

Hero Wars

ISS 1301

# THUNDER REBELS

Player's Book for Orlanthi Barbarians

By Greg Stafford, Robin D. Laws,  
Roderick Robertson, and John Hughes

Cover Art by Stefano Gaudio



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By Greg Stafford, Robin D. Laws, Roderick Robertson, and John Hughes.  
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*The Great Two made the world, the people, and this book.  
 Everyone knows these things. Everyone knows what will happen  
 if they steal from the deities, their people, or this book.*

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# I'm New Here

## Where Do I Start?



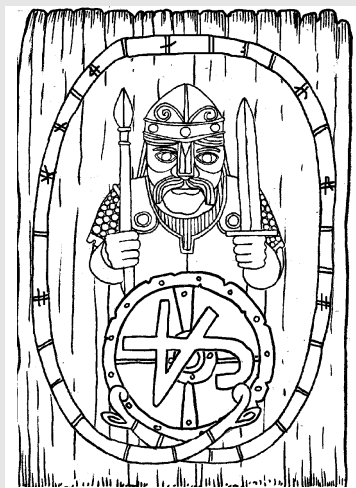
Newcomers to role-playing or Glorantha should not feel intimidated by the size of this book. We don't expect you to read it before playing *Hero Wars*. **You don't need to.** As you become familiar with the information, you can delve deeper into the book to learn more. But for now, you have come to the right place.

## New Players Start Here

Before play, we recommend that you read "The Heortling Way" on pages 11-18. These narratives tell you who you are, how and where you live, and what makes your people special. They give you the minimum information you need to play an informed game of *Hero Wars*.

Then, go to the "I'm New Here: The Default Characters" section on page 153 and create a character. The default character is either a male warrior or a female field medic.

"Your Stead," at the end of chapter 1, is the first of many write-ups about "Your Clan" in *Thunder Rebels*. They tell you about your life as a Heortling, what every Heortling knows about himself, his family, his clan, and his gods. They are on pages 18, 29, 47, 88, 102, and 176.



Orlanth Adventurous



## King Broyan



*Broyan is the last High King. He is noted as a canny and clever leader, so that he has won battles without fighting and wars without battles. Yet he is a great fighter, and worships all three subcults of Vingkot. He has been to the Other Side often, and even raided alien worlds. He is an ultratraditionalist, so deeply imbued with his god that he sometimes speaks in Stormspeech, a language not made for human tongue. His intensity is so great that his personal winds appear around him. His personal band is as fanatical as he, and its loyalty and support are perfect. He is besieged in Whitewall.*

# 6 We Are All Orlanthi 6

*Thunder Rebels* gives you all of the information you need to play Orlanthi barbarians. It cannot be complete, of course, because there is always more to know. However, this book explains what most people know, and how they live using this knowledge.

## What “All” Means

Throughout the book, statements abound that tell definitively what everyone is, acts like, does for a living, enjoys, prefers to eat, and so forth. For instance:

- All Heortlings are initiates of Orlanth or Ernalda.
- All men worship Orlanth. All women worship Ernalda.
- All men live by plowing, harvesting, fishing, and herding.
- All women live by raising children, harvesting, and husbandry.
- All warriors are men. All nurturers are women.
- All Heortlings follow normal gender roles.

**In all of these cases, we mean the “Orlanthi All.”**

**The Orlanthi All = 85%.**

For every statement of “all, every, and everyone,” it is automatically (perhaps even unconsciously) assumed by the Orlanthi that another minority exists that does not conform to these norms. They are “one in seven or so,” says Orlanth. This is acceptable, even desirable, because these other 15% perform specialty tasks that are necessary for society (although “we all” in **this book** would not want to do them). Persons interested in this minority are referred to **Storm Tribe**, *The Cults of Sartar* for details.

### Other Sources

*Thunder Rebels* is a supplement for the **Hero Wars** role-playing game; you must have **Hero Wars** (ISS 1101) to use it. As always, a copy of **Glorantha: Introduction to the Hero Wars** (ISS 102) will greatly enhance the game for both the narrator and players.

**King of Sartar** (ISS 4500) is of particular interest to readers who would like more information about the Heortlings. This book of fiction includes extensive sections on the mythology, history, and culture of the Heortlings. We strongly recommend it to all narrators who intend to run campaigns in the Dragon Pass area.

**Storm Tribe: The Cults of Sartar** (ISS 1310) is the companion volume to **Thunder Rebels**. It provides full details on the unusual deities worshipped by the Heortlings, including full cult write-ups for the ones that are popular among player heroes.



## Text Conventions

*Thunder Rebels* presents information from several different viewpoints. Some of this information comes from outside Glorantha. This point of view attempts to give information in an objective manner, as if it were “truth.” Because we want players to truly understand the Heortling culture, however, some information is presented with a more personal, subjective point of view. These narratives and myths give players first-hand knowledge of their heroes and world in a way that dry text and boring rules examples cannot.

To make it easier to distinguish between these sections, *Thunder Rebels* uses different typefaces for these different types of information:

Objective text and rules use one typeface. Game rules are generally boxed unless they are lengthy.

Narratives and myths use a second typeface, so that they will be easily recognizable. We recommend that the narrator read these sections aloud at appropriate times during the game, to give players the feeling of “being there.” Like rules, isolated myths are generally boxed.

Several additional types of text are set off in their own way throughout the book. Of these, the notes about **The Rebellion** are the most important to the narrator’s game, while the sections about **Your Clan** will be of the greatest interest to players.

## Icons and Images

Throughout *Thunder Rebels* we present images of Orlanthe and Ernaldan deities, copies of images used in modern Sartar. These popular images are frequently found in residences, usually on a stead’s private altar. The actual images in temples are often far less detailed or realistic than these. Of course, all initiates know that the gods do not often appear in human form. The images are there so that worshippers look at an agreeable form when they pray.

This style of iconography carved in relief on boards is called Nomi’s Art, after the artist who stylized and popularized the imagery around the time of King Tarkalor. They are often painted, though not always. Size varies, but the imagery contains certain consistent elements.

All deities appear in at least three ways:

- Largest is the image itself, discernible as male or female by its clothing and whether it has a beard or moustache.
- Before the deity is a manifestation of the powers, such as a basket for nurturing entities or a cloud for storm gods.
- The Rune of Power is foremost, standing in front of the manifestation.

Among the Ernaldan Goddesses, hair style is important. The images follow the same hair style common among the Heortlings. Thus, Voria’s hair is

unbound, Ernalda the Healer has a maiden's braids, Ernalda Allmother has one of the mother's braids, and Ernalda the Queen has her head bound. Esrola naturally has one of the mother's hair styles as well.

The Orlanthi Gods generally appear behind clouds, if they are of the Thunderous aspect; behind shields if they are of the Adventurous aspect; and behind baskets if they are of the Allfather aspect. Beard and moustache styles among men are far more variable than hair styles among women. However, the popularity of these images has had some fashion impact in encouraging members of subcults to emulate the images of their own god. Thus, all of the worshippers of Hedkoranth in a clan might braid their beards identically.

Ancestors are discernible from deities because they always have legs and feet visible instead of hidden behind something. Ancestors typically have tattoos on their bodies or faces, while deities do not. Finally, ancestors generally do not have their own runes.

Variations in imagery are common, so that the images of one clan use baskets similar to the ones woven by the clan. Other particulars are important, so that warrior deities usually wear armor, working deities wear appropriate working clothes, etc. Objects held in an image's hand are usually specifically important. For example, the bloom held by Ernalda the Healer is an aletha flower, noted for its healing properties. Similarly, the images of Orlanth and Ernalda as king and queen show them holding or wearing the torc of leadership.

Total departure from the standard imagery is usually significant. Vingkot the High King stands behind a mountain peak rather than a basket, indicating the different nature and source of kingship that he represents.

Simon Bray drew these images, and dedicates them to Eleanor and Rebecca Bray.



*Ernalda the Healer*

# □ Glossary of Terms □

This book uses a few words that may be unfamiliar to the reader. The following list includes the most important terms, those used throughout the book. We omit terms used only once or twice, since they are explained in the text where they are used.

*Carl*: A farmer, or anyone with equivalent social status.

*Cottar*: The lowest free social class, covering people from stickpickers to gardeners, craftsmen, and poor farmers.

*Daimon*: A petty god, often without an individual name or personality. See *Anaxial's Roster* for details.

*Fyrd*: The clan militia, which defends the *tula*.

*Godi*: Fem. *gyrda*, pl. *godar*. A god-talker.

*Kinstrife*: Any conflict that involves kinsmen on opposing sides.

*Moot*: The formal meeting of all adults of a clan or tribe.

*Predark*: The gods or creatures of Chaos.

*Skald*: A poet or other traveling "high entertainer" (as opposed to jesters, jugglers, and other low entertainers).

*Stead*: A Heortling farm.

*Stickpicker*: A poor person who collects wood for a living.

*Thane*: An appointed nobleman.

*Thrall*: A slave.

*Tula*: The lands claimed by a clan, tied to it by their *wyter*.

*Wyrd*: Fate, doom.

*Wyter*: A daimon or lesser god who protects and is worshipped by a clan, tribe, or other community.



## THE REBELLION



The Heortlings seethe like a hurricane in a bottle. Their god is about to explode in a fury. The epic of the Hero Wars begins with this eruption, as inevitable as the hurricane.

*Hero Wars* presumes that your Heortling character, as portrayed in this book, will participate in that struggle. Throughout this book are notes about the incipient revolt. The information is not secret, but instead is known to most Heortlings.

Players are encouraged to imagine how their characters will fit into the ongoing scheme as the fury of the Hero Wars erupts, providing opportunity for greatness and even immortality for those who dare to enter the new war of the gods.

# Ꝛ The Heortling Way Ꝛ

## The People of the Storm

*Talkative, simple, passionate, deep-hearted, direct, untroubled, unreflective, violent, restless, imaginative, stubborn. Such are the Heortlings. These barbaric farm folk have saved the world at least once, and perhaps they will do so again. Yet do not waste breath musing on such things, for action, not idle speculation, is the Orlanthi Way. Take up your spear and walk with them across the sacred tulas of the land.*

### Who Are We?

We are Orlanthi, born in hardship, formed by story, strengthened by adversity, made invincible by freedom. We are a tribe of the longhouse, of the field, of the great forest, of the battleground. We are a people whose sons and daughters will endure as long as the winds shall blow.

We are the People of the Storm, the men and women of Thunder. Renowned in all the worlds, we are the tribe of Orlanth and Ernalda. We are many, and we are strong. We are a rich people, for we know the secrets of the earth. We are a proud people, farmers and herders, warriors and peaceweavers. We live in steads and villages and hunting camps, but can also build cities and fortresses, and sky steads made of wind and lightning. We are of many clans.

To be Orlanthi is to throw off your kilt and pants and run naked in a hailstorm. To be Orlanthi is to stand alone against an overwhelming foe and know they shall *never* pass. It is to hold your youngest child in your arms and feel tears of beauty course down your cheeks. To be Orlanthi is to understand the thrill of stealing past a hostile clan to take the great bull in a cattle raid; to dance with laughing earth goddesses as the first green shoots appear through the plowed mud of your field; to walk in fear and wonder along the sacred paths of the Godtime.

The Lunars have come with their scimitars and strange gods. They have conquered our land by treachery, so that only our rivers run free. Servants of the Predark, they ban true worship and offer us instead the mask of their twisted Red Goddess, the lies of their Seven Mothers, and the wind of their false Thunderer, Doburdun. They might as well blow on dead embers: they will be vanquished soon, and the freedom wind shall blow again. We will cleanse our land, for they have nothing that we want.

We are Orlanthi. To understand who we are, you must know two things. You must know the land that formed us, our Mother. You must know the story of our tribe, which is the story of Orlanth.

We are born of Thunder, wise in the ways of the Storm. We are a proud people, descendants of Vingkot, children of Heort, oath-kin of Sartar. We make mistakes, but we are always responsible for our actions, and we *never* give up. If we make harm we fix it, because that is Orlanthi's Way.

In generations past we built great wonders — cities and palaces and roads. We will do so again. For now, we have our steads, our herds, and the great forests where we hunt. In these, we are content.

We are a free people — nobles and thanes, cottars and carls, kings and priestesses, stickpickers and godar. We seek courage, wisdom, generosity, justice, honor, glory, and freedom. We live by the strength of our limbs, and we succeed by the blessings of our kin. We are all naked at birth, and we follow our *wyrd* as the winds may blow, to be warrior, crafter, cattewoman, or skald. We all have mud between our toes, and even a king must sweat and groan before the plow.

## How Do We Live?

We live at Mahome's fire. If a stranger wishes to understand us, they have but to spend a season at one of our hearths. A household hearth is never empty, never silent, never still. All of life passes before Mahome's sacred fire. Old men and women drowse for days before the coals, covered in children or cats, guarded patiently by the clay goddesses and ancestral idols that sanctify the hearth. The hearth-mistress oversees her sons' wives as they attend to the day's baking, teaching them songs of lust and healing, sharing the wisdom of her years. Wide-eyed infants are passed from breast to breast to be suckled by their mothers and aunts, all under the protective gaze of the first alynx. Children wrestle and make merry, laughing and screaming without censure, cattle-boasting and playing at priestess and king as they pose their clay dolls and carved wooden herds amidst the rushes on the floor.

The senior men bend in quiet conversation, planning the next harvest or the next moot, scheming how the progress of a lawsuit might bring favor to them all, occasionally glancing to their wives for agreement or guidance. A young weaponthane polishes his armor while flirting with a seed priestess who weaves a dye-bright tapestry on her loom. A Bevaran sews the wound of a cursing thane who was too slow on the practice field. Apart from all the bustle at the hearth, curled in the storage racks under the rafters, a cattle-boy cradles his grandfather's sword and dreams of first love and first herd.

As darkness gathers, the young men and women come in from their fields and herds, laughing and swearing as they scrape the mud and cow dung from their boots. Odaylan kinsfolk arrive from the upland hunting camps to sample the exotic pleasures of the stead. The evening meal is served, and with it song, story, and boasting. The hearth is crowded — a hand of hands or more! — a boisterous, loud, argumentative, joyful crowd all competing to be the center of attention.

By the light of the flame they pass the sweet thick beer. All relive, through the skald's gift, the eternal stories. As the night progresses there is music, dancing, and wrestling. The men are stirred easily to sudden passion, bursting into tears, striking at kinsmen, proclaiming their courage and valor. The women watch, speaking less, though when they give voice their words are sharp and well directed.

Finally, the night draws to its conclusion. Children curl against the nearest body and couples retire to the sleeping platforms by the wall or the hammocks stretched from the posts. Guests curl about the hearth or share the crowded sleeping platforms of kin. As the stead sleeps, cradled to Mahome's breast, the star-watch draw cloaks about themselves and prepare for a chilly night on the palisades.

### What Is the Difference between Men and Women?

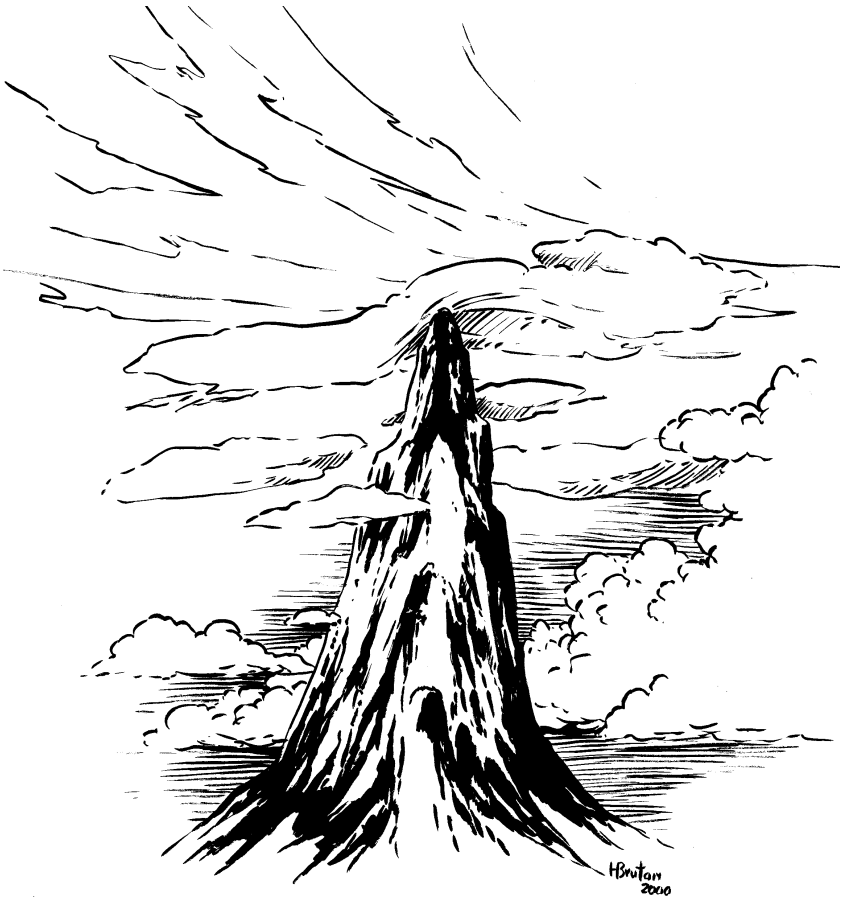
Men and women differ according to their form and the journey of their lives. Women are shaped like the hills and valleys of the earth. Men are wild like the wind: they bluster, and have great shoulders and chests so as to blow mighty breaths. Women have wisdom and secrets, and men have passion and thick heads to take many blows. Men are impulsive in youth, and must learn from their mistakes, but can acquire wisdom with age. Women are cold and calculating when young, but with the passing of years can learn recklessness and true freedom. Men have the trick of being a leader. Women possess the greatest magic of all: the magic of life.

Sometimes we think we are separate tribes, but we know we are truly one. With courage, a man can do whatever a woman does; with heart and training, a woman can be the equal of any man. Humakti men become as cold as any woman, and I myself have taken scars from a dancing Vingan on the practice fields. My grandfather's brother was a Nandan who knew all the secrets of the birthing hut, and my mother could sway even the wildest chieftain in the moot!

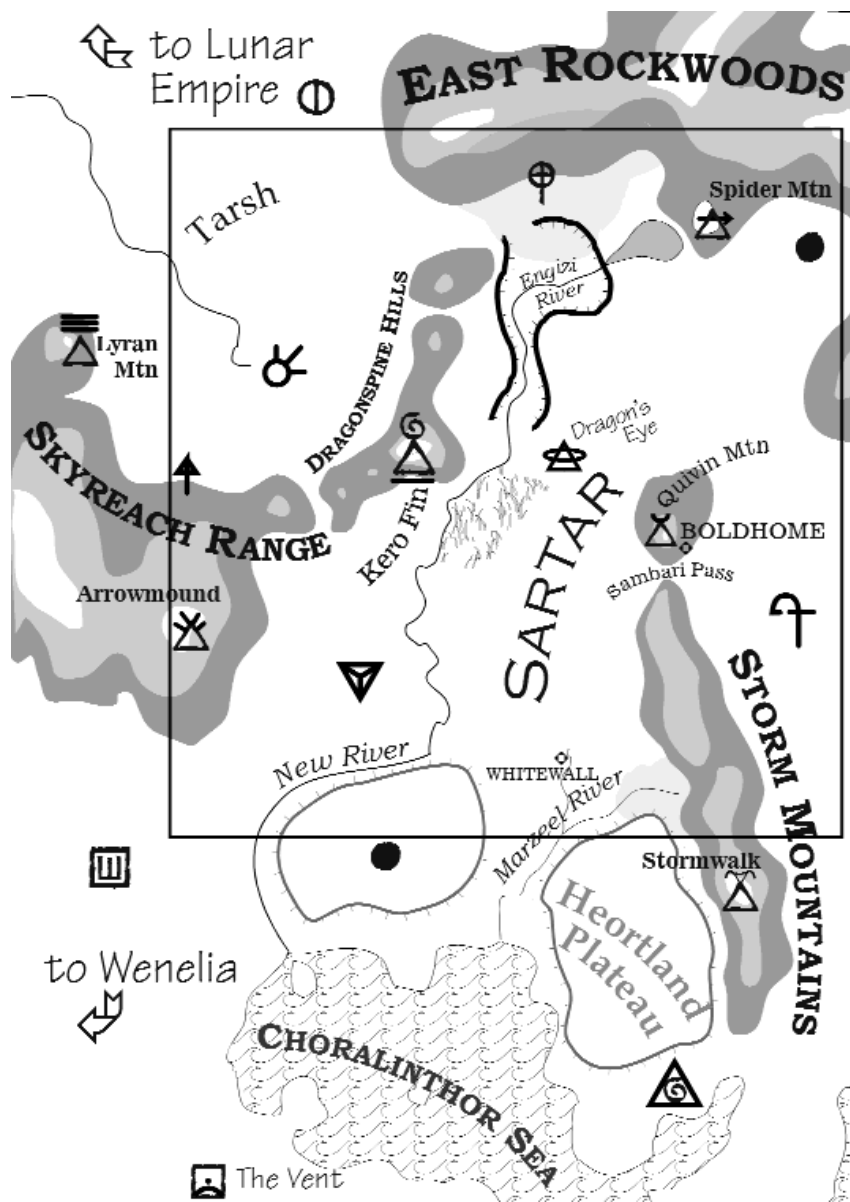
## Where Do We Live?

We live in Kerofinela, the center of the world. Everything that is important occurred here, and everything that is going to be important will occur here, too. In fact, if anything important occurs anywhere else, it is because it is contributing to something that is happening here.

Here is the first mountain, Kero Fin, the Mother of Mountains. Here is the First River, the Engizi River, where the first water fell from above and flowed to the sea. Here was the first fight, when Orlanth defeated Sh'hakarzeel, and sent it fleeing eastward. Here Orlanth and Emalda wed, with their families and friends sitting on either side of the Dragonspine. Here Vingkot made the first tribe, Hantrafal burned the first sacrifice to the gods, and Durev and Orane settled the first homestead, with its pigs and barley and longhouse and grain hut. Vingkot's children lived here, Heort lived here, and Orlanth began and ended the Lightbringer's Quest here.



*Kero Fin is the largest mountain in the world. At times her son, Orlanth, comes to visit. He is visible as a great motionless cloud hovering over and around her peak, motionless and unmoving until he leaves, a marvel to behold.*



Map: Kerofinela, the Center of the World  
(for inset map, see pg. 51)

The Four Great Mountains mark our land. Of course, Kero Fin is greatest, because she is the Mother of Mountains. Kero Fin is the tallest mountain in the world. We can see her from anywhere, even as far away as the Choralinthor Sea. Kero Fin is the mother of Orlanth, and they are together in the center of the world. Lowlanders call our land Dragon Pass.

Three great mountains form a triangle around Kero Fin, and we Heortlings live within. These three are Spider Mountain, in the north, where Engizi falls; Arrowmound, among the Skyreach Range in the southwest; and Stormwalk, a distinctive spiral-shaped peak among the Storm Mountains to the south. Many other important mountains are nearby, of course, but these are the great ones.

Spider Mountain used to be called Conquest or Blackorn Mountain, because Orlanth dropped it on a dragon that threatened Vingket and Barntar. Later, the demon called Cragspider rescued the dragon, and it is now her thrall. Everyone fears Cragspider, a demigoddess also called Fire Witch, Troll Goddess, Darkness Monster, and Daughter of the Spider. Spider Mountain stands beneath the great Skyfall of Engizi, which is a hole in the sky. Engizi is an ocean that rains downward continually from the black clouds that hide the wound, into the deluged Lake, where trolls go fishing.

Arrowmound is always snowcapped, and stands among several similar peaks of the Skyreach Range. When he drove off Jagrekriand, Orlanth heaped up this earth and stuck his lightning arrows into it, ready to be grabbed and hurled with deadly force. On Arrowmound, Jarani got Justice from Orlanth the first time. Here, too, Heort got Justice from Jarani. We still go there today to get it. Arrowmound was one of the places that the Lightbringers stopped when they went on their great quest. The winged *nar sylła* people, also called wind children, live on its steep slopes.

Stormwalk was a rock monster, a foe of our ancestors, until mighty Urox grabbed it by the head and twisted it into a spiral, whose shape is visible from any distance. Upon its slopes, Orlanth tamed the Storm Bull to be his follower. Upon its peak Hendreik the Untouchable hid in splendor, though if you walk up it around the spiral you find only ice and snow, and perhaps the stead of gigantic men all frozen solid at dinner. Urox raised the other Storm Mountains to prevent a fight between his friends Tada and Vingket. Followers of the heropath of Gorangi Vak can tame the ferocious *zarursky* bulls that live on the top, gaining powerful flying mounts.

Quivin Mountain is a large, steep peak that rises north of the Storm Mountains, from which the Sambari Pass separates it. Orlanth leapt from this mountain into the sunset to kill the Fire King. It is the mountain that Vingket leapt upon to prove his worthiness to be king. Down its slopes came the first blue sheep of ancient times. Within its valleys, King Sartar established once-proud Boldhome, capital of the Kingdom of Sartar.

The Engizi River is also called the Creekstream River because its three main sources are the Creek, the Stream, and the River. It used to empty into the Marzeel River, but the Pharach diverted it several centuries ago. The waters now flow through the New River and empty into the Choralinthor Sea through the lands of the Esrolians.

## Who Lives Near Us?

*Four-ways* and other strangers surround us. You must beware of foreigners, for they worship strange gods, and cannot be trusted. All of them are less than whole, and most of them are our enemies. Their stories are twisted, and lack the power of our own myths. *They have nothing that we want.*

Esrolians look like us and call us cousins, but long ago their grandmothers grew greedy, and they no longer follow the true ways. *They have nothing that we want.*



Aeolians look like us and call on Orlanth, but they worship another, distant god who is really Nothingness. *They have nothing that we want.*

Tarshites are a fallen people, who have surrendered their lands and breaths to the Shepelkirt, the Red Moon. Their rain is weak, though they love Ernalda. *They have nothing that we want.*

Lunars are evil. They are less than human; they do not gift, they are not free! They cannot breathe the soul of our land. They are our greatest enemies, and they try to enslave us and turn us from our gods. Their own goddess seeks to claim Orlanth's place as Master of the Middle Air. *They have nothing that we want.*

The horse-spawned Grazers have strange gods and raid out of season. They neither plow nor reap, but the Feathered Horse Queen holds the sovereignty of Kercofinela. *They have nothing that we want.*

The nomads of Prax are cowards and thieves. They are barely human. They sleep beneath their animals, and do not wash. *They have nothing that we want.*

We do not want the world, or great empires, or fine cities of stone. We want only our own lands, our cattle, and the freedom of the winds. This is our hope for our children. It is our way, and to defend this way we will fight and we will die. We are the true people, the People of the Storm, and we can become the thunder.

## What Makes Us Special?

We live by the sacred stories. We are strengthened by story, molded by myth, empowered by the sacred truths of the godar. Knowing the eternal stories means we understand how the gods made the sacred order — we walk their paths, and we shape the world as they did.

Our rituals and ceremonies take us to the Godplane, the Other Side, and there we meet the gods themselves. We take their roles, we bargain with them, and sometimes we even fight them. The Godplane is that timeless source-place where everything begins, and where everything happens at once. Even the hells of the underworld have their beginnings there.

On the Godplane, we walk down the paths the gods walked: we do as they did, and gain their power and magic. Every adult of our tribe has seen Karulinoran, where Orlanth toasts his heroes in hall, and green Daleel, where ripen the fragrant fields of Ernalda. Every man has met Second Son, and fought alone against the Predark, and every woman has slept alongside Ernalda and learned her secret wisdom in the Nurturing Dark.

Our stories hold the secrets of our rituals and ceremonies, the secrets of our gods. They are our greatest treasures. The most powerful myths are known only to the godar, who require many years of training to receive them. But everyone knows the most important tales. There is wisdom in our weaving songs, in the lays of our heroes, and even in the cattle-boasts that the children recite round the hearth. Listen, and you will understand.

Other clans may know our sacred stories. Sometimes they do not know all the secrets or their stories are wrong, and so their ceremonies are not as powerful as ours are. Some other clans' myths are confused, and they do not understand their gods. Their power is diminished.

In Sacred Time our stories become flesh. The realms of gods and men become one, and then we ourselves shape the world and sustain the Sacred Order. For the Godtime is not only long ago, it is here, it is now, it is all around us.

## Where Do We Come From?

In the beginning there was a huge mountain at the center of the world that was called the Spike. It was everything, and inside it lived the Gloranthan Court, gods and goddesses that do not exist anymore.

Some gods and goddesses came outside of the Spike and shaped the world. Among these gods was Umath, Orlanth's father. Umath made the air and everything in between the earth and the sky. Asrela is the mother of Emalda, Esrola, and Maran Gor, and she shaped the earth and underworld.

After Umath was killed, Orlanth became leader of the world. He defeated the Emperor, an oppressive foreign god who stole breath from the air, life force from the earth, and fluidity from the water, and who banished all darkness to the Underworld. Then Orlanth calmed his brothers, welcomed deities who were not his relatives, and formed the family of gods called the Storm Tribe.

When Orlanth married Emalda the great Storm Age began, when all was well. Orlanth and Emalda ruled over all of the Middle Heavens. His Storm Tribe married into her Earth Tribe, and the people were our ancestors, the Vingkotlings. Orlanth fixed all troubles, and people were happy.

Enemy gods then ruined everything. Hunger, death, and darkness took away all that made life worthwhile, until even Emalda entered the Great Sleep. Chaos gods, led by Wakboth, invaded the world. Orlanth fought but could not win, and so he sought another way. He called his companions together, and they set off on the greatest quest ever. They went to the Gates of Dusk, entered the Underworld, and sought the Land of the Dead. The Great Darkness began.

After they had left, Wakboth destroyed the Spike. Evil and Chaos were everywhere. Some weak gods helped a few people to survive, but Chaos monsters destroyed many humans. Heort taught our ancestors how to survive, and we initiate our children to be adults with his rites even now. Thus, we are called the Heortlings.

Orlanth fought, cajoled, and tricked his way to the Land of the Dead. He liberated all life from the underworld, including Emalda and our ancestors. The Sun rose, an event called The Dawn because it was the first one. Orlanth and his companions have ever since been called the Lightbringers, because they brought back the light.

The gods and goddesses of the Storm Tribe, led by Orlanth and Emalda, took rightful rule over the universe. The other gods, both foreign and enemy, took their appointed places as well.

All was fine again, but not for long, for the Red Moon appeared. Evil re-entered the world, and Chaos once again invades. The Red Moon and her minions swarm upon us and Orlanth calls us to fight.

### The Ages of the World

Asrela's Age . . . . .	The Spike exists, the world is made.
Stagnant Age . . . . .	Emalda awakens, is imprisoned by the Solar Emperor.
Umath's Age . . . . .	Solar Emperor Rules, but Umath and other gods rebel.
Storm Tribe Age . . . . .	Orlanth assembles the Storm Tribe, slays the Solar Emperor.
Vingkotling Age . . . . .	Vingkot leads the Storm Tribe, Vingkotlings are strong.
Chaos Age . . . . .	Chaos invades, Orlanth leaves on the Lightbringer's Quest.
Silver Age . . . . .	Star Time, Heortling Tribe created.
Hero Age . . . . .	History, the world of time.

‡ Your Stead ‡

Your hero grew up in a large household with 35 men, 35 women, and about 70 children. Grandpa and grandma are the bosses, but your father sees to the fields and cattle, and your mother rules over the hearth and pantry, the garden, and the other animals.

Your household's stead is really a small village. It has one large long-house, ten smaller residences nearby, and another ten farther out. It has the normal complement of other buildings, including five large cattle barns, other animal and food storage buildings, a mill, and a sacred Loom House.

Your aunt and uncle are the family's god-talkers, and live in one of the near houses. You have an uncle who is one of the clan's five weapon-thanes, off living with the chieftain. Your hamlet has 18 *fyrdmen* available in case trouble starts, but all of the men and women know how to use weapons if they have to.

When you go to Orlanth's ceremonies, you go to the clan's Temple. It is near the chieftain's stead, out past the plowed fields on the highest rise on the *tula*. During the ceremonies, the men go into the center of the circle formed by the women, who stand along the edge of the rise. When you go to Ernalda's ceremonies, you go to the clan's Earth Temple. As is the way with Ernalda, this is out in the fields for the Esrola Rites, in the Loom House for the Mahome rites, and in the other women's places for the other goddesses. Your clan also has shrines to the ancestors, Hedkoranth (your favored Thunder Brother), and several other deities.

Your hamlet has a herd of about 250 cattle, including the 48 oxen that make up your six plow teams. Of these cattle, about 80 are the clan's, and the rest belong to your bloodline. You also have 500 sheep, 30 alynxes, and many pigs.

Every year you send the equivalent of 65 cattle to the clan in taxes. 50 go to support the chieftain, his household, and the clan ring. The other 15 go to support the tribe. Because of your holdings, your stead sends 10 cattle, 35 sheep, and 800 bushels of barley each year, along with 25 spearheads and 5 swords from the forge on your stead. Since the coming of the Lunars, your taxes have doubled, and you have less for your family. If something does not change soon, your children will starve.





# Inside Heort's Hall

## Heortling Society



*Heroes these be, reckless in the cattle raid, generous in gifting, bloody in battle, eloquent in the moot, courageous in compassion, ferocious in worship, passionate in praise, resolute in heroquest, tender in courtship, humble in learning from their mistakes!*

### The Centrality of Kinship

*Better a meal of acorns among kin than a honey feast with strangers.*

In Heortling society, everything filters through the ideology and practice of kinship. Kinship is far more than simple genealogy — it dictates rules of ownership and distribution of resources, rights to use land, relationships with outsiders, clan defense, the workings of justice, the practices of marriage, and the ownership of religious ceremonies.

Kinship is sacred, a manifestation of the Sacred Order. It shows a person how to view things the right way, and it tells him who is family, who is a friend, and who is an enemy. For a Heortling to understand someone, he must be able to understand his relationship to them. The more distant the kinship, the less important that person is to you.

The bonds of blood unite the Heortlings. Kin always support kin, and a man may ask his kin's help in anything. Without kin, a man is nothing — an outlaw, worse than an animal. Ernalda and Orlanth gave the sacred laws of kinship and marriage during the first making of the tribes. Neither Heort nor the Esrolian Widows changed them.

Heortling kinship is both flexible and resilient. This serves the clan well in times of migration and hardship, and is adaptable in placing outsiders within its web when necessary. Kinship serves the clan, and the logic of kinship can sometimes work in reverse. Thus, the storytellers often discover links of kinship to new friends and allies. These links may be tenuous, but they are used to forge strong and enduring bonds.

The Heortlings have many types of marriage, reflecting different circumstances and different statuses between bride and groom. Marriage is a bond between individuals and an agreement between clans. Fidelity is a virtue, but divorce is socially acceptable, and can be initiated by either party. Relations with kin by marriage may be both close and enduring, but it is not always so. Kinship by blood is stronger and more important.

Most men remain on their ancestors' *tula* all their lives, but most women depart upon marriage to live with their husband. Because of this, clans focus on the bond between father and son, and the laws of kinship and property encourage brothers to work together. Some types of marriage claim children as members of the mother's clan, and matrilineal clans are usually egalitarian in interpreting the rights of sons and daughters.

## Marriage

*Stand always together, two are better than one.*

*Life is short, time is long. Life flees before us.*

*Take what you hold, make use of it.*

*This makes you better than gods.*

— from the traditional Heortling wedding ceremony

Marriage among the Heortlings is a mutual bond between participants; it is both exclusive and monogamous. Since sexuality is relatively open and unmarried sex not frowned upon, the marriage bond is significant. Since marriage is sanctified by divine oath, adultery is frowned upon and can be dangerous. The exact values of the brideprice and dowry are less important than their relative values, as determined by the social status of the two parties and the type of marriage into which they enter.

Divorce is available to husband or wife. Traditional law oversees the division of shared property in a divorce. The woman always recovers her dowry and the man his brideprice, except in cases of marriage breach. Seven classes of marriage are recognized:

1. **Husband and Wife.** Both participants have equal property, status, and responsibility. The woman moves to her husband's house, and children belong to his clan.
2. **Husband and Underwife.** The husband has more property and status, and consequently more say in decision-making. The woman moves to her husband's house, and children belong to his clan.
3. **Wife and Underhusband.** The wife has more status and property, and consequently more say in decision-making. The man moves to his wife's house, but children belong to his clan.
4. **Wife and Esrolian Husband.** The wife has more status and property, and consequently more say in decision-making. The man moves to his wife's house, and children belong to her clan.
5. **Year-wife or Year-husband.** This marriage is temporary. It is, renewable after a year, subject to terms defined by the marriage. Thus, a woman can take an Esrolian husband as a year-husband. When the year is up the couple separates; there is no division or return of property, but children stay with the mother's clan.
6. **Bed-wife or Bed-husband.** No property changes hands, save for that publicly granted with witnesses. The individual not named in the title raises the children. Thus, a bed-husband is not responsible for raising the children, who go to the woman's clan.
7. **Love-wife and Love-husband.** No property changes hands. This is a vow of monogamy for its own sake, or for the sake of romantic love. Children rarely result from such marriages, but if they do they go to the father's clan.

Children born outside of marriage always belong to their mother's clan.

Kinship is based on a spiritual connection to ancestors and to the land of the clan *tula*. Moral obligation prevails in all dealings between kinsmen. Support, friendship, and cooperation are automatically assumed, with a force equal to any law. Yet ambivalence, rivalry, and conflict are also present, and in these are the seeds of kinstrife, an evil beyond the workings of justice or retribution, an evil that can destroy an entire clan from within.

Two factors reinforce the power of kinship in everyday life. The first is the strongly communal nature of Heortling society, with extended families of several generations living together at common hearths. People respect the rights of the individual, but the bloodline or family is the legal entity. A person has no identity within the society apart from his or her kin.

The second important factor is the network of gifting between kinsmen. Kinsmen support each other in times of need, and this builds strong, life-long networks of support, obligation, and political influence.

## Individuals and Society

*Orlanth is King, and we are His Tribe!*

Heortling society recognizes personal identity and individuality, but nurtures it only in a social setting. Heort's Laws state that, "No one can make you do anything." Despite this, almost all Heortlings live as members of society. This membership stems from a system of duties both of the individual to the society, and of the society to the individual.

According to tradition, Heortlings gain five benefits as a member of society: Recognition of their place within the society, Participation in the work and benefits of the society, Protection from danger, Direction in a changing world, and Justice through law. (Revenge is sometimes stated to be a sixth benefit of the society, resorted to when justice fails.)

In return for these benefits, individuals have a duty to the society, generally recognized as a duty to their clan: Maintain personal honor and integrity, Feed and Defend the community, Obey chosen leaders, Support the justice of the clan, and Honor the laws of hospitality.

An individual is far more important and influential as a member of society. Central to this relationship is an individual's relationship to the kinsmen of his bloodline (and household, if that differs). Only slightly less important is the individual's relationship to his clan (the largest permanent Heortling organization). Most clans are part of a tribe, but this is a relationship based on politics instead of kinship, and so is of less importance to most folk. The ruler of a tribe is called a king, whether a man or woman. Finally, tribes sometimes organize into large kingdoms, such as the Kingdom of Sartar. As with tribal membership, this political organization usually has little importance to most Heortlings.

### The First Clan

When Orlanth first brought Ernalda to his stead, she looked around and saw that the Thunder Brothers were fighting each other, and that almost everyone was a stickpicker. She showed Orlanth that his folk could be strengthened: "The Emperor's way of organizing people was too much, but this is too little." So Ernalda told her handmaiden, Roitina, how to perform the clan-making dance, and then the Storm People organized themselves into the first clans: the Cat Clan, the Grain Clan, the Marks-On-Bark Clan, the Hurt-Everyone Clan, the Death-Is-Life Clan, and more. Each god became a chieftain, with responsibilities to protect and govern. Orlanth became the best chieftain of all as head of the Big Thunder Clan.

