gain a mystic level you can make more spells favored, as shown on the Mystic table under Favored Spells, the first number is the current amount of favored cantrips and the second number is for leveled spells.

LEVEL	PROFICIENCY BONUS	FEATURES	FAVORED SPELLS	MAXIMUM SPELLCASTING LEVEL
1st	+2	Spellcasting, Mystic Approach	2/1	1
2nd	+2	Ritual Casting	3/1	1
3rd	+2	Mystic Approach	4/2	2
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement or Feat	5/2	2
5th	+3	Ritual Casting	6/3	3
6th	+3	Mystic Approach	6/3	3

Certain spells are on the edge of dark sorcery and cannot become favored. These spells are marked with an asterisk (*) in the spell lists for each mystic approach.

APPROACH

At first level you also choose your mystic approach, which determines how you learned your arcane knowledge and how you understand the nature of the world. You might be a sorcerer, seeking shortcuts to power despite their danger; a theurg that wields the power of the Sun God, or a wizard that learned an orderly and philosophical approach to magic. Or you might be self-taught, without boundaries but a danger to yourself and others.

This product contains a preview of the theurg and wizard approaches. Future products will introduce additional approaches.

Your approach gives you benefits at 1st, 3rd, and 6th levels.

RITUAL CASTING

At 2nd level, choose a spell that you do not already know that is on your mystic approach spell list, has the ritual tag, and does not exceed your current maximum spell level. You gain permanent Corruption (see page 18) equal to half the spell level, rounded up. If the ritual is a cantrip, you gain no permanent Corruption. You can only cast the chosen spell as a ritual — the ritual version of a spell takes 10 minutes longer to cast than normal and can only be cast at its base level. You gain no Corruption from casting one of these spells.

You learn another spell as a ritual at 5th level.

ABILITY IMPROVEMENT OR FEAT

When you reach 4th level, you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or you can increase two ability scores of your choice by 1. As normal, you can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature. Instead of improving your ability scores you can instead choose to gain a feat.

MYSTIC APPROACH:

Theurg



YOU ARE A theurg, a priest with mystical powers. Your faith in the Lawgiver is unwavering: Prios is the sun and the light of the soul, the One who saved mankind from the bondage of the gods of old, the creator of the world and protector of all life. From this pure spring flows extraordinary power. Your mystical knowledge would have been aimless and dangerous without your faith as a compass and foundation, as is often shown when godless mystics wield their powers.

Theurgy is nowadays understood as the teachings of the mystical force that radiates from the sun and which burns at the heart of the human spirit. Its powers are only found among the most loyal worshipers of the light: the chosen champions of Prios. The theurgs are considered the emissaries of Prios in the world of the living, and their burden is truly a great one. They lead the faithful in prayer, thereby guiding the sun through the darkness of the underworld each

night. And their passion keeps the heavenly light from fading; without their strenuous work the ailing Sun God would surely die and the world would fall to the Eternal Night.

Theurgy is an ancient tradition, first developed by the priesthoods devoted to the pantheon referred to as the Young Gods. It is disputed among scholars and the learned whether witchcraft is older than theurgy or if it is the other way around.

Either way, the golden age of theurgy is now. Ever since Prios earned himself the devotion and faith of most Ambrians, the bearers of the tradition have thrived. It is not important to them which of the traditions came first. As far as the theurgs are concerned, worshiping moss and venerating trees are activities unworthy of mankind's holy spirit, and most consider witchcraft to be a path that leads only to decay and Corruption. They regard wizardry - the mystical order built on the foundation of older theurgy

- in much the same way, as a truly godless and morally questionable practice.

THE TITLES OF THEURGY

The titles within the tradition of theurgy are intertwined with the Church of Prios, since theurgs are the defenders of the Church, chosen by the Sun God himself. Obedience to one's elders is both highly regarded and enforced, and the punishments for disobedience are severe.

Lowest in rank are the initiates, who assist and are tutored by the Church's Brothers and Sisters, who in turn serve under the elder theurgs, called Fathers or Mothers. Within the organization of the Sun Church there are also priests who have not been granted the God-given powers of the theurgs, and they are called liturgs.

CORRUPTION

The theurgs of Prios teach that Corruption occurs when nature is allowed to grow without being cultivated and tamed. Corruption thrives in the wild, in chaos, that which is uncontrolled by humans - and in their encounters with Davokar they seem to find all the evidence needed to support this interpretation of the world order.

Every devotee of Prios must accept the threat of Corruption and keep their inner flame burning despite the risk of taint; just as the Lightbringer Ofelya Attio is said to have proclaimed while standing at the threshold of the Dark Lords' stronghold: *"Fire shall with fire be fought, darkness shall with darkness be vanquished!"*

SPELLCASTING ABILITY

Theurgs rely on the teachings of the Sun God and their own Wisdom when interpreting his teachings or calling upon his power.

SPELL LIST

The following spells are taught by the Church of the Dying Sun:

CANTRIPS: acid splash, fire bolt, guidance, light, mending, resistance, sacred flame, spare the dying, thaumaturgy, true strike



4 RUINS OF SYMBAROU M

- ◆ **1ST LEVEL:** *bane**, *bless*, *command**, *create or destroy water*, *cure wounds*, *detect evil and good*, *detect magic*, *detect poison and disease*, *guiding bolt*, *healing word*, *holy smoke*, *inflict wounds**, *protection from evil and good*, *purify food and drink*, *sanctuary*, *shield of faith*
- ◆ **2ND LEVEL:** *aid*, *augury*, *blindness/deafness**, *calm emotions*, *continual flame*, *enhance ability*, *find traps*, *gentle repose*, *hold person**, *lesser restoration*, *locate object*, *prayer of healing*, *protection from poison*, *silence*, *spiritual weapon*, *warding bond*, *zone of truth**
- ◆ **3RD LEVEL:** *beacon of hope*, *clairvoyance*, *create food and water*, *daylight*, *dispel magic*, *glyph of warding*, *magic circle*, *mass healing word*, *meld into stone*, *protection from energy*, *remove curse*, *revivify**, *sending*, *speak with dead**, *spirit guardians**, *tongues*, *water walk*

BONUS SPELL

At 1st level, you learn the *bless* spell in addition to your chosen spells.

TURN UNDEAD

At 3rd level, you can use the power of the Lawgiver to rebuke the undying. As an action, you present your holy symbol and speak a prayer censuring the undead. Each undead creature within 30 feet that can see or hear you must make a Wisdom saving throw against your spell save DC. If the creature fails its saving throw, it is turned for 1 minute or until it takes any damage. A turned creature must spend its turns trying to move as far away from you as it can, and it can't willingly move to a space within 30 feet of you. It also can't take reactions. For its action, it can use only the Dash action or try to escape from an effect that prevents it from moving. If there's nowhere to move, the creature can use the Dodge action.

NEW SPELL:

Holy Smoke

1st-level divination (ritual)

CASTING TIME: 1 action

RANGE: 10 feet

COMPONENTS: V,M (incense)

DURATION: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You light incense and choose a 10-foot cube within range. The smoke spreads among those present and gathers around objects and creatures in relation to how corrupted they are: the closer the smoke gathers, the more tainted the creature in question is. The Game Master clearly states if objects or creatures are blight-stricken, blightmarked or thoroughly corrupt. (See Corruption, page 18).

MEDICUS

At 6th level, you can invest some of your faith into healing energies that do not cause you to incur any Corruption. If you spend a few moments binding a wound, you restore one Hit Die to the treated creature. You can do this a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus and then must take a long or extended rest to recharge.



THUS SPOKE AROALETA

"... and the day dawned, when the spawn of the Serpent took to arms, when the crimes of countless days must be counted and atoned for, horn by horn, fang by fang. And the sinners wept with blinded eyes, they moaned with severed throats, they fled on fractured limbs. And Symbaroum fell, into dreamless sleep ..."



MYSTIC APPROACH:

Wizard



YOU ARE Schooled in the secrets of the old magic of the Order, wisdom born in the southern kingdom and refined by a millennium of research and education. To you, mystical powers are an extension of the fundamental laws of the world, laws that you have studied carefully and know how to use for effects both grand and subtle.

The powers of wizardry come from disciplined study into the fundamental laws of nature, and from insights regarding how these laws can be used and controlled by sheer will and reason. It is a strenuous vocation, even without the boring everyday tasks that the novices must perform for their masters. Only half of those who begin their studies with Ordo Magica see them through, but those who prevail are rewarded with a deep understanding of the mysteries of wizardry.

Wizardry grew out of early forms of theurgy, in a time when the people of Alberetor still worshiped a pantheon of gods. Philosophers and scholars started to renounce the metaphysical ideas of the priesthood, instead regarding the laws of nature as independent from the machinations of deities. To the founders of wizardry, the gods were seen as the creators of the world, but not its shepherds. Instead the world is regarded as being profoundly magical and not in need of any gods to function. Nor is the world meant to be worshiped, merely understood — and used.

THE TITLES OF ORDO MAGICA

The titles of wizardry are closely linked to competence and function, as well as the status, of the individual. The list of a novice's duties is a long one, and the commitments of the adept wizard are considerable, though their new title comes with a touch of authority and privilege. An adept who is experienced enough to teach carries the title Magistrate.

The Masters often have a specific area of expertise, and the few obligations they have can usually be delegated to a novice or adept under their rule. Each Order chapter (commonly called a "wizards' guild") is governed by a Chapter Master, who represents Ordo Magica when dealing

with local authorities. Ordo Magica as a whole is headed by the Grand Master, stationed at the chapter in Agrella.

The title of Arch Mage is no longer in use. Before the Great War, the Grand Master of the organization was chosen from within the circle of Arch Mages. But since all Arch Mages perished in the war, the Grand Master is instead chosen by, and often from among, the acting Chapter Masters.



CORRUPTION

According to Ordo Magica, Corruption is largely misunderstood, thanks to the sermons of hot-headed theurgs and the fairy tales of witches. It all comes down to a regulated response; a reaction that appears when a mystic uses his or her power to affect nature. This is not that different from what happens when someone jumps off the stern of a boat, simultaneously pushing the boat forward with the same amount of force that goes into the jump. If the jumper is reckless, he will drop into the water; if the jumper is careful, he will land on the dock with dry shoes.

SPELLCASTING ABILITY

Wizards rely on the philosophy and knowledge of Ordo Magica, using their Intelligence to understand the ancient secrets.

SPELL LIST

The following spells are taught by Ordo Magica:

CANTRIPS: *acid splash, chill touch, dancing lights, fire bolt, light, mage hand, mending, message, minor illusion, poison spray, prestidigitation, ray of frost, shocking grasp, true strike*

- ◆ **1ST LEVEL:** *alarm, burning hands*, charm person, color spray, comprehend languages, detect magic, disguise self, expeditious retreat, false life*, feather fall, find familiar, floating disk, fog cloud, grease, hideous laughter*, illusory script, jump, longstrider, mage armor, magic missile*, protection from evil and good, shield, silent image, sleep*, thunderwave, unseen servant*
- ◆ **2ND LEVEL:** *acid arrow, alter self, arcane lock, arcanist's magic aura, blindness/deafness, blur, continual flame, darkness, darkvision, detect thoughts, enlarge/reduce, flaming sphere, gust of wind, hold person, invisibility, knock, levitate, locate object, magic mouth, magic weapon, mirror image,*

misty step, ray of enfeeblement, rope trick, scorching ray, see invisibility, shatter, spider climb, suggestion*, web*

- ◆ **3RD LEVEL:** *blink, clairvoyance, counterspell, dispel magic, fear, fireball*, fly, gaseous form, glyph of warding, haste, hypnotic pattern, lightning bolt*, magic circle, major image, nondetection, phantom steed, protection from energy, sending, sleet storm, slow, stinking cloud, tiny hut, tongues, vampiric touch*, water breathing*



BONUS SPELL

At 1st level, you learn the *detect magic* spell in addition to your chosen spells.

LOREMASTER

At 3rd level, the character is educated and well-versed in the ways of the world: its cultures, history, languages and artifacts. For centuries heroes, monsters and kingdoms have come and gone and left behind powerful items and secret texts. This ability represents knowledge about such objects. Through extensive study a character with this ability knows not only the story of an object but also its properties and applications.

- ◆ At 3rd level, you can attempt an Intelligence (Investigation) check to determine the properties of a magic item. On a success, if it is a magic item, you learn its properties and how to use them, whether it requires attunement to use, and how many charges it has, if any. You learn whether any spells are affecting the item and what they are. If the item was created by a spell, you learn which spell created it. The DC is dependent on the kind of magic item: uncommon (DC 13), rare (DC 16), very rare (DC 19), legendary (DC 22). Additionally, you are proficient in both human languages (Ambrian and Barbarian).
- ◆ At 6th level, your understanding of artifacts is extensive enough that you are not as affected by their corruptive power. When attuning to an

artifact, you may reduce the amount of Permanent Corruption gained by 1, to a minimum of 1 Permanent Corruption. This reduction only benefits you, not another bearer. You also become proficient in the ungainly tongues of both elves and trolls.



Scoundrel

In Ambria the word “scoundrel” is used broadly and refers to all who “steal” something from others, be it their trust, secrets, money or life. The calling of the warrior, to proudly face the opponent face-to-face, is an exception to this rule: it is the sneaky assassin that counts among the thieving scoundrels. In essence, warriors, craftsmen and scholars are the ideal occupations among the Ambrians; the rest are more or less regarded as scoundrels.

