

RuneQuest

SLAYERS

WarClans Book I: The Ancient and the Lost

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Introduction

The heart of *RuneQuest: Slayers* is its WarClans, the organizations and guilds that guide men from innocent youths to heroic warriors, and then, perhaps, to old veterans that have as many scars as they do tales. And beyond these old grognards are the legends themselves, men and women who wield impossible abilities given to them by the runes of a forgotten past.

But the WarClans are not limited to Men. The elder races of the Glacier Rifts and Khragmar have been fighting wars and protecting the land for as long as history has been spoken. Just as Men have formed groups and cults to protect themselves and their kingdoms, so have the old races.

In eons past, the WarClans of the elder races numbered in the hundreds. Indeed, they easily outnumbered the WarClans of the humans and likely taught the humans the art of the blade, the tactics of war, and unlocked for them the secret of the runes.

But now, as war has torn Khragmar asunder, and the coldness of the Glacier Rifts has frozen the land, the clans of the nonhumans have been drastically reduced. No more are there hundreds of WarClans amongst the Dwarves, Elves, and Gnomes alone. Now the humans rule, and those members of the ancient races with bold spirits and keen minds often join the human clans to satisfy their urge to be a warrior, a guardian, a ranger, or a dark knight, for their own clans are few.

Despite the decline of the nonhumans, several of their clans survive. These WarClans are as old as the stones themselves. They are steeped in tradition and history. Many of their origins are unknown; others are so recognized that every Dwarven lad can tell the story of the Blackhammers, and every Elf maiden can sing a ballad about the sad tale of Dyra and Vanderon, though they may never have glimpsed a member.

WarClans Book I: The Ancient and the Lost is the first in a series of WarClan books that focus on the WarClans of the nonhuman races. This first volume covers the Elves, Dwarves, and Tuathae, and also introduces a new race, the rare Merfolk. Since the most numerous WarClans are those of Men, this book also details four new human WarClans, clans that are deeply connected to Man's history.

The History of this Book

This book was written at the same time as *RuneQuest: Slayers* (1998), and was intended to be the first real supplement for the game. It was still in production when the original game was cancelled at Avalon Hill at the same time the company was sold. Final artwork for this book is nearly nonexistent, and the entire .pdf was retyped from the lone printout made before the company was shut down.

How to Use This Book

Runemasters should decide which of the new WarClans to allow in his campaign. Most of these new WarClans, along with the Merfolk, are suited for use in both the Glacier Rifts and Khragmar, though not all will fit a Runemaster's campaign style. Some of the WarClans, notably the Hand of Nharga, are definitely villainous.

As a general rule, the human clans introduced in this book are smaller and less known than the clans in the *RuneQuest: Slayers* core book. The Runemaster can introduce one of these new clans through an adventure, and then slowly make it available to new PCs.

The nonhuman WarClans, however, should be available immediately to players who wish to roleplay a member of that particular race. While quite a few nonhumans join the standard clans, nearly all of them will be familiar with their own WarClans, even if they are small and relatively unknown outside their race.

Brotherhood of Ashtee

Shudan al'Isir slowly entered the bazaar, his inky eyes darting from table to table. Both hands were on his sheathed sword, almost awkwardly. Shudan hurried through the tight, colored streets, sidestepping locals and tourists who were browsing the wares the merchants offered.

"Ah!" he cried out, much louder than he intended. He had found what he sought. A worn man sat behind a low table covered with camel leather bags. One pouch in particular caught his eye. It was a pale brown bag with a single leather strap that he could loop over his belt. The top of the bag was studded with three round pieces of scratched amber.

"How much?" asked Shudan, taking out his purse.

"Doing your woman's shopping?" came a rasping voice from behind him. Shudan turned to face the source of the insult, his hands raised slightly in the air. Three young men surrounded him, leering through rotten teeth.

"Very pretty," rasped the man, spitting a yellow glob on the pouch after he spoke.

Shudan was mildly impressed with his aim, but he narrowed his eyes angrily. "I was going to buy that."

"Pay us and you won't have to," suggested Spit Man.

"I will not."

Spit Man pushed Shudan hard as the other two reached for their knives. Shudan winced from the blow, spun around, and jerked his knee against the Spit Man's. Shudan flashed a smile when he saw the man go down and gag on the dirty sand on the ground.

The other two rushed him now, their knives coming in fast. Shudan spun away and drew his sword. One, two, three cuts and one of the men lie dying in a pool of blood, blood that drained quickly in the hungry sand.

"Do not make me fight. I have never lost," said Shudan.

Seeing one comrade still spitting wet sand on the ground, and the other's eyes glaze over, the third assailant dropped his dagger and fled like a desert hare. Shudan sighed and lifted the coughing Spit Man from the ground.

"Now you have learned to watch where you spit!" said Shudan as he pushed the man on his way. He watched the gasping man run and turned his attention to the old merchant. "Now, what is the best way to get that stain off?"

The Brotherhood of Ashtee was founded a thousand years ago by Jharan, or sometimes written Jhaddan, who practices his own set of beliefs he called Ashtee. It is well-documented that Jharan studied under three WarClan masters before he founded his own clan. Those are believed to have been the Cult of the Skull, the Justiciars, and the Obsidian Templari. Despite the often dark nature of these clans, Ashtee is a path of peace, so much so that some other clans think the Brotherhood is a clan of pacifists.

Because Ashtee virtues are difficult to maintain, especially in the wild lands, the Brotherhood has remained a small WarClan for a very long time. Every few decades its numbers swell, but most brothers do not tend to roam far from their homelands, so it is possible for several generations to pass in a land before a Brother of Ashtee walks in its cities.

Campaign Note: The Brotherhood of Ashtee is usually found in desert and dry areas. As such, the WarClan is unknown in the Glacier Rifts, but is appropriate to Khragmar.

The Three Vows of Ashtee

"Harm no creature, unless they harm you and you alone."

"Inner peace at all times."

"Encourage others so that they might encourage you."

Requirements

The Brotherhood only allows members that it deems intelligent and wise (minimum Intellect 11). Beyond that, all brothers must take the Three Vows of Ashtee. If a brother ever breaks a vow, he is required to do penance by fasting, refusing companions, and not touching a weapon for a month.

Ranks

Brother (0 glyphs) -- After taking his vows in the presence of an Ashtee Father, the warrior is admitted into the WarClan. He spends most of his time in the dark monasteries of the Brotherhood, occasionally venturing out to nearby towns and villages to use what he has learned in the real world. A Brother will always return to the monastery to continue his training through meditation, study, and practicing self-defense with his fellows.

Disciple (4 glyphs) -- After many months, sometimes years, of study, the brother goes out into the world to teach others by example. Many brothers, especially ones who disliked their early travels outside the Ashtee monasteries, become hermits, living in a remote place and helping travelers. Others become adventurers and seek out fortune. A small few devote themselves to finding the Truths of the world.

Father (10 glyphs) -- When an Ashtee disciple feels his life is coming to an end, he spends his remaining years contemplating how he has affected the world. This is usually when an Ashtee brother will find a small citadel or home and transform it into a training center for fellow Ashtee. Ultimately, the Ashtee seeks to be at peace with himself and his companions before his death.

Armor and Equipment

All Ashtee are given a blessed sword -- usually a scimitar -- and simple robes. Only Ashtee are permitted to touch this sacred scimitar. If it is touched by a non-Ashtee without his permission, the sword must be blessed by an Ashtee Father once again.

Traveling brothers carry simple wood staves. Many brothers are more adept with their staff, which they are taught to use from an early age, than with their sword.

Most brothers do not wear armor. They believe that to be prepared too much for battle often invites it.

Personality

The vows of the Brotherhood completely define their personality. They are pacifist-warriors, refusing to hurt anyone who does not actually, physically hurt them. Threaten them, spit on them, and wave sharp blades at them -- they will not attack. Punch one in the stomach, and the attacker might not live longer than a few seconds.

Brothers are often simple men and women. Their clan seeks knowledge and truth, though some of them do not find that path easily, and prefer adventure and danger. But even those that seek gold and fortune rarely do so for

selfish reasons. The Brothers of Ashtee are uniformly reliable, and are trained to help those in need.

Less than half the Brothers remain in the WarClan for their entire lives. Most of mankind is too hot-tempered to keep the vows of the Brotherhood. As one ex-disciple put it, "My sister was cut down in front of me. How could I not avenge their deaths?"

The retort to this statement came from Father Hussir Nu (whose name translates to "Wit of the Monkey-Thief" in an ancient Khragmar dialect).

"You should have leaped in front of the blade," he said. "If it so much as scratched you, it would have been your right to cut the man down. This is Ashtee, no? Besides, the wise see danger well before it reaches their loved ones."

Other WarClans see this logic as contradictory, if not absurd. But to the Brotherhood, it is their simple way of life.

Glyphs

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1. Discipline | 6. Honesty |
| 2. Altruism | 7. Honor |
| 3. Knowledge | 8. Humility |
| 4. Defender | 9. Piety |
| 5. Duty | 10. Silence |

Brotherhood of Ashtee Runes



Staff Balance

The Brother has learned to focus his mind on the exact balance and lightness of his staff. He has Agility +1 when using his staff, and also gets an extra Attack Die in combat. If his staff is every broken or lost, he must “reattune” himself to another. This requires a month of work and a successful difficult Perception roll.



Great Focus

The disciple of Ashtee has learned that the mind can focus the body. The brother’s Might is increased by 2 whenever a Might roll is called for. This does not affect damage, only rolls.



Know the Snake Tongue

On a successful Intellect roll, the Brother of Ashtee can identify if someone is not being entirely truthful to him. The Runemaster should always makethis roll, so the brother is unsure about the accuracy of his empathy.



Warm Hands

In sunlight, the Brother of Ashtee can gently touch a friend and restore 1 point of damage to him as well as 1d6 Fatigue. The brother is unable to perform this on himself, and never works more than once a day.



Strength of Wood

The brother has learned dynamic efficiency of both his body, mind, and staff. The disciple of Ashtee does +1 damage -- per die -- with his staff. That is, if the brother normally did 2d6+1 damage which is staff, he now does 2d6+3.



Danger Sense

Anytime danger is hidden from the brother, the Runemaster makes a Perception roll for him. If successful, he detects the chill of threat.



Deep Sleep

The peace of mind that the Brother of Ashtee has acquired allows him to sleep deeper and easier. He needs only sleep half as long as a normal man. Additionally, he recovers lost Fatigue at twice the normal rate.



Shining Courage

As long as the Ashtee’s sword has not been defiled, he draws courage and bravery from it. When affected by Terror or Revulsion, the Brother only rolls 1d10 on the appropriate table. A roll of 1 inspires the brother; he immediately gains 1d6 Fatigue, even if it takes him over his current limit (any additional Fatigue drains within an hour).



Light in the Darkness

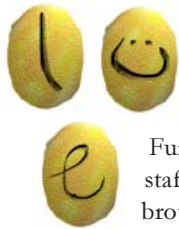
Jharan once said, “the light of the sun can be found even in the darkest places.” This ability allows the brother to stretch his senses to make up for lack of sight. He suffers no ill effects when blinded, in darkness, or even fighting an invisible foe.



Spirit of the Sword

By whispering a few words to his blessed sword and expending 1d6 Fatigue, the brother may increase his Intellect by the same amount of points for a single task. This ability may only be used once per task.

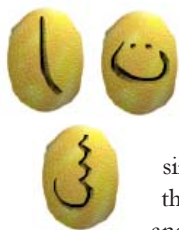
Example: Kadari comes upon a strange puzzle game. The Runemaster says that it will require a Difficult Intellect roll to solve the game. Kadari whispers to his sword and rolls 1d6. He rolls a ‘4’, so he expends 4 Fatigue and gains +4 Intellect to solve the game. He he fails his roll, he may not use this ability to attempt to solve this puzzle again.



Draining of the Wood

Whenever the brother strikes someone with his staff, he may choose to do damage to the subject's Fatigue, rather than health.

Furthermore, armor does not protect against the staff's damage anymore. With this power, brothers may easily tire mighty warriors and creatures.



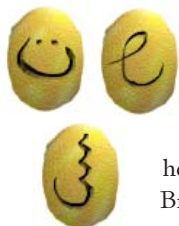
Body of Iron

The Brother of Ashtee has grown resistant to pain and serious injury. By expending 1d6 Fatigue and making a Courage roll, the damage he takes from a single blow stops at the next wound level. If the Courage roll fails, damage is taken normally and the the Fatigue is still spent.

Example: Fasid the wise has Health 25:

Bruised	6
Wounded	12
Reeling	18
Dying	25

Fasid has already taken 7 points of damage from a goblin arrow. Suddenly, an orc leaps out from behind a rock and hits him for 11 points of damage, which should take him to Reeling. Fasid expends 1d6 Fatigue and makes a Courage roll. So, now he is at Wounded, having taken a total of only 12 hits of damage. If he is hit again and uses this ability, he will be Reeling.



The Voice of Ashtee

By expending 1 Fatigue, the Brother's voice becomes completely soothing, trustworthy, and convincing. Mortals must make a Courage roll to not believe or heed a warning or suggestion made by the Brother.

As with the strict code of Ashtee, this power can never be used to cause someone harm, even indirectly. If a Brother ever uses this power to do such a thing, he loses this ability for a year and a day.



Tireless Warrior

All sword strikes made with the warrior's blessed sword cost 1 less Fatigue. Furthermore, any physical activity costs the Brother of Ashtee one less Fatigue, but never less than 1 Fatigue.



Dispute Nature

The Brother has become so at tune with himself and his environment that he can convince it to do his bidding. By expending 1 Fatigue, the Brother of Ashtee may telepathically move an item (including himself) through the air approximately ten feet. The item may weigh up to 100 lbs. Each additional 100 lbs costs 1 Fatigue.

For an additional 1 Fatigue, the item may be hurled through the air. Treat this as a throwing attack (p. RQ00), but damage is +3 per 100 lbs. and based on the warrior's Intellect, not Might.

Example: Hadarat has Intellect 12. He does damage with Dispute Nature as if he had Might 15 (2d6+2). He he expended 3 Fatigue to hurl a 200-lb object, he would do damage based on Might 18 (3d6+2).

Clan of the Lost Kings

Aenir dragged his heavy greatsword along the cracked stone. He didn't care that it ruined the blade and didn't seem to notice the earsplitting sound it made as the edge drew a thin scratch into the age-old granite floor.

His lungs heaved and blood seeped from the corner of his mouth, staining his ocean-gray beard red. He kicked aside an orc arm that lay in his way. It wasn't attached to anything, but he didn't blink. Two paces later he kicked the remainder of the orc carcass off the short stairs that led up to his throne.

Falling bard into the stone chair, Aenir closed his eyes and briefly imagined this palace as it once was. He saw the grandeur, not the half-collapsed, rubble-filled stone hallway that was now no bigger than a stable.

Aenir looked down on the carnage, though he found his eyelids grew heavy. Twenty orcs lay dead in front of him, their black gore flowing like spilled wine from a splintered barrel. Aenir felt the blackness come over him and tasted the blood that spilled from his lungs.

His knuckles whitened as he gripped the arms of his throne.

The Clan of the Lost Kings is an ancient WarClan, perhaps even older than the Galloglauch. Records of its existence go back tens of thousands of years. The clan has undergone several name changes over the centuries, such as the Clan of the Kings, Clan of the Lost, and even the Clan of the Stonesitters -- its oldest name. Today, little more than a few hundred warriors carry the banner of this clan, and the number is dwindling.

Requirements

Members of the Lost Kings must be human. Furthermore, the blood of its members must come from the ancient and royal line of Davinion. According to legend, the Davinions ruled over the land eons ago until a combination of evil gods, backstabbing ministers, and

hordes of monstrous creatures destroyed the throne and ravaged their lands and their people. The sons and daughters of the Davinions fled to all corners of the land, where they swore to one day reclaim their throne.

Because of the difficulty of proving a bloodline, this clan rarely lets in anyone who is not directly descended from a living warrior of the Clan of the Lost Kings. When someone comes of age -- usually thirteen -- the Clan holds a grand ceremony for the new prince.

There have been a few cases, mostly alluded to in incomplete legends, where the spirit of a Davinion entered someone not of the bloodline, and fused with them, giving them the Blood of Kings. Certainly, this is a rare event, and has not occurred in many generations.

Ranks

Dauphin (2 glyphs) -- After his bloodline is confirmed, a warrior undergoes the Ceremony of the Prince. During this day-long process, the young warrior is given an iron crown which he is forbidden to wear until he sits upon a throne that he earned by his own strength and will. At this point, the prince is not necessarily taught any skills other than the history of his bloodline. Often times, it is up to the dauphin's father to teach his child the way of weaponry and tactics.

Lord (4 glyphs) -- This title is claimed only when the prince's father -- or the descendant that confirmed his bloodline -- dies. As a lord of the Lost Kings, a warrior must formally pledge himself to claiming his hereditary throne. This pledge must be taken in the presence of at least three other Lords.

Patriarch (10 glyphs) -- After becoming a king, the Lost King is recognized as being a key figure in the Clan,

one of the rare few that actually has the ability and reputation to restore the Davinion bloodline to its rightful place as lords of one, united land. The Patriarch is given a bronze crown, which will only replace his iron crown when the lands are united under him. A bronze crown has not been worn for over ten thousand years.

Armor and Equipment

All members of the Clan of Lost Kings receive a heavy iron crown (worth only 10 silvers, weighs 5 lbs.). This headdress is always based on an ancient, simple design, and is often considered ugly by current standards. Any member with a status higher than Freed Slave receives a banner, tabard, or shield with the sigil of the clan on it.

Personality

Some Lost Kings prefer to keep their bloodline secret; after all, it's been eons since their dynasty ruled the lands, and most commoners have never heard of the Davinions or their progeny. Other Lost Kings are desperate fanatics on a quest that can never be attained in their lifetime, proclaiming their heritage to all who look their way, and asking for allegiance from them a minute later.

Despite the fact that all of the clan members come from the same bloodline, feuding is not an uncommon occurrence. The Lost Kings all want to see one of their members unite the land and reclaim their ancient throne, but *who* will receive this honor boils the blood of many Lords. The Lost Kings do not enjoy discussing the centuries after their dethronement, but many scholars know that more than a few fratricides, bloody succession wars, and cold-blooded murders illustrate the history books.

The Justiciers have a begrudging respect for the Clan of the Lost Kings, even though many think the Lost Kings are nothing more than a lot of deluded, haughty old men. Legend tells that the Justiciers were once the elite royal guard of the Davinions, splitting from the clan only once they fell from power. Regardless of the truth of this rumor, the Lost Kings universally believe it to be the case, and many look for trustworthy Justiciers to accompany them on their quests.

Glyphs

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Arrogance | 6. Control |
| 2. Desperation | 7. Dedication |
| 3. Duty | 8. Persistence |
| 4. Honor | 9. Rivalry |
| 5. Ancestors | 10. Pride |

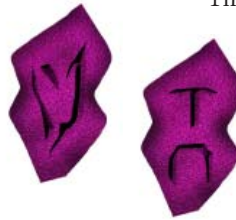
Clan of the Lost Kings Runes

Heart of Courage



If the Lost King eats the heart of a creature or man he has slain (the latter is usually considered immortal by all but the most fanatic of Lost Kings), he gains Courage +1 for a week. If the creature was especially large (Might 25+), he gains Courage +2 for a week. Eating a heart supposedly brings the warrior fertility and potency. No matter how many hearts eaten each week, the Lost King only gains the bonus once.

Holy Blood

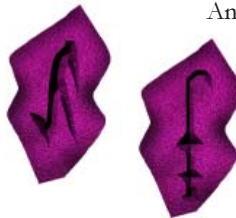


The blood of the Davinions is pure and, some say, holy. Any bandaging or healing on the Lost King heals an additional 1 health. Also, the Lost King may sacrifice his own blood to heal someone 1 health. Each quantity of healing blood costs the Lost King 2 health.



Lord's Stride

True kings never hesitate when they walk - they always have purpose and deliberate direction. This makes it impossible for a Lost King to be lost in a civilized environment. In wild areas (caverns, jungles, snow passes), the Lost King may make a basic Intellect roll to find his way to his destination.



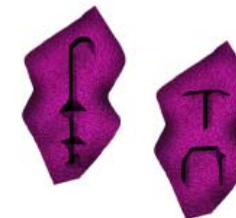
Agony of the King's Passing

Anybody who injures the Lost King to the Reeling level will feel a lead weight upon his soul. He will realize the insult of his blow, and the power of the Davinion lineage. He must make a Hopeless Courage roll or be stunned and unable to move, attack, or even talk for 1d6 rounds. Treat him as Surprised.



One Final Swing

Willpower bred through dozens of generations has given this ability to the warriors of the Lost Kings. When the warrior's Fatigue runs out, or he becomes Reeling, his foes do not receive a Fatigue die until one round later. Also, while Reeling, he does +2 damage.



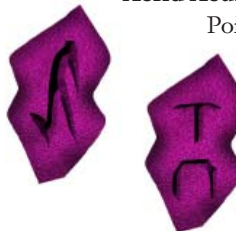
Epic Throw

Throwing was the sport of ancient kings. Anything the Lost King throws (including slings) does +2 damage (+4 for Kings with Agility 15+), and the Ideal Range is increased by one level.



Patriarch / Matriarch

The Lost King looks the part of the ideal ruler. He becomes strong and handsome, with kind eyes, wise voice, and a determined jaw. He gains +2 to all NPC reaction rolls.



Acrid Acuity

Poison and venom reeks to the king's senses. If anything poisoned or venomous passes within ten feet of the Lost King, a successful Perception roll will discover it. The Lost King automatically detects if poison or venom comes within one foot of his lips.



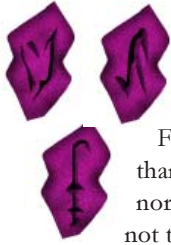
Commanding Authority

Once per game session, the Lost King may order someone to do a task for him. This task must be simple, and not a long-term event. If the subject is unwilling, he must pass a Difficult Courage roll to resist the order.



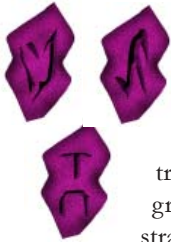
Immortal Seal

The Lost King has taken on such bearing that any attempt to impersonate him, his seal, or his signature are Hopeless. Furthermore, a successful Intellect roll will reveal any disguise or impersonation to the Lost King.



Fury's Majesty

A king should always be able to fight, even when his brave soldiers have fallen around him. This ability makes a warrior's Fatigue score equal to Courage x3, rather than Courage x2. Fatigue still recovers at its normal rate, so a Lost King should be cautious not to tire himself too quickly.



Grip of Tyranny

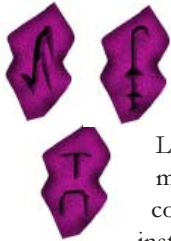
*"Oure emperour of land... God hym see!
his myghte rayses foule traytor by his necke!"*

Perhaps the most glorified member of this clan is Kyng Yadam. Catching a traitor stealing battle plans, Kyng Yadam grabbed him by his throat, lifted him up, and strangled him in front of the generals.

This ability gives the Lost King great bare-handed strength. He gains an extra Attack Die when grappling and does +2 damage when Strangling. Furthermore, he may choose to have all of his Strangling damage go to the opponent's health, as opposed to half of it automatically going to Fatigue (see p.RQ95).

King's Pilgrimage

"How alla Kyng shall come in pilgrimage?"



When ancient kings took long journeys, they found arcane ways to communicate with their most trusted minister.

When this runic ability is gained, the Lost King need specify someone as his trusted minister (PC or NPC). They are able to communicate mentally. Thoughts, feelings, and instructions can be sent freely. If a minister is killed, the King suffers 1d6 damage and 3d6 Fatigue. He may designate a replacement minister in the same amount of weeks as he took damage. Kings may have 1 minister for every 3 glyphs they possess.

Heir of Davinion



By sharing his blood in an ancient bond, the Lost King admits someone into this Clan. The Lost King immediately gives the subject four glyphs of his choosing, which are added into his "pool of glyphs." When the subject acquires the four Lost King glyphs, he earns a one-rune ability from the Lost Kings' selection.

Any sons or daughters of the subject are eligible to join the Clan of the Lost Kings.

This power is not without benefit to the Lost King himself. Upon using this ability, he immediately earns a two-rune ability from the subject's WarClan of his own choosing. He also gains two glyphs from the subject's WarClan, which are added into his own pool. Once he has earned his runic power, he may not learn any more from that WarClan, and will have twelve glyphs to draw from.

This ability may only be used once in the Lost King's lifetime.

Tragedy

"He who slays the Stonesitter will die a thousand deaths, one for each generation of the ancient kings." This was written on a flooded cave wall, once thought to be a throne room, two thousand years ago.



The slayer of a Lost King with this final, runic power is cursed by the entire dynasty of Lost Kings. There are two curses available to the dying Lost King, spat out in his last breath:

polian

Each week the slayer must make a difficult Courage roll or lose a point of Courage permanently. If the slayer's Courage reaches 1, he becomes a pitiful, barely human, creature. His Intellect drops by 1d6 points, and all NPCs react to him at -5. Tragically, his natural lifespan is tripled.

Fyr

1d6 days after the slaying, the slayer must make a difficult Courage roll or become consumed in white fire. This does 1d6 fire damage (Toughness does not protect, as this fire burns from the inside) for each point of Courage the Lost King had. Only the most wicked and powerful creatures can survive the curse of *fyr*.

The only way either curse can be lifted is by the subject swearing allegiance to a living Lost King, who must accept his penitence.

Ethne's Vengeance

The founders of the clan were four Men, four warriors who loved a woman more than they loved their own lives. Their names were Cathos, Thormos, Vadayan, and the strong one, Indane.

They pledged themselves to Ethne, bearer of the Rune of Life. For forty years they traveled at her side, fought with her, watched over her, and laughed with her on those many black nights. Everyone in the land respected this immortal woman and her companions, they who treated commoners as friends.

Imagine the horror these men felt when they saw their beloved slain, a blade through her chest pinning her to the bed she slept in. Imagine their hearts when they heard the foul troll, laughing at the window sill, her severed head looped around his belt with her own hair.

The screams were deafening that night. They beat their chests, gathered their squires, and grabbed their weapons and prepared to follow the troll. For seven nights they refused to sleep, eat, or even talk to each other. They were determined to slay the troll that brutally murdered their only reason for living.

At midnight of the seventh day they found the beast. Cathos launched himself at the creature, only to be cut down in one blow. Thormos ran to his friend's aid, but was stabbed in the back and the two brothers died together, twisted around one another like a dark sculpture.

Spitting a curse, Vadayan and Indane charged the troll, but they were also doomed to die that night. Indane was the last to draw breath. He saw his squires draw their swords and prepare to rush the troll but Indane told them to flee. Flee! Flee! Even as the troll began to feast on his body, he yelled those words again and again.

The five squires of Ethne's defenders told their story to a nearby Medean citadel. The Medeans took the five in to continue their training, for they suspected that if they did not, the five squires would foolishly try to fight the troll before they were ready.

After several years, the five warriors set out to

avenge the death of Ethne. Calling themselves "Ethne's Vengeance," a term that their masters used, they traveled the Rifts looking for the troll Geloshe. Gathering anybody who was willing to kill a loathsome monster, this small WarClan began hunting and slaying any troll they found.

Ethne's Vengeance never found Geloshe, but when it reached them that a burly farmer killed this menace, most of the WarClan disbanded. Since the original squires were long dead at this time, many felt that vengeance was gained. Others continued the trollslaying and avenging of murders -- these are the handful of men and women that compose this clan today.

Campaign Note: Ethne's Vengeance is a WarClan unique to the Glacier Rifts.

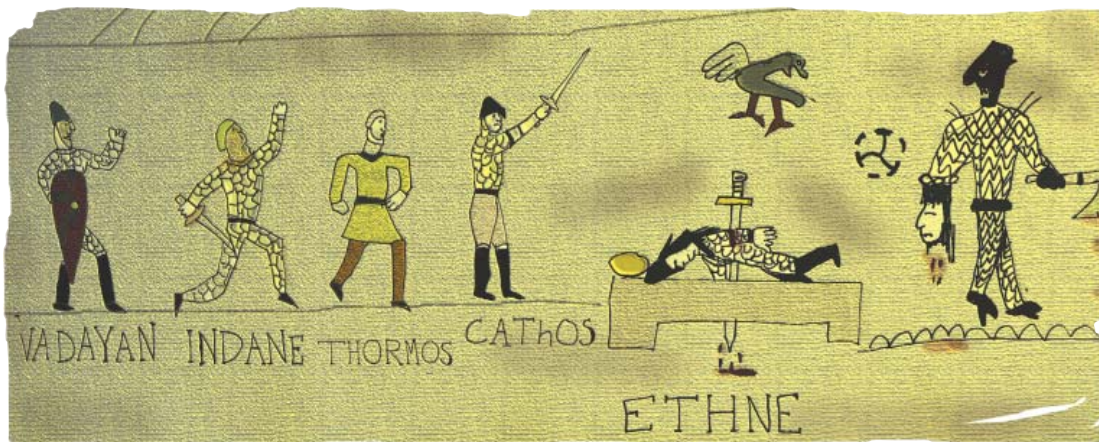
Requirements

There are no requirements to Ethne's Vengeance other than determination and a strong sword arm. Most people have never heard of this clan, but it tends to attract warriors with a fearless, romantic heart, appreciation for heroes of the past, and a taste for vengeance.