## Clan

*"There is fine pasturage along the northern bank, but these lazy Maple-barks claim it, and it is as good as wasted. If we went to the Ring and offered..."*

The clan is the fundamental, enduring unit of Heortling society. Typically, a clan is comprised of between five hundred and two thousand members. All of a clan's bloodlines claim descent from a single ancestor or group of ancestors. The exact line of descent may be unknown, and an event or even a daimon may be the more recognized connection. About half of the clans in Sartar are patrilineal, tracing descent and membership through the male line. Almost a third of clans trace descent from the female line, and clans that trace descent from both are known.

All members of a clan act based on feelings of unity derived from the ancestors and a deep connection to the clan *tula*. Affinal kin (kin by marriage) or *kaylings* (worshippers of the same deity) from other clans may be trusted and loved, but there is always the unspoken feeling that they are not quite the same as us. Even wives, who will bear the next generation of children, struggle in their first years to win the trust and respect of the clan.

Tradition states that members of a clan will not intermarry. Some clans enforce strong prescriptive laws that specify exactly from which clans a man may choose a wife, but others (particularly the clans of the city rings) require only that people marry from outside of their own clan.

Each clan has its territory, called a *tula*, established after ritual negotiation with the deities of the land. The *tula* includes all of the clan's herding, farming, and hunting land. It also contains all of the clan's steads, defensive hill forts, and hunting camps. Individuals or bloodlines hold land in trust for the clan. Most such holdings are set by tradition. Although individuals can own their own herds, each holding includes part of the clan's herd as well. Most men do not leave the *tula* their whole lives. Most women do leave when they marry, but then rarely leave the *tula* of their new clan.

The clan is supported by all of its members, and everything belongs to the clan. Whenever a task is done for the clan, such as a cattle raid or a battle, all the plunder goes to the clan. Part of the clan chieftain's job is to reward

individuals for their efforts on the clan's behalf. If the clan is needy, he may choose to thank everyone profusely and distribute the goods where needed. If the situation is not so desperate then he will reward the people who did the task. Withholding goods from this process is theft.

Although all land, wealth, and cattle are theoretically odal (communal) property, in practice each hearth, family, or bloodline gives only a portion of its harvest and cattle to the clan as rent or taxes. The bloodline pays these taxes annually, seasonally, or even weekly, depending on what the taxes consist of. In general, about 25% of what the clansfolk produce goes to the clan. These taxes are set by tradition according to the holding. Thus, a stead with a holding that traditionally supports farming and herding has their taxes calculated in grain and cows. As long as the holding is managed well, it is sufficient to support a certain number of people and provide for taxes. In bad years, or if the holding is mismanaged, the holding may not provide well enough, and the stead or bloodline must pay taxes out of their own herds and food, and perhaps out of other things as well, such as horses. If they have them, a stead or bloodline will always give silver or copper coins in place of actual goods, crops, and animals.

The clan chieftain can punish a bloodline by giving them a holding he knows they cannot manage properly. This ensures that they will not be able to pay their taxes. If the chieftain does this often or without cause, however, the clan will replace him.

The clan is the focus of most worship, sacrifice, and heroquesting. Each year at Sacred Time, the clan god-talkers and priests gather the entire clan to re-enact the great mysteries and ceremonies that bless and maintain the land. Throughout the year, the god-talkers and priests again lead the entire clan in the proper sacrifices and rites for the members of the Storm Tribe.

Members of a clan all wear a distinctive magical tattoo gained during initiation. The tattoo may be a stylized version of the runes of the clan's primary deity, the form their *wyter* takes, or something that only clan members can recognize. The clan often uses this same mark as a brand on clan herds and as a boundary marker for the clan's *tula*. Even if a clan member is too far away for an observer to see or distinguish their tattoo, most clans can be recognized from a distance by their style of clothing, weapons, or other features. A clan usually has a number of distinct ritual and mythic secrets that they jealously shield even from close allies. Because of this, worship of the gods usually takes a subtly different form in each clan.

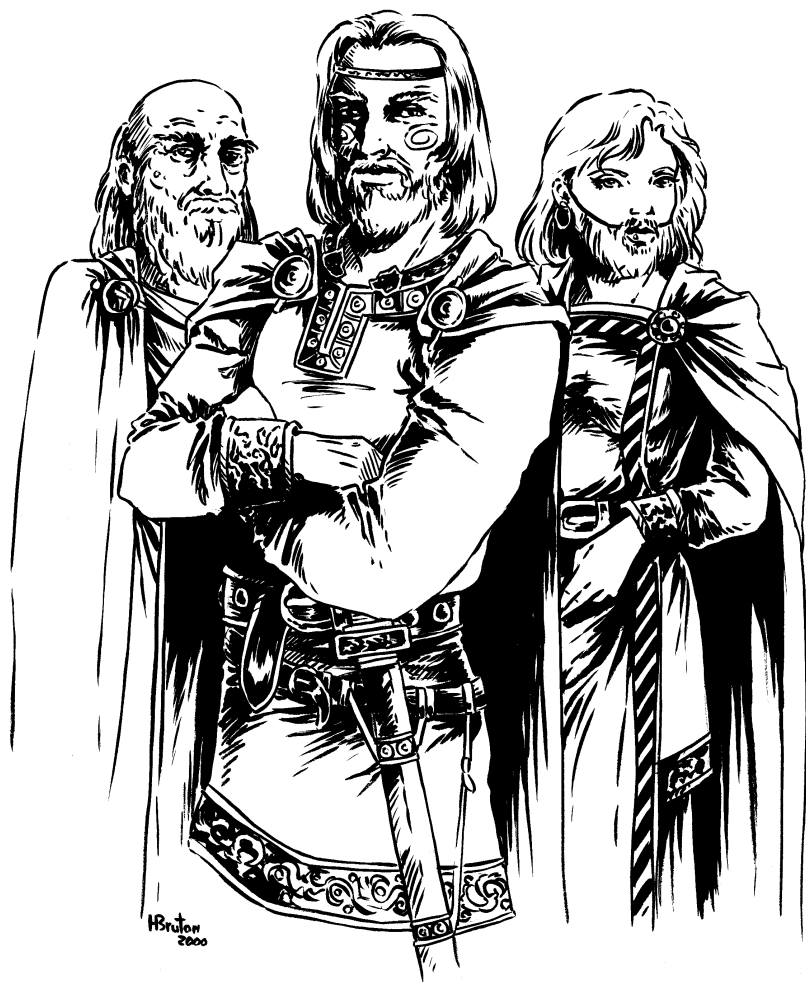
## Clan Leadership

A chieftain governs the clan. The members of the clan elect a chieftain at a moot. After candidates prove their eligibility, the election begins. The candidates come forward, starting with the youngest, and a voice vote is taken. Each adult has a single vote, regardless of their rank. If a verbal vote does not clearly differentiate the winner, the clan takes a count, with each



person placing a spearhead in the ceremonial election basket of his favored candidate. The winner must have a plurality of votes.

Afterwards, the clan acclaims the new chieftain by a *wapentake*. All members shout and bang weapons on shields with as much noise as possible. After this acclamation, the priests and priestesses obtain a vow, bless the new chieftain, and initiate him into the cult of Orlanth the Chieftain (even if female). Then the entire clan retires to a great feast of celebration.



*This is a typical Heortling chieftain, well dressed and groomed. Note the torc around his neck, the sign of a chieftain. With him are his chief godi, cloaked and bald; and his sage. The latter belongs to the cult of Lhankor Mhy. Her cult requires members, even women, to be bearded.*

A chieftain is responsible to the clan in all things, and may be removed at any time by the adults of the clan. The chieftain calls weaponthanes and companions to his side. He gifts and feasts them, and so they enjoy a more privileged lifestyle than ordinary clansfolk. It is a great honor and privilege to become one of the chieftain's companions.

The **clan ring** or council consists of elders, god-talkers, and cult leaders, and advises the chieftain. The clan ring usually consists of between 20 and 30 people, of whom seven form the **inner ring**, serving as officers. The precise structure of the ring varies, based on the number of members, positions held by the officers, and history of the clan. Outer ring members are collectively addressed as the Thunder Brothers (Traditional Ring) or Ginna Jar (Lightbringer Ring), and might consist of all of the clan's thanes or all of the heads of households, depending on the needs of the clan. The inner ring's structure is more formal, with members representing gods and goddesses either of Orlanth and Ernalda's family (Traditional Ring) or the Lightbringers (Lightbringer Ring). The makeup of the inner ring in part determines the nature of the clan's magic — if there are many earth people on the ring, the clan fertility magic is strong. If the ring is skewed towards storm people, then the clan's war magic is best.

Together, the chieftain and clan ring maintain justice, conduct litigation, declare feuds and wars, collect and distribute the gifts of harvest and herd, enter into treaties and contracts, train and equip the *fyrð*, negotiate marriages, protect temples and holy places, and nurture the sacred links to the *tula* and clan *wyter* (protective deity). Each clan also has a chief priestess and a women's circle. Although their power is less formal, they have great influence in clan decision-making.

The chieftain distributes the clan's collective wealth and assigns the use of its land. He receives all gifts to the clan, and oversees all ceremonies, battles, and markets. Every Sacred Time, he grants households the right to plant, herd, or hunt; to collect charcoal, peat, and firewood; and to mine bronze, dig amber, or harvest salt at particular locations on the *tula*. In practice, these rights tend to stay constant from year to year, and times of change can be times of great turmoil for the clan.



## YOU ARE BEING PLUNDERED!



Every year, your clan pays the following in taxes:

100 cattle to the Tribe, for the king and his needs. You expect this, it is normal.

150 cattle to the Tarshgild (or Praxgild, or Horsegild) to help the tribe fight off raiders. You expect this, it is normal.

250 cattle to various Lunars as tribute, triumph money, fines, and reparations. Three cows per household — this is an outrage!

## Bloodline

*"Restalos! Stop harshaxing your cousin! You must support each other, for one day you will be age mates in initiation!"*

A clan member belongs to one of several bloodlines, and gains their identity in custom and law from it. Bloodlines range in size from thirty or forty to several hundred adults. Large bloodlines become increasingly unwieldy, and eventually part of a large bloodline will split off into a new one.

Each bloodline has a founder, and members know their relationship by descent from that ancestor. Although there is considerable variation, a single elder male known as the *spakeman* (literally 'ancestor') often leads a bloodline, closely supported by his brothers and male cousins. Bloodline elders usually, but not necessarily, hold a place in the outer clan ring.

Each bloodline has a hearth that contains the founder's shrine and a holy place for ancestral rites. The bloodline typically lives in a number of households and steads, and the location of the shrines may change over time.

Within a clan, a bloodline is collectively responsible for the actions of its members. If a member injures someone, the entire bloodline bears the cost. If a man marries, the entire bloodline provides his brideprice. Similarly, if a bloodline is gifted by the clan chieftain, all benefit from the honor. To an outsider, one member of a bloodline is as good (or bad) as another. Justice within a bloodline is not a matter of law, but of family. The elders, not the clan, deal with any offense by one member of a bloodline against another.

The duty of support within a bloodline is absolute. One member cannot deny another shelter or support, for that is the source of kinstrife. The only exception is outlawry, which legally separates a person from their bloodline, so that any ill they do afterwards rests upon them alone.

The functional importance of a bloodline varies greatly according to circumstance. When a clan is small, bloodlines are often relatively unimportant except as legal entities. When a clan is large, or dispersed over a wide area, or when its leadership is seduced by Lunar gifts, bloodlines can take on a much greater significance.

Membership in a bloodline is seldom defined precisely. Because descent can be traced through both male and female lines, and because of the forms that marriage can take, most clansfolk are eligible for membership in several bloodlines. Although most continue in their father's bloodline, circumstances (such as family tensions, rivalries, or cult membership) may provide impetus to join another. If many members of a bloodline are killed or outlawed, survivors might join another to find support.

Spouses of bloodline members are accepted as members after they have resided several years in a household and demonstrated their loyalty and usefulness. For women who come from other clans, this usually happens with the birth of their first child. Marriage can cause tensions within a bloodline, however, and such problems may end in divorce.

## Household

*"Karendra, leave your brother alone! How can we teach him respect for women if you're always beating him about the head?"*

The hearth, longhouse, or household is a communal dwelling shared by one or more bloodlines, their spouses, servants, and guests. A Heortling household typically contains twenty to forty individuals — from newborn babes to white-haired ancients. This is the family. Most households house a single bloodline, but on occasion members of two or even three smaller bloodlines may join together to form a household. The membership of a household is always changing, for individuals typically move from hearth to hearth within a bloodline in response to the needs of the farming year or simply to follow the winds.

Although males control most of the senior positions within a bloodline, the household hearth is clearly the domain of the senior woman, the *hearth-mistress*. Within the lodge her word is absolute, and the bloodline males and younger wives all obey her without question. Her husband and his brothers may organize and control the day to day activities of the stead, but the sacred hearth is hers alone. Her only rival is the first alynx, who also demands total obedience.

Although many of the cattle herded by a stead belong to the clan, any competent household also has its own herds. The two sets of cattle are not kept separate, but mingle, since the household's or bloodline's cattle come directly from their good maintenance of the clan cattle that come with their holding. If they maintain the herd such that it increases, the additional cattle are theirs, not the clan's. Conversely, if they manage the herd poorly and it decreases, the number belonging to the clan remains constant, thus impoverishing the stead. A household will slay a number of cattle each year on Sacrifice Day, selecting those to sacrifice or kill for meat. These always include the animals least likely to survive the winter.

### Orlanth's Camp

Orlanth took for himself the Middle Air as his realm, and set about to make his home. This is Orlanth's Camp, which no one can enter unless they are invited. It is a secret place, and Fumal was killed when he told others of it.

First Orlanth named, in the center, the Law Rock, Kero Fin. From there, he organized the rest of the construction. He sent the Six Guardians to their directions, where each set up their own watch station. These six are Ohorlanth, in the northwest; Valind, in the northeast, Urox, in the southeast; and Heler, in the southwest. Up above he sent Odayla the Storm Bear, and down below he sent Humakt, God of the Dead.

Then, by the center, Orlanth lit the sacred fire. He appointed officers, and gave each of them their place to sleep around the fire. These are the officers of the camp: watchman and porter, scout and healer, fireman and cook, foodman and waterman, caster and singer.

Besides defining the domestic unit, the household is also the effective unit of co-operative labor and communal wealth. Most crops and herds are a collective responsibility of a household. Stead buildings, plow teams, and other items of equipment are held in common ownership. Judgements by the clan for or against the bloodline affect all members, and any insult against one is an insult against all.

### Domestic Animals

Our stead is the *odal* property of the clan, and we hold it in trust for all our kin. Most of our cattle are common wealth, overseen by the elders of the bloodlines and by the ring, to be distributed according to need or honor by our chieftain, and used for the paying of wergild and tribute. We have our personal herds too, a mark of wealth and status. If the clan herds under our keeping prosper and grow, then some of their lambs and calves will swell our personal herds. If we plant a heavy crop, and our stead granaries are plump even until the melting of the snow, then our chieftain will reward us in the Sacred Time gifting.

In fair weather our cattle enjoy our choicest meadows, and in foul the warmth of our barns. In return, they gift us with milk, meat, and manure, horn, sinew, and hide. Is it any wonder the skalds proclaim that cattle are better than women?

Upon initiation, a young man receives his own herd from the wealth of the clan. One part is the clan's, another his own, to nurture or to squander. Men and women of wealth may also act as patrons, and gift the young man with cattle. In return, he will honor them and support them in the moot. As his wealth grows he will return the gifts in kind, and become a patron of lesser men.

A man may build his herds through thrift and husbandry, through the giving and taking of gifts, as reward for honest labor, and by adventure. All these ways are honored in custom and in law. If a man loses his herds through laziness or ill *wyrd* then he will have little honor: he will herd or plant for others as a cottar.

A woman will take a dowry from her clan when she marries: it is hers to nurture or to squander, and to take back with her if she divorces from her husband. The form of this wealth is negotiated in the marriage contracts, but often includes herds, breeding pairs, or bronze. Her dowry is a mark of her status among new kin on foreign soil.

We herd many sheep of different shapes, breeds, and colors: fat-tails, blue-shawls, rainbearers, and wild rock rams, as well as our silver-fleece veedons. Sheep are Heler's gift, swift-footed far-travelers, horned providers of mutton, milk, and wool.

We also keep pigs – too many to count! Pigs are easy, for they forage for themselves in the woods and waste and feast on acorns and beech mast. Even a poor stickpicker without a single cow can keep pigs, and they breed quickly, providing much of our meat.

We keep other beasts according to our need and want: horses for riding and ritual, fowl for their eggs each rain season, and bees for their honey, to sweeten our mead.

We eat meat when we can, but preserve most of the meat for the winter. We sometimes must kill stock during the Long Dark, though we rue this. And we always butcher meat for Orlanth's high day and for Sacred Time, days of celebration in seasons of scarcity and hunger.



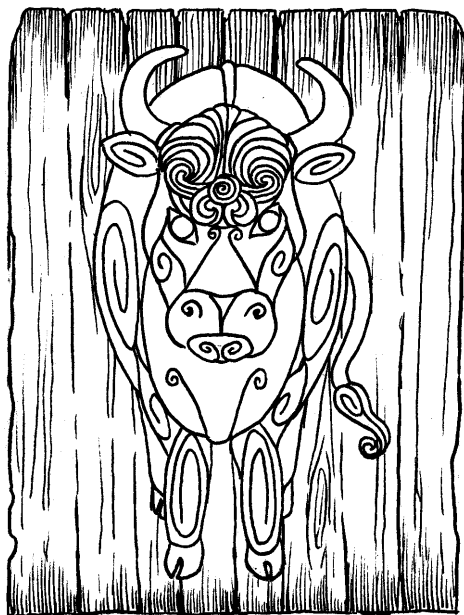
## Your Clan



Your clan consists of about 1200 people, divided into six bloodlines. Of these, 500 are adults (half men and half women), 600 are children, and 100 are old, weak, holy, or otherwise unsuitable for the *fyrð*, the clan militia. A patriarch heads each bloodline, and is counted among the clan's thanes. Each bloodline has its own stead, herds, plow lands, lesser houses, and the like, as assigned by tradition and the clan chieftain. Your bloodline has about 200 people, divided among 15 hearths in three large steads that are essentially small villages, or hamlets.

An equal holding supports the clan priests and god-talkers, and about that much again is the Chieftain's Share, which he holds for the clan. The *tula* encloses everything within a fifteen by twenty-five mile area, ranging from some riverside right up to the top of the nearby highland border with another clan. You, and everyone in your clan, know every byway and secret path through the *tula*, and you never expect to go beyond it except perhaps on a cattle raid or when seeking a wife.

Your chieftain has the biggest and wealthiest stead. The inner members of the clan ring live on their own, smaller steads, but all of the weapon-thanes (plus their assistants) live on the chieftain's stead. The chieftain's stead also houses the clan marketplace, as well as the redsmith, potter, carpenter, and all of their storehouses.



## The Kinly Hearth

*A man without a hearth: a spear without a shaft.*

— Heortling Proverb

The longhouse or hearth is the center of life, a place for eating, sleeping, cooking, and entertainment. In times of danger, it may also become an impromptu (though surprisingly robust) defensive stronghold.

## Longhouses

*"Rostales dear, don't feed your meat to the alynx! I know it's just mutton again, but you'll be grateful enough for even mutton when you're chewing rotroot during Longdark."*

A typical longhouse is sixty feet to one hundred feet long and forty feet wide. Cattle stalls occupy half of many longhouses. This offers shared warmth and extra protection in the snow and ice of Dark Season. Chimneys are rare, for stead 'hearth maidens' (minor wind daimones) control stray drafts and spiral smoke from the fire up into the rafters, where it is spun into tiny rainbow-sheened balls of ash. Translucent animal bladders usually cover unshuttered windows to preserve warmth. Paned glass is known, but is a rare and exotic luxury, and far too fragile for most steads.

A stead is relatively easy to build — all you need is a "a great tree, a good god, and a bloodline for a day." Heortling longhouses are also capable of great elaboration, for some master builders still use techniques from the Imperial Age, which ended centuries ago.

### Communality

Heortling life is overwhelmingly communal. Bloodlines hold property in common. Extended families spanning four or five generations share a common hearth. The degree of communality varies, from entire clans in fortified steads in the Far Point region to the sub-bloodline houses of the large cities. Apart from lonely stickpicker cottages and city dwellings, it is rare for a household to comprise less than a dozen adults.

Although most steads have small cult or blood-based longhouses for private business or ceremony, life revolves around the central hearth. The major exceptions are the clan's weaponthanes (for the most part unmarried males), who reside in their own longhouse by the chieftain's hall; and members of cults such as Humakt or Urox, who must live apart either for their own reasons or by Orlanth's decree.

All of life passes before the sacred hearth. A Heortling child is never alone. Birth, sex, and death are all highly visible — there is no word for 'privacy' in the languages of Sartar. Little is hidden from children: they watch as women give birth, listen to marriage negotiations and the planning of raids, watch as the elderly sicken and die, watch as the dead are prepared for burial or funeral pyre, and watch as couples embrace in the night. Such is the Orlanthei Way.

Construction of a longhouse begins with the setting of the hearthstone, accompanied by sacrifice and ceremony, and the summoning of guardian daimones. Afterwards, the work of building the house begins. Walls are usually constructed of wooden planks, though the use of stone, wattle and daub, or turf is common in upland regions. Strips of bronze may band elaborate buildings. Floors are laid using any of a number of materials, including clay and marl, wood, stone, or tamped chalk. Roofs are thatched, or tiled with painted wood, slate, or even silver (as with the fabled Gifting Hall of the Balmyr). Roof shingles and tiles are often individually painted, and are always marked with wards against angry winds. Crafters often carve the longhouse's lofty gables into animal shapes to serve as wards or houses for petty daimones. Doorways are always elaborate, often carved with sacred runes and symbols to ward off hostile Otherworld entities. Among blood-thirsty clans, the skulls of enemies may be bound into niches in the lintel.

Longhouses are vulnerable to fire, and the owners may abandon them for other reasons. Heortlings scavenge timber and firewood from unsafe buildings, but seldom demolish them, and so the frames of old buildings litter most steads. If a building is cursed, it is burnt with sacred fire.

## The Heart's Good Home

*"Urox's filthy loincloth! Who spiced this stew?!"*

A longhouse's interior is simple, essentially a single large room divided by a long, narrow, central hearth. Platforms among the rafters provide storage space, and hangings and simple leather or wicker screens along the walls create stalls and sleeping platforms. These are the closest approximation to a private space that most clansfolk ever experience.

The interior of a longhouse is decorated in bright colors of blue, red, yellow, and cloudy gray. Posts and pillars are carved with twisted earth spirals and labyrinthine wind whirls. Woven mats, tapestries, and hangings depicting scenes from the sacred stories provide further decoration. The walls are hung with carvings, hides, and ancestral weapons, battle trophies and wind banners, sacred spearheads, bulls' horns, earthshakers' teeth, ceremonial masks, and leather-bound bags of wind.

Furniture is simple — cushions, stools, and tables for the most part. Sleeping platforms are simple raised pallets with furs or mattresses stuffed with straw or fragrant evermoss. Storage chests, giant vases, and painted jars occupy the floor. By the hearth sit the women's treasures — grinding querns, kettles, looms, bronzed mirrors, baths, adder pots, and woven chains of cattle tokens — signs of wealth, fertility, and prosperity. The air of a longhouse is rich with cooking smells and the scent of fragrant resins, white oak and red cedar, fresh green rushes, and vorian petal blossoms.

By tradition, the hearth aligns along a north-south axis. At its northern end are the ancestral shrines: statues and carvings that provide homes to hearth gods and clan ancestors. At the opposite end are shrines to Mahome and the household goddesses.



No hearth can be complete without its family of alynxes. Shadow cat families are fiercely independent, and choose their own hearth and company. They are always welcomed as a sign of luck and favorable *wyrd*; indeed, for the alynxes to shun your hearth is a terrible omen. As alynxes are fastidiously clean, the high standards of cleanliness enforced at a hearth are in part due to the desire to please and attract these discerning cousins.

## Hearth & Harstings

*"Grandmother, throw some resin on the flames to awaken the hearth-goddess, for the smoke is smarting my eyes."*

The Sartarites are a rural people. Many clansfolk have a deep and abiding distrust of cities, and indeed of any place where people gather who are not kin. Cities are soulless and violent; there are no ancestors or protective gods there, and you cannot see your winter stores. Stead life is natural, the way of Orlanth and Ernalda. No matter how far a Heortling may roam, a part of his soul, his breath, will always be with his *tula* and his stead.

More than a farm, less than a town, the stead stands at the center of Heortling society. Steads (also called 'hearth and harstings' after Harst the

### The Household Goddesses

The household goddesses are the daughters and handmaidens of Ernalda. Their shrines range from a small icon of Ernalda or perhaps several clay statues in poorer households, to ornate statues, each one easily identified by its painting, runes, and jewelry as to which goddess it represents. These women's goddesses receive a part of Ernalda's worship in most cases.

These goddesses serve as the model of not only the household, but also the proper servants of a woman. Generally, only wealthy women (like Clan Chieftains, Chief Priestesses, or Esrolian Matriarchs) can afford to have all ten servants attend her.

The traditional Heortling household goddesses are:

- Kesta, who prepares the food.
- Istena, who fills the water and wine skins.
- Sharla, who spins the wool into thread.
- Berlintha, who mends the clothing.
- Mahome, who holds the fire tubes.
- Amna, who holds the key to the treasure box.
- Jera, who keeps the healing kit.
- Roitina, who teaches all the dances.
- Beseta and Besanga, who bear the Goddess' burdens.

Each of these goddesses has their own form and iconography, separate from Ernalda, though often they are subsumed within her images. Thus, Beseta and Besanga are depicted as mares (one red and one gray), and Amna holds the hummingbird to be sacred. When only Ernalda is pictured, she often has their symbols painted on her as if they were jewelry.

Reeve) are largely self-sufficient. They vary greatly, from enormous walled forts to tiny vineyard longhouses. Typically run by a dominant family and containing several households, a stead may be home to as few as 13 or as many as 120 adults. A stead usually includes between one and ten households, known as lodges or hearths.

The cycle of farm labor is difficult and constant. Periods of plenty and of want are part of the yearly cycle. Although rarely is either extreme, but even so periods of famine do occur. Everyone has to work to make the stead successful. Men farm, herd, and hunt while the women maintain the household, prepare the food, and tend the children. The family's elders help as they can, and lend their wisdom to all activities. Even the children have chores, from cleaning and carrying for the youngsters to tending sheep in the hills for those near the age of initiation. At times of peak activity, such as during the harvest, everyone helps with the important tasks, even the god-talkers and clan chieftain.

Most steads sit in low hills, on a slope near running water. A palisade or embankment for protection against enemies often surrounds the central buildings. River meadows are essential for cattle grazing. The best crop fields are often those closest to the longhouses, for they are readily supplied with manure and compost. All steads stand near a fortification or other safe place (such as an ancient hill fort from the Imperial Age or a cave complex) where the clansfolk can retreat with the herds in time of danger.

Work buildings surround the central longhouses of the stead: byres and stables, tanneries and milking sheds, granaries and warehouses, weaving and potting sheds, smithies and workshops, outdoor ovens and kilns, storage pits and drying racks, butcher stones and wood piles, rubbish pits and middens, thunder boxes and privies, sties and poultry boxes, ancestor and warding poles, banner sticks and wind vanes, charcoal and silage pits, clay weathers — all that are required to grow and herd and craft and build. Sunken huts are used for storage; earth magic seals the building's foundations to protect the goods stored inside. Granaries are the most common of such buildings. The hearth's alynxes always favor these haunts, and keep them free of mice and other rodents.

Square houses are common in most areas, inhabited by cottars and other poor folk. Often, a square house will have its barn attached to share warmth in the winter.

Each clan has an ancestral stead that contains the hall of the clan chieftain, major ceremonial temples, and a shrine to the clan's founder. In addition, the founder's stead usually holds the local market and the meeting place of the law court and *fjrd*.

The oldest steads in Sartar are nearly three hundred years old. Few survive so long, however, for migration, feuds and wars, and the depletion of natural resources such as firewood and prey animals means that bloodlines must abandon or relocate many steads after four or five generations.

## Hospitality

Strangers are enemies until proven otherwise. Every Orlanthe is obliged to report strangers to their chieftains and thanes immediately. The chieftain alone is the proper person to speak to strangers and decide if they should be killed. Of course, the chieftain's household and companions may speak for him, and usually begin the rites with strangers who might be friends.

Hospitality is sacred to the Orlanthe, for Orlanthe made the first hospitality. By using the ritual greeting, he transformed a stranger into a friend. All Orlanthe know the Greeting Rites. They are used whenever Orlanthe meet who do not know each other. Many minor variations exist, but all of the versions are similar enough that any Orlanthe can recognize. Other cultures do not have this rite, but can submit to it. The ritual greeting is always used during formal meetings between Orlanthe who know each other, since it constitutes a binding agreement between the host and his guest.

The ritual greeting combines Orlanthe's protection and welcome at the same time. It consists of a series of questions whose answers, if correct, are a binding oath empowered by Orlanthe. Anyone who enters into the questioning is under Orlanthe's scrutiny and power. If the stranger speaks a lie during the rite, the questioner knows this before the stranger has a chance to act.

Orlanthe speaks a typical version in the myth. The story shows how the stranger reveals himself to be of increasingly close kinship and/or successively more important status, hence deserving to be closer to the questioner.

*Questioner:* Are you friend or foe?

*Answer:* Friend.

*Questioner:* I am (questioner's name and title), what is your name?

*Answer:* Stranger's name.

A pause ensues as the questioner tries to remember if he has heard of the stranger, to let his truth magic work, and to see what his companions have to say. If no lies are detected, and no one knows a reason why the stranger ought to be sent away, he is welcomed.

*Questioner:* You can have my hospitality. I offer you water.

*Answer:* I will not steal from you, fight you, or say bad things about you.

At this point, the host has met all hospitality requirements. If the stranger offers any insult or violence to his host, Orlanthe's wrath will fall on him. Normally the questioning goes on, because generosity is a virtue. In practical terms, the questioning is broken off at this point as the watchmen or guards bring the visitor — no longer a stranger — to the chieftain. Of course, the chieftain may recognize this person before the series is over. Even so, the stranger will continue to identify himself so that everyone knows who he is. This is a combination of boasting and news reporting.

The chieftain has no obligation to offer more than water: generosity is a virtue, but the chieftain must always look out for the clan's collective wel-

fare. Thus, most guests sleep under their own blankets and receive water, and perhaps leftovers from the chieftain's hall as well. This is the Beggar's Portion, and there is no shame in that, for beggars are one of the eighteen recognized professions. However, when a known but unwelcome person shows up, the questioner might stop at this point and offer his guest "water as a feast." This is an insult, for he is treating his known guest as a beggar.

### The First Hospitality

After Orlanth made his camp, many people came to visit him there. When they came, Orlanth and his officers greeted them. He said the sacred words, which could not be said if falsehood was intended. The first stranger that came to the camp was Quivin of the Deep. When he came close to Orlanth's Camp he was challenged.

"Halt, Stranger! Who comes this way, to a place that is not allowed to everyone? Do you come in friendship, or as a foe?"

"Greetings, guardian. I come as a friend."

"Greetings, stranger. You speak to the lord of this place. I am Orlanth, King of the Gods, slayer of the Terrible Emperor, and the Liberator of Justice. Tell me your name if you are a friend."

"I am Quivin of the Deep, the son of Vestkarthen."

"You are welcome here, Quivin of the Deep, son of Vestkarthen. I offer you hospitality, and promise my protection to you and yours while inside. I offer you water, to quench your thirst."

"I accept this, with gratitude. I will not rob you, or bare arms, and I will speak ever of your generosity."

"Then you are welcome, guest. And I offer you more: a blanket to sleep under while you are my guest. This is a thing we offer only to friends, or those we would have as friends."

"I accept this, with gratitude, and I will speak ever of your generosity."

"Then you are welcome, guest. And I offer you more: meat, to fill your belly. This is a thing we offer only to kinsmen, and those as good as them."

"I accept this, with gratitude, and I will speak ever of your generosity."

"Then you are welcome, guest. And I offer you more: salt, as token of your honor. This is a thing that we give only to those who are great, or who show promise of it."

"I accept this, with gratitude, and I will speak ever of your generosity."

"Then you are welcome, guest. And I offer you more: duty, which is offered only those who would sit close to me, in my family."

"I accept this, with gratitude. I pledge to stand by you in war or peace, and I will speak ever of your generosity."

And so Orlanth welcomed the guest into his camp, and this is still the way that we greet all people into our homes and sacred places. And this proves the value of welcoming strangers, for after the dinner that night it was revealed that Quivin was Orlanth's own brother, a son of his mother who had never come to his camp before. So then Orlanth went the step beyond hospitality, and gave to Quivin a place in his own *tula* to build a stead.

If he chooses to continue the ritual, he is by definition being generous.

*Questioner:* Are you our friend? (A specific rather than general question.)

*Answer:* Yes, and here is why.

*Questioner:* Then you can have a blanket.

If the stranger explains why he should be treated as a friend, the chieftain gifts him with water and a place to sleep in the hall (where there is fire). This level of guesing includes a meal, commonly of cheese and bread.

*Questioner:* Are you a kinsman (or like a kinsman in importance)?

*Answer:* Yes, and here is why.

*Questioner:* Then you can have meat.

Anyone who satisfies the chief that he deserves this much is doing well, and receives the same honors as one of the chieftain's thanes or kinsmen.

*Questioner:* Are you a great person?

*Answer:* Yes, and here is what I have done.

*Questioner:* Then you can have salt.

Guests of the salt sit at the same high table as the chieftain. No higher honor exists for a guest, except for the host to serve him, as is done to kings; or to serve the host as a member of his own household.

*Questioner:* Are you willing to work for us?

*Answer:* Yes, and here are my qualifications.

*Questioner:* Then you can live among us.

This is the ultimate gift to a visitor who is not of blood. It is what Orlanth did, many times, when he welcomed other gods into the Storm Tribe.

## Law and Justice

*"Three next-season calves she offered in compensation, and a colt with a mangy coat that looked half starved. An insult, and this the third time this season her herd has got among our vegetables! That woman has evil eyes I say, and her clan went to the Lunars at the first showing of silver. It was a bad matching for us all."*

Justice is the gift of Orlanth, who was the first lawspeaker. It keeps the clans strong, and provides them with peace and harmony.

Justice extends to everyone who is part of the sacred web of kinship, to every clan and every bloodline. Even a grim Humakti and his followers can be brought before the courts (though wisdom is required in this!), and even a chieftain must offer compensation if a trickster under his protection causes harm. No one is immune: animals, dead ancestors, and even storms can be brought to court, for justice is part of the Sacred Order. (In such cases, descendants or groups with magical associations to the accused stand in their place.)

To the Heortlings, violence is a natural energy, an accepted part of the world. The *outcomes* of force or violence can be good or evil, but violence itself is morally neutral. King Heort, who compiled the great law codes, reaffirmed that, "No one can make you do anything." Thus, every Heortling is born to freedom. Yet Orlanth achieved his greatness and became Lord of All by taking responsibility to correct the outcomes of his actions. This is the standard he set for his followers. Thus, law is a necessary compromise between freedom and society.

Justice is the responsibility of every man, every woman, every hearth, every stead and bloodline. Strong arms, great hearts, and gifted tongues maintain it, and the courage of the free make it possible (although one cannot discount the importance of large numbers of armed kin). The pursuit of justice serves many functions within society. The law courts are arenas not only for resolving conflicts, but also for political display and manipulation.

### The Cattle Prices

*Ten years for a working man's life.* — A Heortling law

Wergilds (see pg. 42) follow a general pattern across all Heortling clans, though variations always exist. The quote above indicates that a wergild is worth at least the income a person would generally earn in ten years of living. It is based upon wealth, importance, and other measures of social status.

Here are the special Nobles: A Tribal King, who leads ten clans, whose tribe has a ring and a wyter of its own, worth 200 cattle; an Overking, the first among at least four other kings, worth 500 cattle; and a High King, who rules all peoples and withstands divine scrutiny, worth 2000 cattle.

Here are the Nobles, worth 100 cattle: A Clan Chieftain, selected by his folk; Companions of a king who were appointed by him, and are loyal to him; a Priest or Priestess who is entirely dedicated to the holy works; a Tribal Warlord, who leads all of the clans in battle; a Member of a tribal ring; a Chief Priestess who has ten priestesses who answer to her; a Chief Priest the same.

Here are the Thanes, worth 50 cattle: The Head of any bloodline recognized by the clan; a Thane who lives in a noble's household, and is fully supported in all things appropriate to their station in life by that noble, including a clan's several Weaponthanes, the dishthane, the lawthane, the hearththane, the cowthane, the ewethane, the alynxthane, and others; a Godi or Gyrda, proved pious by good magic.

Here are the Carls, worth 25 cattle: Any one with a stead, a herd of 42 cattle, a full plow and plow team, and hands enough to harvest it, as long as he has weapons as well; the Chief Merchant or Skald of a clan.

And the Cottars, worth 10 cattle: Half-carls, with half a plow and half a team, or a full plow, or a full team; Makers, who build and craft; Cabbage-folk, who scabble in gardens; Traders, who count money; Stickpickers, who gather fallen wood in the forest; Jugglers and other vulgar poets; and Beggars, every one a thief if your back is turned.

Justice is primarily a negotiation between two groups related by kinship. Those outside the web of kinship are beyond justice, and are dealt with according to Umath's first thought: Violence is Always an Option. Except for the most heinous capital crimes, individuals are not held directly responsible for misdeeds. Instead, their families and bloodlines share in the responsibility, just as they share in the responsibility for compensation. Heortlings think little of privacy, and everyone assumes that any deliberate action is planned with the knowledge of hearth kin.

The good or bad of a situation comes from its effects, rarely from the deed itself. The Orlanthei Way is not to bind oneself to some abstract code of morality, but to deal practically and honestly with the effects of actions on the community of kin. Because of this, justice is about consensus and compensation instead of punishment; about finding social harmony, not upholding abstract principles. The conduct of the parties concerned is just as relevant as the "facts." That said, a person who has the support of most of the clan is likely to win the case. Everyone accepts that the courts have a political as well as a legal role, and an obligation to maintain peace among all concerned. Accordingly, payment of wergild or honor price is not an admission of fault, merely an act of compensation.

Clan law derives from Heort, the great king who enshrined Orlanthei's principles of possession, establishment and strength of arms. Long years of local interpretation mean that considerable variation exists among the tribes. This also allows flexibility in judgements, and gives great power to the clan lawspeaker, for "those who know the stories rule the tribe." Although the codes proclaim fixed wergilds, fines, and compensation, these are often merely the opening bids in negotiations. Cases may settle for more or less, depending only in part on the actual and perceived value that was lost.

When wrong has been done, a man can gain much status if he goes straight to the affected party, announces what he has done, and offers compensation without the need for a court. More commonly, however, it proceeds to a lawsuit. The plaintiff takes his complaint to a local juror, an informal position accorded only to the wise and honorable men in the clan. The juror renders a decision, which is not binding. If either side wishes, the complaint can be taken to a group of jurors and a judge at the local law court, which convenes at set times during the year. Judgement in such cases is final. Although the jurors and their kinsmen are supposed to support the decision with violence if necessary, in practice the winner must enforce and collect the judgement. If they and their friends are too weak to take it by force if need be, then a strong foe may abuse the system by saying he will abide by the decision or pay the wergild, without ever actually doing so.

The Heortlings recognize that sometimes justice is not enough, and that there is a proper moment for vengeance. Then it is time for the rites of the feud, or the passing of the black arrow to call the clan to war. To the People of the Storm, violence is always an option.

## Social Ranks

*Work is Simple: plant, guard, and harvest.*

— Heortling Saying

Heortling culture recognizes levels of status, each with its own qualities of life. This status is not determined by the individual's or bloodline's personal property (though such things are influential), but is instead conferred by the clan upon a person. Heortlings divide society into four broad classes: Noble, Thane, Carl, and Cottar. The primary differences between the ranks are the rights and responsibilities given and expected, and the *wergild* that the family can expect to collect if the person is killed or maimed.

All Heortlings begin as carls or cottars, but can rise with hard work and a little luck. Noble status comes only when the whole clan or tribe grants it, and thanes are named only by nobles as their closest advisors. Heortlings do not have hereditary kingships, though some groups have adopted such practices, as occurred in Tarsh over a hundred years ago.

