

# RuneQuest

## Rune of Chaos





# Rune of Chaos

## Credits

<b>Author</b> Bryan Steele	<b>Publications Manager</b> Ian Belcher
<b>Game Developers</b> Greg Lynch, Ken Hite, Ian Belcher	<b>Production Director</b> Alexander Fennell
<b>Editor</b> Nick Robinson	<b>Proofreading</b> Scribendi
<b>Cover Art</b> Bob Cram & Dan Howard	<b>Special Thanks</b> Ian Barstow, Greg Stafford
<b>RuneQuest Logo</b> Anne Stokes	<b>Playtesters</b> Mark Gedak, Tammy Gedak, Kent Little, Tony Higgins, Scott Hughes
<b>Interior Illustrations</b> Phil Renne, Tony Parker	

## Contents

<b>Credits &amp; Contents</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>A Simple Day of Travel</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The Tournament</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Let The Games Begin</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>To Victor Go the Spoils</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>The Last Trial</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>28</b>

Credits and contents

## Copyright Information

*Rune of Chaos* ©2006 Mongoose Publishing. All rights reserved. Reproduction of of this work by any means without the written permission of the publisher is expressly forbidden. All significant characters, names, places, items, art and text herein are copyrighted by Mongoose Publishing.

This game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without written permission. To learn more about the Open Game License, please go to [www.mongoosepublishing.com](http://www.mongoosepublishing.com).

This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United Kingdom. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places or events is purely coincidental.

*RuneQuest* is a trademark (TM) of Issaries, Inc. Produced under license from Issaries. All rights reserved. Printed in China.

# Introduction

## Rune of Chaos

The land less travelled is always rife with adventure, it is here that the brave (or foolish) venture. The wilds of every world hide unmentionable evil to be battled and powerful good to be discovered.

The forest of Peranai is no exception. Peranai is an old elfen wood, thick with the magic of many generations past. It is a harrowing place where adventurers have gone for centuries to look for the true keys of power, the blood of the gods...runes. This thick forest spans many kilometres, with numerous ancient burial mounds scattered along the shadowed undergrowth. Most of these burial mounds have been hollowed out by grave robbers and large predators making their dens, such lairs abound in the teeming forest. For years it has been a testing ground for would-be adventurers, claiming many of them.

Within the Peranai there have been dozens of minor runes found over the years, a fact that is well-circulated and no secret in the surrounding area. Both good and evil from many a day's ride away have been drawn here by the lust for these runes and the power they can bring. Venturing along the packed-soil cart roads and peat moss footpaths that twist and turn throughout the forest can put a travelling party in contact with any number of threats or opportunities.

On the southernmost side of the forest there lies a small village, called Wofe, built a few hundred paces from a dilapidated stone keep. The keep was built by early settlers that came to the Peranai, and was supposed to protect against the evils that lurked within the dark forests, however it was long devoid of life when Geramaine Wofe and his wife Susanna came and broke first ground on his new village. When Geramaine began his logging business, others heard of his success and came to join him.

The village Wofe swelled and now supports fifty families comfortably. Using the outlying forest for lumber and small game hunting, but also enjoying the added economy of trade from adventurers heading into the Peranai, Wofe is a tiny beacon of civilisation on the border of a wild, unconquered place.

## In This Adventure...

...the aged daughter of Geramaine and Susanna, Sadradi, has fallen quite ill and knows her life is coming to a close. She always has been dedicated to the protection of her village and the people who call it home. In recent months Wofe has suffered many disappearances of livestock, with a visiting farmer having gone missing just last week. Sadradi feared that a dark evil has nestled in her quaint little town and that when she passes to the next world, it will take over the village and undo her family's work. Subsequently she contacted a far off temple to the god of knowledge and the divinations of the priests there came back with the warning 'the source of Sadradi's evil in Wofe is close to home.'

The old woman took this as confirmation that something evil has moved into the village or corrupted one of her neighbours, rather than guessing the even more terrible truth.

Sadradi decided to set a trap for this malign presence and draw it out into the open. Spending a small fortune through a secret courier to obtain a mystical rune from one of the larger cities elsewhere in these lands, the old woman began the building and planning of her elaborate ruse. Surrounding the foot of the keep, just a few dozen metres from the edge of the Peranai, she had several strange obstacles and odd structures built. Within a month she created a training ground that extends several metres into the forest, with a marked horse trail going a full kilometre down one of the side paths. The village is a blur of rumours, and some think that she has gone mad in her old age.

She then proclaimed her intentions. Announcement parchments were drawn up and sent to nearby settlements to be tacked up for all to see. Wofe is to hold a special tournament of arms and skill for any champions to come and test their abilities against one another. The prize is simple – Sadradi's powerful 'Rune of Destiny.' By putting up a rune of such power for a simple test of skills, Sadradi believes that the unseen enemy will come forward to try and gain it. She has also hired a small number of mercenaries who she trusts not to be part of the evil on the pretence that they will allow the local militia more time

to enjoy the events whilst in reality she hopes they will be able to help defeat the evil once it has been revealed.

The Player Characters will be drawn into the adventure by stopping an attack on a wagon travelling to the tournament. During the attack, a champion who was to go to Wofe and compete is slain. The Player Characters are then asked to take his place.

Ever since the tournament was announced, several similar attacks on capable champions have taken place outside of the village. This has left the list of competitors short, only a handful will compete. When Sadradi sees the characters arrive and hears of their heroic deeds saving the wagon driver, she hopes that they will be able to help fight the evil lurking in Wofe.

The tournament itself is a test of skills in several different events, many of which the characters may or may not be very good at. No matter how well or poorly they do in these events, there is always the promise of a major boon in the sundown Grand Melee, where all competitors will come forward and fight to the last champion standing.

During this Grand Melee, a betrayal most foul will and Sadradi will find out exactly who and what sort of evil is lurking in her tiny village. There will be a terrible price to pay and only the characters will be able to stop it; if they cannot the denizens of the Peranai might claim yet another settlement on its borders.

## Preparing to Play

Rune of Chaos is a short, introductory adventure can be placed in nearly any *RuneQuest* campaign, but the Games Master may need to tweak a few things here and there for his own setting, but the overall plot behind the adventure should remain.

A copy of *RuneQuest*, a notepad, pencils and a full set of dice (at least one of each of the following; D20, D12, D10, D8, D6 and D4) are needed to play Rune of Chaos. Players and Games Masters may also find copies of the *RuneQuest Companion* or *Glorantha – The Second Age* as good reference points for several minor facets of the adventure. Every encounter in the scenario has statistics listed for those involved, but some Games Masters may wish to have extra information at their fingertips for when Players take interesting turns away from the main plot, or

want to come back to this setting later in the campaign. It may also be helpful to have a few of Mongoose Publishing's *RuneQuest* miniatures or counters and some form of map handy for when battles break out, but these are also not essential.

Rune of Chaos assumes that a heroic party of adventurers is involved in the scenario. However the Games Master may need to manipulate events a little to get them to follow the plot. Whilst the setting is designed to allow a group of intrepid heroes to swoop in and save the day (in a matter of speaking), a more amoral and selfish party could find this adventure rewarding. It essentially is up to the Games Master to make it work, but the adventure scenario lends itself to modification.

Games Masters should read and become familiar with the entire scenario before attempting to run it. This should allow Games Masters to seamlessly fit each encounter together with the last, or to evolve their methods to mesh the encounters with the sometimes unpredictable actions of his Player Characters. This is extremely important, as Rune of Chaos allows a healthy degree of action in the village of Wofe that could steer the Players away from the main storyline.

This scenario is designed for three to five starting Player Characters, though it can be easily adjusted or adapted to accommodate groups with higher experience, abilities or attendance. Should Games Masters have more or fewer Players they can easily use their own judgment to strengthen or weaken the severity of some encounters.

This adventure assumes the Player Characters have not yet been to the Peranai area, and that they are just passing through or hoping for one of the supposedly 'frequent' rune sightings in the forested area. They can be simply moving from one place to another, as this opening encounter can easily take place within a few kilometres of Wofe.

For the convenience of the Games Master who wants to use Wofe and the Peranai in his campaign beyond just as a setting for this scenario, we have included a map and some additional information about the area. As always, if this does not fit well with a Games Master's current *RuneQuest* campaign he should change it as he sees fit.

# A Simple Day of Travel

## A Beautiful Morning

The Player Characters will be enjoying a pleasant morning walk (or ride, if they have steeds) through the countryside when they come to an object in the road. This will hold their attention long enough for at least one of them to notice what is occurring just inside the tree line. As the Player Characters travel read the following aloud:

**The sun is a reminder that not every day in this land is a bitter one. From within the dense copse of oaken trees nearby you can hear the songs of a dozen different birds, and a gentle breeze from the north is blowing the scent of new flowers to you. It is a**

**beautiful morning indeed. Your reverie is interrupted when you spot a strange object in the road ahead.**

If the Player Characters ignore the object and try and go in another direction, skip ahead to the Perception skill test below. If they choose to investigate the object, read the following aloud:

**As you draw nearer to the object in the road, the day suddenly seems less wholesome. Surrounded by a swarm of flies is the torso of a young man. He has been bisected from one shoulder and through to the opposite hip, his blonde-haired head stares skywards.**

## The Forest of Peranai

A dark and thick forest of very old trees, the Peranai is a dangerous place for the unwary. The worn paths are more or less safe during the day, with only the occasional brigand lurking to spring an ambush. Anywhere off these 'roads' during the day or under the entire tree cover after dusk is not safe. The forest is crawling with savage predators, and the enigmatic and powerful elves that once policed the area have all but been wiped out and replaced by the savage and Chaotic broo.

The Crimson Hoof tribe of broo have ruled the darkest places of the Peranai since they initially raided the Stonewatchers Keep generations ago. The tools and weapons they took from the keep in that raid was exactly what they needed to strike a lasting blow against the elves of the forest – and they are now the primary sentient lifeform within it. This is why travelling in the Peranai is so dangerous for all but the most proficient warriors.

There are several large lairs in the ancient elfin burial mounds, hollowed out by grave robbers, inhabited by many dangerous creatures. For every eight hours spent in the Peranai there is a 75% chance of encountering one of these inhabitants. If this occurs, roll 2D6 and see below as to what has been encountered.

2D6 Result	Random Encounter†
2	1D3 elfin scouts; will be wary of most outsiders but will not immediately attack
3-5	One centaur warrior hunting for broo; will likely try to enlist allies if possible
6-8	1D4 Crimson Hoof broo warriors; patrolling for food - and the PCs qualify!
9-10	2D3 wolves starved due to broo over-hunting; will attack if they outnumber PCs
11	One brown bear foraging for food; will only attack if bothered
12	1D2 dark trolls hunting elves for food or broo to kill; they will attack PCs if not bribed suitably

† All of these creatures can be found either in the Appendix of this book, or in the Monsters chapter of *RuneQuest*.



**There is no sign of decay or decomposition on the body. Whatever killed him did so recently, and with one very powerful stroke.**

A simple Perception skill test (with a +20% bonus) for the Player Characters should be made. If successful the following can be gleaned at a quick glance:

- ☒ The man's lower body is nowhere to be found, and there is no blood trail.
- ☒ The body's hand has a swordsman's glove pulled halfway onto his fingers.

After any examination of the body read the following:

**Next to the grisly scene you can see what looks like matching ruts in the dewy grass and morning mud. You would say they look like wagon wheel tracks. The tracks lead off the path into the trees, where they disappear into the underbrush.**

If any of the Player Characters look closer at the grassy tracks, they may attempt a simple Tracking skill test (with a +20% bonus). A success indicates they can see that a number of hoof prints accompany the wagon ruts, and at least one pair of booted feet. The largest of the hoof prints is sunken almost a full inch into the ground, likely made by a large horse or mule.