SCOUNDRELS AND THE RACES

People at large would say that changelings and goblins are synonymous with scoundrels, and are usually surprised when they realize that ogres and humans can also be found among their number.

CLASS FEATURES

As belonging to the scoundrel class, you have the following class features:

HIT POINTS

- ◆ **HIT DICE:** If you are not using your race to determine Hit Dice, your Hit Die is a d8.
- ◆ **HIT POINTS AT 1ST LEVEL:** If you do not use your race to determine hit points, you have 8 + your Constitution modifier.
- ◆ **HIT POINTS AT HIGHER LEVELS:** If you do not use your race to determine hit points, you gain 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per scoundrel level after 1st.

PROFICIENCIES

- ◆ **ARMOR:** Light armor
- ◆ **WEAPONS:** Simple weapons, hand crossbows, longswords, rapiers, short swords
- ◆ **TOOLS:** Thieves’ tools
- ◆ **SAVING THROWS:** Dexterity, Charisma
- ◆ **SKILLS:** Choose three from Acrobatics, Athletics, Deception, Insight, Intimidation,

Investigation, Perception, Performance, Persuasion, Sleight of Hand, and Stealth

SHADOW

As a reminder, your Corruption Threshold is equal to your proficiency bonus plus your Charisma modifier, to a minimum of 2.

EQUIPMENT

As a scoundrel you start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- ◆ (a) a rapier or (b) a short sword
- ◆ (a) a shortbow and quiver of 20 arrows or (b) a short sword
- ◆ (a) a burglar’s pack, (b) a dungeoneer’s pack, or (c) an explorer’s pack
- ◆ (a) leather armor, two daggers, and thieves’ tools or (b) Woven silk armor (counts as studded leather)
- ◆ 21 + 4d6 gold pieces

EXPERTISE

At 1st level, choose two of your skill proficiencies, or one of your skill proficiencies and your proficiency with thieves’ tools. Your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses either of the chosen proficiencies.

At 6th level, you can choose two more of your proficiencies (in skills or with thieves’ tools) to gain this benefit.

LEVEL	PROFICIENCY BONUS	BACKSTAB BONUS	FEATURES
1st	+2	1D6	Expertise, Backstab, Approach
2nd	+2	1D6	Cunning Action
3rd	+2	2D6	Approach
4th	+2	2D6	Ability Score Improvement or Feat
5th	+3	3D6	Uncanny Dodge
6th	+3	3D6	Expertise, Approach

BACKSTAB

Beginning at 1st level, you know how to strike subtly and exploit a foe's distraction. Once per turn, you can deal an extra 1D6 damage to one creature you hit with a melee weapon attack if you have advantage on the attack roll. You must be proficient with the weapon used.

You don't need advantage on the attack roll if another enemy of the target is within 5 feet of it, that enemy isn't incapacitated, and you don't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

The amount of the extra damage increases as you gain levels in this class, as shown in the Backstab column of the Scoundrel table.

APPROACH

At first level you also choose your approach, the way that your scoundrel interacts with the world: are they an explorer, a spy, a treasure-hunter, a thug or a witch-hunter? Each approach includes subterfuge and a careful way of dealing with problems, but tends to focus on different environments with drastically different foes.

This product contains a preview of the Explorer approach. Future products will introduce additional approaches.

Your approach gives you benefits at 1st, 3rd, and 6th levels.

CUNNING

Starting at 2nd level, your quick thinking and agility allow you to move and act quickly. You can take a bonus action on each of your turns in combat.



4 RUINS OF SYMBAROU

This action can be used only to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

ABILITY IMPROVEMENT OR FEAT

When you reach 4th level you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or you can increase two ability scores of your choice by 1. As normal, you can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

Instead of improving your ability scores you can instead choose to gain a feat.

UNCANNY DODGE

Starting at 5th level, when an attacker that you can see hits you with an attack, you can use your reaction to halve the attack's damage against you.

SCOUNDREL APPROACH:

Explorer



YOU HAVE CHOSEN to turn away from civilization and strike out into the wilderness. Your home is in the deep forest or the mountain valley, where you hunt beasts for food and fur or to protect inhabitants and travelers from harm. You have learned how to stay clear of your enemies' reach while your arrows still find their mark.

MONSTER-HUNTER

You have advantage on all attacks against targets that are Large size or bigger.

WILDERNESS-MASTER

You gain proficiency with either the Nature or the Survival skill and the Longbow.

STEADFAST WATCH

At 3rd level, you become so adept at preparing and securing campsites in the wilderness that some of your party can gain additional benefits during a long rest. Choose a number of creatures up to your proficiency bonus, each of them regains one Hit Die. You can include yourself as one of the creatures.

SPECIALITIES

When you reach 6th level, choose one of the following specialties.

MARKSMAN

Marksmen have their natural position in every army, scouting party and band of brigands. You can inflict serious damage on enemies with a bow or crossbow, hoping to either bring them down or at least make sure that they do not reach your allies who are equipped only for melee combat.

- ◆ You can add your backstab damage to a ranged weapon attack. You must either have advantage on the attack or have an ally within 5 feet of the target and not have disadvantage on the attack.

MONSTER LORE

The character is schooled in the lore of beasts and knows the secrets of most monsters. Many monsters possess special abilities and unique attacks as well as weaknesses which are good to know about when trying to bring them down.

- ◆ Make an Intelligence (Nature) check with a DC equal to 10 plus the challenge rating (rounding

down) of any beast, giant, humanoid or plant. On a success, the GM must inform you of any vulnerabilities, resistances or immunities the creature possesses and provide you with a general assessment of its threat to the party ('minimal,' 'average,' or 'severe').

SIXTH SENSE

When moving through dark forests or mountain tunnels, one's eyes are no longer very useful. Lighting a lantern or torch may summon dangers, so the explorer had better learn to rely on his or her other senses. With dedicated training it is possible to awaken these other senses and sharpen them to the brink of eeriness.

- ◆ You can see in dim light as if it were normal light but are still unable to see in complete darkness. You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.



Warrior

The barbarian clans of Davokar and the kingdom of Ambria house many traditions of war and combat. Some Warriors are professionals – soldiers with a pragmatic point of view, regarding warfare as a vocation. Others stem from noble families and bloodlines, and consider the glory of battle to be a part of their heritage. To some the art of war is nothing more than a method needed to survive, while others use their prowess in battle for a higher purpose, such as serving Prios the Sun God or restoring family honor lost during the Great War.

REGARDLESS OF CULTURE and origins, the warrior's main arena is the battlefield, where he or she often assumes the role of a heavily armed shock trooper. Additionally, the warrior can also contribute to effective problem-solving, mainly through their capacity to lead.

WARRIORS AND THE RACES

Ogres are commonly considered to be the exemplary warriors, closely followed by humans. Changelings are seldom regarded as classical warrior material, and the same goes for goblins. You can definitely find warriors among changelings and goblins, but these tend to rely on agility and finesse rather than raw physical strength.

CLASS FEATURES

Being of the warrior class, you have the following class features:

HIT POINTS

- ◆ **HIT DICE:** If you are not using your race to determine Hit Dice, your Hit Die is a D8.
- ◆ **HIT POINTS AT 1ST LEVEL:** If you do not use your race to determine hit points, you have 8 + your Constitution modifier.

- ◆ **HIT POINTS AT HIGHER LEVELS:** If you do not use your race to determine hit points, you gain 1D8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per warrior level after 1st.

PROFICIENCIES

- ◆ **ARMOR:** All armor, shields
- ◆ **WEAPONS:** Simple weapons, martial weapons
- ◆ **TOOLS:** None
- ◆ **SAVING THROWS:** Strength, Constitution
- ◆ **SKILLS:** Choose three from Acrobatics, Animal Handling, Athletics, History, Insight, Intimidation, Perception, and Survival.

SHADOW

As a reminder, your Corruption Threshold is equal to your proficiency bonus plus your Charisma modifier, to a minimum of 2.

EQUIPMENT

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- ◆ (a) chain shirt or (b) leather armor, longbow, and 20 arrows
- ◆ (a) a martial weapon and a shield or (b) two martial Weapons
- ◆ (a) a light crossbow and 20 bolts or (b) two handaxes
- ◆ (a) a dungeoneer's pack or (b) an explorer's pack
- ◆ 4 + 1D6 gold pieces

LEVEL	PROFICIENCY BONUS	FEATURES
1st	+2	Battle Wind, Fighting Style, Approach
2nd	+2	Action Surge
3rd	+2	Approach
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement or Feat
5th	+3	Extra Attack
6th	+3	Approach

BATTLE WIND

You are familiar with the ebb and flow of the battlefield and know how to defend yourself against the wild blows of desperate opponents. You can use a bonus action to gain temporary hit points equal to 2D4 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus and then you must take a short (or longer) rest before using this feature again.

FIGHTING STYLE

You adopt a particular style of fighting as your specialty. Choose one of the following options. You can't take a Fighting Style option more than once, even if you later get to choose again.

ARCHERY

You gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls you make with ranged weapons.

DEFENSE

While you are wearing armor, you gain a +1 bonus to AC.

DUELING

When you are wielding a melee weapon in one hand and no other weapons, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with that weapon.

GREAT WEAPON FIGHTING

When you roll a 1 or 2 on a damage die for an attack you make with a melee weapon that you are wielding with two hands, you can reroll the die and must use the new roll, even if the new roll is a 1 or a 2. The weapon must



THUS SPOKE AROALETA

"... and deep down the world was violated, because the shell is suited for the force within; to add power to power without bracing the hide is as inexcusable as it is inconsiderate. For when the shell ruptures the force released is multiplied by the thousands, from anger and shame."



4 RUINS OF SYMBAROU

have the two-handed or versatile property for you to gain this benefit.

POLEARM FIGHTING

When wielding a polearm you can use your reaction to impose disadvantage on a melee attack roll.

SHIELD FIGHTING

If you make a successful melee attack roll you can use your bonus action to slam the target with your shield. If the target is of Medium size or smaller, it must make a Strength saving throw against 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Strength modifier. On a failure you can choose to move it 10 feet in a line, or cause the creature to become prone.

SNARE FIGHTING

If you make a successful attack roll when using a weapon with the ensnaring property, you can spend a bonus action to forgo doing damage, instead tripping the target and causing it to fall prone. This only works on Medium or smaller creatures with two or less legs or similarly shaped targets.

TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING

When you engage in two-weapon fighting, you can add your ability modifier to the damage of the second attack.

APPROACH

At 1st level you also choose your approach to the profession of fighting. Are you a berserker, dangerous to friends and foes alike? A studied duelist used to combat against a single opponent? A captain of others whose voice is as important as their weapon? A sellsword who cares more about money than good versus evil? Or a knight who has pledged their very life to the protection of the kingdom?

This product contains a preview of the knight approach. Future products will introduce additional approaches.

The approach gives benefits at 1st, 3rd and 6th levels.

ACTION SURGE

Starting at 2nd level, you can push yourself beyond your normal limits for a moment. On your turn, you

NEW WEAPON:

Great Flail

Some noble houses of Ambria focus on training with heavy flails, in order to knock their opponents off their feet and out of the fight:

Great Flail	20 gp	1D12 bludgeoning	8 lb.	Ensnaring*, heavy, two-handed
-------------	-------	------------------	-------	-------------------------------

*Ensnaring is a new weapon property, given to whips, flails and great flails. When you make a critical hit with one of these weapons, if the target is a creature it is knocked prone in addition to taking damage.

can take one additional action on top of your regular action and a possible bonus action. Once you use this feature, you must finish a rest of any length before you can use it again.

ABILITY IMPROVEMENT OR FEAT

When you reach 4th level you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or you can increase two ability scores of your choice by 1. As normal, you can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

Instead of improving your ability scores you can instead choose to gain a feat.

EXTRA ATTACK

Beginning at 5th level, you can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn.



THUS SPOKE AROALETA

"... and remember from which roots this verdant beauty springs; even the richest crop feeds on decay, and never before has any harvest been as lush, or any soil as black, as the one in the shadowy halls of Davokar."



WARRIOR APPROACH:

Knight



YOU ARE A knight who fights to break the enemy's lines or to hold your own. Heavily armored on the outside and with a deep sense of duty on the inside, you fight for the favor of your lord, the lives of your allies or your own glory. Maybe you dream of one day becoming a member of the Queen's royal guard or a Templar fighting in the name of Prios.

BODYGUARD

You are trained to put yourself between those you escort and any danger. You can use your reaction to take a blow meant for another creature within 5 feet of you. The attack roll against that creature is compared to your armor class and you take damage only if it would strike you.

At sixth level, when you use your reaction to use this feature you may also make a single attack roll against the attacking creature if you are wielding a weapon capable of hitting it.

TWO-HANDED FORCE

At 3rd level, if you are wielding a heavy melee weapon and miss an attack roll, you can use your reaction to reroll that attack.







CHAPTER FIVE

The Promised Land

The following adventure is intended as a balanced introduction to the setting and rules of *Ruins of Symbaroum*, suitable for experienced role-players and beginners alike. The adventure deals with a perilous journey through the Titans. The player characters can be Ambrians about to make their first contact with Queen Korinthia's new realm or travelers from the north who so far have kept their distance from the newly established civilization – much like the pre-made characters found on page 81–88. In that way none of them know much more about Ambria than what is detailed in the opening section of this book.