### Noble

The nobles are the chieftains, kings and queens, and chief priests and priestesses. Nobles receive their rank from the clan or tribe, instead of inheriting it from their family. A popular chieftain does not need to worry about his position, but a chieftain who leads the clan to ruin can expect to be replaced. Chieftains and kings generally become initiates of Orlanth Rex when their clan or tribe confers the status upon them.

Nobles have the highest living standards. All nobles have large steads, families of carls and cottars to farm them, and several followers who act as personal servants, guards, and messengers. They often have a band of personal followers, who act as companions and bodyguards for the noble.

### Thane

Thanes are the leaders of the community — master craftsmen, warriors, heads of bloodlines, priests, and high entertainers such as the lur-horn player, the harpist, and the piper. They form the clan council, and the clan

#### **“What Work People Do”**

— from *The First King*

*The Eighteen Occupations are high king (warlord), overking (prince), noble, priest, thane, skald, weaponthane, farmer, hunter, herder, fisherman, craftsperson, gardener, merchant, low crafts such as charcoal burner, low entertainer, beggar, thrall.*

The rankings in this list are commonly accepted as being from highest to lowest status, although local needs determine the precise setting of the “Four Providers.”



chieftain chooses the members of the inner clan ring from among them. They are richer and more respected than carls and cottars, but must work harder and think further ahead than a farmer or herdsman. Weaponthanes and horsethanes lead the militia, tradethanes deal with outsiders, and various individuals such as the dishthane hold important offices in a chieftain or tribal king's household. The chieftain or king appoints thanes, and may promote or demote them at his whim.

## **Carl**

Heortling carls are farmers. They tend their clan's herds; the cow is the most important animal by far, and the most prosperous carls tend cattle herds. Fishermen and hunters catch the meat for the clan, but carls are the most important people in the clan; everyone knows that. Sometimes haughty weaponthanes and vain heroes forget this, but when the people go hungry, they soon remember that a clan is nothing without its carls.

Carls work hard to support their families and clan. They help choose the chieftain and the members of the inner clan ring, and are expected to obey them. One member of the outer ring commonly speaks for all the clan's carls, in all the bloodlines. When clan elders act against the interests of the carls, that person must remind the council of their importance.

Wherever there is food, there are lazy people who would rather steal it than work for it. Men must be ready to fight to protect what is theirs. Women urge them to fight, and bind their wounds when they return from the field. Women generally weave, brew, make most household tools, and do other small crafts. They also cook, sew, and manage the stead.

Full carls have the widest range of legal rights and responsibilities. This rank is sometimes called a "cattleman." To qualify, a man must have a plow and a full team of eight oxen. If he qualifies, he and his stead receive from the clan as much land as they can plow in two seasons: about 120 acres (of which 40 lie fallow each year). Full carls require a herd of 42 cattle (including the oxen) to maintain this standard of living. Such a carl will live on a stead inhabited by about 16 people.

A successful carl's wergild often rises higher than the norm of 25 cattle. A man who owns only a plow or one-half of an ox team is a half-carl. A half-carl usually has a herd of about 21 cows, and receives as much land as he can plow in one season, using other people's animals or equipment. His body price is less than a full carl's, though often greater than a cottar's.

Carls usually have a stead, with a family of poor carls or cottars to help with chores; about 15 to 25 people total. In practice, many Heortlings live in larger groups, such as an entire bloodline sharing a single hamlet. Such larger groups have correspondingly larger holdings from the clan. In clans that take slaves, a prosperous carl may have one or two slaves as part of his household. Carls often find work as the follower of a thane, hoping to gain enough fame and experience to move up in society.

## Cottar

Cottars are the lowest class of free man, who cannot afford the basic implements of a carl. They tend sheep or pigs; farm garden plots for herbs, leafy greens, and root vegetables; or work as laborers for farmers, hunters, herders, and fishermen. They must attend the *fyrð* with whatever weapon they can bring — even if it is only a sling or cudgel.

Most craftspeople rank as cottars. There are always exceptions, of course, so that the master redsmith and master brewer count as carls. At the bottom of the cottar class are the stickpickers and charcoal burners; the 'low entertainers' such as jugglers, story-tellers, shout-singers, players of ox-ribs, and whistlers; and merchants.

## Thrall

Thralls are the lowest class of person, mere slaves without any legal status. They are property, not people, as if an alynx, cow, or horse. Among free Heortlings the status is falling out of practice, especially to emphasize their love of freedom and to differentiate them from the slave-owning Lunars. Most thralls are debt slaves or other criminals, or occasionally recalcitrant war prisoners. Traditionally, the children of thralls are not slaves, and are adopted into the clan that owns the mother. Some clans keep thralls, especially those that follow the Lunar way. The Sambari run a thriving business selling slaves to the Lunars. Among other clans, opinions on the keeping of thralls vary. Some accept that other clans keep thralls without feeling that they have to, and others abhor the practice, especially since the Lunars have come and made the practice so widespread.

Thralls may not bear weapons or ride horses. Anyone who gives a thrall a weapon or allows him to ride a horse has set him free, and must pay his master the body price of a carl (25 cows). A man that gives his own thrall weapons is generous indeed!

Thralls are usually body, house, field, or camp slaves. Extraordinary thralls owned by wealthy masters might be made tutors, cooks (though the fear that a thrall might poison her master keeps most thralls out of the kitchen), or messengers.

## Blessed Animals

The gods bless certain animals, so that they are fully intelligent, or especially fertile, or special in other ways. They have the body price of a carl or cottar, depending on the clan and the exact form the blessing takes.



## Wergild and Fines

*This is the honor price of true men, if they are slain, except in battle, or if they are maimed that they cannot be sewn true. Let these be the peace-gifts, fitting compensation to their blood.*

A man's wergild (his "man price") tells how much his life is worth under Heortling law. When a Heortling evaluates a person not of his clan, his calculations always include probable wergild.

When wergild is collected, all of the clan pays. The amount each family pays depends on its proximity to the offender, so that his bloodline pays more than do his affinal kin. When bloodlines pay a share of wergild, such must come out of their own property, not the clan's: their own herd of cattle, not the clan's. The clan itself pays a portion of the wergild from the clan herd, but the chieftain decides where these cattle come from. He can thus further punish individual bloodlines by pulling the clan's portion of the wergild from their holdings.

The intent of wergild is to prevent feuding. If a clan accepts wergild, it means that they agree that not to start or continue a feud. Unfortunately, some wealthy (and therefore powerful) individuals are able to flaunt their wealth by killing whom they want and paying wergild. Although it is a clan decision whether to accept wergild, they are less likely to refuse it when facing an enemy they know they cannot defeat.

Wergild is only one form of payment that a clan or bloodline may have to make. Killing a cow is not the same as killing a person, but it still subjects



### Body Fines



- If the wound be not serious, there is no need for justice.
- If a high priestess be slain in her words, or a chieftain in his rites, a noble, a serdrodosi in her fits, a white woman, a kolating in his leaps, a juror in her pledging, or a champion by cowardice, one hundred cows be the price, or outlawry, or both; if they be maimed, then fifty cows. And ten cows to the gods in either case, and two white bulls for cleansing.
- If a thane be slain, or a hearthmistress, or one of the Ring, then fifty cows be the price, and five hands of seasons outlawry, or both; if he be maimed, then twice five hands of cows. And five fine cows to the gods in either case, and a pair of gelded horses for cleansing.
- If a carl be slain, or any godi, or the head of a bloodline, or a bride before her rites, then twenty-five cows be the price, and three hands of seasons outlawry if the act be planned; if he be maimed, then ten cows.
- If a cottar be slain, or a stickpicker or other beggar, then ten cows.
- If a guest of the stead be killed or maimed, then the price of the host.
- If an alynx, a bull or cow, a ram or ewe, a stallion or mare, or a boar or sow be slain, that was blessed by the gods, then a cottar's or a carl's price, as the casting stones say.
- If an alynx queen be struck down, or interfered with that she lose her kits, then two cows.
- There be no price for the death of a stranger, or an outlaw, or a trickster outside the bond, for there is no honor without honor, and no justice without kin. . . .

the offender and his bloodline to punishment. As with wergild, this punishment is calculated in cattle or, for lesser crimes, sheep. The fines given in *Thunder Rebels* are only samplings of Heortling law and custom.

Wergild applies when a person kills a member of a different clan. Wergild never applies when one member of a clan kills another, for how can a clan collect against itself? Such murder is kinstrife, and is beyond the scope of Heortling law and custom. No amount of payment or restitution can cover such a crime, which is akin to a man cutting off his own arm. No healing can comfort the hurt or repair the damage, which severs kin from kin. The perpetrator is always outlawed.

## Outlawry and Death

*"Your wergild determines your worth. To comfort me in exile, Kardamos the lawspeaker sang to me the statutes of noble living, of virtue, of the strong peace. These are the binds that free, the laws that make us strong, stronger than those who do not know Heort's Gifting.*

*These are the staves he gave me, the words he chanted. Listen well and understand, young son. My exile is honorable, for no moot condemned me, no godi cursed me, no chieftain broke my spear before the courts. We breathe the freedom wind, and when the wind changes, we shall return. Let the Red Ones know and be much afraid: their ways are not our ways, and the vengeance of true men is a terrible thing."*

Some crimes are so dangerous to society that they recognize the individual as deserving of special punishment. A person who uses evil magic, lies in a

### What is a Cow?

*Cattle are the proper geld, for in cattle the laws are measured.*

Any Heortling over the age of seven knows that a "cow" is a milk cow that has successfully given birth to at least two calves. Although the laws specify payment in cattle, people commonly accept other things of equivalent value, especially when they know the other party does not have the cows to give. This is never required, however, and a plaintiff may demand actual cows. He might do this because he gains status from owning cows, or simply so he has an excuse to not accept wergild.

Certain items are worth more than a single cow, such as a trained ox being worth 1 1/2 cows and a horse being worth 4 cows. The exact ratio of trade goods to cattle varies depending on craftsmanship, materials, and scarcity. Each clan has their own base rates, since they are often used as part of the clan's taxes. The exact value of these items when used to satisfy wergild must be agreed-upon in the peace-making. The following equivalencies are average for most Sartarite clans:

1 milk cow = 20 bushels of barley = 5 hogs = 7 ewes = 20 Lunars.

Taxes paid to a tribe are set when the clan joins. They are usually in cows, but often include other things based on the clan's agreement with its fellows, including sheep, grain, horses, defense, and even magic.

moot or hearing, or denies aid to their kin disrupts Heortling society in a way that mere compensation cannot heal. They require that society cast the offender out. Their kin must still pay the cost of their actions.

Outlaws are outside Heortling society and the law. They may be killed with no *werild*, and may not even call upon Orlanth. Bloodlines generally mourn outlaws as those already dead, for their kinship is severed. Those outlawed by a clan have no recourse, although they may support another clan's chieftain as a landless warrior. Outlawry by a tribe is a political act. The offender's clan often resists it, and it does not carry the automatic loss of Orlanth's support that comes when a clan outlaws one of its members.

Lesser outlawry, also called banishment, is a temporary status. The banished must leave their clans' lands and stay away for a specific length of time, after which they can return without loss of honor, status, or membership. While banished, they are treated as outlaws if they return to the *tula*.

Some crimes are so heinous to the Heortlings that they are beyond justice, beyond compensation, beyond even outlawry. They deserve death, and no true Heortling shirks from wielding a swift blade. However, no crime excuses another crime, and members of a clan or bloodline will never kill their own kin, even in such circumstances. Outlawry is the preferred punishment, for it subjects the offender to Orlanth's justice, without the protection of family.

### Capital Crimes

— from *Andrin's Words*

In shame I pronounce their crimes, for they sicken my breath as I speak:

To murder in secret as a coward or an ogre; to murder a king in his sevens; to steal the breath of another that they die, or to curse in secret and to hide one's face, or to slay a guest in your house; to act as a broo with woman, man, child, or beast; to speak that which is holy to those who are not; to betray or desecrate the true lands, the holy places, their buildings, or their temples; to kill or eat the flesh of a consecrated beast; to befoul oneself in consorting with the Predark; to breed disease; to deny the clan of one's birth outside the bounds of a lawful god.

## Combat and Warfare

*Here is what makes a man: a spear, a hard hat, and courage to fight for his family.*

Heortling freemen must attend musters of the *fyrð*, or clan militia. In a typical clan, about half of the male population is available for the common defense; this amounts to about 20% of the total population, including the few women warriors. In the case of local disasters, all able-bodied men and women will turn out to fight, but such emergencies are uncommon. Note that the *fyrð* never leaves the *tula*, since its purpose is defense, not raiding or conquest.

The actual warriors of the clan are fewer, and are the ones most likely to be well trained and well equipped. These professional warriors include the

chieftain, his weaponthanes, and men who are trying to make a name for themselves. They fight duels with opposing champions, and use their magic to disrupt the enemy's battle line. Most warriors know how to hurl javelins, axes, or other weapons, and much of any fight consists of running missile battles between the opposing sides.

Battles between clans usually have four stages: the **Champion's Battle**, the **Warriors' Battle**, the **Fyrd's Battle**, and **Pursuit**. The first clash is between the Champions, who step out to challenge the other side to single combat. The opposing chieftain, his champion, or a rash man hoping to make a name for himself answers the challenge. A clan that fails to send forth a champion loses heart and suffers in following phases. This loss of morale is "Orlanth's Scorn," and it makes men feel afraid. If the two clans are not truly serious about the battle, the Champion's Battle may resolve the entire dispute, with the defeated champion's clan acknowledging defeat.

If the Champion's Battle does not resolve the conflict, then the warriors of the two clans engage in a series of running battles. The object of this phase is to drive the opposing warriors back on their *fyrd*. The Warriors Battle often has an aerial component as well, with flying warriors and the occasional wind daimon skirmishing against each other. The *fyrd* forms a shieldwall behind the warriors, for it is their job to provide a safe haven for the warriors. They remain out of the way during much of the fighting, and let the warriors do their job. As one side gains the upper hand, the warriors of the other side retreats to its *fyrd*, forming up as the shieldwall's front line.

The *fyrd* is less mobile than are the warriors. The transition between the Warrior's Battle and the *Fyrd's Battle* sees the mobile warriors peppering the *fyrd* with javelins, axes, wind blasts, and thunderstones while their own *fyrd* moves into position. The defending *fyrd* often breaks during this transition, leading directly to the Pursuit.

If the defending *fyrd* does not break, the *Fyrd's Battle* begins. It continues until one or the other side surrenders or, more likely, flees the field. The victor engages in the Pursuit, cutting down their foes easily from behind. Most casualties to the loser occur at this phase. Nightfall usually ends this pursuit.

Ambushes are normal practice for Heortlings. The rugged hills and thick woods of their native land are conducive to such tactics. Clans know their *tula* intimately, and always have an advantage there. The weaponthanes know exactly where to spring an ambush, and can easily adapt their tactics to any similar terrain, whether they are raiding, invading, or fleeing.

Combat between individuals is uncommon among the Heortlings, whose legal procedures discourage such fighting. As Orlanth said, however, "violence is always an option." When other legal remedies have been exhausted in a dispute between clans, a fight between the clans (or their champions) is an accepted part of the legal system. Individual combat between members of a clan is unacceptable, since any between relatives is kinstrife.



*A typical fyrdman with his minimal equipment looks much like this. This man is a farmer, but it is impossible to guess how many actual battles he may have been in during these rough times.*

## † Your Enemies †

Our way of fighting is useful against all our enemies, though we have to modify it for each of them.

Against fast opponents, we fight the *fyrð* Battle only. This includes the Grazelanders, the Praxians, Sir Ethilrist's demons, and the Lunar cavalry. Our archers shoot to injure the riding beasts, because a rider cannot fight well on foot. Our warriors who can fly harass the enemy from the air — no horseman can fly!

Against slow but implacable enemies such as the Yelmalions, Lunar spearmen, or Delecti's revenants, we use our speed. Again, we have the advantage in the air, and can target officers with lightning bolts or well-flung javelins. Beware of enemies with Earth magic, however, as they can ground the surest flier.

Uz raiders always attack at night, so trust the senses of your alynx. They attack with hordes of screaming trollkin, but Elmal and Vinga have magic to make the fearful trollkin flee. There are never as many real trolls as we have warriors, so we can usually win in the Warrior's Battle. The Uz sometimes honor the Champion's Battle, so send the Elmali and Vingans against their champions. Unless they send out a Death Lord, for those fanatics have no honor.

Aldryami rarely leave their forests, so are easily avoided. We have no great kingdoms of Aldryami near us, not like in the God's Age. Their warriors are great archers, but Orlanth's lightning spear burns them, and so they fear us.

Esrolians field large armies, but are poor warriors. We field the *fyrð* against them, and harass them with the Warrior's Battle. Most often, the men flee the field after only a few are killed. The ones to watch out for are the women, who wield the power of Babeester Gor. Against them we send our own women warriors, for the Babeester magic works best against men.

Aeolians have heavy cavalry, against which we fight the Champion's and Warrior's Battles. Their cavalry is slow because of the armor they wear, and we can outrun them easily. Sculless sorcerers support them, so we always use our magic and weaponthanes to kill the sorcerers first. The Aeolians fear the hills because of ambushes, so they stay out on the plains, where we can see them and use our movement magic to best effect.

The monsters of the Predark are the most difficult to face, for you cannot say that a Predark can or cannot do anything. There was the plague of flying scorpion things five years ago, the burrowing brood that we defeated only by the barest of margins, the leaping gorp, and the walking hands, all in living memory. Our defense against the Predark falls on Urox and the other Chaos fighters. They have special magic that allows a man to stand and fight when he would run gibbering in fear. This is the reason we tolerate the Uroxi — they may be uncouth and dangerous, but they are more dangerous to Chaos than to us.

The Lunars are our most powerful enemy, for they combine all types of warriors— spearmen and archers, heavy and light cavalry, and lots of magicians. Each requires a different battle to face, and you can't fight all your battles at the same time. If one Lunar unit is by itself we can defeat it easily, but together they can defeat our entire clan. The Lunar peltasts are lightly armed, and can follow us across any terrain. They are especially dangerous because they are almost as fast as us. Our warriors usually lead them off into the woods where we can spring an ambush.



## Heortling Lands

The Heortlings used to occupy a much larger region than they do now. Here we discuss those lands currently occupied by the good peoples of the Heortlings who have not betrayed their god and goddess.

The lands can be divided into two larger parts called Sartar, in the north, and Heortland, in the south. Both these names come from regions ruled by High Kings, and are commonly called kingdoms. The current ruler of Sartar is not a High King. Temertain is a stupid man, a puppet of the Lunar Empire hardly acknowledged even as king by many. King Broyan rules Heortland. The Lunar Empire has forced this proud and upright man to take refuge in the great stronghold of Whitewall.

## Kerofinela

Kerofinela is the region of the great mountain Kero Fin; outsiders call it Dragon Pass. It is a rich and magical land of forests and marshes, of grassy, upland meadows and rocky, storm-blessed peaks. It includes the land of Sartar, hard-won home of the Heortling Orlanthi.

**Kerofinela is a holy and sacred land**, bursting with life and fierce spiritual energies, home to the Storm Tribe since before the world was set. Well-watered it is, pleasant to the eye, and generous in its bounty. Its three great rivers draw together and flow to the south, and other streams dive beneath the earth, some falling all the way to the underworld. Sky-reaching it is, and its rocky uplands hide many secrets, home to sleeping dragons and tribes of powerful entities. Unbroken its forests are, stretching vast and secretive, untracked and hiding many things, so thick that even Elmal's fiery eye cannot penetrate the gloom.

**Kerofinela is a magical land**, defying those who say, "It must be so" or, "Beyond this hill as the hill before". Only the godar and the skalds full-know the secrets of its mighty storms, its roving hills, its enveloping mists and colored snows. The earth is restless here, and shakes itself in anger without warning. Five storms each proclaim their mastery, bringing in their allotted turn fire and darkness, rain and harvest, bright sunlight and cleansing wind.

**Kerofinela is a blessed land**, whose many holy places incarnate wonder and treacherous beauty, where meadow nymphs distract the young from their herding and gods of the air tribe chant their silence and storm across the rocky uplands.

**Kerofinela is a wind-gifted land**, where the blessing winds of Ohorlanth bring promise and gentle rain, where the great hurricane gales of Orlanth rage in furious battle against the ice demons of Darkness, and where the Kolat winds call the mighty to the mysteries of the Other Side.

**Kerofinela is an ancient land, filled with reminders of the past.** The ruins of ancient empires lie about – mostly worn and battered from titanic battles before and after the Dawn. The ancestors built some: ancient hill forts and guardian stones. These have been restored and are used again by the clans. Some ruins still shelter evil: shattered wrecks of temples, fields of melted stones that once were armies, twisted gateways of the Predark.

The tribes share their land with Elder Races who have long sheltered here: Uz, hiding in the shadows; beast folk, who worship at the Wild Temple; dragons and their enigmatic kin; durulz and other Little

People, with their tragic hidden plans; Aldryami in the shrinking remnants of their elder woods; and many lesser-known races and beings.

The Predark is also here, vile Chaos. In the Storm Age, its hordes raged across the land tearing the bastions of order down to the barest roots of being. The mountains of Sartar were formed in the great battles of the gods against the void army. From the Chaos nests of Ginijji and from a hundred other places the Predark still ventures forth in ever-changing forms, some gross, some subtle, all seeking to pervert and destroy.

**Kerofinela is a Heortling land.** The realm to the south and east of the Mother of Mountains is Sartar, a kingdom of great tribes. They are a rural people living in clans, herding sheep and cattle, and reaping the rich bounty of the earth.

The tribes, though cut to different patterns, are of the same wool. Their traditions, organization, and sacred stories may vary, but their worship of Orlanth, Lord of Middle Air, and his wife Ernalda, Queen of the Broad Earth, unites them.

The Alakoring tribes of Far Point have in recent years made common cause with the tribes of Sartar, but their *wyrd* is once again their own.

**Kerofinela is a land in chains.** A generation ago, the Lunar Empire conquered Sartar in the name of its Red Goddess. The Lunar Goddess has many names, but the holy folk recognize her as *Shepelkirt* the Blood Moon, false mask of the Predark. She is the ancient enemy returned.

The Lunar victory seems complete. The power and unity of the original Kingdom is no more, though its tribes endure. The ceremonies of the founder are lost: the roads decay and the city walls weaken. Save a puppet prince, the royal line of Sartar is no more, its heroes vanquished and its warbands subdued. Year by year the grip of the Lunar Empire tightens. Some now boast openly that Orlanth Himself is bound, helpless. The great storms themselves seem to be dying, and the Sacred Time ceremonies weaken and fail.

So the land of Sartar waits, groaning in travail. Surely a hero will arise to unite the clans and drive the invader from the land. Surely the champions of the clans will rise to defend the ancient ways. Surely the Kingdom will be whole again, and purified of its taint. Surely the Son of Sartar will come and make the Freedom Wind blow through the land.

## Dragon Pass

Dragon Pass is a wide highland break in the tall Rockwood Mountain chain. The Rockwoods continue on to the east and west, and are steep and rugged, impassable to human travel throughout their length. Their highest crests carry snow year round. These features make the Dragon Pass area the only place to cross for five hundred miles in either direction.

Dragon Pass is generally hilly, drained by two major river complexes. Dragonspine Ridge is a series of hills that marks the continental divide across Dragon Pass. It stretches from the Skyreach Range to Kero Fin, then on through the Bush Range. In the north the Oslir River drains Tarsh, a land occupied now by lackeys and soldiers of the vile Lunar Empire. The modern Heortling lands are south of the Dragonspine Ridge. They are

drained by the Creekstream River, which starts at Skyfall Lake. With its tributaries, it drains the eastern side of Dragon Pass.

Ginijji is a festering chaotic land also called Snake-pipe Hollow. This area dropped to its current height in the God Wars. Monsters spewed out of deep caves, threatening everyone, and so Maran Gor commanded the land to drop away, thus containing them in its steep-sided hollow. The only exit faces away from good Heortling lands, for the Chaos things are still there, barely contained. The River runs down its center, flowing from Skyfall Lake near the Hollow's northern end.

Far Point is occupied by a confederation of peoples called the Aldachurings, after its principal city of Alda-chur. It is hilly and cut by minor rivers and streams that flow into the River. It stands upon a plateau that is sharply defined in the north and the west, but which fades away into broken hills to the east and the flat lands of Donalf to the south. The Aldachurings were taken over by a traitorous, shallow, and short-thinking king named Harvar Ironfist. Harvar has gleefully joined with Tarsh and the Lunar Empire, and has even introduced foreign gods to his people.

West of Far Point is Dwarf Run, a wide, steep-sided valley through which The River flows. A Mostali stronghold called Dwarf Mine sits in this valley. No people live here because of the Chaos monsters that sometimes flow out of Ginijji, and also because the Dwarf demigod has forbidden it. Only merchants travel through the Run, going from Alda-chur to the farther areas of Tarsh. Because of this, the valley is sometimes called Trader's Valley or the Merchant's Way. West of Dwarf Run is the Bush Range, a land claimed by both Sartar and Tarsh, but ruled by neither.

South of Far Point lie the Donalf Flats. This region has few hills, and is thus a rich farming land, now occupied solely by the Dinacoli Tribe. South of the Donalf Flats is Stagland, now held by the Lunar Empire, stolen by them from the now-extinct Maboder Tribe. The Creek and its tributaries drain the Flats. The Torkani and the semi-human Telmori occupy the hills to the east; dragonewts live in the west.

The Quivin Mountains are a series of rugged ridges that surround the central peak of the same name. Quivin is the heart of Sartar, and contains many tribes who have lived there since the resettlement several centuries ago. Boldhome, the capital of Sartar, sits in a valley high in the mountains. The tribes of the Quivin Mountains joined into City Rings, alliances formed by High King Sartar. The northern tribes live around Jonstown, the eastern around Swenstown, and the southern around Wilmskirk. The western tribes, including the duck-like durulz, live around Duck Point, a city without a confederation. The Stream and its tributaries drain the western half of the Quivin Hills, and minor, seasonal rivers drain the eastern and flow into the desolate land of Prax.

East of the Quivin Hills is the fetid Upland Marsh, a hideous area inhabited by the terrible undead sorcerer Delecti. No people enter the Marsh



## The Triumph of the Moon



A generation has passed since the soldiers of the Red Moon occupied Sartar. Although many clans seek to maintain their worship of Orlanth and the traditions of their ancestors, there are many Sartarites who have betrayed their gods and embraced the Lunar way.

Brave heroes rose up against the Lunars during the Righteous Wind Uprising, Starbrow's Rebellion, the Season of Five Storms, and the Firebull Moot. The Lunars have defeated all of them with bloodshed, bribery, treachery, and threats. Except for the puppet prince, Temertain, those of Sartar's royal blood are no more, and the heroes who openly opposed the Lunars are dead or exiled.

So deep is the Lunar presence and treachery that Sartar is a battleground now of tribe against tribe, clan against clan, and even sister against brother. This is the true triumph of the Lunars.



Map: Sartar

unless escorted by the aquatic durulz, who hate Delecti with a deep and abiding passion.

All of the Heortling lands above used to be part of the Kingdom of Sartar. Now only the tribes around the Quivin Mountains are in the kingdom.

The steep Storm Mountain chain runs south from Quivin Mountain. It forms the border between Kethaela (the lands west of the mountains) and Prax (to the east). Stormwalk Mountain is part of this chain, which continues south past it to the sea. Sambari Pass, just south of the Quivin Mountains, is the best route across these mountains.

The Amber Fields are a wide and pleasant vale held by the people of the Sun Dome Temple, who worship the foreign god Yelmalió. They received this territory a century ago by High King Tarkalor after they helped him to conquer the darkness-tainted Kitori Tribe. East of the Fields is the Beast Valley, inhabited by inhuman beastfolk who have never been part of the Heortling people or their kingdoms.

The Kitori Tribe occupies the Troll Forest, though they once had wider lands. They are a vile people who hold blasphemous congress with Uz. They worship gods of the underworld, and their Uz allies taint the good gods of the Orlanthi with false worship. The Kitori now hide in their woods, and rarely venture forth except to pillage and to take slaves. Everyone hates them.

The King's Road goes from Wilmskirk to Whitewall, linking Heortland and Sartar. A series of forts set up by High King Tarkalor protect caravans from Kitori raiders. They are now held by Baron Samuel, a mercenary rewarded by the Lunar Empire for his service against the Heortlings.

## Heortland

Heortland lies west of the Storm Mountains. As its name implies, this used to be entirely Heortling land. Heortland is a high plateau, averaging about 1000 feet above sea level, much lower than Dragon Pass. The cliffs are mostly white in color, sometimes streaked by red or black strata. To the west of Heortland is the Choralinthor Bay, to the south are the Leftarm Islands of God Forgot. Five rivers chop Heortland into ancient tribal areas established twelve hundred years ago by the hero Hendreik. Heortland is warmer than Dragon Pass, with longer growing seasons and much less snow.

Volsaxar is first, inhabited by the Volsaxings. It includes the lands of the Marzeel Valley, a fierce, rushing river that cannot be navigated, which falls into the Choralinthor Bay near the city of Karse. King Broyan came from this land, and was its High King until the Lunars crushed its tribes.

Karhend is the northernmost area of the Heortland Plateau. It is bordered by the Marzeel River in the north and the Syphon River in the south. Jansholm is a fortified island on the Solthi River that has grown to become the capital city of this region. It was the territory of the Jondalar Tribe

before being conquered by Rikard Tigerheart, a foreign mercenary. The Jondalings still worship Orlanth, although their leaders do not.

The Syphon is an evil river. It flows backward from Choralinthor Bay uphill into the area called the Print, a place where the elder god Larnste stamped all the hills flat to crush a Chaos monster. The monster bit him, and his tainted blood burned a deep hole all the way to the Underworld, into which the Syphon River flows. The Print is a land of monsters ruled by the Scorpion Queen of Jab, set off from normal lands by a swath of petrified forest. Backford, a fortified city, is the safest crossing of the Syphon.

Gardufar is the next region of Heortland, and includes the lands between the Syphon and Minthos Rivers. Its largest city is Durengard, on the banks of the Bullflood River that flows from Stormwalk Mountain itself. The tribe here was the Hurlant before Rikard Tigerheart conquered it.

Esvular is the southernmost region of Heortland. The tribe there used to be called the Esvularings, but three hundred years ago King Andrin, whom Heortlings call "the zombie king," began to convert them to the Western ways that they had resisted for centuries. They built the city called Mount Passant to be their capital; the old capital, Bensval, was razed, and a new bridge built at Duchamp. The people here have drifted so far from being Heortlings that their main god is Saint Aeolus, and so they are called the Aeolings. Rikard Tigerheart has taken over all of southern Heortland. He has crowned himself King and renamed the plateau New Malkonwal, after a mythical city of his homeland.

## Surrounding Lands and Peoples

The Heortlings sit in the center of a great crossroads. Enemies beset them on all sides.

The worst enemy comes from Tarsh, just north of Kerofinela. It used to be a Heortling land, but Yelm has repeatedly sent gods and goddesses to conquer and seize it. Orlanth has always cast them back or driven them out and resettled their lands with decent humans. The last enemy to come is the Red Goddess, the vile bleeding moon of the northern sky. Hon-eel the Whore conquered the land with treachery and evil magic, and enslaved the good folk of Tarsh. Now the Evil Empire even forces them to worship Chaos.

Prax is a desolate land without normal weather. Drought is frequent and sandstorms are common, filled with hostile spirits. Savage, semi-human nomads live there, who ride on wild animals like bison, antelopes, and zebras. They worship spirits, do not use metal or cloth, and love to raid and plunder the Heortlings. The only good people there are the Poljoni, a semi-nomadic tribe that worships Orlanth and continually fights against the Praxians. Nobody sensible travels into Prax.

Maniria is far away, across the Choralinthor Bay. It includes three areas: Esrolia, Caladraland, and Wenelia. The Esrolians used to be Heortlings, but

ages ago they cast out Orlanth, and now worship only the Earth Family. Men are subservient to women there, and though they worship many gods, all are minor and petty. Caladraland is a jungle that surrounds the huge volcano called the Vent. It formed when Vestkarthen struck deep into Esrola's flesh. Maran defended her weaker sister. She snapped the spear, then from the wound showered Vestkarthen with molten rock that imprisoned him inside the volcano. He now serves her. Wenelia is so far away that they think Orlanth is a boar, and it has no impact today in Kerofinela.

The Uz are a huge, vicious, voracious race of monsters. Several hordes live in Dagori Inkarth, an inhospitable land to the east of the Far Point region. They hate humans, and ambush anyone who ventures into their land. They have tried to drive humans out of Kerofinela many times, but they always fail, for they lurk in the night and are afraid of the daylight. Nonetheless, they still raid, and no one trusts them. Humans are fortunate that Chaos cursed them long ago to bear stunted things called trollkin instead of healthy trolls. Trollkin are like normal Uz, but are weak, stupid, and cowardly.

Dragonewts are another race of monsters, like a cross between people and dragons. Several types live in Dragon Pass. They generally ignore humans, and prefer to be left alone. They have a large "city" called the Dragon's Eye, which dominates the western area of the Donalf Flats; they have a number of smaller settlements as well, including one in the Quivin Mountains. Some dragonewts ride huge flightless birds that can bite a man's head off. Humans cannot communicate with dragonewts. They often act irra-

**① Lunar Warriors (Facing Page) ①**

*These three are particularly dangerous to us. Each represents a regiment stationed in Sartar to plague the countryside and bring the tribes under control.*

*In front, in the feathers, is a Tholmite. Her god is Tholm, the foreign hawk who is Tarena's enemy. The Tholmites have light armor and are quick on their feet. They can leap into the air, and with small flaps of their wings travel a hundred yards with one jump. Never mounted, the Tholmites are adroit against cavalry and can yank horsemen to the ground with their hooked spears.*

*On the left is a Dogeater. They are expert javelineers, but are not afraid to engage in close combat with their hooked weapons. They worship a sakkar god — the saber toothed cat — and the Shepelkirt.*

*The last is a slinger. They are unskilled in face to face combat, and always run away, even if only confronted by a fyrd. But they hurl rocks with terrible accuracy, much farther than any man can throw a javelin. Worse, they sometimes use magic rocks that cause terrible damage when they strike. We must stay out of range, and use our own thunderstones to kill them from a distance.*





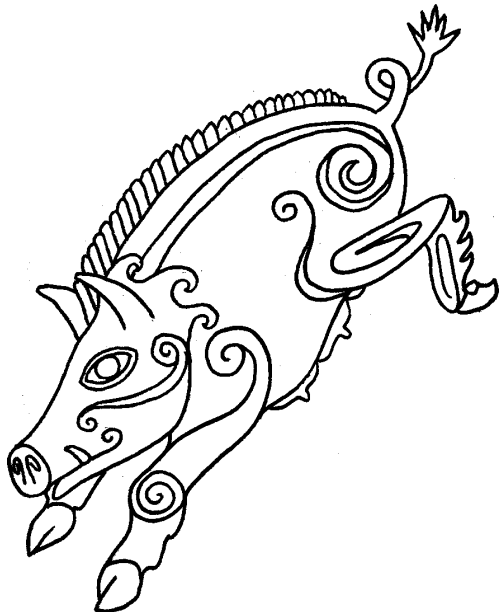
tionally, or perhaps due to some strange inhuman urge, and often do strange things. They have no fear even when wounded, and so must be killed if they attack.

Humans rarely see Aldryami. They are wooden people, sometimes called elves, who have leaves growing on them. Once many lived in Kerofinela. The Uz killed most, and the Heortlings burned out the rest. Many types exist, some large and some small, but all are shy outside their woods and deadly inside them.

The Grazelanders live in the western part of Kerofinela. They are descended from horses (or maybe centaurs) cursed to be people, and so they hate the Heortlings. Nonetheless, their Feathered Horse Queen holds the secret of sovereignty to Kerofinela, and anyone who wishes to be the High King must marry her. They have nations of Heortling slaves that they lord over, and they wish to enslave the rest. They raid often, and usually escape thanks to their supernaturally swift steeds.

Ethilrist is a demigod mercenary who lives on the western side of Dragon Pass. He is a hard man who worships a hard god. His people are a race that came up from the Underworld. They live in a shadowy land that the Heortlings wisely avoid.

The beastfolk are a collection of inhumans that live in Beast Valley. All are part human, but some are part horse, others part goat, others part lion or fox. They are only semi-intelligent, and delight in making trouble for their neighbors. Ancient curses and blessings protect their land so that no one can farm there. They can summon their ancient hero, Ironhoof, who takes the form of a huge centaur.





# The Storm Tribe



## *The Religion of the Heortlings*

*The mythical images of Orlanth's household at the eye of the storm, with his good wife Ernalda and his children and servants, shows the idealized Orlanthi household.*

*Mahome sits at the fire pit stirring the coals, making small sparks fly skyward.*

*Voria stands behind her stern father, ready to serve her dew of youth to him or his guest.*

*Heler, the pure holy man, has a seat on the lower side, with loyal Elmal on the right.*

*Orlanth's sons are each in their place: Durev the householder, dirty from the fields;*

*Chorlanth with his gray brows; Destor standing guard at the west door.*

The Religion of Orlanth and Ernalda is a traditional, oral religion that unites all Orlanthi. It teaches that deities of many sizes and types are what make the world alive and good to be in. Children become men and women when they initiate to the deity that has chosen them. Everyone participates in a series of regular, public celebrations throughout the year. Men and women act and worship differently, each gender living in harmony with their god or goddess. Most men worship Orlanth through one of his many sons, and most women worship Ernalda through one of her many daughters and handmaidens. Worshipers petition the gods for aid and advice using appropriate rituals. The gods punish worshippers who do not act as they should. When worshippers die, their souls travel to the God World to join Orlanth and Ernalda in the afterlife.

Many other friendly gods and goddesses exist. There is a sun god, a rain god, and even a goddess of still air. Special deities give the power of language, healing, and secret knowledge. Local rivers and mountains also have their own deities. Some people are chosen by minor deities. In this manner, the other gods obtain worshippers, who provide the specialists for many necessary but unusual tasks. Heortlings consider these worshippers eccentric, strange, or dangerous, and normal people are curious, uncomfortable, or even frightened around them. Nonetheless, many find devout worshippers. There are deities with a place for pacifists (Chalana Arroy), for psychopaths (Urox, Babeester Gor, Humakt), for those with wanderlust (Issaries), and for those who would waste their lives as librarians (Lhankor Mhy). Even men who do women's work and women who do men's work have their own deities (Nandan and Vinga).

The Heortlings have always regarded obedience to authority as optional. It may be a good thing some or even all of the time, but ultimately people follow leaders out of choice, not obligation. The first rule of Heortling life, laid down by Umath, is: "No one can make you do anything." Orlanth and his descendants later added laws to Umath's Law, but they did not replace it. As a divine edict, it is as relevant in religious practice as in anything else. The clan priest may know more about the gods than the average Heortling farmer. However, the farmer has direct personal experience of the divine, starting with his initiation ceremony, when the clan elders took him to the Other Side and showed him the divine truths of Orlanth and Ernalda.

## Becoming People

All Heortlings undergo an initiation rite conducted by their clan elders. This rite takes the person from being a child to being an adult, with full benefits and responsibilities in the society. The entire process takes at least two years. It combines social and religious elements, and progresses from initiation as an adult and communal worshipper of Orlanth and Ernalda to initiation or devotion to a specific deity. Both rituals involve trips to the God Plane. Although everyone undergoes these rites, as with any trip to the Other Side they can be dangerous. It is possible (though unusual) for children or even elders to die or be lost during the initiation process.

## Adulthood Rites

The Heortling Rites come first, which make children into adults, individual and recognized. Heort and his wife Ivarne taught these rites to everyone, and all Heortling clans use them today. Before their initiation, children are called “Not Adults.” They do not have full rights or responsibilities, are forbidden certain things (such as having sex or learning magic), and observe worship of the pantheon without any understanding of the secrets. During the adulthood rites, boys and girls both discover their place in a world of supernatural power, their expectations as members of a community, the consequences of failure, and the rewards of success.