Should the Player Characters choose to sneak up to the tree line and have a look, read the following aloud:

**You are reminded how quickly a day can turn from beautiful to horrible, as a raven's echoing call brings to your attention the fact that no longer are the songbirds singing. The wind has picked up, and now whistles through the branches of the trees you are peering through.**

**The ruts disappear as they go deeper into the trees, being replaced with torn moss and overturned stones. Not too far ahead you can see a large shape, which could easily be a covered wagon. Just as the raven calls out again, you think you hear inhuman and guttural voices.**

If the Player Characters advance stealthily, they will need to pass normal Stealth tests versus the Crimson Hoof brood raiders' difficult Perception tests (-20% penalty), as they ransack the wagon. If seen immediately go to the next encounter. If not, they can get a bit closer and see what is going on around the wagon. If this is the case, read the following to them:

**You can see half a dozen filthy creatures ransacking the wagon. They have muscled dark flesh marked with red paint or tattoos on their upper bodies, but have twisted goat-like legs that give them an awkward gait as they clop around. For a moment you wonder what sort of men these are, but then one turns its face toward you and you can see they are not men in the slightest, they have elongated faces topped with curling horns like those of a ram!**

From their fevered grunts to one another, you can tell they are excited to be poking around in the wagon. As they find some objects they hand them back to their comrades; others are tossed aside like rubbish.

**Then a new sound erupts from the wagon bed, a human yelp, followed by the hoots and cries from the beast-legged creatures. From the hungry looks on their faces, you are sickened to realise why they are so excited. They have found a fresh meal!**

Should the Player Characters choose to immediately come to the rescue, Alann, the person the broo have just found, will scramble up out of the wagon and begin shouting, 'Help me! Help me!' as he tries to avoid the pawing hands of the broo. As with the above example, his shouts and attention will immediately push the Player Characters into the next encounter.

If they wait to see what happens, Alann will get hoisted up out of the wagon by his feet and will 'fortunately' see the Player Characters where they are hiding – and will shout out to them. His shouts for help and frantic pointing leads to the broo spotting the party and the next encounter can begin.

### Crimson Hoof Raid!

Whether the Player Characters start the fight or not, they are about to get into a bloody battle with a small group of Crimson Hoof broo raiders. The broo are not interested in negotiation, nor will they accept surrender.

When the broo are made aware of the Player Characters' presence (one way or another), read the following aloud:

**The group of savage beast-men turn their faces toward you, letting out a snort of displeasure followed by several growls. After a quick series of bleating commands, half of the creatures vanish into the undergrowth and move away, with remarkable agility, deeper into the forest.**

**The remaining three creatures, two armed with jagged spears and the third wielding what looks like a crude ball and chain, leap down from the wagon with their reddish eyes transfixed on you. As he begins to twirl his weapon, the largest of the trio grunts out a grisly mockery of human speech as he and his comrades close the distance between you.**

**'Crimson Hoof own Peranai... and all in it!'**

The Crimson Hoof raid leader and his two henchmen will immediately attack, hopefully covering the other broos' escape back to their den. Although sent for no broo reinforcements will arrive before the battle is concluded. Alann will immediately duck back into hiding once the battle commences and will avoid combat. The statistics for these broo are in the appendix section.

After the battle, Alann will emerge from his hiding place and immediately approach the largest Player Character in the group. He will say the following:

**'Thank the gods! Those broo bastards ambushed us on the road! If it were not for you, I would surely be on a spit by sundown! We have to get out of here! More could come at any time! They travel in packs in the Peranai, and sure as a duck swims they will be back!'**

Alann will then begin to frantically scoop up luggage from the back of the wagon, the mare which had been pulling it already slaughtered. He will not argue with any of the Player Characters, but he will try to get back out of the forest and onto the road as soon as he can.

Should the Player Characters choose to look around the area, they will have around fifteen minutes to do so before another 2D6 Crimson Hoof raiders return to the scene to regain possession of the wagon. During that time, the Player Characters can find all of the following if they choose to look for them:

- ☒ The lower half of the body from the man in the road is still slumped in the driving bench of the wagon. It has 19 silvers in its pocket and a nice dagger on its belt.
- ☒ The wagon has mostly grocery goods and a suitcase full of travelling clothes.
- ☒ Under a leather tarp in the back is a human-sized scalemail shirt and a finely crafted bastard sword. Both of these items are inlaid with the family crest of the Berrimans (a spear wrapped with vineyard grapevines).
- ☒ The Crimson Hoof Raid Leader has a small pouch filled with 38 silvers.

Eventually Player Characters should decide to join Alann back on the road, leading to the next encounter.

## An Express Invitation

When the Player Characters walk up to Alann in the road, read the following aloud:

**Kneeling next to the mauled body on the road, the young man who left the wagon in such a hurry looks as if he is about to weep. As you approach, he turns and watery green eyes look up at you.**

**‘The broo,’ he sighs, ‘they had a human leader. The cur wore a leather mask, and called Walther out to duel over our wagon. As our family’s chosen champion he accepted, of course. Walther bid me to stay hidden for I am no fighter. Before Walther could even climb down from the wagon and arm himself that masked bastard cut him down with a single stroke!’**

**He takes a moment to collect himself, stands up, and looks at you with a touch of anger burning in his eyes. You can sense that anger is not directed at you, but through you and into the forest behind.**

**‘My name is Alann. I am...was...Walther’s cousin, and his closest friend. I owe you my life, and a Berriman always repays his debts.’ He extends a shaking hand in a gesture of friendship to you.**

After his introduction, Alann can tell the Players about the Peranai area and the village of Wofe. He is not knowledgeable about much else other than how to patch clothes and prepare baths (he is a family steward), but if asked about specific subjects he will respond as follows:

If asked about Walther he will explain that he was the Berriman family’s finest swordsman and was headed to Wofe to compete in the Tournament being held there. He and Walther were very close friends, and he wished he could have done more for him when he was still alive.

Alann will explain that the Crimson Hoof are dominant in the Peranai and that they make travel treacherous throughout the area. Having a human among them is a first as far as he knows, but they are known to take slaves and eat humans whenever they can.

If asked about the Tournament, he will produce one of the announcement sheets that Sadradi had posted earlier. He will explain that his family did not care so much for the

rune being offered as much as the monetary winnings for individual events. Their vineyard to the north has been suffering from unseasonable weather, and they need the money to survive the next winter. Their hope was to have Walther win the whole thing, keeping the silvers as prizes and auctioning off the rune to the highest bidder.

When the subject is turned to the Tournament, Alann will have an idea. Unless the Player Characters come up with it first read the following aloud to the players:

**‘Wait just a moment!’ In a sudden change of mood, Alann grins. ‘I know how I can repay you! You can all be the Berriman’s champions! Nowhere does it say that we are only allowed to have one champion, and I will cover the twenty silvers entrance fees. I have seen you in action, and I know those loggers and farmhands will have no chance!’ He claps his hands together in glee. ‘You can win and keep the rune, and I will be able to take some of your winnings back to the Berrimans.’**

**‘Follow me to Wofe, it’s not far from here. I’ll pay for everything! It’s the least I can do for my rescuers!’**

Should the Player Characters go along with the idea, if only to get a few nights’ free food and board, you can move to the next section – The Tournament of Sadradi.

If the Player Characters are not convinced to go with Alann for the Tournament, he will offer to pay them in the only currency the Berrimans have left...wine. The Berriman Vineyard keeps a stock house of some of their finest vintages in Wofe for sale at the general store and for trade to passers by. He will plead with the Characters that if he returns to the estate without the money from the Tournament and with news of their eldest son’s death he will be likely kicked out into the cold. At least if he returns with tales of victory and a purse full of coin, their sorrow will be tempered by the survival of the family business.

Alann will do anything he can to get the Player Characters to champion his family in the Tournament. It is entirely possible that they will enter the tournament for their own benefit. In this case they will have to arrange their own accomodation and pay the entrance fees, although Alann will still be thankful for saving his life he will be saddened at this turn of events.



# The Tournament

## The Village of Wofe

Located just a few minutes walk from the edge of the Peranai, Wofe is a quaint little village of lumberjacks and farmhands with a population of around three hundred souls. Under the watchful eye of Germaine Wofe, and later his daughter Sadradi, the village has flourished. Even with the dangerous forest so near, the villagers carve out a nice living for themselves with relatively few troubles.

The village consists of several cottages surrounding a central road. This cobblestone surfaced road, leading to the old keep, is where all of the non-logging businesses are located. Placed in a strip along the main road like a village bazaar specifically for adventuring types travelling through to the Peranai, Wofe's businesses are surprisingly diverse. On either side of the road are the following businesses can be found:

- ☒ The Pheasant's Tale Inn
- ☒ Renworth's General Store and Apothecary
- ☒ Hammer and Clasp Blacksmith Services
- ☒ Collectibles and Reliquary
- ☒ Wofe Community Stables
- ☒ Fallen Centaur Huntsmen's Club (combined store/tavern)

The village has roughly ten men at any given moment who are on duty as watchmen, but could summon twenty more from their jobs and homes if necessary. The militia occasionally has to ward away hungry predators or the occasional broo scout that creeps out from the edge of the forest, but the well patrolled streets and constant stream of visiting adventurers tend to keep the Chaos beasts at bay.

Sadradi has left no heir to the role of burgomaster to the village, so when she passes away the eldest men and women of the village will likely hold some form of council to elevate one amongst them to the role. What will become of the simple logging town after that is unknown.

## Entering the Village

As the Player Characters enter the village of Wofe they will quickly see that they are not the only adventuring types. As the Player Characters enter the main street of Wofe, read the following aloud:

**For what looks like a small village mostly crafted of wooden buildings and thatched roofs, Wofe is bustling with activity. All around there are townsfolk decorating and preparing their village for the upcoming tournament. Some are putting up silken ribbons and streamers, many of which have been dyed fantastic and brilliant colours. Others are sinking additional horse posts along the sides of the main cobblestone street. A pair of jugglers are practicing nearby, much to the chagrin of the men trying to work around them.**

**For all of the hustle and bustle of the village proper, the activity worth watching seems to be taking place around an old stone keep a few hundred paces outside of town. A large gilded balcony-styled box has been attached to the second story window to overlook several segmented areas. You can see an archery range, a set of strange constructions like those found in a travelling circus and a large brazen gateway that reminds you of some kind of carnival entrance. The area around the keep is obviously where the tournament is going to be held.**

**'Hey!' Alann shouts, drawing your attention to him as he opens the heavy oaken doors to a brightly coloured building. The sign hanging above him shows a hand-carved pheasant reading from a storybook. 'This is it, the Pheasant's Tale Inn.'**

Once inside, Alann will arrange for one comfortable room for each pair of Player Characters. He already has a room booked in advance, so will not be staying with the party. Once he has passed the room keys out he will scoop his bags up and head to his room, leaving the Player Characters to mingle in the main room of the inn. Later they will see him walk out into the street, if asked he will explain that he is arranging for their Champion registration.

The Pheasant's Tale is a warm and welcome place with a large fireplace filled with the smells of cooking meat and smouldering wood. There are several other patrons who look and sound like they are from neighbouring areas. Two men are struggling at arm wrestling each other, a trio of dark-skinned foreigners play darts in a corner, a waitress is being wooed by a wandering minstrel telling a tale of ancient dragonmen. A slender huntress next to the bar sips a steaming cup of broth from under a grey leather hood, her face hidden by a veil.

## The Rune of Destiny

The overall feel of the Pheasant's Tale should be one of fun and excitement, of games and revelry. Almost everyone in town, inhabitant and visitor alike, is gearing up for the upcoming tournament. With the room filled with laughter and song, read the following to the Players:

**Suddenly, the doors to the inn swing open and fill with the frame of a massive man. He is easily a hand span taller than any of the other champions or locals in the room and bulges with thick corded muscles. His hair is long, black and unkempt. His eyes scan the room quickly, briefly sizing up each occupant in turn.**

**'Who here are Champions for the old woman's Rune of Destiny?' his voice is strong and deep. 'Who here is my competition?'**

**One of the dart players, both of the arm wrestlers and the minstrel raise their hands. Many eyes turn to you.**

The Player Characters can now react, although Victor will pause only briefly before continuing to speak:

**'The old woman,' he grunts as he strides into the room confidently, 'has many treasures tucked away in that keep, but the prize...her special rune...is what I, Victor Malf out, have come for. Take the gold and silvers as you like, but the rune will be mine.'**

If no one tries to confront Victor in any way, he will gulp down a tankard of ale, let out a loud belch and moves to leave. However, if the Player Characters wish to say something to Victor about his attitude, or comment about his claims to the rune, read the following aloud:

**'You think you will stand in Victor's way? I have plucked larger and more threatening lice from my backside!' he lets out a low rumble from deep within his throat and clenches his teeth visibly. 'I would love nothing more than to break you over my knee like dry kindling in the grand melee tomorrow, but I suppose now is as good a time as any!'**

**He moves towards you as several tavern patrons move away from what looks like a brawl in the making.**

Victor is a powerful opponent, depending on the conversations the Player Characters had with the other Champions in the tavern before Victor's entrance, they may come to their aid as well. For the statistics of Victor and the other champions see the Appendix.