Ranks

Squire (0 glyphs) -- After joining Ethne's Vengeance, a squire usually travels with another member of the clan, looking for trolls and murderers to slay. On this long journey, which usually lasts several years, the elder warrior tells his squire the oral history of Ethne and her Rune of Life. As the squire gains more experience, his master sends him out on quests in the company of other skilled warriors. As it was with the original squires, the best teacher is not a lone one.

Defender (4 glyphs) -- After several trolls have been killed by the blade of the squire, he and his teacher



part company. He becomes a defender and travels the world to spread the tale of Ethne. Many defenders take on their own students; others spend the rest of their lives in the corners of the Rifts battling trolls.

Armor and Equipment

All members of Ethne's Vengeance are given a cloak with the emblem of the clan on it. Upon reaching the most honored status in the clan (10 glyphs), the warrior is given one of the original cloaks that Cathos, Thormos, Vadayan, or Indane wore the night Ethne was slain. The cloak of Ethne, the most treasured artifact to members of Ethne's Vengeance, is kept in Kilfeinn, where a small temple devoted to Ethne is maintained by the elder warriors of this clan.

Members of Ethne's Vengeance are also found with several pitch-covered wooden stakes. After wounding or slaying a troll with their blades, these stakes are driven into the troll's body and into the ground -- symbolic of Ethne's murder -- and lit on fire.

Personality

Ethne's Vengeance strives to be more than a clan that has a single purpose -- slaying troll -- though many of its members have boiled the intricate history of the clan into that one action. But even for these single-minded folk, the tale of the beauty and power of Ethne has been so emphasized (if not slightly overblown) that most of them to still mourn the loss of the woman, and become emotional thinking of her. Thus, it is not uncommon for members of this clan to become overprotective of any woman that shows traces of Ethne's character.

This has led to several clan warriors to believe that it is their job not only to avenge the death of Ethne, but to find an heir to what she represented -- strength of sword and purity of heart. The only way to do this, of course, is to find a mortal woman with these rare qualities and guide her into killing another with the Rune of Life.

Finding a woman with these qualities presents only

half the problem to the clan. The larger problem is finding an immortal that can be slain by such a girl. Part of the beliefs of Ethne's Vengeance is that those who have earned the Rune of Life should be respected, so any honorable immortal, such as Duracht or Eridne of Mendocci, is not eligible. Thus, their quest is twofold. First, they must find and train the perfect woman, then they must lead her to a vile creature who possesses the Rune.

Satisfying both of these conditions has proved to be extraordinarily difficult for this small WarClan.

Glyphs

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| 1. Cooperation | 6. Violence |
| 2. Dedication | 7. Loyalty |
| 3. Defender | 8. Love |
| 4. Remorse | 9. Abandon |
| 6. Sacrifice | 10. Seeking |

Ethne's Vengeance Runes



Unshaken Heart

The Courage of the warrior is increased by +3 for all Terror (but not Revulsion) rolls.



To the Gates of Doom

"Seven nights they ran
Saplings tearing flesh
Beating their breasts they cried,
'Vengeance for Ethne'"

-- Ethne of Coradynia; 3, iv

Just as Ethne's four traveled for seven nights following their foe, others in the clan have the innate ability to locate their own foes. If an opponent has been seen at least once, a Perception roll will reveal his general location to the warrior. The location will never be overly specific. "To the north," or "In the nearby mountains" are typical clues.



Vengeance's Cry

"And crying Indane struck his final
blow,
the strength of his three comrades
behind his mortal arm."

-- Ethne of Coradynia; 5, iv

If a comrade dies in battle (usually PC, though the Runemaster may allow trusted servants and NPCs to fall into this category), the warrior gains *four* bonus Attack Dice in his next attack.



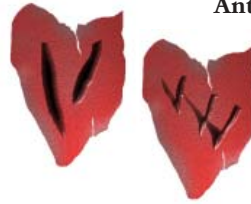
Two Breaths More

If the warrior of Ethne is Dying, the first '6' rolled on the Death Die is ignored completely. Only if a second '6' is rolled (on another attack roll) is the warrior slain.



Fury Unbound

Just like the four founders, the warriors of Ethne's Vengeance can find themselves in a passionate, uncontrollable rage. At any time during combat, especially at an emotional moment, the player may Fury and do an additional 1d6 damage. The warrior *must* Strike Hard for five rounds. If he has no enemies left, his distraught rage causes him to injure himself; he does Might damage to himself (no armor Toughness) every turn.



Anticipation of the Falling

Only after Ethne's men first spotted Geloshe did they realize they were exhausted and ill-prepared to fight. They clasped hands to regain energy. If the warrior clasps hands with his comrades before a battle begins, they each regain 1d6 Fatigue.



Cathos' Footspeed

Cathos was the fastest of the four warriors of Ethne, even able to outrun Ethne herself. A warrior with this runic ability may reroll any Speed test (see p.RQ00) and use the best result. Additionally, the warrior may increase his Speed up to double the normal racial maximum, rather than half.



Strength of Indane

The warrior with this runic ability gains a permanent +2 Might. Those with this ability gain a sharp resemblance to the strong one. Perhaps it is his hawk nose, broad shoulders, or large smile.



The Brooding of Three

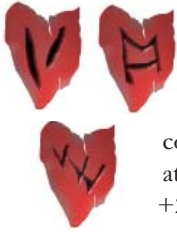
The men of Ethne's Vengeance felt a torrent of emotions the day their mistress died. This ability gives the warrior the power to detect another person's exact emotion on a successful Intellect roll made by the Runemaster. If the subject is trying to hide his emotions (or is a Journeyman Actor or better), the roll is Difficult.



Vadayan's Luck

"You are my lucky one,
Fetch me the waters of the moon."
--Ethne of Coradynia, 1, i
A warrior with this runic ability may reroll any of his own rolls. This may be done three times per adventure session. If he wishes to use his luck to affect someone else's roll (friend or foe), this "costs" him *two* rerolls.

Brothers Four



The four founders of Ethne's Vengeance fought together for over twenty years before their grisly demise. This ability gives both the warrior and his companion a bonus Attack Die when attacking a single foe together (for a total of +2 attack dice when facing multiple opponents; see p.RQ96).

Sorrow's Tears



"Together they cried,
wishing their tears would bring a
smile to her face again."
- *Ethne of Coradynia*, 4, iv

The tears of some warriors of Ethne have a mystic, healing potency. When the bearer of this ability cries over a Dying or recently deceased man, he makes a Courage roll. He will heal him 1 Health for each point by which the Courage roll was *failed*. If this restores a dead man back to Dying, the warrior of Ethne will have brought him back to life. A man can only benefit from this ability once a week.

Alertness of Thormos



"How well I know you, Thormos
Two watches for you this night?"
- *Ethne of Coradynia*, 1, ii

Thormos was the most watchful and alert of the four squires. When this ability is learned, the warrior receives +3 to Perception rolls. Furthermore, he receives +5 to all Perception rolls that involve one type of sense. He may pick from Vision, Hearing, or Wild Senses (which includes touch, taste, smell, and any other Perception roll which does not involve vision or hearing).

Turin's Hand



A little-known legend tells of a fifth warrior companion of Ethne, Turin, who was slain by a pack of demon wolves a few years before the great tragedy. From this account, it is known that Turin was a mighty Galloglaich, and also a legendary giant and troll slayer. It is tragic irony that if Turin had lived to see the death of Ethne, he might have been able to kill Geloshe.

A warrior with this ability gains +1d6 damage against trolls and giants (and similar sized creatures), rolls an extra Attack Die against them, and they roll one less Attack Die against him.

Ghosts of the Past



"My boy the one called Gerr,
See me now this night?
Who are these four!
Recognize you not your masters?"
- *Ethne of Coradynia*, V, 5

Some warriors who carried on the tradition of Ethne swore that they have caught a glimpse of the original four warriors, come back from the spirit world to defend the honor of the clan.

On a successful Hopeless Courage roll, these four warrior ghosts can be summoned to the side of the warrior. They will fight one target chosen by him.

Each ghost attacks with three Attack Dice, which is not modified in anyway whatsoever. A hit does 1d6 damage, though the last ghost, Indane, does 2d6 damage. Armor Toughness does not protect against their ghostly blades. If one of the ghosts is hit at all (treat them as Agility 15), he vanishes, and the warrior who wields this power ages 1 year. Indane is always the last ghost to disappear; even if he is specifically targeted, one of his companions will take the blow himself.

Once the target is defeated, the ghosts disappear.

There is another price to be paid for this ability. Each time the ghosts appears, any warrior not of the WarClan must make a Terror roll.

Men of Thull

Hoder wrapped his large hand around the slim waist of the young red-haired woman and lifted a frothy mug to his lips. In three gulps the ale was downed and he smiled broadly for it. The girl laughed and pointed at the good amount of froth on his face. Hoder's eyes narrowed in mock anger.

"Don't laugh at me, woman!"

"You look like a mad dog!" laughed the girl, taking a sip of her wine.

"I am a mad dog!" shouted Hoder, lifting his heavy broadsword high in the air with one hand, and the girl in the other.

The point of his sword thumped into the ceiling, startling Hoder. He cautiously let go of the hilt and examined his sword, now hanging from the ceiling like a stalactite.

"You are obviously a powerful sorcerer, too," taunted the redhead, pointing at the sword that hung in the air.

Hoder smirked and yanked down the weapon. Quickly fastening it on to his belt, he threw the pretty girl over his massive shoulders.

"Where are we going?" asked the woman, kicking her feet playfully.

"The ale is sour here. I know of a better place," answered Hoder, pushing aside the crowd.

The Men of Thull are a loud, boisterous bunch of solid barbarians that hail from the borderlands of the world. In the Glacier Rifts, the Men of Thull are found in the mountains of the Kingdoms Carved from Rock. In Khragmar, the Men of Thull mostly come from the Coast of Jahpur.

No one knows who, or what Thull really is. Asking a Man of Thull doesn't help, since they believe that Thull is whatever they want. To some, Thull is their god of strength and might, or perhaps an ancient hero, or even a village. Many believe that Thull is the name of their afterlife, where battle and ale is aplenty. There are dozens more explanations of the meaning of Thull... practically each member of this clan has his own well-thought theory.

Requirements

Warriors of Thull must be born into the clan and deemed worthy and strong. Not just limited to men, some women find the strength to join; the legendary Korra Rednails, the "maid who slew the Frog God" was one that is still spoken of fondly. All Men of Thull must pass a grueling test of strength and endurance (minimum Might 12 and Courage 12).

Ranks

Child of Thull (0 glyphs) -- In order to advance beyond the rank of Child, the strength test of Thull must be passed. The test may be taken once the warrior earns his first glyph. There are three challenges in the test. First, the child must fight a Warrior of Thull. The object is not to defeat this warrior, but not to lose. This battle continues for an hour. The second is a physical feat, usually climbing a mountain or running through a jungle without stopping. The final test is another battle, this time against the three other initiates. Again, the object is not to lose. If an initiate draws blood from another, the wounded is out and cannot try to gain entry into the clan for another year. If the warrior passes the tests, he becomes a Warrior of Thull. Any initiate who draws blood instead becomes a Blood-Warrior of Thull.

Blood-Warrior of Thull (1 glyph) -- Blood-Warriors are respected by all other Men of Thull, who usually defer to their battle prowess and tactical ability.

Warrior (1 glyphs) -- Warriors of Thull leave their homelands to roam the world for fame, respect, and responsibility. Above all, Warriors of Thull appreciate heroic deeds and legendary feats. Nothing is as important as a good reputation to the Men of Thull.

Mountain-Thunder of Thull (4 glyphs) -- After accomplishing many great deeds, a Warrior of Thull is honored by this title. Any Man of Thull may claim this title for themselves, but if they ever meet an Elder of Thull who has not heard of him, the title is immediately stripped away. The old laws state that women are not permitted to declare Mountain-Thunder.

Elder of Thull (8 glyphs) -- Like Mountain-Thunder, this title can be claimed by any warrior who deems himself worthy. However, if any Man of Thull admits to not having heard of this warrior, both Elder and Mountain-Thunder are stripped away. All Men of Thull must have heard of the Elders, from the lowliest Child to the most respected Blood-Warrior.

Elders are given tremendous respect and honor; Men of Thull may never refuse their requests. Doing so would risk removal from the clan. Women may not become Elders.

Even more respected are Blood-Elders, the men who have trod the path of the Blood Warrior and Blood Mountain-Thunder.

Armor and Equipment

Men of Thull fashion their own stone knives -- the ancient weapon of the clan. Killing a foe with this knife is considered a testament to the warrior's skill and strength. Of course, most warriors of Thull prefer to rely on steel and iron.

Men of Thull that hail from Khragmar prefer wearing light armor. The hot climate that they come from encourages their warriors to go shirtless. Despite the rumors that the Red Serpents spread, Men of Thull never go naked into battle!

The Men of Thull of the Glacier Rifts dress heavily in chain and fur, though quickly strip down in warm taverns. These barbarians begin play with fur armor covering all parts of their body.

Personality

The Men of Thull love life, women, and any deed that might immortalize their name. Despite the fact that many outsiders consider them careless brutes, the Men of Thull aren't ones to recklessly throw away their lives. Instead, they are taught that a long lifetime filled with hundreds of battles and heroic deeds overshadowed a short life ended by a glorious death. Both are respected, the former preferred.

The women who join this clan are in many ways similar to their male brethren. They can be a frightening sight to men not of Thull!

Glyphs

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Berserker | 6. Mercenary |
| 2. Lust | 7. Strength |
| 3. Carousing | 8. Will |
| 4. Endurance | 9. Valor |
| 5. Glory | 10. Stubborn |

Men of Thull Runes



Fist of Rock

This technique is supposedly learned by punching boulders. The Man of Thull's punches do Might +2 smashing damage.



Battle Cry of Thull

With eyes like an angry lion's, the Man of Thull bellows forth pure rage. Whenever this battle cry is used, the warrior rolls 2d6 for Initiative and keeps the higher result.



Labor's Son

Years of hard training, simple diets, and grueling exercise in the wild have made the warrior a titan among men. His Fatigue is Might x2 rather than Courage x2.



Bronze Skin

The harsh sun and cruel elements have forged the skin of the warrior into a tough hide. Warriors with this ability can withstand great temperatures and harsh weather conditions. He will suffer no extra Fatigue due to extreme hot or cold temperatures, and his skin gives him a natural Toughness +1.



Weapon Wisdom

The warrior of Thull has opened his mind to the nuances of combat. He may learn two additional weapon maneuvers, based on his Expertise; these maneuvers are learned normally and still cost hero points.



Midnight's Son

In one story, Thull was a bloodsucking beast who hunted women in the dark. Only the great warrior Tael, who stayed awake for nine nights, could kill the monster.

When the sun sets, the warrior gains energy from the darkness and the night. His maximum and current Fatigue is increased by 6 the moment the sun disappears from the sky. It returns to normal when the sun rises again.



Daybreak's Son

Some scholars say that Thull is a form of the word "Tahull," an old word for morning.

When the sun rises, the warrior gains energy from the morning and the light. His maximum and current

Fatigue is increased by 6 the moment the sun appears. It returns to normal when the sun sets again.



Liver Cutter

One story tells of two men, one of Thull, who had a contest. Two dead wolves were presented to them. The first man, eight feet tall and half as wide chopped his

axe into a wolf and cut right through it. The Thull-man, much smaller than his rival, swung his axe, cut through the wolf, and found the head of the axe buried in the ground up to his knuckles.

This runic ability allows the Man of Thull to do a "Liver Cutter" Vital Shot that does an extra +1d6 damage.



Rapid Healing

Warriors of Thull are renowned for their ability to recover quickly from battle.

Each day of rest heals the Man of Thull 2 points of damage, rather than 1. Even if the warrior does not rest quietly for a day, he always heals 1 point automatically, or the full 2 points if he makes a Courage roll.



Defensive Pounce

This runic ability gives the Man of Thull a tactical feat supposedly used by Thull himself.

Leaning backwards on the balls of his feet, the warrior waits for his opponent to charge. As soon as he sees his opponent's attack, he launches himself forward in a pounce that takes the battle right to the enemy.

When Holding, the warrior gains an extra Attack Die against the first foe who attacks him.





By This Axe I Rule

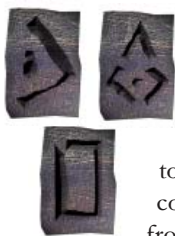
In the stories where Thull is a legendary warrior-king, he is depicted wielding an ancient great axe named “Wanird the Slayer.” Those warriors who seek to become a likeness of Thull typically wield a similar, named weapon. This runic ability teaches a Man of Thull how to keep his axe extraordinarily sharp. When it bypasses armor, it does an additional +2d6 for carving damage, rather than +1d6.



Thull the Horn

An epic poem explains that Thull was the name of a horn owned by a strong but simple man named Farmer (most sages believe that was actually his occupation, not name). One day, Farmer saw the ravenous Canus Men, the wolf-men of the northern plains, come from the forests intending to raid and kill. With a club in one hand and the horn Thull in the other, he called out a warning to his brethren. Though slain in battle, his twin brother came from forty miles away to avenge his death.

This odd ability gives the Man of Thull a simple ram’s horn. When he blows it, he alerts his counterpart (usually a nearby brethren) to his plight. If the Man falls in battle, this person will appear shortly to avenge his death. When, exactly, this person arrives is up to the Runemaster. For game purposes, the avenger is exactly the same as the fallen character, except with a new name, history, and equipment. The horn, however, will not work for this new character, as it would only try to summon the original, dead hero.



Last Gasp of Thull

In one story, Thull is a legendary bull with great intelligence and mystic powers. A great prince captured this bull, and refused to believe that it could speak to him, even though the bull had carried on conversations every night with the prince from the darkness outside his window. During the next festival, the prince sacrificed Thull to the gods. Unbelievably, the bull took seventeen blows to the neck before it finally expired.

This runic ability makes it impossible for a warrior to take more than his Dying level of damage in a single hit.

Example: Cordyn the Mountain Bear is currently Reeling with 23 points of damage. He has Dying 28. A minotaur gores him the next round for 10 points of damage. Normally, this would take him to 33 points, but with this ability, damage stops at 28.



Defensive Pounce

This runic ability gives the Man of Thull a tactical feat supposedly used by the warrior-king himself.

Leaning backwards on the balls of his feet, the warrior waits for his opponent to charge. As soon as he sees his opponent attack, he launches himself forward in a pounce that takes the battle right to the enemy.

When holding, the warrior gains an extra attack die and +1d6 damage against the first opponent who attacks him.



Body of Thull’s Earth

The Man of Thull has been imbued with the strength of the ground, the earth, and the mountain rock. While touching the ground, he gains Might +5, which will also permanently increase his Health levels appropriately. If he loses contact with the earth, he loses his Might bonus, but not his Health bonus.

Blackhammers

The rhythmic hammering noises had finally stopped, and Grathblur was certain the final attack would come. He could almost sense the troglodytes, separated by only a few inches of rock, preparing for the final effort that would send them crashing into the beleaguered Dwarfhold. For hours, he had waited in total darkness, with yet no sign of the reinforcements promised by Hall-Keeper Rhazgad.

It seemed no more than a few moments before the tunneling noises began again. This time they would come through, of that Grathblur was certain. He muttered a few words to his ancestors and gripped his worn mattock tightly. He would hold the passage to the last.

As he prepared himself for his last battle, the echo of heavy footsteps rolled over him. He turned in surprise to see Rhazgad and a dozen armored warriors hurrying down the well-chiseled corridor.

“Did you think you would take the glory for yourself, Grathblur?”

The Dwarves readied their weapons and moved to break through the wall. The Blackhammers of Rhazgad wouldn't wait for the tregs; they would carry the fight to their enemy.

The Blackhammers are elite guardians of the Dwarven domain. They are rarely seen on the surface as they spend their days traveling the sunless world below ground. Blackhammers are experts at tunnel-fighting, and serve as a Dwarfhold's first line of defense against their numerous foes. Their rivalry with the Hand of Nharga is legendary, and the two WarClans hinder one another at any opportunity. The Blackhammers see the expelled Hand of Nharga as the ultimate betrayers of good Dwarves, and if it weren't for the fact that Nharga were Dwarves themselves, the Blackhammers would be on a crusade to kill every last one of them and burn their bodies in the smith furnaces.

Ranks

Tunneler (2 glyphs) -- Tunnelers are assigned the “grunt work” of the clan as a means of instilling dedication and strength. They haul metal carts of ore, work within the scalding furnaces, and climb down tight tunnels in search of larger passageways. In the dark mines of the underworld, such work is always unpleasant and often fatal.

Stalwart (4 glyphs) -- The Stalwarts are doughty warriors, well-versed in the ways of subterranean battle. When not guarding the frontiers of a Dwarfhold, they follow the Warders on perilous missions both into the black unknown of the earth, as well as to any Dwarven surface towns that might need assistance.

Warder (6 glyphs) -- A Stalwart must first slay a troglodyte, an ogre, and a cave troll (the traditional threats to Dwarven security) before joining the ranks of the Warders. Warders lead fellow Blackhammers on expeditions into the unexplored realms of the under-earth, searching for new resources and scouting the heart of enemy territory for signs of future threats.

Hall-Keeper (8 glyphs) -- Hall-Keepers are the chosen warriors of the Stonecarvers. In battle they can be found where the fighting is thickest, and in peace where the ale is just the same. They are often placed in command of isolated outposts or small mining colonies, a position as lonely as it is dangerous. Still, most Hall-Keepers crave danger where it can be found, and the fewer present, the fewer share the glory.

Stonecarver (10 glyphs) -- Old and wise, the Stonecarvers direct the action of the clan like skilled gamesmen, moving them about the underworld like pieces in the dwarven game of Rookshard. Despite their age

(Stonecarvers must be at least a century old), they still lead their warriors into the fray, the halls echoing with their grim, eons-old, warsongs.

Armor and Equipment

There's no mistaking the grim purpose of the Blackhammers. The warriors clad themselves in black, unpolished armor and, when on the warpath, are quick to make light of other burdens. As their name implies, most wield black hammers, maces, and mallets. Other gear useful to the subterranean world (rope and potions, lanterns) is carried, but gear for personal comforts is disdained.

Personality

For all the darkness of the world around them, the Blackhammers are all the more cheerful. When not in battle, the ale flows and songs resound throughout their halls. Outsiders are welcome to accompany them on their dangerous forays, and it has been said that a non-Dwarf or two have even become warriors of the Blackhammers. Irrespective of the truth to these stories, the warriors of the Blackhammers make good friends and bitter enemies, never forgetting a good deed and never forgiving a bad.

When not at war with underground enemies (which is rare lately for the Dwarfen race), Blackhammers serve as the police forces for Dwarfholds. They settle disputes among merchants, guard caravans of precious metals that travel from the underground, question any outsiders who trespass into the Dwarfen domain, and patrol the tunnels looking for any indication of an attack. Even during battle campaigns, wounded Blackhammers are often reassigned to this sort of duty until they are well enough to rejoin their comrades.

Like most Dwarves, the Blackhammers are very respectful to their elders and ancestors. The halls of the Blackhammers are filled with statues of great leaders, skilled warriors, as well as the

names of all that joined the Blackhammers.

Blackhammers speak of their clan ancestors and founders as frequently as a mortal man speaks of his living brothers. The discussion is rarely one of total reverence; Blackhammers frequently argue which of their ancestors could best each other in battle; another favorite topic is which passed elder could slay more troglodytes given a roomful and half an hourglass.

Values

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. Ancestry | 6. Loyalty |
| 2. Practicality | 7. Carousing |
| 3. Cooperation | 8. Silence |
| 4. Dedication | 9. Resentment |
| 5. Endurance | 10. Discipline |



Blackhammer Runes



Nerves of Stone

The Blackhammer warrior is unshakable in battle, and fears neither man nor beast. He may always reroll a failed Courage roll.



Soulhammer

When wielding a mattock, hammer, or pick, the Blackhammer does an additional +1 damage.



Iron Hard

The soot of the underworld has made the Blackhammer's skin as hard as iron. His skin provides an additional point of Toughness.



Strength of the Undermountain

A weakling is of no use to the clan, and the harsh underworld swiftly eliminates the unworthy. Each round the Blackhammer Holds and does not attack, he regains 2 Fatigue.



Fury of Iron

The Blackhammer clan is often faced by terrible odds, against which they, more often than not, emerge triumphant. This runic ability ensures that the Blackhammer's foes do not get a Surprise Die when he is faced with multiple attackers.



Steady Path

The labyrinthine passages of the underworld are no mystery to the Blackhammer. He is never lost in the underworld. Furthermore, even if he is not in a familiar area, an Intellect roll will allow him to discover a route to a Dwarfhold or to the surface.



Strength of Legends

The warrior's strength is phenomenal, even among Dwarves. He gains a permanent +1 Might. Furthermore, any Might rolls that require brute strength, such as lifting and breaking, are one difficulty easier. Thus, a Difficult task is Basic, and a Hopeless task is Difficult.



Vigilance

Ever alert to danger, the Blackhammer is not to be caught off-guard. Anytime danger hides itself from the Blackhammer, the Runemaster should roll a Perception roll for him. If successful, the Blackhammer senses the danger.



Foecrusher

Few underworld denizens can withstand the might of an angry Blackhammer. Any Smashing critical hit inflicted by the warrior is resolved with an additional die.



Thus, a minimum of two dice will always be rolled for any Smashing critical hit.

Hibernation

Some Dwarves of the Blackhammers have been taught an ancient technique for recovering wounds quickly. On a successful Courage roll (allowable once per day), a Blackhammer may enter a hibernating sleep. This recovers 1d6 health each day; the Dwarf is awakened only when he is fully healed, or takes damage. If he makes a Difficult Courage roll, he may enter a deep hibernation, which heals 2d6 per day.





Hammerhand

With brutal strength gained from life-or-death struggles with troglodytes, the warrior has become especially devastating in close combat. He does an extra 1d6 damage with any Smashing weapon, including his fists! He also gains an extra Attack Die in grappling attacks; Blackhammers have been known to wrestle Troglodytes if their weapons break while smashing their stony hide.



Ancestor's Wisdom

The warrior's Blackhammer ancestral spirits are drawn to him. Once per game session, they will answer a question concerning the past or the future. Of the past, the spirits know a great deal, although their opinion may cloud their answers. Their knowledge of the future is less certain, but often valuable despite its cryptic nature.



Swordbreaker

So tough is the Blackhammer that any weapon that fails to penetrate his armor will shatter! To determine if the weapon shatters, roll its Ruin value, but at +3. Thus, a steel or mithril sword will break on a roll of 1-3. A silver sword, normally with Ruin 1-2, will break on a roll of 1-5. When a weapon shatters, it does 1d6 damage to the wielder.



Dwarf's True Sight

The warrior's vision pierces the dark veil of the underworld, allowing him to see in the black void. The Blackhammer may see up to 50 paces in the most perfect darkness. If he clasps his hand on another person's shoulder, regardless of race, that person will be able to see just as well in the dark. Warriors may not Strike Hard when fighting in this position.



Spirit of the Forge

The Blackhammer's endurance goes beyond mortal Dwarf understanding. He will continue to battle long after his warriors have collapsed in exhaustion. Once each day, when his Fatigue reaches 0, he immediately gains half his Courage dice in Fatigue back (round down). He may distribute this Courage to his companions as well; the Spirit of the Forge is a runic ability intended for the true leaders of the Dwarven elite.

Example: *With a crushing blow, Rha'zgard smashes a troglodyte into pieces. This blow reduces his Fatigue to 0. Rha'zgard has Courage 15. He rolls 7d6 and gets a 25. He immediately restores 20 Fatigue to himself, and 5 Fatigue to his flagging companion, Grathlur.*



Blindswimmers

“Why does this ship have a mast?” asked the shivering warrior of the Red Serpents, staring up at the great, petrified, wood mast that just out of the deck.

“Bab!” laughed Captain Thygok. “You never heard of cavern winds? A good winding can blow through the tunnels and give us a long-good push, no? Not having a masthead would be as smart as not having fore lantern there shining its beacon ways for us to see.”