The adulthood rites are segregated by gender. Girls are initiated after they begin menstruation. Their rites last about two weeks, and are held every year. Boys are initiated sometime after they turn fourteen. A clan usually conducts the rites only about once every five years, so boys may be as old as nineteen before they become men. Afterwards, the new man or woman is an adult of the clan. He or she may wed, own cattle, and speak at clan moots.

After the Heortling Rites, the former children are “New Adults” for at least two years while they discover which deity has chosen them. The New Adults are full members of the religion. They receive roles in the rituals (usually simply being one of the crowd of Thunder Brothers or Weaver Women), and must shoulder their appropriate burdens in society. Wergild is fixed by the family’s status (cottar or carl for most people). In game terms, the New Adult is a communal worshipper of the entire Orlanth Pantheon. They do not learn any specific magic until they actually become initiates of Orlanth, Ernalda, or another deity.

When the Heortling Rites end, each New Adult names the deity that they think (or hope) has chosen them. Occasionally, this will be obvious to them and even to others. Most people choose a subcult of Orlanth or Ernalda. The New Adults receive instruction on worship during the next year. At the end of the first year the groups meet again, and this time the elders assign a deity for each New Adult to learn about for a year. This is usually a subcult of Orlanth or Ernalda, as appropriate to the New Adult’s occupation.

At the end of the second year, the New Adults may choose to initiate to a god, at which point they become full adults. If they do not qualify yet, they may continue to study and prepare for their initiation. Most people simply initiate to Orlanth or Ernalda at this time, for they are the deities that choose almost all people. Sometimes a person will not yet know which deity has chosen them. Such individuals are often those chosen by one of the

### Sacred Breath

Your breath is sacred! You have many breaths and winds within you: the first came to your father before you were conceived, and a second to your mother as she carried you in her womb. They may have come from an ancestor or from a god, from a powerful animal or even from a place.

The breath of your *wyter* and *tula* is part of you! When you were eight days old your parents presented you to the clan, and they set a name and another breath upon you. Now, if a child cries a great deal, or falls ill, or if a strange mark appears on their skin, then they have received a wrong name and the giver of the third breath is angry.

When you were initiated you breathed a powerful new wind, and that breath — Orlanth's breath! — can only grow in power as you age. Powerful questers can breathe so deep of the god that he fills them, and they may walk as he walks. In love and in hate you may steal part of another's breath — and so your *wyrds* intertwine. If this is so, they will always be in your thoughts, for good or ill. Sometimes a bird or an animal partakes of your breath, and it will grow as you grow, and its *wyrd* will cross yours many times.

Temples, buildings, and natural places have breath! You may share of their power, but by doing so you become bound to them. The breath of a place may sometimes come to you in a form you can understand — as a man, a nymph, or an animal. In Sacred Time, we remake the world, and there our ceremonies give breath to the *tula* and the entire world.

Other breaths become part of you as you grow. Only you can look within and know the names and powers of your many breaths! Or you may glimpse them in your shadow, in reflections in water, or in the polished bronze of a warrior's mirror. And as you grow in the rituals, the breath of the *wyter* grows in you, and when it becomes your own then the power of the entire clan will be part of you as you walk the eternal paths.

A breath may wander free from your body for a time, and wander as a wind in the night. Or it may take different shapes as it manifests to others in dreams and sacred trance. And if a breath is gifted to you by a divine power, then calling its name may bring it to your side.

Some seek to number the breaths a man may hold, but this is like trying to number the ripples on a mountain lake. They say a Colymar has thirteen breaths, and a Maboder only three. The Lismelder name seven, but that is as high as they can count! It is easy to reap a poor field, but this we know: if a breath departs or is stolen, you will suffer deeply; if two depart you will sicken; and if three are torn you will die.

All things have breath. That is why sacrifice works, for the power of an object's breath is released in sacrifice. Sacrificial goods must be broken, or burned, or scraped with a knife, as the laws specify. Holy objects regain their breath over time. If the proper rituals are known, they may be sacrificed again and again.

unusual deities of the pantheon. These people remain New Adults for another year, and again choose a deity to learn about during this time. By the end of the third year, everybody has been selected by a deity. Sometimes the deity is unclear, in which case everyone knows that Orlanth or Ernalda has chosen the New Adult, who then initiates into whichever aspect and subcult is normal for their clan or occupation.

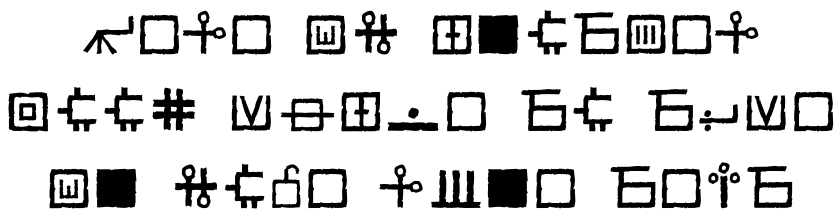
## The Ernalda Initiation

Girls journey to the Other Side and witness the miraculous birth of Ernalda, Esrola, and Maran to Asrelia the Mother. They live as children and learn the secrets of the Green Age, when Maran created the world. They stretch forth their power and freedom as Esrola. They experience life as the Cow Mother, Uralda, or others of the Four-Legged Tribe. They feel the seeds of Esra, the Barley Mother, both when they are thriving and under the Bad Growers. They are drums, they are dancing costumes, they are masks and babies and whatever it requires to understand the secret: the Form is not the Goddess, the Goddess is the keeper of the Form. Esrola is the body, Maran is the action, and Ernalda is the power. Once learned, these things allow the women to worship any member of the Earth Family, which are manifestations of the Goddess' powers to be and to become.

## The Orlanth Initiation

Boys journey to the Other Side and experience Orlanth's terrifying initiation at the hands of the Old Gods who meant him harm. They participate in his early victories, including his struggle against the unjust Emperor, whom he eventually slays when he gains the secret of Death. They live through his reign over the ideal time called the Storm Age. They face the terrors of the Great Darkness, when the vile creatures of Chaos nearly destroyed the world.

Orlanth and six companions, collectively called the Lightbringers, voluntarily die and go to Hell in order to rescue Ernalda, who has been slain by Chaos. They fight and fight until they learn the secret of life: work is never over, life is struggle. As they return to the everyday world, they participate in the Dawn, when Orlanth's efforts revive Ernalda. This ends the Godtime and begins the progress of history, making the realm of mortals and the realm of the gods into two separate places.



## Sacrifices

Sacrifice is the method of communicating with the Otherworld used by theists. It is an action, but it is also a way of life. Heortling worship includes frequent sacrifices. Details vary from deity to deity and from clan to clan, so that no one expects other Orlanthis to agree whether a sacrificed cow should be red, black, or white, or whether boars and rams can be substituted for bulls without provoking the god's disfavor.

Sacrifice involves the ritual destruction of an object to give it to a deity, but it does not consist only of the object. Outsiders (i.e., practitioners of other magic systems) often make the mistake of thinking that the objects given to the gods are the sacrifice. The worshipper is actually the core sacrifice. This experience of sharing the Self with the Deity is the secret methodology of theist religions. Only human beings can generate or experience certain things, including time, attention, and consciousness. In a sacrificial ritual, people give these things to the deities. Thus, although the material goods are necessary to conduct the rite properly, more easily, or more strongly, the key element is the participation of the initiates and devotees. Through this personal sacrifice, the worshippers transfer spiritual essences to their deities, in essence feeding them; and then receive the magic in return.

## Ceremonial Procedure

Orlanthis ceremonies take "all day." The ceremony also includes the preceding night and sometimes the following night as well. For priests, god-talkers, and their assistants, work began several days earlier as they planned the ceremony, prepared the area, and made sure the proper people and goods were present.

The ceremony starts at sunset when the priests and god-talkers start the invocations. Devotees of the primary deity are always present at this time.

### The Three Old Gods

Nearly all Heortling ceremonies begin with the same invocation:

*We call upon Hant, Heort, and Hara;  
And all the good gods and goddesses.*

These three are so old they permeate Heortling society. None receives sacrifices, either annual or for special causes. Nonetheless, they all feed upon the sacrifices in which they are invoked. The three ones are:

- Hant (a diminutive of Hantrafal) is the First Godi. He brought the secrets of sacrifice and prayer to people in the Vingkotling Age.
- Heort is the founder of all customs, laws, and sacrifices, and of anything else that makes an Orlanthis a Heortling.
- Hara is a nickname that means 'Beloved.' It is a title that men use for Ernalda, Esrola, and Voria, and that women use for Orlanthis, Heler, and Elmal.

Anyone else is welcome, and the pious always show up. Prayers and songs begin, for they are pleasing to the deities. Beautiful clothing and resplendent artifacts attract their attention. Dancing starts. Opening sacrifices are made. These rites continue to sunrise.

For everyone else, ceremonies begin at dawn. The worshippers go to the temple where the leaders stand in the center, with the devotees and other participants in a circle around them. The initiates of the other deities stand in one or more circles around the center. The worshippers pray and sing, dance and make morning sacrifices as a continuation of the ceremonies conducted throughout the night.

During the day, the ceremonial leaders incarnate their deities as they reenact the myth that established the rite. For a period during the day, the initiates actually enter the God World. Orlanthi men do so while they fly overhead and Ernaldan women when they are standing still. The ceremony goes on, continued by the other participants, with onlookers never able to tell exactly when the participants are in both worlds at once.

At the end of the ritual, the initiates return from the God World to the temple with songs and invocations similar to those that called the deities in the first place. When everyone is back and the gods have been appeased, the ceremony ends. Finally, the leaders withdraw or enclose the sacred space within the precincts of the temple, and thank and dismiss the deities. The magical appearances disappear, and the ceremony ends.

Afterwards, everyone shares in the bounty of the gods by eating the feast prepared by them. The meat comes from the sacrificial animals. Long ago, Orlanth rejected the meat as the portion for the gods, who are pleased with the burnt bones, skin, and offal.

## **Worship Schedule**

### **Communal Sacrifices**

All Heortlings attend the twenty-eight Holy Days and fourteen Sacred Days, the days of public sacrifice (see *The Annual Sacred Calendar*, pp. 106-117). These holy days celebrate specific gods or goddesses, and thus are always special for their initiates. These ceremonies also include all of the pantheon's main deities, however, and thus the whole clan commonly attends. Ernalda's holy days thus have the men in important parts, although Ernalda's priestesses take the most critical roles. Likewise, on Orlanth holy days the women have supporting parts.

### **Initiate Sacrifices**

Initiates have greater religious time requirements than do communal worshippers (see pg. 65). A significant portion of this time is spent attending worship ceremonies particular to the deity. Although the proportion of time spent in actual worship varies, on average an initiate spends about half of his additional time in sacrifice and worship. Some initiate sacrifices require

significant material goods, though not all. The rest of the time he does mundane work for the temple. Typical activities include acting as temple servants, maintenance of the grounds, guard work, farming in the temple's holding, making items for ceremonial use, and carrying errands to nearby god-talkers and priests. Some special requirements are also included, such as attending the clan *fyr*d for worshippers of Orlanth Adventurous.



## Crone

*Here is Grandmother, awaiting the procession to the sacred rocks. Heortlings revere and respect the elderly because they have lived through so much, remember things no one else knows, and harbor a power gained from knowing so many people who are now dead.*



## Devotee Sacrifices

Devotees have even greater time requirements, such that they cannot support themselves completely solely by their own efforts. In general, the devotee spends most of this additional time in personal activity that concentrates his time and attention upon the deity. Devotional sacrifice requires the least material components and public time.

## Wyter Sacrifices

Heortlings generally belong to several communities congruent with the various social organizations to which they belong. Each community has a minor deity called a *wyter*, which protects the members of the community in return for worship. A Heortling man or woman normally belongs to three communities, and therefore contributes to three *wyters*. Membership in additional communities, such as a household, is of course possible.

- Clan. A kin group worshipping ancestors, organized in their *tula*.
- Cult. A congregation dedicated to a god or goddess, organized around a temple or holy place.
- Band. A group usually organized around practical matters like warfare or sharing plow lands or pasturage.

Worship for *wyters* is generally part of larger social functions. Clan *wyters*, for instance, receive sacrifice at the start of every clan moot, as well as during rites to the ancestors. Temple *wyters* receive collateral worship at every ceremony held within their precincts. A carpenter band's *wyter* receives worship each year at ceremonies to Orstan the Carpenter, regular worship at seasonal rites to protect the carpentry shop, occasional worship every time a new project begins, and personal worship whenever a carpenter uses a tool.

## Special Sacrifices

Special worship is performed to meet specific needs. These vary in grandiosity depending upon the importance of the objective and the deity worshipped. Generally, if the magic will affect the whole clan the ritual takes the standard "all day," but smaller groups making sacrifice usually require less time. The nature of the items sacrificed varies more than the time requirement, however, with smaller rites for specific purposes sometimes requiring more elaborate sacrifices than an outsider might expect. Special sacrifices are made for many reasons, including Divination (see pg. 74) and special requests for Divine Aid (see pg. 78).

## Membership Levels

Orlanth has three primary aspects: Adventurous, the martial and wandering aspect of the god; Allfather, the social and leadership aspect of the god; and Thunderous, the weather and fertility aspect of the god. Special aspects command great power but have little importance to most members of society. Although all clans have at least a few worshippers of each aspect, most

clans have a single aspect of Orlanth that they concentrate on, and this can be any one of the main aspects. (Worshippers of other aspects usually band together at clan or tribal sites.)

Ernalda has four primary aspects: Allmother, the social aspect of the goddess; Healer, the peace aspect of the goddess; Queen, the leadership aspect of the goddess; and Esrola, the Earth Mother of plants and animals. Again, most clans have a single aspect of Ernalda that they favor over others, but all clans have worshippers of each aspect.

Each aspect has several subcults. An initiate focuses their worship by choosing a specific subcult to worship. Within a given clan, it is normal for members to worship any of several subcults of an aspect. For example, worshippers of Orlanth Thunderous normally choose from among the subcults of Daylanus, Hedkoranth, Helamakt, Ohorlanth, and Yavor. A clan may favor one or the other, but usually worships all of them.

Membership in a religion requires that a worshipper support it. This requirement is often abbreviated as a "time commitment," but it includes all of the worshipper's resources, not just his time. Thus, for example, about 30% of an initiate's ability increases or new abilities should be in traits, relationships, and abilities appropriate to their cult. If an initiate receives a substantial amount of money or wealth, people expect that he will give a portion to his cult, to help support the priests. Heroes who fail to meet these broad expectations suffer social stigma and, eventually, divine retribution.

## Communal Worshippers

All Heortling adults are communal worshippers of the Storm Pantheon, even if initiated to a deity. They spend 10% of their time and resources worshipping the deities of the pantheon in a general way. Specifically, they attend the twenty-eight Holy Days shown on The Annual Sacred Calendar (pg. 106) and the fourteen Sacred Days.

Communal worshippers can ask for Divine Aid from gods besides the one they worship. The basic rules for divine aid appear in the Theist Magic chapter of *Hero Wars*. Heortlings can also seek specific benefits by sacrificing to a god.

### Sacrifices and Divine Aid

A Heortling that seeks the specific magic of a god can approach any god-talker or priest of the pantheon. The same procedures apply whether the worshipper is a communal worshipper, initiate, or devotee. The attempt is similar to divine aid, but the worshipper provides sacrifices to the god in an attempt to gain a specific result. It is always easier to simply find a god-talker or priest of the appropriate deity and have them use their specific magic. If such is unavailable, a god-talker can speak to any god.

If the god-talker agrees to help and the god can provide the aid requested, he determines the rites and sacrifices needed. As described in the Advanced

Magic chapter of **Hero Wars**, this requires any victory level in a contest using the god-talker's *Heortling Myths* or other appropriate ability. The petitioner provides the sacrifices (and often a payment for the god-talker).

The god-talker then performs the appropriate ritual, matching his *Pray to [God]* or *Worship Storm Pantheon* ability against a resistance determined by the narrator, usually around 20W. As is normal, the elements of the ritual augment this ability. Additionally, the god-talker may augment with his *Perform Sacrifice* ability or use a hero point to bump the roll.

- Major or Complete Victory: the specific magic is granted.
- Minor or Marginal Victory: the worshipper receives normal divine aid.
- Tie or a Marginal, Minor, or Major Defeat: no effect.
- Complete Defeat: something bad happens to the worshipper, the god-talker, or both.

*☞ The Red Cow clan's lands have been enveloped by heavy fog for several days. The chieftain approaches Odda, a player hero and god-talker of Ernalda the Healer. All of the Orlanth Thunderous worshippers are away, so he wants her to ask Orlanth for a wind to blow the fog onto the lands of their neighbors, the Split Waters clan. Odda states that a white bull and a black ram must be sacrificed at the Standing Stone on Windsday (her player obtains a minor victory in an ability test against Heortling Myths 1W, so Kathy, the narrator, tells her the necessary elements of the ritual). That Windsday, the clan gathers at the Standing Stone, leading the sacrificial animals and a ewe as payment for Odda's temple.*

*Kathy determines that the animal sacrifices provide +2 each, the Standing Stones holy place +1, and Windsday +5, for a total of +10. Odda adds this to her Worship Storm Pantheon 12W (she does not have a Pray to Orlanth ability, so must use this instead). Odda augments with her Perform Sacrifice 7W, gaining another +3. Kathy knows that the fog is a curse sent by the Split Waters clan, with a resistance of 12W2. Fortunately, Odda's Worship Storm Pantheon ability increases to 5W2 due of the ritual and augmentation, so the masteries cancel out.*

*Kathy decides on the following results:*

*On a Major or Complete Victory, Orlanth will send a wind to sweep the fog back on the Split Waters tula.*

*On a Marginal or Minor Victory, the wind will simply disperse the fog. At least it will be gone from the Red Cow's tula.*

*On a Tie or a Marginal, Minor, or Major Defeat, the wind will stir the fog, but it will stay in the air, making life miserable and killing the crops.*

*On a Complete Defeat, the fog will resist completely. Any attempt the clan makes to reach Orlanth Thunderous will suffer a -10 penalty while in the clan tula. The fog will remain, even thicker than before. A special Ritual of Purification will be necessary to remove the penalty.*

## Initiates

All Heortlings initiate into one of Orlanth or Ernalda's aspects, and usually into one of their subcults. A few initiate into two different subcults or into other gods instead. The clan recognizes an initiate of Orlanth as a full adult. He has all the benefits stated in the Theistic Magic chapter of **Hero Wars**. He may learn the affinities of his aspect and subcult, and may improvise feats from these affinities.

Most people use their affinities to augment everyday tasks. Thus, a farmer will use his **Farming** affinity to give a bonus to his mundane farming skills. An occasional task may call for specific feats to be used, but this is unusual. Only when initiates are in a ritual situation, facing traditional foes, or in the Otherworld do they commonly improvise feats.

A worshipper's initiatory participation requires that he spend at least 20% of his time, in addition to the 10% spent in communal worship (for a total of 30% of his time). Usually, this time is a normal part of the hero's clan activities and occupation, and does not take him away from his job.

### Subcults

A subcult worships a god, hero, or part of a god within the context of a larger cult. Most major gods have several subcults, others have none.

Each aspect of Orlanth and Ernalda has several subcults. When a player chooses an aspect or god for his hero, he also chooses the specific subcult that his hero follows. He gains the affinities and mundane abilities of both subcult and aspect, since together they form one magic keyword.

For ease of reference, players may wish to refer to the relationship as "Initiate of [Subcult] [Aspect]."

*☞ Rurik's character sheet lists him as an Initiate of Orlanth Adventurous. He is a follower of Destor the Adventurer (see pg. 222).*

*Govoran's character sheet lists him as an Initiate of Ormalaya, showing that he is a follower of the Ormalaya subcult of Orlanth Adventurous (see pg. 219). If he worshipped the Allfather aspect and the Ormalaya subcult, he would record his relationship as Initiate of Ormalaya Allfather to show that he worships a subcult that is not a normal part of his aspect.*

### Multiple Initiation

All Heortlings initiate into the worship of one subcult. An extraordinary few feel the pull of two gods equally, or from two subcults of one god. They may initiate to two deities. It is theoretically possible to be initiated three or more times, but this is extremely rare.

Both cults (and the narrator) must approve the second initiation. It requires additional time and resources, the exact amount dependent on the relationship between the two subcults. Subcults of the same aspect have many

common rites and practices. Because of this, a worshipper who initiates into a second subcult of the same aspect spends only an additional 10% of his time. If the second initiation is to a subcult of a different aspect of the same deity, the worshipper spends 20% of his time worshipping the additional subcult. (It is possible to initiate into a second aspect without also initiating into another subcult, but this has the same 20% time commitment.) Finally, if the second initiation is to a different deity, the worshipper must dedicate a full 30% of his time to that deity.

The dual initiate must abide by all restrictions of both cults. In return, he gains access to the affinity and mundane abilities of the additional subcult, aspect, or deity. If he initiates to a subcult of the same aspect, he gains that subcult affinity. If he initiates to a subcult of a different aspect, he gains both of the aspect affinities as well. If he initiates to another deity, he gains the full affinities of that deity (and subcult, if applicable).

### ◆ Subcults and Magic

The full magic gained from worshipping a deity is based upon subcults. Although most initiates know three affinities, not all come directly from the god or aspect. Instead, each god or aspect has two affinities. Thus, Orlanth Adventurous teaches the **Combat** and **Movement** affinities to worshippers of all of its subcults, and all Ernalda the Healer worshippers know **Heal People** and **Heal Relationships**.

Each subcult then provides a single affinity to its worshippers in addition to the aspect affinities. A worshipper of the Destor subcult of Orlanth Adventurous learns the **Wind** affinity, and a worshipper of the Bevara subcult of Ernalda the Healer learns the **Self Defense** affinity.

A person can instead worship an aspect but a subcult of a different aspect. A worshipper of Orlanth Adventurous might choose to worship Daylanus, from the Thunderous aspect, instead of one of the Orlanth Adventurous subcults. He would therefore know the **Combat**, **Movement**, and **Fight Elements** affinities. This mode of worship may stem from a clan's history and mythology, but is just as often a personal choice.

### Secrets in Hero Wars

Secrets are a magical feature of a god, spirit, or Otherworld entity, not a game rule. Although secrets have game mechanics, we give these so that the narrator and player have a way to use them within the game. This does not mean that the secret is an example of that game mechanic. For example, many secrets act as "integrated passion spirits" in play. The player does integrate or become possessed by a spirit.

One exception is important: secrets that act like mystic strikes are similar to mystic strikes in all ways. If a hero attempts to use the secret and fails, he loses points in his secret's ability rating as described in the Mystic Magic chapter of *Hero Wars*. This is because such secrets access a transcendent facet of the deity.

☞ Rurik is an Initiate of Destor Adventurous. He knows the **Combat**, **Movement**, and **Wind** affinities. He feels the pull of Daylanus, who drove the Uz from the Battle of Drastch. Rurik speaks with his Orlanth priest and with his permission initiates to Daylanus as well. Rurik already spends 30% of his time worshipping Orlanth Adventurous and Destor, and now must spend an additional 20% of his time worshipping Orlanth Thunderous and Daylanus. He records the new relationship on his character sheet as Initiate of Daylanus Thunderous. In return, he can now learn the **Fight Elements** affinity from Daylanus, as well as the **Storm** affinity from Orlanth Thunderous. He already has a **Wind** affinity.

Before, Rurik spent 30% of his time worshipping Orlanth and Destor. Now, he spends 50% of his time worshipping Orlanth, Destor, and Daylanus.

## Devotees

Devotion is a stronger tie to a god, based upon a desire to emulate that god in day to day life. The hero spends an additional 30% of his time and resources in worship, for a total of 60%. For this extra energy, the devotee gains the benefits listed in the Theist Magic chapter of **Hero Wars**. To spend so much time at worship, a person must have some outside source of support or income. A clan typically supports its thanes and god-talkers in this manner. Again, players may wish to refer to the relationship as “Devotee of [Subcult] [Aspect]” for clarity.

☞ After several years of dedication and service, Rurik becomes a devotee. He transfers his ability rating from Initiate of Destor Adventurous into the new relationship Devotee of Destor Adventurous. He can now learn the feats of his **Combat**, **Movement**, and **Wind** affinities. He remains an initiate of Daylanus and Orlanth Thunderous, and continues to use the **Fight Elements** and **Storm** affinities with an improvisational modifier. Because he has the **Wind** affinity as a devotee of Destor, he can learn any of the **Wind** feats available to the Orlanth Thunderous aspect. Because he is a devotee of a subcult of one aspect and an initiate of a subcult of a different aspect, he must spend 80% of his time in worship of Orlanth, Destor, and Daylanus. Since Rurik is a weaponthane that is not a problem, because he receives full support from his clan as a member of his chieftain’s household.

## Secrets

Aspects and deities do not normally have secrets available to worshippers. Instead, each subcult of an aspect or deity has its own secret. This inner magic is not available to initiates, and so this does not affect most people. Once a worshipper decides to become a devotee, he chooses the specific subcult that he intends to follow for the rest of his life. Such dedication is necessary to learn the subcult’s secret, for once he does that, he can never learn another (as described in **Hero Wars**).

## Changing Gods

Heortlings often change the deity or aspect that they worship. The great underlying continuity of Orlanth and Ernalda make this a natural process. Thus, when a man becomes a farmer instead of a hunter, he changes his worship from Ormalaya (Orlanth the Hunter) to Orlanthcarl (Orlanth the Farmer). Similarly, a farmer who is burned out of his home and takes up the sword no longer needs the benefits provided by Orlanthcarl, but needs the combat abilities of Helamakt or Hedkoranth. Since he is moving between aspects or subcults of the same god, he suffers no penalties for this change beyond the loss of some magic associated with the old worship. In return, he can learn new magic more appropriate to his changed circumstances.

Devotees are a special case. It is possible to be devoted to a subcult or deity, and then later abandon that deity for another, as long as you have not learned the deity's secret. This is extremely rare, however, and always subjects the hero to divine retribution (see pg. 78). It is possible, though still unusual, for a devotee of Orlanth or Ernalda to change aspects but retain the subcult to which they are devoted. Players and narrators should keep this in mind when reading the following section and examples.

### ◆ Devotion and Multiple Initiation

It is possible for a worshipper to initiate to different gods. The gods are usually complementary, so that a person might be an initiate of Heler, God of Rain, and Orlanth Thunderous. When this occurs, most people within the culture understand that two deities are calling the worshipper.

A person can be devoted to only one deity and subcult. When a person becomes a devotee, he has not just made a choice, he has been chosen by his deity. This level of commitment does not allow for hesitation or conflicting desires. As such, it is not possible for a person to be a devotee of one god and an initiate of a different god. If an initiate of two gods chooses to devote to one, he must completely give up membership in the other's cult, losing his *Initiate of [God]* ability and any magic that he has learned from that other deity. There is rarely any adverse reaction to this decision, since most people understand that a dual initiate will one day have to decide which deity's call is the stronger.

A devotee can initiate to other aspects or subcults of their deity. They rarely do so, but use the rules for Multiple Initiation when they do.

If a player has a hero devoted to one god (such as Orlanth) and initiated to another (such as Heler), he has two options. His narrator may allow him to keep his character unchanged, as an exception to the rules. Alternately, he can find an appropriate subcult of the deity to whom he is devoted to replace the existing initiation. Thus, a devotee of Orlanth who is also an initiate of Yinkin might instead be an initiate of Niskis the Lover, a subcult of Orlanth Adventurous.

## Changing Aspects and Subcults

People are like the wind and earth, which change every day and every year. Orlanth and Ernalda have provided places for people to exhibit and practice any normal behavior. Many ceremonies have a place in them that allows a person to change subcults or aspects without trouble.

When a hero changes subcults, he loses the affinity associated with his former subcult. He retains the aspect affinities, even if the new subcult is from a different aspect. If his old subcult has special feats in an aspect affinity the hero retains them if he is a devotee. Of course, the hero also retains the knowledge of any mundane abilities learned from his former subcult.

A hero's "Initiate of [Deity]" relationship is unchanged. Because devotion is to a specific subcult, however, a hero's "Devotee of [Deity]" ability rating drops to 3/4 of its current value (though never less than 12). A devotee who has learned the secret of his subcult can no longer change subcults — by learning the secret, he has "locked in" his magic.

*☞ Govoran is a devotee of the Ormalaya subcult of Orlanth Adventurous. He cannot support his family by hunting, so he moves to his brother's stead and becomes a farmer. He switches devotion from Ormalaya to Orlanthcarl, a subcult of Orlanth Allfather. His affinities from Orlanth Adventurous (**Combat and Movement**) are unchanged, but he loses his **Hunting** affinity, and in its place can learn the **Farming** affinity. Because he retains his **Movement** affinity, Govoran can use the special feats of **Avoid Claws and Run Up Tree** — he does not forget the ways he learned to use his affinity just because he no longer hunts for a living.*

*Govoran's Devotee of Ormalaya Adventurous ability changes to Devotee of Orlanthcarl Adventurous. Because he changed subcults, the ability rating is reduced to 3/4 its current rating, from 18 to 14.*

If the hero changes aspects without changing subcult, the aspect affinities (only) are lost, even if the subcult has access to special feats.

A hero's "Initiate of [Deity]" relationship remains unchanged. A hero's "Devotee of [Deity]" relationship also remains unchanged, because the subcult worshipped remains the same. A devotee who has learned the secret of his subcult can no longer change aspects.

*☞ Govoran takes a wife to help settle a feud with a neighboring clan. As part of the agreement, he moves to her family's stead. This clan worships Orlanth Allfather, and insists that Govoran give up his wild ways. He remains a worshipper of Orlanthcarl the Farmer, but switches aspects from Orlanth Adventurous to Orlanth Allfather. He retains his **Farming** affinity, but loses his **Combat and Movement** affinities. Instead, he can learn the **Allfather and Making** affinities provided by Orlanth Allfather. His Devotee of Orlanthcarl Adventurous ability changes to Devotee of Orlanthcarl Allfather, but his ability rating of 14 remains the same because he still worships the same subcult.*



☞ When a hero changes subcults or deities, he may lose access to his affinities. The player should retain the entry on his character sheet for future reference. Although the hero cannot use the affinity now, he may be able to if he returns to that deity in the future. If this occurs, the hero will be able to use all of his old feats, and might even start with his old ability rating, at the narrator's option.

If a hero changes both subcults and aspects, he loses all of his old affinities, and again may learn the affinities of his new aspect and subcult. If one of the affinities remains substantially the same, he retains his ability rating in that affinity. If he is a devotee, he also retains any feats he knows. He may not learn additional feats from the old subcult or aspect, but can of course learn any of the new feats available to him.

A hero's "Initiate of [Deity]" relationship remains unchanged. A devotee's "Devotee of [Deity]" relationship is reduced as described above.

*☞ The Lunars burn Govoran the Farmer out of his stead. He decides to join an outlaw band that worships Helamakt the Fighting Storm. He loses his affinities (**Allfather** and **Making** from Orlanth Allfather, **Farming** from Orlanthcarl ) and can learn the affinities of his new cult (**Storm** and **Wind** from Orlanth Thunderous, **Combat** from the Helamakt subcult). Although he has not been able to use the **Combat** affinity since he left Orlanth Adventurous, this does not mean that he has forgotten everything he knew. Although he has to learn the **Storm**, **Wind**, and **Combat** affinities as new abilities, the narrator rules that Govoran remembers all of the feats that he once knew. He cannot learn new feats taught by Orlanth Adventurous, but can learn the feats available from Helamakt.*

*Govoran's Devotee of Orlanthcarl Allfather ability changes to Devotee of Helamakt Thunderous. Because he changed subcults, the ability rating is reduced from 14 to 12 (3/4 of 14 would be 11, less than the minimum of 12).*

## Changing Deities within the Pantheon

The Storm Tribe includes many deities besides Orlanth and Ernalda. No one dares to ignore that passions rule everyone, even many gods! No person is free from red jealousy, green envy, dark depression, bright hilarity, and even soft, hidden delicacy. Everyone knows this, and is glad that Orlanth and Ernalda have assembled their pantheon to interact with these Otherworld powers.

Leaving Orlanth or Ernalda to worship another deity of the pantheon is unusual. Sometimes it is a natural progression, such as when a man who worships Orlanth the Farmer feels the call of Barntar instead. Sometimes it is an unusual change, as when a person who died and returned decides to abandon all other gods to follow Humakt, God of Death. Regardless of the

reason for the change or the deities worshipped, however, this is still an accepted part of the religion. Some penalties may apply, but the primary effect again is the loss of the magic associated with the old worship.

The hero's relationship with his former god is removed, and he starts a new relationship at 12. If a hero later rejoins a cult he left, he must start his relationship with the god at the base ability rating of 12, just as if he had joined the cult for the first time. The worshipper normally loses all of his magic from the old god, and must learn the magic of the new god as new abilities. However, if an affinity is sufficiently similar between the two gods, he may retain the ability rating. If a devotee, he loses all of his feats, but may learn the feats provided by his new god.

*☞ Govoran's warband fares badly, and finally he and the other few survivors join a more successful Humakt warband. After a few seasons, Govoran recognizes that his whole life has been a progression from Life to Death, and that Humakt has chosen him. He leaves Helamakt and becomes an initiate of Humakt. As did Humakt before him, he severs his ties to the Primal Air, and so loses his Storm and Wind affinities. Although Govoran loses all Orlanth magic, the narrator states that his familiarity with combat magic is enough that he can transfer over his full ability from his Orlanth Combat affinity to his new Humakt affinity. He does not retain the specific Orlanth feats, but begins to learn Humakt's Combat feats, as well as Humakt's Death and Honor affinities.*

*Govoran loses his Devotee of Helamakt Thunderous 12 relationship, and starts a new Initiate of Humakt 12 relationship. If he later leaves Humakt and rejoins the worship of Orlanth, his relationship to Orlanth will start at 12, just as if he had never belonged in the first place.*

## Worshipping Foreign Deities

If someone initiates into a deity outside of the pantheon, the clan ring meets to decide whether the deity is neutral, unknown, friendly, or hostile. If the deity is neutral or friendly, the person is normally allowed to remain with the clan, though he will always be viewed with curiosity, fear, and suspicion, for he has abandoned his religion. If the deity is unknown or hostile, the person is cast out of the clan. In either case, the person loses all magic learned from their old god, and suffers divine retribution from their deity (see pg. 78).

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## Divination, Listening to the Gods

*The gods speak to us, if we but have the ears to listen and the souls to hear.*

The Heortlings regularly practice **augury**, using **divination** to ask their gods for information. Divinations are only successful and accurate for faithful and devoted worshippers. A petitioner whose faith is not strong or who has not followed the strictures of his religion will not receive answers to his questions, or will receive only an indication that the higher powers are displeased with him. The narrator must judge relative faith and dedication, and assign penalties to the petitioner for flaws and misdeeds. On the other hand, a devotee with high ability ratings in his god's virtues should gain a bonus, since he has a history of acting in the way his god requires.

Clans commonly petition their *wyter for guidance*. On holy days, nearly every worshipper sees their deity and receives information that they need. In emergencies, the community leaders and holy folk always ask for guidance from an appropriate deity. In all of these cases the deity responds, but the nature of that response and the listeners' abilities to understand it are both variable quantities that complicate the process.

Divination involves listening to a god, not talking. It is not fortune telling, or even "telling the future," as the vulgar believe. It is generally useless to ask about a particular worshipper, since individuals rarely reach a god's consciousness or awareness. Divination is used to answer larger questions, such as what a clan should do in farming the next year, how hunting will go, or whether an enemy's warband is stronger than the petitioner's.

### Limitations on Divination

Divination can never provide certain kinds of information. Events on the Inner World are hidden if they occurred in another deity's holy place. The link between a holy place and the Otherworld prevents any entity from discovering what happened there (except for the entity whose holy place it is, of course). Divination is also useless as a source of information of events that occur far away (outside of the area where the deity has worshippers), in the distant past, or that are blocked by magic. Divination can never discover events that occur on or in a specific Otherworld (such as the Spirit Plane), even the deity's home realm. To gain information about events in the Otherworld (including the many Hero Planes), the petitioner must actually enter the Otherworld to view the event.

**Divination cannot foretell the future.** Powerful deities can answer with some certainty about what they are going to do in a general way. Orlanth Thunderous knows if it will rain tomorrow, because he is the god who sends the rain. However, no god can take into account such things as the actions of mortals or Otherworld entities not controlled by the being petitioned. Thus, Orlanth might be wrong because of the influence of foreign weather gods, people using weather-affecting magic, or a gale of Kolat winds from

the Spirit World. Of course, Orlanth's characteristics include nothing permanent: his religion embraces fluidity. He has a greater chance to be wrong in his "predictions" than Ernalda does about more earthly, stable things, because weather changes more quickly than does the earth.

The further in the future an event might be, or the more specific the event, the less likely that the god can answer. Orlanth can tell you if he will make it rain tomorrow, and can probably give a general idea of the coming season's weather. He cannot tell you when it will rain tomorrow on your stead (unless the entire area is expecting rain), and he certainly cannot tell you what time it will rain on a given day in the next season. He probably cannot even tell you that it will rain on a specific day, although he might be able to tell you that the weather is likely to be stormy at that general time. He can never tell what the weather will be next year, since that is dependent on the all of the weather that occurs between now and then.

## Sphere of Influence

The gods are not omniscient, and even the most powerful deity cannot answer all questions. A god only knows about things that are within his **sphere of influence**. When in doubt, the narrator should look closely at the secret and affinities of the deity when deciding if and how clearly a deity can answer a given question. Divination to great gods or transcendent entities is generally unsuccessful, for they are too distant to respond in a meaningful way. Petitioners can reach their aspects, but the deities of subcults are the most likely to answer divinations.

The gods do know *in general* whatever their devotees and initiates know, because these worshippers are extensions of the deity, and share their knowledge in worship and prayer. However, the deity does not know what a worshipper thinks or feels, cannot deduce motivations, and knows nothing.



### THE ORLANTH PROHIBITION



The Lunars have prohibited the worship of Orlanth, and death is the punishment for defiance. From Pavis to Tarsh and Whitewall, the crucified bodies of pious men and women decorate the Lunar-controlled roads. The Red Goddess cannot kill Orlanth, but she can kill all of his children who dare to be true to their god.

Heortlings get around this prohibition by attending worship of other gods. Many deities of the pantheon can stand in for Orlanth if necessary, such as a worshipper of Orlanthcarl (Orlanth the Farmer) sacrificing to Barntar instead. In this way, Orlanth worship continues right under the noses of the Lunar Occupation forces. When the time is right and he is free, Orlanth's people will return to worship him again.

ing if a worshipper has specifically withheld information. Additionally, deities have trouble distinguishing among individuals unless piety is high, and so a deity might not know which worshipper is the source of information. If asked about an individual, the deity always knows if he is alive or dead, and can usually determine if the worshipper has lost his faith or performed misdeeds if the worshipper is present at the rite. The deity rarely knows where the worshipper is or what he has done. Of course, the greater the worshipper's connection to the deity (i.e., communal worshipper, initiate, devotee), the more accurate information the deity will have.

Deities' only answer questions about what they know, which is often not of practical use. A farm goddess can tell the clan that they need to be careful of the lambs, wheat rust, hornets, and early snow. She can only warn them, not tell them what to do, because she does not know what people can do. The local valley god might say that it will be dryer than usual this year, with more locusts and fewer deer. It cannot tell the hunter how lucky or skillful he will need to be to overcome these difficulties. A war god might be able to report the relative strengths of armies, but only those that it knows; enemies with new magic are regularly overlooked by Orlanthi war gods, who are used to fighting traditional foes.

Even if a question falls within a god's sphere of influence, the god's nature may limit the answer. Orlanth Thunderous is the wind, and can tell about anything touched by the wind. The wind does not distinguish between individuals, however, and so cannot answer about a specific person. If Orlanth Adventurous is asked about how a battle is going against a neighboring tribe, he may say that it is going well, or even that one side is doing much better than the other. This may not tell the petitioner which side is winning, since Orlanth cannot distinguish sides between two groups of his own worshippers unless one of them is clearly in the wrong (as Orlanth sees it).