Onward to Yndaros

The player characters have for different reasons ended up in a caravan camp just south of the Titans. The camp spans a vast area, surrounded by slender trees covered in leaves that have started to shift in autumnal nuances. About forty wagons are parked in a random pattern and between them tents have been raised. Most of the tents are tiny and weathered but a few of them look like small palaces made of cloth – evidently belonging to some of the nobles who have waited until the last moment to leave their estates. In a dozen places fires are burning day and night, some of them surrounded by logs, others by more or less sloppily crafted benches.

MOST OF THE people in the camp give face to a mixture of sorrow, relief and hope. They are sad to have to leave the place where their family has lived for generations, where their ancestors are buried and where so much of themselves is tied to the earth, the landscape and the now abandoned buildings. They are relieved to finally be on their way, to have left the ash deserts of the south and reached the still living soils of the mountain region. And the hope they feel can be seen in their slightly curved lips; the hope that the world north of the Titans shall prove to be flourishing and as welcoming as everybody says.

Overview

THE GOAL OF this first section is to introduce the characters and have them sign on to Argasto's caravan. As long as the players have made arrangements to travel north, everything is fine. Some players might refuse to fight Argasto's guards in mock combat, in which case Argasto might charge them a couple of thaler (gp) each to cover hiring another guard or two.

The Lost Land

Player characters who were raised in Alberetor or have been there some time all carry dark and haunting memories from the journey to the camp.

South of the camp the ground has enough vigor still to nourish vegetation, but the crops soon to be harvested are not what they once were. The fields are sparsely vegetated by pale stalks with shrunken ears of grain; the orchards that used to be full of apples, lemons and sweet plums are all but naked; and scrawny cattle can be seen everywhere, grazing in the all but naked fields, roaming wild after being left adrift by their previous owners and caretakers.

The ones who come from a place further south or out east have witnessed even darker scenes. In those places the soil is blackened and completely lifeless, often transformed into dusty deserts incapable of absorbing water from either rains or rivers. Abandoned cities, deserted residencies and castles, ghostly farms with livestock enclosures occupied by nothing but carcasses – Alberetor is dead and all but gone. All that is left is what the people of Queen Korinthia carry with them on the journey over the mountains

Scene 0: Beginnings

THE PRE-MADE PLAYER characters are connected to each other and you can open the game as they are clustered around a meager campfire somewhere at the camp site – a good place for the players to describe their characters to one another. By the fire are also some of the people who will become their traveling companions, possibly the talkative coachman Telk, maybe also the pathfinders Belun and Ludo. Edira is eating by herself, in her tent.

The folk around the fire prepare their supper and discuss the latest in a long list of bad news: the caravan owners have decided to stop here and shelter for the winter on the south side of the Titans, because of the rapidly approaching snows. The question is if they are right in assuming that the mountain passes soon will be closed off or if there still is a chance to make it through before the winter reigns supreme.

After a while, yet another person joins the circle around the fire, Telk's friend Keler. He is visibly excited and leans in to whisper something in the ear of the coachman. A character who succeeds at a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check can make out the essentials: there is one caravan owner who has decided to brave the danger and dare an attempt to reach Ambria before the snows.

Scene 1: The Tryouts

ARGASTO SITS IN his pavilion inspecting his inventory before the trip. At the same time he takes the opportunity to interview potential companions. Outside a small line has formed, and in front of the characters stands Telk and Keler, maybe also Belun and Ludo. All of them can brag about having survived a number of trips over the Titans and will consequently leave the tent with bright smiles on their lips. Then it is time for the player characters to enter the pavilion.

Master Argasto – a plump man in his fifties with rose-red cheeks, dressed in baggy clothes of felts and

We stay at the campfire

Experienced players starting a new adventure are often on the lookout for hooks like the one above, but sometimes new players might not seize such opportunities. If, for some reason, the heroes remain behind, Telk and Keler return in a few moments: Argasto is willing to brave the mountains but wants more guards and scouts in his group. Telk tells the characters they look like just what Argasto needs and won't they please come with him to meet the caravan master?

If none of the characters should hear what is said they will probably still understand what is going on – Telk brightens up like a midsummer sun, excuses himself and rushes to his tent to pack his belongings. The player characters can either extort the truth from the weak-willed Keler with a successful DC 5 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check, or they can without further ado tag along with the duo as they walk towards the northern part of the camp. There Master Argasto is preparing to leave, as soon as the next morning dawns.

skins – glances at them briefly before returning to his list of equipment with a short: “Well?” Edira walks right up to the table and places the Sun Stone in front of him, with a short: “You will need me and the warmth of Prios if you are to survive the journey.” Argasto's eyes widen and he gives a short nod, before looking up at the player characters: “Them?” Edira only shrugs her shoulders, apparently not willing to vouch for her traveling companions.

It is now up to the player characters to try and convince the caravan owner that they deserve a place in the caravan, and that they will prove to be more

5 RUINS OF SYMBAROU M

useful than troublesome. When they have made their arguments he looks up: “Can you defend yourselves? I am not convinced...”

He stresses that there is a limit to the number of people he can accommodate, and the ones who receive a spot need to be “individuals of competence,” meaning persons who improve his chances of getting the wagons across the mountains. If the characters want to tag along they must prove themselves worthy by participating in a fighting test against some of his loyal caravan guards. This isn’t a real battle, just a bout with the flats of blades and butts of spears. The characters will recover any lost hit points after a short rest, without spending any Hit Dice.

Argasto picks out a number of guards equal to the number of characters, plus one. “Just to keep things interesting,” he says if challenged and indicates a clear area near the camp about 40 feet in diameter. He doesn’t provide any specific rules, other than “no sharp edges and yield before you’re seriously hurt.” This means each of the guards will yield once they have 5 or less hit points, but the players are free to continue if they wish. Argasto has a practical approach to magic and won’t be upset unless one of the mystics does something to seriously injure or affect his guards.

The extra guard will attack whoever seems to be the biggest threat, which is almost certainly Orlan if he is present. Once the combat is over Argasto is satisfied. Even if one or more of the player characters yielded, they still fought bravely.

The caravan will leave at first light.

Caravan Guards

These men and women are from Ambria and have crossed the Titans several times in service to Argasto.

CARAVAN GUARD

Medium humanoid (human)	
ARMOR CLASS	12 (leather armor)
HIT POINTS	11 (2D8 + 2)
SPEED	30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)
SKILLS	Intimidation +1, Perception +3, Survival +3				
SENSES	passive Perception 13				
LANGUAGES	Ambrian				
CHALLENGE	1/8 (25 XP)				
MANNER	grins confidently, swings their swords provokingly				
SHADOW	unpolished copper (Corruption: 0/2)				
EQUIPMENT	2D10 silver pieces, chewing tobacco or a silver amulet of Prios				

AGGRESSIVE.

As a bonus action, the guards can move up to their speed toward a hostile creature that they can see.

ACTIONS

SHORT SWORD. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1D6 + 1) piercing damage.

Extra Details

If you’re familiar with monster and NPC entries in 5e, you’ll notice we’ve included a few more details in our statblocks. “Manner” gives the Game Master some hints as to how the creature behaves when first met. “Shadow” provides details on Corruption and the creature’s shadow for those who can see it. Finally “Equipment” has some sample items that might be found on the creature during its normal activity. Of course, the Game Master can always change these details in order to provide more variety in the game.

In the Company of Thieves

Argasto's caravan has left the camp and the journey north has begun. The landscape is still forested, often so densely that the characters cannot see more than trees and the wobbling wagons on the road ahead. The journey goes slowly upwards, winding between wooded hills and shallow canyons. At times the wagons reach a crest from where towering mountains can be seen further north.

THE SUN SHINES from a clear blue sky, as if the Sun God Prios has heard the travelers' prayers for good weather conditions. Argasto walks at the head of the wagons with Edira by his side. The woman proudly proclaims *"The Lawgiver's face smiles warmly over the pass; that bodes well."*

At dusk it is time to make camp, and the caravan forms a corral. The player characters are there to do their part, while Edira walks off on her own, as usual, shaking her head to anyone who offers her company. But this time something happens: when the camp site is

close to finished, the voice of the priestess can be heard: *"Thieves, thieves!"*

While Edira was washing the road dust away in a nearby stream, someone sneaked up and went through her coat - the Sun Stone was taken from an inside pocket! This mystical item is an artifact of the old kingdom that the priestess was charged with delivering to Thistle Hold. Also, with the artifact gone, the caravan may not be able to keep warm if the worst happens high up in the mountains. Argasto tells it like it is: *"Retrieve the Sun Stone or we must turn back, favored by Prios or not!"*

Overview

THE GOAL OF this second session is for the characters to find and recover the Sun Stone. This alerts them to the presence of the artifact and its potential power. It can

also serve to introduce Mal-Rogan as a recurring villain. Even if he remains only a rumor in these scenes, he can still be used again in future adventures.

Scene 2:

Finding the Thief

IT IS EASY for the characters to identify the thief, but harder to catch up to him. The villain is a mule keeper called Keler who has gone missing. His wagon team does nothing to try to hide his absence, quite the opposite. However, his best (and only) friend Telk is withholding some information, and might be persuaded to talk.

There are two ways of finding the thief Keler and, in doing that, the Sun Stone: the player characters can either follow his trail from the crime scene, or they can convince Telk to speak up. After all, the Sun Stone may prove to be essential for the survival of them all.

PERSUADING TELK

Keler was part of a larger team but he primarily confided in another mule keeper, Telk. Telk knows full and well that his friend is a thief and a liar but found the friendship heartening. Hence, he must be persuaded if he is to divulge any leads as to the whereabouts of Keler.

Characters speaking to Telk (many can confirm that he was the one closest to Keler) have to succeed on a DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check to get information from the mule keeper: *“Keler mentioned some kind of hideout hereabout; I can point you in the right direction.”*

If so, the characters gain advantage on their checks to follow the trail (see below).

TRAILING THE THIEF

The thief has left tracks that can be followed from the crime scene (the place on the riverbank where Edira left her coat). Keler has made an effort to hide the tracks and has also rigged a trap at the end of the trail (the trap is described in Scene 3).

Trailing the thief to the watermill ruin takes two successful DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) checks. If Telk gave them directions they have advantage on the checks. If it takes multiple attempts to follow the trail, you might decide that Mal-Rogan has arrived at the meeting.

An alternative to tracking is to try to sense the direction to the Sun Stone by mystical means, such as the locate object spell. This will allow the group to reach the windmill clearing automatically.

Scene 3: Retrieving the Sun Stone

KELER HAS HIDDEN a trap right where the trail enters the clearing. It is the sort of spring-loaded leghold trap that slams shut when stepped on. If a character has a passive Perception of 15 or higher then they spot the trap automatically. Otherwise, the first character to enter the clearing must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw as the trap is triggered! On a failed save, the target takes 1D8 piercing damage and becomes restrained by the trap. It takes a DC 13 Strength check to open up the trap.

Even if the saving throw succeeded, the trap makes a loud enough noise to alert Keler, who is on the third floor of the Windmill, next to a window (half-cover, +2 to his AC). Go ahead and roll initiative. On his turns, Keler shoots with his crossbow as long as he can see a target.

If the trap was avoided, the characters may try to sneak up to the ruin and go inside. As long as half or more of the characters succeed at a DC 13 Dexterity (Stealth) check, they make it inside the windmill without alerting Keler. Inside the windmill, they must make another Stealth check at the same difficulty to climb the ladder without alerting the thief. Once they reach the third floor of the windmill they can surprise him by attacking or executing any other sort of plan.

If the player characters close in on the ruin Keler shouts: *“You will regret this! The undead Mal-Rogan will find you and chop you to pieces. Not even death could beat him; you think you are a match for Mal-Rogan, the Master of Death!?”* He will not enter into melee. Instead he throws both himself and the crossbow to the ground if the characters come close. The Sun Stone is in his pocket.

If Keler is brought back to the caravan he will be the target of harsh words as well as of pebbles and dirt. Argasto will deprive him of food and tools and then send him into the wilderness as punishment for his crime. If the player characters should suggest some other form of reprimand, Argasto will concur with the argument since it was they who found the stone and captured the villain.



Keler, Second-rate Thief

Keler sees himself as a misunderstood genius and in particular as a misjudged master thief. Due to his curiosity and watchfulness he took notice of Edira's treasure, when she pulled it out of her pocket to warm her frozen fingers. In order to prove his superiority Keler decided to pinch the artifact and make



for the hideout of the gang of robbers he once was a member of. There he is determined to wait for his former companions to arrive, hoping that they will regret kicking him out when he hands them the Sun Stone. The best plan he has had in years, according to himself.

Keler fires his crossbow and pulls his dagger if backed into a corner. But as soon as it is evident that he will get hurt, he throws the weapons away and pleads for his life.