Sadradi will make her entrance a few rounds into the fight or when Victor turns to leave if he was left alone. When the Games Master feels that the story should progress, he should read the following aloud:

**Once more the doors to the tavern room open, this time slowly and elegantly. In contrast to the last body to fill the doorway, it is a small-framed old woman who walks into the room. She is grey-haired and has pleasant features with lively eyes. Around her neck hangs a heavy, leather pouch.**

**'Lady Sadradi,' Victor says, 'what brings you out this late?' His voice is no less threatening when he speaks to her, but it carries a slight tone of respect.**

**'The registry is now closed,' she says with a bit of a creak to her voice, 'the Tournament of Wofe begins tomorrow. All Champions must be at the foot of the keep before the morning fog fades to dew.' With a curt nod, she wraps her hands around the pouch resting on her chest, 'Tomorrow destiny will be passed to another.'**

**A cheer rips through the tavern as tankards clash and voices boom. Victor gives a final grunt as he elbows his way through the doors and back out into the street, giving one last angry look as he does. Sadradi accepts several people's friendly greetings, but quickly manages to work her way across the room to where you are. 'Alann, the steward of the Berrimans, tells me that you have done a great thing for him.'**

Sadradi explains to the Player Characters that she hopes it is good folk like them that win her rune. She will try to tell them in unspecific terms to beware some of the other Champions, she fears at least one of them is responsible for several murders in the surrounding countryside. She will not share any more information except that the Player Characters should be very careful. 'Always expect the unexpected,' she will continually remind them.

If the subject ever turns to the rune itself, read the following aloud:

**'This,' she says as she looks down at the pouch around her neck, 'is something my father found in the forest a few weeks before he died, and I have held it for a special occasion. It never chose me to use it, but I could not trust such power in the hands of just anyone.' She sighs heavily. 'But now I see that my village is in need of a little destiny, and I am too weak to control the power of this rune.'**

Characters who wish to look deeper into her story for misdirection or signs of lies must roll an Evaluate skill roll versus her considerable Influence skill. If they somehow manage to be successful, they will know her story sounds too rehearsed and patterned – and that she is likely lying in some way.

She seems a bit distracted by all of the activity around the tavern, and Games Masters it is very easy to tell that she is ill. Any First Aid tests that characters might make are of easy difficulty (at a +40% test modifier), and they will see from her pallor and voice that her lungs are failing, she will likely be dead before the year is out. Should the conversation ever turn to her health, or if there is a lull, Sadradi will excuse herself and leave the Pheasant's Tale as quickly as she can. Several glasses and tankards will be raised to her as she passes, and Schotte the barkeep will actually spring to action and get the door for her.

There is a lot of respect in Wofe for the old woman, and should any conversation bring her up, the following information is available:

- ☒ Her father, Geramaine Wofe, founded the village and led the defence against several attacks from the denizens of the Peranai.
- ☒ She once had a husband and son. The husband died protecting her and the infant from Chaos-worshipping cultists almost thirty years ago. She was ravaged by several of them, and the child was

taken for their sick and twisted sacrifices. She never took another husband and will leave the town leaderless when she passes away.

- ☒ No one had ever heard of her Rune of Destiny before she announced the Tournament, although it has proved popular with the locals, bringing much needed business to Wofe.
- ☒ Many are worried for her health, and some have sent for healers from far away. None have made it through the Peranai roads to get here, however.
- ☒ No one native to Wofe allows even the slightest disrespect towards Sadradi, or anyone of the Wofe bloodline. Several individuals have been banished from the village for speaking ill of her and the Player Characters will be no exception.

Once Sadradi has left the Champions will be toasted by Schotte.

## The Champions

When it is a good time to do so, the barkeep Schotte will ring a very loud bell at the end of his bar and make an announcement. Read the following aloud:

**'Alright, alright!' the barkeep, Schotte, bellows out as the ringing of his bar side bell echoes out through the conversation and laughter. 'Gather round, folks. I got something to say.'**

**As the crowd draws closer he climbs up on top of the bar, a bottle of fine brandy in each hand. With a pair of quick tugs from his teeth the corks are spat across the room and he holds the golden glass containers toward the crowd.**

**'Alright, everyone. These are on the house, pass 'em 'round and everyone gets a dram! I want all of tomorrow's Champions to come forward and get a full glass first of all. After Victor's little speech and show, we of Wofe don't know who to root for tomorrow!' A cheer bellows up out of the collected masses as the aforementioned Champions edge their way up to the bar. "Fill your glass and tell us who you are.'**

**'I,' the dark-skinned dart player smiles as the brandy spills into his glass, 'am Trenton Usari, from the lands to the west. My sons came with me to see their father bring home that rune for our priest. I am born to win tomorrow!' A cheer passes through the crowd.**

**'We,' the two arm wrestling brutes say in unison, 'are the brothers Oran; Kite and Furrow. We travelled from seventy leagues away, and we will not go home empty handed!' Another cheer.**

**'Some of you know me already,' the minstrel laughs, 'but for you who do not, my name is Rilmer Garrison and I am a traveller and collector of fine stories and song. What better a place to gather a fine tale of heroic victories and bitter defeats than here? Should I get the rune, I will use it to take my stories to lands a thousand weeks away, to see foreign smiles and coin in exchange!' A rousing cheer and the clanking of glass and tankards.**

**'Me?' the huntress looks up from under her leather cowl, 'I'm just here for the stew and the drink, and to take that rune back to my people.' After a moment of brief pause, she pulls back her cowl and veil to reveal the greenish tint of her skin and angled points of her ears. 'The elves of the Peranai are not all dead. Call me Maljenna.'**

## Glorantha

If the Games Master is using this adventure in the Glorantha setting the description of Maljenna will be very different to that of a classical fantasy elf.

**'Me?' the huntress looks up from under her leather cowl, 'I'm just here for the stew and the drink, and to take that rune back to my people.' After a moment of brief pause, she pulls back her cowl and veil to reveal the image of a plant in humanoid form. Her face is of the texture of bark and where her hair should be there are twigs with a lush covering of rich, green leaves. Her angular features look almost chiselled and are curiously attractive. 'The elves of the Peranai are not all dead. Call me Maljenna.'**

**An eerie silence hangs in the air at first, but then a series of cheers brings a slight smile to the elf's thin lips.**

**'And you?' Schotte says, handing you the bottle of brandy. All eyes and ears turn your way...**

At this point the Player Characters can give their own descriptions of their characters to the assembled tavern patrons. After each character gives his name and a brief anecdote about himself, the room will resound with cheers and toasts, no matter what they say about themselves. At this point they are simply glad to be drinking with the Tournament's Champions.

Should there be any non-humans in the group of Player Characters, the locals will be wary of them but not actually afraid. This area has never been very thick with any nonhumans other than elves and the minions of Chaos, so this is also a good chance for characters to talk about their species with strangers.

Any elfin characters will receive the sort of awe and sad respect given to a near mythical and dying people. No matter how powerful the elves are elsewhere, or how little the Player Character seems to care about the local history (if at all), the Wofe citizens will make it seem as if the elves are dead and gone. Maljenna, however, will avoid speaking to any elves (unless the Games Master has allowed one of his Player Characters to be from the Peranai), as her tiny elfin community hiding in the treetops of the forest feel neglected and abandoned by their own kind.

Once the introductions are over, read the following aloud:

**'Okay, okay,' Schotte laughs, 'let's give the Champions time to themselves! Tonight is a celebration for tomorrow they will be adversaries!'**

**His words carry a truth that is shown in the eyes of many of the Champions, and you wonder which of them may be the evil that Sadradi warned about...**

Many of the patrons will buy drinks for anyone who was announced as a Champion and several will strike up conversations about what the characters feel are their strengths and weaknesses. Should a player character speak to one of the other Champions (for whatever reason) the following is what the other Champions know:

## Trenton Usari

- ☒ His sons, Rafe and Derren, came with him in order to protect his travels. It is well known that the roads around this village have become dangerous.

- ❑ He is a master horseman and claims to be able to tame any beast with nine or fewer words in his native tongue.
- ❑ His indigo and flax plantations have very poor yields this year, and he hopes to use the power of the rune to ensure his family's survival over the next few seasons.

### Kite Oran

- ❑ While he and his brother are both very strong looking and physically intimidating, he claims to be the smarter of the two. He came up with the idea of having two people from the same family enter the Tournament.
- ❑ In their homeland, he and his brother are local celebrities from when they wrestled a rampaging feral bear, the scars from which they both bare in many places on their arms and chests. It was their fame that drew an announcement of this Tournament to them in the first place.
- ❑ He is not sure why their father, the captain of their city's guard, wants this rune bad enough to risk both of his sons to get it, but as loyal sons they will do as he says.

### Furrow Oran

- ❑ He is a bit of a simpleton, and does whatever his father or brother tell him to.
- ❑ He feels bad having to hurt people so often just because he is so strong. He has always wanted to be a gardener like his mother, but his father says he will always be 'the secret, iron fist of the law,' whatever that means.
- ❑ He does not really know what a rune is, other than it is a thing that his father wants really badly.
- ❑ He often gets yelled at for fighting with Kite and secretly hopes to be able to get back at him for all the mean tricks he plays.

### Rilmer Garrison

- ❑ He is a wandering bard who claims to have been from one side of the world to the other. He certainly knows a great deal about a lot of subjects, but seems a little too willing to share that information all the time.
- ❑ His skill with a crossbow has earned him several accolades at other competitions and when he saw

the archery range out by the keep being set up he knew that at least one of the games would be terribly simple for him to win.

- ❑ In all of his travels he has never even heard of a Rune of Destiny, which is why he has come to compete against total strangers. He is simply curious, or so he says.

### Majenna

- ❑ Her family, some of the last dozen or so Peranai elves left, sent her and her bow to the Tournament despite risking exposing themselves to their broo enemies in order to obtain the Rune of Destiny. If it is half as powerful as the rumours say it is, the elves will rise again in that dark forest.
- ❑ She knows a great deal about the Crimson Hoof broo, as they are her sworn blood enemies. She knows that they once were mainly men, but their dark rituals and sacrifices twisted many of them into the creatures known as broo. Now most of the tribe are naturally bred broo, but she has seen humans amongst them as well.
- ❑ She was not the original Champion sent by the Peranai elves; her brother came a few weeks ago and has since gone missing. She fears that he may have met with foul play.

Once the Player Characters have had a chance to mingle with their opponents, or if they wish to retire upstairs to their rooms, the night can pass uneventfully.



# Let the Games Begin

After a good night's sleep you head downstairs for breakfast and there is a good spread of meats, bread and porridge with various flavoured syrups and fresh goats milk. The food is well prepared and hearty, exactly what anyone about to start a ten hour day of competing needs.

Schotte is there, and will greet any Champions as they come down the stairs with a fresh and hot towel in order to 'freshen up a bit' before they eat, and then again as they leave. He will usher out anyone who lingers too long as he does not wish to miss the day's action.

Eventually the Player Characters will reach the Tournament grounds and the militiamen serving as fencerow security will let them into the large open space that lies directly under the brightly coloured judges' box. When that happens, read the following aloud:

The area around the base of the keep has been transformed into a small carnival with street performers, traders' wares in small temporary stands and dozens of visitors from all around have come to see the Tournament. You spot Sadradi in the small balcony and she nods when she sees you arrive.

You fall into line with the other competitors, noticing that Victor has failed to arrive just yet. Sadradi looks over you all and then stands.