Greater detail is possible. A devotee who actually enters the God Plane can directly question the deity, and possibly gain clearer information. That is not divination, but heroquesting. Some deities have special powers in the area of divination, and can answer more general questions. Lhankor Mhy is the God of Knowledge, and can know almost anything. To ask a question about a specific thing (such as a magical item), the petitioner must have the object with him and use it in the ritual. Even then, a specific subcult with appropriate abilities is easier to contact, and will give more specific information.

## Divination Procedure

Divination occurs as part of ceremonies, and also both routinely and in emergencies as a separate ritual. It follows the general procedures described in the Advanced Magic chapter of *Hero Wars*. The exact form of the ritual varies greatly among cultures, gods, and clans. Narrators and players are encouraged to develop all the details of the divination ritual they plan to use. Most divination rituals include an invocation of the deity, a time of prayer, and then a spoken part (where the petitioner asks the question).

Every culture has specific methods of divination that they use. Most Heortling divination rituals involve an action whose results provide the answer. The Orlanth and Ernalda rites include animal sacrifice, and the priests commonly study the animals' livers for signs. They also engage in rune casting (using stones or sticks), study the flames and smoke of sacrifices, and watch the flights of birds (though each deity has its preferred fowl).

Normally only a devotee can properly conduct the divination ritual. The narrator sets the resistance to the ritual based on the question and the deity asked, keeping in mind that most deities can *never* answer certain questions, as discussed above. The petitioner uses his *Devotee of [God]* ability to overcome the resistance. If he knows the secret of his deity, he may use that ability to augment this roll.

If the god-talker or priest performs the ritual properly, the question is within the deity's sphere of influence, and the petitioner succeeds in his roll, the deity provides an answer. Even if no physical action is performed as part of the ritual, most gods use omens, dreams and visions, divine messengers, natural phenomena, or "divine inspiration" to give their answers. Thus, Orlanth Adventurous might send a wind whispering a single word, or an alynx may stand on its hind legs and recite a stanza of poetry; Ernalda the Healer might give the petitioner a feeling of comfort and wellness, or send a flight of doves into the prevailing wind; etc. The narrator should determine the exact form of the answer based on the nature of the deity and the level of victory the petitioner obtained in the contest. Even with a complete victory, however, the answer does not come in the form of a "voice from the heavens" (unless, of course, the narrator feels that such an event is an important part of her story).

### Resistance to Divination

The narrator determines the resistance to a divination attempt based upon two factors: the nature of the deity and the nature of the question. Bonuses or penalties apply for the piety of the petitioner (and the devotee, if he is performing the ritual for another person). In general, a divination attempt to a more powerful deity is more difficult, and so has a greater resistance. We provide the following base levels of resistance for various deities as a *guide*:

- Clan *wyter*, daimon, petty god: 10W3.
- Common daimones, tribal *wyter*, gale force umbroli, lesser god, subcult hero or deity: 10W3 to 10W5.
- Aspects of Great Deities, normal gods: 10W6 to 10W8.
- Great Gods: 10W9.

## Divine Retribution

Worshippers of the gods must act in certain ways. The precise requirements vary, but the general rule is to act in a morally responsible way. Morality in turn is defined by the ways the gods tell people to act. These divine edicts are the source of the laws of kinship, hospitality, work, and worship, among others.

Behavior requirements are not the same for everyone. They become stricter as a person's commitment increases from communal worship to initiation and then devotion. As the standards become stricter, so do the penalties for straying. Children who misbehave are punished by their parents. Communal worshippers who act improperly gain a certain amount of social stigma and may have to pay fines. Initiates and devotees have more specific behavior requirements; these are the Virtues listed in their magic keyword. (Narrators should also take into account other factors, such as the deity's myths.)

Orlanthi society is not rigid and inflexible, and a fair amount of laxity is tolerable. People are fallible, and nobody expects perfection. Thus, a spectrum of behavior is normal, with fanatical moralists at one end and shirkers at the other. The danger is that no one can really tell how much casual misbehavior can occur before incurring divine disfavor, which warrants punishments.

## Divine Wrath

Acting improperly incurs punishment. The first punishments fall not on the individual, but on his community. The gods cannot isolate individuals, so the community suffers instead. Each deity's punishment differs: sickness, bad luck, freak accidents, pests, milk and crop failures, and increased raids by enemies are common. The nature of the curse depends on the deity and the clan's mythology, but not necessarily the nature of the crime. The curse is not just divine wrath, but also reflects the removal of a normal protection provided by Orlanth, Ernalda, or other deities. Worshippers of any deity can bring a curse down upon the community if they violate their god's virtues. Thus, an initiate of Humakt who shows cowardice or a healer of Chalana Arroy who wields a weapon in anger curse their community in the same way as a person who commits a social crime such as theft.

Once the community recognizes the curse, they must find its source, often using Divination. Once they know that the "curse" is an infraction of this nature, they can remedy the problem. This involves identifying the offender (something the god and *wyter* cannot do) and forcing them to correct their error, usually by making them mend their ways, pay a fine, and perhaps sponsor a sacrifice (see Atonement, below). In most cases, the community knows who among them is the likely offender. If not, the problems will increase in magnitude until the community is truly cursed. For exam-

ple, each season the curse continues the penalty might increase by -2. Eventually, the curse will cause the community's destruction.

If social pressure is not enough to cause wrongdoers to repent, community leaders can call on the gods to punish the individual. The ritual of invoking divine punishment is formal, and involves the entire community gathering to transfer their collective guilt onto the responsible individual. A community cannot fool the gods by blaming an innocent party even if the scapegoat is willing or the community believes that he is guilty. If this is attempted, the ritual of transferal simply fails, and the community continues to suffer the penalties until they identify the true offender.

## Concealing Guilt

Hiding guilt is possible. A person can try to conceal his crime from people in normal ways, by blaming enemies or even another member of the community. To succeed in fooling the divine powers, however, he must redirect the consequences of his error to himself instead of his community. Everyone knows this foul rite: "Say the crime into a handful of dirt, eat the dirt and say ten times, 'the curse is mine.'"

If this is done, the community does not suffer divine wrath. However, the consequences are drastic for the individual. An infraction that only mildly affects a community has severe consequences when concentrated into an individual. Thus, a penalty of -2 to the community becomes a penalty of -10 for an individual, and a community modifier of -10 translates into a -50 individual modifier. Such large modifiers always have visible effects on an individual, appearing as disfigurement, illness, pain, foul odor, attacks by domestic animals, or the like. A person may still be able to direct attention away from himself by blaming the affliction on a curse. However, any god-talker, shaman, or healer who examines and tries to treat his problem will quickly discover the true cause.

This rite is not always completely successful. A person might eat the dirt and be incapable afterwards of doing anything successfully but the curse might still affect the community, although possibly in a reduced form.

☞ Narrators may apply a Divine Wrath Penalty to every member of a community. This penalty affects every member of the community, and manifests as a penalty to any roll appropriate to the nature of the curse. A penalty of -2 to -10 is typical, depending on the nature of the crime.

More important to the player heroes, however, is the effect of this curse on their community. The heroes should listen to their narrator's description, and should feel what their community suffers. Determining the guilty party is critical to the survival of the community. The players should either feel true guilt and shame if the crime is theirs, or outrage that one of their own kinsmen or brothers-in-arms would allow this calamity to befall the community.



## Agents of Reprisal

Agents of reprisal are often known as enforcers or “reminder agents.” These divine agents consist of races of daimones tasked to punish offenders. The punishment is not an end in itself, but a “push” from the god, an attempt to get the worshipper back on track. Greater crimes or repeated violations bring greater punishments and the most powerful daimones available to the pantheon usually pursue a true apostate.

Like all daimones, the Storm Tribe’s agents of reprisal have bodies; most inhabit air or earth, as befits the nature of Orlanth and Ernalda. They are always visible to the individual they punish, devotees, and priests, but are invisible to other people who are not using magical senses. Once an agent of reprisal has been defeated or has completed its task it automatically returns to the God World without needing to engage in any contest.

Although a worshipper can resist agents of reprisal, he cannot use any of his magical abilities or relationships from the Storm Pantheon to do so. Thus, he cannot use *Worship Storm Pantheon*, *Initiate of [God]*, *Devotee of [God]*, or any affinity gained from a Storm Tribe deity. Even other abilities used to resist generally take the personal magical penalty described above. If a worshipper successfully resists the agents they return to the God World. If the worshipper does not make amends and change his ways, however, this only delays the inevitable, and more powerful daimones will soon follow.

Several agents of reprisal are described here, using the format from **Anaxial’s Roster**. They cover the entire Storm Pantheon and can afflict any communal worshipper, even if he is an initiate or devotee of a deity other than Orlanth or Ernalda. Some deities also have their own daimones that punish violations specific to that deity. Others may send curses instead of

### ◆ Personal Magic Penalties

Initiates and devotees learn magic from their gods. This magic depends on their maintaining contact with their deity through sacrifice and prayer. If a player hero commits a crime but attempts to conceal it, he cannot maintain this connection properly. If he withholds part of himself from the deity to prevent it from learning of his crimes, this will interfere with his ability to invoke the god. In game terms, he takes a penalty when using any magic derived from the god.

The narrator determines the exact penalty. The severity of the crime is rarely a factor, since it is the act of withholding himself from the deity that causes the penalty. A penalty of 1/10 the hero’s *Initiate of [God]* or *Devotee of [God]* ability rating is a good base value, since these abilities reflect his piety, and thus his connection to the deity.

This penalty affects not only magic, but any task related to the offended deity, as determined by the narrator. A wayward Orlanth worshipper suffers all sorts of problems with air — not only does his magic weaken, but he finds breathing itself difficult.

agents of reprisal, such as the Raw Greed curse that afflicts an Issaries merchant who cheats his own people. Because of his connection to the deity, a worshipper cannot resist the curse. A few deities have no agents of reprisal or curses and rely upon others to avenge them. In this way Babeester Gor is the avenger, whose worshippers deal with mortals who violate Earth worshippers or their holy places.

## Releasing Agents of Reprisal

Agents of reprisal cannot simply appear in the Inner World. Most enter the Inner World during worship ceremonies, when the gateway between worlds is open. Thus, most Orlanthi and Ernaldan ceremonies have a point when enforcers enter the Inner World. At this time, priests and god-talkers can direct the enforcers towards individuals. Once this is done, the curse lifts from the community. Worshippers may feel the ground move beneath their feet as Ernaldan's belnan and esnan servants move to seek out those who have offended her. Worshippers may see hedkorings and yavorlings moving above the crowd as they leave to seek their prey.

As with all Otherworld entities, agents of reprisal suffer the alien world modifier in the Inner Plane or any Otherworld but their own. **This reduction is already reflected in the statistics provided here.** If a hero encounters an agent of reprisal on its native plane, increase all of its abilities by +20.

Agents of reprisal appear here in the order of their severity.

## Yavorling (Bolter, Jag, Sparker)

*Ages:* Storm.

*Habitat:* Storm Realm (God World).

Yavorlings appear as small lightning bolts that leap between the malefactor's hand and any metal he touches. They are "reminder" agents, sent against those that have committed minor infractions. The attack of a yavorling is mild: the shock causes a -1 penalty to one roll. Yavorlings continue to plague the worshipper until he repents.

Over time, the burn and pain from continued attacks can become significant. To reflect this, each week that a yavorling plagues a worshipper he

### Orlanth's Agents of Reprisal

— from *The Travels of Biturian Varosh*, 1615 S.I.

I was not prepared for the onslaught of Enforcers that came rushing from behind the priests. They hurtled over us, their yellow eyes gleaming hungrily as they searched for maldoers. The wind fists buzzed around at head level, zooming straight at a face and turning aside only at the last moment. The flint slingers leapt over the heads of the crowd, and clouds of impests made ringing sounds as they passed harmlessly among us. Several people in the crowd began scratching themselves absentmindedly. It was a very impressive display, and I am sure that any Orlanth initiate viewing these things regularly could be easily urged to follow his cult vows.

takes a cumulative -1 to any action that involves using either hand. These burns have no opportunity to heal, and no magic provided by any deity of the Storm Pantheon can heal them. Foreign magic can be used, but the yavorling resists with its Spark ability. Once the worshipper repents and makes restitution, the penalty will heal naturally.

### **Yavorling**

*Weapons and Armor:* None.

*Significant Abilities:* None.

*Innate Magical Abilities:* Spark 15⚡.

*Tactics:* Yavorlings attack each time the worshipper touches any metal, giving him a mild shock and burn as it travels from his hand to the object and back.

### **Haruling (Impest)**

*Ages:* Green, Storm, Darkness.

*Habitat:* Storm Realm (God World).

Harulings like small swarms of gnats. They inflict itches, rashes, coughs, hives, and similar minor problems on worshippers who commit minor infractions, such as missing worship or cult service or failing to embody one of their deity's virtues.

While present, harulings distract worshippers. After they leave afflicted worshippers might suffer as if Hurt, at the narrator's option.

### **Haruling**

*Weapons and Armor:* None.

*Significant Abilities:* None.

*Innate Magical Abilities:* Cause Minor Distraction 17.

*Tactics:* Harulings do not attack, but their presence distracts the target.

### **Belnan (Clodfoot)**

*Ages:* Green, Golden, Storm.

*Habitat:* Earth Realm (God World).

Belnans cling like mud to the feet of minor offenders, slowing them down. They were common in the Gods Age, but disappeared when the waters dried up during the Darkness. Ernalda sends them to punish worshippers who profane any Orlanthi holy place, either intentionally or through inaction. They also punish those who neglect the proper sacrifices to the earth.

Belnans are difficult to dislodge. Anyone afflicted by belnans can try to scrape them off with his feet, pitting his Strong or other appropriate ability against the Strong of the belnan. Multiple belnans resist as if they were a single entity, so that a group of three belnans are harder to dislodge than one. The worshipper must successfully remove all belnans at once, or the full penalty applies as the dislodged belnans immediately latch on again. Only if all belnans are dislodged at once do they return to the Earth Realm.

**Belnan**

*Weapons and Armor:* None.

*Significant Abilities:* Blend into Earth and Mud 20⚡, Grapple 14.

*Innate Magical Abilities:* Strong 10⚡.

*Tactics:* Belnans “attack” by grabbing onto their target’s feet. This is automatically successful when the belnans are acting as agents of reprisal; otherwise, they use their Grapple ability. Once attached, each belnan causes the victim to suffer a -1 penalty to all movement abilities, even magical ones. The narrator decides if an ability is movement related. Belnans may actively use their Strong ability in other non-violent ways, such as to keep a person from moving at all.

**Esnan (Earth Thief, Gulper)**

*Ages:* Green, Golden, Storm, Darkness.

*Habitat:* Earth Realm (God World).

Esnans can travel through any natural earth — soil, sand, rock, even berms, ditches, and plowed fields. They can take and carry any inanimate object in direct contact with the earth. Esnans reclaim items taken from holy places, and punish the thieves by stealing from them in return. If the esnans regain the stolen relics, they return them to a place where god-talkers or priests can find them lying on the ground. The thief can only regain his possessions if he makes restitution and a direct appeal to Asrelia on the God Plane (i.e., he must undertake a heroquest to regain the item).

**Esnan**

*Weapons and Armor:* None.

*Significant Abilities:* None.

*Innate Magical Abilities:* Strong 5⚡3.

*Tactics:* Esnans do not attack. Instead, they steal inanimate items in contact with natural earth. If the worshipper is quick enough, he can oppose an esnan’s Strong with an appropriate ability. If not, the item is gone, taken to Asrelia’s Treasure Vault.

**Hedkoring (Flint Slinger)**

*Ages:* Storm Age, Darkness Age.

*Habitat:* Storm Realm (God World).

Hedkorings are long-legged daimones capable of great leaps (up to about 150 feet). They plague worshippers who steal from Orlanth, Ernalda, or any Lightbringer (Issaries, Chalana Arroy, Lhankor Mhy, or Eurmál). They also pursue apostates. They are commonly called “Flint Slingers,” and are sometimes said to be the sling stones hurled by an angry god.

The number of hedkorings that attack depends on the worshipper’s rank (i.e., initiate or devotee) and the nature of the offense. Rather than causing direct harm they remove his Storm Pantheon magic.

*continued on page 85*

**R                      Fines for Transgressions of Ceremony & Magic                      R**

- If foreign gods be invoked with sacrifice or ceremony, that ill come of it, then two cows, or a hand of seasons outlawry, or both.
- If ceremony be made by seven or more in secret, then one cow.
- If ritual be made without invocation of the six guardians, that ill comes of it, then three sheep.
- If one summons a spirit, or allows possession by a spirit, that ill come of it, then four cows.
- If one sleeps in the holy rite, or the ceremony, or at the masking, or at the sending of heroes, then two sheep.
- If sacrifice or ceremony be not made at the appointed time, that the land suffers or the ancestors be angered, then one cow plus the sacrifice.
- If an ancestral shrine be defiled, or destroyed, then four cows; if it be ill maintained or forgotten, so that the ancestors are angered, then six cows.
- If a holy place be defiled through laziness, or by ones' herds, then six cows.
- If an evil wind be loosed, and none to bag it, then two cows.
- If a child be cursed or shriven in the womb, that it brings deformity, then two cows.
- If tongue be given to strangers of paths, rites, magic, or the secrets of heroes, and ill come of it, then ten cows.
- If masks be lost, or destroyed, or soiled by beasts, and likewise implements or charms, that the clan suffers, then four cows.
- If one sings rats, storms out of season, or black snow, or calls down any of the Seven Dangers, then five cows and outlawry ...

**☉                      Fines for Aiding Chaos                      ☉**

- If failure to report, that disease be spread, then beast for beast and man for man for all that die forthwith.
- If failure to help to burn and cleanse, that disease or evil be spread, then beast for beast and man for man for all that die forthwith.
- If a servant of the Predark is succored, or those who sacrifice to Predark, or seek its mystery, knowingly or unknowingly, whether ill come of it or no, then twenty cows and outlawry.
- If propitiation or sacrifice be made to spirits of disease, or to the mother of ills, or to the toothed Maw, whether ill come of it or no, then five cows.
- If sickness or taint upon the herds be concealed, be they cattle or sheep or pigs, or upon alynxes or horses, or upon a household, then ten cows and lesser outlawry.
- If waters be fouled upstream from a household, then one cow ....

**⚠                      Other Transgressions                      ⚠**

- If one consort with Darkness, or lay in perversion with an Uz, or carve darkness upon a rock, to speak or utter to darkness without the chieftain's yeah, then two cows and lesser outlawry.
- If dragon-kin be buried upon the tula, or any part of it, or its armor or weapons, and ill come of it, then two cows.
- If an alynx be caused to scream within sound of a hearth so that children are harmed, then two cows ....

## Hedkoring

*Weapons and Armor:* None.

*Significant Abilities:* Sling flintstone 3⚔.

*Innate Magical Abilities:* Great Leap 5⚔2, Ignore Attacks by Orlanth Worshippers 5⚔2.

*Tactics:* Hedkorings appear when the offender is in combat, flinging their magical stones at him. They act independently, which causes the target to take a Multiple Attacker penalty. If the hedkoring is victorious, the worshipper's Storm Pantheon-derived affinities drop based on the Ordinary Consequences Chart. Thus, if the hedkoring attains a Complete Victory, the worshipper loses his entire ability rating in each affinity.

If the worshipper makes full restitution and proves his dedication to Orlanth, the hedkorings cease their attacks. The reductions to the worshipper's affinities are permanent, although the hero can of course spend Hero Points in the future to increase his ability ratings.

## Banumbroling (Wind Fist)

*Ages:* Storm, Darkness.

*Habitat:* Storm Realm (God World).

Banumbrolings are ugly, bat-winged daimones with tiny bronze fists that plague worshippers who commit capital crimes (see pg. 44). Up to six appear, depending on the person's crimes and his worship status.

### Banumbroling

*Weapons and Armor:* None.

*Significant Abilities:* None.

*Innate Magical Abilities:* Pummel 5⚔.

*Tactics:* Banumbrolings attack when their victim is in combat. They surround the victim and strike him with their fists, wounding and distracting him. Each attacks separately, essentially turning the existing contest into an extended group contest. They continue attacking until they kill the worshipper. They can force a contest to continue until the worshipper reaches -40 AP, even if the original opponent does not seek to kill him.

## Protection

Apostates may seek protection from other gods or Otherworld entities. Any holy place is effective, as long as it is strong enough to withstand the attack. No god or temple from the pantheon will provide this sanctuary, of course. Even a foreign entity can protect a person while he remains inside the holy place. The enforcers wait and attack the worshipper as soon as he laves.

Magicians from outside the Storm Pantheon can attempt to banish the enforcers with appropriate magical abilities. Any attempt by a shaman or sorcerer suffers the -20 Alien World modifier. Priests of other pantheons take the -10 Dangerous modifier, because they are attempting to interfere with another deity's agent.

## Ending Divine Retribution

Reprisals end only when the offender dies or makes atonement. True apostates may join a new religion, although this act alone is enough to cause agents of reprisal to be sent in punishment.

### Atonement

Heortling morality always allows atonement. "Fixing what I did wrong" is an Orlanthe virtue. Once a worshipper mends his ways and makes restitution magical penalties cease and agents of reprisal depart. Partial atonement may lessen the penalties or attacks, but then again it may not. Heortling law and tradition specify fines for various religious transgressions. Payment of the fines counts as restitution, and thus heals the community and avoids or ends attacks by agents of reprisal.

### Apostasy

Leaving the religion to avoid reprisals is dangerous. Every agent of reprisal will appear at once to make a last attack upon the apostate, and new enforcers whose specific duty is to punish apostates may join them. Even if a worshipper has committed no crimes, the act of joining a new religion will cause agents of reprisal to attack, without any need for the community to perform special rituals. The gods can always sense when a worshipper severs all of their relationships with the pantheon.

The worshipper may seek sanctuary in a holy place, but the enforcers will linger until he leaves it. If the apostate has joined a new religion, he will be free of further attacks by his former religion's enforcers once he defeats the agents. Of course, once he joins the new religion he loses all relationships and magical abilities from the old religion.



*Image of a Female Ancestor*

## Funeral Customs

*If you call me, or I see the smoke, I will come.* — part of the Orlanth cremation ceremony.

When a person dies, their corpse is laid in state in his or her home. The hearth fire is extinguished, and for a week anyone can view them to pay last respects, make sure no foul play was involved, and (for important or powerful people) see if they come back. The person's soul takes a week to reach the Court of Silence, so any resurrection after that always results in an unnatural thing, not the person who once vitalized the body.

On the eighth day the family burns a man's body on a pyre or a woman's body in a funerary oven. After a man's ashes blow away on the winds, the relatives place the bones and other remains inside an urn. All of a woman's remains go into an urn. The funerary urns (known as *teka*) are buried in the urnfield. The family always includes grave goods in the rites. The entire process of prayers and mourning takes a full year from the cremation to be completed. After that, the person has joined the ancestors.

Orlanth and Ernalda are the defenders of life. They died and went to the Underworld, then returned with Life and Light to revitalize the dead world. They guarantee their worshippers that they will retrieve their soul from any place in the universe, as long as they lived right. This way, their people need not fear dying in a strange land among foreigners.

### The Fate of the Dead

When a person dies, his soul goes to a place that is between the worlds of the Gods and of Mortals. That place is the Path of the Dead, a transitional zone of silence and ghosts. It usually takes a week for the spirit to walk the path, led by the Guide of the Dead. At the end is the Court of Silence, the realm of Havan Vor, "Mortal Judge." This is a title of Grandfather Life, who was the first person to die, and afterwards was known as Grandfather Mortal.

At the Court of Silence, Havan Vor scrutinizes every person before sending them to the proper heaven or hell. The souls can not speak. Ancestors and sometimes even gods step forward to present evidence about the individual's life, each of them trying to get the soul into their own realm. Those who are godless are particularly vulnerable to demons and evil gods, for they have no protector to speak for them. Havan Vor listens to all the evidence and makes his judgment. The soul then departs from the Court of Silence through one of the Nine Doors. Once past the Court of Silence, no one can return.

After judgment, the Awakener at the Threshold (who used to be Grandmother Life) opens the senses of the soul so that it can travel to its proper afterlife. Good Orlanthi go to Karulinoran, Orlanth's Hall. People who worship one of Orlanth's brothers, children, or friends may go to their own deity's home, such as Vanganth's initiates collecting high up on Flint Ridge. Good Emeraldans go to Daleel, where sits Ernalda's Loom House. Again, those who worship her daughters or handmaids collect at the cattle field, bakery, or other place instead.

Souls remain in their divine abode long enough to be hidden, healed, rested, or educated. Eventually, most souls return to life in the Inner World. They are reborn as children in their ancestral clans, and grow up to feed the dead and continue the cycle of life. The greatest are not reborn as mortals, but instead become umbri, talosi, or other daimones, or even gods.





## Your Gods



*We have four kinds of gods.*

*Great Gods are first, Father Orlanth and Mother Ernalda.*

*Gods and goddesses are second, who receive worship, and sacrifice when special needs rise.*

*Lesser Gods are third, who receive sacrifices for special needs only.*

*Daimones are fourth, who do not receive worship.*

— from *Andrin's Words*

Here are the deities that your clan worships regularly. You attend worship in each season, at the proper places on your *tula*. Thus, on Tribute Day the clan gathers at the Ice Break. There, the god-talkers sacrifice to Valind and ask him to spare your lands during the winter.

**☉ □ Orlanth and Ernalda**, the Great Deities.

They are broader and greater than any other deity. Everyone sacrifices to them at many holy days during the year.

**☙ Ancestors**. Grandfathers and Grandmothers.

Ancestor Day. Dark Season, Death Week, Wild Day.

**☼ Asrelia**. Goddess of the Earth's Wealth.

Rest Day. Movable holy day, when the harvest is completed.

**☽ Barntar**. God of Plowing.

Plow Blessing Day. Sea Season, Harmony Week, Winds Day.

**☼ Brastalos**. Goddess of the Still Air.

Still Day. Earth Season, Disorder Week, Clay Day. Only women worship on this day, for she is the calm at the center of Orlanth's storm.

**☼ Chalana Arroy**. Goddess of Healing and Resurrection.

Secret Healing Day. Sacred Time, Fate Week, Freeze Day. We invoke her whenever we seek healing of great hurts.

**☼ Elmal**. God of the Sun.

Victorious Sun Day. Fire Season, Fertility Week, Fire Day. He is present each day, and gives us his strength.

**☙ Heler**. God of Rain and Clouds.

Great Rain Day. Movable holy day, when Heler first comes.

**☙ Humakt**. God of Death and War.

Death Day. Storm Season, Death Week, Winds Day. We invoke him before every battle.

**☙ Issaries**. God of Trade and Speech.

Secret Way Day. Sacred Time, Luck Week, Wild Day. We invoke him every market day.

☞ **Kolat.** Great Spirit of the Winds.

Good Winds Day. Storm Season, Disorder Week, Wild Day. We invoke him whenever strange winds blow or spirits are sensed.

Y **Lhankor Mhy.** God of Truth, Knowledge, and Law.

Prophesy Day. Sacred Time, Fate Week, Gods Day. We invoke him at the beginning of every moot.

♁ **Mahome.** Goddess of the Hearth.

Spindle Day. Fire Season, Fertility Week, Clay Day. We invoke her whenever we light a new hearth fire.

☒ **Maran.** Goddess of Forceful Change.

Shutting the Door Day. Earth Season, Fertility Week, Wild Day. She is invoked whenever the earth moves, for good or ill.

☞ **Odayla.** The Storm Bear, God of Hunting.

Giftng Day. Storm Season, Harmony Week, Gods Day. We invoke him at the start of every hunt.

☞ **Thunder Brothers.** The Sons of Orlanth.

Brothers' Day. Movable holy day, when the winds and rain of Storm Season first overcome the snow and winter winds. Only the men and Vingans worship on this day.

■ **Ty Kora Tek.** Goddess of the Dead.

Shroud Day. Dark Season, Illusion Week, Freeze Day. We invoke her whenever someone dies.

☞ **Urox.** The Sandstorm, Chaos-Killer.

Bellow Day. Storm Season, Stasis Week, Wild Day. We invoke him whenever we see or suspect Chaos.

☞ **Valind.** God of Winter, Snow, and Ice Storms.

Tribute Day. Movable holy day, whenever snow first stays on the ground for two days in a row (Darkness Season).

☒ **Vinga.** Defense Storm, the Woman Warrior.

Defense Day. Movable holy day, when the first Defender Storm strikes (usually in late Earth or early Darkness Season).

☒ **Voria.** Goddess of Beginnings, Spring, and Childhood.

Flower Day. Sea Season, Harmony Week, Water Day. We invoke her at every new beginning.

☞ **Voriof.** The Shepherd, God of Childhood.

Sacrifice Day. Dark Season, Harmony Week, Freeze Day.

☞ **Yinkin.** God of Loyalty, Hunting, and Alynxes.

Lover's Day. Storm Season, Harmony Week, Fire Day.

## Other Deities

You know of many other gods. Some are enemies, others just entities you do not worship. You must be careful not to offend them, for some are powerful. You must be cautious of anyone who says they worship them, for such are not Heortlings, and may be dangerous.

♠ **Aldrya.** The Wild Woods, Mother of the Aldryami.

Aldrya was once an enemy, for she tried to grow woods across Orlanth's lands. Ernalda sent Overdruva to make peace with her.

♣ **Angdartha.** The Kidnapper of Esrola.

Angdartha was a servant of the Emperor. He came and took Esrola away to punish the Earth goddesses for not obeying the Emperor. Ernalda taught people the dances that forced him to return Esrola to them.

♣ **Daga.** Drought, Heler's Foe.

Daga is the child of Molanni. He slew Esrola's daughters, so Orlanth released Heler from the Dragon to flood the earth. Orlanth imprisoned Daga in an iron jar, and frees him only to punish God's foes.

● **Deloradella.** Dark Woman, Queen of the Darkness Tribe.

The Uz worship Deloradella, goddess of the night. She is also the mother of Orlanth's son, Crushing Noise, the dark thunder.

♣ **Engizi.** Sky River Titan, God of the River.

Engizi is a great fighter against Chaos worshipped by some people who live along his banks. He invaded Orlanth's lands, but Poverri the Fisher made peace with him.

♣ **Eurmal.** Trickster and Fool.

Eurmal is propitiated at the start of all ceremonies, to keep him from disrupting them. Only his bond to Orlanth keeps him in check.

♣ **Gagarth.** Outlaw, Most Wild Wind.

Gagarth initiated kinstrife, a crime so great Orlanth banished him from the Storm Realm. Outlaws worship him and send his storm blasting across the landscape to destroy buildings and steal sheep.

♣ **Jagrekriand.** The Red Planet, Umath's Killer.

Jagrekriand was the son of the Emperor who killed Umath. Orlanth defeated and bound him into his place in the sky, but he still rebels and tries to escape his prison.

♣ **Karjakan.** The Bad Spirit, Kolat's Foe.

Karjakan led a spirit attack during the Darkness Age that conquered the whole world. Orlanth then sent Kolat to oppose him. Kolat seized his own spirits and used them to defend the Heortlings. Karjakan still occasionally sends his spirits to attack the Heortlings.

~ **Magasta.** Maelstrom, King of the Water Tribe.

Magasta is the lord of the oceans. He and his kin fought against the Storm Tribe. They flooded the whole world, but Orlanth sent Brastalos to make peace with him, and so the waters receded.

∞ **Malia.** The Devourer, Mistress of Plague.

Malia sold her soul to the Predark to feed her hunger. She is now just an empty spirit that nothing can fill. She brings pestilence, but is kept at bay by Ernalda and the other healing goddesses.

■ **Nontraya.** The Spurned, Ernalda's Captor.

Nontraya sought to possess Ernalda. He came in the Darkness to steal her away, but found her dead. He followed her to the Underworld and finally possessed her until Orlanth arrived to free her once more.

⊙ **Shepelkirt.** Poison Blood, the Red Moon.

The evil Lunars worship the Shepelkirt. She seeks to enslave Orlanth and conquer the whole world. She is the wound in Orlanth's sky that never moves, but turns from red to black and back again each week.

~ **Sh'hakarzeel.** The Dragon.

Sh'hakarzeel the Mover of Heavens was slain by Orlanth, but always returned. Orlanth recognized her each time, and used the power of the Orvanshagor to slay her, most recently in the Imperial Age. Her corpse lies in the sky for all to see, and her head decorates his Great Ring.

⚡ **Tekakos.** Stone Mover, Maran Gor's Foe.

Tekakos destroyed Maran when he gave up his spirit and soul and used his emptiness to take away the Earth's movement. Maran waited in the Underworld for Ernalda so that together they could recreate the world.

‡ **Velhara.** Lady of the Wild.

The goddess of the wilds cannot be tamed. Hunters propitiate her on Gifting Day so that she will send prey their way.

☐ **Vestkarthen.** The Volcano, Lord of the Deep Earth.

Vestkarthen came to Umath's Camp as a friend, but Urox wounded him when the two of them argued. He is the father of our own Quivin, but Maran Gor imprisoned him so that he could not harm the earth.

⊙ **Yelm.** Emperor, King of the Sky Tribe.

Yelm was the Emperor who ruled the whole world and made all good things stop moving. Orlanth killed him, then traveled to the Underworld to bring him back for the good of all.

≡ **Zzabur.** Arch-Sorcerer, the False God.

Zzabur is the great sorcerer of the West who steals the very life of the universe to power his spells. He opposed Orlanth on the Lightbringers' Quest, and was defeated by God's true magic.



## Kallyr Starbrow



*Kallyr Starbrow is the Queen of the Kheldon Tribe. She led a great revolt that killed thousands of Lunars, but failed anyway. She and her companions escaped only through luck, and now they burn for another victory. She worships Vinga and Orlanth the King, and has been to the sky world. She says that she is going back, but for now she is in Whitewall with King Broyan.*

# R Call the Lightning R

## Magic Among the Heortlings

*Where the gods meet the world, there is magic.*

Heortling magic is theistic; its magicians draw their power from the gods. Heortlings participate in worship ceremonies led by god-talkers and priests, and so draw down magic to help their communities. The Heortlings know their gods are powerful and superior to mere mortals. Their relationship with the gods is a pact between mortals and supernatural entities, not the blind obedience that the Solar Pantheon requires of its worshippers.

In Heortling belief, a community is a sacred thing. Orlanth and Ernalda made social units such as the family, clan, and tribe. Each social unit has its own store of magical power, collected into a minor god called a *wyter* (see pg. 96). The community's collective actions determine whether that power is strong or weak.

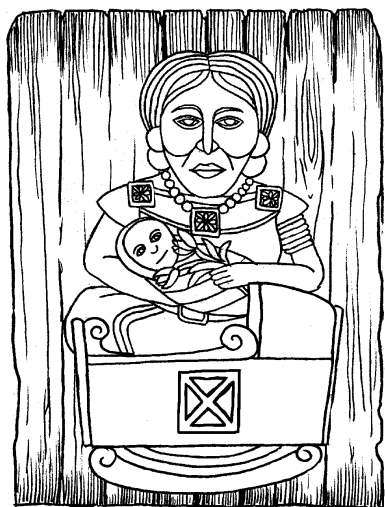
### The Sacred Order

Listen, I am speaking. There is a sacred order that is everywhere and in everything. Look around you and see! It is in the land, it is in your breath, it is in the bonds of kinship. Ernalda spun her thread, and the web endures. The runes give form to it, and are part of it. The eternal paths and the great stories exist because of it. Orlanth and the gods maintain it: they order it, and even they are subject to its rule.

When the Predark threatened to destroy the world, Orlanth quested on the Lightbringer's Path to restore the Sacred Order. There, in the heart of destruction, he met Wakboth and destroyed it. Making peace with the Evil Emperor, the Wind Lord called upon Arachne Solara and helped her reweave the sacred web of *wyrd* and beauty. Everything that is good and whole is part of that web. It is Orlanth's gift.

Only the Predark is apart from the Sacred Order. The Predark can never create, only destroy; can never find freedom, only slavery. The Chaos of the Predark comes in many forms – misshapen brood and burning dragonsnail and Red Moon priestess – but it is always our enemy.

You must earn your revelation. Open your eyes, listen, and breathe. There are sacred gifts and lessons all around, if you are willing to perceive them.



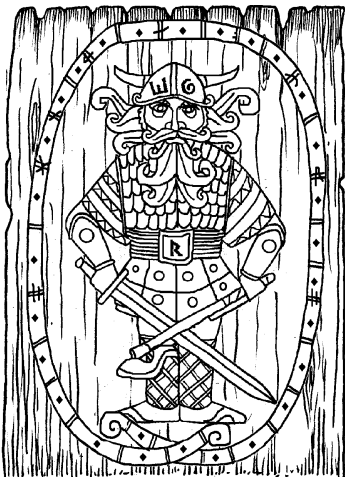
## Ancestors

*The Ancestors are the mortals who preceded us. They are "those who came before." Not just our blood ancestors, grandparents upon grandparents, but also the unmarried cousins, bachelors who died young, spinster aunts, and everyone else who ever bent over the barley at harvest time. We live to continue their work, and they protect and advise us. When we offer them the blood of the black bulls, rams, and cocks in sacrifice, they come here among us and bless our lives.*

Ancestors are essentially the lowest class of daimon in the theistic system. They act as part of a collective; their only identity is their clan. When mortals go to the God World, they become part of this collective as well. Thus, when mortals go to Orlanth's Hall, they find it crowded and bustling with worshippers. Everyone is happily drinking among their relatives, but no individual can be found, father, son, or brother.

The Ancestors spend most of their time in the God World. There, they do the things that they did well in life: farmers join Durev on his stead, warriors feast and practice with the Thunder Brothers, and chieftains and kings serve Orlanth himself. Each family, bloodline, and clan keeps a shrine to their ancestors, and offers small sacrifices to them regularly to keep them happy. Images of the ancestors vary immensely, since each clan and even bloodline has their own traits, icons, and preferred clothing, tools, and weapons.

On Ancestor Day, Heartlings offer formal sacrifice to their ancestors, who briefly visit the world. Their substance is ephemeral on these occasions; they are translucent but visible even to the uninitiated. To their worshippers, they appear in their resplendent divinity, though still as a group rather than as individuals.



*Typical Image of a  
Clan Ancestor*

Ancestors also appear to warn the clan of danger, again as a collective. They do not warn of mundane things, for these have their own protectors: the goddesses oversee the crops and animals, and the clan *wyter* defends the *tula*. A warning by the ancestors indicates a serious threat to the clan. If the clan ignores them they will remove their normal protection. This amounts to a curse, whose effects may seem unconnected to the transgression. Thus, if a clan makes peace with traditional enemies and then ignores the ancestors' warning, wolves might take the lambs or the children might sicken. To appease the ancestors, the clan must first correct their error and then give sacrifices to ask the ancestors to bring back their blessings and protection.

## Sacrifices to the Ancestors

The ancestors receive collateral worship from sacrifices to the gods and the clan *wyter*. On Ancestor Day their mortal descendants give them their own sacrifice. They come to the Inner World to visit with their living relatives. This is the one day of the year that people might recognize individual ancestors. On this day, the ancestors have great power over their descendants, and even the gods cannot save someone from them. Consequently, everyone in the clan is careful to do things correctly to please the ancestors.

The ancestral rites begin at sunset two nights before, and no one eats for two days after that. Everyone gathers at the clan holy place to assist the god-talker or priest with the community magic. The god-talker contacts the *wyter* and sacrifices the burnt barley, bull, and beer. The initial rite lasts until midnight. Afterwards, everyone takes home a part of the sacrifice. The next day, they perform a similar rite for their bloodline's ancestors. On Ancestor Day, the family cleans the house and lays out the family goods for inspection. They tie the best animals to the door of the stead with herd-count ropes tied around their necks. A sumptuous feast is laid out for the ancestors. The ancestors send signs during the day, and everyone looks for them as they prepare the house.

After nightfall the ancestors appear, rising up from the urnfields where their bones lie, or coming in on the wind from the distance. They then travel, as a group, to each of the steads. The ancestors are welcomed at the door of each stead, and one of them steps forth like a ghost. The householder leads the ancestor around to view the goods and peoples, and offers it a chance to eat. Often, the ancestor that enters the house is recognizable as an individual, usually (but not always) the most recently deceased member of the household. This is the only time that an individual ancestor might be recognized.