The Red Serpent nodded. It was his first voyage on one of these creaking oak ships that slowly traveled the winding rivers of the underworld. Even to a man of his sea expertise, this trip had been unnerving. Nobody could see more than twenty paces; the cavern mist was too thick and the darkness heavy.

He heard a strange beast thump against the bottom of the boat. A dwarf called out a number; it was his job to number and catalog the menagerie of thumps and bumps.

“How much longer?”

“Don’t know,” smirked Captain Thygok. “Rivers go on and on. You get there when you arrive and not a moment sooner. Hit a dead end tomorrow, we will turn around. Maybe we’ll arrive tomorrow? A good captain doesn’t guess. Same as the ocean sea, right? Once my father’s father dark-sailed for seven months. He finally saw his port, but then the earth shifted and the current changed. Seven months later, he was back where he started. Ha! You should have heard the grumbling that day!”

By their nature, Dwarves dislike the open seas and rolling oceans. Even those that do rarely step foot on deck, preferring to spend the voyage, however long, in their cramped quarters.

The exception to this well-known aversion are the Blindswimmers clan. Legend holds that Hoan, an eccentric even by Dwarven standards, enjoyed seafaring so much that he longed to do it in his mountain home. He bought a ship and had it transported seven leagues across the wild. Finding it was too big to fit into the tunnels of his home,

the ship was disassembled and reassembled at the shores of a great underground lake. Gathering a tiny crew, Hoan sailed the underground rivers. On its maiden voyage, Hoan dubbed the reassembled ship the *Blindswimmer*. The name soon became associated with any Dwarf that sailed the dark rivers of the under-earth.

Requirements

Any Dwarf willing to get on a cave boat is welcome among the Blindswimmers. Once a Dwarf becomes a Blindswimmer, he’s expected to spend most of his time working on the ship and traversing the distance between various Dwarven ports. While the typical Blindswimmer is not usually found outside his cavern routes, some are sent to the surface on errands. These typically involve researching new vessels (these Dwarves have a good relationship with the Red Serpents). Also, since many underground rivers don’t connect with each other, Blindswimmers are also found on the surface traveling to a new river source or Dwarven port. Blindswimmer crews, on rare occasion, can be found on an epic overland journey, carrying their massive boats with them.

Ranks

Ensign (2 glyphs) -- After completing a cavern boat voyage, the Dwarf is given this rank. Ensigns specialize in ship repairs, so each is expected to constantly examine the boat for leaks and gashes -- the rocks of the underground are unforgiving.

Swimmer (3 glyphs) -- The tight waterways that are home to the Blindswimmers often present obstacles that require Dwarves to get in the cold water. Swimmers specialize in destroying outcroppings that might be in the way of the boat, checking water depth, and scouting ahead

to make sure the cavern won't suddenly turn into a tight, dead end, trapping the ship. When not working, Swimmers teach the new Blindswimmers.

Counter (5 glyphs) -- There are many beasts that inhabit the waters of the under-earth. Most are harmless blind whales and amphibians, but some species attack cavern boats and crew with uncanny enthusiasm. It is the counter's job to count and catalog each thump that hits the ship, and communicate any potential danger to the navigator. Zones with a lot of these creatures are marked as "slow stretches" with Dwarven carvings (placed for Swimmers to see). Areas with fewer creatures are faster, but also more dangerous. Fewer fish generally means a hungrier predator population in the underworld. Counters require Intellect 11.

Navigator (6 glyphs) -- Navigators map the underground tunnels and keep detailed journals of the voyage. Earthquakes and cave-ins constantly shift the currents and tunnels; navigators must be able to plot alternate routes quickly. Navigators require Intellect 12 and Perception 12.

Yeller (7 glyphs) -- Yellers are the commanders of the boat. There are usually five Yellers (sometimes known as Yelling Men) assigned to a cavern vessel. Yellers oversee the Ensigns and the Swimmers, and are directly responsible for them. One Yeller is always assigned to watch duty.

Captain (9 glyphs) -- Dwarves with at least a decade of experience are promoted to Captain by a retiring Captain. Captains are responsible for all important decisions on a cavern boat; they are explorers and profiteers alike. Shipping goods from one port to another is a tried and true method, though many captains intersperse economic trips with more interesting explorations -- charting new rivers, seeking out lost dwarven cities, or hunting a formidable underground beast.

Armor and Equipment

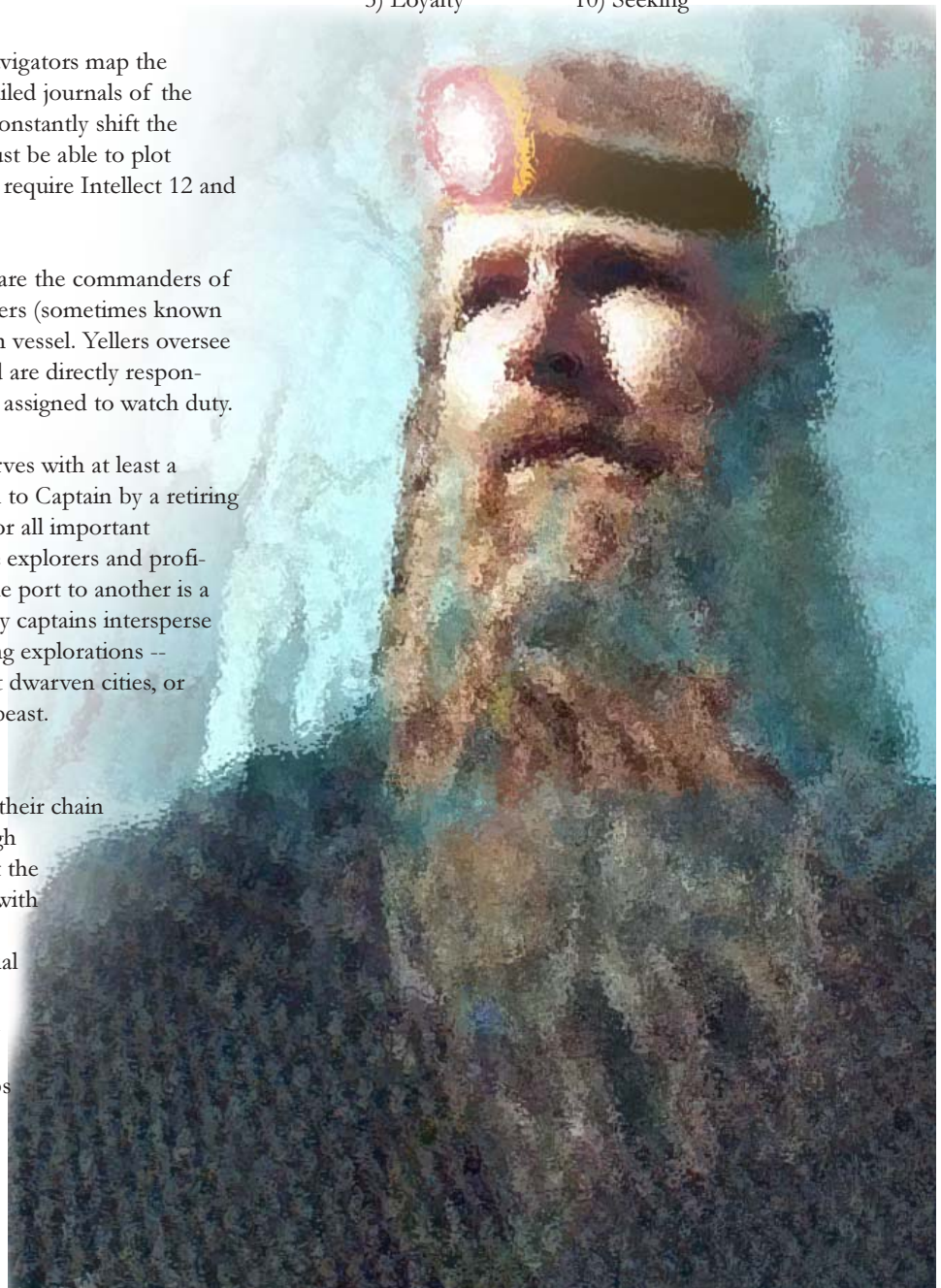
Dwarves are loathe to leave their chain and plate armor behind, even though Blindswimmers begrudgingly admit the danger of falling into a river laden with metal. To deal with this, Blindswimmers have invented special release clamps. If they fall into the water, it only takes a few seconds (1 round) to unfasten the armor. Modifying armor with release clamps increases the cost by 15%. Swimmers usually wear greased leather armor, leaving their heavier armor in their quarters.

Personality

Blindswimmers have only one thing in common with each other -- a love for the dark waters and shadow mists of the underworld. They treat their fellow crewmen with respect, and their Captains with admiration and loyalty. Every Blindswimmer loves his ship -- that is the only thing separating him from a watery death in cold, black waters.

Glyphs

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1) Duty | 6) Greed |
| 2) Tale-Telling | 7) Cooperation |
| 3) Curiosity | 8) Independence |
| 4) Wanderlust | 9) Solitude |
| 5) Loyalty | 10) Seeking |



Blindswimmer Runes

Blood Chills



The waters of the underworld are icy, and some Dwarves learn how to control their body temperature to adapt to it. Dwarves with Blood Chills do not suffer any Fatigue when jumping into freezing water, and take half Fatigue damage every five minutes thereafter. The Dwarf also gains an additional +2 Toughness against magical or unnatural cold or frost attacks.

Rock Yanker



Some Blindswimmers have learned a unique ability to swim faster. They dive underwater, reach the rocky bottom, and then use their strong arms to pull themselves along. When this is possible, Speed in the water is increased to half Might.

Oaken Ribcage



It is a sad fact that Blindswimmers often find themselves being crushed between rocks and his boat. Miraculously, some Blindswimmers have survived these collisions with only a few bruises. This ability gives the Blindswimmer an additional Toughness 1 against smashing weapons; any damage from collision or falls is reduced by 1 *per die*.

Squint-Eyes



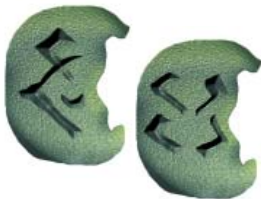
A few Dwarves have excellent dark vision, and these are the ones usually found keeping watch. This ability gives the Dwarf to see in anything but pitch black darkness; spotting something requires a Basic Perception roll, not a Difficult one due to darkness.

Fish Lungs



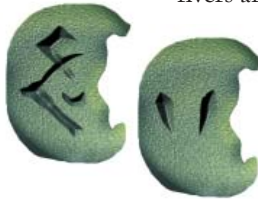
The Blindswimmer can hold his breath twice as long as the ordinary man. If he's fighting or exerting himself, he can hold his breath for Might x2 rounds. Otherwise, double that.

Kin to the Ice

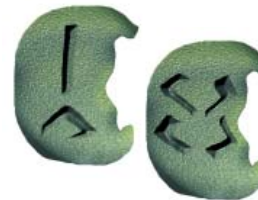


When the Dwarf jumps into freezing water, he *gains* 1d6 Fatigue (he may do this once every two hours). If the water is cool, but not freezing, halve the Fatigue gained.

Echo Checking



The sounds that echo off the walls of underground rivers are as varied and loud as the deepest jungles of Khragmar. Some Blindswimmers learn how to pick out and identify even the quietest or most distorted sounds. This gives the dwarf Perception +5 when making a roll to that requires listening.



Ooze Fighting

Sometimes the creatures get so thick underneath the hulls of the cavern boats, Swimmers must enter the water with hatchets to beat them off. Fighting in the water or while submerged costs no additional Fatigue (see p.RQ81).



Rot Finder

Blindswimmers are trained to find and identify rot and weakness in wood. A rare few excel at it. This ability allows a Dwarf to locate a weakness in any piece of wood. Once the weakness has been found, he can easily break it (halve its Health; if a Perception roll is made, quarter it). This ability also allows a Dwarf to find even the most well-hidden wooden secret doors on a Basic Perception roll.



Kraken Gore

Blindswimmers who dare search the black waters for great underworld beasts are not foolhardy enough to rely only on their simple axes and hatchets. Many ships are equipped with powerful Dwarven ballistae, and there are hundreds of tales of Yelling Men who were masters of this weapon. One such Dwarf was Kraken Gore, who earned his name by putting a well-placed ballistae arrow into a kraken's eye. He was one of three Dwarves, from an original crew of forty, to survive the mission.

This ability gives the Dwarf +1 damage when using crossbows. When using ballistae, the Dwarf also rolls an additional 2 Attack Dice.



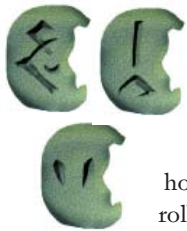
Murken's Meade

Blindswimmer crews carry water supplies with them; cavern water is stale and often poisonous. One Dwarf,

Murken of the *Stalagmite Swimmer*, however, claimed that cavern water was better than the finest Dwarven beers. When his ship wrecked (some say due to his being intoxicated), he survived for weeks drinking the same water that killed his surviving crewmen.

Though the Blindswimmer cannot detect poisoned water or food any better, it will not harm him at all. Blood poisons and venoms do normal damage, but it is always subtracted from the Dwarf's Fatigue, not Health.

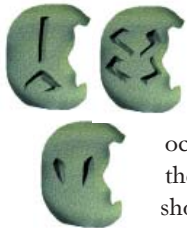
Barrel Lungs



Navigator Oggan of the *Bottomspit* was said to be able to hold his breath for seventy-nine minutes. This record is seldom challenged anymore.

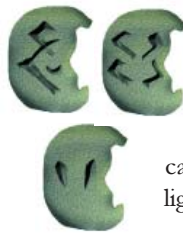
The Blindswimmer can automatically hold his breath for ten minutes. A Courage roll increases this to over an hour (or, for those trying to break Oggan's record, 60 minutes + Courage). Halve these times if the Dwarf is fighting or exerting himself, unless he also has the *Ooze Fighting* runic ability.

Cavern Crasher



An old story tells that in her later years, the Blindswimmer was being chased by another Dwarven boat occupied by troglodytes that had taken over the ship. During the battle, one of the Yellers shouted an order to his mast-man, and he accidentally caused the roof of the cavern to crash down on the troglodyte's ship.

By expending 1 Fatigue, the Blindswimmer's voice can be heard over the loudest noises and over twice the distance of a normal man's voice. If done before combat, his battle cry gives him and his companions +3 Initiative.



Fisher Chef

Blindswimmers love the taste of the agile, white cavefish that swim underneath their boats, especially if prepared raw and salted. Swimmers who can catch these fast fish are known for the lightning reflexes and flicking knives.

This reduces the basic knife strike for the Blindswimmer to 0 Fatigue. Furthermore, he may strike twice with a knife each round, and while wielding a knife, he has Agility +3 for purposes of comparing it to his opponent's.

The Opal Cavefish



Captain Hoan's ship, the *Blindswimmer*, was presumed lost. It went on a simple, six-league journey one day, but never got to its destination. Several cavern ships were sent out for it, but neither the ship nor its crew was ever discovered.

A century later, Captain Ordwan of the cave ship *Polefish* returned to port and told a strange tale. Ordwan said that as his ship was sailing down the great *Blozen River Cave*, his crew heard a haunting singing. Out of the darkness came another *Blindswimmer* ship, its fore lantern glowing brightly. At the helm of the ship was Captain Hoan himself, his skin as white as a blind fish, his eyes as wide as his smile. Hoan waved at the *Polefish*, and the *Polefish's* own fore lantern was immediately extinguished. When the *Yelling Men* finally got it relit, Captain Hoan and the *Blindswimmer* were gone.

This ability makes the Dwarf's spirit one with the cavern rivers... once he dies. His skin turns white and delicate, and he takes an additional point of damage whenever he is wounded. However, he can see in the blackest dark easily, swims incredibly fast (at his regular Speed), and may breathe underwater. This also adds a century to the Dwarf's natural lifespan. If killed again, the body of the *Blindswimmer* turns to a pale white goo, and eventually soaks into the ground.

Emerald Eaters

An ancient Dwarf, his long, coppery beard neatly tucked into his wide belt, stood in the center of the mine tunnel. The battle horn was blowing loudly. The old one breathed deeply. Days like this could last forever.

He heard the tell-tale footsteps coming towards him. He checked his green tunic -- three hundred years old -- and opened his small bag of faintly-glowing gems.

The first Dwarven warrior came running up to him. The young Dwarf held his axe parallel to the ground and knelt before the Emerald Eater.

"What is your name?" asked the ancient Emerald Eater.

"They call me Cutter, sir."

The old Dwarf reached into his bag, nimbly took out a tiny emerald and pushed it into the hand of Cutter.

"Bravery and Strength of Arm," said the Emerald Eater, speaking the old words. Cutter took the small gem and shoved it into his mouth. Swallowing hard, the warrior roared a battle cry and ran past the Emerald Eater down the corridor that led to the fray.

Another Dwarven warrior stepped up. The Emerald Eater now glanced a long line -- hundreds of Dwarves -- anticipating his blessing and the battle beyond. None of these Dwarves would dare charge their enemy without one of his gems and the old words.

The aging Dwarf hurried.

The Emerald Eaters are the "druids of the Dwarves," and the ancient spiritual protectors of that ancient race. A sect that goes back eons, the Emerald Eaters are universally wanderers and hermits, though occasionally, an Emerald Eater will find a small cave near a Dwarfkeep and make it home for a few seasons. When they visit the Dwarven civilization, they give battle blessings, approve artwork of the Dwarven masters, and give advice and direction to troubled kings. Eventually, when they feel their work has been accomplished, they disappear.

Among the Dwarves, it is a curse to kill an Emerald Eater. No Dwarf would dare raise a weapon against these

most ancient and sacred advisors.

The numbers of the Emerald Eaters are, and always have been, few. Even in the largest Dwarven fortresses and keeps, Emerald Eaters are only seen once every few years. When one first visits, a Dwarven city becomes rife with rumors and suppositions. Sometimes, the Emerald Eater appears only to talk to the king. Other times, he holds a simple and short ceremony of blessings and luck and then quickly goes on his way. It is not unknown for an Emerald Eater to arrive and urge the city to form an army in preparation for the attack of an unknown foe. Whenever an Emerald Eater approaches a Dwarven city, it is tradition for the Blackhammers to meet him and see if he brings news of any imminent danger.

Common Dwarves believe that the word of the Emerald Eater is to be obeyed more obediently than the word of a Dwarven king, though few Emerald Eaters are so blunt as to tell a Dwarven people to disobey their rightful lord.

Requirements

Emerald Eaters choose their disciples carefully. To even be considered for this sacred position, a Dwarf must have a 12 or higher in all of his Primary Attributes.

Ranks

Disciple (0 glyphs) -- After joining the Emerald Eaters, a disciple learns the ways of his order. His master gives him tasks, many of which require long journeys. Disciples are taught to fight and wield many weapons, though they are expected never to attack another Dwarf. Disciples may not, under any circumstances, reveal to others outside the clan that they are an Emerald Eater disciple. They are too young and inexperienced to take on the responsibility that other Dwarves expect. Disciples are given one Sacred Emerald each month by their masters.

Acolyte (4 glyphs) -- In a hidden ceremony, worthy disciples are promoted to acolytes. During this event, they swallow a Sacred Emerald, a tradition that earned this WarClan its name. Only at this level is the Emerald Eater allowed to reveal his order. Acolytes wear green tabards with the ancient symbol of the WarClan woven into it with gold and silver threads. Acolytes are expected to wander the land, above and below, and give patient advice to Dwarves. They must also look for threats to the Dwarven homes and reveal them to the Hierophants. Acolytes are given four Sacred Emeralds each month, though Hierophants will give them more of the acolyte is expected to be away on a long journey.

Hierophant (7 glyphs) -- Hierophants are the holiest of the Emerald Eaters. Only the acolytes who have done noticeable work are asked to join the Hierophants. The induction takes place at the hidden temple of Or'Genel -- a temple built entirely of emeralds. Its location is revealed only to the Hierophants. Once a decade, all the Hierophants meet in the Great Gathering of Or'Genel and decide the next ten years worth of objectives and journeys. Hierophants handpick the disciples of the next generation (found in their travels), and give them to worthy acolytes for training. Here, the Emerald Keeper gives each Hierophant a year's supply of 92 Sacred Emeralds -- a holy number among the order.

The Emerald Keeper (10 glyphs) -- During the Great Gathering, the Hierophants choose one Dwarf to be their leader and the caretaker of the jewel temple of Or'Genel. Though the Great Gathering can elect a new Keeper every decade, this position is traditionally a lifetime one. The Emerald Keeper is the only Emerald Eater who does not wander. He is the founding stone of the clan and needs to be in a place where other Emerald Eaters can find him easily. Historically, the Emerald Keeper is not only the wisest Emerald Eater, but also a master warrior. After all, it is his blade alone that guards Or'Genel. The Emerald Keeper has an unlimited supply of Sacred Emeralds and spends a great deal of his time creating them by carving sacred runes and inscriptions on each facet of each tiny green gem.

Armor and Equipment

Once an Emerald Eater becomes an acolyte, he is allowed to wear the traditional green tabard. Most wear fine mithril chainmail under their tabards and carry small, one-handed weapons such as shortswords, hammers, and hatchets.

Personality

The Emerald Eaters have always been a mysterious part of the Dwarves' history. Ancient Dwarven cave-paintings portray the Emerald Eaters showing the Dwarves how to tunnel, how to smelt, and even presenting the first axe to the fabled Dwarf king Ur. The Emerald Eaters helped drive the Gracht from the Dwarven mountainsides and have picked the sites for the greatest Dwarven citadels.

As the guiding hand of the Dwarves, individual Emerald Eaters are taught to be the ultimate and ideal Dwarf. Wisdom, strength, bravery, and logic are the qualities that they foster, along with the appreciation for hard work. Emerald Eaters must be the greatest of warriors and the most respected of sages. As a result of this responsibility, Emerald Eaters are not nearly as boisterous as other Dwarves. It is rare to see an Emerald Eater singing loudly, a mug of dark ale in his hand, and telling exaggerated stories of killing a dozen gray goblins with a single axe blow.

Ordinary Dwarves expect the Emerald Eaters to be above the petty day-to-day life they lead. They give Emerald Eaters their utmost respect and attention when they arrive. In turn, the Emerald Eaters always have an eye for the future of their people. This is the greatest reason why they are wanderers; they are constantly seeking new ideas, devices, and information to give to their brethren.

Glyphs

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Wanderlust | 6. Loyalty |
| 2. Seeking | 7. Creation |
| 3. Defender | 8. Discipline |
| 4. Ritual | 9. Pride |
| 5. Legends | 10. Altruism |

Emerald Eater Runes

Jewel Teeth



Emerald Eaters can get nourishment from gems just as an ordinary Dwarf eats bread! Each Sacred Emerald eaten restores 2d6 Health and the same amount of Fatigue. Each 50 silvers of any other gemstone gains the Emerald Eater 1 Health and 1 Fatigue.

Curse of Or'Genel



Dwarves dare not kill an Emerald Eater, and this is not just an old superstition. Anybody who kills an Emerald Eater takes 5d6 damage from the spirit of the slain Dwarf. If the killer is a Dwarf, he takes double that damage as he is consumed by a green fire!

Gem Sight



Dwarves with this runic ability can instantly detect gems and jewels within three paces of them, even if they are hidden. Furthermore, they'll know exactly what kind of gem it is, what it's worth, and where, exactly, it is. This ability can be used at greater distances (generally, within vision range) but requires a Perception roll.

Minehammer Grip



In the old ceremonies, Emerald Eaters would crush the Sacred Gems to dust using their bare hands. The hand strength of the Dwarf is Might +5. While this doesn't do any extra damage (except for Strangling), it counts for comparing Might when grappling.

Emerald Edge



By coating a blade with the dust of Sacred Emeralds from Or'Genel, the weapon can be made preternaturally sharp. Coating a weapon adds +1 to its damage permanently.

Seeing Stone



By cracking a Sacred Emerald in half, the Emerald Eater can look through one half and see what the other half sees, regardless of distance. The image is very blurry, and requires a Perception roll to fully discern it. After a month, Seeing Stones lose their magic.

Jaw Scraper



Before the Dwarves had axes and picks as weapons, it is said they fought with their burly hands and strong jaws. This "barbaric" martial style has been lost to most Dwarven-kind, but not to some Emerald Eaters.

If the Emerald Eater successfully grapples a foe, he can also choose to bite for Might -2 carving damage. Some Dwarves coat their teeth in metal -- their bites do Might -1 damage. Coating the teeth costs about 100 silvers and requires the talent of a Master smith.

See the Inner Gem



The Emerald Eater can instantly detect the presence of another Emerald Eater within fifty feet. Furthermore, a successful Intellect roll will identify the WarClan of another Dwarf, and whether or not that Dwarf is hiding rage or anger (a Difficult roll can be made on non-Dwarves).

Gem Truth

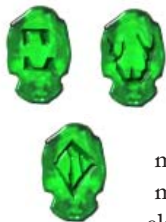


This runic ability forbids the Emerald Eater to lie. At the same time, however, it allows him to immediately detect when others are lying in his presence.

Blessing of Or'Genel



By sprinkling a touch of Sacred Emerald dust on a warrior, he will roll an extra Attack Die in his next battle. One Sacred Emerald can bless 10 warriors. An Emerald Eater may not bless himself or higher-ranking clansmen, though higher-ranking Emerald Eater may bless lower-ranking ones.



Ghoststone

The Emerald Eater has learned to trap part of his spirit into a Sacred Emerald, turning it into a brilliant green ghoststone. This allows him to “record” a message into the valuable stone. The message may be up to an hour long. When someone else touches the gem, the ghost of the Emerald Eater appears (regardless of whether or not he is alive or dead!) and speaks the message, and may even converse intelligently to the recipient about related topics. When he creates the stone, the Emerald Eater can dictate that only a specific individual or clan will activate the ghoststone. Or’Genel has countless ghoststones embedded into his walls; a Dwarf can listen to millenniums of Dwarven wisdom.



Great Blessing of Or’Genel

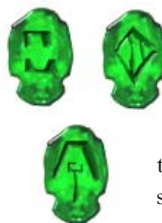
Similar to the Blessing, but gives 2 extra Attack Dice to the blessed recipient. So great is this blessing, Dwarves must make a Courage roll to accept it. Non-Dwarves must make a Difficult Courage roll.

Sacred Gems of Or’Genel



The Emerald Eater gains the sacred ability to consecrate ordinary gems into Sacred Gems. This requires a 1-carat emerald (500 silvers). By expending 2d6 Fatigue, praying for an hour, and passing a Courage roll, the emerald becomes a Sacred Gem. Its facets shine with perfect clarity and it glows with a slight, greenish light.

Emerald Keepers are required to have this runic power to perform their duties.



Energy Stone

An ancient and long-lost technique, this ability allows an Emerald Eater to hit a gemstone in such a way that it explodes with tremendous force. This technique was used to open difficult mine shafts in the great Dwarven Halls.

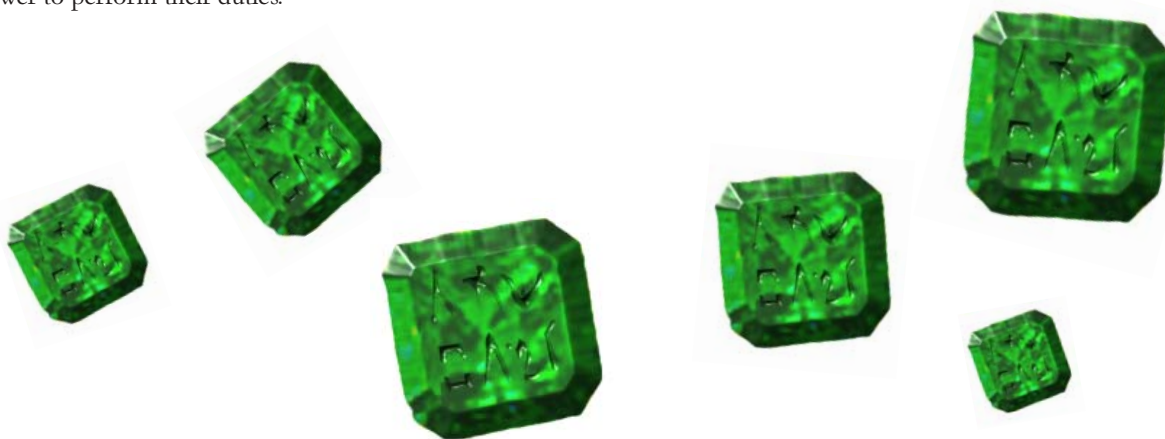
If the Dwarf lands a blow on a gemstone, it explodes doing 1d6 damage for every 100 silvers worth. Some Emerald Eaters affix a gem to their hammer or mace to do extra damage in combat. This requires a successful Intellect roll and about ten minutes. To break the gem on a foe, the Dwarf must do at least 10 points of damage in the attack. Treat the damage from the weapon separately than the damage from the explosion. The weapon must make a Ruin roll immediately when it is used in this fashion, +1 for every 10 points of damage the explosion did.