'The last of the morning...' Sadradi begins with her hands raised, but is cut off immediately by the final Champion to arrive.

'I am here,' Victor growls as he steps over the fence and pushes a militiaman aside, 'my competition can now despair.' He is wearing nearly the exact same outfit as the night before, but now has a massive axe strapped to his back and a slightly disturbing red handprint on his face in what you hope is face paint. 'Go on, hostess.'

'As I was saying,' Sadradi continues with a slight hint of exasperation in her voice, 'the last of the morning fog has fallen into dew and the Champions have

arrived. Before we begin, I will explain the rules of the Tournament as I have written them.' She unfurls a piece of parchment and begins to read, her voice clear.

'Each Champion will choose two of three events in which to compete, and all will attend the Grand Melee at sundown. The winner of each event will earn that game's prize, and a token of the Tournament. The Grand Melee will be worth two tokens, so you must not worry should your opponents defeat you in the events themselves.' She lets out a slight string of wet sounding coughs and a hush falls over the crowd, but she continues, 'The games are as follows...'

'The Obstacles of Geramaine -' she points to the odd-looking training equipment and muddy pond - 'will test the boldness of your body and the fitness of your frame.'

'The Range of Susanna -' she points to the archery range set up nearby - 'will test the accuracy of the hunt and your ability to choose the right target when given the choice.'

'The Course Peranai -' she points to the large gate over a road leading into the forest - 'will test your control over the lesser beasts of our world, and the mastery over your own animal instincts within that dark route.'

'And finally,' she gestures to the large open area where you and the other Champions are standing right now, 'the Grand Melee after sunset will be a battle to the yield that will show just how much you favour your own destiny, before you can have this one!' She holds up the conical, stone rune and the crowd cheers.

'If, after the Grand Melee, there is no clear victor with two champions holding an equal number of tokens there will be a final test between them which I will reveal only at that point in time. Now,' she smiles knowingly, 'choose your paths...and let the games begin!'

Let the Games Begin

Champion	The Obstacles	The Range	The Course
Trenton Usari	—	X	X
Kite Oran	X	—	X
Furrow Oran	X	—	X
Rilmer Garrison	X	X	—
Maljenna	—	X	X
Victor Malout	X	X	—

### Players Sitting Out?

Because each Player Character may compete in drastically different games, some of them may have to sit out for a short time while the competing Player Character runs through each game. In order to keep the Players involved with every event in some way, we suggest that any Players sitting out do the dice rolling for the other competing Champions. Even if no Player Characters are involved in a game, it might be fun to have the Players roll for the other Champions anyway, to keep the standings in the Tournament random and fair.

The Player Characters can choose in which games they will participate in, and they are all required to appear in the final Grand Melee. As far as the events the other Champions choose, see the table above. Each 'X' represents a game in which that character chooses to compete.

### The Obstacles

The first event of the day is the Obstacles of Geramaine, who is noted in local legend as being able to climb any tree faster than a squirrel and sprint across a length of braided horsehair cord ten metres long. Obviously this is not really the case, but when Sadradi was having her Tournament obstacle course set up, she wanted to make it a testament to Geramaine's renowned abilities. When the Player Characters are ready to begin, read the following aloud:

**'The Obstacles of Geramaine! A course like this my father would run twice a day, three times on holidays,' Sadradi proclaims and a mixture of laughter and applause rings out of the crowd, 'but today...the Champions will only need to do it once! The route will take them over the climbing peg boards, through a series of rope nets, across a balance board hung low over the pond and through a choice of small tunnels that will bring them to me. Sound easy?'** A small number of the crowd shouts out their replies in a good-natured manner.

**'Well, it is not!'** the old woman produces a small cage containing a hare, holding it up for everyone to see. **'This frightened little scamp will run the course before the Champions do, as it has a dozen times before, and I will be waiting at the other end to see which tunnel it emerges from. That is the only tunnel the winner can emerge from! My father could track a field hare through rain or snow as easy as dry grass, and so will the Champions if they wish to run this course to Wofe's approval!'** A cheer echoes across the field.

**'And now I take my place.'** She hands the cage to a young man standing nearby. **'When I give the signal...you set the hare free and I will ring my bell again when the Champions can follow.'**

A few tense moments pass before the first chime of the bell sounds from the far end of the obstacle race course, and the boy drops the hare as told. It hits the ground running, disappearing in a hole carved in the slats of a peg board. A moment later the bell sounds again, and you charge toward the first obstacle...

## Peg Boards

The first section of the course is a series of varied heights of wooden boards notched with climbing pegs on them. It takes a good degree of hand-eye coordination and agility to scale over them quickly, but they can also be powered over as well.

The skill in question that the Champions will be using is Athletics. Due to the nature and design of the objects they are climbing over, they characters need only to pass a simple (+20% bonus to their skill) Athletics skill test on this obstacle.

Each Champion is required to roll five opposed Athletics skill tests, one by one. Although most opposed skill tests are normally one-on-one, these will be single group opposed rolls. At the end of each opposed roll, the Games Master should announce who succeeded with the best result (and is therefore in first place), the next best (second place) and so on. Those who fail are still counted in the rankings in order of their own results, after those that succeeded.

For the following four rolls, the Champion in first place gets a +10% bonus, second place gets +5% bonus, third and fourth get no bonus, and anyone in fifth or beyond suffers a -10% penalty to their Athletics roll. The order the Champions are in (and hence who gets which bonus to their roll) can change after every roll. After the last peg board roll, note who is currently in what ranking, any bonus will be carried over to the next obstacle.

After each skill roll, the Champions should have a moment to decide if they want to try anything strange or dirty, but it should be noted that all attempts to slip up their competition require a Sleight skill test opposed by the overall Perception of the crowd of onlookers (50%) to perform any nefarious deed without being disqualified. This 'rule against cheating' applies on all sections of the obstacle course.

## Rope Nets

This section of the course is a web of thick knotted rope netting hung from stout poles stuck deep in the ground. The Champions must wind their way through this web without getting caught up or falling off. The web is designed to be a nightmare to traverse and requires good

balance and hand strength. These nets do not give any bonuses to the Athletics rolls they require.

Each Champion is required to roll three opposed Athletics skill tests, one by one. At the end of each opposed roll, the Games Master should announce who succeeded with the highest result (and is therefore in first place), the next success (second place) and so on. Again, those who fail (likely on the nets) are still counted in the rankings in order of their own results – but always after the successes. Anyone suffering a fumble on these nets has fallen off completely and must start over from the first net – automatically taking last place.

For all of the skill rolls, the Champion in first place gets a +5% bonus, second and third get no bonus and anyone in fourth or beyond suffers a -10% penalty to their Athletics roll. After the last roll, note who is currently in what ranking – it will matter in future obstacle segments.

## Balance Beam

This obstacle consists of ten metre lengths of wood laid out over a muddy pond that the Champions run across as quickly as they can. However each length of wood is rigged with subtle cuts and weakened points to give way after the Champion has run halfway across, dropping him into the pond below to swim the remainder of the way.

The basic skill that to use here is Athletics, which will require two opposed skill tests with the competition. Alternatively, the advanced skill of Acrobatics can be used instead.

Using Athletics each Champion is required to roll two opposed Athletics skill tests, one by one. For both of the skill rolls, the Champion currently in first place gets a +10% bonus, second gets a +5% bonus, third and fourth get no bonus and anyone in fifth or beyond has a -10% penalty. Anyone who fails this roll is considered to have dropped into the pond and must use Athletics. Any Champion who uses Athletics for both rolls – successfully or not – finds a break in his board and falls into the pond. For the purposes of timing these tests with anyone who fell into the pond, each set of tests take one round.

Anyone wishing to use Acrobatics needs only to make one skill test with no penalty or bonus, but if passed, can be considered to have not only beaten the balance beam test but also can begin trying to track the hare.



## Muddy Pond

This is an extra obstacle for anyone who falls off the balance beam prematurely, or breaks through the centre sections as planned. Athletics is the appropriate skill here. The water is murky and muddy, but is only a metre or so deep.

The pond needs four Athletics successful skill tests to move from shore to shore. Anyone who jumps in before reaching the balance beams needs to take four tests, anyone who falls in after one balance beam test needs three, anyone who makes it halfway needs two and anyone who fails the alternate Acrobatics test needs one. A passed Athletics skill test progresses the Champion one test closer to the opposite shore, but takes one round. As soon as a Champion gets to the opposite shore, he may progress on to the Hare Tunnel. It is a good idea for the Games Master to keep a record of how far each Champion has to go before reaching the shore, using markers or miniatures.

## Hare Tunnel

This is a cleverly designed tunnel entrance that intertwines with several dead-ends, circled loops and other obstacles. It is designed so that when a Champion enters, he will need to track the hare or the other Champions in order to emerge from the correct exit where Sadradi is waiting.

The two skills that can be used here are Survival or Tracking. If Tracking is used it counts as of simple difficulty (+20% bonus to the rolls).

It takes a total of three successful skill tests to emerge from the proper exit, and the first to pass the third skill test is the winner. The next is second, then third and so on. The first Champion who reaches the Hare Tunnel will have a significant benefit in tracking the hare, as no one else's prints or movements will have marred the original tracks. That Champion receives a +10% bonus on Survival or Tracking skill tests – unless he fails one, at which point he loses the bonus because he has likely retraced his own tracks.

It is possible to ignore any tracks and for a champion to just leave by the first exit he randomly chooses. If this is the case he will take a single round to do so and will have to roll a D10, on the roll of a 1 he has gotten lucky and guessed right. Any other result will mean he has failed the course and can not win as a result.

## The Winner is...

After all Champions have emerged from the Hare Tunnel, Sadradi will hold her hands up to the crowd and you can read the following to the Players aloud:

**'The Obstacles have been conquered! We have a winner!' Sadradi holds up three ribbons, with large keys tied to them, 'and to the winners go these prize keys!' The crowd erupts in applause as the old woman hands the red, blue and green ribbon-keys to the first, second and third place Champions in that order. She bows gently to each one as she does so.**

**'These keys open purse chests I have stored in the keep,' Sadradi proclaims, 'but the holder of a red key is our event's winner! He is one step closer to the grand prize!'**

The applause of the onlookers echoes across the countryside, even as the throng moves toward the next event, the Range of Susanna.



Should a Player Character earn a key and not be involved in the next game event, he could decide to go to the keep and see what he has won. The main door is locked, but a pair of militiamen will gladly escort a winning Champion to go and claim his prize. Inside, there are five small red chests, four blue and three green – the chests are locked, but can be opened using any of the colour-coded keys.

The red chests contain a slip of parchment that reads ‘Good for any one item or service – Hammer and Clasp Blacksmith’ and 500 silvers in coin.

The blue chests contain a slip of parchment that reads ‘Good for one month’s stay at the Pheasant’s Tale’ and 250 silvers in coin.

The green chests contain a slip of parchment that reads ‘Good for two meals at the Fallen Centaur’ and 100 silvers in coin.

## The Range

The second event of the day is the Range of Susanna, who was well known to be a fantastically skilled archer and huntswoman. Sadradi wanted to put forward a testament to both her parents, and her mother’s skill with a bow was unequalled locally in her time – so it only made sense to have some kind of archery test.

The contest will test the Champions’ Ranged Weapon skills and their Perception skills.

When the Player Characters are ready to begin, read the following aloud:

**‘In the days of my mother Susanna Wofe,’ Sadradi begins, holding up a hunting bow in one hand, ‘she was heralded to be able to place an arrow in the knot of a Peranai maple at a hundred metres. I’m not asking the Champions to perform this feat, unless they want to!’**

**‘Each Champion receives five shots with whatever weapon he prefers to use,’ she turns and points down the range of scattered targets, ‘and he can strike whichever targets he wishes with four of the shots, scoring the points painted on the targets.’**



**Looking down the range you can see five large haystacks and barrels with numbers from one to five painted crudely on their faces, five more simple wooden shields farther away with six to ten on them, and a splash of white that might be a twenty on a tree at the very far end of the range.**

**‘The fifth shot however,’ Sadradi holds up a pair of odd-looking red vases, ‘will be shot at a set of these. Two are pottery, the other is wood. Only a keen eye will be able to tell the difference at fifty paces. A single arrow lodged in the wooden vase is worth ten points, but pottery shards earn nothing! Whoever has the most points after the five shots wins.’**

**‘What if there is a tie?’ asks Maljenna, her voice strong and firm.**

**‘A simple target shoot will ensue. Whoever hits closest to the centre will be the winner. If we are ready, let us begin!’**

Once the Champions have decided the shooting order (Victor will demand to go first), the contest can begin.