The ancestor that enters the house always accepts the offer to eat. If it is pleased with the food and display, it says so in a loud voice. The crowd outside then murmurs its satisfaction (or displeasure) and pronounces any curses or blessings on the stead and its residents. They then travel to the next stead. The ancestors return to the Otherworld at dawn, and the steadholders can finally sit down and finish the feast, which the sacred place, time, and actions have blessed.

## Worshipped Heroes

Mortals can become deities. Such exceptional individuals retain their identity after death. They do not join the ancestors as part of the collective, but instead become daimones. They operate as immortals instead of ancestors, and receive their own sacrifices instead of partaking of the sacrifices made to the ancestors.



The key difference between a hero or god and a daimon or ancestor is whether they receive individual sacrifice *and* give some form of magic in return. If a being meets both requirements, it is a god. The world is full of small gods who receive a sacrifice each year for a specific task, such as getting berries, planting cabbage, or protecting from ice storms. Some are tiny, and receive only the occasional sacrifice for something specific, such as protecting from the blue two-headed broos, curing the green pox, or sending away the brick mites.

### The Difference Between Mortals and Gods

— from *Heort's Summer Statements*

We are the descendants of gods. The goddesses were our ancient mothers and the gods our fathers, and all of nature is thus our kin. But we are not gods. For ages our ancestors have been people, set aside from the immortals, and so are we.

All people are a mixture of deities, and have portions of Orlanth and Emalda in them. We are a mixture of Above and Below, of Body and Spirit, of Action and Inaction. But we are mortals, for we died before the Darkness. We are Body and Breath, but something more too. As everyone learns at I Fought We Won, we are part ourselves. This is what makes us individuals, mortals, free-willed, and aware of the universe so that we can make magic. That is a person's soul.

Here is the difference between mortals and gods:

- Gods live in the God World, and have manifestations in the Inner World. Mortals live in the Inner World, and have manifestations in the God World, the Ancestors.
- Gods maintain their identity in the God World, mortals do not.
- Gods do not normally die, but mortals do. When gods do die, slain by the Predark, they never come back. When mortals die they spend time in the God World, and then return to the Inner World.
- Gods, in the God World, never change themselves, their inner natures, or their manifestations. Mortals can change the God World simply by joining into it as Heroes.
- Gods, in the Inner World, never change outside of the natural patterns agreed upon in the Great Compromise. Mortals, in the Inner World, can change themselves and nature.

## Wyters

Every Heortling community has a patron deity called a *wyter*. The *wyter* is the daimon that protects the community and stores its magical potency. A *wyter* is a community god. It is intimately bound to the community that it represents, and it and the community are dependent on each other.

All *wyters* have a prior existence. Whenever Heortlings form a new community they summon the Good Gods and Goddesses (see pg. 61) to witness and bless the act. If the ceremony is successful, one of these deities binds itself to the new organization as the *wyter*. It is usually possible to call a known daimon to create a hero band or form a clan descended from a single person.

All *wyters* must inhabit a physical body. Some become the daimon of a prominent geographical feature, such as a tree or sacred rock. Others incarnate in an animal, or a divine animal manifests as a *wyter*. Many simply inhabit an artifact. This is usually a large metal armband or a statue, but swords, battle standards, thrones, hearths, and other objects are known. Since a daimon is manifest in a physical body, it has no presence on the God World; its tie to the Inner World prevents it from leaving.

This manifestation does not measure the *wyter's* actual size. The awareness or field of influence of the *wyter* surrounds it, invisibly filling the community's territory. A clan *wyter's* territory is its *tula*. A stead's *wyter* is resident in all of the land and buildings within its outer fence (although not necessarily in the outer fields). A temple *wyter* occupies only the temple and any attached holy ground (such as a burial urnfield). A war band's *wyter* has no permanent territory, except the ground the fighters are on when they are in formation or after they set up camp. Beyond this, however, the *wyter* is the community. It is simultaneously in its manifest body, throughout the territory, and in each member of the community.

The community leader has a unique relationship with the *wyter*. This leader is the chieftain for a clan, the commander for a warband or military unit, the leader of a guild, the priest of a temple, etc. He alone can communicate with the *wyter* and command it to act. This act might be to bless everyone with a feat, confuse an invader, or let someone wear the sacred helmet, but the leader makes the decision.

A *wyter* has two modes of communication. It can always communicate simple information to the leader about events within its awareness. The leader does not have to perform a divination or even be near the *wyter's* body for it to tell him what it knows, whether this information is general (something is happening at the border with the Orleving Clan) or specific (a swarm of grasshoppers have covered the Olmstead fields). The *wyter* can speak directly into his mind if he is anywhere within the territory, and over time he develops his skill at understanding its communications.

When the *wyter* speaks to the leader, this communication is manifest. For example, the leaves of the Liberty Oak might rustle, or all of the clan's alynxes begin to howl. Any community member who is near the Liberty Oak when the leaves rustle knows that the *wyter* is speaking, for the leaves never move otherwise, even in the strongest wind. Elders and experienced god-talkers of the community might know enough to get basic information, such as "Big fire in the northwest woods" or "Many strangers in Apple Valley." Normal people cannot understand the message, and need the chieftain to tell them what the *wyter* said.

Losing the object in which the *wyter* manifests is disastrous. The community will be unable to contact the *wyter*, and loses all of its benefits. The community will not be able to support heroquesters until they restore the *wyter*. This act itself often involves a heroquest.

The community ceases to exist if it cannot recover or recreate the object. The daimon then returns to the God World. Destruction of a *wyter's* body must be deliberate and complete to be effective. Such destruction is sometimes difficult, for the sacrifices made by the community heal minor damage to a *wyter's* physical body.

## Wyter Abilities

All *wyters* have characteristics in common, which act as abilities. Each has an **Awareness**, which is its connection to its territory and community. Each acts as a **Defense**, protecting its territory and community from invaders and hostile magic. Finally, all *wyters* can give **Blessings**. The *wyter* can only use these abilities within its territory, but never takes a penalty for distance. Appropriate modifiers for duration or multiple targets apply normally.

Each of the above powers acts as an ability, and can be used in a general way by the *wyter*; this may involve an improvisational modifier. Thus, a *wyter* will always use its Awareness ability to oppose any attempt by people to cross its territory undetected. A *wyter* can oppose any curse or other magic sent against the community with its Community Defense ability. The *wyter* will augment individuals and groups within the community who are acting on the community's behalf. *Wyters* do not need to make ability rolls when using the ability in a general way, any more than a person needs to make a roll to know that he is feeling ill.

Most *wyters* have one or more specific powers in these categories, usually a function of their mythic history. These do not have separate ability ratings, but allow the *wyter* to use its general ability in a specific way by making an ability roll (whether opposed or not).

## Awareness

A *wyter* has a general awareness of its membership and territory. This awareness does not rely on sight, sound, or other mundane senses. It does not depend on the *wyter's* physical body at all. It allows the *wyter* to automatically sense what it is supposed to sense, and does not allow it to sense other things. A *wyter* can sense the general health and integrity of its territory and community, in the same way that a person is aware of the health of his body. Thus, a *wyter* might feel the equivalent of "pain" if there is rust in the barley or discord in a household. It will not know exactly what is causing this "pain," but will be able to identify the general source — "the barley" or "a household." *Wyters* are incapable of sensing the motivations or identity of individuals (other than the clan chieftain), and cannot pinpoint which field or household is causing the disruption.

This awareness always allows a *wyter* to sense outside influences, although it cannot usually tell what they are. A *wyter* senses larger disturbances more easily than small ones, groups more easily than individuals, unprotected

people more easily than those guarded by magic, and sorcerous or animist magic more easily than theistic. If a *wyter* has physical senses it may always use those on anything within its immediate vicinity, thus giving it more information than it receives from its awareness alone.

A *wyter's* awareness is limited by its nature, its field of influence (see pg. 97). A War Clan concentrates all of its magic into conquest and raiding. These are the *wyter's* priorities, and so affect its awareness. Luckily, most communities have other sources of information besides the *wyter*, in particular Orlanth, Ernalda, and the ancestors. Thus, if rust is infecting the barley, a War Clan's *wyter* might be unaware, but a warning may come from Esrola or Barntar (if the clan worships them).

Most *wyters* have additional awareness powers within their ability, which are attuned to specific dangers. For example, a clan *wyter* that in life was a warrior killed fighting against Dara Happans may have the power of *Vigilant for Imperial Enemies*. It uses its Awareness ability generally in most situations, but uses this specific power when imperial soldiers enter the *tula*. Any enemies will probably be noted quickly, but the *wyter* is not as good at telling when streams are tainted, when rust is attacking the barley, or if panthers prowl the upper meadows. It will take the *wyter* a while to figure out if spirits are haunting a field or valley. However, the clan's *fyrd* will never be ambushed by the Empire in its own territory!

A *wyter's* awareness ends at the territory boundaries. It knows that the rest of the world exists, but it cannot sense it. Although it is present within each member of the community, it cannot sense a person who leaves even temporarily. Some few *wyters* might have abilities to sense outside the territory, but this requires a carrier of some kind. Thus, a clan *wyter* embodied in an *alynx* might be able to send its children out of the *tula* to be its eyes.

## Defense

All *wyters* have the ability to defend their community against attacks. Every *wyter* has the power to resist enemy spirits, spells, and deities. In this manner, the *wyter* is the force that resists any curses sent against the community, as discussed under *Community Defense* in the Advanced Magic chapter of *Hero Wars*. Although the *wyter* automatically protects the community without individual members even being aware of an assault, it always notifies the community leader of such attacks so that he can attempt to locate and deal with the attacker. The *wyter* can defend against mundane attacks, by augmenting the community members who resist the attackers.

## Blessings

All *wyters* can bless their members. This is a natural and automatic process, and again is usually unnoticed by most members of the community. The *wyter* rarely uses this power in a general manner. Instead, a *wyter* normally augments any community member who uses an ability related to a specific

blessing. A *wyter* with a *Cure Children of Cough* blessing augments the clan healer; one with *Make Everyone Happier* augments any ability that increases harmony and decreases discord. The blessings cannot prevent children from catching a cold or keep a husband and wife from arguing.

Some blessings are more specific, and are used directly. For example, war-band *wyter* might have a specific feat that it can cast upon the warriors to aid them in battle.

Few *wyters* are capable of offensive action, and any such ability normally falls under the category of Blessings unless gained on a heroquest. Few people risk their *wyter* in battle, however, except for military units: it is just too essential to the community to risk needlessly. Nonetheless, some *wyters* may have an innate feat to knock down foes, ignite them, or make them dizzy. A *wyter* never acts of its own volition by attacking strangers or foes, unless the community has predetermined its response. Normally, it simply alerts the community leader and waits for instructions.

## Community Support

The *wyter* is the conduit through which a community is linked to members who are on heroquest. It channels the community's support to a hero in the Otherworld. This is also how the community benefits from heroquests. Failed heroquests also affect the *wyter*, thus harming the community (see *Narrator's Book*). A *wyter* may also gain Transitory Abilities from community members. A successful heroquester can give his magical benefit to the community instead of keeping it for himself. The *wyter* holds the benefit.

Such a **Transitory Ability** has its own ability rating. It acts as a normal ability, unlike the *wyter's* innate powers. The *wyter* can use the power directly or to augment members of the community. Additionally, the *wyter* can simply confer the ability on any community member, so that they use the ability as if it were their own, until the *wyter* takes it back. The process is identical whether or not the ability manifests in a physical object (such as a magical item).

The *wyter* and community are inseparable. If one is harmed, the other suffers as well. If the *wyter* suffers a complete defeat in a contest, every member of the community feels this and shares in the defeat. The death or actions of an individual have no noticeable effect on the *wyter*, but if many people are killed or enslaved it will severely weaken the *wyter*.

## Withholding Support

Although a person is a member of a community, he is also an individual, and he must make his own decisions. If a person feels that his community is pursuing a wrong course of action, he can withhold his support from the community, and thus from the *wyter*. This is a serious decision, for any such dissent weakens the *wyter*, and thus the community defenses. This dissent

must be formal, stated per laws and traditions, usually at the clan moot. If done correctly, the dissenting individual removes himself from the *wyter* until he formally rejoins, but still remains a full member of the community, with all rights and responsibilities. This withdrawal of support is generally insignificant when performed by one person or a small group. If enough people dissent, however, the *wyter* will weaken.

The same effect occurs when there is kinstrife, without any need for voluntary dissent. Disagreement is a part of every relationship, and such everyday problems have no effect on the *wyter*. True kinstrife, however, can destroy a community, since of itself it weakens the *wyter*.

### **Hero Wars Rules for Wytters**

The community leader controls a *wyter's* resources, and as such acts as if he possesses its abilities. Although *wyter* abilities are treated in most ways as normal abilities, Community Participation does not have any effect upon a *wyter* because the support and spiritual energy of the community is already a part of the *wyter*.

The *wyter's* ability ratings are generally in proportion to the size, power, and age of the organization they represent. Thus, a new hero band with 10 members might have a *wyter* with ability ratings around 16 $\square$  and a clan of 1200 people one with abilities around 15 $\square$ 2. Although the *wyter* is a god or goddess with a separate and distinct existence, it is tied to the well being of the community. It is possible for a *wyter* to be present in a vast territory but still be weak if its members are few, come together only occasionally, make no special sacrifices, or are sick or hungry.

In game terms, a standard *wyter* has a base ability rating of 10 $\square$  in each of its three main abilities. (Some *wytters* might begin with a higher base rating at the narrator's option, depending on the nature of the daimon.) This base rating increases with the community's population. Use the Extraordinary Support column of the Community Participation chart from *Hero Wars* to determine this increase. This is not a function of active support — all adult members of the community automatically provide the equivalent of extraordinary support to the *wyter* merely by being alive. If people leave the community or die, the *wyter's* power changes, because those people are not renewing their connection to the *wyter*. The *wyter* is an independent entity, however, and even if the entire community is dead and gone, the *wyter* itself remains, just growing much smaller and weaker. As long as the *wyter's* physical body is extant and the correct rituals performed, the community can reestablish itself with the same *wyter*.

A *wyter's* ability ratings do not permanently increase or decrease unless the population of the community changes. Divine Wrath (see pg. 78) and special community magic may temporarily increase or decrease the *wyter's* ability ratings or provide a modifier to specific abilities.

✧ Your Wyter ✧

Your clan has a *wyter*, as do all clans. In the Vingkotling Age, Thoraval was a great farmer, and his people followed Barntar and Gustbran. When war came, however, he reforged his plow into a sword and followed Vingkot against the Dara Happans. He was a great warrior, but never forgot his roots, and when he had the chance he stole magic powers from the sky gods to help his people. When he returned to farming, the Aldryami tried to grow a forest across his stead. Although he had taken weapons from the Dara Happans, he met the Plant People in peace instead of war, and they taught him more magic to help his crops. Your clan is friendly with the Aldryami to this day.

Thoraval died defending Vingkot from Sky Captains at the battle of Mahomestead. His people, your ancestors, survived the Long Dark because of what Thoraval taught them. When Heort came, they chose to be a Peace Clan, and so gained further blessings on their crops. But they and you have never forgotten that a clan without warriors soon becomes a clan without people.

The *wyter* protects your clan from enemy magic, and blesses the clan with its power and luck. Without the *wyter*, your clan would not exist today, and so you sacrifice to the *wyter* on your founder's day and during the Sacred Time. These sacrifices strengthen your *wyter*, so that it can defend your community.

Your *wyter's* magic is unique, different from that of any other clan. Your *wyter's* blessings aid your crops. Your *wyter* gives your warriors aid as well, and can help the most when you resist your traditional foes, the Dara Happans. Without its magic, you would have fared far worse when the Lunars came to the land.

Since the Lunars have come, times have been difficult. Although in past generations heroes from your clan have traveled to the Other Side and brought back god treasures, no such quest has been successful in decades.

*Physical Manifestation:* Clan Ring, made out of bronze and silver, which your chieftain wears on his arm.

*Communication Manifestation:* All bronze on the *tula* becomes warm to the touch.

*Wyter Abilities:*

**Awareness 20W2** (Recognize Aldryami, Vigilant for Imperial Enemies)

**Defense 15W2** (Hide from Imperial Enemies)

**Blessings 20W2** (Early Spring Growth, Grow Vegetables, Melt Ice, Tame Bull).

*Transitory Abilities:* None.

Not all *wyters* can be voluntarily withdrawn from. The Orlanthei clan-making ritual does include these provisions, because “No one can make you do anything.” Individuality is always an option in Orlanthei society. Smaller organizations, or those with strict heirarchical structures, rarely include the rites for a member to excuse himself, because they cannot afford for even one member to act contrary to the group.

In game terms, people who voluntarily dissent do not count towards the community’s population when figuring the *wyter’s* ability ratings. Kinstrife is different and uses the rules for Divine Wrath in chapter 3 (see pg. 78).

## The Sacred Order of Time

*Time is the Sacred Order. Each day is sacred, and each season brings the blessings of the gods. When Orlanthe destroyed Wakboth, Arachne Solara fed on its corpse and grew pregnant. Time is her child. Each day is a god, each a part of her sacred web. Our lives run according to the days and seasons of the year.*

### The Cycle of the Year

Sea Season brings the blessing winds, and it is a fertile time of new life and new beginnings. It is the time for courtship and marriage-negotiations, of trade contracts and treaties. We plant, we sow, and we shelter the new-born lambs. Our hungry cattle graze the fresh new grass. We plow our fallow fields and harvest the winter crop.

Fire Season brings war and raiding. It is the time for ceremony and valor, for the destruction of enemies. We rejoice in Elmal’s amber bounty, and shelter against Heler’s blue rain.

Earth Season brings Ernalda’s Blessing. It is the harvest time, when we end our feuds and find another way. It is the time to cull our herds, hunt the bounty of the forest, and repair our steads in preparation for the coming winter. We burn charcoal, gather peat and wood, and make candles and torches. With the first frost comes Minlister’s Blessing, and we pause in our labors to brew cider and ale.

Dark Season is the bitter time of snow and darkness, the season of Valind and the Vadrudi. Ice Demons and Uz haunt the land, and deep drifts of snow may cover our steads. The bitter Humakt wind guards us, but we must stay close to the hearth and maintain the Elmal flame. It is the season for stories and singing, for the making of masks and the learning of magics.

Storm Season brings the Hunger Time, but also hope and celebration, as the elements battle to claim the coming year. As we consume the last of our winter food, the desperate and hungry may be forced to raid their neighbors or slaughter too many of their herds. Great storms wrack the land as Orlanthe drives off his chill brother. With the melting of the snow, pale blue stomblooms proclaim God’s victory, and we celebrate with festive food kept aside even through the hungry weeks of winter. Then comes the first plowing and sowing, and the release of winter stock from the barns.

In Sacred Time, we enter the Godplane to make the world anew. It is the time of our most sacred ceremonies, the quests of the Lightbringer’s Rite and the victories of I Fought We Won. It is a time of great rejoicing or great sorrow, depending on the outcome of the rites, which show us our *wyrd* for the coming year.



## Calendar Runes

Days of the Week	Phases of the Moon	Weeks of the Season
● Freeze Day (Darkness)	☾ Crescent Go Moon	⚊ Disorder Week
☵ Water Day (Water)	● Dying Moon	⚋ Harmony Week
☶ Clay Day (Earth)	● Black Moon	† Death Week
☴ Winds Day (Air)	☾ Crescent Come Moon	⚋ Fertility Week
☲ Fire Day (Fire)	☾ Empty Half Moon	⚊ Stasis Week
♁ Wild Day (Luck)	☽ Full Moon	⚋ Movement Week
* Gods Day (Fate)	● Full Half Moon	⚋ Illusion Week
		⚊ Truth Week

The traditional Heortling calendar has been in use since the Dawn. It contains five seasons, each named after one of the five primal elements. Each season has eight weeks named after the divine powers of the Gloranthan Court, the elder deities that created the world. Five days of the week take their names from the primal elements, while the other two days are named for chance and the gods, respectively. Every year ends with a two-week period called Sacred Time, which is dedicated to the working of magic to renew the world. Sacred Time is special, outside of normal time. During these two weeks, all members of the religion spend time every day in ceremonies.

Two runes mark each day of the week. The first is the standard elemental association, the second the phase of the Red Moon that day **in Dragon Pass**. The Red Moon is always in the sky, day and night, waxing and waning through its seven-day cycle. Despite their hatred of it, the Heortlings cannot escape its influence, and its phase is important. In the Dying and Black phases, Lunar magic is weakest, and during the Full Moon it is strongest (as described in the Advanced Magic chapter of *Hero Wars*). The Heortlings take advantage of this information when planning attacks and ceremonies.

## Seasonal Calendars

The calendars in this section show the regular Heortling worship days. They do not list every holy day of every deity, but instead show the most important, the “Twenty-eight Days” of the sacred calendar. These are the public holy days of Orlanth and Ernalda, as well as the other important deities, such as Urox, Humakt, and the Lightbringers. All communal worshippers attend these ceremonies. When counted, they equal about one day in ten. In fact, they outline the 10% time commitment required of all communal worshippers (see pg. 62), including initiates and devotees of all gods. The fourteen days of Sacred Time do not count as part of the year. The Sacred Days at the end of the year are automatic, counted as part of the worshipper’s commitment without being part of the “Twenty-eight Days.”

Each season has its own calendar. The runes show the holy days, with the specific rune indicating the primary deity who receives sacrifices. Numbered notes mark days of political or economic significance. After each calendar, these runes appear in order, with the name of the deity and a page reference to learn more about them. Fixed holy days come first, then the movable holy days determined by the weather. Numbered notes appear next, followed by a brief synopsis of the prevailing weather conditions for that season. (For more information on these weather patterns, see *Dragon Pass Weather* on pg. 121.)

### Holy Days

All Heortling gods have holy days that commemorate their mythic deeds. The magic of a deity is easier to invoke, and can be more powerful, on a holy day. Important deities have many holy days (often at least one in each season), and also have high holy days, which are even more important and supernaturally charged. See the *Advanced Magic* chapter of **Hero Wars** for more information on the effects of holy days on magic.

Heortling holy days are dependent in part on the weather, since Orlanth is the God of Weather. Because of this, their holy days are of two types. Most are fixed, always occurring on the same day each year. Others are tied to meteorological phenomena, and so the exact day on which worship occurs varies each year depending on the weather, occurring earlier or later, or even in the “wrong” season (although the latter occurs only rarely).

It is important to note that Heortlings count days starting from dusk, not dawn. Thus, when we say that a ceremony begins at dusk the “night before” clay day, as far as the Heortlings are concerned it begins at dusk on clay day.

*continued on page 118*

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## Sea Season Holy Days

- ☰ **Flower Day.** Voria gives her blessing to everyone on this day (see pg. 89, 183).
- ⚓ **Plow Blessing Day.** Barntar the Plowman (see pg. 88).
- ☒ **Honoring Day.** Ernalda Allmother (see pg. 183, 187).
- ⚔ **Sword Day.** Orlanth Adventurous (see pg. 212, 219). Clan *fyrð* musters (see pg. 44).

### Variable Holy Days

⚡ **Thunder Day.** Ohorlanth the Great Storm (see pg. 212, 241).

### Other Important Events

- (1) Spring Equinox. Day and night are of equal length. Afterwards, days are longer than nights.
- (2) Clan Moot.
- (3) Tribal Market Day.

### Seasonal Weather (see pg. 121)

*Dominant Storm:* Ohorlanth Storm, from the northwest.

*Wind Strength:* Mostly Strong, some gusts and a few gales.

*Clouds:* Common, with plenty of moderate rain.

*Temperature:* Cool early, warm later.

☉ Fire Season ☉							
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## Fire Season Holy Days

- ☪ **Hearth Day.** Mahome, Hearth Goddess (see pg. 184, 189).
- ☼ **Victorious Sun Day.** Elmal, Sun God (see pg. 88).
- ⚡ **Lawstaff Day.** Orlanth Allfather (see pg. 213, 229).

### Variable Holy Days

- ☁ **Great Rain Day.** Heler the Rain God (see pg. 88, 212).

### Other Important Events

- (1) Summer Solstice. Longest day and shortest night of the year.
- (2) Founder's Day. Anniversary of the founding of the Kingdom of Sartar.
- (3) Tribal Moot.
- (4) Tribal Market Day.
- (5) Presentation Day. Orlanth Rex and Alakoring holy day (see pg. 245).

### Seasonal Weather (see pg. 122)

*Dominant Storm:* Heler Storm, from the southwest; Elmal (i.e., none).

*Wind Strength:* Gusts to Weak.

*Clouds:* About half the time; very heavy when present, with much rain.

*Temperature:* Hot to warm.

☐      Earth Season      ☐

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## Earth Season Holy Days

- ☞ **Still Day.** Brastalos, Still Air Goddess (see pg. 88). **Men and women worship separately.**
- ☐ **Tool Day.** Ernalda the Great Goddess (see pg. 177, 184).
- ▣ **Shutting the Door Day.** Maran the Earthshaker (see pg. 89).
- ☒ **Goose Day, Harvest Day.** Esrola the Earth Goddess (see pg. 184, 202). **Attended by women only.**
- ☞ **Reaping Day.** Durev the Steadholder (see pg. 213, 232). **Attended by men only.**

### Variable Holy Days

- ☒ **Defense Day.** Vinga, the Defender Storm (see pg. 89, 213).
- ☒ **Rest Day.** Asrelia, Goddess of Wealth (see pg. 88, 184). End of the Harvest.

### Other Important Events

- (1) Autumnal Equinox. Day and night of equal length. Afterwards, nights are longer than days.
- (2) Tribal Market Day.
- (3) Clan Moot is held the day after Rest Day. Thus, there is no set date.

### Seasonal Weather (see pg. 122)

*Dominant Storm:* Brastalos, Vinga (i.e., none).

*Wind Strength:* None to weak.

*Clouds:* Few, usually no rain.

*Temperature:* Warm to cool.



● Darkness Season ●							
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## Darkness Season Holy Days

- ☞ **Sacrifice Day.** Voriof the Shepherd (see pg. 89).
- 🌳 **Ancestor Day.** Mortal Ancestors (see pg. 88, 95).
- 🔲 **Loom Blessing Day.** Ernalda the Healer (see pg. 185, 192).
- ⚡ **Protection Day.** Orlanth Thunderous (see pg. 214, 238).
- **Shroud Day.** Ty Kora Tek, Goddess of the Underworld (see pg. 89, 185).

### Variable Holy Days

- ☞ **Tribute Day.** Valind, God of Winter (see pg. 89, 214).

### Other Important Events

- (1) Slaughter Day. On this day, the butchering of the herds begins.
- (2) Tribal Market Day.
- (3) Winter Solstice. Shortest day and longest night of the year.
- (4) Law Day. Orlanthanandrin, Law Maker (see pg. 243).

### Seasonal Weather (see pg. 123)

*Dominant Storm:* Valind Storm, from the north.

*Wind Strength:* Strong, some gales.

*Clouds:* Constant, often total.

*Temperature:* Cold.

<span style="float: left;">☯</span> <span style="margin-left: 100px;">Storm Season</span> <span style="float: right;">☯</span>							
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## Storm Season Holy Days

- ∞ **Good Winds Day.** Kolat, Source of Wind Spirits (see pg. 89).
- ⚡ **Lover's Day.** Yinkin the Alynx God (see pg. 89).
- † **Death Day.** Humakt, God of Death (see pg. 88).
- 👑 **Queen Day.** Ernalda the Queen (see pg. 185, 198).
- 🌪️ **Bellow Day.** Urox, Dust Storm God (see pg. 89).
- 🌀 **One Day.** Orlanth the Great God (see pg. 207, 215).
- 👤 **Wife Day.** Ernalda the Wife (see pg. 185-186).

### Variable Holy Days

- 👯 **Brothers' Day.** The Thunder Brothers (see pg. 214). **Attended by men only (plus Vingan women).**

### Other Important Events

- (1) Clan Moot. Chieftain's Shout, Wapentake Day. Clan Chieftains acclaimed (see pg. 24).
- (2) Tribal Market Day.

### Seasonal Weather (see pg. 124)

*Dominant Storm:* Ohorlanth, from the northwest.

*Wind Strength:* Weak to gales.

*Clouds:* Extremely variable.

*Temperature:* Warm to cold.

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## Sacred Time Holy Days

- ☯ **Together Day.** The Storm Pantheon.
- ☯ **Lightbringer Day.** Lightbringers.
- ☀ **Survival Day.** Elmal (see pg. 88).
- ∞ **I Fought We Won Day.** Heort the Founder.
- ⋈ **Secret Way Day.** Issaries (see pg. 88).
- ||| **Secret Healing Day.** Chalana Arroy (see pg. 88).
- ☯ **Return Day.** The Storm Pantheon.
- Υ **Prophecy Day.** Lhankor Mhy (see pg. 89).

## Together Day

### *Freeze Day of Luck Week*

Together Day celebrates the long and happy marriage of Orlanth and Ernalda. It begins joyously, with the unmarried worshippers praising married couples, giving them gifts of bread, wine, bright clothing, and copper and silver ornaments. As the day passes, they spend more time apart. By dusk the women are gone, just as Ernalda left Orlanth during the Darkness. Although men and women worship together in most of the Sacred Time rites that follow, married couples spend the next week and a half apart. They sleep and eat separately (even though unmarried people share their meals and even their beds if they wish), and come together again only on Return Day.

## Lightbringer Day

### *Winds Day of Luck Week*

Lightbringer Day commemorates when Orlanth set off to heal the world. The two weeks between his high holy day and this day are full of special celebrations leading up to the day when the Lightbringer's Quest is re-enacted (or, sometimes, begun for real). Each initiate and devotee taking the part and living the ordeals of his or her deity. Without these ceremonies, the clan will face Chaos and darkness: the very earth will be infertile, streams will dry up, the wild wind will ravage the tula, and healing will be impossible. At the height of the rite's first day, seven leaders leave on the Lightbringers' Quest. They are

gone until Return Day, a week later. Various parts of the quest are performed throughout the week, and the clan must continue without their leaders, sending them their support and power so that they do not fail.

## I Fought We Won Day

### *Gods Day of Luck Week*

All initiates and devotees except the seven involved in the Lightbringer's Quest participate in these rites. Each person faces the armies of Chaos alone, but together they defeat the Devil. Everyone is tested by the rituals, and this is the most dangerous day of the year. Real Chaos creatures are faced, and it is not unknown for a person to be killed during the rite. However, as long as all Heortlings perform the rituals, the killed participants will be healed and returned by the collected magical power of the people.

## Return Day

### *Winds Day of Fate Week*

The Lightbringers return from the underworld with Ernalda. Together they heal Elmal who leaps joyously across the sky, bearing the Sun Torch. The other gods and goddesses awaken from their death-sleep. Time begins, Chaos recedes, and the world is healed of all ills. The feast honors the Lightbringers, who saved the world. Just as this day reunites Orlanth and Ernalda, married couples who were separated on Together Day celebrate the return of love to their marriage.

## The Sacred Order of Space

*The world is sacred. The Six Directions that order the world are sacred. When Orlanth first set his camp, he named and set guardians to each of the six directions: north, south, east, west, above, and below. Each of the Guardians carries a truth, a sign, and a power. "As it was, so it is." Every time we begin a ceremony, make sacrifice, or mark the boundaries of a tula, we call upon the guardians. In doing this, our actions become strong in both worlds.*

*Steads and camps also reflect the power of the six directions: they are set out in the same way as the stead of Orlanth, with each bloodline having its proper direction and place. As Orlanth sits in the north, so do all our kings and chieftains. As Humakt is master of the powers of separation, so do those cursed to serve him make their lodges beyond the circle of kin.*

*The six directions reflect the world. For those with eyes to see, many secrets can be known. The colors, strength, and direction of the wind show truths that no skald can sing. The shape of the clouds, the splay of bolted lightning across the sky, and the paths of birds and animals also reveal hidden truths, for all are linked in the web of wyrd. An Odaylan hunter can follow the tracks of a bird through the air because he knows and understands the Sacred Order. A herder knows the right direction to drive her summer flocks, if only she reads the signs.*

*There is another, hidden, direction. It is the most magical of all. Do not invoke it lightly for it is secret, and its power can destroy you.*

## Holy Places

Holy places are the locations where the deities performed great acts. They often have great natural power, even without containing formal temples. At a holy place, the barriers to the Other Side are weak, and the actions of worshippers there connect them more easily to the gods. Holy places are often dedicated to a specific deity, and most deities have more than one. Many Heortling holy places are not dedicated to a specific deity, however, and instead a worshipper can contact any deity. The magic of a deity is always easier to invoke at a holy place. See the Advanced Magic chapter of **Hero Wars** for more information, keeping in mind that holy places dedicated to a specific deity provide greater bonuses than do general ones.

Orlanth's holy places are many, for his adventures carried him everywhere. Hill tops and oak groves are sacred, as are blessing stones and carved rocks, pinnacles and crests, pledge markers and dolmens, the storm spirals carved into the landscape by the ancestors before the Dawn, and lightning-scarred earth marked by a blue-bright profusion of boltblooms. Most Orlanth holy places recognize all of his aspects, although one may be preminent.

The holy places of Ernalda are bounteous and many, for she gave life to all the world. Fields and water-blessed meadows are sacred to her, as are grottoes and caves, votive shafts or wells dug into the earth, hearth and home, the standing stones raised by the ancestors before the Dawn, and the fertile earth filled with plants and animals. As with Orlanth, most holy places to Ernalda recognize all of her aspects, though one may be central at that shrine.

A Heortling may find a holy place anywhere: in a cow meadow, in the wilds of the forest, or atop the windy heights of a mountain that only the gods or magic can scale. Heortlings can always recognize such a place: it is sharp and clear to the eye, colors are brighter, sounds are sharper, and emotions powerful and strong. The local Heortlings usually know and use most natural holy places. Any Heortling who comes upon a holy place can recognize the deity worshipped, and often the clan that worships, by the oath banners, blessing flags, altar stones, carved votary sticks, and offerings that he finds there.

Some holy places contain temples, but many more do not. Temples hold images of the gods, sacrifices and offerings, and ancestral relics. They are the homes to powerful guardian daimones, and at times to the gods themselves, but the Heortlings do not need them for worship. Indeed, most Heortlings prefer to worship in the open air, wherever the winds may blow and the scent of the earth fills the air.

## Ceremonies

The Inner World is also called the Human World, because it is the place of everyday life. The regular ceremonies supercharge the everyday world with divine energy and make it more like the Other Side. As explained in *Hero Wars*, temples and other holy places are simultaneously in the Human World and the God World during ceremonies. With the proper prayers and rites, initiates can leave the holy place and enter the God World instead of exiting back into the Human World.

Ernalda's ceremonies begin with the worshippers performing traditional songs and dances. These continue throughout the rites, although the worshippers normally take breaks at certain times. The depth of a rite sees the worshippers enter deep trances, from which they awaken in the God World. Orlanth's ceremonies usually have a transitional phase where the worshippers turn into winds and fly upward to the nearest holy place, which is always on a hilltop or mountaintop. The distance traveled in this airy form varies, but establishes a series of places where the sacred winds gather before blowing away to the God Plane.

The mountains where Heortlings gather are called God Tops. The Orlanthi recognize three kinds: the Greatest Mountain, the three Great Mountains, and the Grand Mountains, which are many.

Kero Fin is the Greatest Mountain. On Orlanth's high holy day, all of his initiates within a radius of about 400 miles gather and fly around Kero Fin before passing to the Storm Realm. This area includes all of Dragon Pass, Kethaela, Tarsh, Balazar, and the surrounding regions. (This area is roughly the region occupied by the Heortling peoples at the Dawn, plus Prax.) Orlanthi in other lands, such as Ralios, have their own Greatest Mountain, and fly there instead of to Kero Fin.

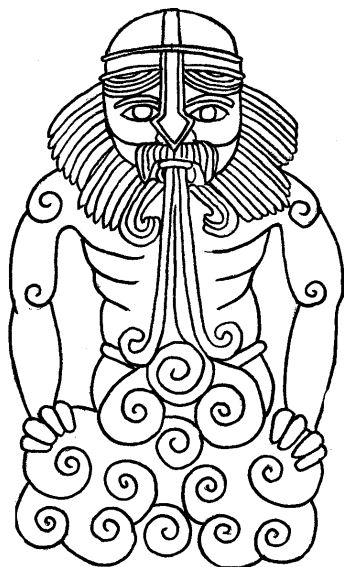


☞ **What Does This Look Like?**

At any ceremony outsiders see the mundane events, but they do not see what *truly* occurs. They do not see what the worshippers do, because they do not know the secrets or have the proper perceptions. For example, when outsiders watch an Orlanth ceremony they see the men dancing throughout the entire rite. They may even see the men rise into the air at the climax and fly in a spiral above the temple. They cannot see that the worshippers have actually left their bodies and flown into the God World. Similarly, outsiders at an Ernaldan rite see the women continue to dance, even after the worshippers know that they have fallen asleep and entered the Earth Realm. In both cases, the souls of the worshippers have gone to the God World.

Great Mountains of immediate importance are Arrowmound, Conquest Peak, and Stormwalk. They are visited on Orlanth's other holy days, since most people cannot fly as far on those days, usually only between 100 and 200 miles (depending on the number of worshippers). Other Great Mountains are known outside of Kerofinela.

At any other Orlanthi ceremony, such as on Hedkoranth's holy day, this spiritual travel is limited to about 60 miles. Thus, in their general clan ceremonies Orlanthi go to the Greatest Mountain if they can reach it, or the Great Mountains, if Kero Fin is too far. Many Heortlings are not within flying distance of these four, and so travel to the nearest Grand Mountain: Mount Zomi, where the Wind Temple is; Mount Quivin, above Boldhome; Mount Lyran, in the Hydra Mountains; and Mount Drastch, in the Indigo Mountains. Many Grand Mountains are known outside of the local area.



## Dragon Pass Weather

Weather follows a seasonal pattern that has remained unchanged since the Dawn. Each season the winds come from the same direction as the previous year. Exceptions to these patterns are frequent and always important.

### ☞ What are Umbroli?

Umbroli, to whom mention is made in “Dragon Pass Weather,” are petty air gods, or daimones in the precise vocabulary. *Anaxial’s Roster*, details them on pages 196-198. They are most often associated with winds, but also include specific seasonal storms, clouds, and even temperature. Umbroli with great strength or multiple attributes often have names and titles, and receive sacrifice for specific purposes (usually to come, if they are good; or to leave, if they are bad).

Umbroli are often measured by the strength of their wind, but such measures do not always accurately define an umbrol. Sometimes the bitter cold or voluminous rain makes an umbroli stronger than just its wind implies.

## Sea Season

### *Ohorlanth, the Thunder Storm*

Sea Season is the equivalent of springtime, and is often called Spring, Wet Season (because of its wetness), or, occasionally, Ohorlanth’s Season. Ohorlanth the Thunder Storm rules in Sea Season. He is a manifestation of Orlanth Thunderous, the Life Father in all his glory. His rains bring fertility and bounty, and ensure a good crop from the season’s planting. He chases away the cold, and brings fertility and warmth.

Ohorlanth rolls in from the northwest early in the season, shifting slowly so that at the end the winds come from the west. The temperature starts cool, but is increasingly warmer. The winds are normally strong early in the season, but calmer at the end of Spring. About half of the time, clouds sweep in before the wind. These are great herds of sheep, and often ram storms rage. Most of the rain falls in Dragon Pass, though some gets over the range into Prax or Kethaela.

### Ohorlanth’s Minions and Assistants

- Northwest Gale Umbroli.
- Heler, the Rain God.
- Lightning(s).
- Gentle Squall Umbroli.
- Voriof Sprinkle Wind.
- Hedkoranth (early hailstorm).

## Fire Season

### *Elmal and the Heler Storm*

Fire Season is the equivalent of summer. It celebrates the rivalry between Heler and Elmal. Even before Orlanth was chieftain these two were rivals for Esrola. Even before these two gods joined with the bountiful earth there was the struggle between warm and cold, above and below. Elmal is the bright and warm god, Heler the cold and wet one. Elmal is the bright day that comes from the Sun. Heler is the dense, warm fertile rain of summer.