SECOND-RATE THIEF

Medium humanoid (human)						
ARMOR CLASS		14 (studded leather armor)				
HIT POINTS		18 (4D8)				
SPEED		30 ft				
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	
SKILLS		Perception +2, Sleight of Hand +3, Stealth +3				
SENSES		passive Perception 12				
LANGUAGES		Ambrian				
CHALLENGE		1/2 (100 XP)				
MANNER		shifty eyes, stutters				
SHADOW		darkened silver (Corruption: 1/2)				

EQUIPMENT the Sun Stone, 3D6 silver pieces, lucky charm (dysfunctional), 12 bolts in a quiver

CUNNING ACTION. On each of its turns, the thief can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

SNEAK ATTACK (1/TURN). The thief deals an extra 7 (2D6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the thief that isn't incapacitated and the spy doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS
DAGGER. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1D4 + 2) piercing damage.

LIGHT CROSSBOW. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1D8 + 2) piercing damage.



SCENE 3A: MAL-ROGAN ARRIVES

If the players choose to wait for Keler's companions, a ragged band of robbers soon arrives from the south along the overgrown footpath. A couple of robbers act as scouts and the leader follows behind — Mal-Rogan may be undying, but he is not stupid. There are as many robbers as characters in the party.



Mal-Rogan, Undead Robber Chieftain

The Queen's guard Rogan Gorinder died in the war against the Dark Lords. He got an arm chopped off in combat, the wound festered and the healers were powerless to neutralize the black blood infection that coursed through his veins.

But instead of dying, Rogan arose as an undead, with puss dripping from his truncated arm and with blackened veins visible on his neck and temples. Why? No one knows, but Rogan took it as a dark sign that he had been chosen for greatness. Nowadays the robber baron calls himself Mal-Rogan and

5 RUINS OF SYMBAROU

An Undead Future

Mal-Rogan is an enemy beyond the range of starting heroes. Keler will beg for the group to surrender to the undead chieftain or insist on fleeing if they refuse to hand over the Sun Stone.

If they do face up against Mal-Rogan, they should have a chance to realize the danger of the fight. For new players it is a good idea to call a time-out and explain that in *Ruins of Symparoum*, there's no guarantee of a fair fight. That way, if they do fight then it's on the heads of the players.

Otherwise, Mal-Rogan may decide that he NEEDS the Sun Stone for his grandiose plans and resolve to follow the party to Thistle Hold and beyond. He might even show up when the characters are threatened by the elves (see page 69) and offer to help if they give him the Stone.

If you want to increase the horror and revulsion, then Pansar Rogan might have been known to Orlan, or Bartolom before his corruption and dark resurrection.

leads a band of robbers in the mountains where he grew up, dreaming of founding a veritable bandit kingdom.

If the player characters cannot stop the blight-stricken nobleman he will make a name for himself throughout the southern parts of Ambria, where he roams around as a raving horror leaving desecrated corpses in his wake.

UNDEAD ROBBER CHIEFTAIN

Medium undead						
ARMOR CLASS		14 (chainmail)				
HIT POINTS		30 (4D8 + 12)				
SPEED		30 ft				
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	4 (-3)	
SKILLS		Perception +3				
SENSES		passive Perception 13				



LANGUAGES	Ambrian
CHALLENGE	3 (700 XP)
MANNER	Speaks in a croaking voice, tilting his head back and forth
SHADOW	Black as tar (thoroughly corrupt)
EQUIPMENT	His own mummified hand in a rusty chain around his neck (artifact, see page 77), 4D6 silver pieces

EXCEPTIONAL STRENGTH. Mal-Rogan doubles his damage on melee weapon strikes due to his Strength modifier.

UNDEAD FORTITUDE. If damage reduces Mal-Rogan to 0 hp, he must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, Mal-Rogan drops to 1 hp instead.

ACTIONS

FLAIL. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1D8 + 6) bludgeoning damage. Also if Mal-Rogan makes a critical hit, if the target is a creature it is knocked prone in addition to taking damage.

Robbers

The robbers fire a salvo with their crossbows before attacking with swords. They try to stay alive while Mal-Rogan kills the enemies one by one.

Leghold trap



THE WATERMILL RUIN

The watermill was built long ago by some overly optimistic baron, hoping to colonize the mountains. Nowadays it is covered by moss and creepers and the mid-level floors have caved in so that only the stone-based top floor remains. The robbers use a ladder to get up there, a ladder that is too tall to be hoisted up or toppled inside the ruin. From the windows of the top-floor you have a good view of the surroundings.



5 RUINS OF SYMBAROU



ROBBER

Medium humanoid (human)

ARMOR CLASS 12 (leather armor)

HIT POINTS 19 (3D8 + 6)

SPEED 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11	12	14	10	12	10
(+0)	(+1)	(+2)	(+0)	(+1)	(+0)

SKILLS Intimidation +2, Perception +3, Survival +3

SENSES passive Perception 13

LANGUAGES Ambrian

CHALLENGE 1/4 (50 XP)

MANNER stares with misty eyes

SHADOW rusty iron (Corruption: 2/2)

EQUIPMENT 2D6 silver pieces, card deck or dice set, chewing tobacco, 6 bolts in a quiver

ACTIONS

SHORT SWORD. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1D6 + 1) piercing damage.

LIGHT CROSSBOW. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1D6 + 1) piercing damage.



Toll of the Mountains

On the road up to the mountain pass the weather continues to be favorable, even if the cold bites at cheeks and fingers. The Sun Stone has not been activated yet. By “*the laws of magic*,” which stipulate that every lit candle creates shadows, this must not be done until truly called for. Those who have befriended Edira also sense that the priestess knows that waking the warmth of the stone will come to affect the one doing so — another reason for not waking it prematurely.

THE CHARACTERS DO not know it yet, but among their fellow travelers are a couple of persons who have been active in the forest of Davokar, as pathfinders for treasure-hunters from Thistle Hold. Because of that they have managed to attract the interest of the Black

Cloak Lestra, fallen out of favor with the Iron Pact, and also contracted a horrible curse that has already killed most of their previous companions. This third chapter describes what happens when the elves of the Iron Pact catch up to their prey.

Overview

UNLIKE PREVIOUS SECTIONS, this final section does not have a definitive plan of progression. Instead, the characters are free to address problems as they are introduced, or to even ignore one challenge in exchange for dealing with another. Remember the silver rule of GMing — plans mean nothing, but planning is necessary. In other words, you’ll want to be familiar with each of the various non-player characters and their goals, so that you can have them react appropriately to the player characters’ actions.

Scene 4: The Price of Firewood

SUN STONE OR not, for the freezing nights in the pass you also need firewood. For that purpose the travelers make short forays into the increasingly sparse vegetation

A Bit of History

Some time ago, the two pathfinders Belun and Ludo accompanied an expedition into the forest of Davokar. As far as the brothers knew, the expedition was a failure, they never reached the deep woods and made do with a smaller tomb closer to the edge. But in the intervening time, every other member of the expedition has died under mysterious circumstances. They escaped to the south but now they are returning to Ambria with fear in their hearts.

In truth, they are right to fear. The Iron Pact (an alliance of elves and other Elder Folk) has marked them for death for their intrusion. Also, the Black Cloak Lestra who is traveling with the caravan suspects the brothers. Already, Belun shows the signs of a grave blight-sickness. It may be up to the player characters to support or thwart Lestra’s attempt to claim the pathfinders for her order.

dotting the hills. Suddenly the roaring of a beast is heard, soon merged with desperate cries from humans. The characters are nearby and arrive first on the scene. By then the following stage is set: A monstrous wolf — a DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) check identifies it as a hunger wolf — stands snarling and drooling in front of the two pathfinders and a Black Cloak. Behind the monstrosity a number of smaller wolf beasts have formed a half-circle — a DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) check marks them as jakaars. There are as many of the jakaars as there are player characters.

Consequently, the upcoming fight will involve the characters and a group of enemies, one of which is more dangerous (the hunger wolf) than the others (the jakaars). The characters also have a couple of NPCs on their side, to make use of in a tactically sound manner.

If the players refrain from giving orders — a DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check is required if the order entails facing the hunger wolf — the pathfinders will take on the jakaars, while the Black Cloak heals them (and searches them for signs of Corruption). If so, that fight can be handled summarily and without rolling any dice; the main fight is the one between the characters and the hunger wolf. If you decide to roll dice for everything, see pages 70-72 for Lestra and the pathfinders. (Belun's entry on page 70 is only for once the abomination growing within him erupts forth.)

Note that the pathfinders and the Black Cloak Lestra can be hurt or struck down in this fight, but are not supposed to die at this stage. The reason for involving the trio in the scene is for the characters to get to know them. Should the Game Master prefer to swap them for other travelers who can die here, you can use a couple other generic pathfinders. They have the same stats as the brothers but no Corruption.

Hunger Wolf, the elf scout Keri-Las in her wolf shape

Keri-Las tries to get to the barbarian scouts and will kill them if she cannot catch them alive. She tries not to kill others (like the player characters), but will hurt them if they stand in her way. If the hunger wolf dies she transforms back to her original shape.

A severely battered elf lies on the ground, as lifeless as the beast just killed by the characters. She is dressed in a simple wool coat and carries no weapon. In truth her name was Keri-Las and she was a scout for the group that has been hunting the brothers.

She wears a nicely decorated bracelet round her left upper arm. A player character can make a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check to realize that it must be an ancient elven oath ring; a symbol for the Iron Pact, supposedly signifying an age-old alliance or agreement between humans and elves.

HUNGER WOLF

Large monstrosity						
ARMOR CLASS		14 (natural armor)				
HIT POINTS		85 (10D10 + 30)				
SPEED		50 ft				
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	
SKILLS		Perception +5, Stealth +3				
SENSES		passive Perception 15				
LANGUAGES		understands Ambrian, Barbarian and Elvish but only speaks Wolf-tongue				
CHALLENGE		3 (700 XP)				
MANNER		growls with bared teeth, then tries to attack Ludo and Belun				
SHADOW		blood red with a slightly coagulated rim (Corruption: 3/3)				
EQUIPMENT		(only in elven form) an arm bracelet of rusted iron, 6 gold pieces				

KEEN HEARING AND SMELL.

The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

PACK TACTICS.

The wolf has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

BITE. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2D8 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Jakaar

The jakaar is a canine pack hunter, as prone to capturing its own prey as it is to eating cadavers left by other beasts. The pack following Keri-Las takes the chance of attacking together with the hunger wolf. The jakaars trail the hunger wolf and attack one opponent each (or the pathfinders if the PCs take on the hunger wolf).

JAKAAR						
Medium beast						
ARMOR CLASS		12				
HIT POINTS		13 (2D8 + 4)				
SPEED		40 ft				
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	4 (-3)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	
SKILLS		Perception +3, Stealth +4				
SENSES		passive Perception 13				
LANGUAGE		—				
CHALLENGE		1/4 (50 XP)				
MANNER		slinks behind the hunger wolf and then strikes out				
SHADOW		green like spring grass (Corruption: 0/2)				
EQUIPMENT		none				

KEEN HEARING AND SMELL.

A jakaar has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

PACK TACTICS.

A jakaar has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the jakaar's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

BITE. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2D4 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

SCENE 4A:

TRACKING THE HUNGER WOLF

It is not unlikely that the players will want to backtrack the movement of the hunger wolf, which will lead them to the elven camp. To do that the characters must make three DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) checks; each represents about two hours of tracking, so it will be late in the afternoon before they find the camp. In this case, the event described in Scene 5: Stormnight will commence between the second and third check.

Godrai and Saran-Ri patiently wait for Keri-Las to return, their small tents and careful fire blending into the mountain scenery almost effortlessly. An elk is tethered nearby, with a saddle and other riding gear on it. See page 69 for more details.

A DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check lets a player character realize that attacking the elves is a very bad idea; sure, there are only two of them, but elves are long-lived and these two seem to have great power. If the players accept this, two options remain: sneak up and listen to them talk or approach them in the open in the hope of starting a conversation.

To sneak up on the elves requires a group DC 16 Dexterity (Stealth) check. If half or more of the group fails, the elves stand up warily but do not immediately attack. If instead the check succeeds, a character that understands Elvish can sneak up and listen to the elves' conversation.

Saran-Ri: *"Let us strike them all, we don't know who else is infected."*

Godrai: *"No, the two are enough, no others."*

Saran-Ri: *"Keri-Las should have been back. She is dead, I know it, I feel it."*

Godrai: *"If so, her sacrifice will not be forgotten. But the killing ends with the blight-stricken barbarians. We won't start a war today."*

Saran-Ri: *"Huh, you know as I do that war is inevitable. If not today..."*

Godrai: *"Enough!"*

Saran-Ri growls and backs away.

There is something beast-like in how Saran-Ri moves, a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that Saran-Ri is also a shapeshifter.



5 RUINS OF SYMBAROU

If the characters approach the elves for a talk, openly or after having failed the Stealth check, Godrai will respond in broken Ambrian. There will not be much of a discussion. He asks if they speak for the company including two humans named Belun and Ludo. If the characters lie, he just sends them on their way; if they are truthful, the conversation will flow much like described in Scene 6: the elf gives them the ultimatum to carry back to their companions. Before turning his back, he leaves the PCs with a very serious threat: “I will have those two. Blood will flow if you refuse. Look for us next sundown; you have until then to decide.”

Note that this means Scene 6: the ultimatum becomes obsolete.

Godrai, elf of late summer

This elf has a lordly stature and stern expression; it is clear that he is in charge.