The targets are numbered as to the number of points they will grant for the first four shots. The Champion simply needs to decide which target to fire at (comparing the number of points gained to the ease of the shot and range of his weapon) and make a Ranged Weapon Skill roll. If he succeeds, he scores that many points for the shot.

Let the Games Begin

The statistics for the targets are as follows:

Target Type	Points Gained	Range	SIZ/Shape modifier
Haystack	1	10m	+10%
Haystack	2	20m	+5%
Barrel	3	30m	—
Barrel	4	40m	—
Haystack	5	50m	—
Wooden Shield	6	50m	-10%
Wooden Shield	7	60m	-10%
Wooden Shield	8	70m	-10%
Bronze Shield	9	80m	-10%
Bronze Shield	10	90m	-10%
Maple Tree Knot	20	100m	-20%

After the first four shots, the Tournament hands will set up three pedestals with the red vases on them at 50m. The shooting Champion can either trust his skills of Perception to figure out which vase is the wooden one, or fire with nothing but blind luck on his side. The SIZ/shape modifier for the vase is an additional -10% to the attack.

If a Champion chooses blind luck, there is a flat 34% chance that he will fire at the right target.

If using his skills of Perception to decide whether the shape is right or the shine too perfect to be the right vase, the Champion must pass a difficult Perception skill test with a -20% penalty. If he fails and the shot hits, a pottery vase will explode in a shower of fragments. If the test is passed and the shot hits, a loud ‘thunk’ from the shot hitting and knocking the wooden vase from its pedestal will precede a loud cheer. If the shot misses, Perception test notwithstanding, the crowd will sigh and no points will be awarded.

After each Champion takes his fifth shot, Tournament hands will go and retrieve arrows, bolts, axes or whatever other ranged weapons were used.

## And the Winner is...

After all Champions have taken their shots and the points have been tallied and announced by the Tournament hands, read the following aloud to the Players:

**‘The Range has been tamed by the Champions’ skill and keen eyes! We have a winner!’ Sadradi holds up three ribbons, with large keys tied to them, ‘...and to the winners go the prize keys!’ the crowd cheers the winners as the old woman hands out the keys. She bows to each winner in turn and you can see that she is in some discomfort as she does so.**

**‘Next, to the Course gate!’ she exclaims.**

Should a Player Character earn a key and not be involved in the next game event, he could decide to go to the keep and see what he has won. See the relevant information under the The Obstacles encounter earlier in this chapter for details.

## The Course

The third event of the day is the Course Peranai, which is a race through a stretch of the treacherous Forest of Peranai. The forest has been a major source of fear and danger for generations, and although the brood will interfere they will not expose their leader just yet.

The course will test the Champions’ Athletics, Riding and even Dodge skills. When the Player Characters are ready to begin, read the following aloud:

**‘In the Forest Peranai,’ Sadradi begins with a slight tremor in her voice, ‘many have met their deaths, but today it will reveal the best woodsman of our Champions and determine who is the fleetest of foot.’ She holds up a handful of small brass keys. ‘These keys fit to the reins of steeds waiting for the Champions in the forest! All they have to do is run to their horses, unlock the reins and ride to the other side of the Course!’ The crowd rumbles with anxious chatter and more than a few gasps.**

**‘Do not worry for our Champions! I have several mercenaries standing guard along the path. They will not help the Champions in any way, but they will protect them!’**

**'Here,' she hands each Champion a key, 'when I ring the bell to begin, find the angels of your fastest pace, and get to those horses.'**

**The bell rings out like tinny thunder, and the Champions are off.**

The Course race is separated into three legs; the footrace, freeing the horse and the final turn. In addition there are two things that a Champion who looks around as he continues on his way in the race might notice. First of all there are no mercenary guards as promised, they have been captured and killed by Crimson Hoof broo. Secondly, there are dark shapes lurking in the underbrush of the forest around the course of the race, the aforementioned broo waiting for the signal to attack the village. Both of these bits of information require a Perception test, but Games Masters should not offer that test. Make a way Player ask for it so it is easy to miss, as they should be concentrating on the Course.

Every test involved in the course is measured in rounds. If every test that the Champions makes is successful, and if they do not stop to investigate the arrows (see Freeing the Horse), or fall trying, it should take nine rounds to finish the Course. The Games Master will need to keep track of each competitor's progress.

## The Footrace

The first leg of the Course Race is a quick sprint up a short hill and around a copse of dense tree cover. So long as the Champions are not held up by the terrain or each other, it should take five successful skill tests to reach the horse posts (and the next leg of the race). The skill in question that the Champions will be using is Athletics.

Each Champion is required to roll an Athletics skill test each round. Those who pass move one step closer to the horse posts and those who fail can be considered to be suffering from cramps or struggling with the knotty terrain of roots and weeds that dominate the path. The Games Master must keep track of which position each Champions is in by how high their successful Athletics tests are, similar to how it was done with the opposed tests in The Obstacles. Although this will not modify future rolls, it will keep a specific place attached to each of the Champions, this will become important at the horse posts.

Once a Champion has passed five tests, he has reached the Freeing the Horse leg of the race and can move on, leaving anyone still in this section of the race must catch up if he can.

Should any Champion wish to try and cheat in some way, the rules for being caught covered in The Obstacles do not apply for any skill tests other than the first one – as the rest are inside the forest beyond the sight of spectators.

## Freeing the Horse

The second leg of the Course Race is the freeing of a horse from its locked reins. So long as the Champions are not held up by the lock or each other, it should take two successful skill tests to remove a horses from its post and another to mount the steed and move on to the last leg of the race. The skill that the Champions will be using open the lock with the key is Mechanisms, followed by Athletics to mount the saddle in a hurry. Of course, any Champion may always find an alternate way of freeing the steed (cutting the reins, removing the whole saddle, and so on) and are free to do so.

There are a pair of Crimson Hoof Warriors armed with short bows are standing watch in the nearby underbrush, and will make 1D3-1 attacks each round that someone is standing by the horse posts. They will fight if attacked, but will not emerge from hiding unless forced somehow to do so.

Using the tiny key and lock to free the reins is an easy task, and grants a +40% bonus to the Mechanisms skill test.

Once the Champion has freed a horse, he can make a simple Athletics skill test to leap up into the saddle. This test receives a +20% bonus when done carefully.

Should any Champion wish to try and cheat in some way at the horse posts, the rules for being caught covered in The Obstacles do not apply, as this is well beyond the sight of onlookers. Although with the broo trying to kill him and time being of the essence, a character trying to cheat at this stage is unlikely.

## The Final Turn

The last leg of the Course is a twisting and turning path designed to slow down a mounted racer. The skill that the Champions will be using is Riding, so long as they have a horse. Should a Champion be separated from his horse, or if his horse was killed, he will be using Athletics tests instead.

Each Champion is required to roll a Riding skill test each round to traverse the path. Those who pass move along one step closer to the finish line and those who fail are trying to steer their horses properly and doing their best to avoid obstacles and low branches for that round. In the case of those unfortunates on foot using their Athletics skill, they have to pass two tests in order to move one Riding skill test's worth of path. The Games Master must keep track of which Champions are in which rankings by how high their successful skill tests are, similar to how it was done with the opposed tests in The Obstacles. Although this will not modify future rolls, it will keep a specific place attached to each of the Champions. Of course, only if the Champions are at the same place on the track (two Riding tests/four Athletics tests successful, and so on) should they even be compared for placing, otherwise use the number of successful skill tests to determine the positions.



Once a Champion has passed three Riding (or six Athletics) tests, he has reached the finish line. Anyone who is left on the Course due to injuries will be retrieved by several militiamen in the minutes following the last active Champion to cross the finish line. Either one of the Champions or a surviving path guard will explain about the broo archers, who will have disappeared before anyone searching for them can find them.

Should any Champion wish to try and cheat in some way, the rules for being caught covered in The Obstacles do not apply for any skill tests other than the last one, as the rest are beyond the view of spectators.

## And the Winner is...

After all remaining Champions have crossed the finish line, read the following to the Players:

**‘The Course Peranai has tested these Champions and found them worthy! It was a trial, but we have been given a winner!’ Sadradi holds up another three ribbon-keys, ‘and to the winners not only go the prize keys,’ she unfurls three sheets of parchment, ‘but also the horses upon which they won!’ The crowd roars the winners’ names in a semblance of rhythm as she hands the keys and the slips of ownership to the winners. She barely bows to the winners this time, her age showing in her lack of flexibility.**

**‘The sun, it sets so soon,’ she says. ‘It is almost time to see our Champions race and test not against the world or themselves...but against each other! The Grand Melee will begin when the topmost sliver of the daystar vanishes below the horizon. Champions, prepare! We will see you at the foot of the keep!’**

Should a Player Character earn a key and want to hurry and see what he has won before the Grand Melee, he can. See the relevant information under the The Obstacles encounter earlier in this chapter for details.

It is important to know that Sadradi will not cease the events she has planned despite the deaths of the mercenaries or even if Champions fall to these broo. She knows that this may be her last chance to celebrate with the village in any way, and to uncover the evil that is hurting her loyal villagers. While it will visibly sadden her, she will insist that the Tournament progress – and that the Grand Melee go on at sunset as planned.

## The Grand Melee

The final event of the Tournament, the Grand Melee, is to take place at sunset in the large area in front of the keep. When the Champions are gathered there and it is suitable, read the following aloud:

With the sun having sunk below the horizon two dozen flickering torches light up the fenced in area. Dozens of spectators are gathered around in eager anticipation. As you stand there, waiting for the event to begin, you look around at the other Champions. Then it strikes you Victor is nowhere to be seen. The Grand Melee is for all Champions, and he seemed the type to be a perfect contender for such a martial contest.

**‘We wait no longer!’ Sadradi says loudly from her perch in the raised judge’s box. ‘The Grand Melee begins!’ A cheer rips through the crowd. ‘Champions, you will fight with whatever weapon you wish, and accept quarter if asked. Today is a joyous day of celebration and contest, not of blood and slaughter. The last among you to remain standing will be the will receive two red keys! The last to be defeated receives a blue key.’ She holds up her hands, in one she holds the two crimson ribbon-keys; from the other dangles the blue one.**

**‘Go to your posts and ready yourselves. At the chime,’ she says, ‘you may begin. Fight well. Fight bravely. Most of all, show the Gods you have earned that life you live! Champions begin!’ The brass bell to her side clatters loudly.**

The Grand Melee is a mass combat in which the combatants are not trying to kill one another, but accidents could happen. As long as someone falls unconscious due to loss of Hit Points, they will likely not be attacked any further and Tournament hands will drag them off to the side to be woken up and patched up with the First Aid skill (45% skill level). If anyone is delivered a lucky blow to the head or a crippling blow to a limb, that Champion will yield and will be treated as if unconscious. If any are killed by a lucky or skilful blow then it will not lead to any repercussions for the slayer.

The other Champions have the following tactics:

**Trenton Usari** – Trenton will fight bravely and hard, but will not risk killing anyone if possible.

**Kite Oran** – Kite has no problem picking on an injured opponent or attacking from behind. He will not attack his brother unless attacked first. If someone would happen to kill Furrow, Kite would seek revenge.

**Furrow Oran** – Furrow holds nothing back. He has a childlike view of the violence and is not daunted by it. If given the chance, he is looking forward to getting a few blows in on his brother, but does not wish to kill him.

**Rilmer Garrison** – He is a finesse fighter, and will try to deliver stylish when possible. He is not a seasoned fighter, so will yield if cornered or overpowered. After all, he is here for the story more than anything.

**Maljenna** – She will fight bravely as she is fighting for her people’s survival. She will kill if she has to and will not yield, forcing her enemies to knock her unconscious or worse.