Emerald Shadow

By concentrating for a round, making a Courage roll, and swallowing a Sacred Emerald, the Emerald Eater can turn himself insubstantial. He is immune to damage, and can float through walls, floors, and ceilings. Just as the real world cannot affect the Dwarf, he cannot affect the real world in any way. He cannot talk or move objects, though his equipment and armor stays on him in this insubstantial form. To others, he looks like a spectacular green ghost.

Staying in this form costs 1 Fatigue each minute.



The Hand of Nharga

The name of Nharga is spoken in hushed whispers when the fires burn low in the Dwarfhold. For generations it has been a byword for treachery and murder among the Dwarves. Ages ago, Nharga was a bodyguard and confidant to the High King of the Dwarves in the semi-mythical Torgshold. In a fit of jealousy and madness, Nharga betrayed his king and people by opening the gates of the hold to waiting orcs. As the invaders poured into the ancient caverns and halls, Nharga slew the High King and proclaimed himself lord of Torgshold. The strength of the Dwarves was still great in those days, and the orcs were repulsed, though at great cost. The sons of the High King and their Blackhammer guards came to reward Nharga for his betrayal, but he vanished in the darkness of the underworld and passed into Dwarven legend. From that day, no Dwarf would carry his name.

The treachery-stained name would not be forgotten, however. In dark, forbidden caverns below the deepest levels of the Dwarfholds, small bands of renegades gathered to honor and worship the memory of Nharga. Led by his exiled offspring, a cult of assassins, feared and reviled throughout Dwarfdom, would grow around the worship of Nharga, this prince of treachery and rebellion. The Hand of Nharga would reach from the beyond the grave to exact revenge for his exile and finally overthrow the Dwarf Lords.

For the Hand of Nharga, the years in exile have not dampened their desire for revenge. All warriors are sworn to hary and oppose Dwarves not of their cult at all opportunities. They are secretive and untrusting, qualities that have earned them a notoriety for intrigue. As a result, the Hand of Nharga creates the most sought-after assassins in the world. They still have a powerful reputation among Dwarves, which has led to witch-hunts and inquisitions to root out these insidious warriors.

The devious nature of this group has recently caused several splinter factions to appear. One such group, the Fist of Nharga, believes that Nharga intended for his

children to become elite assassins to they could one day make peace with their old enemies and use their skills to push the entire Dwarven race to new heights. These rare acolytes of Nharga do not have some of the more murderous tendencies towards other Dwarves that their kin are known for. More typical acolytes of Nharga view these outcasts as traitors.

Ranks

Apprentice (2 glyphs) -- A warrior of the Hand is not considered a true Apprentice until he has successfully assassinated a target at the behest of his WarClan. Apprentices are used with impunity by the Lord of Secrets; their lives are cheap and easily replaced.

Messenger (4 glyphs) -- Those that serve faithfully and survive their months as Apprentices are promoted to Messengers. They deliver terror and death at the word of the Lords, and pride themselves on the intricacies of their plots.

Claw (6 glyphs) -- Messengers are encouraged to slay each other to gain the coveted rank of Claw. The Claws of the Hand gain the post by surviving assassination within the clan. They are used for delicate assassinations of importance, as well as information gathering. Many gain positions in the hierarchy of Dwarfholds, waiting for the orders to betray as their namesake once did.

Shadow (8 glyphs) -- The Shadows are the most dangerous and least trusted servants of the Lord of Secrets. They have risen to their place through murder and patience. It is accepted by the WarClan that the most successful Shadows will attempt to murder his superior and take his place as Lord of Shadows.

Lord of Secrets (10 glyphs) -- From the dark caverns of their hidden holds, the Lords of Secrets conduct their campaigns of revenge. Having survived assassination attempts from within and without, they are masters of survival, intrigue, and terror. In a given hold there are always five Lords, all of whom know that their position and lives are at risk every day.

Armor and Equipment

Warriors of the Hand of Nharga are encouraged to train with all forms of weapons. Circumstances rather than tradition dictate the outfit of these warriors. Accordingly, weapons and armor vary with the individual and role he plays. Thus, an assassin sneaking into a guarded keep would obviously not wear plate armor or carry much gear, while a warrior of the Hand undertaking a long journey in the underworld might pack a good deal of equipment.

Personality

The Hand of Nharga reveals itself only to its victims. Even a warrior's closest companion may not know his true identity and affiliation. Although within he may feel spiteful and bitter at the indignations his clan has suffered, he will show a different face to those around him, always concealing his true motives.

Because of its chaotic nature, Runemasters may disallow players to pick this WarClan, or only allow players to create characters from the splinter group, the Fist of Nharga.

Warriors of the Fist of Nharga are every bit as manipulative, cunning, and dangerous as the more traditional members. Unlike the typical Dwarves of Nharga, however, members of the Fist believe that the true path of Nharga was lost for centuries and has only now been rediscovered. In their view, Nharga was a martyr. He betrayed the Dwarves -- an act which pained him dearly -- so that he and his kin could eschew Dwarven traditions and become strong in a different way. Now that they have, warriors of the Fist use their Machiavellian minds to find a way to unite with their Dwarven brothers and start a new golden age of Dwarves.

Other Dwarves, especially the Blackhammers, find the ideas of the Fists dubious. They don't appreciate the tactics and techniques of the Hand of Nharga, and don't want to see it corrupt the Dwarven populace.

Glyphs

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Betrayal | 6. Terror |
| 2. Practicality | 7. Vengeance |
| 3. Elusiveness | 8. Mercilessness |
| 4. Intrigue | 9. Deception |
| 5. Recrimination | 10. The Mercenary |

The Hand of Nharga Runes



Silent Stalker

The warrior's tread is soft and stealthy, making him difficult to detect. As long as he is concealed by shadows or good cover, listeners can only detect him with a Hopeless Perception roll.



Fangbite

With each successful melee hit, the warrior does +1 damage as he twists his weapon into his foe.



Seeker's Sense

Even the most bewildering maze is no challenge to a servant of Nharga. His sense of direction is almost perfect, even in total darkness.



Cavern Guile

The warrior draws strength from the nourishment of the caverns. He is adept at finding strange lichens and albino creatures of the underworld for food. Ingested poisons do not affect the Dwarf; other poisons and venoms do half damage if he makes a Courage roll.



Sudden Strike

The Hand of Nharga strikes without warning. If attacked while Holding, the warrior gains +1 Attack Die.



Stone Skin of Nharga

The warrior may become as still as stone. Even his skin takes on a dull, rock-like appearance. As long as he does not move, and the terrain is favorable, it requires a Difficult Perception roll to spot him.

In dark, underground conditions, a Hopeless Perception roll is required.

Secrets of the Caves



Within the dark caverns beneath the Dwarfholds all manner of strange fungi grows, and the Hand of Nharga knows well how to use these plants for their nefarious purposes. The warrior gains one level of expertise in the Herbalist profession. Furthermore, he may mix the deadly White Mold poison, which does 5d6 damage if ingested or taken into the blood. It takes one week (and supplies from the underworld) to make 3 doses.



Blade Hand of Nharga

Nothing can stop the Hand of Nharga from reaching its victim. Once per adventure session, the warrior may turn a missed shot into a Vital Shot.



Dark Creatures of the Caves

The dank caverns of the underworld are home to all manners of exotic, deadly creatures. The warrior becomes knowledgeable of all manners of venomous creatures. Furthermore, he may extract the deadly Albino Asp poison, which does 1d6 damage if ingested or taken into the blood, and causes paralysis within 1d6 minutes if a Might roll is failed. It takes one week (and supplies from the underworld) to make 3 doses.



Batsight

The warrior's senses are so acute that even in the perpetual night of the underworld he can fight without penalty. By smell and sound, he can detect living or moving creatures within ten paces, even in absolute darkness.



Speed of Darkness

So fast is the warrior's blade that it appears as a blur of inky darkness. He rolls 3d6 when determining initiative; this may cause a flurry (see p. RQ97).



Nharga's Eyes

The warrior is uncannily alert. He may not be surprised, and foes will never gain a Surprise die against him for any reason.



Voice of Terror

The warrior brings the whisper of Death to his foes, chilling the blood. Once per combat, the warrior may force an opponent within hearing range to immediately make a Difficult Courage roll or be affected by Terror.



Death Blow

Nharga's Vengeance is as efficient as it is ruthless. Once per adventure session, the warrior may add an additional '6' to any die roll. This may be used with Attack Dice, turning a miss into a Solid Shot, a Solid into a Vital Shot, or a Vital into a Critical. It may be added to a Critical for greater havoc, or even to a damage roll for a truly nasty blow.



The Hand of Nharga

The venomous touch of the Hand is lethal to its victims. A successful Vital Shot to the opponents forehead or unarmored chest causes forces the victim to make a Difficult Might roll or suffer 5d6 of poison damage. This is the feared calling card of Nharga's legacy, the victim's withered corpse with only a black handprint upon it to mark the cause of death.

If the acolyte of Nharga ever critically misses his attack roll, the poison affects himself!

Children of Dyra

So long ago that even the Elves do not remember the full tale, the Elven lord Vanderon chanced upon a strange sight in the ancient forests of Hylithos. At the edge of a green glade, an injured swan of great size strove to escape the ravenous jaws of a pack of wolves. Vanderon sat for a moment, watching the scene unfold. Although no great lover of birds, the grace and dignity of the swan, even in this most desperate time, struck him deeply. It seems da terrible injustice that such a beautiful creature should die such a lonely death. With a cry, he leapt into battle, silver sword shining, raining blows upon the startled wolves. Fang and claw rent his purple cloak, and bright blade drew red blood from the wolves. Blazing with passion, he cut his way through the pack, scattering them in all directions. With mournful howls, they fled into the deep woods.

Vanderon turned to the swan. It had not fled as he might have expected, but instead fluttered about unsteadily, unable to fly or walk away. To his utter amazement, the swan seemed to flow before his eyes, its form turning to that of a beautiful woman, still clutching the arm wounded by the wolves. That was Dyra, the legendary Maiden of the Wood. The bloody sword fell forgotten from Vanderon's hand, and at that moment he knew he beheld his love.

From that day forth, Vanderon and Dyra dwelt together in the forests of Hylithos, and their children grew to be many and strong.

The Elven Children of Dyra and Vanderon walk the same path, but each in their own way. The males are warriors, like their father, whilst females are healers like their mother. The distinction is not always clear cut, however, as all remember how Dyra fought the wolves and Vanderon healed her injuries.

While the Children of Dyra are true Elves, they never forget that their heritage has been mixed with that of the wild Maiden of the Forest, something most Elves consider more mystical and connected to nature than themselves.

Ranks

Shield Bearer (2 glyphs) -- These eager warriors are often the children of noble families, bored with the intricacies of Elven society, yet not completely willing to leave their homelands entirely. Fresh and inexperienced, they are rarely seen unescorted by their elder comrades.

Warder (4 glyphs) -- Most Shield Bearers join the ranks of the Warders within a year. It is at this time that they choose to follow the path of Dyra or Vanderon. They are then considered full members of the WarClan. Warders make up the bulk of the clan's fighting strength, and are looked upon as the community's first line of defense.

Guardian (6 glyphs) -- Guardians are hardy warriors, and all have served the WarClan for several years. They are practical and reliable, and are thus entrusted with guarding important personages, and setting out in the wild on other missions of import. Shield Bearers are often assigned a Guardian mentor to accompany and train them during their first year of service in the WarClan.

Defender (8 glyphs) -- Only by a Protector's appointment may a Guardian join the elite ranks of the Defenders. They are the Protector's personal lieutenants, and lead troops of Warders into battle on the occasion that it becomes necessary. The Elves have not seen a full regiment of the Children Dyra and Vanderon in over three centuries.

Protector (10 glyphs) -- The role of Protector is not a mere formality for the WarClan. There are only two Protectors at any given time for the clan, one a female who follows the way of Dyra, the other a male who lives with the spirit of Vanderon. They are the first into war, and the first to accept any challenge to the clan.

Armor and Equipment

The Children of Dyra vary the color and heraldry of their clothing and armor according to the path they have chosen. The healers of the WarClan wear sky blue and white in honor of Dyra the Swan-Maiden, while the warriors wear purple cloaks in honor of the courageous Vanderon. Warriors favor bright steel swords and spears as weapons, whilst healers generally make light of weapons in favor of herbs and other items of restoration.

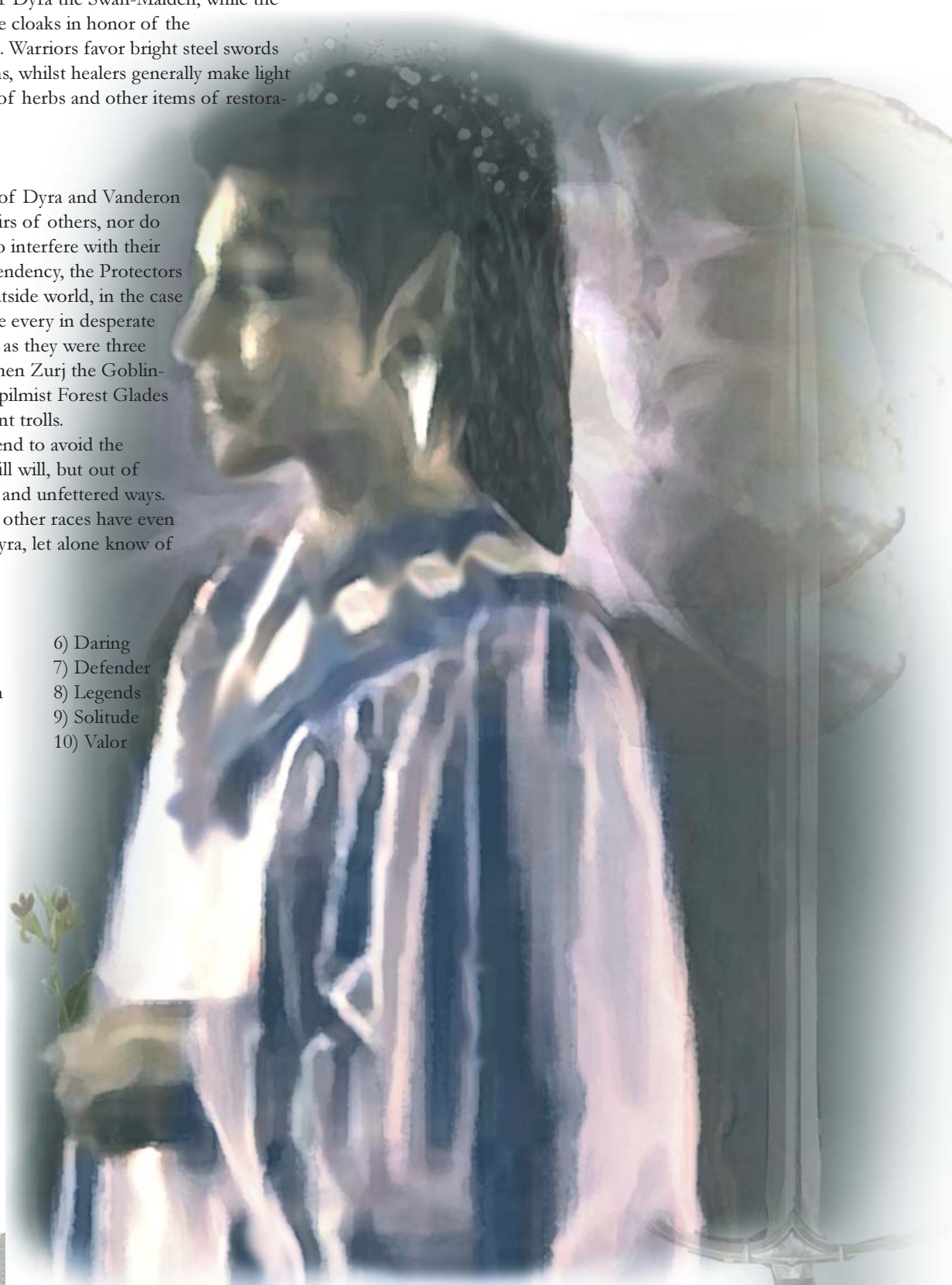
Personality

The Children of Dyra and Vanderon care little for the affairs of others, nor do they tolerate others to interfere with their affairs. Despite this tendency, the Protectors keep watch on the outside world, in the case that their brethren are ever in desperate need their assistance, as they were three hundred years ago when Zurj the Goblin-Orc invaded the Deepmist Forest Glades with a cadre of ancient trolls.

Other Elves tend to avoid the Children, not out of ill will, but out of respect for their wild and unfettered ways. Few members of the other races have even heard the story of Dyra, let alone know of her children.

Glyphs

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| 1) Altruism | 6) Daring |
| 2) Creation | 7) Defender |
| 3) Equilibrium | 8) Legends |
| 4) Passion | 9) Solitude |
| 5) Mercy | 10) Valor |



Children of Dyra Runes



Herb Song

The Child of Dyra is close to the ways of the earth and soil, and knows the songs it sings. The Child may sing to the herbs to find them by their answer. She may reroll a Perception roll when searching for herbs, and her rolls are never harder than Basic difficulty. Even in the starkest of landscapes, a Child will be able to find some useful herb.



Burning Spirit

The courageous spirit of Vanderon imbues the warrior with strength. All Fatigue costs for wielding weapons is reduced by one (to a minimum of one).

Birdspeak



The birds of the air remember the beauty of the Swan-Maiden and honor her children. The Child of Dyra may speak to and understand the songs of birds. The birds will not necessarily be cooperative or knowledgeable (they are birds, after all), but most know little of deception and will tell what they have observed. This also gives +2 when dealing with birds on the Reaction Table (p. RQ213).



Stalwart Blade

The spirit of Vanderon inhabits the Child's blade and protects the warrior from harm in battle. The Child may choose one foe attacking him each round to use one less Attack Die. The Child may change this foe freely each round.



Healing Hands

In the hands of some Child of Dyra herbs reach their full potency. Any healing or beneficial herb has double the normal effect. Furthermore, any harmful herb does half its normal effect to the Child.



Birdsong

Once per day, the Child may sing a glorious song of Dyra to bring forth a great flock of birds to aid her. For the short time they stay, they will serve the Child as guides, messengers, or even in battle.



A flock of small birds do no damage but count as extra attackers, allowing the summoner and his companions to gain a Surprise Die against their foe. Larger birds may be summoned individually, and use the hawk's attributes (p. RQ202).



Soothing Psalm

Twice each day, at dawn and dusk, the Child may sing a song of purification, cleansing poison from a single person. Furthermore, if the listener makes a Courage roll, the poison damage is healed as well.



Song of Strength

The restoring words of this song bring rejuvenation to the Child's companions. All friendly listeners gain 1d6 Fatigue points (roll separately). This may be sung three times each day, as long as an hour separates each performance.



Blade of Fire

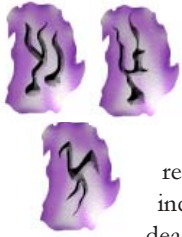
The wrath of Vanderon burns against any injustice, striking down those who oppose his descendants. This ability ignites the Child's blade with preternatural, purple fire. He does an additional +1 fire damage, and has a 1 in 6 chance of turning most foes into infernos (see p.RQ83).



Singing Blade

The warrior's weapon dances in his hand, striking and moving with incredible speed, leaving blurred, purple and white streaks of moonlight behind it. He and his nearest companion may reroll Initiative at the beginning of the combat.





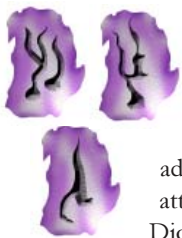
Restoration

Dyra's descendants bring health and rest, and their touch imbues life to those in need. Once per day, the Child may heal an injured creature of all wounds, restoring all lost Health. Even a Dying individual may be Restored, although the truly dead are beyond such help. This effort costs the Child 1d6 Fatigue for each Health level the victim is suffering (1d6 for Wounded, 2d6 for Bloody, 3d6 for Reeling, 4d6 for Dying). If she becomes Fatigued by this drain, the Restoration fails and may not be attempted for another full day.



Defender's Honor

When all looks lost, the Child of Vanderon draws his strength from adversity. Each time he is injured in battle, he gains 1d6 Fatigue points. Furthermore, he may ignore any Critical Hit or Fear effects that result in losing Fatigue.



Bitter Riposte

The sword of Vanderon was rarely drawn first, but was always sheathed last. Whenever the warrior is injured in battle, he may immediately roll an additional attack against the assailant. This attack uses the appropriate number of Attack Dice and expends Fatigue normally.



Cloak of Feathers

Dyra's gift to the warrior protects him in battle, and may be called upon at will and without limit. Each round, an opponent must pass a Difficult Perception roll or be unable to strike the Child, due to a swirling mass of white, glowing feathers that surrounds and shelters him. Once passed, a foe need not test again.



Soul of Dyra

By spending 1d6 Fatigue, the Child of Dyra may take the form of a white swan. While in this form, her attributes become those of the swan, except her Intellect, which remains the same. Each hour remaining in this form costs an additional 1d6 Fatigue, which cannot be recovered until she rests in Elven form. If the Child becomes Fatigued while in this form, she immediately reverts to her Elven form.



Soul of Vanderon

The Child of Vanderon burns with fiery passion in battle, and with a great love for all things wild and beautiful. Those foes of lesser Intellect than the Child and within sword reach are scorched by his burning anger. Each round, all those within the flames take 1d6 damage from which armor does not protect, and has a 1 in 6 chance of becoming an inferno (see p.RQ83).

The final runic ability that a Child possess is determined by the Child. Males typically take the Soul of Vanderon, while Females choose the Soul of Dyra. It is not entirely uncommon, however, for the reverse to be true. To advance to the rank of Protector, however, the Old Ways must be followed.

Dreamcasters

The cloudy sky was cast in nightmarish colors as the flames rose over the burning fortress. Panic reigned within as the remaining defenders fled the battlements, vainly searching for respite or refuge. They would find none. Already the Elves were within the walls, slaying indiscriminately. In the uppermost chamber of the central tower, the Baron waited anxiously. His remaining guards would soon fall, and there was no escape from this disaster. His dreams of imperial expansion had brought this ruin, for the Elves did not take kindly to his intrusions. All his ambitions were turning to ash before him, and nothing remained except the inevitable.

The great oaken door to his chambers shuddered under a heavy blow. The Baron stood for a moment at the window, watching in dread fascination as the wood seemed to peel and melt away. With a final blow it fell in, and through the wreckage stalked a menacing shadow, tall and proud in its victory. The Baron met its gaze for a moment, then recoiled in horror. Without a thought, he hurled himself from the high tower, plunging to the rocky ground...

Lying in his bed, the Baron shuddered once, then was still. His guards would find him at sunrise, dead without a mark upon him, terror frozen forever on his visage. In the courtyard below, the cloaked figure drifted unseen past the guards. His mission accomplished, the Dreamcaster knew the Elves no longer need concern themselves with the Baron's mad ambitions. As he stood atop the wall of the fortress, he cleared his throat to catch the attention of the nearby watchmen. When the guard caught his eye, the Elf smiled widely and bowed with a flourish, then quickly leapt down to the ground below and disappeared into the dark woods.

The Dreamcasters are warriors of illusion. Even within the WarClan, not all is as it seems. There are many sub-clans or guilds, each with its own goals. While most recognize the authority of the WarClan, their first allegiance is to their own "haven," or guild. Dreamcasters strike in the night, bringing fear and disorder to their enemies, or on behalf of others willing to pay their price. Their reputation as mercenary-assassins is such that even their employers do not trust them, leading most Dreamcasters to conceal their true affiliation.

Ranks

Warrior of Twilight (2 glyphs) -- The Warriors of Twilight make up the bulk of this clan. They are the messengers of the Dreamcasters, and often appear before an attack to cause dissention and panic.

Nightbringer (6 glyphs) -- The Nightbringers test harshly those who wish to join their numbers. Nightbringers are assigned a hand of Warriors of Twilight to their charge, and are responsible for using them wisely. Some Nightbringers act as elite warriors and guards, some are more political in their ambitions and help organize the structure with their haven.

Dreamshaper (10 glyphs) -- Dreamshapers gain their position through the admiration of their haven. Acts of insane courage or sheer audacity are the keys to success. As can be expected, the position of chief Dreamshaper of all the WarClan changes hands frequently, although this is most often a bloodless (and even humorous) affair, with would-be Dreamshapers competing to outwit and outsmart their competition and earn the respect of the Nightbringers.

Armor and Equipment

Voluminous robes and great cloaks hide the weapons and tools with which the Dreamcaster performs. As deception places a key role in their clan, disguises and make-up are often used with great effect.

Even when not on their missions, Dreamcasters prefer to wear spectacular, flowing robes that reflect their personalities. Most Dreamcasters learn the skills of sewing such robes themselves -- it is a welcome distraction that appeals to their Elven hearts when not on dangerous assignments.

Personality

Theatrical and rather pretentious, Dreamcasters often revel in the performances of their talents. They are showmen at all times, and given to “over the top” behavior. Whether moody or delighted, the Dreamcaster is always in character. Other Elves often say that knowing a Dreamcaster’s true personality is as impossible as counting the leaves in a forest.

Of all the Elves, the Dreamcasters are the most enamored with human civilization. They often sneak into towns and villages to watch the drama of ordinary human lives. Furthermore, they often involve themselves in the lives of these people to better hone their skills or add excitement to their own long lives. Whether its pretending to be a long-lost aunt, running for mayor only to step down two days after being elected, or romancing a beautiful young woman, the Dreamcasters enjoy creating artificial lives within these towns. They are never purposely cruel, though inevitably they leave tender disappointment when they must leave.

Though they rarely reveal themselves to outsiders, it is not uncommon for Dreamcasters to become emotionally attached to these human families or villages, and to become quite enraged if they are endangered in any way.

Despite their fondness for humanity, and though they often live removed from other Elves, Dreamcasters consider themselves an important part of the vast Elven nation. They will never turn down a request to come to the defense of their brethren, and will always show up with style and panache.

Glyphs

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 1) Abandon | 6) Daring |
| 2) Bravado | 7) Deception |
| 3) Talk-Telling | 8) Glory |
| 4) Rivalry | 9) Humor |
| 5) Ingenuity | 10) Passion |

Dreamcaster Runes



Sight Unseen

Dreamcasters see beneath the veil of illusion. Unlike most people, who automatically see illusions as real, a Dreamcaster may make a Perception roll to reveal the illusion for the falsehood it truly is.



Veil of Dreams

The Dreamcaster is a master of stealth and moving unseen. The Elf is considered a Master when trying to sneak past a subject or otherwise be stealthy.



Twist of Fate

Fortune favors the bold. Thrice per adventure session, the Dreamcaster may reroll one die roll. The roll must be one that directly affects him (e.g. his own attack, his damage



Shadow Dance

The elusive motions of the warrior confuse and bewilder opponents. Would-be attackers must spend an entire turn Holding and make a successful Perception roll before being allowed to Strike Hard against the Elf. Once passed, the attacker needs not make another roll. Animals and wild beasts are not affected by this ability.



Shadow Cloak

For 1d6 fatigue, the warrior can surround himself with a cloak of shadows. Attackers roll one less Attack Die when trying to hit him. The cloak lasts for one combat before dissipating.



Coils of Fear

Once per combat, the Dreamcaster may strike his foe with tendrils of pure fear, encumbering his prey in the icy bonds of terror. The victim must Hold and rolls one less attack die until he succeeds at a Difficult Courage roll, made each round on his turn.



Nightmare

Once each night, the Dreamcaster may summon a shadow horse as his mount. Ghostly and insubstantial, it will bear the summoner and his gear without making a sound. Although no faster than a common horse, the nightmare never tires. At the first touch of dawn, it disappears.



Masquerade

Through persuasion and illusion, the Dreamcaster may assume the identity of another. His voice and face changes, though the general size and shape of his body cannot. The observant will spot the deception only on a Difficult Perception roll. The warrior may keep this appearance as long as he wishes, but cannot maintain it in his sleep.



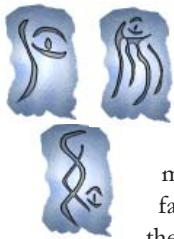
Taste of Death

Poisons and toxins are the servants of some Dreamcasters, and they have no reason to fear them. The Dreamcaster takes no effect from a poison or venom if he succeeds at his Might roll, or half the effect if he does not.



Eye of the Beholder

All manner of deception is revealed by the warrior's trained eye. All Perception rolls involving sight are never harder than basic difficulty.