GODRAI						
Medium humanoid (elf - late summer)						
ARMOR CLASS		14 (lacquered silk cuirass)				
HIT POINTS		97 (13D8 + 39)				
SPEED		30 ft				
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	
SAVING THROWS		Intelligence +7, Wisdom +5				
SKILLS		Arcana +10, Perception +5, Survival +5				
SENSES		passive Perception 15				
LANGUAGES		Ambrian, Elvish				
CHALLENGE		5 (1,800 XP)				
MANNER		stern and lordly				
SHADOW		bluish red (Corruption: 2/14)				
EQUIPMENT		Two quivers with 12 arrows in each (the arrows in one of them are coated with moderate poison), headband of rusty iron				



ACTIONS

MAGIC MISSILE. Godrai releases 3-7 glowing darts of magical force. Each hits a target within 120 ft. and does 1D4 + 1 force damage. More than one dart can hit the same target. Godrai gains Corruption equal to the number of darts minus 1.

RAY OF FROST. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (3D8) cold damage, and target's speed is reduced by 10 ft. until the start of Godrai's next turn. Godrai gains 1 Corruption.

SHORTBOW. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1D6 + 1) piercing damage. Godrai can use his bonus action to select a poison arrow, if so the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for one minute.

TURN WEATHER. Godrai causes the weather to shift further along one axis: increasing or decreasing precipitation, temperature or wind speed by one step. Godrai gains 6 Corruption.

Saran-Ri, elf of early summer

This shapeshifting elf will rush through the snow in his beamon form, fully prepared to sacrifice himself in order to kill the blight-stricken barbarians or defend Godrai.

SARAN-RI IN BEAMON FORM

Huge beast (elf - early summer)

ARMOR CLASS 11 (natural armor)



HIT POINTS	105 (10D12 + 40)					
SPEED	40 ft., 30 ft. climb					
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	
19 (+4)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	
SKILLS	Perception +5, Survival +5					
SENSES	passive Perception 15					
LANGUAGES	Elvish (can't speak in beamon form)					
CHALLENGE	5 (1,800 XP)					
MANNER	wary and alert					
SHADOW	burning red with dancing flakes of soot (Corruption: 3/3)					
EQUIPMENT	ring of rusty iron					

Beamon

The black-furred bear creature known to clan folks as the beamon is a solitary soul that takes its dominance for granted. It certainly has many enemies, both beast and human. The beamon is prized by the barbarians for its meat, and for many northern clans its slaying is a coming-of-age rite. Any person who has successfully hunted a beamon is considered to be an adult, and those who manage to bring the beastly bear down single-handedly are regarded as fully-trained warriors.

KEEN SMELL.

The beamon has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The beamon makes two attacks, either two with its claws or one claw and one bite attack.

BITE. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2D8 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

CLAW. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2D10 + 4) slashing damage.

SCENE 4B: THE DEAD ELF

If the player characters refrain from backtracking the hunger wolf, what follows will play out differently. If the shapeshifter is dead, they must decide what to do with the corpse – hide it or bring the dead elf to Argasto’s attention. Should Keri-Las instead survive and be captured, she will reluctantly transform back to her elven form. In halting Ambrian she tells her captors that Belun and Ludo have broken the law of the Iron Pact and must be given over. She hints that there are more elves coming to rescue her. Anyone who makes a DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check (or who has a passive Insight of 13 or higher) notices that the presence of the elf makes both Belun and Ludo very nervous.

The Black Cloak Lestra may ask pointed questions, such as “*Who was the hunger wolf out to get?*” while glancing significantly at the two pathfinders.

With the caravan members in general, the reactions to the events of the morning will depend on who knows what and how the fight was resolved. It is possible that the body of Keri-Las could be hidden quickly so that most members of the caravan won’t know about the presence of an elf. But Lestra insists on meeting Argasto with the PCs to talk things through. If they refuse, she goes to him and he tracks them down, threatening that the caravan will abandon them if they refuse a meeting again.

In his tent, Argasto shakes his head when he learns who was hidden under the pelt of the hunger wolf. He

5 RUINS OF SYMBAROU M

becomes even more eager to get a move on. “Elves are bad news, we must hurry to Yndaros, we’ll be safe in the city of the Queen!”

If Lestra was able to use shadow-sight during the battle, she tells Argasto that she wants to have Belun and Ludo shackled, so that she can take them to a nearby monastery of the Twilight Friars for healing and study. Argasto looks troubled by this and says he won’t make a decision on her request until after a

good night’s sleep. Lestra is frustrated but nods. The player-characters are free to express their opinions on the matter as well.

Neither Lestra nor Edira can tell the player characters much about Keri-Las’ bracelet, but both seem very interested in the shapeshifting magic. “*The work we do is blessed by Prios but the evils of the world still fight against us. Their magic is different: more primitive — witchcraft, in other words.*”

Scene 5: Stormnight

THE CARAVAN STRUGGLES up the steeper and steeper road toward the pass. As the first crest is traversed the wagons roll out onto a plateau, and suddenly the weather changes for the worse. The wind picks up, the sky grows dark and snow starts falling.

Argasto orders the wagons to form a corral for protection against the storm. A character with the ability shadow-sight

may realize that the storm is conjured (the elf Godrai has used the spell *turn weather*) and the PC hears a wrathful voice singing in the winds. If none of the PCs hear it, the Game Master can let Lestra do so, if only for the effect.

The travelers in the caravan cover any openings on their wagons, put blankets over the huddled pack animals and prepare for a long night in the cold.



Scene 6: The Ultimatum

WHEN MORNING COMES the storm subsides. But the situation is far from ideal; it is doubtful that the caravan can continue since the snow lies deep across the plateau. A brawling discussion erupts between those who want to push onward and those who would rather not risk getting stuck down the road.

Right then two shapes emerge out of the light snowfall, one astride a majestic elk, the other keeping pace with the mount. They approach the corral. The lookout Telk cries: *“Elves, I think they’re elves!”* The quarrel dies out and everything is silent.

The elf on the elk dismounts and walks forward. He introduces himself as Godrai and his quiet friend as Saran-Ri. He says *“We want the ones called Belun and Ludo.”*

If asked why, he replies: *“They have violated the treaties; they have tunneled too deep into the soil of old Davokar. They are blight-stricken and must be purged.”*

If the characters do not speak up and refuse to hand over the pathfinders, Argasto will. Godrai’s companion whispers something in the ear of the leader, who responds calmly. (This is much the same conversation that the characters might have heard at their camp and a character can make a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check if they understand Elvish to hear the conversation, see page 65.) After the sibilant conversation Godrai says: *“I will have those two. Blood will flow if you refuse. We will return at sundown.”*

The elves leave and the people of the caravan are left to discuss the ultimatum.

Scene 7: Negotiations Under the Axe

THE CARAVAN COMPANIONS have to make up their minds: do they hand the pathfinders Belun and Ludo over or do they defend them when the elves (re)appear? The caravan owner Argasto is full of doubt but will be forced to make the final judgment. Before he does, he wants to learn what others think on the matter.

What Really Happened

If the PCs are afforded the opportunity to question Ludo and manage to make him speak (requires a successful DC 13 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check, along with credible threats) he has the following story to tell: He and Belun were hired as pathfinders by a group of treasure-hunters, headed by an unpleasant individual named Gorak and his second, the changeling Alahara.

The group traveled deep into Davokar but did not reach the planned target: the darker parts of the forest and its well-preserved ruins. Instead they came across a smaller tomb, the final resting place of a king from the early days of Symbaroum. The others in the team got away with gold, jewelry and mystical objects; all that Gorak wanted for himself was the verdigris-covered copper crown worn by the dead lord; a crown that had merged with the cranium.

Once they returned to Thistle Hold, the expedition’s members lived like kings for a while. Then they started to die, or change (if Belun has already changed, Ludo says that the same happened to the others). Gorak and Alahara disappeared after having talked to Lasifor Nightpitch, the Mayor of the Hold. Then Belun started to feel as if someone was watching him and together the pair fled south.

Ludo suddenly remembers another detail: one evening by the fire everyone in the expedition got to hold the cranium with the crown. He recalls that the skull, despite being dead, was warm to the touch and that he for a moment felt as if its empty eyes looked back at him in the glow from the camp fire...

The Black Cloak Lestra wants to put the brothers in shackles and take them to the monastery of the Twilight Friars on the northern slopes of the Titans, where members of her order can *“care for them if they are sick.”* The Black Cloaks are very interested in everything related to the blight and corruption of Davokar.

5 RUINS OF SYMBAROU

Lestra will say and do whatever it takes to make this happen. She is, for instance, willing to lie, saying she knows how the elves of the Iron Pact always operate: they will kill everyone, extradition or not, for safety's sake.

The two barbarians are of course opposed to being extradited; something that Ludo loudly proclaims while Belun mutters it. The mule keeper Telk wants the brothers to be surrendered: *"Better them than me!"* Concurring mumbles and cries are heard from many others in the caravan.

The PCs will tip the scales, either for extradition to the elves or for being taken to the monastery. No matter which decision is made, Argasto goes to shackle the two pathfinders. Precisely then, faced by the severity of their desperate situation, Belun undergoes a horrific transformation. Ludo is as shocked as anyone.

Belun, blight-born

Belun dies a bloody death when something terrible literally claws itself out of his skin: a towering creature of raw, exposed muscle, with fingers transformed into knives of bone, and cranial outgrowths that make it look as if it wears a pointy bone crown.

The abomination is furious and famished, and will kill indiscriminately until it is slain. In death the body collapses into a bloody, shapeless heap that rapidly begins to rot. All that remains is the deformed cranium.

BLIGHT-BORN

Medium abomination

ARMOR CLASS 15 (natural armor)

HIT POINTS 38 (7D8 + 7)

SPEED 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)

SAVING THROWS Constitution +3, Wisdom +4



SKILLS Perception +4, Stealth +4, Survival +4

SENSES passive Perception 14

LANGUAGES —

CHALLENGE 3 (700 XP)

MANNER first trembling with fear, then trembling from the dark power that surges through it

SHADOW oozing black (thoroughly corrupt)

EQUIPMENT none

BERSERKER.

The blight-born can use its bonus action to enter a rage. While in a rage, it is resistant to normal bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage. It has advantage on attack rolls and attacks against it also have advantage. Its attacks do an extra +2 damage. It loses its rage if it ends its turn without having attacked a creature since its last turn or taken damage since its last turn.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The blight-born makes two attacks with its claws.

CLAW. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2D4 + 3) slashing damage.

Ludo

Ludo wears a stigma as a sign of his growing corruption — he has wounds that will not heal in the creases of all bodily joints. Note that if Ludo is saved, he too



will sooner or later reach the same end as Belun did. When Ludo is transformed the Game Master can reuse the appearance and stats of Belun. The Corruption will take 1D4 more days before it triggers his metamorphosis into a blight-born monstrosity.

LUDO

Medium humanoid (human)

ARMOR CLASS 12 (leather armor)

HIT POINTS 16 (3D8 + 3)

SPEED 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

SKILLS Perception +3, Survival +3

SENSES passive Perception 13

LANGUAGES Ambrian, Barbarian

CHALLENGE 1/4 (50 XP)

MANNER distracted and worried

SHADOW black iron (Corruption: 3/2)

EQUIPMENT 1D6 silver pieces

ACTIONS

SHORT SWORD. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1D6 + 1) piercing damage.

Scene 8:

Extradition or Combat

WITH THE ABOMINATION laid to rest, there is still Ludo to deal with. Argasto's decision on what to do with the brother either results in an extradition (Scene 8A), or in a final battle between the people of the caravan and the elves (Scene 8B). Irrespective of what happens, the caravan owner will likely need the help of all capable companions.

A kind Game Master might have the blight-born Belun strike out at Ludo and slay him. If so, the elves can plainly see the evidence before them and are satisfied. However, Lestra is distraught. If the characters are Ambrian, she says "You are seriously mistaken if you believe this strengthens our position. Prios, the One and the Giver of Laws, wants the corrupted brought to Ambria, where my brothers and sisters will care for them. This was a waste of life."

SCENE 8A:

ELVEN EXTRADITION

If Ludo survives and is handed over to the elves, Saran-Ri will transform into a beamon (see the textblock on page 67), bite hold of the kicking and screaming barbarian and drag him away in the lessening storm.

The last the PCs see of the pathfinder is his waving arms and desperate facial expression. Soon they disappear from sight and moments later the cries of Ludo go silent, either because they are drowned out by the cold winds of the mountain pass or because not even the blight-stricken can make sounds when they have passed over into the realm of the dead.

5 RUINS OF SYMBAROU

SCENE 8B: THE FINAL BATTLE

If the player characters do not speak up for surrendering the pathfinders, Argasto decides to fight for them. In that case, combat with the elves is inevitable. The elves are dangerous. Godrai is a summer elf in full bloom and Saran-Ri a young summer elf skilled in battle - which becomes apparent when the fight begins. However, they are only out to get Ludo; the PCs can surrender or flee at any time.

The elves make their move at sundown. They take aim at Ludo and will withdraw once the barbarian is dead; they will not hunt those who run or strike at persons that have surrendered. Argasto, Lestra, Ludo and some of Argasto's guards will fight alongside the player characters. There are two ways to handle the fight:

- ◆ The players get to handle one each of the mentioned NPCs during the battle, relieving the GM from that task.
- ◆ The player characters fight either Godrai or Saran-Ri; the other elf faces Argasto and his companions. In this case the outcome of both fights is decided by what happens in the characters' fight — if they win, both groups do; if they fail, both fail.