The Grand Melee itself should last 1D6+3 combat rounds. Allow Player Characters the occasional difficult Perception test (–20% penalty) during the battle, a normal success will have the Character see a shadowy form slip behind the crowds, if a critical success is rolled Victor will be seen sneaking behind the judge’s box. A Grand Melee Champion will attack the Player Character if he tries to do anything about it.

When the Games Master feels it is time to move on to the next section, he should read the following aloud:

**The Grand Melee rages on, and the grunting of exertion and ringing of metal against metal surrounds you in the growing evening gloom. All of a sudden one of the split log fence sections falls inward as Alann topples into the fighting area, his legs barely holding him upright long enough to stagger forward. His steps seem almost drunken, but the gasps of the crowd he just barrelled through tell you otherwise.**

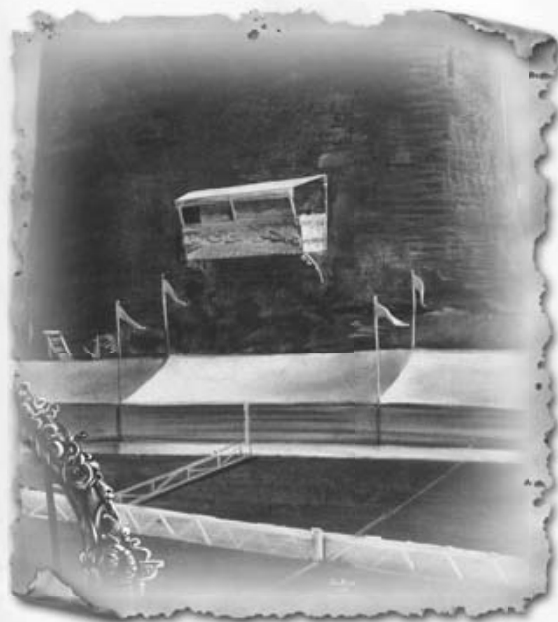
**‘Vi...Vic...’ he stammers, blood dripping from his lower lip, ‘m...mask...masked...’ the young man falls forward into your arms, his eyes looking at the darkness creeping into them. ‘Killed...Walther...’ Alann bubbles out before dying, succumbing to the huge wound that splits his back.**

Let the Games Begin

# To Victor Go the Spoils

The crowd remains in utter shock for several moments with the death of Alann. It is the pandemonium that follows that gives the Victor the perfect cover to slit the throat of one of the judge's box guards and sneak up the ladder into the box.

Victor knew that he would need a distraction, and he found one when the unlucky Alann discovered the Chaos leader retrieving his leather battle-mask (a mask that Alann recognised from the wagon raid the day before). Victor is a powerful combatant and dealt Alann a mortal wound with his battleaxe, shoving him forward toward the Grand Melee arena. After kicking the dying man toward the crowds, causing the ensuing bedlam, Victor slipped on his battle-mask and shouldered his axe – he needs stealth for his next task, not brutal aggression.



## Treachery and Murder!

After a few moments of utter mayhem due to the shattering of the Grand Melee Victor will make his move. This will prompt a difficult Perception test (with a -20% penalty) for any Player Character who is actually watching the judge's box area.

If this test is passed, that Player Character will see a collapsing militiaman and Victor's muscular lower legs climbing up into the box, kicking the ladder away from the ledge. However even if the Player Characters shout warnings to Sadradi it will be too late.

**With a horrific shriek the militiaman that was guarding the judge's box goes careening out of the front balcony to the ground below – his throat cut, the wound both deep and ragged.**

**Rising from her chair in shock, Sadradi gasps as a meaty arm sweeps around her shoulders and the cold blade of a dagger is thrust against her neck. It does not puncture deeply, but a trickle of blood drips onto her ivory gown. Appearing next to her from out of the shadows is a horrible mask, a twisted and beastly visage of leather and red paint. From the size and shape of the man, it is obvious who holds the old woman in his clutchss, Victor Malfout!**

**'It is over,' he shouts out. 'The village is doomed. The rune is ours! The prodigal son has returned to claim his birthright!'**

**He yanks the blade away from her neck quickly, cutting the cord holding the rune stone. As it falls he catches it with his off hand, but plunges the dagger deeply in the old woman's side. She staggers for just a moment, turning to look at him, and paws at his mask.**

**'This is my destiny, many thanks for keeping it ready for me for so long!' He jabs the blade forward once more, this time leaving the dagger protruding from the growing red stains on her gown.**

**As he turns away she grabs a hold of the leather visage and pulls the mask free to look upon his scarred and snarling face for just a moment. A look of horrified recognition passes over Sadradi's face before he disappears into the door to the keep behind them, her resolve falters and she collapses beyond your sight.**

**The crowd explodes into a frantic panic almost immediately with their leader and beloved matriarch brutally attacked right before their eyes. The militiamen are frozen, aghast at the sight. You may only have known her for a day, but you cannot help but be shocked as well. The sight of her frail and bloody hand trying to grasp the balcony railing rips you out of your daze, Sadradi is still alive!**

The Player Characters and whichever Champions might still be conscious will likely immediately want to rush over to the judge's box and try to save Sadradi. The Games Master should really play up the mayhem and incompetent nature of the militiamen. They are not soldiers; they are just farmers and loggers who have a duty to protect the village from the occasional troll or broo from without – not murderous barbarians from within! The crowd is rushing around without direction and more than once someone grabs a Player Character and begs them 'as Champions' to help Sadradi.

Vengeful Player Characters might simply want to get to Victor, leaving the old woman to be helped by others. If that is the case and they head to the main door to the keep they will find that it is locked. A nearby militiaman will have the key, but will need to be reminded of it by the Player Characters. If they do not think of this, or simply

do not care, it would take either 35 collective points of Strength or 30 points of damage (the door has AP 3) to break down. The lock can be picked, but will require a successful difficult Mechanisms roll (-20% penalty).

Inside the Player Characters will find that the keep has two internal floors sprouting off the spiralling stone staircase, with the door agape to the second floor balcony – and the judge's box. When the Player Characters get to the second floor landing Sadradi will have dragged herself out to meet them. The characters can pause to try and aid her or they may simply run to the roof and deal with Victor.

If the Player Characters try to aid Sadradi without entering the keep they will find the following scene, which should be read aloud to the Players:

**Pushing through the panicking villagers, you get to where the ladder leading up to the judge's box was once lashed to the wooden terrace. Lying in a sticky pool of his own blood is a militiaman – a man you remember toasting you the evening before with a smiling grin and ruddy cheeks.**

**The ladder is lying next to him, the wood at the top rungs splintered and broken from where Victor must have kicked it forcefully off the terrace landing. It is going to be of little help getting you or anyone else up the five metres to that judge's box.**

Managing to reinforce the ladder with an appropriate Craft advanced skill roll could result in a quick way to gain access, but will not likely hold more than just the Player Characters before giving way again. If no one has a suitable Craft skill, the Player Characters will need to find a different way up. Ingeious Player Characters may come up with a number of ideas on how to climb up into the box or they might arrange the use of magic, various skills, other Champions or even the panicking townsfolk to help them get there. No matter how they get into the judge's box terrace, they should move on to the next encounter.



to Victor go the spoils



## The Truth of Sadradi's Destiny

When the characters eventually reach Sadradi read the following:

**‘Please, wait. You have to know the truth,’ Sadradi says in a voice slightly louder than a whisper. Even as you try to help her in some way she musters the strength to wave you away.**

**‘I am done with this world,’ she says with a weak smile, ‘but you are not. You must stop him.’ She swallows hard, fighting to catch her breath as her lungs begin to fail. ‘Victor must not attune himself...to that rune. This whole thing...the Tournament...it was a trap for Wofe’s evil...’ She coughs hard twice, and even in the torchlight you can see the red fluid on her lips.**

**‘There is no Rune of Destiny,’ she says with a forceful shake of her head. ‘At least, I have never had one. That rune, the prize, is one of the runes of Chaos, a horrible thing I purchased from a horrible man far from here.’ She looks up at you with tears and pain in her eyes. ‘Now my son...my stolen flesh and blood has come to claim it! They say it turns men to monsters and monsters to gods...’ she lets out a rattle that sounds as grim as the tolling of a funeral bell, ‘...you must stop him. Those creatures that took him and his father from me...so long ago...he had such beautiful eyes...he...’ a child’s cry outside in the tournament grounds shakes her out of her fading reverie.**

**From atop the keep a strained howl echoes out preternaturally over the shouts and cries of the panicked villagers. It is quickly answered by the bestial howls and cries of inhuman monsters from all around – the broo answer Victor’s call to slaughter.**

**‘No,’ she says strongly, the sounds of battle stoking memories decades passed, ‘my son died at the hands of these very same beast men. What waits for you now is a mockery of my infant.’ She closes her eyes and lets out a deep and throaty sigh.**

**‘Save my village,’ she whispers, giving in to the darkness of the next world.**



Sadradi has passed on, and unless the Player Characters have some extremely fast healing magics or perfect successes on First Aid skill tests – this cannot be avoided. She is old and tired, and when she realises that her only son, who was stolen from her decades ago, is the very evil that has come to sack her village and she has not the will to live. Sadradi will die and the village will fall under attack by inhuman creatures of Chaos.

Sticking out of Sadradi’s stomach is a dagger, and the militiaman dropped a nearly unused bastard sword. There are also the two red and one blue ribbon-keys lying on the floor of the judge’s box. Some Player Characters might not think of it, but there may be those profiteers who will not pass up that sort of opportunity.

The Player Characters now have an option: to charge to the top of the keep and meet Victor, hopefully before he has a chance to attune himself with the Rune of Chaos, or to deal with the incoming swarm of Crimson Hoof broo. With their decision having been made, they should be ready for the final chapter of this scenario.

# The Last Trial

Victor's howls of from the battlements of the keep have called all the Crimson Hoof out of hiding and into a bloody attack on Wofe. The militia is being mustered as quickly as it can, but will need the help of the Player Characters and the other Champions if the village is to survive the night.

## The Crimson Hoof's Return

Once the characters are in a position to see what is happening read the following aloud:

**The night is alive with running townspeople and the beast-men chasing them. Torches are plucked from their sconces and tossed on thatch roofs. Men and women are being cut down by broo swords and axes; their spears felling children and elderly alike. It is a horror to witness.**

**The militiamen are doing their best, but they are outnumbered and outskilled. For every broo they manage to kill, two of their own citizens are cut down. They are losing the battle, and you cannot help but feel sorry for the people of Wofe.**

**'We'll take care of these,' declares one of the Tournament Champions – you cannot tell exactly who through the growing smoke and shouts – 'you stop the murderer!'**

With the Crimson Hoof broo attacking and Victor attuning himself to the Rune of Chaos, the Player Characters can choose to either go into the village and fight the broo or try to stop Victor. Should they try to stop Victor first, move on to The Monster Within encounter below.

No matter whether they simply use ranged weaponry from the window or judge's box, or leap down (remember it is a five metre drop) to deal with them in melee combat, they will be dealing with larger numbers than they are likely used to. This could result in some rather heavy losses on the part of the Player Characters if they are not careful.

The fight should feel hurried and brutal, with some broo already injured from battling militiamen and others unwilling to commit to personal battle with a trained adventurer – when there are so many unarmed townsfolk to butcher! Although there are more villagers and broo in Wofe the major fight that will determine the success or failure of the attack will involve the following forces:

## The Forces of Wofe

Any remaining Tournament Champions  
12 Wofe militiamen  
Three Wofe warriors  
45 Unarmed villagers  
The Player Characters

## The Crimson Hoof Broo

Victor Malfout  
20 Crimson Hoof broo raiders  
10 Crimson Hoof broo warriors  
Four Crimson Hoof broo raider leaders

The statistics for the above can be found in the Appendix of this book.

During the raid, so long as Victor is alive and still 'in charge,' the broo will fight in waves of cohesive attacks. When Victor is killed and topples from the keep, the broo will begin to withdraw back to the forest. Although he was 'just human' he was their battle-scarred and tested chieftain, and they will not want to press on without him.

Should the broo lose half of their total number (17 dead in any ratio), they will also begin withdrawing from the attack, trying to kidnap anyone incapable of fighting back against them. The Player Characters will likely have the chance to stop a few more of the Chaos creatures before the attack is over.