Sanity Assassin

The most deadly poison is that which exists only in the mind. Once per day, the Dreamcaster may compel a subject within his sight (and with Intellect 7+) to make a Difficult Courage roll. If the victim fails, he must roll 2d10 on the Terror Table. If the first victim fails, he may choose a second target, and so on. It is said that the Dreamcaster Vallandria routed an entire Gulpi army in this manner, thus turning the course of the Battle of Bordrin.

Poison Kiss



The touch of the Dreamcaster brings gruesome death to his foes. Once per day, the Dreamcaster may poison someone with a simple touch. The victim must pass a Difficult Might roll or take 3d6 damage. If the Dreamcaster actually kisses the victim (which can only be accomplished on a willing or helpless person), he takes 6d6 damage. The poison takes hold within seconds, or as long as after an hour, at the desire of the Dreamcaster. If a victim survives the poison of a Dreamcaster, he will not be affected by it again.

Thin Air



With the flourish of his cloak, the Dreamcaster may vanish before the startled eyes of onlookers. He becomes insubstantial, able to walk through walls or other solid objects, and unaffected by normal attacks; he is also unable to interact with the physical world himself. Each round he is in this state, he must pass a Courage roll or take 1d6 Fatigue and instantly become Corporeal. If this happens, the Dreamcaster may not use this power again until a full night has passed.

Shadow Dagger



Fear is the Dreamcaster's weapon, and he wields it with ruthless efficiency. The start terror of his combat style inflicts an additional 1d6 damage with each hit, or 2d6 if he is using a knife.



Dreamwalk

Even the most well-guarded Baron is defenseless in his dreams. Once per night, the Dreamcaster may enter the dreams of a sleeping individual that he can see, bringing terror and death to his victim. The Dreamcaster can manipulate his victim's dreams as he wishes. Dreamcasters use this ability to manipulate, to frighten, and to even cause death...

If the Dreamcaster wishes it, the victim must pass a Courage roll or die of fright, having met a nightmarish fate in his sleep. If the Dreamcaster knows his victim well, or has knowledge of his worst fears, the Courage roll is Difficult.

Elusive White

Shal's honeycorn hair flowed down her back and seemed to hold her scabbard in place. She knelt among the Elven children, a gentle smile on her face.

"An' when you hear the loud footsteps," she began, her lilting voice and ancient dialect drawing smiles upon the children's narrow faces, "what do you do?"

"Draw my blade and bow, yell 'ogre,' and run upon him!" answered a young Elf, her voice still musical with youth.

Shal pretended to be taken aback. "Ey, then you become ogre sausage!"

The children giggled.

"Take to the trees, children. Twit out the whistle that I taught you yonder day," Shal said, more sternly.

"Can't ogres climb trees?" asked a small girl.

"Ey, but not as nimble as you childers," winked Shal. "He may yell and shake the trunk. Just grab on tight and wait for Elusive White to come and feed thore beast to the ground."

The immortal Elves value their children above even their pristine forest homeland. Despite lifespans that cross centuries, Elven women barely bare more than one child in their lives. Protection of these children falls not only on family, but also to the entire Elven civilization. Even the coldest of Elven warriors would not hesitate to give their life to save an Elven child's.

Elusive White is the WarClan formed to protect the Elven children. Founded millenia ago, when wild Gulpi and Gracht committed atrocities against wandering Elven childers, Elusive White is still every bit as fanatical and protective as they were back in those days. Where childers play, a member of Elusive White can be found, often just out of view.

Requirements

Most Elusive White are women; one in ten are men. Elusive White demands ideal physical and mental traits.

Members are not just guardians, but role models and examples to Elven childers.

All warriors of Elusive White must have a minimum of 12 in *all* attributes.

Ranks

Watcher (2 glyphs) -- After training with Elusive White Guardians for two to three years, new members of the clan are promoted to Watchers. They are assigned to a small Elven settlement to watch and guard the children. Since many Elven villages have no children, Watchers spend a good deal of time wandering between settlements. Many larger villages need the assistance of two or three watchers.

Guardian (4 glyphs) -- After ten years, Watchers are promoted to Guardians. Guardians constantly travel between Elven settlements. They look for Elves worthy of being a new recruit and take them with them on their journeys. They also keep a sharp eye out for villages with children that have not yet been assigned Watchers. Guardians train their studies in survival, scouting, and combat skills. When the Guardian feels that a new member of Elusive White is ready to become a Watcher, the two go on one final journey which will end at a village that needs the unique services of the Clan.

Sentinel (7 glyphs) -- After being in the clan for at least fifty years, Guardians take on the responsibilities of the Sentinels. Sentinels act as Guardians in most respects, except they handle "emergency" situations. On rare occasions, Elven children are captured, found dead, or go missing. Sentinels are immediately dispatched for a rescue mission, investigation, or, rarely, a vengeance crusade.



Armor and Equipment

Elusive White are easily identified by their long, often transparent flowing white robes (Elves are not as subject to self-consciousness about such matters). Elusive White are so named because they seem like ghosts -- just out of sight, always watching, eerily silent except to the children.

The bright white of their robes serve a tactical purpose to this clan. Elusive White *wants* to be spotted before the Elven children. Warriors who expect trouble usually wear light Elven chainmail beneath their robes. All carry both a melee and ranged weapon; bows and short swords are typical.

Personality

Elusive White have been the protectors of the Elven race for many generations. As a result, they tend to disdain the outside world, preferring to stay close to the people of their race. When they're not with the children, they are usually having quiet conversations with Elves of their own generation.

There are a few members of Elusive White who protect Man's children as fiercely as their own; these clan members see themselves as guardians of civilization's children. Fortunate is the Man who finds Elusive White watching his young sons and daughters.

Glyphs

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| 1. Elusive | 6. Love |
| 2. Loyalty | 7. Creation |
| 3. Defender | 8. Piety |
| 4. Dedication | 9. Trust |
| 5. Confrontation | 10. Altruism |

Elusive White Runes



Chill of Danger

When danger approaches the Elf, or her children wards, the Runemaster should make a Perception roll for her. If successful, the Elf feels the dread aura of death around her.



Anastalia's Speed

One of the founders of Elusive White, Anastalia, was said to be faster than the wind. She could sprint faster than any Elf, especially when her charges were in danger. This gives the Elusive White a permanent +1 Speed. When the Elf is racing to protect someone, her Speed is increased by an additional +4.



Purity

The Elf becomes immune to all diseases and plagues. Furthermore, she can detect the presence of sickness by merely touching a subject. The Elf can also identify and diagnose an illness with a successful Intellect roll; those physicians without this ability normally must make a Difficult Intellect roll to do the same.



Ely-Lurann

The Elven term for "combat divination," this allows an Elf to use her training and intuition to predict a foe's movements. If the Elf makes an Intellect roll before combat, she gets +2 to her Initiative.



Whispering Voices

Some Elusive White have exceptional hearing and can discern voices twice as far as the average Elf. This also gives the Elf a +5 Perception when trying to hear voices, whispering, or talking.

Even in a loud room, her keen ears can isolate and listen to a single conversation easily.



Banish Emroth

Emroth is the Elven word for "plague spirit." By making a successful Hopeless Intellect roll, the Elf can cure someone of a disease. If she has identified the disease first (by making a Difficult Intellect roll), the difficulty is reduced to Difficult.



Wind Techniques

One of the older names for the clan is "Che Anre," Children of the Wind. Like the wind, Elusive White warriors try to be omnipresent, and strong one moment, calm the next.

This ability may be used once each combat. If the warrior spends an entire round Holding, and is not attacked, she may regain 1d6 Fatigue.



Feather Sprint

Maidens of Elusive White often gain uncanny reflexes when charging steady foes. This ability allows an Elf to attack a Holding foe and not lose Initiative. Instead, both attacks are considered simultaneous.



Sar'Lanaer

An ancient Elven weapon technique that translates to "twice vengeance," this runic ability allows the warrior to strike twice in a combat round with a one-handed sword or knife. The second attack expends 1d6 extra Fatigue.



Guardian Heart

Elusive White are known to fight to the bitter end, ignoring the frailties of their mortal bodies. This feat increases the Elf's Dying level by half their Courage (round down).



Sylph Child

With a few moments of calm meditation, the Elf may transform her body to that of an Elven child. Roll 2d6



the first time she uses this ability to determine the age of her appearance. She gains +1 Agility in this form, but all other attributes remain the same. To revert out of this form, the Elf must meditate again, and make a Hopeless Intellect roll. This attempt may be tried once each day. It is often very hard for Elves to leave their childhood behind.



Truth Sight

When speaking to a subject, the Elf may make a Difficult Intellect roll. For the rest of the conversation, the Elf knows whether or not the subject is speaking the truth. If used on children, or subjects whose Intellect is 5 less than the Elf's, the roll is a basic difficulty.



Chiarial's Fae Blessing

Chiarial, a beautiful young Elf who was the ninth member of Elusive White, was said to have arcane powers that rivaled the Elven elementalists' of the north. She used these powers to protect her children.



This ability allows an Elf to place a protective blessing on a subject, summoning faeries of the wind to watch over the subject. Make a first impression Reaction Roll (see p.RQ00) for the faeries. This roll is at +3 for children. The effects last until the Elf cancels the blessing; an Elf may have one blessing in effect for each 5 full points of Courage.

Hatred (0 or less): The faeries despise their subject, and see him as a curse of nature. When he is alone, they will summon a fierce animal to devour him.

Dislike (1 to 6): The faeries reluctantly do their duty. They use their fae magic to weaken blows. The subject gains Toughness +1.

Neutral (7 to 13): The faeries swear their fealty to the subject. He receives Toughness +1, and the faeries distract foes, causing them to lose an Attack Die against the subject.

Favorable (14 to 22): The faeries befriend their subject. As above, but each day a different (and random) animal companion will watch over the subject guarding him with its life.

Worship (23+): As above, but with each blow that hurts the subject, a faerie tries to sacrifice its life. Roll a die.

On a '5' or '6', the faerie has given its life to save the subject, and the foe who struck the blow takes 1d6 of magical backlash damage (armor Toughness does not protect).



Invisibility

The most elusive of Elusive White are not merely stealthy -- they are invisible. This ability allows the Elf, with only a thought, to turn herself invisible (see p.RQ95). Foes lose 2 Attack Dice, and the invisible Elf gains a Surprise die against them.



Invisibility costs 2 Fatigue each combat round, or 1 Fatigue if the Elf is in a natural, woodland setting.

Saviour



Despite their passion and arcane abilities, many Elusive White have fallen in the defense of children. Some, however, does not let this stop them from completing their duties.

This ability is twofold:

Sacrifice

First, the Elusive White may take the Death die from anyone in their eyesight. It is rolled normally, when foes attack the Elf (*not* the original subject). If it comes up '6,' the Elf does not die unless she is at the Dying level herself. However, she will take 3d6 damage from the spiritual blow, and armor Toughness will not protect. The original subject may continue to live and fight, though if the Elf dies, the Death Die reverts back to him.

Restoration

Secondly, if the Elusive White does die (even if not in this manner), there is a chance the spirit of nature and the faerie kings will take pity on her, and sacrifice a bit of themselves to make her whole again. Make a Reaction Roll, with the following modifiers:

- +1 if the Elf is beautiful or incredibly handsome
- +1 if another Elf is nearby to cry out to the spirits
- +3 if she died in the forest woodlands
- +3 if she died because of *Sacrifice* (see above)
- +5 if she used *Sacrifice* to save a child

If the result is 23 or higher, the fae spirits take pity and restore life back to her body. She is not healed, but she will waken from her deathly slumber in exactly one day.

Stygian Elves

The great forests of the Elves have come under attack countless times. Each time, the Elves used the defense of the trees, roots, and brush to ward off the attackers; the unswerving arrows shot forth from the copses with unerring aim, and Elven warriors leapt from high branches to overwhelm the clumsy enemies.

Once, the legends tell, the forest was attacked from within.

From caves ad hollow, dead stumps came the Whari, black subterranean creatures that even the Dwarves do not know. The Whari were swift and smart and attacked with spiked swords of black metal. The Elves went into retreat, for the Whari were stealthy, and the Elven arrows could not find them and the warriors could not see them. Many Elves were murdered in those nights.

Then one Elf gathered up a WarClan and drove the Whari back into the caverns. Using ingenious Elven tactics, the fae magic of the Tuathae, and the trap knowledge of the Dwarves, these brave Elven warriors fought bitterly, pushing the Whari further and further into the darkness of the caverns. In a final battle, the Whari host were driven off an underground cliff and into a bottomless chasm. No Whari has been seen since.

Still, these Elves knew that they had to stay in the underworld. They needed to be sentries in the case the Whari returned. Bidding a sorrowful farewell to the birds, the trees, and the sky, the Stygian Elves built a city-fortress, Stygia-Kallare, on the edge of that chasm. To this day, they wait.

The Stygian Elves are a WarClan that has made its home in the underworld far beneath the forests of the world. Here they have guarded the woodlands above for many centuries. Though they have fought troglodytes and orcs, evil Dwarves and goblins, they keep a wary eye for the enemies that forced them to guard the underworld -- the twisted and devious Whari.

Who, or what, the Whari were is unknown to these Elves, though many Stygian sages have devoted their lives to unlocking this mystery. The Dwarves claim to have never seen this race, and they are equally unknown to Man

and Gnome alike. A few brave Stygian explorers have ventured down that bottomless chasm, but they always return with no information other than tales of the sheer chill of the depths, and the empty silence that waits below.

Requirements


Most Stygian Elves are born underground in the city of Stygia-Kallare and welcomed immediately into the WarClan; indeed, the entire city is full of Elves that claim membership. Occasionally, an Elf from the surface will journey into the underworld to join the clan, but this is rare as there are few Elves willing to leave their sun-lit world behind. Many Elven settlements believe the Stygian Elves to be little more than a legend.

Ranks

Ward (0 glyphs) -- Wards are taught basic weapon and underground survival skills. Specifically, they are taught to find food in the desolate underworld, techniques to defeat subterranean foes, and forced to memorize the labyrinthine paths of darkness. Most citizens of Stygia-Kallare are of this rank.

Sojourner (3 glyphs) -- Sojourners are the messengers to the surface world. They travel back and forth to the larger Elven settlements bringing supplies, food, and information from their kin. Sojourners can be recognized by their billowing black and gray cloaks -- the camouflage of the underground realms.

Caverner (6 glyphs) -- Caverners are the explorers of the underworld. They map new routes and seek out signs of the Whari. Occasionally, Caverners leave their own tunnels to journey across the land to another set of caverns to further the search for the Whari.



Stygian Lord (10 glyphs) -- There is only one Stygian Lord, and he is the ruler of all Stygian Elves, as well as the governor of Stygia-Kallare. He is chief warlord of the clan, as well as historian, master architect, and diplomat to the surface Elves. He wears the traditional outfit of the Lords, black adamantine armor and a forboding gothic helmet. The current Stygian Lord is one of the few remaining Elves that was present during the Whari attack.

Armor and Equipment

Stygian Elves typically wear light, black-chainmail as their armor. The coolness and color of the metal helps them blend in with the cavern walls.

Stygian Elves found outside the walls of Stygia-Kallare are well-armed; these elves are trained to fight with many varieties of weapons. The cavern environment presents many challenges to the Stygian warriors. Most carry backup shortswords and knives for close-quarters fighting. All carry ropes and grapples. Unlike other Elves, Stygian Elves disdain bows; there are seldom battles in open cave chambers that allow their effective use. The wall guards of Stygia-Kallare, however, are equipped with shortbows eternally aimed down into the great chasm.

Personality

Stygian Elves are more grim than their surface counterparts; this is the toll of the darkness. The loneliness of the underworld, along with their single task of watching for an enemy that has not been seen in centuries has made them ideal guardians of a silent world.

As a rule, Stygian Elves do not enjoy their environment, but realize the importance of their station. Their hearts still cry out for the open skies and greenery of the surface. Stygia-Kallare is not a home, but a necessary outpost. They accept their new abode with stoic countenance.

Many Stygian Elves have never seen the surface world, and it may take several months, if not years, for them to be accostomed to its vastness.

Glyphs

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1. Solitude | 6. Sacrifice |
| 2. Violence | 7. Defender |
| 3. Duty | 8. Intrigue |
| 4. Seeking | 9. Endurance |
| 5. Ancestry | 10. Discipline |

Stygian Elf Runes



Cavern Skin

Some of the oldest Stygian Elf families have gained the odd adaptation of gray skin. Such Elves are born with their normal pale skin, but soon after adolescence their skin turns a dark, sometimes coal gray. They gain an additional reroll when using stealth or camouflage in a cavern or mountainous environment.



Burning Eyes

The eyes of the Stygian Elf permanently become burning embers. This allows him to see in pitch darkness without penalty. This ability, however, has a downside; bright sunlight (a cloudless day in summer; desert sun; the Season of Mirrors in the Glacier Rifts) hurts the eyes of the Elves with this ability. All foes gain a Surprise Die against the Elf in this kind of light.



Subtle Flaws

A successful Perception roll will allow the Elf to detect any sort of structural instability. He'll know if a cavern is dangerously close to a cave-in, or a rope bridge is too rotted to hold his weight.



Contortion

The Stygian Elf can bend his way through the tightest of spots, shifting bones and muscle to squeeze through tiny holes. His Might is considered to be 5 less for squeezing through passages (see p.00), and this also reduces falling damage by 2 yards.



Compass of the Mind

The Stygian Elf has a keen mind for measurement. He always knows which way is north, which way is up, which way is down. He knows how much time has passed and how many leagues he has traveled. If he's trod a path before, he knows the way and will not get lost.



Cavern Whispers

By using the echoes and subtle air currents of caves -- and by making an Intellect roll -- the Elf can create soft noises elsewhere. The noises must be nonspecific (muffled footsteps, unintelligible whispers, or scratches), and the Elf must make some sort of movement to create the noises, whether a snap of his fingers, a low whistle, or soothing hum. A Difficult Intellect roll will allow him to use this track outside the caverns.



Shellonae's Cry

This runic ability is only available to female Stygian Elves.

When the Whari first invaded, they attacked an Elven women named Shellonae. Survivors say after they broke her legs, they poked her with their barbed sticks over and over, and with each blow she cried out a warning to her family.

Whenever the Elf is hit by an Impaling attack, she may cry out a piercing, horrible scream. This reduces the Impaling damage bonus from 2d6 to 1d6.



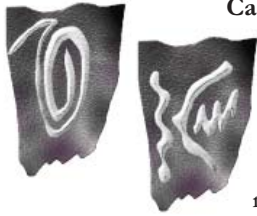
Whari Sense

The Stygian Elf's keen senses warn him of approaching danger. Whenever danger is near, the Runemaster should make a Perception roll for the Stygian Elf. If successful, the Elf's nerves warn him. He won't know the exact location or source of danger, but will know it is nearby.



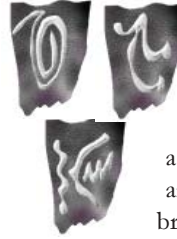
Darkness Shroud

When in darkness (at least torchlight), the Stygian Elf regains Fatigue twice as fast. In pitch blackness, he regains Fatigue three times as fast.



Caedan's Leap

By focusing his thoughts and spending 1 Fatigue, the Elf can leap high into the air. He may leap up to his Agility in feet straight up. With a successful Intellect roll, he may harness the magic better, and leap Agility yards in the air. The strange magic of this ability has an odd side-effect -- the jump is oddly slow... it takes an entire round to reach the maximum height on a normal jump, and 1d6 rounds to reach the pinnacle on an extended jump.



Marble Tomb

The Stygian Elf can instantly go into a deep, hibernating trance that lasts a minimum of 1d6 days. While in this state, the Elf takes on the appearance of a pale marble statue. He gains 15 Toughness and does not need to eat, drink, or even breathe.

When the minimum time has expired, the Elf must make a Courage roll to come out of the Tomb. If succeeded, he will slowly awaken, fully healed and rested. If the roll is failed, he must stay in his trance another 1d6 days, after which another Courage roll may be attempted.



Throwing Dark Water

This ancient trick lets a Stygian Elf to use his magical nature to hold darkness itself in his hand, and throw it in the eyes of an enemy. If his surroundings are not dark, he must get it from a shadow, which requires a round and an Agility roll. When thrown, treat it as a missile weapon that requires a Vital Shot to hit and has a maximum range of Short. The darkness is incredibly fast; it gets a bonus Attack Die like a bow or crossbow. The darkness magically blinds the foe, unless he can see in the dark, for 1d6 rounds.



Dark Embrace

Elven lore speaks of Krilorian Kellari, the first Stygian Elf. After founding Stygia-Kellare, he traveled down the great chasm to search for the remnants of the Whari. There, it is said, he learned the secrets of Darkness and Silence. Krilorian learned to weave the darkness about him like a billowing cloak, armor to envelop his enemies' weapons.

This runic ability allows the Stygian Elf to use darkness as armor:

Dim indoors	+2 Toughness
Torchlight	+3 Toughness
Moonlight	+4 Toughness
Candle or Starlight	+5 Toughness
Cloudy Night	+6 Toughness
Blackness	+7 Toughness

This ability also allows the Elf to *speak* to the Darkness, in its strange whispering tongue. Treat the Darkness as a being with the Intellect equal to the Toughness above. The Darkness of the dim indoors might just know that beings have recently passed through it -- the Darkness found in pitch black caverns would be able to hold an intelligent, if not limited, conversation.



Stalactite Technique

This fabled technique was used by the Stygians to route the Whar and force them down the great chasm. The Elf leaps high into the air and pushes his spear down through his foe, hopefully impaling him through. This must be used with Strike Hard, costs an extra Fatigue, and does 1d6 extra damage. It also gives an extra Attack Die when fighting creatures the same size or smaller than the Elf.



Ash Warrior

Named after the elite Stygian Elves that spend their time training in the deepest, most dangerous sections of the underworld. This fighting company rarely visits Stygia-Killare, instead opting to search deeper and deeper for evidence of the Whari.

Ash Warriors coat their weapons, armor, and faces with ashen runes, which give them the power of fire. After hitting a foe, the Ash Warrior may ignite the ashes on his weapon. This costs 1 Fatigue, does +1 damage, and has a 1 in 6 chance of turning the enemy into an inferno.

Caillathae

Their passing had churned the new snow into a muddy trail even a child could follow. The great tribe of Gracht cared little for that, as they had left no living thing in their wake. The bodies of men and unlucky animals alike lay partially covered as if under white blankets, asleep in the silence of winter. Each day, the Gracht moved deeper into the forest, disturbing the stillness of the wood then leaving behind a quiet that spoke of a season of death without hope or rebirth.

Yet the invaders did not move unobserved. The Forest cried a song of grief for those that could hear, and its children answered the call. Unseen by the ravaging Gracht, the Caillathae stalked their prey, a great circle, ever-tightening around the foul beast-men. As the silver moon began to rise over the trees, the warriors of winter struck. Moving like ghosts across the snow-covered ground, they sang a cold song of bitter revenge, their white hair and ghastly visages leering like demons in the pale moonlight. Glittering frost-blades rose and fell, sending forth a cascade of Gracht blood already freezing into gory ice. Stunned by Caillathae's sudden appearance, they milled about uncertainly, rapidly falling before their vengeful foes.

The moon had not yet risen over the trees when the last of the invaders fell. Their frozen bodies lay where they fell, to return to the earth in due time. The Forest would be preserved, and its defilers would become part of its renewal.

The Caillathae are the Tuathae warriors of the winter. They represent not only the cold north wind and icy death, but sleep with the promise of rebirth in spring as well.

The Caillathae are as old as the Tuathae themselves. Since the race first emerged from the ancient trees, they have divided themselves in Clans based on the seasons. In old times, all Tuathae were associated with a clan. In more recent times, only about a quarter of the population are officially a member of the Thae clans, as they are known. The rest quietly live their lives in the depths of the woods, and a handful have joined human WarClans.

Requirements

Like all Tuathae WarClans, the Tuathae must have been born in proper season. For the Caillathae, this season is winter. The colder the night on which the Tuathae child is born (for all Tuathae are birthed at night), the greater he will rise in the ranks of the Caillathae.

Ranks

Snowwalker (1 glyph) -- The youngest Caillathae are tasked to roam the world, observing the laws of nature and learning of their role in its cycle. Many do not return to the WarClan, as the temptations of the world (as well as other, human WarClans) frequently lure the inexperienced away from their true calling.

Silencebringer (3 glyphs) -- Snowwalkers that return to the clan become Silencebringers. They are charged with prowling the outlands of the forests and glades, guarding the pure interior from defilers.

Frostwarden (6 glyphs) -- A warrior that proves himself by defeating a dreaded Ice Troll in single combat may rise to the ranks of the Frostwardens. These Caillathae are fearsome warriors, and take very seriously the protection of their homelands. Frostwardens are often sent out as emissaries to nearby non-Tuathae settlements, especially Elven ones.

Sleepmaster (8 glyphs) -- As the word of the Icelords, these shadowy figures move about the land bringing the sleep of winter into the forest. Legend holds that the Sleepmaster's chant will bring about the cold season, and that their numbers determined its harshness. They carry the word of the Icelords, and command Caillathae warbands in their absence.



Armor and Equipment

The Caillathae have no uniform equipment, as such things vary with homewood and personal preference. All manner of weapons are used, impaling weapons being the most common. Although most Tuathae do not care for metal armor, it is not uncommon to see a Caillathae wearing icy-blue scalemail.

Special Skills

All Caillathae learn the harsh Wintertongue language. Never taught outside the clan, this language allows Caillathae to speak to each other without worry of being understood.

Personality

Caillathae are the most subdued of the Thae clans, being the messengers of the dark winter. The sleep of death is their domain, and this gives them a rather formidable reputation, even among Tuathae. They are not evil, however, but merely servants of nature. Although capable of journeying to warmer climates, they prefer to dwell in the cold northern lands. Their grim and saturnine bearing is a reflection of their role in the cycle, and they bear this responsibility with pride.

Glyphs

- | | |
|--------------|------------------|
| 1) Apathy | 6) Equilibrium |
| 2) Silence | 7) Moderation |
| 3) Merciless | 8) Serenity |
| 4) Order | 9) Practicality |
| 5) Stalking | 10) Annihilation |

Caillathae Runes

Frostbreath



The warrior may slow an opponent with his chilling breath. A target within three paces must make an Agility roll or suffer from the numbing cold. The chilled victim may choose neither Strike Hard or Hold for the remainder of the combat, but must instead strike without these maneuvers in his normal initiative order.

This costs 4 Fatigue each time the breath is used.

Snowwalker



The winter is the true domain of the Caillathae. He leaves no mark when walking upon the snow, and may walk across deep snowdrifts and ice without fear of sinking. Furthermore, during the season of winter, the Caillathae gains +1 to all attributes.

Deathsleep



The warrior may enter a death-like trance at will. The warrior appears to be dead, and his pain sensors dull, giving him +2 Toughness. No breathing or heartbeat can be detected, except on a Hopeless Intellect roll. The Tuathae is, however, alert and aware of his surroundings at all times, and may come out of the trance at any time, likely Surprising nearby foes.

Wind Armor



Once each day, the Caillathae may summon the wind spirits of winter to protect him as a shield. A cold wind will whip around him, giving him an additional Toughness 5 against missile weapons, and Toughness 1 against other attacks. The duration lasts for the combat.

Snowblind



With a wave of his hand, the Caillathae may fling shards of ice at a foe's eyes. For a cost of 4 Fatigue, the Caillathae may attempt to blind a target within three paces. If the victim fails a Difficult Perception roll, he is blinded and must roll one less Attack Die in addition to

normal blinding penalties (see p.RQ00). The effect lasts the duration of the combat.

Dreamsleep



The warrior may enter a deep sleep at night, mimicking the hibernation of winter. If injured, he will recover 2d6 lost Health. The Caillathae must sleep as many hours as Health points recovered, even if the number rolled is more than the damage he suffered. Nothing will awaken the Dreamsleeping warrior before this time.

Frostblade



The warrior, usually female, may fashion and wield weapons of pure ice. Material is free in cold areas, though is considered to be worth 5 silvers per pound for creation purposes (see p.RQ141). Tuathae may take the Icecrafter profession to increase crafting speed. Frostblade weapons are unbreakable, and may only be wielded by Caillathae (due to their slippery nature). In freezing weather, such weapons do +1 damage. In warm weather, the weapons do -1 damage.

Ice Touch



The frigid clasp of the Caillathae's hand numbs the skin as well as the soul. On a successful barehanded attack, the victim receives an additional +1 damage, and has his Agility halved for the remainder of the combat.

Icemail



The Tuathae warrior, traditionally male, has learned the ancient technique of creating armor made from ice. Tuathae may take the Icecrafter profession to increase crafting speed. Ice armor is treated as a material (see p.RQ151) with Toughness +2 in freezing areas (Toughness -1 otherwise), normal weight, -90% cost, and Ruin 1-4. Icemail is rarely given to non-Caillathae (most find it unbearably cold), but it is not impossible to see allies of the Caillathae riding to battle wearing the glittering armor.