Argasto, Caravan Master

If the decision has been made to defend the pathfinder, Argasto will do so to the best of his ability!

ARGASTO						
Medium humanoid (human)						
ARMOR CLASS		15 (scale mail)				
HIT POINTS		22 (4D8 + 4)				
SPEED		30 ft				
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	
15 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	
SKILLS		Investigation +2, Perception +3, Survival +3				
SENSES		passive Perception 13				



LANGUAGES	Ambrian
CHALLENGE	1/2 (100 XP)
MANNER	sighs deeply, shakes his head
SHADOW	bronze, dull and unpolished (Corruption: 0/5)
EQUIPMENT	1D6 x 10 gold pieces, 2D6 silver pieces
ACTIONS	
MAUL. <i>Melee Weapon Attack:</i> +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. <i>Hit:</i> 9 (2D6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.	

Lestra, Black Cloak

Lestra is used to commanding Templars to do the dirty work once she has unmasked an abomination. But she will face both abominations and elves with her sword in hand, so long as she is convinced that doing so is the will of Prios.

LESTRA						
Medium humanoid (human)						
ARMOR CLASS		12				
HIT POINTS		22 (3D8 + 9)				
SPEED		30 ft				
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	



SKILLS Deception +3, Insight +5, Persuasion +3, Religion +2

SENSES passive Perception 13

LANGUAGES Ambrian

CHALLENGE 1 (200 XP)

MANNER bites her lip

SHADOW brushed steel with a few dark spots (Corruption: 1/7)

EQUIPMENT sun symbol on a necklace, 2D6 gold pieces, scroll titled “*The Inner Nature of the Abomination*”

ACTIONS

BLESS. Lestra chooses three creatures within 30 feet. Whenever the chosen creatures make an attack roll or saving throw they add 1D4 to the roll. This effect lasts as long as Lestra concentrates on it, or up to a maximum of 1 minute. She gains 1D4 + 1 Corruption by casting this spell.

CURE WOUNDS. Lestra touches a creature. It regains 1D8 + 3 hit points. Lestra gains 2 Corruption.

SACRED FLAME. Flame-like radiance descends on a creature of Lestra’s choice that she can see within 60 feet. The target must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 1D8 radiant damage. Lestra gains 1 Corruption.

SHORT SWORD. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1D6 + 2) piercing damage.

SPARE THE DYING. Lestra touches a living creature that has 0 hit points. The creature becomes stable.



The Road North

No matter how Scene 8 ends the storm finally dies out. The strong winds subside, the snowfall ends and soon the world rests peacefully under its snow-white blanket.

After two more days of struggles the caravan makes it across the snowy plateau, up through the last pass where the passengers get a fantastic view of the landscape that stretches out before them.

Below in the distance lies Yndaros, the grand capital city of Ambria, towering over farmlands covered in swaying fields and pierced by glittering rivers. Here and there are patches of forest, burning in yellow and red. The patches become more frequent and grow bigger and bigger the further the gaze wanders north, and somewhere far away the trees gain mastery over the lowland – trees that together make out the dark and mythic forest of Davokar.

It is probably only your knowledge of its existence that makes you imagine seeing the red flame of Thistle Hold's beacon, located at the forest's edge. Karvosti, the plateau ruled by witches and barbarian warriors, cannot be seen, as it lies deep in the woods; the same goes for the haunted ruins of old Symbaroum. And that

is likely for the best, since the ruins are said to be monstrously beautiful, almost hypnotic in their overgrown splendor.

Argasto interrupts your daydreams with a high-pitched order to mount up. As soon as the cookware has been stowed away, the break is over, and the caravan resumes its journey towards Yndaros. The wagons sway on bumpy routes, with animals in front and exhausted travelers holding ropes tied to the wagons behind.

Weary faces are gleaming with sweat in the chilly mountain air. Steamy clouds fume from mouths and muzzles alike. But despite fatigue and cold, the eyes of the travelers shine as brightly as the pinnacles on the Queen's palace – the Promised Land is waiting for them to arrive.

Overview

THIS FINAL SECTION is intended to get the party to the edge of Davokar, where more adventures await. You'll want to make a judgment about the game so far and your players. Some groups will enjoy a quick wind-down after a big fight; other groups with younger or less experienced players might be reaching the limits of their attention or patience. In these cases, ignoring the optional scenes is probably for the best.

However, for groups who have made deep connections between the characters already or who want even more experience with the *Ruins of Symbaroum* system you can draw out the following narration, giving folks the chance to set watches and talk among themselves or with the caravan members.

The journey from the foothills of the Titans to the town of Thistle Hold is about 400 kilometers (or 250 miles), passing the capital city of Yndaros as well as Templewall, the seat of the Ambrian Sun Church. Edira and the player characters accompany the caravan to Yndaros, where they break off to continue on their own. And as they are eager to arrive in the Hold, it is suggested that the party abstain from entering the larger settlements – from an adventuring perspective, those sites are better left to be explored with the support of future modules for *Ruins of Symbaroum*.

If you agree, the party keeps to the roads, spending their nights at roadhouses or out in the open. They travel a rolling landscape covered in swaying fields of wheat, grain and sun-yellow rapeseed; they pass small village



5 RUINS OF SYMBAROU

centers with newly built timber houses and rose-cheeked inhabitants; they pass over arched bridges, from which they literally can see the shadows of big, fat trouts struggling against the stream – as appearances go, the contrast to the land they left behind could not be greater.

Here follows a couple of suggested scenes that you can use, or build on, if you would like to make the journey more eventful.

OPTIONAL SCENE 1: INTERACTING WITH THE CARAVAN

Before reaching Yndaros, the Game Master can set one or more scenes where the player characters get to interact with their traveling companions, summing up what has happened and reminiscing about the good, the bad and the horrible. Such a scene can take place around the fire or on the road, depending on what suits the story best.

- ◆ **ARGASTO.** Argasto's attitude towards the player characters naturally depends on how they handled themselves during the key challenges of the journey: the theft of the Sun Stone and the blight-birth of Belun. If they were helpful and proved loyal to the caravan collective, he promises to keep them in mind for future travels. When in Ambria, he often stays in Yndaros, parked at the Refugee Camp – they can find him there or by asking around at the caravan station.
- ◆ **EDIRA.** Edira does not change much from the reclusive person you have gotten to know, but once in Ambria she is actually sometimes seen smiling to herself. If approached she informs the player characters of her plan, to follow the caravan as far as Yndaros and then continue to Thistle Hold, avoiding all large towns and settlements. She doesn't say as much, but if the player characters helped recover the Sun Stone from Keler, she is both thankful and impressed.
- ◆ **LESTRA.** If Ludo was given over to the Black Cloak, she is long gone, having taken him to the Twilight Monastery in the mountains. Otherwise she will likely look up the characters, especially Ansela, to try and educate them about the Lawgiver's new realm: "Here,

evil does not show, not like in the old country; here it hides in plain sight, even basking in sunlight, in what seems sound and true. All taint of corruption must be identified, then studied, and then cleansed – only in that way can we hope to ever breathe life into Prios and purify this realm from evil."

- ◆ **TELK.** The mule-handler is a bit shell-shocked and amazed at all that has happened since the group and he sat by a campfire in Alberetor. He'll wonder aloud at how his friend proved to be a thief in league with the undead and how Belun and Ludo were corrupted by Davokar and hunted by elves! In short, he is the perfect person to use for a scene meant to give the players a chance to discuss the events that happened on the road to the Promised Land.

OPTIONAL SCENE 2: PEDDLER ON THE ROAD

Somewhere on the road between Yndaros and Thistle Hold, the party encounters a peddler leading a donkey-drawn cart. His name is Tavio, the donkey's is Syna. He is headed to Yndaros but will stop for the characters if they would like to peruse his wares.

He has at least one of almost everything listed in the core rules equipment that has a cost in silver or copper pieces; should the price be in gold pieces, it is too rich an item for him to carry. If the character wants more than one of the item, roll a D6. On a 4 or more, there is only one available. On a 1, 2, or 3, he has that many more of the item that he can find by rummaging around the cart.

If you would like another stab at the rules of combat, Tavio's appearance may also provide such an encounter. Maybe a band of highwaymen has followed the peddler, waiting for him to meet with one or more customers who look like they might be worth robbing? If so, they have stats as a Caravan Guard (page 56); they outnumber the player characters 2:1, and close in from all directions, hidden by bushes and tall crops.

The player characters have a chance to spot them before they are ambushed, by making a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check. If unsuccessful then the player characters are surprised during the first round of combat.

Adventure Appendix

In this section you will find a description of the mystical artifacts that the player characters can find or be affected by during the scenario. The section also includes two maps and short descriptions of some of the places visited during Toll of the Mountains.

Artifacts

THE CHARACTERS MIGHT acquire the following items over the course of the adventure.

MAL-ROGAN'S MUMMIFIED HAND

The "amulet" of Mal-Rogan is in fact his own left hand, mummified and hung from a rusty chain.

Mal-Rogan's soul is tied to the amulet and it can give others beside himself the powers listed below. However, the hand comes with a severe negative effect: as long as the amulet exists, Mal-Rogan will respawn, irrespective of how he was slain or what was done to the corpse – and he will do anything to reclaim his corrupt soul!

The amulet requires attunement and the bearer gains 2 points of permanent Corruption once attuned. If the amulet is destroyed or another person attunes to the hand then 1 point of permanent Corruption fades over the next few days.

- ◆ **WORD OF DOOM:** The master of the amulet uses their action to utter words of doom over their enemies. The bearer gains 1D4 points of temporary Corruption. For the next minute, any attackers have disadvantage on attack rolls against the bearer.
- ◆ **BLACK BLISS:** By gaining a point of temporary Corruption and using a bonus action, the bearer can reroll any ability check.

MAL-ROGAN'S REVENGE

It is possible for the one tied to the amulet to destroy it; all it takes is a successful DC 15 Wisdom saving throw to overcome the desire not to harm the hand. If it is destroyed, the released soul of Mal-Rogan will try to possess its previous master. The character must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw and a DC 15 Charisma saving throw. If they succeed at two or more saving throws they have fought off the possession — the spirit of Mal-Rogan screams as it fades from this world.

If the possession succeeds, the character will be controlled by Mal-Rogan and seek out vengeance on their former friends and anyone who hurt Mal-Rogan in the past. If the character is slain, Mal-Rogan dies a final death as well. If the character is the target of *banishment* or *greater restoration* then they can be restored to normal, although they remember all their actions as Mal-Rogan.

THE SUN STONE

In ancient times wizards tied a wild fire spirit to this stone. Normally it glows with a pale light and gives off a mild warmth (enough to keep someone warm on an icy winter day). Someone who attunes with the stone gains 1 point of permanent Corruption while attuned. They can awaken the fire spirit and command it to perform more dramatic actions, namely the following ones:

5 RUINS OF SYMBAROU

- ◆ **STRIKE WITH FIRE:** By gaining 1 point of temporary Corruption and using an action, the master of the Sun Stone can set an object that they can see within 60 feet alight. This includes enemy garments (1D6 fire damage for 1D4 rounds). A burning person can put out the fire by using an action.
- ◆ **AMPLIFY FLAME:** If the master of the stone can cast spells that produce fire damage, they can use the stone to increase their power. By using a bonus action and gaining a point of temporary Corruption they can add their proficiency bonus as additional fire damage.
- ◆ **FIRE SPIRIT:** By using an action and gaining 1D4 points of temporary Corruption the master of the stone can release the captured fire spirit, destroying the artifact in the process. The spirit appears as a towering humanoid made of flames and soot. It is grateful and will obey its former master for one hour. It can be given simple commands like “guard this place,” “attack that individual” or “keep me safe”.



FIRE SPIRIT

Medium elemental, neutral

ARMOR CLASS 12

HIT POINTS 75 (10D8 + 30)

SPEED 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

DAMAGE RESISTANCES bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

DAMAGE fire, poison

IMMUNITIES

CONDITION IMMUNITIES exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

SENSES darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES Irgan

CHALLENGE 3 (700 XP)

MANNER smiling, exulting in its freedom

SHADOW non-applicable (Corruption: 0/0)

EQUIPMENT none

FIRE FORM.

The spirit can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. A creature that touches the fire spirit or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 3 (1D6) fire damage. In addition, the fire spirit can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. The first time it enters a creature's space on a turn, that creature takes 3 (1D6) fire damage and catches fire; until someone takes an action to douse the fire, the creature takes 3 (1D6) fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

ILLUMINATION.

The fire spirit sheds bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet.

WATER SUSCEPTIBILITY.

For every 5 feet the fire spirit moves in water or snow, or for every gallon of water splashed on it, it takes 1 cold damage.

ACTIONS

EMBRACE. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2D4 + 2) fire damage. If the target is a creature or a flammable object, it ignites. Until a creature takes an action to douse the fire, the target takes 3 (1D6) fire damage at the start of each of its turns.



Locations

THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS are featured in the third act of the adventure. If you as a Game Master wishes to expand on or alter them, or if the player characters

take initiatives which lead them elsewhere, you can always draw your own maps, before the game starts or during play.