Most of the time, Elmal rules, and the weather is bright and hot. Heler is a vast cloud that gathers over the Choralinthor Bay, which sometimes grows so large that it just creeps over all of Kethaela and up into the hills. He is pitifully weak, and his winds grow even weaker throughout the season. Sometimes, however, even his tiny wind is enough to send the great cloud rumbling into Dragon Pass.

Actual storms are rare, but generally huge when they do occur. The clouds are generally tall and wide, and filled with rain. They are called Helerian Clouds, Helerian Rains, and so on. Because of their color, they are sometimes called the "blue sheep clouds." They always come from the southwest.

### **Heler's Minions and Assistants**

- Dini Wind, from the south (rare but deadly).
- The Summer Umbroli: the Flower Wind, the Stilling Wind, and the Love Shower Wind.
- Molanni. Molanni is the windless and hot air that on some days makes people breathless with its oppression. Molanni can appear in other seasons, but most often comes in summer.
- Iphara, the Murder Fog. Iphara is another enemy of Elmal. Her huge fogs walk right up the earth and cover all of Kethaela. Sometimes they climb right up the river valleys into Dragon Pass. She creeps heavily, dark, cold, and wet, through all the low places, and usually comes when there is no wind.

## Earth Season

### *The "Ernalda Wind": Brastalos and the Defender Storm*

Earth Season is similar to late summer and early fall. Earth is a great dampener of Air; as Ernalda's power is great in this season, the wind is extremely weak. This is part of her power over Orlanth, which proves that "There is always another way." Sometimes she is called the "Another Way Wind," which simply means that there is no wind at all.

The temperature ranges from hot early in the season to cool at the end. The season is over when the first real Valind Storm blows.

## Earth Season Storms

- **Brastalos.** She is the No Wind. She rules early in the season, when there is no wind. The temperature starts out hot but cools to be merely warm.
- **Vinga.** She comes around midseason with the first violent rainstorm, often called Vinga's Defense Storm. Afterwards, other Defender Winds come from the northwest. They grow stronger as the air grows cooler. Storms during this time are abrupt, erratic, and often of great strength.
- **Eurmál.** Sometimes significant breezes puff from the southwest early in the season, and from the northwest in the middle. They are often called the Trick winds or the Eurmál Winds, because of their sporadic appearance, unpredictable types, and variable intensity.

## Darkness Season

### *The Valind Storm*

Darkness Season is winter. Valind, the God of Winter, rules. The season is cold, usually below freezing, with deep snow and ice.

The Valind Storm blows from the north with strong winds, sometimes very strong. Valind himself rarely appears, but his storms are bad enough. The residents of Dragon Pass know many types of snow and winter storms, too numerous to mention, of which we describe only the most famous.

### **Valind's Minions and Assistants**

- **Brightnight Storm.** This is not a storm, but a night with no wind or clouds, a rare winter occurrence in Dragon Pass. As its name implies, the night is visible clearly overhead. It is almost unbelievably cold.
- **The Howler.** The Howler is a gale-force umbroli that pushes the others on harder and brings a lot of noise. It is a wind without any specific clouds, and often appears helping other storms.
- **Vadrudi Storm.** The Vadrudi often cause sudden changes in the weather for the worse. They can blow in from any direction.
- **Inora Cold.** Inora is another windless winter goddess. She lives atop mountains that are ice clad all year. Sometimes, even without winds, she and her chill creep down from the mountaintops to freeze the land.
- **Humakt.** Humakt's Storm comes from the north. It brings no clouds, is bitterly cold, and sends strong, cutting winds. In sacrifices, this wind is addressed as "Lord Umbroli called Cloudless Blast Storm."
- **Ithas.** Ithas is the total overcast that comes with herds of black cloud sheep but no snow. Sometimes she receives propitiatory sacrifice as a Darkness goddess.
- **Big Ice Storm.** This storm comes from the north bearing precipitation that falls wet and then freezes.
- **Little Ice Storm.** From the north, when ice falls.
- **Wet Snowstorm.** From the north, when sleet falls.

## Storm Season

### *Orlanth, the Warrior Wind*

Orlanth asserts himself in Storm Season. He fights off the forces of brother Winter, and prepares the way for peace, growth, pleasure, and prosperity.

At first, Valind is strong, but the Thunderous winds increasingly break the storms. Orlanth's storms come from the northwest, and do not carry ice or snow. Because of their battle, for weeks in midseason it is possible for any variety of storm to bluster in. Hedkoranth may brawl against Great North Ice Gale, or Helamakt roar out against Wet Snowstorm and Howler. Almost any of the Valind Winds can appear. Sometimes, even Heler's rains fall. Eventually, warm winds replace the frigid ice storms. White sheep replace the angry black ram storms, and the rain starts to become warmer as well.

### **Orlanth's Minions and Assistants**

- **Victorious Storm.** This warm storm melts the snow across the Pass. On a good year, it marks the end of the Valind Winds, but usually the struggle between freeze and thaw continues for several weeks.
- **The Arrow Wind.** This wind is so-named because it blows erratically and fitfully, gusty and weak, and so is terrible for archers.
- **The Windstream.** This hard, steady wind blows over Spider Mountain towards Kero Fin. It is usually cold, but free of clouds.
- **The King's Wind.** This wind is strong. It blows from the northeast, but clears the sky of all clouds.
- **Ohorlanth.** The most desirable storm. Early its winds are sporadic and short, but then the Thunder Brothers join in. By the season's end the warming wind brings rain, allows plowing and seeding, and dries the ground for spring activities.

## Non-seasonal Winds and Storms

### **Counterwinds**

Seasons normally have winds and storms that come from the same general directions. On the ground, however, the wind is often different from that seasonal norm. At times, anyone can see that the dominant wind is blowing from a non-seasonal direction. Sometimes these unusual movements can be traced to a special wind or storm, such as Urox or Gagarth. Just as often, however, the Counterwinds cause these unusual movements.

Counterwinds are a natural phenomenon of the Orlanth air, for the nature of air is change. Knowledge of the Counterwinds is an Orlanth secret, and not even the great God Learner seekers or the cruelly clever Lunar scholars can sense the winds like the Orlanthi can. Because of this secret knowledge, Orlanth's initiates can tell what the weather will be in the near future, as long as great magic does not disrupt it.

## Gagarth, the Wild Hunter

Gagarth is the Wild Hunter, whom Orlanth exiled to the Wastes. Gagarth is the tornado. His twisters appear often in Fire Season and nearly as often in Storm Season, but can abruptly burst from any cloud formation when the outlaws who worship this vile god have enough power to summon him. Tornadoes are dangerous because they are the only winds that can normally pick things up and then drop them from a height.

## Kolat Winds

Kolat winds are erratic, and can come out of any direction in any season. They are not usually strong. Instead, they are dangerous because they are spirits, not daimones. Thanks to the efforts of the kolatings, they are not usually a problem. These invader winds often carry odd bits of the Spirit World, such as disease spirits, the ghosts of people that became spirits instead of daimones, or tree or rock spirits that are seeking to incarnate.

## Urain

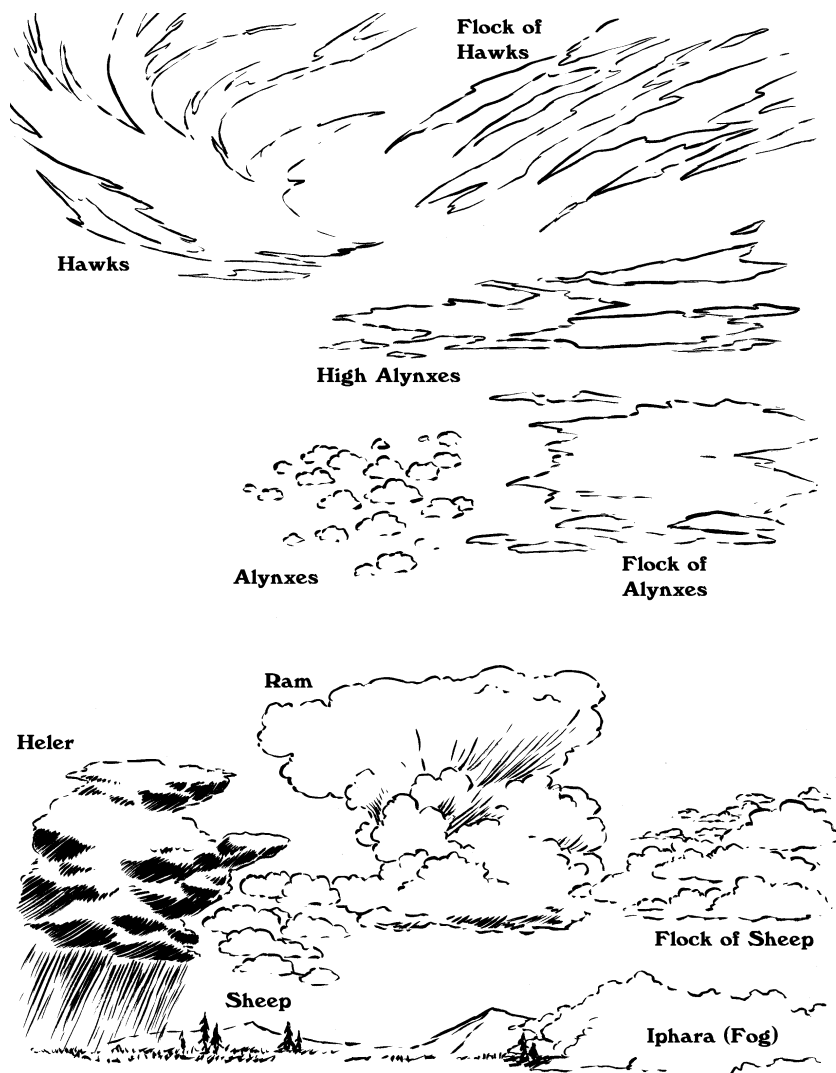
Urain is a title given to any Bad Wind. It applies most often to weather that is out of season, especially when the god-talkers, priests, and shamans cannot identify it. Such weather may later be recognized as a Gagarth tornado, Molanni spell, Kolat Wind, or Iphara Fog. Sometimes they remain unique and troublesome, carrying red biting gnats, a noxious smell, a coughing disease, burning rain, or a buzzing in the ears.

### ☉ Using the Winds

When an Orlanthe asks for help from the gods, it is most likely to come along a wind. The wind gods are always stronger in their natural season, and the presence of one or another of the aerial minions can often be traced to the actions and summons of its worshippers, somewhere in Dragon Pass.

The winds can also occur at any time. Although it is not quite possible for *any* wind to appear in *any* season, the Counterwinds always allow storms and winds to come from almost any direction except the southeast, and to have significant variation within the seasons. Thus, Heler is strongest in Fire Season, but he can occasionally come in Sea Season as well. Counterwinds rise and disappear without pattern both on their own and when people use magic to change them.

Many Orlanthe weather feats are manipulations of the Counterwinds. Whenever the power of a storm deity is used, their characteristic weather is often a spontaneous manifestation of the magic. Thus, hailstorms often accompany the magical actions of Hedkoranth devotees, and Ohorlanthe magic always comes with great noise.



## Cloud Types

The highest clouds are the cloud hawks. They usually fly singly up to 5 miles above the ground, but occasionally gather into flocks.

Most cloud cats hunt alone, but again flocks can be found between two and three miles above the ground. A few fly almost as high as the hawks.

Flocks of these cloud sheep fly about a mile above the ground. Greatest is Heler, the Ram, who brings the thunder storms when he comes. The Iphara fogs sometimes creep into the Pass during summer. People fear them greatly, for she often seems to be the Ewe until the rains fail to come.

## Where Our Animals Come From

Orlanth made three types of clouds: the hawks, the alynxes, and the sheep. They live in the air, as natural to that realm as a fish is to water.

Once Orlanth came down from his celestial home and impregnated the goddess Tarena, who was the Blue Woman in hawk shape. Their children were the Cloudhawks, called Tarenings. The Tarenings are the highest of the clouds, and never come below five miles above the earth. The Tarenings are also the weakest of the clouds. Sometimes they gathered in a flock that spreads across the entire sky. But even gathered in such a flock, their collective density is not enough to block out the Sun, the Moon, or even Jagrekriand, which may appear to have rings around them. They are so high that only the gods and the Vanganthi can fly among them.

One time Yinkin went on the prowl, calling himself Tol (an erotic term). He came across Tarheler, a beautiful goddess as seductive as he. Their children were the Cloudcats, called Tolings. The Tolings can climb as high as the hawks, but are as weak as hawks there, and cannot gather into flocks. They prefer the middle heights, where they are strong. They prowl and rule between two and five miles above the earth.

Urotha is a goddess who looked for a way to serve Ernalda. Heler convinced her that he knew the way. He turned himself into a ram and seduced her. Their children were the Cloudsheep, called Urothrorol or Urothings. They are the most abundant of all the clouds, and flock between a half-mile and two miles above the earth.

Heler performed this same seduction upon another goddess. He was skilled now, and though she was a creature of the earth they had many children. Her name was Nevala, and their children are the thousands of sheep that the Orlanthi tend.

Yinkin too continued to prowl, and he begot several lineages of alynx upon various mothers. These became the breeds of alynx that are loyal to Orlanth in his home of Dragon Pass.

Tarena too bred children of mortal form. She herself never landed from her endless flight until the Golden Archer brought her down with a magical arrow, a magical friend, and a curse. After she fell, the Great Archer took pity on Tarena. He took shape just like hers, built a nest atop a tall tree, and helped raise the first brood of hawks. These Wind Hawks are sacred to Orlanth, and seek to destroy all eagles for their lord.

## Urox Storm

The Urox Storm brings sporadic, irregular, and unpredictable winds. It is totally independent of the normal, annual cycle of the Great Winds, for Urox is one of the autonomous storms that disobeys Orlanth.

The Urox winds come into Dragon Pass from the east, from Prax, or the southeast, from Stormwalk Mountain. They are usually strong or gale force, are always dry and warmer than the season's normal winds, and often blow sand as well. They may last for days or only a few minutes, and might appear several times quickly and then not again for ten or twenty years.



The Urox Storm is unlucky, according to common Heortling experience. It is necessary, however, because Urox is the first line of defense against Chaos. Such winds, though bad for people, occur because Urox is sending his power against the enemy. The most disturbing thing about the Urox winds is that although they are often normal Umbroli, sometimes they are spirit winds, and many times both types blow together.

## Clouds

The Orlanthe have several stories about where clouds come from. The three standard cloud types are hawks, alynxes, and sheep. The hawks appear in the high and medium air, and are thin cirrus clouds. The alynxes appear at high and medium altitudes, and are the thicker cumulus clouds. The sheep appear in the lower sky, and are fluffy cumulus clouds.

Physical phenomena often seem to be contradictory, and so it is common for people to have several stories attempting to explain the same thing. Thus, Orlanthe mythology mentions both the Seven Storms and the Four Storms, and sometimes confuses Storms and Winds with each other. Similarly, the Orlanthe have several different myths about the origin of clouds. In many cases, the stories make it clear that the different myths are about different types of physical phenomena that only appear similar to outsiders, not to the storm-wise Orlanthe themselves.

### The Heler Clouds

As described above, the Heler Storm is a vast cloud that can cover all of the land from the Choralinthor Bay through Dragon Pass. This cloud is sometimes called the Ewe, because it drops rain from the sky like “milk from a nursing sheep.”

Heler can also appear in different form, especially when he appears suddenly in Fire Season after weeks of warm weather. At those times, he comes without warning, towering high into the sky and raging with thunder. In this form he is called the Ram. He brings powerful winds and bruising rain for a short time.

### Urox Clouds

The Urox Wind is also a cloud. It is dry, and always carries some sort of particulate. Sometimes it blows strongly like a wind, filling the sky with a gray haze, but at other times it is simply a cloud that slowly rolls across the land, or even stays in one place for a long time. The cloud may be invisible, but always has the “smell of Urox” on it.

## Seagull Clouds

Seagull clouds are low strata clouds. They blow in from the south, usually on a sluggish wind, and neither bring rain nor shield the Sun completely. They hover around, then disappear without any sign of where they went.

## The Orlanth Cloud

Often a huge cloud stands still around the top of Kero Fin. This is the Orlanth Cloud, which can appear at any season. It is always present at the beginning of Sacred Time, but disappears when Orlanth descends to the Underworld on Lightbringer Day.

## The Molanni Fumes

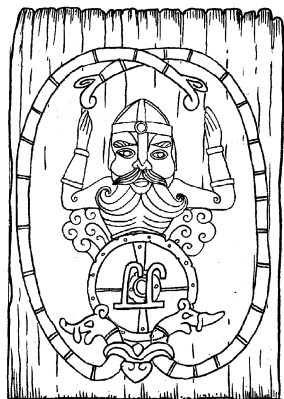
Molanni is the still air, malevolent and bearing cruel intentions against humans. Her lover was Huru, Famine, and their child is Daga, the Drought. Molanni bears a water jug that she sometimes opens onto the world, but it is full of a bitterly burning potion of suffering that brings ill rain and poison fogs, without wind to disperse them.

## Fog and Mist

Fog upon and from the sea is Iphara, often called the Murder Fog because it stifles breath and obscures all sight. Many sailors cut their fingers when their ship leaves port, letting a little blood drip into the water as an offering to help keep Iphara away. Iphara's fogs often creep onto the land, and only their lack of rain distinguishes them from the Heler clouds.

Huraya is a gentle spirit who rises from rivers and lakes. Unlike Iphara, she is not a goddess, but a spirit within the Kolat Tradition. She was a lover of Orlanth, and her gentle mists helped hide him from foes one time. Her mists usually rise in the morning and by midday are gone as she hides from the Sun.

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⓪ A Lunar Warband ⓪

*If you see this group, avoid them if possible. They are a band of mixed individuals and troops, much like one of our own hero bands. They are usually well armed, well led, and magically prepared. They are also well trained, and can probably follow us closely over most terrain, even in our own tula. You may encounter many strange groups like this. They are called a vexilla in their language, and always consist of a mixed group of leaders, with supporting troops.*

*The woman in front is a priestess. Those robes are typical, being part of her sacred uniform. If it is a waterday or clayday (when the Shepelkirt looks black instead of red), she will be helpless. But Lunar magicians always have other help.*

*Behind her is a heavy warrior. He will go toe to toe with any foe, and is probably a good fighter. Fyrdmen should just try to run away from him: he is a professional, like a weaponthane.*

*The lion man behind him is lightly armed, and any weaponthane can take him on equally. However, he is not hampered by heavy armor, and he is hardy at running in pursuit or withdrawal.*

# ✧ Inside Orlanth's Hall ✧

## Heortling Worlds

*The stories of Orlanth and Enalda tell how our world was made, why we are here, and how to be happy and successful. Listen to the skalds and god-talkers, for they speak of your life, your family, your ancestors, and your gods.*

The Heortlings know that they live, die, and are born again. Their religion deals not with things that they believe, but those that they know and experience. The Heortlings *remember* being deities, remember other times when they were greater, and know that they can again grow to that level of divinity after many lifetimes.

### Other Myths

Many myths are covered in *Thunder Rebels* with a single sentence. Even the longer versions of myths give only abbreviated forms of stories that take all day and night to celebrate, and many important myths do not appear in this book at all. *King of Sartar* contains a comprehensive mythology, including longer versions of some of the myths presented in this book. Many additional stories appear in *Gloranthan Visions*, *Wyrms Footprints*, and *Anaxial's Roster*. Instead of repeating them here, we refer you to these available sources.

#### ◉ Otherworld Perception

Perception in the God World is not the same as in the Mortal World. Individual focus and expectation affects perception. Also, because of its nature, the God World erases human individuality. Even in their own god's home, people see and remember the divine magnificence in detail and glory, but usually do not recognize or even remember the fellow who sat at their elbow and talked all night.

In the God World, people see only what they expect or need to see. While flying in, Orlanthe focus on where they are going, looking ahead and skipping everything unimportant. This concentration is necessary for worshippers to reach their destination, and everyone is trained to do it. Thus, most Orlanthe flyers see a vast and nearly featureless forest beneath them. Yinkin initiates, however, can see their god's lairs and the places where he stalks, and Odayla's worshippers see their god's hunting camps and the trails of the Great Bear.

Heortlings are most familiar with Orlanth's Stead and the Storm Realm, but they know of the other realms as well through their myths and rituals. The Spirit and Sorcery Planes are enemy territory, where their magic does not work properly. Heortlings do not normally enter these planes except during the few heroquests where their gods entered them.

## The Storm Realm

The Storm Realm (see map on pg. 137) is the part of the Gods World ruled by Orlanth and dominated by the element of Air. To the initiated, it is a vast and primal region where no humans have yet trod, save for a few areas around the settlements. To outsiders, it is a wild and wind-blasted place, full of hostile storm demons and barbarian warriors.

The Storm Realm merges into five regions inhabited by wild daimones and enemy gods. These are the frontiers between the Storm Realm and the realms of other pantheons. In the direction of water is the Endless Sea, turgid and dark. The only calm place along the Belligerent Shore is Brastalos' Beach (♨), where the Still Wind welcomes all visitors to her home. No winds blow to disturb her guests, which is why she has none. In the air direction, past the Engizi River, are the Outlaw Wilds (⊗). The Glacier (⚡) is there, a continent unto itself, that once flowed like a river across the world. Only Valind's worshippers can see through the mist and stars to the great Ice Palace, where the Winter King rules over the remnants of the Vadrudi. In the direction of fire, past Elmal's Stead, Daga (♠) and Molanni (♁) wander in the Wasteland Desert that they helped to create. Farther away are worse enemies: the Fire Tribe. The Endless Forest lies in the direction of Earth. In those woods prowl every type of beast and monster from the forests of the gods. And ever last, Darkness and ruin lie beyond the Great Barrier.

## Entering the Storm Realm

All initiated Heortlings have been to the God World. They go there every seasonal high holy day, the Storm Season high holy day, and during Sacred Time. The souls of the initiates rise above their temple area and hurtle towards the nearest sacred mountain. There, hundreds or thousands of other initiates and devotees are gathering, depending on the holy day (see pg. 119). They circle the mountain as a single wind, and in an instant find themselves blowing upon Orlanth's winds in the God World. The initiates are still flying, but everything is bigger and more vital.

At first, flyers cruise over the seemingly endless virgin Forest of the Winds. Trees stretch away on all sides as far as can be seen. The green of the forest is so deep that it looks black. Gods and their kin stalk this forest, where Yinkin is king and Velhara, Lady of the Wild, is his beloved prey. The initiates fly on, in the direction that they call *In One Direction*.

From over forest, hurtling onward, the storm blows amidst great mountains. The crags pierce the air, striking sharply up out of the woods, all of them stark and steep. Their cutting edges rise so sheer that no one could ever climb over them. On their left are the mountains of great Aedin's Wall. On their right they can see the measureless Great Barrier range, whose far



## Hidden Gyffur



*Gyffur Ulfsson kills, destroys, and demolishes. He is a fanatical rebel, with a band of committed berserks. They all worship Barantaros, a demigod who lets their souls fight on after death.*

*Their warband is organized entirely around that god, so that they do nothing except raid, vanish into the wilds, and ride on to the next ambush or fight. To join them is to leave normal society.*

*To meet them as foes is to leave the world of the living.*

side is the Cliffs of Shadow. The gale of worshippers dips lower until they are beneath the tops of the mountains, then fall even lower to speed over the tops of the trees that hurtle beneath and behind them. Amidst the trees, they see the occasional clearing, perhaps with the dwelling of some petty god. At least one huge column of smoke rises over the woods, though usually not on the path the flyers take.

Eventually, the forest gives way to a vast plain only occasionally dotted with woods. Here and there are other settlements of gods of the pantheon. Following their path inwards, the flyers pass over the plains and can at last see Storm Home, Orlanth's own village, far ahead.

## **Other Landmarks**

Other deities have separate holdings on the Storm Realm. There are many such places, well known to the devotees of their own gods, but only the most important are recognized by all initiates.

A terrible gash called the Doorway of Havan Vor (⚔) runs through the stone of the Great Barrier. This is the Vale of Death, which leads to the Underworld. After they die and are judged, ancestors come up this vale to join the gods. At the bottom is Sword Hall (†), where Humakt the Death God resides. His warband keeps the Dead Air from invading Orlanth's realm, and he himself holds back all the people who are not worthy of entering the Storm Realm.

Urox (♠) has his winter camp at the top of Spiral Mountain (⚔), one of the few peaks in the Storm Realm that is not part of Aedin's Wall. From its top he looks over the ruined lands beyond that used to be Ragnaglar's, from whence Chaos comes occasionally.

The River Engizi (⚔) flows from the Endless Sea across the plains. Heler's

### **The God World of the Heortlings**

Player heroes should remember that the maps and descriptions given in this chapter are those of the Heortlings of Sartar in the modern era. Worshippers in different lands and times may see parts of the God World that others do not, or may perceive some places differently. Thus, the Heortlings' greatest mountain is Kero Fin, which rises near the center of the Storm Realm. It is part of a spiral range of mountains, each of which is one of the great or grand mountains (see pg. 119). The mountains appear the same as in the Inner World (though much larger, of course), and have the same landmarks. An Orlanthi from Ralios who goes to the Storm Realm sees the same mountain range. However, he sees the central peak as his own greatest mountain, called Top of the World. His myths and experience prove that the other mountains are the great mountains of his land. Both perceptions are equally correct, and equally incorrect.

Longhouse (𐌆) stands on its banks, where his worshippers gather in his Great Hall. It winds across the Boundless Fields to the Sky Lake, where the water leaves the Storm Realm and tumbles as torrential rain into Dragon Pass. Poverri's Shack (𐌆) is visible on the banks near the Skyfall, with his nets spread out in the swift waters to catch fish, crawdads, ducks, and the occasional odd piece of debris. If he thinks what he catches is of value he keeps it, but if it is junk he throws it back and lets the river carry it into the Middle World.

Elmal's Longhouse (𐌆) stands at the edge of the Wasteland Desert. The golden roof of his Great Hall makes a bright contrast to the sand and dust storms of Daga's dry realm. The nearby Bull Fields are a wild and dangerous stretch of hills and woods where the land has been broken by Urox' fierce hoofs. Urox has no stead here, just rough camps where he pauses with his wild herds of aurochs.

Aedin's Wall is a range of obviously divine proportions, with mountains formed of stark raw rock and topped with gleaming snow. It is impossible in its height and blinding in its brilliance. It forms a spiral around Orlanth's Stead, and leaves only a single tight entry, Aedin's Gap, where Starkval's Guardhouse (𐌆) protects the *tula*. On one side is Kero Fin, the first mountain, on the other is Empty Mountain.

Aedin's Wall includes many notable peaks. First, the snow-capped Doktados Mountain (𐌆) rises high above the Forest. Somewhere hidden on its peak is Kolat's Cave of the Winds. Those who enter never return. Bear Mountain (𐌆) also rises out of the Forest. At its base sits Odayla's hunting camp, near the Storm Eagle Tree. From this camp he enters the forest or travels to foreign lands (i.e., the sky world) to hunt the Great Bear. The third great mountain is Arrowmound (𐌆), where Orlanth gave Jarani the Justice Staff. First Step is on this peak, where Mastakos stepped when he was traveling to the Black Isle of Introspection. All of his worshippers can leap from here to any of the other mountaintops in the realm, or to their own specially prepared places in the Inner World. High Mount Soren (𐌆) is next, which never fell beneath the waves. The Thunder Brothers mustered here before each great battle against the waters, and so were always victorious. The fifth great mountain is Conquest Peak (𐌆), where the Naked Wind blows. Here Orlanth defeated Dargabon, the storm dragon that invaded the Storm Realm. The sixth peak is Mount Lyran (𐌆), where Voriof summers his herd. Orlanth fought against the Urain here when it first fell from the air. The last of the grand mountains is Quivin (𐌆), who was welcomed into the tribe by Orlanth. He stands near his mother, Kero Fin.

At the center of the Storm Realm rises Kero Fin, the Mother Mountain (𐌆). At her base is a crack in the earth, through which the Maran women can enter their goddess' home. Halfway up the mountain is Kero Fin's Summer House, where she goes when she does not live in her small house on Orlanth's Stead. At the crest shines the white roof of Inora's House, where she dances all year round.



## Storm Home

Within Aedin's Wall sits Storm Home, the farmlands and village of the Storm Tribe. In the center stand Orlanth's Great Hall and Ernalda's Loom House, each huge and gleaming. A few large houses are the homes of Chalana Arroy, Issaries, Lhankor Mhy, and other important gods.

All of Orlanth's household are here in the Great Hall and Loom House. Additionally, the most important thanes also have houses in the village. All of his carls and cottars have their own households where they live, either near the Great Hall or farther out, by the fields. Some of the most important places in Storm Home are:

- Ernalda's Loom House, where the Weaver Women gather
- Flint Ridge, where Vanganth and his followers gather
- Vinga's Red-Headed Lodge, near the Twisted Flint Spire
- Hedkoranth's Thunder Oak
- Barntar and Mahome's Big House
- Thunder Brothers' Sparring Field
- Kero Fin's Winter House
- Harst's Granary, Pella's Kiln, Orstan's Mill, Gustbran's Forge, Minlister's Brewery, and other work places

### View from the Seven Stars

Orlanth's Six Virtues helped him to slay the dragon, for each has a great power. Those powers now reside in the celestial Orlanth, and are the six normal stars that make up the constellation that is his heavenly abode. The seventh star is Orlanth himself (though none can tell which star is which). The eighth star is, of course, the trophy of the Dragon's Head.

When the Seven Stars are all together in the Hall Orlanth sometimes asks them to stand and recite a poem or sing a song. They always agree. Often the seven have their own musicians, and sometimes a poet or goldentongue to speak for them. Such details matter naught. The presence and blessing of the Star Man himself is what is important, and the Star Seven Song that they sing. The Star Seven Song makes everyone fall silent; it fills the air with clarity and stillness. The hall disappears. Each person realizes that they are only a tiny movement in the calm air. Everyone can see something beyond what they know, and it is always something that they could not normally think of by themselves. Everyone is flying, and if they look down they see the whole of the Storm Realm there, spread out like a map.

But even from the most lofty heights where the High Winds neither blow nor not blow, eventually the Eighth Star, the Dragon's Head, attracts everyone's attention again. They look around at their drinking mates, who are likewise blinking and looking around, and the great hall appears again. We took that journey. We saw the Storm Realm from above.

Uralda's Byrne, Entra's Trough, Redalda's Stable, Nevala's Pen, and other animal places

Issaries' Marketplace and Tent

Lhankor Mhy's Great Study

Chalana Arroy's Hall of Healing

Elmal's Shining Hall

Heler's Dark Hall

Vingkot's Hall called Victory Hall

Heort's Hall called Staghall

Alakoring's Hall called Cloudbreak



Map: The Storm Realm

## Karulinoran

Karulinoran is the name of Orlanth's Great Hall. Innumerable men sit packed together across the broad floor, shoulder to shoulder. A river of mead flows along a trough from Minlister's Pot, and every man present dips his horn into the rich river and drinks his fill. Orlanth and Ernalda sit in front with their household, high atop a dais. Amidst the rafters the seven star birds sit and sing, then dash and fly about to make secret signs over the heads of the masses celebrating in their cups.

When worshippers first enter Orlanth's Hall, as always they see only as much as they can perceive. For most worshippers, they see Orlanth's Hall as specific to the aspect that they worship: Adventurous, Allfather, or Thunderous. The celebrants they see are thus warriors, farmers, holy people, or the like. Such is the nature of Orlanth the Great God that when anyone in one of these familiar halls raises a horn of mead in a toast to the great god, they find themselves in the Great Hall upon completion.

### • Where Are You Going?

Location in the God Plane is not a matter of distance, but of relationship. It is possible for a single location to be in several places. Relationships are complex and simultaneous: things may seem contradictory, but more than one can exist. Both Orlanth and Ernalda's houses stand next to each other, each surrounded by their own family's dwellings. Similarly, an ordinary Heortling can travel to Orlanth's Hall and then leave. Karulinoran is simultaneously located at the center of Orlanth's Stead, in the sky as Orlanth's Ring, in each of the Mythic Ages, and in the center of every temple in the world. When heroes leave Karulinoran by one of the Nine Doors, they find themselves outside Orlanth's Hall in the appropriate age. They can re-enter the Hall, whose appearance will change based on the door they use.

*Umath's Age:* Karulinoran is a simple tent. Orlanth has no stead, but wanders through the wilderness or with his herds. He has his friends, but no formal control over the other gods and people. Wares are of wood or basket, sometimes carved stone.

*Storm Tribe Age:* Karulinoran is a wealthy and clean house, unwallled and with many strangers present. Carved poles hold the roof aloft, the high table has a rich cloth upon it, and even the common tables are painted. Orlanth and his guests at the high table eat off plates of silver and drink from gold goblets. Rich tapestries hang on the walls. Only the occasional weapon shows that the inhabitants are ready for defense.

*Early Vingkotling Age:* Karulinoran is a great hall with hundreds of warriors crowded into the floor at long tables. Orlanth and Ernalda sit at the high table with the thanes, all in good humor. The gods at Orlanth's high table drink from goblets of cut diamond, and even the weakest warrior devours food borne on platters of gold and silver. The walls hold some famous trophies, proud and bright in their glory.

*Late Vingkotling Age:* Karulinoran is a vast hall crammed with warriors rubbing elbows, reputations, and good will in a numberless horde. The high table is visible in the far distance. There sits Orlanth, somber and unreachable as he views the crowd with Ernalda. Silver and gold are everywhere. Shields, weapons, banners, and the trophies of a thousand battles hang on the walls. The hall groans under the weight of its glory.

*Early Chaos Age:* Karulinoran is dark and gloomy, as if covered with a thick layer of soot and dust. Most seats are empty, including many at the high table. It is cold, and the coals in the fire pit untended. Ernalda and many others are gone, and this saps the pleasure out of everyone, including Orlanth.

*Late Chaos Age:* Karulinoran is smaller and partially in ruins. The hall lies empty, abandoned, and infested with demons, dogs, or even Chaos. A few gods and mortals are left in the world, but they have taken refuge in other places, such as Elmal's Fort or the steads of the Hidden Kings.

*Silver Age:* Karulinoran is gone, for Orlanth is gone. Worshippers find themselves outside a small hall, that of their local founder. For the Heortlings, this is the Hall of Heort. It is similar to Karulinoran in the Chaos Age, but is filled with warriors and the little bit of life that they defend.

*Orlanth's Ring:* One door from Karulinoran leads to the Sky World or Underworld, depending on the location of Orlanth's Ring. When in the sky, the ring might be in the Celestial Fields, crossing the Celestial River, or near the Pole Star watchpost, depending on the day of the week. When in the Underworld, this door may lead to any one of a number of bleak, hopeless, and dangerous places.

*Ninth Door:* The secret ninth door is behind Orlanth's High Seat. It leads not outside Karulinoran, but inside, to Orlanth's Secret Vault. Only the greatest heroes can enter this inner sanctum. The door itself is not visible to most worshippers, and only the devout can see that it leads to more than an empty space, but in fact contains all spaces, being larger than the entire Storm Realm.

## Daleel

Ernalda is Orlanth's wife, and she lives with him on his stead. She has her own Loom House, the Women's House, but is also hearthmistress in Orlanth's Great Hall. Near the Loom House is her Green Garden, where she grows food to help to feed the household. Asrelia's Hut stands nearby, where Orlanth's mother-in-law lives. Ernalda's sister Esrola has her own stead out in the fields, where each spring Elmal and Heler come to court her. By midsummer she selects one of her suitors to be her Year-Husband, and help her bring forth new life from the earth.

Ernalda's Loom House is also simultaneously at the center of Daleel, the Earth Realm, where it is visible as her Earth Palace. All of her relatives have their own true homes here.

The most important places in the Earth Realm are:

Ernalda's Earth Palace

Esrola's Great Garden, which feeds the whole world

Maran Gor's Underworld Palace

Asrelia's Treasure Vault, hidden deep beneath the earth

The Necropolis of Ty Kora Tek, surrounded by the River Styx

Babeester Gor's Axe Hall, on the Screaming Isle

Overdruva's Tree, marking the border with Aldrya's Forest

Nearby is Orlanth's Longhouse, with a couple of his supporters' buildings nearby as well. Equal distances away are the houses of Elmal, Heler, and several other gods.

## Leaving the Storm Realm

Most Orlanthei leave the Storm Realm as they came, by flying. They fly in the opposite direction, out from Orlanth's Hall. At some point, their flight takes them back to the Inner World, at their nearby sacred mountain, from whence they fly to their temple.

If the heroes have entered the Storm Realm but plan to continue on (as part of a hero-quest), at some point Orlanth will call them forward to state the cause of their visit. The leader should clearly state their purpose, using the myth as his guide. Orlanth will always react to this statement in whatever manner is appropriate to the myth. Afterwards, the heroes depart Karulinoran by the door indicated to them, and go to the appropriate Mythic Age.



## The Mythic Ages

Heortlings learn magic not by studying, but by doing. When they wish to learn magic, they travel to the Mythic Ages. There they participate in the event and help their god, and by doing so acquire a part of the god's power: an affinity or a feat. Magic exists not because the god gives or knows it, but because the god does it and is it. The overview given here cannot do justice to the actual stories told, celebrated, and entered during Heortling ceremonies. Even the few longer myths in *Thunder Rebels* are only the briefest synopses of rites that take "all day" to perform.

Our purpose here is not to give a complete Heortling mythology, only a quick look at the Mythic Ages that worshippers enter on holy days and heroquests. Events are in the common sequence, as most Heortlings tell them. Innumerable variants exist, many in contradiction to these and each other. Everyone knows best those stories they have experienced many times. This participation is central to Heortling worship.

### Asrelia's Age (Green Age)

*The only stories about Asrelia's Age are stories about its end.  
Its stories show people awakening to the most basic facts of their lives.*

Here is what everyone knows about the end of the Green Age: the Spike existed, the cosmic mountain, the axis mundi of the world. Inside it lived the Gloranthan Court, beings so great that none can know if they were gods, powers, runes, or something else. They are beyond mortal comprehension.

The Earth Family made the hills and valleys and lived within them. Other families did the same to make waves and currents, fires and lights, shadows and cold. Animals, plants, and beings of every description filled all the spaces of the world. The world existed, but it had no reason for being before Umath came. Nothing in the world ever changed or moved, and nothing happened anywhere.

### Stagnant Age (Golden Age)

*The Stagnant Age begins when the Emperor forces the first growth to stop,  
And ends when Umath is born.  
Its stories tell how the Solar Emperor brought all power to his palace.*

Emalda was born in the Green Age but she came into her power in the Golden Age, when the Emperor ruled everything. She performed some of her most miraculous deeds in this era. When Angdartha took away Esrela, Emalda taught the Goose Dance that brought her back. Later, when she went to the Golden Palace, she made the first garden with her Flower Day. Within the Golden City she taught her family how to survive with the rites of Mahome's Day.

Then Umath came. His mother had never birthed such a child, and could not pass him into the world. Umath's first thought was, "Violence is always an option." He took one of his own teeth and made a knife to cut himself free. The place that he came out of is the Stormgate, and it is that orange spot there, that you can see each Clay day and Winds day night. It never moves its place in the sky.

Umath was born "with a great noise, deafening, disabling, like thunder in a cavern, like living in a horn." His arrival was unexpected, and there was no room for him. Every place had been parceled out to the gods and servants of the Solar Empire. Seeing this, his visage "rolled over the earth with anger, rumbled across the sky with greed, filled the space with his gray brows and thunder." He put his hands to the belly of his father and his feet upon his mother and pushed them apart. Old Man Sky groaned and Grandmother Earth wept, so that now life has its groans and sorrows. Thus did Umath make a place for himself: the realm of Space, of Air, of the Middle World.

After that change, the world began to move, to grow, and to seek meaning for its residents. As Umath moved so too did others, until eventually everything moved and changed. From these movements came the gods and goddesses, the humans and demons, and all the world.

## **Umath's Age (Late Golden Age)**

*Umath's Age begins when he is born,  
And ends when he is destroyed.*

*Its stories are Umath's, who changed the world.*

Emperor Yelm ruled from the Golden City. When he learned about Umath, he sent a messenger to order him to stop being himself. The messenger had to run, because the young god began moving as soon as he was born. He was born at the fringe of the world, and wound his way inward, slowly spiraling in towards the center. The Messenger, used to things that did not move, could never catch up.