Winter's Rest

The Caillathae may touch a subject and, if they are willing, guide them into the deep slumber of winter. After a full 24 hours, the subject will awaken fully healed.



Snow Frenzy

The warrior of winter becomes a whirling maelstrom of storm in battle. He may do an additional 2d6 damage in combat (3d6 in freezing weather), but his recklessness makes him easier to hit. All foes gain an Attack Die when they attack him.



Frostbite

The Caillathae's grasp becomes that of pure winter. Anyone struck by the open hand of the Tuathae must make a Might roll or suffer severe frostbite. This does an additional 1d6 damage on a torso hit. If the Caillathae touches a limb (requiring a Vital Shot), the limb becomes immediately useless until the comba is over. If the limb is touched again, it shatters into a thousand pieces, causing an additional 3d6 damage, along with the permanent loss of the limb. Exceptionally large creatures require one additional touch per 10 Might to be "shattered".



Blizzard Spirit

The Caillathae awakens the power of winter incarnate to do his bidding. To summon the Blizzard Spirit, the Tuathae must make a Courage roll (Difficult in non-freezing weather, Hopeless in hot weather). If he succeeds, the Blizzard Spirit forms in 1d6 rounds. When formed, the Caillathae must determine the mood of the Blizzard Spirit by rolling a Reaction Roll (see p.RQ214). This roll is unmodified. If the result is 4 or less, the spirit attacks the Tuathae in a rage. Otherwise, its helpfulness will depend on the reaction roll. Blizzard Spirits are not particularly intelligent, and will usually behave like clever animals. They do, however, have a keen understanding of the Caillathae's enemies, and will not hesitate to attack them, except on a disastrous Reaction Roll.

Northwind

The Caillathae is the embodiment of the cold wind of the north. For a cost of 1d6 Fatigue, he may double his Speed, moving like a freezing gust. While moving at this pace, he is a difficult target, and all foes lose an Attack Die against him. This may cause them to roll less than 2 Attack Dice! He may give this power to his allies with a touch, though it still costs them Fatigue as well. If anyone ever rolls a '6' on the Fatigue loss, the Northwind becomes angered and will not aid the Tuathae for a full day.

Blizzard Sprits will accompany the Caillathae for 1d6 hours, or less if the weather is warm. They react to any Tuathae who summons them more than once a week at -5.

CAILLATHAE BLIZZARD SPIRIT

MIGHT	350	HEALTH	380
COURAGE	30	Reeling	285
INTELLECT	6		
AGILITY	15	Speed: 30 flying	
PERCEPTION	12	Toughness: 0	

Ice Bridge

The Caillathae may form a wall of solid ice. For a cost of 1 Fatigue, he may instantly create a wall that will or bridge the length of his arm span. He may expend more Fatigue to create a larger wall. The ice wall has Toughness 10 and 50 hit points; if it is used to create a bridge, it will easily hold an armored man on horseback.

Attacks

Mountain-Wither	Attack Dice: 3 Damage: 12d6 smashing
Ice Shards	Attack Dice: 3 Damage: 4d6 impaling Ideal Range: Short

Luhathae

Over the quiet fields of ice, the morning sun was rising. Its gold rays sparkled from glittering icicles. As the beams of light flickered and danced in the fading mist, lithe forms flitted between the trees. The chill air carried their lilting voices far and wide, a song of joy and rebirth. All about them, the ice began to melt, thawing quickly and vanishing in the brilliant light.

The green-clad figures laughed and sang as they ran, trading jibes and jests with their fellows, leaping from bough to bough in the trees above. Winter was failing and the Luhathae would carry the fair message of change.

Spring had returned at last.

The Luhathae are the Tuathae incarnation of spring. They are guardians of new life and bringers of restoration. They are the least aggressive of their race, but no less deadly the few times they have been brought to battle.

The Luhathae are the smallest of the Thae clans. There are no more than two or three settlements of them located throughout the world, and they rarely interact with others.

Although handfuls of Luhathae have been called upon in times of battle, there was only once instance where the entire clan was called. Nine Luhathae women, known as the Leafdancers, were captured by the Gracht. Fleeing the forests, the Gracht occupied a Gnomish town, where they tortured and killed the Leafdancers -- one each night -- as the Gnomes hid deep in their burrows. As the Gracht numbers grew, the Gnomes grew more afraid, for every night the Gracht shouted out that they would dig as deep as they needed to devour the Gnomes.

Baluka, a Gnome child who had spied the Luhathae dancing in the nearby forest weeks before, escaped the doomed town to get help. Within days, the entire might of the Luhathae was called upon.

Six hundred Luhathae leapt into battle that cold day.

Dissonant songs of battle and rage were heard deep in the Gnome burrows that morning.

By nightfall, the battle was finished, and over five thousand Gracht lay mortally wounded. Legend says that not one had been killed -- the Luhathae would let them writhe in pain until the sun rose before putting them out of their misery. But the battle was costly for the Tuathae -- only fifty were left to celebrate that morning, and celebrate they did, with wild abandon, wine made from blood, and loud songs of agony. The Gnomes stayed in their burrows that morning, for too afraid were they to witness the celebration as violent as the battle.

To this day, Gnomes have great respect for the Luhathae. Many Gnomish clans even worship them, whispering prayers to them daily, and hoping a Luhathae pays their own burrows a visit before they grow old and blind.

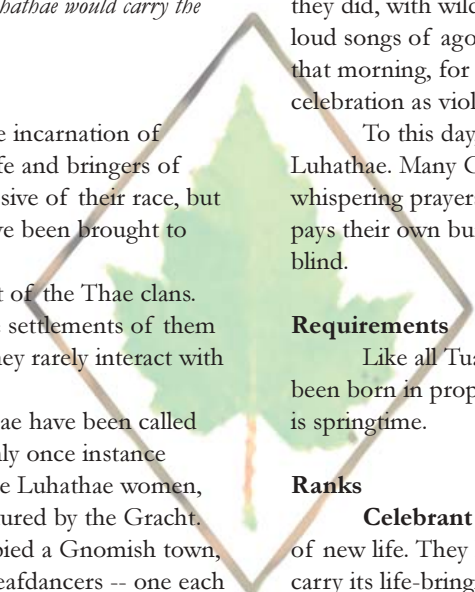
Requirements

Like all Tuathae WarClans, the Tuathae must have been born in proper season. For the Luhathae, this season is springtime.

Ranks

Celebrant (2 glyphs) -- Celebrants are the voices of new life. They herald the coming of the spring, and carry its life-bringing joy throughout the seasons. They are fierce defenders of their glades and do not hesitate to bring retribution to those who would harm them.

Traveler (4 glyphs) -- The Travelers are mature Celebrants. They often lead other Luhathae on journeys, instructing them in the ways of the WarClan. Travelers migrate frequently, and love to see the sights of different lands just for the sake of seeing them and logging them in their handmade journals of green leafpaper.



Tender (6 glyphs) -- Many Travelers eventually miss their homelands and choose to return to settle. They promote the growth of their land, defending it from all threats, and training new Celebrants. By human standards, Tenders are quite eccentric, as they are taught to revel in the moment and never dwell in the past.

Earth Warden (8 glyphs) -- Earth Wardens lead the clan in times of war. They are dreadful in battle, like the wild force of nature given form. There has not been an Earth Warden in the ranks of the Luhathae for several centuries.

Grovemaster (10 glyphs) -- The eldest of the Luhathae are the Grovemasters. It is said that they are like the trees amidst which they live, never moving, never dying. Time moves slowly for these Tuathae. Despite these tendencies, sometimes, after decades in the same glade, they will uproot and journey to another locale miles away to observe and guide a new Tuathae settlement. They are the living embodiment of the spring, bringing life and light to their surroundings.

Armor and Equipment

The Luhathae rarely have need for weaponry, though when they do they prefer bows and spears. Armor is frowned upon by most, as it is very uncomfortable during the wild celebrations, and it is extremely rare for a Luhathae to wear metal. Instead, the Luhathae trust to speed and fortune to carry them through battle unharmed.

Personality

The Luhathae are reknowned for their merriment, even among the Tuathae. They celebrate life and love always, and their celebrations can be wild and fearless, even making the boldest human merrymaker red with embarrassment. They are taught to take joy in everything, including battle. They have no natural enemies, only those who would bring harm to their works.

Glyphs

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Abandon | 6. Love |
| 2. Carousing | 7. Humor |
| 3. Creation | 8. Passion |
| 4. Curiosity | 9. Strength |
| 5. Generosity | 10. Wanderlust |

Luhathae Blood Wine

In times of wild celebration (usually following a battle), the Luhathae make wine mixed from the blood of the fallen. This requires a Hopeless Intellect roll to remember the exact arcane recipe. Tuathae who drink the blood wine recover 2d6 Fatigue and 1d6 health.

Non-Tuathae who drink the blood wine for the first time must pass a Difficult Courage roll. Failure indicates the subject *receives* 1d6 Fatigue, and will not stomach the drink for as long as he lives.

Luhathae Runes

Healing Touch



The Luhathae's light touch brings the healing power of spring. Twice per day, once at sunrise, once at sunset, he may restore 1d6 Heal points to any injured creature. He may not heal himself in this fashion.

Ore Shaper



Luhathae are master craftsmen, and this arcane ability allows them to shape metal in their hands like clay. The Luhathae automatically receives Journeyman level in Blacksmith, and does not require a forge or tools to create goods, only raw material.

Trailwalker



As with all Tuathae, branches yield before the Luhathae, and brush parts to leave him a path. If the Luhathae wills it, he may extend this power to up to ten followers. He may also command the brush to uproot entirely and move their position, creating a natural trail.

Earth Sense



The warrior is in tune with the earth, and can sense that which is out of the ordinary. On a successful Perception roll, he can determine the integrity of structures such as natural bridges, sense a coming earthquake or avalanche, know the weather days in advance, or recognize other natural phenomena.

Iron Ward



Due to their natural connection with the earth, metal is loathe to harm the Tuathae. Attackers using metal blades and axes must roll one less Attack Die. Weapons partially made of metal (metal-tipped arrowheads, spears) do not suffer this penalty.

Venom Ward



The Luhathae can sense the harmful poisons of nature and defeat them. On a successful Perception roll, he can identify the poison and find a suitable antidote from nearby herbs, which will heal the poison damage if ingested within an hour. If he is located in a desolate area, the Perception roll is difficult. This ability also makes the Luhathae himself take no damage from poisons and venoms.

Recovery



The Tuathae heals quickly when in touch with the earth. As long as he is touching the soil, he recovers 1d6 Health each day at midnight, regardless of his activities. This replaces normal daily healing, and is in addition to any treatment by physicians.

Seduction of Spring



The joyous laughter of the Luhathae is infectious, and any intelligent (Intellect 7+) being hearing it must pass a Courage roll or take up the laughter as well. This may not be used in combat, but otherwise serves to distract those participating, as they may do nothing else but celebrate joy. A new attempt to break free may be made each turn (automatic if attacked), but those who laugh for more than three rounds recover 2d6 Fatigue. These points may be gained only once per day.

Green Visage



By standing still and expending 1d6 Fatigue, the Tuathae takes on the form of a small tree, almost indistinguishable from any other. Only a Difficult Perception roll will reveal the Luhathae's smiling face in the trunk of the tree. While in tree form, the Tuathae receives an addition +3 Toughness. He cannot, however, talk or move.



Earth Secrets

The earth yields up its secrets to the Luhathae, revealing who or what has passed over it. On a successful Perception roll, the warrior may learn the nature and number of creatures who have passed by recently, as well as any conversations that have taken place.



Rites of Spring

The Luhathae brings growth and life to all. Crops will grow speedily, flowers will bloom around him, and dry wells flow again when he touches the moist ground. At his command, vines and branches will extend to encumber his foes, counting as an extra attacker who does no damage, but causes the entangled creature to gain a Surprise die. He may entangle one foe for every 5 full points of Intellect.



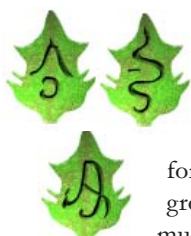
Breath of Life

As spring brings life after winter, so may the Luhathae bring life to the injured. The Luhathae may expend up to 5d6 Fatigue, healing the same amount. A subject may only receive the Breath once each day. The Luhathae may not, obviously, heal more Health than he has Fatigue, and the Breath will fail if he reaches 0 Fatigue while performing it.



Metal's Master

Metal obeys the will of its master. By expending 1d6 Fatigue, the Tuathae may command any metal to take on a different shape or form. A foe's weapon may melt in his hands, or a steel sword will crumble from its hinges at a word.



Earthmeld

The warrior may turn earth into mud, and vice versa, at will. By expending 2d6 Fatigue, a small section (10 paces by 10 paces) is transformed. The Tuathae may form bridges of solid earth, or turn the ground into a quagmire, slowing foes in a muddy bog (rolling one less Attack Die, and gaining a Surprise die). This isn't a fast process... only the slowest of foes will let themselves become permanently trapped by the earth.



Earth Spirit

The Luhathae can call a child of the earth to his side. Earth Spirits are glowing, vine-twisted, creatures of earth and mud. They are both powerful agents of healing and destruction.

To summon an Earth Spirit, the Tuathae must make a Courage roll (Difficult in moderately populated areas, Hopeless in cities). If he succeeds, the Earth Spirit forms in 1d6 rounds. When formed, the Caillathae must determine the mood of the Earth Spirit by rolling a Reaction Roll (see p.RQ214). This roll is unmodified. If the result is 4 or less, the spirit attacks the Tuathae in a rage.

Earth Spirits are fairly intelligent, and will not hesitate to attack the Tuathae's foes. They will accompany the Luhathae for 1d6 hours.

Earth Spirits may also be called on to use their healing abilities. They will heal as many dice in wounds as their Reaction Roll. So, if the Luhathae rolls a 15, they will heal 15d of wounds and then vanish into the ground, as this greatly tires them.

On an exceptional reaction roll (16+), the Earth Spirit may resurrect a recently fallen subject (usually within a few days). This requires the subject to make a Courage roll to return. If failed, the Luhathae may pour his own life energy to help, and requires the Luhathae himself to make a Courage roll. If this second roll fails, the Luhathae's spirit is permanently saddened, and the Earth Spirit transforms him into a willow tree. If either of the rolls succeed, the subject is restored to life, though is not healed. After such a feat, the Earth Spirit immediately disappears.

Earth Spirits react to any Tuathae who summons them more than once a week at -5.

LUHATHAE EARTH SPIRIT

MIGHT	350	HEALTH	385
COURAGE	35	Reeling	289
INTELLECT	9		
AGILITY	12	Speed: 10	
PERCEPTION	14	Toughness: 5	

Attacks

Club Fist

Attack Dice: 3
Damage: 12d6 smashing

Saimathae

The music lifted like an invocation above the forest, rising high into the night sky. Below the boughs, the Children of the Wood watched the Dance of Preparation whirl through the trees. The celebration fires cast long shadows that moved in intricate patterns, mirroring the careful motions of the dancers. The Saimathae drifted like ghosts in the orange moonlight, their feet not seeming to touch the ground as the dance continued. Their actions bespoke the gathering of the harvest, as each dancer enjoyed the richness of the forest's beauty.

It seemed like an eternity that the Dance continued, that the joy of Autumn would never end. Yet slowly it became evident that the dancers motions became more cautious, as if aware of a great danger approaching. Slower and slower they moved as the song took on a tone of sadness. A cold note of winter crept through the trees like a harbinger of frost. With that, the dancers froze, unmoving in the night. The dance ended. Yet as the dancers held their post, a quiet lilting tune made one last echo under the trees. Winter would come, but life would return again.

The Saimathae are warriors of the Autumn, reaping the harvests both literally and metaphorically before the coming winter. Cautious and mindful of the necessity for preparation, they are methodical in battle, allowing for no error on the part of their foes nor in their own carefully-practiced techniques.

Requirements

Like all the Tuathae WarClans, the members of the Saimathae WarClan must be born in a specific season. The season of the Saimathae is Autumn, commonly called Harvest-Time among the Tuathae.

Saimathae believe that to be unprepared for life is to be unworthy of life. Warriors who are deemed worthy of a clan promotion are sent alone on dangerous quests to prove their skills. Rarely are they told the nature of their goal, forcing them to prepare for any eventuality. Only when they solve these mysteries are they allowed to return and claim a new rank.

Ranks

Gatherer (2 glyphs) -- After their first quest, Saimathae become members of the great chorus of Gatherers. They guide other Tuathae in preparing for the coming winter, as well as serve the WarClan in times of battle.

Watcher (4 glyphs) -- The Watchers are the overseers of the Gatherers, instructing them in ways of caution and stealth. Accordingly, they are often the favored scouts of the Saimathae, and are sent out of the wild to gather valuable information.

Windborne (6 glyphs) -- Named for the manner in which they wander, like leaves tossed by the wind, these WarClan members are strange beings indeed. They are the Tuathae harbingers of doom, bringing tales of impending trouble and tribulations. They are both feared and respected, for they carry news of coming hardship, yet also hope for the determined.

Reaper (8 glyphs) -- The fell servants of the Harvestlords, Reapers are both healer and destroyer. Those that prepare for their coming are worthy stock to survive hardships and flourish, while others are separated like chaff from wheat. While most Reapers are content to admonish and frighten those who are not prepared for life's hardships, a rare few take their position in the extreme, and are cold executioners of the ill-prepared.

Harvestlord (10 glyphs) -- The masters of the Saimathae maintain an unceasing vigil, preparing their people for change and danger, as autumn prepares the world for winter. They think in ways inconceivable to Men or Dwarves, and are always planning for futures undreamed by others.

Armor and Equipment

Saimathae warriors like to prepare for the worst and hope for the best. Rather than be caught unprepared, they generally carry more equipment and tools than most other Tuathae, and always keep a stash or tree hollow nearby with additional supplies. A Saimathae haversack is a bag of wonders, concealing all manner of odd items that the warrior is convinced might be useful some day. Weaponry is varied, though the thresh is favored by many Saimathae.

Personality

More practical than most, the Saimathae are the most subdued warriors of the Tuathae. They are cautious and never given to rash action. Their laughter carries with it a note of apprehension, as they know that into every year winter must come. Despite this, they are light-hearted, knowing that careful preparation will bring them through any hardship. And when hard times come, they act swiftly, their careful plans executed with grace and diligence.

Unlike the other Tuathae WarClans, there are routinely groups of Saimathae found in every Tuathae settlement. Their wisdom and preparedness makes them good leaders and wise decision-makers. Most Tuathae see them not as a WarClan, but as an ancient league established to protect and serve their people.

Glyphs

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1) Caution | 6) Haste |
| 2) Cooperation | 7) Ingenuity |
| 3) Dedication | 8) Intrigue |
| 4) Discipline | 9) Persistence |
| 5) Tale-Telling | 10) Practicality |

Traditional Weaponry

Saimathae traditionally use sickles and threshes as weapons, though many merely keep these weapons at home in favor of more effective swords and axes. Sickles and threshes made for war are usually created by master craftsman using only the finest materials.

Sickles are short, curved weapons. They use sword maneuvers. They do +1 Carving damage, require one hand, cost 15 talents, and weigh 2 lbs.

Scythes use pole-arm maneuvers. They do +4 Carving damage, require two hands, cost 50 talents, require Might 12, and weigh 10 lbs.

Threshes are listed on p. RQ146.

Saimathae Runes

Hidden Ways



The light feet of the Saimathae allow for the Tuathae to tread silently. All stealth rolls where silence is important are automatically basic difficulty. Furthermore, anyone attempting to track the Tuathae suffers an additional level of Difficulty.

Divining Sense



The warrior can sense the presence of water and food, even if concealed or below ground. On a successful Perception roll, he can determine the direction and approximate distance of any water or food source within several miles. Water and food below ground requires a Difficult roll, while finding supplies in rocky barrens or deserts is often Hopeless.

Haste



As if rushing to prepare for the coming winter, the Saimathae moves with blinding speed. For every Fatigue point spent, he may increase his speed by 1d6 paces for a round. Furthermore, he may spend 1d6 additional Fatigue to gain an extra Attack Die for one round of combat.

Bitter Harvest



The Saimathae reaps those foolish enough to defy him. The ability turns the Saimathae's eyes permanently orange, and he does +1 damage anytime he strikes his foe.

Water Walking



The numble warrior floats on the surface of a river like an autumn leaf. As long as he carries less than $Might \times 3$ lbs, he may walk upon any calm body of fresh water. Rougher water may call for an Agility roll to stay afloat.



Quickhand

In a flash, the Saimathae's weapon flies to the ready. For 1 Fatigue, he may add an additional 1d6 to his Perception for purposes of Initiative. He spend any amount of Fatigue for this purpose.



Time of Passing

The warrior's keen sense notes every weakness in a foe. For a cost of 1d6 Fatigue, the Saimathae may bypass a target's Toughness on one successful attack.

Horn of Plenty



The Saimathae brings forth the last fruits of the harvest. Once per day, the warrior may call forth food. For every 1d6 Fatigue he spends, two meals appear. He may roll as many dice as he wants, but he must roll them all together. If the

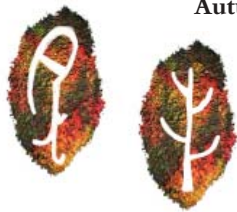
Saimathae is Fatigued by this effort, the Harvest Spirits are offended and no food is created.

Also, once a day with a Difficult Courage roll, the Saimathae may ask the Harvest Spirits to bless his quiver. For that day, the quiver will never empty, though the arrows are only useable by the Tuathae who asks the blessing... if another person touches one for more than a moment, it withers away into dead bark. The Saimathae can ask the blessing for multiple quivers, for use by his allies, but this requires a Hopeless Courage roll.



Fountain of Health

Once per day, the Saimathae may heal himself by immersing completely in water. This restores 2d6 Health, in addition to normal healing.



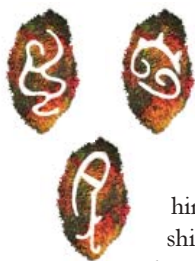
Autumn's Shadow

The touch of the Saimathae brings fear and uncertainty. Once per session, the warrior may bring fear to the unprepared by making a successful attack roll. No damage is done, but if a Difficult Courage roll is failed, the victim must roll for Terror. This ability only works on sentient beings (Intellect 7+)



Season's End

The final stroke of the scythe brings the harvest to a close, and the Saimathae reaps without mercy. All blows struck by the warrior do an additional 1d6 damage, and any critical hits are rolled with an extra die.



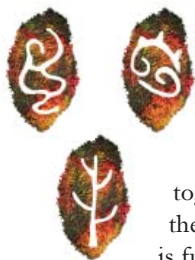
Shield of Leaves

In battle, the Saimathae may surround himself with a whirlwind of swirling orange and red leaves. These act as a shield -- attackers lose one Attack Die when attempting to strike him. This is not cumulative with a normal shield. The Saimathae may also disperse his leaves into a razor-sharp torrent. This attack is made with 3 Attack Dice for 3d6 carving damage; armor Toughness is halved. Once dispersed, the leaves cannot be resummoned until the next battle.



Fleeting Seasons

The speed of the Saimathae's weapons match the rushing of time. The Tuathae may attack 1d6 times in a single combat round. He must attempt to use all his attacks, even against multiple foes, paying the full Fatigue cost for each. If he is Fatigued by this effort, he may complete his attacks in that round, but collapses unconscious for one hour.



Harvest Blessing

The nourishing power of the Saimathae restores life in the face of death. For 1d6 points of Health the Tuathae warrior sacrifices, 1d6 Health is restored to a wounded creature. The total number of dice must be rolled together, which may result in the death of the Saimathae. If this happens, the recipient is fully healed, regardless of his injuries. The Saimathae may restore someone to life with this ability, but only if he witnessed the person's death and he expends enough energy to fully heal the subject. If not, the subject's body sinks into the ground and pumpkin patch appears within hours.



Harvest Reaper

The spirit of the autumn harvest appears to aid the Tuathae who calls his ancient name.

To summon the Autumn Reaper, the Tuathae must make a Courage roll (Difficult in summer and winter, Hopeless in the spring). If he succeeds, the Harvest Reaper forms in 1d6 rounds. When formed, the Caillathae must determine the mood of the Autumn Spirit by rolling an unmodified Reaction Roll (see p.RQ214). Any Saimathae who dares summon a Harvest Reaper more than once a season receives a cumulative -5 penalty to his Reaction Roll.

If the roll is 4 or less, the Reaper appears in his true form -- a hooded creature with robes of matted, dead leaves -- and attacks the Tuathae in a rage.

If the roll is 13 or less, the Reaper appears in his true form to defend the Saimathae and his allies, and to destroy those who oppose them. He accompanies the Caillathae for 1d6 hours.

If the roll is higher than 13, the Reaper appears to bless the Saimathae and prepare him for the coming harshness. The Reaper does not physically form, but a rush of autumn leaves surrounds the Saimathae and his allies. Any person who passes a Courage roll (Difficult for non-Tuathae) is blessed and receives 1d10 hero points, and +1 Toughness for the rest of the season.

SAIMATHAE AUTUMN SPIRIT (HARVEST REAPER)

MIGHT	250	HEALTH	280
COURAGE	30	Reeling	210
INTELLECT	16		
AGILITY	16	Speed: 20	
PERCEPTION	16	Toughness: 3	

Attacks

Scythe Sweep

Attack Dice: 3
Damage: 9d6 carving

Tainathae

“Now what? How will we stop them before they reach the Raven’s Peak?” Riella’s voice was laden with frustration. The trail had stopped cold at the river’s edge, and with the trees vanishing into the approaching nightfall, she knew they would have a difficult time pursuing the orcs by moonlight.

“We can’t follow blindly, or we risk going astray or falling prey to an ambush.” The words of Alaric were as forbidding as they were ponderous. Even at the risk of losing the orcs and their captives, his warrior’s caution would not let him to take such chances.

A lilting voice danced from the darkening wood.

“I will lead.”

Riella and Alaric drew their swords at the unexpected voice, startled that someone could approach them unnoticed. As if materialized from the very forest, a lithe figure shrouded in green and gold stood beside them, his smile mocking their confusion.

“Those you pursue are no friend to my people, and I have my own score to settle.”

With that, the stranger snatched a fallen branch from the forest floor and held it aloft. With a slender finger he drew a strange rune upon the branch and spoke a word. The branch burst into flame, illuminating the woods in a ghostly light. To the amazement of the two onlookers, the branch burned and was not consumed. Their new companion broke the silence again.

“Now, let us run our quarry to ground.”

The Tainathae are said to be the greatest of the Tuathae WarClans; they have won the most glorious battles, created the most beautiful pieces of tree art, have the most exotic runic abilities available to them. They are folk of the warm summer and bright sun. Ever in search of new adventures and excitement, irrespective of danger, the Tainathae live for today and have no concern for the morrow.

Requirements

Like all Tuathae WarClans, the Tuathae must have been born in proper season. For the Tainathae, this season is summer. The warmer the month on which the Tuathae babe is born, the greater the adventures he will pursue.

Ranks

Trickster (2 glyphs) -- These youthful warriors seek to prove their worth by the most extreme actions. Tricksters are carefree and reckless, taking all manner of risks to gain the attention of the WarClan.

Madcap (4 glyphs) -- The majority of warriors in the Tainathae clan are Madcaps. Wild and unruly, they enter battle with laughter and concern only for the thrill of combat. Few Madcaps ever have the desire to gain a higher rank, for the excitement of the hunt and the frenzy of battle is all they need.

Fury (6 glyphs) -- First to smash open the door to a haunted tower, first to run into battle against trolls, first to leap off a cliff into the sea to see if it is survivable, the Furies are the leaders of the Tuathae warbands. A Madcap may only become a Fury after proving his talent for good humor and a spirit of adventure as well as battle. Often they roam far and wide, gathering information for the WarClan, as well as spreading their own reputation for mischief and derring-do.

Firedancer (8 glyphs) -- Most Furies serve the clan for decades before joining the ranks of the Firedancers. They are the elite of the WarClan, and act as bodyguards and advisors to Sunlord. Firedancers are not tied to the homewood as much as their masters, however, as they must undertake the most perilous and outrageously impossible missions for the Tainathae.

Sunlord (10 glyphs) -- Sunlord is the eldest warrior of the Tainathae. In ancient times there have been several Sunlords, but in recent days, only one exists. Sunlord is revered for his skill as well as his keen intellect, wit, and humor. Sunlords rarely leave the homewood.



Armor and Equipment

As Tuathae, the warriors of the Tainathae favor weapons and armor of wood. Spear and bows are prevalent, and Tainathae are feared for their prowess with these weapons. Most prefer the ability to travel lightly to the cumbersome protection of iron and steel. Still, above all Tuathae, the Tainathae are ruled by their individuality, and each warrior is free to follow his own preferences.