THE MOUNTAIN PASS

The pass is in truth two passes, fringed by high slopes to the east and west and with a vast plateau between them.



5 RUINS OF SYMBAROU

THE CORRAL



THE CORRAL

The six wagons of the caravan form a corral each evening, or when under threat. Wooden gates leaning against barrels are placed between the wagons. All travelers have a designated post in the event of danger, at a gate if the person can fight and otherwise in shelter behind the wagons.

Finding one's place in the corral is a well-rehearsed routine which does not require instructions — an alarm from a guard or an order from Argasto is enough for everyone to rush to their assigned place, weapon in hand.

THE ELVEN CAMP

The elven camp is located about halfway over the plateau, on the western slope (the Game Master

decides on a suitable location). The camp is simple, with an earth-toned tent, some equipment and three beds on which to rest or meditate. One of the elves is always on guard and the camp is skillfully concealed, although possible to find by following their tracks.

Pre-made Characters

THE NEXT FEW pages have a series of premade characters in case you'd like to play the adventure as quickly as possible. Each character comes with a backstory that explains why they're in the south as the adventure begins.

Ansela

(ANSELM), HUMAN MYSTIC (THEURG)

A barbarian by birth, but a childhood convert to the faith of the Sun Church, you have proven your devotion to Priors over and over again.

AFTER RECEIVING YOUR education at the temple on Karvosti you moved on to Thistle Hold, where you didn't stay for more than a week before the Lawgiver gave you a holy errand to run: it was time to evacuate one of the few remaining Sun Temples in Alberetor, and guide its sole inhabitant up north. The task was gifted to you and a goblin called Fenya – a local guide with ties to the Church, known to have a passion for adventure.

Your mission was to seek out the temple and inform a liturg named Edira that it was time to abandon the small shrine, and to bring a fabled artifact called the Sun Stone to the temple in Thistle Hold. Having delivered the message, the three of you are now on your way north, together with two other humans who had sought refuge on the holy grounds – Bartolom of Ordo Magica, and a noble soldier named Orlan Daar.

You haven't come very far, but you have quickly grown to like and respect both Bartolom and Orlan, despite feeling a bit awkward about not being able to answer their many questions about the new realm of their southern Queen (frankly, you don't know very much about it). The priestess Edira is more difficult to like, since she rarely speaks and often wanders off on her own. However, your closest friend is no doubt the goblin Fenya. She is a bit on the wild side, but she loves to tell tall tales about her many adventures and mishaps in the forest you both call home, Davokar.



RUINS OF SYMBAROUM

CLASS Mystic

Player Name

APPROACH

Theurg

CHARACTER NAME

Ansela

BACKGROUND

Convert

RACE

Human (Barbarian)

LEVEL

1st

XP

STRENGTH

+2 | 14

+2 SAVING THROW

+2 ATHLETICS

+2 PROFICIENCY BONUS

|| + || = ||
ARMOR + SHIELD = AC

TEMPORARY HIT POINTS

CURRENT HIT POINTS

DEXTERITY

+0 | 10

+0 SAVING THROW

+0 ACROBATICS

+0 SLEIGHT OF HAND

+0 STEALTH

+0
INITIATIVE

30
SPEED

10
MAXIMUM HIT POINTS

CURRENT HIT DICE

CONSTITUTION

+2 | 14

+2 SAVING THROW

- EXHAUSTION**
- DISADVANTAGE ON CHECKS
 - HALF SPEED
 - DISADVANTAGE ON ATTACKS/SAVING THROWS
 - HP MAX HALVED
 - SPEED ZERO
 - DEAD

1 (d8)
MAXIMUM HIT DICE

DEATH SAVES

INTELLIGENCE

+2 | 14

+4 SAVING THROW

+2 ARCANA

+4 HISTORY

+2 INVESTIGATION

+2 NATURE

+4 RELIGION

PASSIVE INSIGHT
15

WISDOM

+3 | 16

+5 SAVING THROW

+3 ANIMAL HANDLING

+5 INSIGHT

+5 MEDICINE

+3 PERCEPTION

+3 SURVIVAL

PASSIVE PERCEPTION
13

CHARISMA

-1 | 8

-1 SAVING THROW

-1 DECEPTION

-1 INTIMIDATION

-1 PERFORMANCE

-1 PERSUASION

INSPIRATION



NAME	RANGE/REACH	ATTACK BONUS	DAMAGE (TYPE)
<u>Quarterstaff</u>	<u>5 ft.</u>	<u>+4</u>	<u>1d6(1d8) + 2 (B)</u>
<u>Spear</u>	<u>5ft or 20/60ft</u>	<u>+4</u>	<u>1d6(1d8) + 2 (P)</u>
<u>Daggers (2)</u>	<u>5ft or 20/60ft</u>	<u>+4</u>	<u>1d4 + 2 (Piercing)</u>

ATTACKS & SPELLCASTING

<u>4</u> GOLD	<u> </u> SILVER	<u>25</u> COPPER	OTHER TREASURES
------------------	--------------------	---------------------	-----------------

EQUIPMENT
<u>Calligrapher's set, religious robes</u>
<u>Quarterstaff, spear</u>
<u>Explorer's pack</u>
<u>Leather armor, two daggers, component pouch</u>

LANGUAGES & PROFICIENCIES
<u>Ambrian, Barbarian</u>
<u>Calligrapher's Supplies</u>
<u>Light armor, simple weapons</u>

<u> </u> + <u> </u> = <u> </u> / <u> </u> <u>7</u>
TEMPORARY CORRUPTION + PERMANENT CORRUPTION = CURRENT CORRUPTION / CORRUPTON THRESHOLD

SHADOW
<u>Shimmering gold like the sun reflecting from a mirror.</u>
PERSONALITY TRAITS
<u>I repeat back things that you say to me. Not to annoy but to understand.</u>
IDEALS
<u>I am very open-minded. If my teachers could accept me, I can accept anyone.</u>
BONDS
<u>The Word. What is written cannot be changed or undone. That is power.</u>
FLAWS
<u>Despite my new life, I still remember my family.</u>
<u>I am suspicious of my teachers. Why are they so nice to me?</u>

FEATURES & TRAITS
Contacts: DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check can find out about a person who should be able to help with a specific question or precarious situation.
Bushcraft: DC 10 (+ number of allies) Wisdom (Survival) check to find one day's worth of food in the wild.
Member of the Church: You can prove yourself a servant of Prios and gain shelter in a church. DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check possibly needed.
Spellcasting: +5 spell attack, 13 spell save
Favored Spells: <u>sacred flame, resistance, shield of faith</u>
Cantrips: <u>guidance, light, resistance, sacred flame, spare the dying, thaumaturgy (+1 Temp. Corruption except for favored)</u>
1st level spells: <u>bles (1d4 + 1 Temp. Corruption), cure wounds (1d4 + 1 Temp. Corruption), shield of faith (2 Temp. Corruption)</u>

Bartolom

(BARTALA), HUMAN MYSTIC (WIZARD)

You are a novice of Ordo Magica, Ambria's biggest and most influential order of wizardry. When all others journeyed north, you and your master stayed in Alberetor to study the dying earth, although you wanted nothing more than to tag along and search for the truth behind rumors about Davokar's herbs and the magic of barbarian witches.

THREE MONTHS AGO your master died, and left you alone in the world. After about a week, you held a small ceremony to close the order tower, and you relocated to a nearby temple after having asked permission from its sole inhabitant, Edira - a reclusive but not at all unfriendly priestess of Prios whom you had met many times over the years without really getting to know. You talked to her about leaving Alberetor behind, and soon you were not alone in trying to convince the stubborn theurg: a Pansar, Orlan of House Daar, who you vaguely remember having tended to after a battle against the Dark Lords, also came to seek refuge at the temple.

If you were the least bit superstitious you would probably have considered it fated: only days after Orlan's arrival, two travelers arrived calling Edira to the land north of the Titans. And now you are on your way, apparently headed for the same town where your only living acquaintance resides, your old teacher Master Vernam, who (as far as you know) is working as a tutor in Thistle Hold. The latest additions to your little group are a whimsical but quite interesting goblin called Fenya, and Ansela: a very curious priestess, descended from a barbarian clan but converted to the beliefs of your fellow Ambrians. Both seem to know a lot about the great forest of Davokar, but hardly anything about Ambria, the new and promised land of your people.



RUINS OF
SYMBAROUM

CLASS
Mystic

Player Name

APPROACH

Wizard

CHARACTER NAME

Bartolom

BACKGROUND

Scholar of Ordo Magica

RACE

Human (Ambrian)

LEVEL

1st

XP

STRENGTH

+0 | 10

- +0 SAVING THROW
- +0 ATHLETICS

+2 **PROFICIENCY BONUS**

11 + 2 = 13
ARMOR + SHIELD = AC

TEMPORARY HIT POINTS

CURRENT HIT POINTS

DEXTERITY

+1 | 12

- +1 SAVING THROW
- +1 ACROBATICS
- +1 SLEIGHT OF HAND
- +1 STEALTH

+1

INITIATIVE

30

SPEED

CONSTITUTION

+2 | 15

- +2 SAVING THROW

EXHAUSTION

- DISADVANTAGE ON CHECKS
- HALF SPEED
- DISADVANTAGE ON ATTACKS/SAVING THROWS
- HP MAX HALVED
- SPEED ZERO
- DEAD

1 (d8)

MAXIMUM HIT DICE

DEATH SAVES

INTELLIGENCE

+3 | 16

- +5 SAVING THROW
- +5 ARCANA
- +5 HISTORY
- +5 INVESTIGATION
- +3 NATURE
- +3 RELIGION

PASSIVE INSIGHT

15

WISDOM

+1 | 13

- +3 SAVING THROW
- +3 ANIMAL HANDLING
- +5 INSIGHT
- +3 MEDICINE
- +3 PERCEPTION
- +3 SURVIVAL

PASSIVE PERCEPTION

13

CHARISMA

+0 | 10

- +0 SAVING THROW
- +0 DECEPTION
- +0 INTIMIDATION
- +0 PERFORMANCE
- +0 PERSUASION

INSPIRATION



NAME RANGE/REACH ATTACK BONUS DAMAGE (TYPE)

Shortbow 80/320 ft. +3 1d6 + 1 (Piercing)

Daggers (2) 5ft or 20/60ft +3 1d4 + 1 (Piercing)

ATTACKS & SPELLCASTING

5

GOLD

65

SILVER

COPPER

OTHER TREASURES

EQUIPMENT

Painting Supplies, thick robes

Shortbow w/ 20 arrows, scholar's pack, leather armor, two daggers, component pouch.

Shield

LANGUAGES & PROFICIENCIES

Ambrian,

Painter's Supplies

Light armor, simple weapons

 + = / 7

TEMPORARY CORRUPTION + PERMANENT CORRUPTION = CURRENT CORRUPTION / CORRUPTON THRESHOLD

SHADOW

Fiery copper with patterns of grey lines.

PERSONALITY TRAITS

I like to be thought of as the smart one and often over-explain things.

I have a hard time keeping secrets.

IDEALS

Discovery. You only learn new things at the edge of knowledge.

BONDS

My master was a kind and generous person. I miss him dearly.

FLAWS

I don't have any sense of self-preservation when given the chance to explore.

FEATURES & TRAITS

Contacts: DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check can find out about a person who should be able to help with a specific question or precarious situation.

Privileged: No roll on common social interactions, advantage on dealing with Ambrians when needed.

Practical Knowledge: Once per long rest gain advantage on an INT check.

Spellcasting: +5 spell attack, 13 spell save

Favored Spells: fire bolt, ray of frost, thunderwave

Cantrips: dancing lights, fire bolt, light, mage hand, mending, message, minor illusion, prestidigitation, ray of frost (+1 Temp. Corruption except for favored)

1st level spells: burning hands* (1d4 + 1 Temp. Corruption), detect magic (1d4 + 1 Temp. Corruption), thunderwave (2 Temp. Corruption)

Fenya

GOBLIN SCOUNDREL (EXPLORER)

Even for a young goblin you are consumed with a lust for adventure and discovery. Somehow, you have always known that you were meant to be more than a simple laborer for an Ambrian master, and when your friends at the Sun Temple in Thistle Hold asked you to accompany one of their priests on an expedition to 'the old land,' you accepted without hesitation.

THE TRIP TO Alberetor and the stay there have been highly informative and interesting, but in all honesty — now your only desire is to return north, to again feel and smell the cold, musky air beneath Davokar's foliage.

You have come to know the priestess Ansela fairly well; she is very much like other clan folk, aside from having converted to the beliefs of the Ambrians. Besides, she is a good (and silent) listener, and you've always loved to tell stories of your previous adventures, real or... less so. Now you are on your way back to Thistle Hold together with three companions. The one you were sent to fetch is another sun priestess, just as silent but one of the worst listeners you've ever met - she always wanders off on her own and never reacts to anything you say or do; it's like you're not even there.

Then there are Orlan and Bartolom, the former being some kind of noble warrior, and not a very amusing one at that. But Bartolom you like, not least because he seems very curious about Davokar and the lands over the Titans. Also, he very much reminds you of Master Vernam, a genuinely nice teacher that you befriended during many long sessions at the missionary station in Blackmoor, just south of Thistle Hold. Had you been but half as good a listener as Ansela, Vernam would probably have been able to teach you much about reading, writing, counting and such.