Depending when the Player Characters undertake this encounter (before or after dealing with Victor), they may have to progress to The Monster Within or to the Conclusion encounters next.

## The Monster Within

Once the Player Characters decide to get to the roof of the keep to deal with Victor, read the following aloud:

**The wooden hatch leading up to the battlement of the old stone keep is hanging limply by its hinges, the wood splintered and broken from where the murderer burst through it. From where you are standing you can hear low, bestial laughing marked occasionally with a series of loud grunts or howls.**

As you pull yourselves up onto the torch-lit surface of the structure, you can see Victor in the centre of the unadorned battlement. His back is turned to you, and he is shirtless and hunched over as if in great pain. If not for his grunting laughter, you would think he is injured in some grievous way. His blood-spattered axe lies on the brickwork floor and his legs are trembling, looking like they could give out at any moment.

‘This is my destiny.’ He coughs angrily as he begins to turn around towards you. ‘My mother made sure of that.’ As Victor swivels so he is hunched over but facing you, there is a sadistic glint in his eyes. ‘The Rune of Destiny is mine now...I already feel its power flowing through my flesh! Arghh!’ he bellows as the glint in his eyes turns black. With another roar of pain that he is obviously not expecting, he doubles over further but keeps his glare on you.

‘What is this?’ he roars, standing up straight as his eyes spill trails of blackness down his face and neck. His arms go wide and you can see that he has plunged the conical rune stone into his chest. The magical object is burrowed all the way to the edge of the flat side of the stone into his bulging left chest muscle, and the wound seeps more and more black fluid running under his skin. In seconds it is over, and his body is covered in a web of black pulsating veins. He lifts his head at you with a malicious grin, his gums as black as his featureless eyes. ‘Wofe, like the village before it that built this keep, and the one before that which tried to help those whelping elves, will be crushed under the might of the Crimson Hoof. This land is ours, and nothing will stand in the way of my destiny to claim it.’

‘And now -’ he stoops down and scoops up his axe - ‘you die.’

Immediately after this Victor will begin to attack the Player Characters. The Rune of Chaos is considered to have given Victor the regeneration Chaos feature when it attuned to him right before the Player Characters entered this encounter. The black veins and transformation scene is narrative, and serves to visibly show the power of the rune affecting Victor.

Now capable of automatically regenerating 1D6 Hit Points per body location at the beginning of each round, the following should be read aloud the first time Victor is wounded.

### Slashing/piercing weapon:

As your weapon slides through Victor’s muscular flesh he recoils slightly, looking at the wound with wide eyes. The nearest sets of black veins pulsate and twist toward the wound, filling it with dark fluid which quickly recedes to reveal knitted and healed flesh. With a laugh and a grunt, he returns to the fight.



### Bludgeoning weapons:

Your weapon connects with him and he is sent reeling, his flesh sloughed off and already swelling with yellowing bruises. Victor looks at the wound and grins as the nearest sets of black veins pulsate and twist toward the wound, flooding it with dark fluid which then quickly recedes to reveal that the bruise is already fading and the wound is tightening, healing. With a laugh and a grunt, Victor returns to the fight.

Once Victor realises that he regenerates at a remarkable rate, he will begin to fight with even more sadistic savagery than normal. Although normally a very efficient fighter who slays a target before moving on to the next, this new ability has made him rather cocky and he will gladly spread out his attacks if only to bloody everyone at least a little bit to increase their fear of him.

His axe, designed to kill the magic-using elves of the forest, is edged with iron and bears the names in broo pictograms of the seven Crimson Hoof chieftains who wielded it before him.

If Victor defeats all of the Player Characters, battling them at least to unconsciousness, he will leave them on the battlements for his broo to come and fetch them later for the celebratory feast. He will leave them to their own devices and possible deaths, leaping down from the 15 metre-high battlements (uncaring of any damage, as he will heal it) to join the rest of the Crimson Hoof in sacking the village.

If the Player Characters do indeed land a killing blow against Victor, read the following aloud:

**Victor's eyes go wide with astonishment as the last blow is struck, and the blackness evaporates like wisps of smoke from them. The veins covering his skin begin to waver and fade away in similar curls of vapour. As the rune's magic abandons him, he paws at the vanishing black essence in total shock.**

**'But no,' he stammers, blood dripping from his lower lip, 'this is not supposed to happen! My destiny is written! I...'** he stops, sinks to his knees and looks down in disbelief as the rune stone slides out of his

**chest and rolls away from him on the blood-slick floor. As if it is fleeing from his touch it rolls to the edge of the battlement and falls off into the disarray below.**

**'You.'** He looks up, face pale and eyes squinted in pain and anger at you. **'You will be sorry one day. I have a destiny; my Dark Lord has promised me such! You will feel my wrath...in this world or the next...'** he clenches his bloody fists as he slumps to one side, his eyes still transfixed upon you even as they are consumed by death.

If the Player Characters stay on top of the battlement or in the keep for a long time (for whatever reasons) the remaining Wofe villagers, militia and surviving Champions will eventually succeed in beating back the broo who have lost heart with Victor's death. If not, and the Player Characters go and help finish running the broo off into the forest, you may want to refer to The Crimson Hoof's Return earlier in this chapter for details.

If the Player Characters choose to search Victor's body and the top of the battlement they will find Victor's battleaxe (iron rules apply), 30 silvers in his belt pouch and his blood-covered leather leggings. This should not take more than a round or two to find, even with a hasty search.

### Conclusion

**After the murder of Sadradi and the raid by the broo, the village is in major disrepair. Several buildings are on fire, many others have bashed in doors and windows and the dead and wounded litter the streets. It is a victory, but a bittersweet one over an enemy that will eventually return. Wofe has been saved for a while from the evils of the Crimson Hoof. Perhaps the townspeople will be stronger when the beastmen come for them the next time, learning from the experience of this battle.**

The villagers are very aware that they likely owe their 'victory' to the Player Characters, and once the smoke dies down some and they have a chance, they will send an emissary to talk to them. When the Games Master feels it is a good time for the final scripted scene of this scenario, he should read the following aloud:

**As Wofe tends to its wounded, counts the dead and puts out fires, a balding and portly man in wrinkled and soiled clothing approaches you.**

**‘Champions of Wofe,’ he says as he wipes the blood from a cut on his brow with his sleeve, ‘with Sadradi gone we will soon be deciding on our next leader. Until then we are leaving many of our decisions up to popular consensus. We have passed the word around, and everyone agrees, you are welcome to stay here whenever you like. We will arrange for a warm bed and a hot meal anytime you come this way for what you have done.’ He smiles broadly and you can see the red wound that once held two of his teeth.**

**‘Also, we want you to have this,’ he produces a leather sack on a drawstring, and you recognise the shape immediately, ‘as the real victors of everything that happened today...you deserve Sadradi’s Rune of Destiny. We all think that she would want it that way. It truly belongs,’ he holds out the bag, ‘to you.’**

The portly man is Aluicious Barnaby, the man who will soon be the new village leader by popular demand. He will not take no for an answer, and will not listen to anything that might besmirch Sadradi’s reputation (like implying she did not have a Rune of Destiny, or that she planned on bringing the evil here). Wofe can easily become a recurring site for a *RuneQuest* campaign that hosts this scenarios, as the villagers will not forget the men and women who saved their lives anytime soon.

The other Tournament Champions will go on their own ways, but could easily be made into their own story arcs or plotlines. This is also true of the Forest of Peranai, with its many dangers and fleeing broo. Here are a handful of story ideas that Games Masters could use to lead Rune of Chaos into other adventures nearly seamlessly.

- ☒ Victor may not have been lying about his destiny. After all, he was kidnapped by the broo at a young age and not eaten. Maybe they know something about the man that no one else does. They could make attempts to steal his corpse, or perhaps it will simply disappear, only for Victor to reappear as a recurring foe for the player characters.

- ☒ Trenton Usari might wish to invite the Player Characters to his plantation, or ask for their help with his own problems back home. Conversely, he may have lost one or both of his sons in the broo attack and hold the Player Characters somehow responsible.

- ☒ The Oran brothers were told they had to do anything to get that rune, real or not. It will not take long for these two brothers to start following the Player Characters using bribes, treachery and threats to try and get the magic stone for their father. Should Furrow be left alone after the battle (for any reason) he may sadly implore the Player Characters to help him find his way home, as Kite was the one who knew the way.

- ☒ Rilmer Garrison will be highly intrigued by the heroic actions of the Player Characters and may decide to follow them for a while – even if they do not want him to. Garrison could also travel ahead in secret in order to arrange for new and heroic challenges that they must overcome. The story, after all, is what is important!

- ☒ Maljenna may decide that the Player Characters are worth their salt after all, and may offer to bring them deep into the Peranai where the remaining elves survive. This is a great honour to be even offered, and should they accept they will have to travel for two days and three nights in the deep forest in order to find the small elfen enclave. That in itself could be the source of many new adventures.

- ☒ The Crimson Hoof broo are on the run, and if the Player Characters are feeling truly heroic they could go into the forest after the rest of them. Should they look like succeeding in eliminating them, the people of Wofe and the Peranai elves would likely join in. The only problem is that the Crimson Hoof broo are not the only evil in those dark woods and worse things can be awakened when their minions are in such trouble.

# Appendix

## Monsters and Non-Player Characters

### Crimson Hoof Broo

The warriors of the Crimson Hoof broo tribe are truly monstrous abominations of beast and man. Their horrid language is often perceived as bestial gibberish, but it is actually quite diverse in what sorts of messages and emotions the broo can relay to each other. They rely on their current chieftain to direct their actions with barks, howls and growls.

They wield crude weapons in combat, painting themselves in their namesake colours in order to distinguish themselves when fighting with other broo tribes. They protect themselves as best they can with their oddly shaped bodies by wrapping some parts of their bodies with thick leather straps buckled with rivets or studs.

One of the nastiest features that broo in general possess is the ability to infect others with the diseases they carry due to their immunity to infection and appalling hygiene. The Crimson Hoof broo are no exception, although with the (near) human members in their tribe they make a token effort to avoid this. As a result one quarter of all Crimson Hoof broo carry the yellow ague disease (see page 87 of *RuneQuest*).

### Crimson Hoof Warrior

**Characteristics:** STR 15, CON 16, SIZ 16, INT 10, POW 12, DEX 11, CHA 7

**CA:** 2; **DM:** +1D4; **SR:** +10; **Move:** 4m; **MP:** 12

**Skills:** Athletics 65%, Perception 35%, Sleight 35%, Track 40%

**Atk:** Head butt 65%, 1D6+1D4 damage

Axe or crude sword 55%, 1D6-1+1D4 damage / AP 2

**Armour:** Horns, leather strapping (5% Skill Penalty)

### Crimson Hoof Warrior

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	1/7
4-6	Left Leg	1/7
7-9	Abdomen	0/8
10-12	Chest	1/9
13-15	Right Arm	1/6
16-18	Left Arm	1/6
19-20	Head	3/7

### Crimson Hoof Raider

**Characteristics:** STR 13, CON 12, SIZ 13, INT 12, POW 10, DEX 12, CHA 7

**CA:** 2 **DM:** 0; **SR:** +12; **Move:** 4m; **MP:** 10

**Skills:** Athletics 60%, Perception 40%, Sleight 30%, Track 40%

**Atk:** Head butt 60%, 1D6 damage

Short Spear 50%, 1D8-1 damage / AP 2

**Armour:** Horns.

### Crimson Hoof Raider

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	0/5
4-6	Left Leg	0/5
7-9	Abdomen	0/6
10-12	Chest	0/7
13-15	Right Arm	0/4
16-18	Left Arm	0/4
19-20	Head	3/5

### Crimson Hoof Raid Leader

**Characteristics:** STR 14, CON 15, SIZ 15, INT 12, POW 11, DEX 11, CHA 7

**CA:** 2 **DM:** +1D2; **SR:** +11; **Move:** 4m; **MP:** 11

**Skills:** Athletics 65%, Perception 30%, Sleight 30%, Track 40%

**Atk:** Head butt 65%, 1D6+1D2 damage

Ball-and-chain 55%, 1D6+1+1D2 damage / AP 4

**Armour:** Horns.

### Crimson Hoof Raid Leader

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	0/6
4-6	Left Leg	0/6
7-9	Abdomen	0/7
10-12	Chest	0/8
13-15	Right Arm	0/5
16-18	Left Arm	0/5
19-20	Head	3/6

### Victor Malfout

Stolen from his mother after the death of his father, Victor Malfout gained his name from legends that the broo have held sacred for generations. He bears a mystic birthmark that closely resembles the symbol for Chaos, and the broo have foretold the coming of such a new leader. Hefting the iron axe of leadership, Victor believes himself to be a walking prophesy of the powers of Chaos.