Personality

Mischievous and playful, the Tainathae are the wildest of the Children of the Wood. They are people of open glades and bright sun, quick in their passions and fiery in their temperament. Perhaps it is these qualities that make the Tainathae -- most especially the beautiful, carefree Tainathae women -- the most adored by humans.

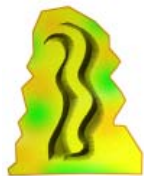
It can be said that there is no such thing as a Tainathae without a fantastic sense of humor. The Tainathae have a reputation as pranksters, but their light-hearted manner can change to a burning rage if provoked. As with all Tuathae WarClans, the Tainathae are unruly and unregimented, but a threat to their homewood will bring warriors from far and wide together in a common cause.

Glyphs

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1) Fury | 6) Madness |
| 2) Abandon | 7) Generosity |
| 3) Humor | 8) Elusiveness |
| 4) Sanguinary | 9) Carousing |
| 5) Passion | 10) Love |

Tainathae Runes

Flametouch



The warrior may create a small flame in his hand. This will ignite flammable materials such as dry leaves, paper, or cloth. Such fires may become infernos, given enough time (and as per the normal rules, see p.RQ83). Any unarmored creature struck by the Tainathae's bare hands will take +1 damage.

Firewalk



The Tainathae becomes immune to normal fire and flames (magical fires will do half damage). His equipment is similarly protected. The Tainathae may not offer anyone else this protection, however.

Sungaze



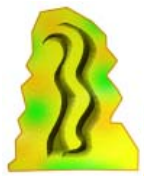
As a true child of the summer, the Tainathae is immune to the harmful effects of the sun. He will not suffer additional fatigue due to excess heat, and cannot be blinded or impaired by light.

Wither



The summer sun is hot and enduring, as is the Tainathae. He permanently gains +5 Fatigue. However, like the blazing summer sun, the Tuathae's touch causes plants to dry and wither under the heat of his touch.

Sunspeed



Once each day, and only while the sun is visible, the Tainathae may move with supernatural speed. For an hour, his speed is tripled. As he moves, small, fiery footprints mark his trail. Although grass and wood will generally only smolder

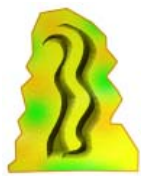
under this heat, dry leaves or similar material may actually catch fire.

Fury Eyes



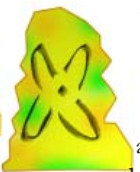
The warrior's eyes permanently glow with the yellow of the sun. Once each combat, he may force an opponent to make a Courage roll or be Surprised for 1d6 rounds. At night, the opponent must instead make a Terror roll!

Flamebrand



At his command, the Tainathae summons the fire spirits to make flames run down the edge of his weapon. This costs 1 Fatigue; this preternatural fire does an additional +1 damage on each hit, and may be used to ignite flammable materials (see p.RQ83).

Sun Strength



Inigorated by the warmth of the sun, the Tainathae may recover 1d6 Health. This health is regenerated at noon-day sun, and only if the sun is visible.

Summer Stride

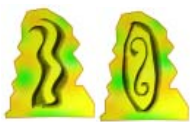


The Tainathae is imbued with the strength of the summer. He will never tire on the march, and normal athletic abilities (running, climbing, and jumping) never sap his Fatigue. Furthermore, during the summer months, he gains a permanent +1d6 Fatigue, rolled anew each day.

Withering Stare

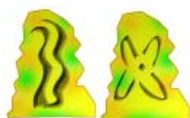


With a mere look, the warrior can drain the strength from a foe as they feel the heat of the sun on them. Once each combat, when the Tainathae Holds, an opponent becomes unable to Strike Hard for the remainder of the combat, unless they pass a Difficult Might roll.



Healing of Fire

The burning heat of the sun may heal as well as harm. Thrice per day, and only in the daylight, the Tainathae may restore 2d6 Health to an injured subject. However, if the subject does not pass a Courage roll when the healing touch is applied, the sun spirits do not deem him worthy and he is instead burned for 1d6 damage.

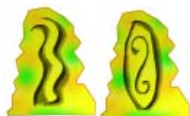


Blinding Glare

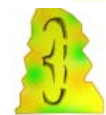


will recover.

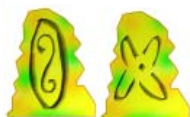
With a sudden blaze of his eyes, the Tainathae may blind a foe as if from the glare of the sun. If the Tainathae Holds, his opponent must fail a Perception roll or be blinded. He will roll one less Attack Die (and all opponents receive a Surprise Die) for the remainder of the combat, after which he



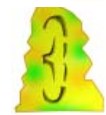
Witchfire



The Tuathae may bring fire from wood at will. For as long as he holds the item, it will burn but not consume the wood. In addition to doing +1d6 damage, anything touched by the witchfire has a better than normal chance of turning into targets into an inferno (2 in 6 chance, rather than 1 in 6!).

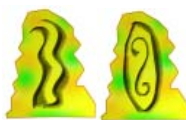


Conflagration of Summer Spirits

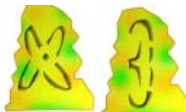


The Tainathae's soul is shared by a fire spirit. With a Courage roll, he may cause the spirit to burst from within him in a great, fiery explosion. Anyone within 10 paces suffers 5d6 points of damage, which ignores armor Toughness and automatically turns anything damaged into an inferno (see p.RQ83). The Tainathae also takes this damage, unless he possesses the Firewalk runic ability, in which case he takes half damage.

With a Difficult Courage roll, the Tainathae can force the fire spirit to only damage certain individuals within the range of the conflagration. With a Hopeless Courage roll, the fire spirit will spare the Tainathae from the damage.



Spirit of Fire



The Tainathae may summon a great being of fire and heat to do his bidding. Fire Spirits are the most fickle and dangerous of the Tuathae spirit allies, and great caution is needed when summoning one.

To summon the Fire Spirit, the Tuathae must make a Courage roll (Difficult in spring and autumn months, Hopeless in winter or freezing weather). If he succeeds, the Fire Spirit immediately forms. The Tainathae must determine the mood of the Fire Spirit by rolling a Reaction Roll (see p.RQ214) at -5! The Runemaster should also roll for the sex of the Fire Spirit. If the Tuathae is of the opposite sex, the Fire Spirit only reacts at -3.

If the result is 4 or less, the spirit attacks the Tuathae and his allies in a cruel rage. Otherwise, its helpfulness will depend on the reaction roll. Fire Spirits are very intelligent, though impulsive; Runemasters should fully roleplay them.

Fire Spirits may transform themselves into beautiful Tuathae men and women, except with shimmering red hair and burning yellow eyes. Most take this form when they appear, unless they are filled with rage. They also possess a moderate amount of healing abilities. They may heal 1d6 Health, but at a cost of 10 Health of their own. They may cure a disease or poison at the cost of 10 Health. They will volunteer their medicinal services for those who look like they need it.

The Fire Spirit will remain for as many hours as the result of the Reaction Roll.

TAINATHAE FIRE SPIRIT

MIGHT	350	HEALTH	380
COURAGE	30	Reeling	285
INTELLECT	16		
AGILITY	16	Speed: 30 flying	
PERCEPTION	16	Toughness: 0	

Attacks

Flame Lick

Attack Dice: 3
Damage: 12d6 fire*

Heat Wave

Attack Dice: 3
Damage: 6d6 fire*
Ideal Range: Short

* Automatic Inferno

The Merfolk

The Merfolk is a new race to RuneQuest: Slayers. They may be used in both Khragmar and Glacier Rift campaigns.

Physical Description

Merfolk are very similar in appearance to Humans, with whom they acknowledge a certain kinship. They are generally tall and thin, with hands and feet slightly longer than a Man's. Merfolk have small gill-slits on their throats that let them breathe in water, though their lungs are also adapted to function without water, allowing them to live and travel away from their ocean homes.

Their range of skin tones encompasses those of land-dwelling Humans, but includes pale blues and greens as well.

When on dry land, Merfolk possess limbs that appear Man-like, allowing them to pass for Humans except under close scrutiny. At sea, however, their lower bodies transform, melding the two legs into a single, fish-like tail which propels them through the water at great speed.

The Homelands

Although most Merfolk cities are completely underwater, it is not unheard of for them to establish small settlements in grottos or other areas on the shore. Under-sea cities are truly spectacular, having been formed of living coral and decorated with pearls and other sea stones. Great multi-hued towers spiral toward the surface, while Merfolk and other denizens of the sea swim between them in the sparkling waters. Merfolk cities are usually found in shallow waters, as the dark depths are deemed unsafe and home to ferocious sea monsters, such as the deepfin trolls.

Personality

Merfolk are as diverse as Humans in their outlook and personality. In general, however, they are curious about other lands and cultures, and use their great mobility to explore the unknown regions of the world. They trade with Humans and other folk that dwell on the coast, and have no natural enemies other than the Ankhari, with whom they consider themselves always at war.

Characteristics

- ❖ Merfolk have a Base Speed of 10 paces, both on land and at sea.
- ❖ Merfolk automatically begin play with Apprentice Fisher profession, in addition to the normal free profession.

❖ Merfolk may breathe on land or under water. They may drink salt water as if it were fresh.

❖ In addition to the local tongue, Merfolk speak their own underwater language made of clicks and whistles.

❖ Merfolk age like humans.

WarClans

There are four WarClans exclusive to the Merfolk, and most of them who have joined a clan belong to one of these. Merfolk are also seen among the Red Serpents (occasionally hiding their true identity), Guidesmen, as well as the Martyrs of War.

Special Equipment

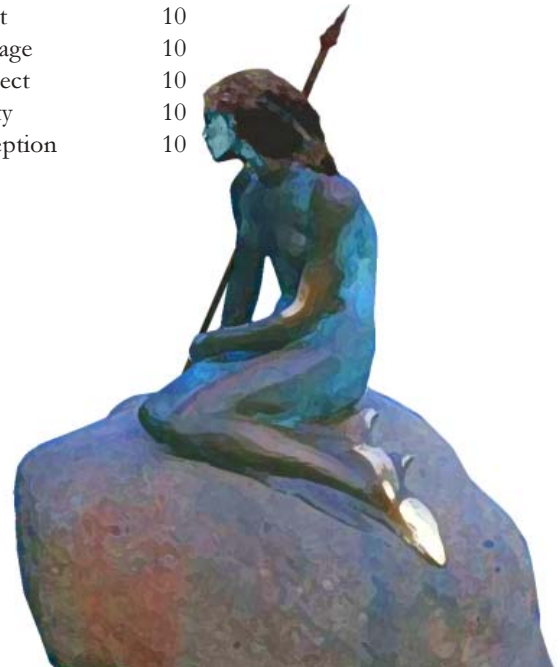
Merfolk blacksmiths are known to craft specially hardened fish-scale armor. The statistics for fish-scale material (p.RQ151) are: Toughness Modifier -1, Cost x2, Weight -30%, Ruin 0 (or 1-2 out of the water). Royal Merfolk often obtain ornate shell helmets (Toughness 6, Cost 100, 4 lbs, Ruin 1-3).

Hero Points

Merfolk characters receive only 25 Hero Points.

Base Attributes

Might	10
Courage	10
Intellect	10
Agility	10
Perception	10



Benthicians

The inky depths pressed Clar Rey like an iron blanket. He was completely blind at this depth -- he even felt his eyeballs being squeezed -- and though his ears could normally pick up the tiniest noises underwater, this place was totally silent. Nonetheless, Clar Rey was accustomed to this environment... four miles down.

He held completely still. Even though his senses could detect nothing, Clar Rey knew that the creatures that lived this deep could pick up on the slightest vibration, and devour it seconds later.

The Merman heard the tiniest rippling sound four arm spans from his throat. He shot backwards in the water, pointing his barbed javelin in the direction of the sound. A massive form bit the end of the spear, forcing its blunt end painfully into Clar Rey's hip.

Gritting his teeth, Clar Rey released one hand from his weapon and squeezed it hard into a fist. A pale yellow light shone from it. He could fith in the dark well, but he weas much more at home in the light... especially facing a deepfin troll.

The Benthicians are the stoic explorers of the canyons and rifts of the deep ocean floor. Most Merfolk settlements are on the continental shelf, much closer to the shore than the homes of the Benthicians, which lie miles down at the deepest and most haunted parts of the sea.

The Benthicians are hunters and protectors. Though Merfolk colonies have become reliant on their algae and fish farmers, the Benthicians bring them more exotic delicacies from the volcanic springs along the black ocean floor. Favorites include giant squid, cold-seep tubeworms, and boiled deepfin troll.

These trolls have always been a menace to the Merfolk. Stalking the ocean floor, eating anything that moves, deepfins have been known to challenge great white sharks and win. The Benthicians are experts at killing (and preparing) these menaces, along with other abyssal nightmares such as clawhorn white worms and the intelligent Morids, a rapidly evolving race of eel-people.

Requirements

The Benthicians have a rigid code of discipline. Their deep sea conclaves located along the great abysses and trenches are truly spartan. The Benthicians spend at least six hours a day in training, which includes weaponry, aquatic maneuvers, and the study of the enormous ecology of the deep seas. After training, two or three hours are spent in practical exploration and hunting.

The Benthician's superiors, the grim Abyssal Lords, rule with total authority at the conclaves. Disobeying their laws, which include leaving the conclave without permission, carry harsh penalties. Death and banishment are usual punishments.


The underwater conclaves are hastily constructed and build from natural terrain formations. They are unlit -- the Benthicians are trained to adapt to perfect darkness, though many can magically create light with their hands.

Any Merfolk that wishes to join the Benthicians are welcome. After living in a settlement and falling into the hard routine for several months, the Benthicians formally invite the newcomer into the clan.

Ranks

Bottomfeeder (0 glyphs) -- The grunts of the Benthicians. This term is somewhat misleading since the Bottomfeeders are rarely allowed to go outside the conclave, much less visit the bottom of the trenches. Bottomfeeders spent their hours training and preparing food. They are not allowed to speak to higher-ranking Merfolk, unless granted permission.

Deliverer (2 glyphs) -- Deliverers bring the carcasses of the deepfin trolls (boiled on hot springs to prevent regeneration) and other delicacies to the shoreside dwellings of the Merfolk. It is customary for Deliverers to travel in groups of three.



Hunter (5 glyphs) -- Hunters travel far down into the canyons looking for meat and exploring unknown areas of the ocean floor. Hunters kill lone deepfin trolls on sight. When deepfins travel in schools of thirty or more, Hunters are explicitly instructed to withdraw back to the conclave to report the menace.

Abyssal Lord (8 glyphs) -- Abyssal Lords are the master hunters and warriors of the Benthicians, and the rulers of the conclaves. They lead hunting parties into the depths to recover the greatest and most bestial of underwater fauna. Abyssal Lords are known for the calm and stoic behavior. Surviving long enough to become an Abyssal Lord means these few are the most cunning and intelligent of Benthicians.

Armor and Equipment

The Benthicians wear the scale armor (usually made from hardened and lacquered fish scales) common to their brethren, and carry barbed javelins and nets. Thrusting weapons are much easier to handle in their underwater environments, and the barbs and nets make it easier to haul the carcasses.

Personality

Benthicians are stoics. They are level-headed and sometimes seen as cold and merciless. They never complain or challenge their superiors. Not only is their own strict hierarchy not to be broken, Benthicians expect others to fit into their given roles. Nothing disgusts a Benthician more than seeing a peasant speak out of turn to his noble, or even a noble speaking too kindly to a barmaid. When in other lands, Benthicians feel compelled to obey their own laws as well as the laws of the land they occupy. If these conflict, the laws of the deep sea always take precedence.

Glyphs

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1) Arrogance | 6) Dedication |
| 2) Honor | 7) Defender |
| 3) Duty | 8) Order |
| 4) Stalking | 9) Endurance |
| 5) Exploration | 10) Discipline |

Benthician Runes

Hand Lantern



Thousands of years of living at the bottom of the ocean have given the Benthicians a unique way to create light in a lightless environment. By squeezing their hand tightly, a lantern-like light emits from their fist while it is squeezed. If out of the water, the light is noticeably dimmer (equivalent to a candle).

While creating light, the Merfolk cannot hold an item (Merfolk shields are designed around this) or wield a weapon in that hand.

Ocean's Echo



When underwater, the Benthician can pick up subtle sounds and vibrations with ease. They receive +4 to any Perception rolls while underwater, or +1 when on land.

Algae Skin



Years of living in the benthic environment can have odd effects on the Merfolk. One such effect is that greasy algae forms on their skin. Not only does this give them a green-black appearance (-1 to reaction rolls), but it protects them with +1 Toughness. Anyone trying to grapple them loses 2 Attack Dice. The algae dries up and falls off when the Merfolk spends more than a day out of water, but will grow back after a week spent under the waves.

Back Fighter



This unusual fighting method was invented by one of the first Abyssal Lords, Jul. He could dive into the sediment that lies at the bottom of the ocean, and fight from his back. The sediment would cover him and offer incredible protection. When it is possible to use this technique (usually only at the bottom of an ocean or lake, or a sandy beach), the warrior gains +4 Toughness. If used in less ideal environments (snow, dead leaves), he receives only +1 Toughness. Normally, the attacker would gain an extra Attack Die for attacking a foe on the ground, but since the Back Fighter kicks up blinding sand and dirt as part of the technique, both combatants fight normally. Each strike, however, costs the Back Fighter an additional +1 Fatigue.

Shrill



By expending 1 Fatigue, the Benthician can let out a shriek that can be heard up to a mile away (or 5 miles underwater). This is usually used as a distress or warning call, most commonly when schools of deepfin trolls are spotted and the scout doesn't think he'll survive the journey home. The shriek is just that -- a shout. It cannot contain a deeper message.

Backspine



This is a common, but useful, deformity among the Merfolk who live on the deep ocean floor. Their spine becomes plated with a thick, spiny cartilage, giving them Toughness +3 on their backs.

Trench Skimmer



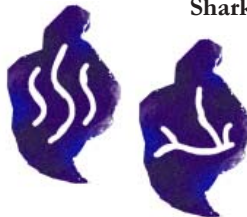
The Merfolk's maximum diving depth without taking pressure damage is increased by 2,000 yards.

Salt Wither



The concentration of salt and murk in the depths occasionally changes Benthician anatomy. He becomes thin and withered; his health points are permanently increased by 6.

Shark Bones



The depths of the oceans have turned the bones of the Benthician into dense cartilage. Against smashing attacks, the Merfolk has an additional Toughness +2.

Benthic Discipline



A harsh life has given the warrior unthinkable willpower. He gains +3 Courage or Intellect whenever he tries to resist a suggestion or curse, magical or otherwise, or to resist the effects of Terror or Revulsion.



Weird Regeneration

If the Benthician's limb is severed, it will grow back. Hands and feet take about a week to regrow; legs and arms take two weeks. If the Merman's torso is severed (!) -- and he's still alive -- he'll regrow his lower half in a month. This ability does not work if the Benthician is decapitated!



Abyss Skimmer

The Merfolk's maximum diving depth without taking pressure damage is increased by 5,000 yards. Benthicians with this runic ability are legends among their own people -- they gain +3 on all reaction rolls from Merfolk.



Ocean's Crushing Grasp

The bones and organs of the Benthician have become remarkably dense from the crushing ocean depths. He takes half damage from all smashing attacks after Toughness has been subtracted. On land, however, the Merman's dense body is unwieldy; he suffers -2 to his Agility on land.



Depth Tomb

While in the water, the Benthician can go into a deep, hibernation trance that lasts a minimum of 1d6 days. While in this state, he does not take any damage from pressure, cold, heat, or other natural hazards. Weapons, teeth, and claws *will* still injure him, though his marble-like skin gains +5 Toughness against these attacks! He does not need to eat or drink; nor does he age. The ocean provides all the sustenance the Benthician needs.

After the minimum time has expired, only the touch of another Merfolk will awaken the Benthician. There are sea tales of whole bands of Benthicians diving to the deepest abyssal trenches in this state to avoid danger... now silently waiting for rescue.



Enemy of the Sea

The warrior can detect the presence of specific racial enemies whenever they get close. This automatically includes Deepfin Trolls, other Merfolk, and Morids. Whenever a member of these races comes within 100 yards, the Runemaster makes a Perception roll for the Benthician. If successful, he detects what kind of beings are close, how far away they are, and how many approach them. On a successful Intellect roll, he will know more detailed information -- their names and their immediate desires and intentions, and gains the ability to speak to them telepathically. The subjects, however, will be unable to respond; Benthicians typically taunt their natural enemies this way with cold threats and promises of serving them hot in a bowl of chowder.

A Benthician may "add" new races to the natural ones. Each additional race costs 1 hero point, or 2 if the race is not native to the sea.

Coral Coven

“Ocean’s sift,” began the chant barely audible over the lapping of the waves. “Fires old, Bebemoth-King hear our fold.”

Echina closed her eyes, concentrating on the musical chant of the Prophetess. Her silvery-white hair blew across her face as an otherworldly wind swirled around the circle of women. A thunder clap sounded and the beach was cloaked in darkness.

“The summoning is complete!” shouted the Prophetess over the wind. “Behold! The Bebemoth-King!”

Echina opened her eyes and pulled the hair from her face. Sea spray blinded her for a brief moment, but then she saw the form of the Bebemoth-King.

The creature was misshapen and twisted. Though he was hardly taller than Echina, he seemed huge and monstrous. Raw muscles bulged out where his skin ended -- his mouth hung open in a leer. His milky eyes looked dried up and dead.

The summoning had gone wrong! This was not the same Bebemoth-King the Coven had conversed with a fortnight ago!

The creature raced forward silently. Before Echina could draw her knife, she saw its talons rip apart the Prophetess and throw her mangled corpse into the shallows. The false-king turned towards Echina. The Mermaid gripped her knife tightly and waited for its runes to glow brightly.

They did. The runes on the blade glowed whiter as the creature raced towards her. As the talons shot towards her face, her life lashed outwards. Whoever’s weapon hit first would win this battle, and both of them knew it.

The Merfolk have whispered the name of this WarClan for centuries. Members of the Coral Coven live far away from the beautiful shore cities of the Merfolk, preferring to live on the edges of tiny, uninhabited volcanic isles far out in the ocean. On these verdant islands the Coven perform their mystic ceremonies and wait for guidance from their living gods who rest in the deepest trenches of the ocean... far deeper than even the Benthicians have been.

Requirements

All members of the Coral Coven are women. Years ago, all Merfolk obeyed a strict, matriarchal society. Though most Merfolk settlements are now ruled by both men and maids equally, the Coven strongly believes their gods will only reveal the Truth to women Merfolk.

Coven members are usually born in the WarClan. Though warrior-women of the Coral Coven spend much of the year at their sacred islands, most have mates back in one of the larger Merfolk settlements. Husbands of a Coral Coven witch do not often talk about their wives, and the other Merfolk do not ask them to.

All women of the Coral Coven must have a Courage 12 or greater, and an Intellect 11 or greater. Concentration and willpower are vital to the Coven’s ceremonies.

Ranks

Maiden (0 glyphs) -- After joining the Coven, Maidens are taught the pantheon of the ancient gods of the Merfolk. When Maidens are 12 years old, they are expected to watch the ceremonies, but are forbidden to participate.

Watch Maid (2 glyphs) -- Maidens are promoted to Watch Maids usually upon reaching their 16th birthday. They are allowed to participate in the ceremonies, but their main duty is to watch for strange omens and backfires. Since most ceremonies focus on summoning benevolent gods from the uncharted undersea canyons, it is very easy to summon another undersea creature, such as a backfin troll or a Morid. Watch Maids are well-armed and trained to slay these menaces. Watch Maids are expected to travel abroad and start families before returning to the sacred islands to become a Prophetess.

Prophetess (4 glyphs) -- Prophetesses are the women in charge of a ceremony. They decide when and

where to start the the summonings. They assign Watch Maids and Maidens to a given ceremony and spend days, if not weeks, preparing for events. Prophetesses carefully watch the seas for omens and signs of the future -- when these omens are perfectly aligned, they are inspired to organize a summoning to predict the future and bless their people.

Sea-Witch (10 glyphs) -- The always-beautiful Sea-Witch is the leader of the entire Coral Coven. There is only one Sea-Witch, and the position only passes to a Prophetess when one dies. The Sea-Witch lives on a hidden Sacred Isle, guarded by elite Prophetesses and Watch Maids. The primary duties of the Sea-Witch include overseeing Prophetesses and watching for subtle omens, sending out messengers to the Coven telling them which gods to contact and when is the best time to do it. Sea-Witches spend much of their time meditating and divining the future, always listening for the whispers of their deep gods.

Armor and Equipment

The Coral Coven uses equipment typical of all Merfolk -- fish-scale armor and spears or tridents. Watch Maids wear heavier armor during ceremonies and are sometimes given enchanted weapons since they act as the first line of defense after summonings go bad.

Personality

The Coral Coven is a cult entirely devoted to the gods of the Merfolk. They live to communicate and learn from their mysterious pantheon, and spread the wishes of their gods to the common people. The greatest secret of the Coral Coven, one suspected by more than a few common Merfolk, is that even the Coven knows little about their sacred pantheon, other than the names of their gods and their influences.

Secretly, members of the Coven are thrilled by the danger of their summonings. Though officially a WarClan, they skirt on the edge of being a Sorcerous band. Publicly, the Coven maintains the gods are pleased to be summoned from their trenches. Truthfully, over half their ceremonies backfire, often disastrously. It is not uncommon for a clan member to thrive on this edge of disaster. They love it, though most hide their enthusiasm with a veil of mystery.

Glyphs

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1) Ritual | 6) Haste |
| 2) Passion | 7) Arrogance |
| 3) Will | 8) Control |
| 4) Dedication | 9) Superstition |
| 5) Valor | 10) Piety |

The Ancient Gods

There are dozens, if not hundreds, of ancient Merfolk gods rumored to exist deep in the ocean. Most are minor divinities... others, even the benevolent ones (if such a thing exists), are awe-inspiring terrors. Here are some of the more major ones:

Choeyops, the Coral King -- The lord of the underseas, this bearded, humanoid creature is thought to be the kind creator of the Merfolk. His servants include Deywa, Lord of Blackness; Vogha, Lord of Sea Caves; and Linglor, Lord of Sea Plants.

Coriolis, the Tide King -- The king of currents, tides, and waters. Coriolis is a fickle lord, kind one moment, cruel the next. His servants include the forgiving Yor, Lord of Sea Divination and the sadistic Madach, Lord of the Crushing Depths.

Haedal, the Sulfur King -- The wicked ruler of fish, especially the ones of the deep sea. His servants include Custus, Lord of the Crabs; Ucker Dar, Lord of Deepfin Trolls; Agher, Lord of Sunken Vessels; Sqronos, the Tentacled Octopus Lord; and Mar Marid, the Eel Prince.

Borcha, the Behemoth-King -- The patron of bold deaths at sea. Warrior Merfolk often say quick prayers to this warrior god. Sometimes he grants victories, other times noble deaths. His servants include Karinna, Queen Messenger of the Oceans (and the only known female god) and Weyoni Yor, Lord Mapper of the Trenches.

Coral Coven Runes

Many of the following powers use a new term, the “Ceremony” roll. This is a *Hopeless Courage* roll, or *Difficult* if the ceremony occurs on a quiet ocean beach.

A ceremony, regardless of its success, costs the invoker 1d6 *Fatigue*, and everyone else participating 1 *Fatigue*. All ceremonies take one hour, and can only be performed once each day. Ceremonies may be done in less time, but the roll is at -1 for every 10 minutes the ceremony is reduced (minimum 10 minutes).

For every 10 Merfolk participating (Coral Coven members of *Watch Maid* rank or better count as 2), the invoker receives +1 to his *Courage* for the roll. The result of a ceremony often affect everyone involved, including non-participants and non-Merfolk.

Blessings of the Benevolent



If the Coven maid makes a successful Ceremony roll, she has summoned the blessings of one of the kinder gods. Everyone present receives +1 to any attribute (chosen by the invoker) until sundown.

The Hand of Tide



This power allows the Coven maid to summon the spirit of Coriolis, the Tide King. If a successful Ceremony roll is made, his healing breath restores 1d6 *Health* to everyone present. If the roll is failed, his angry fist squeezes the subjects for 1d6 damage.

Sea Curse

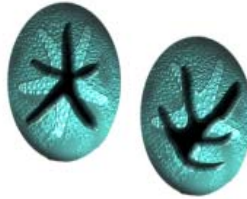


If a successful Ceremony roll is made, a single subject (who must be named in the ritual) takes 3d6 damage as his skin turns dry and salty, like a deepfin troll left out in the sun.

Victory of Borchha



This summons the battle-prowess of the Behemoth-King. If a successful Ceremony roll is made, all Coral Coven participants receive an extra 3 *Attack Dice* on their next attack! All other participants receive only 1 additional *Attack Die*.