RUINS OF SYMBAROUM

Player Name

CHARACTER NAME

RACE

CLASS

APPROACH

BACKGROUND

LEVEL

XP

Scoundrel

Explorer

Laborer

Goblin

1st

STRENGTH

-1 | 8

- 1 SAVING THROW
- 1 ATHLETICS

+2 PROFICIENCY BONUS

14 + 0 = 14

ARMOR + SHIELD = AC

DEXTERITY

+3 | 16

- +5 SAVING THROW
- +5 ACROBATICS
- +3 SLEIGHT OF HAND
- +5 STEALTH

+3

INITIATIVE

25

SPEED

CONSTITUTION

+3 | 16

- +3 SAVING THROW

EXHAUSTION

- DISADVANTAGE ON CHECKS
- HALF SPEED
- DISADVANTAGE ON ATTACKS/SAVING THROWS
- HP MAX HALVED
- SPEED ZERO
- DEAD

1 (d6)

MAXIMUM HIT DICE

- -
 -
 -
- DEATH SAVES

INTELLIGENCE

+1 | 12

- +1 SAVING THROW
- +1 ARCANA
- +1 HISTORY
- +3 INVESTIGATION
- +3 NATURE
- +1 RELIGION

PASSIVE INSIGHT

11

WISDOM

+1 | 13

- +1 SAVING THROW
- +1 ANIMAL HANDLING
- +1 INSIGHT
- +1 MEDICINE
- +5 PERCEPTION
- +5 SURVIVAL

PASSIVE PERCEPTION

15

CHARISMA

+0 | 10

- +2 SAVING THROW
- +0 DECEPTION
- +0 INTIMIDATION
- +0 PERFORMANCE
- +0 PERSUASION

INSPIRATION



TEMPORARY HIT POINTS

CURRENT HIT POINTS

9
MAXIMUM HIT POINTS

CURRENT HIT DICE

1 (d6)
MAXIMUM HIT DICE

NAME	RANGE/REACH	ATTACK BONUS	DAMAGE (TYPE)
Shortsword	5 ft.	+5	1d6 + 3 (Piercing)*
Shortbow	80/320 ft.	+5	1d6 + 3 (Piercing)
Daggers (2)	5ft or 20/60ft	+5	1d4 + 3 (Piercing)*

*If used in melee this attack might be eligible for backstab damage, see feature details.

ATTACKS & SPELLCASTING

GOLD

43
SILVER

COPPER

OTHER TREASURES

EQUIPMENT

Carpenter tools, thick work clothes

Shortsword, Shortbow w/20 arrows, explorer's pack

Leather armor, two daggers, thieves' tools.

LANGUAGES & PROFICIENCIES

Ambrian, Elvish

Carpenter's Tools, Thieves' Tools

Light armor, simple weapons, hand crossbows, longswords, rapiers, shortswords, longbows

$$\text{TEMPORARY CORRUPTION} + \text{PERMANENT CORRUPTION} = \text{CURRENT CORRUPTION} / \text{CORRUPTON THRESHOLD}$$

SHADOW

Dale silver like the moon behind thin clouds.

PERSONALITY TRAITS

I left my family behind to seek glory.

IDEALS

I like farm animals more than I like most people.

Opportunity. It's my right to try my own way, even if it fails.

BONDS

I wish I had paid more attention to Master Vernam.

FLAWS

I'm not really one for plans, or planning, or following instructions exactly.

FEATURES & TRAITS

Darkvision: See 60 ft in dim light as bright; and in darkness as dim light.

Pariahs: Disadvantage on CHA checks with other races, advantage with other goblins.

Survival Instinct: Take either Dodge or Disengage as a bonus action.

Tireless Worker: As long as you have no levels of exhaustion, you have advantage on saving throws against exhaustion.

Expertise: Double proficiency bonus for Perception & Survival

Backstab: Once per turn do 1d6 damage to melee target if you have advantage or it is engaged with an ally. You cannot use backstab if you have disadvantage on the attack.

Monster-hunter: Advantage on all attacks against targets that are size Large or bigger.

Wilderness-master: proficiency with Nature skill and longbow.

Orlan

(ORLANA), HUMAN WARRIOR (KNIGHT)

You are the youngest son of a – besides you – extinct house of nobility. The estates and your relatives perished in the Great War; you were accepted into the ranks of the Queen's Pansars, thanks to your skills and your family name.

NOW, AFTER SEVERAL years of service in the rear-guard still posted in Alberetor, you have had enough of patrols and drills. Just a couple of months ago you resigned and returned to your family's ruined estate in order to find a purpose in life, perhaps even the strength to rebuild your house.

You soon realized that there was nothing left for you in the devastated land of your forebears: this new purpose and new life must be crafted in Ambria, the new realm of Queen Korinthia Nightbane! About halfway to the mountains, you were spotted by a band of lingering undead and found refuge in a small temple, inhabited by a priestess and a young wizard that you recognized – he had literally saved your right leg after a hard-fought battle against the enemy hordes, many years earlier. You and Bartolom, the wizard, decided to band together to convince the Sun Priest Edira to leave the dying south for the Promised Land up north.

You were not making much progress when suddenly a pair of travelers came with a message from the Ambrian Sun Church: Edira was to abandon the temple and follow them to the town of Thistle Hold, at the border of the fabled forest of Davokar. So now you are not alone anymore; in fact, you have volunteered to follow the

company all the way, as their guard and protector. Not that Edira seems very keen on being protected; she often walks off on her own and rarely engages in any conversations or pleasantries. You aren't very talkative yourself, but you find both comfort and glimpses of joy in listening to the goblin Fenya narrate her tall-tales to Bartolom and Ansel – the priestess of northern heritage who came to guide Edira to The Promised Land.



RUINS OF SYMBAROUM

Player Name

CHARACTER NAME

RACE

CLASS

APPROACH

BACKGROUND

LEVEL

XP

Warrior

Knight

Orlan of the House Daar, Pansar

Human (Ambrian)

Houses of Nobility

1st

STRENGTH

+3 | 16

+5 SAVING THROW

+5 ATHLETICS

+2 PROFICIENCY BONUS

14 + = 14

ARMOR + SHIELD = AC

DEXTERITY

+1 | 13

+1 SAVING THROW

+1 ACROBATICS

+1 SLEIGHT OF HAND

+1 STEALTH

+1

INITIATIVE

30

SPEED

CONSTITUTION

+3 | 16

+5 SAVING THROW

EXHAUSTION

- DISADVANTAGE ON CHECKS
- HALF SPEED
- DISADVANTAGE ON ATTACKS/SAVING THROWS
- HP MAX HALVED
- SPEED ZERO
- DEAD

1 (d8)

MAXIMUM HIT DICE

DEATH SAVES

INTELLIGENCE

-1 | 9

-1 SAVING THROW

-1 ARCANA

-1 HISTORY

-1 INVESTIGATION

-1 NATURE

-1 RELIGION

WISDOM

+0 | 10

+0 SAVING THROW

+0 ANIMAL HANDLING

+0 INSIGHT

+0 MEDICINE

+2 PERCEPTION

+0 SURVIVAL

CHARISMA

+1 | 12

+1 SAVING THROW

+1 DECEPTION

+3 INTIMIDATION

+1 PERFORMANCE

+3 PERSUASION

INSPIRATION



PASSIVE INSIGHT

10

PASSIVE PERCEPTION

12

NAME	RANGE/REACH	ATTACK BONUS	DAMAGE (TYPE)
Great Flail*	5 ft.	+5	1d12 + 3 (Bludgeoning)
Longsword	5 ft.	+5	1d8 (1d10) + 3 (S)
Handaxes (2)	5ft or 20/60ft	+5	1d6 + 3 (Slashing)

* When you make a critical hit with this weapon, if the target is a creature it is knocked prone in addition to taking damage.

ATTACKS & SPELLCASTING

8

GOLD

67

SILVER

COPPER

OTHER TREASURES

EQUIPMENT

Calligrapher's set, signet ring, wax, paper

Chain shirt, great flail, longsword, two handaxes

Explorer's pack

LANGUAGES & PROFICIENCIES

Ambrian

Calligrapher's Supplies

All armor, shields, simple weapons, martial weapons

$$\text{TEMPORARY CORRUPTION} + \text{PERMANENT CORRUPTION} = \text{CURRENT CORRUPTION} / \text{CORRUPTION THRESHOLD}$$

SHADOW

Cleaming silver with white snowflakes.

PERSONALITY TRAITS

I am a good friend but a fierce enemy. Don't cross me.

I tend to be blind to the needs of others and idealistic in my expectations.

IDEALS

Trial of Arms. Prios ensures that the just are victorious.

BONDS

I place my faith in my wargear and companions.

FLAWS

I am too eager to see every concern as right vs. wrong; good vs. evil.

FEATURES & TRAITS

Contacts: DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check can find out about a person who should be able to help with a specific question or precarious situation.

Privileged: No roll on common social interactions, advantage on dealing with Ambrians when needed.

Titled: Automatically gain audience with other noble or receive excellent treatment from common folk. Higher nobles may give you missions.

Battle Wind: Use bonus action to get 2d4 + 5 temporary hit points. Use twice and then you must take a short or longer rest to use again.

Snare Fighting (Fighting Style): On successful attack use bonus action to forgo damage and make target prone instead (Medium two-legged creatures only).

Bodyguard: Use your reaction to take a blow for someone else within 5 feet. The attack roll is compared to your AC instead and you take damage if hit.

Symbaroum

More about the original Symbaroum roleplaying game can be found on at our homepage www.freeleaguepublishing.com, where you can sign up for the Free League newsletter and brows our webstore.

Should you want more information right now, we recommend the following links:

- ♦ [Symbaroum Quick Start, 117 page PDF](#)
- ♦ [Symbaroum Art Gallery](#)
- ♦ [On the Nature of Davokar](#) (setting introduction)
- ♦ [The Free League YouTube Channel](#)



The Korinthia Bundle, featuring the four Core Books, as many setting and adventure books, along with a number of support products.

"The game that has inspired me most this year"

- JOHN DODD, TABLETOP GAMING MAGAZINE

"The simple system and rich setting, thick with dark and evocative imagery, makes this a worthy consideration for new and experienced gamers alike."

- PAUL BALDOWSKI, GEEKNATIVE

"All in all, this is a stunning piece of work. It has all the sophistication of 13th Age, the mechanical beauty of Dungeon World, and the dark attractiveness of Warhammer Fantasy in a comprehensive and elegant game."

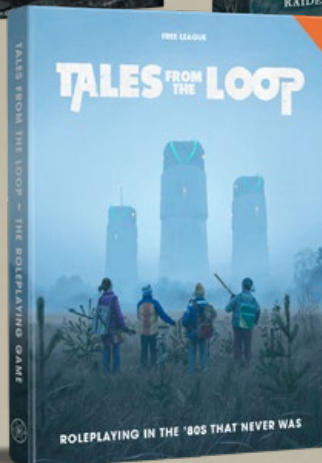
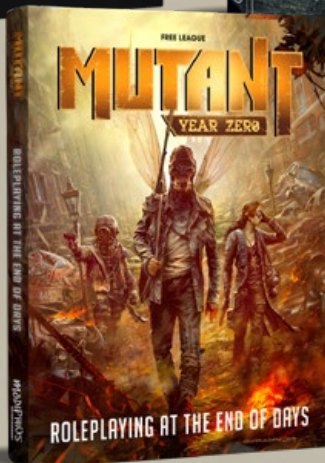
- RODNEY ORPHEUS, MEDIUM



FREE LEAGUE

www.freeleaguepublishing.com

More award-winning games from Free League Publishing:



OPEN GAME LICENSE

OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc (“Wizards”). All Rights Reserved.

- 1. DEFINITIONS:** (a) “Contributors” means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) “Derivative Material” means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) “Distribute” means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) “Open Game Content” means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) “Product Identity” means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) “Trademark” means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) “Use”, “Used” or “Using” means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) “You” or “Your” means the licensee in terms of this agreement.
- 2. THE LICENSE:** This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.
- 3. OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE:** By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.
- 4. GRANT AND CONSIDERATION:** In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty free, non exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. **5. REPRESENTATION OF AUTHORITY TO CONTRIBUTE:** If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.
6. **NOTICE OF LICENSE COPYRIGHT:** You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.
7. **USE OF PRODUCT IDENTITY:** You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.
8. **IDENTIFICATION:** If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.
9. **UPDATING THE LICENSE:** Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and

distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. **COPY OF THIS LICENSE:** You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.
11. **USE OF CONTRIBUTOR CREDITS:** You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.
12. **INABILITY TO COMPLY:** If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.
13. **TERMINATION:** This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.
14. **REFORMATION:** If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.
15. **COPYRIGHT NOTICE:** Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, LLC.
System Reference Document 5.1 Copyright 2016, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Mike Mearls, Jeremy Crawford, Chris Perkins, Rodney Thompson, Peter Lee, James Wyatt, Robert J. Schwalb, Bruce R. Cordell, Chris Sims, and Steve Townshend, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.
Ruins of Symbaroum: The Promised Land Copyright 2020, Fria Ligan AB; Authors Mattias Johnsson Haake, Mattias Lilja, Jacob Rodgers.