When the word began to spread that Wofe was holding a tournament of games for some family heirloom he began to amass his forces.

**Characteristics:** STR 17, CON 18, SIZ 19, INT 10, POW 13, DEX 12, CHA 11

**CA:** 2 **DM:** +1D6; **SR:** +11; **Move:** 4m; **MP:** 13

**Traits:** Regenerate Chaos Feature, Chieftain's Howls

**Skills:** Athletics 50%, Unarmed Combat 50%, Dodge 45%, Driving 42%, Influence 41%, Lore – Chaos 45%, Perception 52%, Riding 43%, Sleight 38%, Stealth 56%, Survival 68%, Throwing 45%, Track 48%

**Atk:** Iron Battleaxe 67%, 1D6+2+1D6 damage / AP 3

Dagger 55%, 1D4+1+1D6 damage 10m range / AP 4

**Javelin 48%.** 1D6+1D6 damage 40m range/ AP 1

**Armour:** Leather leggings, forearm bracers (4% Skill Penalty)

**Chaos Feature:** Regenerates 1D6 Hit Points on all locations every round.

**Chieftain's Howls:** Victor can make a special howl every round that will invigorate the attacks of Crimson Hoof broo. With a successful Influence skill test, all Crimson Hoof broo within one kilometre gain +10% to their Close Combat Weapon Skills.

### Victor Malfout

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	1/8
4-6	Left Leg	1/8
7-9	Abdomen	0/9
10-12	Chest	0/10
13-15	Right Arm	1/7
16-18	Left Arm	1/7
19-20	Head	0/8

### Village of Wofe: Militiamen, Warriors and Villagers

The men and women of Wofe are a generally peaceful lot avoiding combat of any sort, enjoying normal lives of crafting goods and carving out a living in their own way. Some have learned a bit of fighting skill in the course of their lives, a few travelling to fighting schools far away to learn. These occasional warriors aid Wofe's defence alongside the militiamen.

Village militiamen and warriors wield bastard swords of good quality forged at Hammer and Clasp, and they wear stiff leather armour to protect themselves. Villagers who are caught unawares will fight if pressed, wielding brooms, rakes or anything else they can find. This is not overly effective, but hopefully they can hold off their assailant long enough for a militiaman to come and rescue them.

**Characteristics:** STR 11, CON 10, SIZ 10, INT 10, POW 11, DEX 12, CHA 12

**CA: 2 DM: +0; SR: +10; Move: 4m; MP: 11**

**Skills:** Athletics 35%, Craft – Various 45%, Dodge 30%, First Aid 20%, Perception 40%, Riding 35%, Survival 30%

**Atk:** Bastard sword 50%, 1D8+1 damage (Militiamen and Warriors) / AP 4

Improvised weapon 35%, 1D4 damage (Villagers) / AP–

**Armour:** Militiamen and warriors of Wofe wear heavy leather and leather armour (10% skill penalty)

**Unarmed Villagers:** These people will only fight if cornered, and would much rather flee if possible.

## Villagers (Militiamen and Warriors)

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1–3	Right Leg	0(1)/4
4–6	Left Leg	0(1)/4
7–9	Abdomen	0(2)/5
10–12	Chest	0(2)/6
13–15	Right Arm	0(1)/3
16–18	Left Arm	0(1)/3
19–20	Head	0(2)/4

## Trenton Usari, Western Tribesman

A wealthy family man by his tribe's standards, Trenton owns a formerly successful plantation several days' ride to the west of Wofe. He is a seasoned wilderness traveller, and plans to teach his two sons to follow in his footsteps. They mean everything to him, and woe to anyone foolish enough to harm them.

**Characteristics:** STR 13, CON 14, SIZ 12, INT 13, POW 13, DEX 14, CHA 16

**CA: 3 DM: +0; SR: +13; Move: 4m; MP: 13**

**Skills:** Acrobatics 30%, Athletics 54%, 1H Swords 45%, Dodge 41%, Lore – Animal 50%, Perception 44%, Riding 53%, Stealth 35%, Survival 48%, Track 28%

**Atk:** Scimitar 57%, 1D6+1 damage / AP 4

Javelin (ranged) 42%, 1D6 damage 40m range / AP 1

**Armour:** Leather leggings, studded chest bandolier and bracers (6% skill penalty)

## Trenton Usari

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1–3	Right Leg	1/6
4–6	Left Leg	1/6
7–9	Abdomen	1/7
10–12	Chest	1/8
13–15	Right Arm	1/5
16–18	Left Arm	1/5
19–20	Head	0/6

## Kite Oran, Manipulative Warrior

The more intelligent of the Oran brothers, Kite is a manipulative warrior loyal only to himself and the wishes of his father. He cares for his brother Furrow deeply, but enjoys mocking and teasing him incessantly whenever he can. When he sets his mind to a task he devotes his body as well, and often the bodies of several others if he can help it. He and his brother's specially designed 'battle gauntlets' are little more than hinged chunks of metal covered in small hooks and poorly forged blades that inflict terrible wounds when the Orans put them to such good use.

**Characteristics:** STR 13, CON 15, SIZ 14, INT 12, POW 11, DEX 12, CHA 12

**CA: 2 DM: +1D2; SR: +12; Move: 4m; MP: 11**

**Skills:** Athletics 65%, Unarmed Combat 30%, Influence 28%, Perception 35%, Riding 35%, Stealth 27%, Survival 32%, Throwing 26%

**Atk:** Battle gauntlets 47%, 1D4+1+1D2 damage / AP 1

**Armour:** Leather leggings, studded bracers, hard leather mask/helm (6% skill penalty)

## Kite Oran

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1–3	Right Leg	1/6
4–6	Left Leg	1/6
7–9	Abdomen	0/7
10–12	Chest	0/8
13–15	Right Arm	1/5
16–18	Left Arm	1/5
19–20	Head	2/6



## Furrow Oran, Powerful Simpleton

The more physically powerful of the Oran brothers, Furrow is addled with the mind of a small child. He enjoys simple things and finds fun or humour in many things that older minds cannot see. He lives to serve the wishes of his father, no matter how corrupt or foolish they might be. He loves his brother very much, but wishes that Kite would treat him better when other people are around, it makes him feel sad when he gets made fun of.

**Characteristics:** STR 16, CON 16, SIZ 15, INT 6, POW 8, DEX 10, CHA 13

**CA:** 2 **DM:** +1D4; **SR:** +8; **Move:** 4m; **MP:** 8

**Skills:** Athletics 45%, Unarmed Combat 35%, Riding 27%, Survival 38%, Throwing 32%

**Atk:** Battle gauntlets 52%, 1D4+1+1D4 damage / AP 1

**Armour:** Leather leggings, studded bracers, hard leather mask/helm (6% skill penalty)

### Furrow Oran

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1–3	Right Leg	1/7
4–6	Left Leg	1/7
7–9	Abdomen	0/8
10–12	Chest	0/9
13–15	Right Arm	1/6
16–18	Left Arm	1/6
19–20	Head	2/7

## Rilmer Garrison, Travelling Bard

Rilmer Garrison has suffered from wanderlust since he lost his parents when he was a young man. Ever since, he has let the winds guide him, feet rarely cross the same path twice. He is fun loving and boastful, gallant and flamboyant and always enjoys the company of others. His stories and songs sometimes seem far fetched, but in the manner that he tells or sings them it is hard to disbelieve that he was not really there to witness them all.

**Characteristics:** STR 10, CON 13, SIZ 12, INT 15, POW 14, DEX 15, CHA 17

**CA:** 3 **DM:** +0; **SR:** +15; **Move:** 4m; **MP:** 14

**Skills:** Acrobatics 32%, Athletics 45%, Dodge 44%, First Aid 32%, Influence 48%, Lore – World 55%, Mechanisms 34%, Perception 45%, Riding 46%, Sing 75%, Sleight 44%, Stealth 37%

**Atk:** Rapier 36%, 1D8 damage / AP 3

Light crossbow 67%, 2D6 damage 100m range / AP 2

**Armour:** Leather hauberk, ringmail skirt (10% skill penalty)

### Rilmer Garrison

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1–3	Right Leg	3/5
4–6	Left Leg	3/5
7–9	Abdomen	2/6
10–12	Chest	2/7
13–15	Right Arm	0/4
16–18	Left Arm	0/4
19–20	Head	0/5

## Maljenna, Elf of the Peranai

Bitter and deadly, Maljenna is one the few remaining Peranai elves. She believes that the other elves of the world forgot about her people, leaving them to be hunted down by the trolls and broo of the Peranai. Beautiful beyond what most humans can even appreciate; her looks hide a lethal huntress.

**Characteristics:** STR 11, CON 12, SIZ 10, INT 14, POW 16, DEX 18, CHA 16

**CA:** 3 **DM:** +0; **SR:** +16; **Move:** 4m; **MP:** 16

**Traits:** Life Sense, Night Sight

**Skills:** Acrobatics 48%, Athletics 63%, Dodge 54%, First Aid 29%, Influence 34%, Lore – Plant 46%, Perception 48%, Riding 52%, Sleight 35%, Stealth 46%, Survival 66%, Track 44%

**Atk:** Short spear 41%, 1D8 damage / AP 2

Nomad bow 70%, 1D10 damage 120m range / AP 2

**Arour:** Leathers (9% skill penalty)

### Maljenna

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1–3	Right Leg	2/5
4–6	Left Leg	2/5
7–9	Abdomen	1/6
10–12	Chest	1/7
13–15	Right Arm	1/4
16–18	Left Arm	1/4
19–20	Head	1/5

# RuneQuest

## Rune of Chaos

The wilds of every world hide unmentionable evil to be battled and powerful good to be discovered. The forest of Peranaí is no exception. It is a harrowing place where adventurers have gone for centuries to look for the true keys of power, the blood of the gods... runes. On the southernmost side of the forest there lies the village of Woçe, a tiny beacon of civilisation on the border of a wild, unconquered place.

Sadradi, the leader of this small settlement, knows that her life is coming to a close and fears for her people. She has organised a tournament for champions to compete in a series of trials, where the winner will take home the Rune of Destiny, the Woçe family heirloom.

As to Sadradi's motivation? Many in the village see the tournament as a celebration of Sadradi's family, while others believe it is an excellent opportunity for trade or perhaps an attempt to find the village a permanent protector. Who, or what, will be attracted to Woçe to compete for the magnificent prize?

Rune of Chaos is the first adventure for the new RuneQuest game from Mongoose Publishing. Designed to fit into any campaign it allows Player Characters to compete in the tournament whilst dealing with an old evil that threatens the people of Woçe.

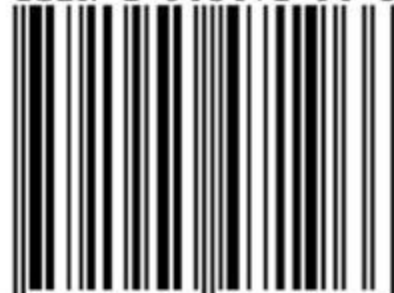
Rune of Chaos is designed for three to five starting characters and combines situations and encounters that will require a mix of skills to survive and overcome. This adventure also gives the Player Characters the opportunity to test their mettle against each other as they compete in the tournament as well as against their mutual foes.



RuneQuest is a trademark (TM) of Issaries.  
Produced under license from Issaries. All rights reserved.

U.S. \$9.95

ISBN 1-905471-96-3



9 781905 471966

MGP  
8111



MONGOOSE  
PUBLISHING