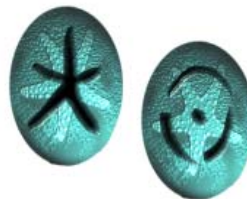


The Blessed Maid

The Coven Maid has been chosen by the gods to be a great priestess. She may reroll any failed Ceremony roll and use the new result.

A Blessed Maid is marked by her long, pink fingernails. These aren't just pretty -- they are coral and contain a painful poison. Her unarmed attacks do +2 damage, and create nasty scars wherever they hit.

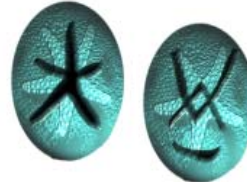
Eyes of Karinna



When this ceremony is performed successfully, the invoker may see through the eyes of someone named in the ritual. For the next 24 hours, whenever the invoker concentrates and closes her

eyes, she will see what the subject sees, no matter the distance.

The Vested



The Coven Maid has been blessed by a specific god that she chooses. She receives +1 on all ceremony rolls involving that god or one of his servants. Furthermore, she receives +1 *Intellect* (Choeypops), +1 *Agility* (Coriolis), +1 *Courage* (Haedal), or +1 *Might* (Borchha).

Karinna's Whispers



After a successful Ceremony roll, all participants may send a short telepathic message to someone they know (approximately a single sentence in length, except for the message of the invoker, which can be up to a minute long).

Yor's Word



When this ceremony is successful, Weyoni Yor, Lord-Mapper of the Merfolk, whispers a single word to each participant. This word is a portent of the future and a clue to the subject's destiny; Runemasters should write down the word and give it to each player. If this ceremony is performed alone, the Coven Maid receives a more detailed divination. Weyoni will visit the Maid in her sleep (something that is often sensual and disturbing) and give her a vision of the future.



Linglor's Essence

After a successful Ceremony roll, all of the participants are invigorated with Linglor's endurance and energy. Any lost Fatigue is regained and any Merfolk participating gain 2d6 to their maximum

Fatigue for 24 hours. Non-Merfolk participants only gain 1d6.



Words with Ancient Lords

When this ceremony is successful, one of the ancient lords -- a servant of the god named during the ceremony -- is summoned for one hour. Most lords do not take kindly to being summoned and will leap into the ocean to escape unless constrained physically. Especially nasty lords will attack, seeking to destroy their summoners. A rare few kind lords will enjoy the opportunity to talk to beautiful Mermaids, though it is not unheard of for this to be a pretense to do something horrible to them.

When a maid gains this ability, she must choose one of the gods from p.74. Additional gods may be learned for 5 hero points.

Lords are very powerful, immortal creatures. They know vast amounts of information, though most of it is related to their domains and that of the ocean and sea. Helpful lords will provide Coven Maids with information... others will demand payment in return for their inconvenience. Such payments are rarely in gold and silver; lords prefer mysterious tasks, enemies killed, or sometimes even a living sacrifice of one of the Mermaids present, something if not done, he will do himself.

The average lord has Might 30, Courage 20, Intellect 15, Agility 12, Perception 15. They have Health 50, Toughness 2, though many wear armor. They attack with a variety of weapons, talons, claws, and grapples -- they rarely do less than 3d6 carving damage. Summoned lords react at -3 on the NPC Reaction Table (-5 if summoned accidentally!).

If this ceremony fails, and the result is 5 or more higher than the invoker's effective Courage, the ceremony has accidentally summoned some other creature. This is typically a deepfin troll, an elemental, an exotic beast, or even another lord.



The Forbidden Rite of Madach

This ceremony is, indeed, forbidden. Those Mermaids who learn this ceremony are often wicked Prophetesses in league with underwater demons.

During this ceremony, a mortal must be sacrificed. Afterwards, if the ceremony is successful, the mortal rises again as a Salt Zombie, a dried and wither creature eternally bonded to the will of the invoker. Use the statistics for the Zombie on p.RQ194. If a Coven Maid is careless enough to create more Zombies than she can control (equal to her Courage), the Zombies regain a portion of their souls and will attack her.



The Path of Weyoni

This ceremony can summon a single individual, named in the ceremony. Once complete, the person vanishes from his current location and is instantly transported to the invoker's location. This trip is tiring and painful -- the subject takes 3d6 Fatigue and 1d6 damage. The Coven can summon people, but cannot send them somewhere else.

If this ceremony fails, and the final roll is 5 or more higher than the Coven Maid's effective Courage, the ceremony has accidentally summoned another person or creature. If the roll is critically failed, the subject is brutally twisted and torn and merged with the accidentally summoned creature. This malformed entity takes 6d6 damage, and its attributes are an average of the previous ones.



Haedal's Water Imps

This ceremony summons a Water Imp, a strange blue creature the size of a large monkey. They are the servants to the ancient got Haedal. The Water Imp will protect the invoker -- or someone else named in the ceremony -- with its life. Water Imps, however, hate each other and will attack each other on sight. Water Imps have poisonous teeth and claws. Anyone who takes damage must make an immediate Might roll or suffer an additional 2d6 damage (half if successful).

WATER IMP

MIGHT	14	HEALTH	28
COURAGE	14	Reeling	21
INTELLECT	8		
AGILITY	16	Speed: 20	
PERCEPTION	13	Toughness: 2	

Attacks

Poison Claws

Attack Dice: 2
Damage: 2d6 carving





Haltia

The Coral Coven maiden becomes stunningly beautiful. All NPC reaction modifiers for appearance are doubled. The witch ages normally, but she will never appear more than 20 years old.

With this beauty comes power. The common Sea Spirits of the ocean become madly in love with her, and she may command these invisible spirits with her will. They follow her constantly, though they weaken as they get further from the ocean.

The spirits, known as the Haltia, reside inside the Mermaid's body most of the time. While inside, all of her attributes are raised by 4 while she can smell the ocean, or 2 otherwise.

The Mermaid may command the Haltia to lift her into the air. This gives her unlimited flight while she can smell the ocean. If not, she may fly for one minute, after which she must make a Courage roll to inspire the Haltia to continue to lift her. After another minute, the roll becomes Difficult, then Hopeless.

When she commands, the Haltia tear themselves from her body to attack someone. Their combined attack does 1d6 damage each round -- armor Toughness does not protect. Halve this damage if the Mermaid is not within smell of the ocean. It is extremely painful, however, when the Haltia return to the Mermaid's body. She takes 1d6 damage and 1d6 Fatigue. This has been enough to kill some Sea Witches.

Myrmydons

For hours they had waited, barely moving in the cold, dark water. The ship was certain to pass by, as this was the only safe break in the rocky shoals. The pirates had sacked the Merfolk trading colony the previous day, but had foolishly lingered in the area, washing the blood from their hands with stolen wine and rum. Amid the reefs, dozens of Myrmydon warriors waited impatiently, watching for the first sign of their approaching prey. About them, sharks circled anxiously, disturbed by the unusual activity in the water, but unable to disobey or destroy their masters.

A cry echoed below the surface, an alarm pitched to travel swiftly through the water. Rounding the bend, the Red Serpents' vessel slowly came into view, oars rhythmically propelling the one-masted ship toward the open seas. The noisome sound of ribald song carried across the water, mocking the Merfolk dead their murderous journey left behind. As one, the Myrmydons dipped their heads beneath the waves and began moving closer to the vessel.

The buccaneers, drunk on wine and plunder, were unaware of their approaching doom. As they neared the shoals, the Myrmydons cast nets before the gliding ship, easily ensnaring its sweeping oars. Shouts of alarm went up from the decks as the treasure-laden galley veered toward the reef. For a moment it seemed the Serpent helmsman might yet heave the wallowing ship away from the rocks, but only for a moment. With a snapping sound that rang deep into the water as a death-knell, the galley plowed onto the waiting reef. In seconds, grappling hooks and nets came sailing up from the water, followed by the blood-mad Myrmydons. Tridents gleaming in the sunshine, they poured over the side of the stricken vessel hungry for men's blood. Surprised crewmen tried to save themselves by casting themselves into the sea, hoping to reach the safety of the shore. Few saw the sleek dorsal fins of the great fish that devoured them, turning the waters crimson.

A short, bloody time later, the sinking galley was set loose on its final journey, its dead crew hanging from the mast and the railings as a warning and mute testimony to the wrath of the Myrmydons.

The Myrmydons are among the fiercest warriors of the Merfolk. The most nomadic of their kind, the Myrmydons are constantly roaming the seas, shores, and even lakes of the land, never attaching themselves to one region for very long.

Myrmydons consider themselves the elite of the fighting Merfolk -- wild warriors who exist halfway between civilization and the animalistic laws of the sea. While they are known to fiercely avenge slights to the Merfolk race, they are hardly their protectors. The Myrmydons exist only to destroy that which they do not like. It is not unknown for this wild, tattooed WarClan to wage war against their own kind, whether to root out a hidden (and sometimes non-existent) evil or to simply cull the weak. The Sojourners distrust and dislike this clan.

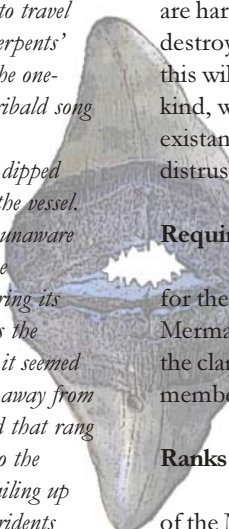
Requirements

The Myrmydons only require a wild spirit and love for the law -- not chaos -- of nature. It is rare to find Mermaids in this clan; many of the ones that have joined the clan have often been kidnapped and forced into membership.

Ranks

Axiar (2 glyphs) -- Axuars are the least experienced of the Myrmydons, and are accorded the least respect. They will do most anything to prove themselves to the clan and earn their first tattoo.

Retaeri (4 glyphs) -- Before becoming a Retaeri, an Axiar must single-handedly defeat a deadly beast to prove his mettle. This is most often a blood-mad shark, but during times of conflict a suitable enemy of a WarClan will be chosen. Those that survive earn the tattoo of the Retaeri. They are charged with defending the WarClan, as well as finding suitable slaves to serve it.



Eridian (6 glyphs) -- After many acts of Courage on land and sea, a Retaeri may join the ranks of the Eridians. They lead long patrols and command the Retaeri in battle. They receive a shark-tooth crown as a symbol of their status.

Hetaroi (9 glyphs) -- The companions and bodyguards of the Myrrarch, the Heteroi are sworn to live and die at his side. They have proven themselves time and time again in battle, and are entrusted with the most important missions of the WarClan.

Myrrarch (10 glyphs) -- Commanding the loyalty of the Myrmydon warriors, Myrrarchs are powerful figures in Merfolk culture. While most remain loyal to their undersea homelands, others establish their own colonies, often living by plunder and taxation of the surface vessels.

Armor and Equipment

As with most Merfolk warriors, the Myrmydons generally wear the unencumbering fish-scale armor unique to their race. Helms made of large shells and other such armor is common as well.

At each rank, Myrmydons are given a tattoo to mark their status. These take many forms, and vary among the Myrmydon sects.

Personality

Myrmydons have a barbarous reputation, an uncommon trait among the civilized Merfolk race. They are almost always at war with someone, and are frequently seen prowling the oceans with their shark allies in tow.

Myrmydons are not universally hostile towards others, but will vigorously pursue those who are perceived to threaten their clan or kin. In war and in peace, Myrmydons are ruled by their passions, and they derive their strength from this.

Despite their love for the wild, they see themselves as being subject to its laws as well. They will not betray their own without good reason, and will keep sharp eyes out for any abomination that disrupts the status quo.

Glyphs

- | | |
|-------------|------------------|
| 1) Violence | 6) Independence |
| 2) Valor | 7) Lust |
| 3) Stalking | 8) Abandon |
| 4) Pride | 9) The Mercenary |
| 5) Passion | 10) Fury |

Myrmydon Runes



Wave Rider

The Merfolk's body becomes slick and shiny. He moves at twice his normal Speed in the water. Furthermore, any Grappling attempts against him in the water lose one Attack Die.



Shark Tooth

The vicious, twisting stabs of the Myrmydon warrior cause an additional +1 damage, as long as he is using a thrusting or impaling weapon (spears, swords, knives, et cetera).



Warding Tattoos

The warrior's bizarre tattoos surround him with a mystical energy, allowing him to more easily shrug off injury. He receives an additional health points equal to half his Might.



Sea Terror

The denizens of the deep are little danger to a cunning Myrmydon warrior. Any normal sea creature must pass a Difficult Courage roll to attack the Myrmydon. Unnatural sea creatures, such as Kraken or Sea Serpents must only pass a simple Courage roll.



Blood Frenzy

After injuring an opponent in battle, the Myrmydon goes into a frenzy, like a blood-mad shark. He must choose Strike Hard each round, but all his attacks do an additional 1d6 damage. He cannot retreat from the battle unless he is reduced to Reeling.



Sunsplash

As fast as the brilliant rays of the sun striking the waves, so the Myrmydon's blade flashes forth in battle. He may reroll his Initiative at the beginning of combat, and, once per battle, instantly change a Hold into a Strike Hard (providing he has not been attacked that round yet).



Sea Shadow

A master of ambush and concealment, the warrior waits patiently for his prey. As long as he remains motionless, he is nearly impossible to spot. A Difficult Perception roll is required to see him; in the water, this is Hopeless.



Blood Cult

The Myrmydon Retaeri often swear oaths to destroy a specific enemy. In this rite, the warrior names his enemy before he reaches the rank of Retaeri, be it another race, a WarClan, a type of animal, or other such foe. When battling this blood enemy, the warrior rolls an extra Attack Die and does an additional 1d6 damage.



Fearbringer

The fearful raving of a warring Myrmydon overwhelms foes with terror. Each time a Myrmydon wounds an opponent in battle, the Myrmydon may decide whether the foe will Hold or Strike Hard the next round, depending on whether he intimidates or taunts him.



Sea Shield

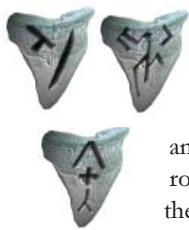
When immersed in water, the Myrmydon can summon a school of a thousand tiny silver fish, which swim around him and protect him. Opponents must fight the fish swarm before the Myrmydon. They have Agility 15, and only 10 health points. They do no damage, and may only sacrifice themselves for the Merfolk.



Dolphin Rider

The Myrmydon may summon a dolphin to serve as his companion. The dolphin will carry the warrior, as well as fight on his behalf. As long as it is treated well, the dolphin will obey its master's commands and remain with him.

Once the Myrmydon reaches the rank of Hetaroi, the dolphin is replaced by a mystic dolphin, which has the ability to shapeshift into a mute man or woman, while retaining its basic statistics. That way, the dolphin can stay with the warrior no matter where he travels.



Hydra's Grasp

The warrior's grip is like that of a deadly jellyfish. Stinging cells rend and poison a foe. After wounding a foe with an unarmed attack, the foe must make a Might roll or take an additional 2d6 damage (half if the roll succeeds).



Arms of the Octopus

The Myrmydon becomes a flailing engine of destruction in combat, raining blows upon his enemy. When he chooses Strike Hard, he may increase his number of attacks by 1d6! However, he must pay the normal Fatigue for these attacks. If he becomes Fatigued by this, he completes his attacks, but cannot use the ability again until he is completely rested.



Shark Call

Once per week, the Myrmydon may summon 1d6 sharks to aid him in battle. They will come as quickly as they can, and will obey his commands, harming those he wishes and ignoring his companions. The sharks will leave after battle.

Once the Merfolk reaches the rank of Hetaroi, the sharks become man-sharks, walking abominations which will emerge from the sea and travel up to 100 miles to aid him. Treat these creatures as having the same statistics as sharks, though they move at half their normal Speed on land.



Eel Shock

The Myrmydon's body is charged with the power of the electric eel. He adds 2d6 damage to any unarmed attack, and 1d6 damage to any melee attack as long as he is using a metal weapon. At a cost of 5 Fatigue, he may discharge this power in a ball of lightning. All within 10 paces take 4d6 damage. Metal armor Toughness does not protect. After this discharge, it takes a full day for the electricity to rebuild, during which he cannot discharge again and does not do any additional damage with his attacks.



The Sojourners

The troll-infested kelp forest swayed silently before her, but Neelatrix was unafraid. She had navigated this green maze a dozen times before, and even the reports of a new menace dwelling within did not shake her confidence. Spear in hand she swam into the thick mush, weaving her way through the waving fronds. At this depth, the sun was nothing more than a small shiny blur on the ocean's ceiling far above her, but Neelatrix's eyes were accustomed to the murky gloom of the undersea forest.

Her eyes scanned the long strands of kelp, vigilant for signs of this lurking horror that had already consumed two Myrmydon messengers whose paths led through this aquatic labyrinth.

It was more instinct than skill that made her veer sharply away as a long tentacle erupted from the ocean floor. A mass of waving arms followed, outstretched to grab and entangle the Mermaid. Her silvery hair flowed into her face as she backpedaled. She brought her spear upwards to deflect another incoming tentacle, and caught a glimpse of the abomination's head, rising from the fine silt of the ocean floor.

With a slash, the tip of her spear severed the tentacle. Another two darted towards her. She nimbly flipped around them, grinning as she jetted towards the head, her spear outstretched. She was the pin that would burst this boil on the ocean floor, and she forced her entire body weight behind her weapon as she thrust it deep into one of the creature's enormous eyes.

The Sojourners are the rangers and guides of the deep seas. They patrol the wild depths of the ocean, protecting the domains of the Merfolk and the shore cities of Man alike. It is their calling to roam the silent seas, seeking out threats to their kin and their comrades.

When Merfolk need to travel long distances, they often contact a Sojourner to show them a safe path through the ocean. Sojourners keep mental notes of canyons to avoid, safe kelp forests to rest between swims, and sunny shores that are safe enough for Merfolk children to frolic. They are the Guidesmen of the Sea.

Requirements

The Sojourners only require a love for the ocean, and a deep curiosity about its environment and inhabitants. While few Sojourners are pacifists, many dislike killing, and instead prefer to lure dangers far away from civilization into the wild where they belong.

Ranks

Shallow Boy/Girl (0 glyphs)-- When a Merfolk joins the Sojourners, they are paired with a Waverunner master who can teach them the ways of the ocean, the history of the Merfolk, and the philosophies of the clan.

Waverunner (2 glyphs)-- The least experienced of the Sojourners rarely make voyages into the great depths, instead patrolling the shores and beaches of the civilized realms. Of all their WarClan, the Waverunners are the most often seen in Mankind's cities. They are eager to explore the surface world, and are typically gregarious, making friends with Man and Elf as they would Merfolk.

Seadrifter (6 glyphs)-- Veteran Sojourners take long leaves from the WarClan, seeking out new territories, lands, and cultures. Many perish in the lonely places of the deep, while others return with great stories of undersea cities, rich island kingdoms, and battles with terrifying beasts.

Deeplord (10 glyphs)-- Venerated for their wisdom, the Deeplords have traveled lands and seas no other has seen. They are legendary figures, and the appearance of one is often taken as a sign of great fortune and change.

Armor and Equipment

Sojourners typically wear the Merfolk's unique fish-scale armor, which does not encumber a swimmer as much as metal armor. The Sojourners know several secret techniques that allow them to change the color of the scales by boiling them at different temperatures. Sojourners take great pride in their own patterns and designs, and wear them proudly.

As they spend much of their time beneath the sea, thrusting weapons are preferred over others. Spears and tridents are typical favorites, these often being decorated with colorful coral or shells. Especially renowned are the legendary Sojourner Harpoon Masters, who are unmatched among Merfolk warriors.

Other equipment is chosen for its utility; Sojourners have little use for heavy or burdensome gear.

Personality

Sojourners may seem taciturn compared to the other Merfolk (they will say that the difficult path they follow hardens the soul), but this is usually just a temporary condition. Accustomed to months of solitude, it often takes a few days in the company of others for them to regain their normal, jovial personalities. They truthfully enjoy the presence of other Merfolk and humans, and especially take pleasure in regaling them with tales of fabulous treasures and heroic deeds of historical figures. Though they may seem shy at first, Sojourners are warm friends at heart.

The Sojourners have a long history of hatred with the Ankhari, as these creatures have on more than one occasion allied themselves with the dark beasts that dwell beneath the waves. The Sojourners harry them at every opportunity, and the skulls of the Ankhari are marks of praise within the WarClan.

Glyphs

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1) Daring | 6) Practicality |
| 2) Tale-telling | 7) Ingenuity |
| 3) Wanderlust | 8) Seeking |
| 4) Independence | 9) Solitude |
| 5) Exploration | 10) Silence |

Sojourner Runes



Seadrift

The long journeys of the Sojourner require him to travel by day and night. Walking, running, and swimming costs him no Fatigue. In the water, he is able to drift with the currents even while he sleeps, unconsciously navigating himself to his destination.



Awakened Senses

The Sojourner's heightened senses makes him aware of his surroundings at all times. Once per game hour, he may automatically succeed at a Perception roll, no matter how difficult.



Strength of Journeys

The warrior is gifted with unending endurance, enabling him to persevere in the harsh wild. He recovers Fatigue at twice the normal rate.



Path Finder

On land or at sea, the Sojourner can weave his way through any obstacle. He is never lost, and may reroll a failed Perception roll to track or find a trail. Furthermore, he is never hindered by the great kelp beds or seaweed forests of the deep.



Lone Hunter

The Sojourners must rely upon himself in the wild. It takes three foes to surround the Sojourner for them to gain a multiple attacker Surprise Die. Underwater, multiple attackers *never* gain a Surprise Die against him.



Lifegiver

The warrior heals quickly from wounds. After a battle in which he was wounded, he immediately regains a Health point, or two if he succeeds at a Courage roll.



Lifetaker (Harpoon Master)

The Sojourner's skills exceed those of mortals. His expertise is treated as one higher when using any time of spear in combat, even if already a Runecarver.



Secret Ways

As easily as he spots danger, he can avoid it. When hiding, searchers only discover him on a Difficult Perception roll. If underwater, the task is Hopeless.



Sea Lore

The Sojourner knows the ways of the deep, and can recall any fact or history of the ocean with an Intellect roll (Difficult if the fact is especially obscure). Furthermore, his Herbalist profession is considered one rank higher when underwater. If he does not have it, he is considered an Apprentice.



Sea Kiss

For the cost of 5 Fatigue, the Sojourner may kiss the ability to breathe water into a subject. The gift is accepted only if the subject succeeds at a Courage roll when entering the water. The kiss will not enhance the subject's swimming ability, but the waterbreathing effect will last 24 hours.



Lifebringer

Once per day, the warrior may attempt to heal a wounded creature with a combination of healing kelp, algae, and long-lost Merfolk medicinal techniques. The subject must make a Courage roll, and the healer must make an Intellect roll (rerolling for the Herbalist profession). If both are successful, the subject is restored 3d6 Health for that day. If one is successful, the subject is restored 1d6 Health. If neither are successful, the subject is restored only 1 Health.





Hunter of the Deep

Even alone in the dark depths of the sea, the Sojourner is a dangerous predator. Each round in combat he may roll one additional Attack Die at a cost of 1d6 Fatigue points. When fighting alone without the help of companions, or when fighting Ankhari, the fierce instincts of the Sojourner come to the surface and the the Fatigue rolled is halved. Only one additional Attack Die may be gained each round.



Ink Spray

Like a provoked squid, the warrior may send a jet of ink from his fingertips to blind and confuse his foes. This expends 5 Fatigue. When used underwater, all those he faces in front of him within 20 paces will be quickly engulfed and blinded for 2d6 rounds. The Sojourner is never blinded by this ink. On land, a single spray be be shot at a single foe in melee combat. The victim will automatically be blinded for one round.



Entangler

As easily as he passes through the great vines of seaweed, so can the Sojourner cause them to grip and entangle his prey. Thrice per day, the warrior may cause vines (land or sea) to rear up and attack his foes. A single victim may thus be attacked.

SEA VINES

MIGHT	14	HEALTH	32*
COURAGE	18	Reeling	n/a
INTELLECT	1		
AGILITY	15	Speed: 2	
PERCEPTION	8	Toughness: 0	

* Reduce Health by 10 if on land

ATTACKS

Strangling Vine Attack Dice: 3
3d6 smashing



Giant of the Deep

"So it was that Skiilatrax the Wanderer was able to defeat the deepfin troll army of Varagbul and protect the Merfolk city of Loolris. How, you ask, did he do this? He swallowed them whole, children."

The Sojourner may take the form of the sea's greatest inhabitant, the blue whale. All attributes other than Intellect become those of the whale. While in this form, he may communicate with any other whale or dolphin, as well as swim the black depths untouchable by others.

BLUE WHALE

MIGHT	330	HEALTH	341
COURAGE	11	Reeling	255
INTELLECT	5		
AGILITY	10	Speed: 12	
PERCEPTION	12	Toughness: 5	

ATTACKS

Swallow Attack Dice: 3
1d6+2 smashing*

Bump Attack Dice: 3
6d6 smashing

* If the Blue Whale succeeds at a Swallow attack, the creature, if suitably sized, is swallowed whole. It may continue to attack the Blue Whale, automatically gaining an extra Attack Die for higher Agility. However, the crushing stomach of the Blue Whale automatically inflicts 1d6+2 smashing damage each round against the subject. Angry Blue Whales usually Bump then Swallow their foes.



Appendix: New Rules

Campaigns or single adventures in the winding cavern rivers of the Blindswimmers, or the deep waters of the Merfolk's domain, may require some additional rules.

Icy Waters, Boiling Waters

The rivers of the underworld and the deep oceans are often freezing. Swimmers who enter these depths unintentionally will perish in short order.

Anyone who enters frigid or freezing water immediately loses 1d6 Fatigue, plus an additional 1d6 Fatigue for every five minutes thereafter. Once half Fatigue is gone, Agility, Perception, and Speed immediately drop by 5. If Fatigue reaches 0, death comes quickly.

Some uncommon areas in the sea or under-earth rivers have molten lava pouring into the depths, creating dangerous areas of boiling water. Anyone unfortunate enough to swim in boiling water takes 1d6 damage every other round. Armor does not protect against this damage at all.

Some old Blindswimmers have whispered of areas of boiling ooze and oils. These also do 1d6 damage every round.

Cavern Squeezing

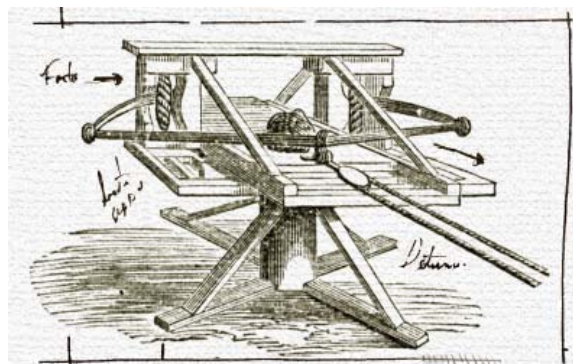
A tight passageway can be just as much of an obstacle to an adventurer as a towering wall. Every 8 full points of Might requires 1 full foot of width. Thus, the table lists the minimum width of a passageway for an average human.

If someone is wearing metal armor or bulky clothing, add 2 to his effective Might. If he's wearing plate armor, add 4 to his effective Might. If a spelunker greases up, subtract 4 from his Might. Finally, someone extremely agile (Agility 15+) may subtract 2 from their effective Might.

Might	Space Required
8	1 foot
9 - 12	1.5 feet
13 - 15	2 feet
16 - 23	2.5 feet

Ballistae

These enormous crossbow-like weapons can be found on ships (both surface vessels and those of the Blindswimmer's underworld), as well as mounted on castle



turrets for defense against particularly strong foes. Their use requires the new Ballistae weapon expertise.

Ballistae may be fired every four rounds, or every three rounds if two men with the Expertise are operating it. Firing a ballistae takes no fatigue, but loading it costs 2, or 1 if two men load it.

Ideal Range:

Unskilled and Novice -- Medium

Skilled and Veteran -- Long

Expert and Master -- Far

Damage: 4d6 impaling (one man), or 5d6 impaling (two men). Dwarf-made ballistae use especially sharp, barbed tips, adding +2 damage.

Cost: 750 silvers (each bolt costs 5 silvers, or 10 silvers for Dwarven-made ones, though these are rarely found outside the under-earth).

Weight: 300 lbs (usually bolted in to the deck).

Basic Maneuver

Double-load -- Technique

This engineering feat allows the operator to load two ballistae bolts into the siege weapon. Both must be rolled separately to hit the target. Each bolt rolls one less Attack Die (minimum 2 Attack Dice).

Advanced Maneuver

Expert Engineer -- Technique

The warrior knows the secrets of the ballistae siege weapon, and understands its science. He gains a bonus Attack Die when using a ballistae.