Umath discovered that other beings existed who were like him. In order to meet them, he created the first Hospitality Rites to allow friendly visiting. Umath joined with several goddesses in this way, and when his children were born they joined him in his journeying. Umath's Hospitality Rites were violated by visiting sky gods, who followed Yelm's Laws. This always resulted in violence, and sometimes the bodies of dead gods tumbled to earth, creating new ranges of mountains and hills.

Jagrekiand, called the Red God, was the chief Defender of the Sky Realm. He followed Umath through the sky, and fought him many times. At Highgate they met toe to toe. Umath was sore wounded, and spiraled away. Umath sought refuge with the Zenfel, the White God, but that god broke his vows of friendship and secretly plotted with Jagrekiand to ambush Umath in the healing baths of Melimios. Orlanth, just a boy then, overheard the plots and brought the whispers to his father. Umath and his men crushed the White God's palace, land, and people before the Red God could arrive. He sent his sons to pursue the fleeing survivors.

Jagrekiand arrived and attacked Umath, who was by himself and wounded from his great battles. The Red God turned black to destroy the upstart, but Umath fought so hard that the whole land about them broke. Umath's body dispersed among the winds of the world, and Jagrekiand was smashed into pieces.

## **Storm Tribe Age (Late Golden Age)**

*The Storm Tribe Age begins when Umath dies,  
And ends when Orlanth becomes Chieftain.*

*Its stories are the great adventures of Orlanth and the Storm Tribe.*

Fatherless, the young sons of Umath were in danger. Their uncles devised a trick to destroy them, but Orlanth and his brothers survived and proved that they were deities. Adults now, the Umathsons claimed their father's powers, possessions, and places as their own. Then they began to fight about them.

Orlanth made his place in the world. He and his relatives brought their people and animals down from the Spike. They left Dini and stopped first in Mavorela, where many people settled. Orlanth went on and stopped in Envorela, where Barntar was born. The third stop was in the land of Kethaela, and again people stopped traveling to make permanent homes. Orlanth then continued to Kerofinela, where his mother Kero Fin welcomed him and his remaining followers.

Sh'hakarzeel was a terrible dragon that lived near Kerofinela. Orlanth was ready, and he killed it after a great struggle, the First Dragonslaying. The notch in the Kerospine Hills is where Orlanth's killing blow cut it in two. His sons dispatched some parts of the serpent that stayed alive when it died, and after that all the remaining dragons fled far to the east.

Orlanth performed many great deeds as a young god. He was the leader of a band of divine companions who defeated all enemies. He formed the Storm Tribe when he welcomed strangers and outsiders into his camp. Orlanth invented and created many things, including new forms of music, dancing, and magic.

Orlanth met Emalda when he was performing the Contests with the Emperor to prove himself a part of the cosmic order. The judges ruled against him in each trial. Finally, Orlanth received Death from his brother Humakt, who took it from Eumal the Fool and gave it to his chieftain, as was proper. This is the famous Sword Story, which explains how Death came into the world.

Orlanth used death in the last Contest, and killed Emperor Yelm. He then freed Emalda and her family from the Court, and sent many deities, peoples, and other beings away. This was the end of the so-called Golden Age of the Solar Empire. It set everyone free.

### **Durev the Householder**

Durev is the Great Carl, the true Everyman of the Storm Tribe. His wife Orane is likewise a model of Everywoman. However, they started as nobodies in the nowhere land called Dini, where people lived before they knew what life was, or that they could do something more than be.

Durev and Orane were among those that followed Orlanth on the Great Migration. At the Second Rest, many people and creatures were tired. Orane was pregnant, and all of her family and friends agreed she could not go on. So her husband Durev went to Orlanth and told him that they wanted to stay. Orlanth blessed them in this, and named the land Envorela.

People called Durev the Cabineer, because he was the first person to make a building out of wood. After the migration continued, Orstan the Carpenter and Durev made a loom house, so that Orane and the women would have a decent place to gather and, when it was time, give birth.

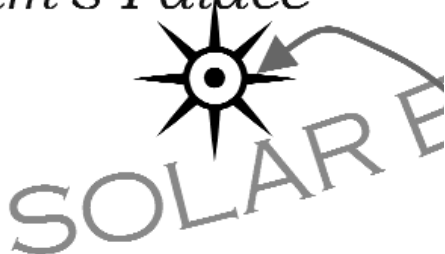
Durev and his followers were the first people to settle down to live, and they invented the long-house, the barns, and the sheds that we still use. They decided how to measure the seasons by the storms, where to keep the animals each season, when to plant the crops, and when to hold meetings. Thus, Orane and Durev are the first householders, and later even Orlanth and Emalda copied their methods.

Durev and Orane prospered and had many children and grandchildren. They lived so long that they even saw the birth of their great-great-grandchildren. The Dureving family was huge, and had already populated most of Envorela when Orlanth reached Dragon Pass. By the time Vingkot became king, the Durevings had filled most of Mavorela and parts of Kethaela. Vingkot was successful only because he carefully made peace with Durev at the Lawmaking. Durev and his wife determined the rights of the stead holders, and after their deaths in the Vingkotling Age people made sacrifices to them. Now all householders and farmers offer them sacrifices.





## Yelm's Palace



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Map: The Storm Tribe Age

**Aroka Invades:** The dragon Aroka arrived and created a new ocean. It was slain at the Second Dragonslaying, and the ocean receded.

**Dini:** Original mountain valley home of Orlanth and his family.

**Envorela:** Second land settled in the Downland Migration. This is the place where Barntar was born.

**First Dragonslaying:** Where Orlanth defeated Sh'hakarzeel, the Cosmic Dragon. Its remains formed a new mountain range, and its head still decorates Orlanth's Ring.

**Genert's Garden:** Realm of the great spirit Genert.

**Kero Fin (Å):** Orlanth's Mother, who is also called the Mother of Mountains and the center of the world.

**Kerofinela:** Lands around Kero Fin, first inhabited by dragons, then by Orlanth and the Storm Tribe, and then by the Vingkotlings.

**Kethaela:** Land south of Kerofinela, occupied by the Earth people and later by the Vingkotlings.

**Mavorela:** Extensive razing ground settled in the early part of the Downland Migration.

After the death of Yelm, Orlanth and the Storm Tribe came into their own, and soon ruled much of the world. Orlanth had many victories in this era, such as acquiring the Four Magic Weapons, conciliating his brothers, and defeating Deloradella, Magasta, and Zzabur. The first Beast War occurred at this time. Orlanth was sometimes beaten, but he always came back.

One of Orlanth's greatest victories was when the dragon Aroka devoured all the waters of the world. Orlanth overcame him and freed the rains of life at the Second Dragonslaying. Orlanth renamed the dragon Oslira and sent her north to drown the Solar Empire. The rivers came so quickly that nearly the whole world was flooded. The Waters spared the Storm Tribe lands at first because Orlanth had defeated the Source of Waters, and they dared not attack him. This safe land was called Emaldela.

A hundred different tribes of people in ships and boats plagued the worshippers of Orlanth and the Storm Tribe at this time, seeking refuge from the flood. Several of the most powerful of the boat people made the god Worcha, in the hopes that he would be powerful enough to defeat Orlanth. After Worcha drowned Mavorela, however, Vingkot stopped the crashing waves at the Trembling Shores. Then, the Thunder Brothers destroyed Worcha at Three Coves. At Thrinbarri, Orlanth himself led the defense against attacks from the sea, the air, and the sky, all of which were defeated. The Storm Tribe systematically drove the waters back after that great victory, and their followers settled the new lands.

Orlanth could have kept fighting forever, but even early in the age he began to realize that there was another way. He had stopped for a while when his first child with Emalda was born, in Envorela. He returned to explore and fight, but paused again and again, and for longer each time. Finally he performed the High Seat Blessing, and afterwards spent more time in his long Hall than outside of it.

*Neargreen:* Aldryami forest growing on the slopes of the Spike.

*Oslira Sent On:* After Orlanth slew Aroka, he sent the remaining part of the Blue Dragon against the Solar Empire as the Oslira River.

*Second Dragonslaying:* Where Orlanth defeated Aroka, rescuing Heler and drowning the land in mead, water, and blood.

*Sevid:* Name given to the unsettled lands to the west.

*Solar Empire:* Land where the Solar Emperor imprisoned all peoples and gods until Orlanth liberated them by slaying the Emperor.

*Spike* (⊗): The Cosmic Mountain.

*Troll Exit* (●): A tribe of Uz entered the surface world at this place after

spending generations climbing up from the Underworld.

*Umath Mountains:* Mountain range formed from pieces of Umath that fell off in his last battle against Jagrekriand.

*Umath's Crater* (⊞): Great pit created in the far north when Umath died and fell crashing to earth. His sons came to this place to retrieve his weapons and powers.

*White Sea:* Body of water created when Umath and Jagrekriand slew each other and destroyed the palace of the White God. The waters rushed in to fill the region, leaving only Umath's Crater free of the waters.

*Yelm's Palace* (⊛): The Golden City from which the Solar Emperor and his Celestial Court ruled the world.

## Vingkotling Age (Lesser Darkness, Storm Age)

*The Vingkotling Age begins when Vingkot becomes Warlord,  
And ends with his death.*

*Its stories are the great adventures of the gods, demigods, and heroes.*

Vingkot was a son of Orlanth famous for allying with the On Jorri folk. He also continued the great migration. The Vingkotlings expanded until they could go no more, and then stopped.

The Vingkotlings are our ancestors, the mixed children of the Storm Tribe and Earth Family. Whatever happened to the Vingkotlings happened to our ancestors. In the earliest part of the Age, the Vingkotlings drove back the waters that still tried to take over the land. Troubles with the Hsunchen peoples continued, sometimes called the Second Beast Wars. Orlanth had some adventures, such as his victories at the Hill of Gold. Most often, however, his sons did deeds in his name.

When the world was conquered by the Storm Tribe there was no one left for them to fight. Vadrus attacked his own kin. This was the start of Kinstrife, which is the worst crime anyone can commit. He fought and took things from his kinsmen, and attracted a huge gang of thugs called the Vadrudi.

One time all of his brothers conspired, and helped by a thief and a trickster they caused Orlanth to be outlawed. This is the time of Emalda's "other guardians." She got many strong gods to defend the Vingkotling peoples, and forged alliances with small gods to join them to the tribe. Here is a partial list of her temporary husbands: Elmal the Bright, Heler the Shaggy, Vestkarthen of the Deep, Dejor the Black, Delan the Strong, and Dashing Veradash. While Orlanth was gone, kinstrife rocked the Storm Tribe. Finally, Vadrus killed Barntar, who stayed dead. This was the first true death in the kinstrife.

After Orlanth's time of exile was over, Vingkot sacrificed and called him back. Orlanth returned with his Four Storms. He returned Urox to the tribe by wrestling him. He went to Kolat and forged old bonds anew, for the Storm Tribe had cast Kolat out when Orlanth left. He went to Humakt and made amends, as was required. And of course, Yinkin came, for he had helped Orlanth during his exile.

Orlanth went to Vadrus and deposed his brother, but did not kill anyone. He put his nephew Valind in charge instead. He thought that Valind was weak, and would only have a small region of ice. But Thyk the Ice Giant fooled Orlanth and got help from the Uz, whose sacrifices made the glacier grow. It grew slowly and seemed inconsequential to the Vingkotlings, since obvious foes were assaulting them on all sides.

The most brutal and efficient foes were the Mostali. They fought everyone at one time or another, and everyone together once, but each of their armies was defeated in the end. This was also the time of the Third Beast War. It began when the Deep Snakes invaded Storm Home, which were finally slain long afterwards by Babeester Gor. A huge glacier spread across all of the northern part of the world, sent by Valind so that he could take as much of the world as he could. By this time, most things were dead, and so few beings stood against him.

In the cold and darkness, the earth began to die. Esrola, who fed everyone, was taken away by demons. Maran Gor stopped moving, and became the last mountain. The endless wars and struggles had cost the world nearly everything. One day Emalda sat down and counted her dead kinfolk. Everyone alive joined her in weeping, but could do nothing. Emalda retired to her bed and slipped into deep and permanent sleep.

Orlanth determined that he would fix everything. He gathered his companions, and with them went into the land of the dead. They left the world, the last gods to abandon life.

## Chaos Age (Great Darkness, Long Night)

*The Chaos Age begins when Orlanth leaves the world, and ends at the Unity Battle.*

*Its stories are about Chaos invasions, and great heroes saving their people.*

Three previously vile and obnoxious deities elevated themselves to be truly evil. The deities Mallia, Ragnaglar, and Thed became the Unholy Trio. They made Wakboth the Chaos god, the worst thing that ever came into Glorantha.

Vadrus tried to gain Wakboth's power by defeating it. He and his followers were so completely destroyed that no one today can worship them. This defeat gave King Vingkot time to muster his forces, but even so, he was slain at Stormfall. The Thunder Brothers fled to the Underworld to tell Orlanth of the horror. Wakboth won other battles at Icebreak Seamake, when Valind's Palace melted; Earthfall, where the Spirit World was defeated; Tadafall, where the Beast Riders were defeated; Seaslime Landbridge, where the water gods were defeated; and finally, into the Spike itself.

When Wakboth entered the Cosmic Mountain, the center of all creation, it exploded. Glorantha began to collapse in upon itself. The rushing of the storm, the roaring of the waters, the tumbling of the land, and the screams of Darkness filled the void. Now this is the Homeward Ocean, an endless maelstrom at the center of the world.

After the destruction of the Spike, Chaos roamed, and all life fell to death. The great gods of Chaos killed everything until they could find nothing else to destroy, and then they turned upon each other. Evil destroyed evil, and the world was better for it. Finally, only Wakboth remained.

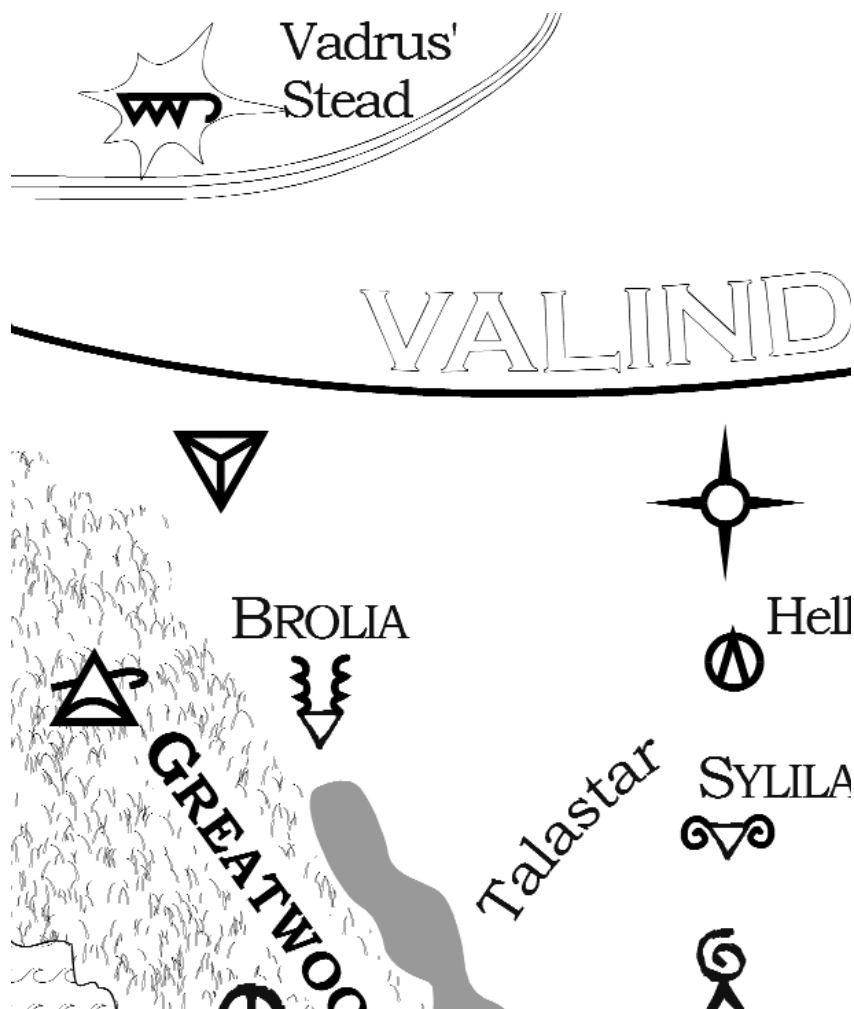
Wakboth turned his attention to Prax, where the last great god lived. Urox was ready, but though great in battle, he was killed. He leapt back to life, then took a huge block of truestone and crushed Wakboth beneath it. The Block is still there, in Prax. Urox crawled away then, the last god to leave the world of life.



Vingkot

Meanwhile, Orlanth and his companions traveled through the Underworlds, where their dead foes ambushed them. Even their dead friends and their own flaws attacked them. Everyone became separated and failed. Yet, thanks to the prayers of his worshippers and the help of the other gods, Orlanth succeeded. He went on to the Land of the Dead and made peace with his former foes. Everyone agreed, and so Orlanth went another step and forged an alliance against Chaos. Again everyone agreed, and they created the Great Compromise.

Then Wakboth, having slain everything in the world, came to Hell to annihilate the dead. Instead, it met all the deities and spirits, the powers and beasts, and the demons and people, all unified to resist it. The gods caught Wakboth in the net of the Great Compromise, and Arachne Solara devoured him.



Map: The Late Vingkotling Age

**Adoren:** The "Fourth sea conquered, dried out from our foes." Occupied by the Durevings.

**Bilon:** The "Fifth sea conquered, taken from the corpse of the Hancheros." Occupied by the Durevings.

**Boztakang Uz** (●): A region where the Uz lived happily off of the ice and its denizens, including the Vadrudi.

**Brolia** (♣): Land taken by the Andini People, an Orlanthe folk. It was destroyed by ice late in the age.

**Chomal Sea:** The western ocean, whose gods were defeated but not destroyed.

**Dagori Inkarth** (●): Great settlement led by the Uz heroes Gore and Gash, where they erected the great Castle of Lead.

*Dini*: Peaceful highland valley on the slopes of the Spike (♁), original home of Orlanth and his people before they left to explore the land called Esjenen in the Downland Migration.

*Dogwood*: Forested land occupied by the Votanki hunting people, enemies of the Vingkotlings.

*Dozaki Uz* (♣): A large ice and waste region swarming with Uz.

*Genert's Garden*: The lands of the powerful Spirit Lord, Genert.

*Greatwood* (♣): Huge western forest that overwhelmed New Thrinbarri, then Old Thrinbarri. Many of the Great Trees grew here with their Aldryami nations.

*Helerela*: Land of the Helerings, who made Slarelos an ally, not a slave. Late in the age, they surrendered to Orlanth.

*Hellgate* (♁): Settlement of demons, home of Jagrekriand, defender of the remains of the Solar Empire (♣).

*Kerofinela*: Land around Kero Fin (♁) Mountain, occupied by the Vingkotlings.

*Kethaela*: Land south of Kerofinela, occupied by the Vingkotlings.

*Newgreen*: Western portion of the Sivilis forest. Newgreen was so named because it was young compared to the Stillgreen.

*Old Lands*: Former lands of Envorela and Mavorela, now occupied by the Durevings.

*Prax*: The homeland of Tada, a great hero of the Genertings. It is also the land of Eiritha, one of the wives of Urox (♣).

*Reclaimed Lands*: Lands recovered from the water forces by the Orlanthi. It

includes Adoren, Bilon, Selus, and Velun.

*Selus*: The "Sixth great attack, and eighth, and ninth." Occupied by the Aluthorings.

*Seravus* (♣): Area controlled by the Enchanter. He stole all the beasts, but the Thunder Brothers took them back at the Plundering of Aron.

*Sevid*: Regions west and southwest of Kethaela, which Orlanth recovered from the waters and gave to Ernalda, his wife.

*Sivilis*: First sea taken by Orlanth, later given to Aldrya to make peace.

*Stillgreen*: Aldryami forest upon the slopes of the Spike, so named because it was still green when many forests had changed colors because of frost, poison gasses, and other defeats.

*Sylila* (♣): Land taken by the Iron Helerings and then destroyed by ice late in the age.

*Talastar*: Area settled by Talastings, who took it from the Aldryami.

*Umath Mtns.*: Eastern mountain range, formed from parts of Umath that fell to earth during his final battle with Jagrekriand.

*Vadrus Stead*: Large region of ice and snow where Vadrus originally had his stronghold. Valind later created his Winter Palace (♣) in this place.

*Valind Glacier*: This line shows the extent of Valind's Glacier by the end of the Vingkotling Age.

*Velun*: "Seventh Sea taken, where the merfolk were slaughtered" by Orlanth and the Thunder Brothers.

*Zarkos* (♣): Land taken by the goat people. Its inhabitants moved atop the glacier late in the age and spread havoc everywhere.

## Silver Age (Gray Age, Star Age)

*The Silver Age is a transitional time between Darkness and the Dawn.*

Heort was a Vingkotling who lived in the Ice Lands. To combat the evils of Chaos he searched through broken places and forbidden powers. He underwent the I Fought We Won battle and personally resisted Chaos.

Heort saw that all Chaos had not been destroyed with Wakboth. He went among other peoples and made peace with them. Men, Uz, Aldryami, Mostali, beasts, plants, and the feeble spirits and daemons all banded together. They destroyed the last Chaos army at the famous Unity Battle, and only small pieces and fragments survived in their land.

Heort's successes inaugurated the Gray Age, a period of "twilight" that preceded the first sunrise. We call it the Silver Age to mark its increasing splendor. The people of Dragon Pass began to increase in population. Steads that had survived the endless winter went from a couple dozen people to a few hundred. Heort went among them and taught them new ways, and they named themselves Heortlings.

Emalda's absence had motivated Orlanth to undertake the Lifebringer Quest. He found her inside the hidden places of Ty Kora Tek's unknown realm. She sat at her loom and wove a new cloth that showed all of nature — plants and animals and people, mountains and valleys and seas. She sewed herself a new cloak from this cloth, and once dressed she went into the world again. She gave life to all from the old world that had mourned and been mourned.

Arachne Solara gave birth to Time. She went to the farthest East and opened the doors from Hell, Death, and Fear. She cast a web across the whole world to bind it as one. She blessed Orlanth to rule and sent the other gods to their places. She then loosed the horse of Elmal from the east for the first time, and it galloped to the summit of the sky. Elmal had never left his post atop Kero Fin, and grew stronger when his horse came to him. He mounted, and the first day of the new world was at its noon.

This was the Dawning, the start of measured time. Emalda woke the earth, Aldrya woke the wilds, Elmal woke the heavens, and the other great gods each woke their portion of the world.



## The Hero Age (History, Now, Time)

*The Hero Age began with the First Dawn. It is going on still.*

### The Dawn Age

At the Dawn, the Heortlings numbered a few thousand people. They were a unified and strong people compared to nearby humans. The local Uz, Aldryami, Mostali, dragonewts, and other races were their allies. These survivors of the Unity Battle formed the Unity Council. Their Lightbringer religion motivated them to go out and bring light to the rest of the world.

The simple Unity Council transformed after meeting the Dara Happans. After wars and the death of some gods, all the people came to peace and a new council formed in the land of Dorastor.

The Heortlings were only one large group of Orlanthi at this time. In Ralios and southern Peloria, once-fragmentary populations had grown after the Dawn. The Ralians never united, torn by war and foreigners. In Peloria, the hero Lokamayadon united the other large group; they called themselves the Talastari. On Orlanth's high holy day they flew to Mount Farar, popularly called Top of the World, since Kero Fin was too far away. Farar was a huge piece of Umath that had crashed to earth, and had nearly the fame of Kero Fin.

The High Council of Dorastor then fell under the influence of bad Dara Happan ideas. The Council agreed to use whatever resources were necessary to create a new god. Most of the Elder Races protested, and when the Uz broke from the council the Heortlings did as well. The Talastari and Dara Happans then began the conquest of the Heortlings.



On the autumnal equinox of the year 375, Elmal was unhorsed, and the Sun stopped in the sky. The new god was born, and Chaos came into the world again in the form of Nysalor, whom the Heortlings now call Gbaji, the Liar. Lokamayadon fell to the wiles of the god and began to worship Tarumath, whom he called the High Storm. Soon, Lokamayadon's war against men was not enough. He stopped all Orlanth worship, and largely replaced it with sacrifices to Tarumath. Lokamayadon was stopped at the Battle of the Verge by Vargast Redhand, who also died in the fight.

A decade later Harmast Barefoot was the first human being to assemble the myths and perform the entire Lightbringer's Quest. He brought back with him the anti-hero Arkat, a perfect foil to defeat Gbaji, the anti-god. The Heortlings conquered Dara Happa, threw down all the altars to Tarumath, and banished Gbaji back to Chaos.

### The Imperial Age

The Heortlings lived for centuries under the relative benevolence of the Unity Council. Then the dragons directed their thoughts to their ancient home. Dragonewts had not communicated since escaping their enslave-



ment by Gbaji, but suddenly they began to visit local leaders. The Unity Council welcomed them back, and helped form the , which is called Empire of the Wyrms Friends. When Orlanth Dragonslayer ordered his devotees to do their duty, war broke out between the traditionalists and the dragonfriends. Betrayed by their own people and fearful of kinstrife, the traditionalists were scorched. Obduran the Betrayer established the cult of Orlanth the Dragon, the remaining priests joined enthusiastically, and the Heortling people disappeared under the veil of the  banner.

Alakoring Dragonbreaker came from Ralios to liberate the world from the dragons. He killed Drang, the Diamond Storm Dragon. He established a new rite of kingship, sacrificing to Orlanth Rex, and began the movement that let the Heortlings vomit out their inner dragon and be free. Elves assassinated him, and the learned among his followers sensed what was to come. A vast foreign army invaded Dragon Pass, and the cultists moved north past Tarsh or south into Heortland. A hundred thousand dragons came to Dragon Pass and devoured every human being. King Daranvolath rallied the people who had fled south, and the people acclaimed him High King of the Hendreiki.

## The Modern Age

The remaining Heortlings lived in peace for years. A common Heortling proverb says that whenever there is peace, Someone always comes bringing dangerous new ideas, death, and disaster. In Heortland, this person was the Pharaoh, a powerful magician who said he was a god. Impossibly, he swam ashore from the impassable oceans and then conquered Heortland, Esrolia, and many other lands. Some Heortlings supported him, but others did not. A few braved a trip back into Dragon Pass to avoid kinstrife, even though people said the dragons would destroy any who crossed the border. The dragons did not destroy them. They settled in the hills surrounding the Quivin Mountains and eventually formed the Kingdom of Sartar.





# I'm New Here

## Default Characters



*Hero Wars* provides several different methods of character creation. If you are new, in a hurry, or don't want to bother with those systems, we recommend that you create one of the Default Characters. These two types are common, simple to understand, and have abilities and magic suited to survival and adventure.

*Hero Wars* is a storytelling game. It relies on your ability to imagine your hero's actions rather than long lists of abilities. Nonetheless, you do have stats to write down. The default Character Sheet is a blank piece of paper.

1. Decide whether to be a male warrior or a female field medic.
2. Select a name. See pg. 156 for common Heortling names.
- 3a. If you are a male warrior, write the following on the paper :

**Heortling Warrior** 17

**Close Combat** 5W

**Brave** 1W

⚔ Destor the Explorer Magic

† **Combat** 17

⌘ **Movement** 17

⊖ **Wind** 17

- 3b. If you are a female field medic, write the following on the paper:

**Heortling Healer** 17

**First Aid** 5W

**Calm** 1W

⊞ Bevara the Healer Magic

⏏ **Heal People** 17

⏏ **Heal Relationships** 17

⊞ **Self Defense** 17

If you want to know now what these statistics mean, consult *Hero Wars*. Otherwise, your narrator will tell you when to use them. You will have a chance later to add abilities; again, your narrator will help you with this. If you want to see typical abilities, go to the following keywords:

⊖ **Male Heortling** (pg. 155), **Warrior** (pg. 168), **Orlanth Adventurous** (pg. 219), and **Destor the Adventurer** (pg. 222); OR

⊞ **Female Heortling** (pg. 155), **Healer** (pg. 163), **Ernalda the Healer** (pg. 192), and **Bevara the Medic** (pg. 194).

Of course, *Hero Wars* has Character Sheets to contain more than this minimal information. They are available in *Deluxe Hero Wars* or from our web site at [www.herowars.com/hw/samples/CharSheetTheist.pdf](http://www.herowars.com/hw/samples/CharSheetTheist.pdf).



## Orstalar the Spearlord



*Orstalar uses no weapons but long spears, with which he is so adroit that he also uses them as javelins. He worships Finovan the Raider, but practices his skills on the Lunars now instead of cattle. He specializes in ambushes (whether of small bands or centuries). He has a special relationship with Engizi, and no Lunar soldiers dare pursue him within a quarter mile of the Creek, Stream, or River.*

# ⚡ Become the Thunder! ⚡

## Heortling Character Creation

*Call the people from their herds now, To my feasting hearth invite them;  
Summon cowman, cottar, godi; Call the gyrd and the thane!*

*I shall sing now of the heroes; I shall chant the praise of high ones,  
Those who wear the blue-bright iron; Those who heft the rune-carved blade!*

*Men who know the ways of power; Women wise and rich in magic,  
Keepers of the herds and plantings; Staunch defenders of the clan.*

Character creation follows the rules provided in **Hero Wars**. The keywords provided in this section are those common to the vast majority of Heortlings. Additional, less common occupations and magic keywords are available in **Storm Tribe: The Cults of Sartar**.

## Cultural Keywords

### Female Heortling

*Physical Abilities:* Housework, Spinning and Weaving.

*Mental Abilities:* Dragon Pass Geography, Heortling Customs, Heortling Myths, Know Local Area.

*Relationships:* to Family; to Clan; Worship Storm Pantheon.

*Magic:* All women initiate or devote themselves to a specific goddess. Each profession lists suitable goddesses from this book. Heortlings fear sorcery as soul draining. Shamanism is rare, and shamans are generally outcasts and hermits. Mysticism is extremely rare, normally equated with dragonewts and outsiders.

### Male Heortling

*Physical Abilities:* Close Combat (*Fyrd* Combat), Farming, Ranged combat (Javelin), Running.

*Mental Abilities:* Dragon Pass Geography, Heortling Customs, Heortling Myths, Know Local Area.

*Relationships:* to Family; to Clan; Worship Storm Pantheon.

*Magic:* All men initiate or devote themselves to a specific god. Each profession lists suitable gods from this book. Heortlings fear sorcery as soul draining. Shamanism is rare, and shamans are generally outcasts and hermits. Mysticism is extremely rare, normally equated with dragonewts and outsiders.

## Selecting a Name

Heartling children receive their name in a family ceremony that recognizes them as a living being with a life and future. Different clans have their own traditions that determine the timing and importance of this ceremony. Some name their children as early as eight days after birth, but most wait until the child's first tooth shows or even until his first birthday. The meaning of a child's name is always significant. Many children are named after an ancestor (thus honoring both the ancestor and the child). Others identify a physical feature, such as when a blonde child is named Elmalandti. Rarely, a child's *wyrd* might make itself known even this early in life, such as if the Three Women appear at the ceremony and give a child her name.

Most names have masculine and feminine forms. Generally, the feminine form of a name has an **-a** suffix (or, less commonly, **-e**) added to the base; men's names rarely add an **-i**, **-os**, or **-us** to a base. Some names are used **only** for men or women, often the names of gods (for men) and goddesses (for women). Some diminutives of deity names and honorifics are restricted as well: **-tyr**, **Orl-** and **Tor-** for men, **Ernald-**, **-ernald-**, and **Nat-** for women. A few names are common to both men and women. As is always the case with a semi-literate culture, the pronunciation of a name is what is important, since variations in spelling are common. Thus, the same name may be spelled Nikena or Niquena.

Everyone has other identifiers. These include a family identification, as the "son of" or "daughter of" a parent (usually the father, unless the person is fatherless or their mother is more important than their father); a bloodline identification, as "of the *X* lineage;" or a clan identification, "the *X*-ing," where *X* is the clan name ("-ing" means "children of" or "descendant of"). The first of these identifiers would be commonly used by neighbors and clansfolk, to tell which Aski is meant. The second, bloodline, identification is used among the clan. The third name is used for everyone else in the world outside the clan. Thus, a person might call himself Aski Harbardsson, Aski Jenest, or Aski Varmanding, depending on the circumstances.

People normally acquire an epithet, or nickname, as well. These are individual and personal, used primarily among friends or when the person becomes famous. They are usually given by others based upon some event of note, and only the most pompous ass chooses a name for himself. Epithets often change, especially as people gain fame through deeds. Thus, the famous Colymar warrior Asborn was known as Demonslayer, Twice-born, Thrice-born, and Four-born in the course of his career.

*Common Base Names (add suffix):* Angor-, Ask-, Barngrad-, Barntad-, Bastak-, Benev-, Bundr-, Butar-, Brygg-, Byrgar-, Dastandr-, Enestak-, Engarn-, Enjoss-, Estav-, Faltik-, Fedark-, Fistiv-, Haldel-, Hurb-, Ortoss-, Iristh-, Iskall-, Jarstak-, Kagrad-, Karendr-, Kar-, Koll-, Korstard-, Londr-, Malt-, Manisk-, Miltr-, Monr-, Mor-, Odd-, Organd-, Ran-, Renedal-, Rostak-, Rostal-, Rostand-, Tarkal-, Unstan-, Valenst-, Yerest-

*Men's Names (add -a or -e for women):* Alebard, Amald, Anton, Aransand, Aren, Argrand, Arkell, Arlest, Arnal, Arnbord, Asborn, Ashart, Askul, Aslandar, Avareen, Baranthos, Baranwolf, Belkar, Bender, Bofrost, Bolik, Bolthor, Boltar, Borngold, Branbrig, Brandgor, Branduan, Bren, Brol, Broost, Broyan, Bruth, Dangmag, Dangmar, Dangmet, Darndrev, Darrold, Derek, Desrad, Domas, Dorasor, Drelfon, Drenyan, Dunorl, Elgan, Ellisif, Enastar, Endal, Enent, Enfrew, Entarios, Eonisar, Eonistaran, Eparikondos, Eric, Errol, Erryn, Fantarl, Farad, Farangar, Farnan, Feren, Filbar, Frekor, Garaystar, Gardrostan, Garnath, Garrath, Garstal, Gastar, Gavial, Glendar, Gordangar, Govoran, Gralar, Griseld, Grivton, Gustand, Gyffun, Hahlgrim, Hallarax, Haloric, Harbard, Harev, Hargart, Hargran, Harkalor, Harmast, Harnafel, Harnkorl, Harran, Harsaltar, Harvald, Harvar, Hastur, Heleric, Helgan, Hemrid, Hendrick, Hengall, Heorl, Hervald, Hindal, Hiord, Hofstaring, Ilgalad, Illig, Ingan, Ingard, Intagarn, Ivarth, Jafoksor, Janar, Janstan, Jarang, Jarastan, Jarenst, Jarnandar, Jarolor, Jaronak, Jarosar, Jarstan, Jenest, Jistin, Jonatan, Jonrik, Joram, Jorator, Jordan, Jostharl, Jotaran, Kangharl, Kenstrel, Kentvent, Kestald, Ketil, Kirnan, Kistrald, Koreng, Korlaman, Korlmar, Kornos, Korol, Kost, Krogar, Kulbrast, Kurash, Leik, Londar, Loricon, Magan, Malan, Markalor, Mikhil, Minar, Minaryth, Miran, Morgan, Mosdorl, Narden, Offir, Olav, Olend, Orand, Ordag, Orendal, Orfal, Orkarl, Orngerin, Orstalar, Orstanor, Ostlan, Parzel, Penterest, Perandal, Petrad, Randalyar, Randan, Randel, Rangard, Rangor, Ranulf, Rastoron, Renath, Robasart, Roganvarth, Rurik, Salinarg, Sarask, Saronil, Sarotar, Sasar, Simbal, Skalfar, Soran, Swen, Tamar, Tarkal, Taros, Thandren, Tonalang, Urenstand, Valstatch, Vamastal, Vandarl, Varmand, Varsens, Varthanis, Venharl, Veoslin, Verlain, Vinin, Voskandor, Voskandoras, Willandring, Willem, Yaransor, Yend, Yorsar.

*Other Men's Names:* Angtyr, Biturian, Brandig, Dushi, Elmalandti, Elnor, Enderos, Enerin, Enothan, Entarios, Flesso, Friedar, Frithorf, Garnen, Gringle, Heortarl, Kalf, Kallai, Kamil, Korlmhy, Koschei, Kuschile, Leikan, Levru, Lhankpent, Lismelder, Orlaf, Orlaront, Orlidag, Orlev, Orlgard, Orlkarlman, Orlkarth, Orlkarth, Orlkensor, Orlmakt, Rastorlanth, Rollo, Sarostip, Sartark, Temertain, Terasarin, Torvath, Torkan, Tormakt, Torvald, Umathkar, Vastyr, Wilms.

*Other Women's Names:* Aileena, Ailrene, Camille, Dorasa, Dushi, Elnor, Enderos, Enerin, Enothea, Entarios, Erissa, Ernaldesta, Ernaldinna, Ernaldness, Erania, Flesso, Frieda, Frithorf, Garneneva, Insterid, Ivarne, Janerra, Jareen, Jareena, Jeraka, Jerernalda, Jeresrola, Kareena, Leikan, Levru, Lismelder, Lyzal, Marlesta, Morganeth, Myara, Natalina, Neela, Nevana, Niquena, Onelisin, Rolla, Sora, Uraldinna, Yanioth, Yrsa.

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## Occupational Keywords

*Thunder Rebels* provides only occupations worshipped by the majority of Heortlings. These are the traditional “Eighteen Occupations” (see pg. 39). They include the basic occupations held by most people, the special occupations filled by thanes, and the nobles, who are the leaders of society.

### Wergild and Living Standards

Wergild is a universal part of Heortling culture. Everyone has a wergild, based on their occupation, status in the clan, and personal wealth. Page 37 lists the actual wergilds for each category.

**Basic Occupations** have either a cottar’s or a carl’s wergild. For example, a farmer who owns a full ox team and plow has a carl’s wergild. A farmer who has no oxen or plow, but who herds pigs or sheep or works for a carl, has a cottar’s wergild.

The living standard of a carl is usually Common, but can range from Minimal to Prosperous depending on their property, holdings, and most importantly, how hard and successfully they work. A cottar can hope to have a Common living standard if they work hard, but even then most have Minimal wealth.

**Advanced Occupation** have either a thane’s or a noble’s wergild. **Thanes** have more responsibility and are more accountable to the clan for their actions than are carls and cottars. Part of the benefits accruing to thanes is an increased wergild. **Nobles** have the highest wergilds. They are the rulers and leaders of society.

## Basic Occupations

According to tradition, both men and women comprise the Four Providers: farmer, fisher, herder, and hunter. In practice, however, only men actually perform these jobs in most cases. Instead, these rules cover the wives of providers with the Steadwife occupation. In Heortling society, women generally are not the “active” half of the population. A warrior’s wife might be a healer, steadwife, gardener, or craftsperson, for example, not a warrior.

A few other occupations are “restricted” to one gender or the other by tradition. It is possible to have a male healer or female warrior, but these are exceptions.

*Men:* Farmer, Fisher, Herder, Hunter, Lawspeaker, Skald, Warrior.

*Women:* Entertainer, Healer, Steadwife.

The deities listed under Magic are the most common and acceptable for that occupation. Where an occupation is common to both men and women, the deities available to women are listed first. Boldface type marks

the “default” or recommended deity. These are not, however, the only deities that a member of the occupation can worship. A man can worship any subcult of Orlanth, regardless of his occupation. The same is true of women and their worship of Ernalda.

The deities listed under Unusual Magic are uncommon for that occupation, but are still acceptable. These deities are detailed in *Storm Tribe: The Cults of Sartar*.

## Beggar

The beggars that flock around the gates of Sartar’s cities are a new phenomenon, brought about by the Lunar occupation. Before the Lunars, there were no beggars, for the clans took care of all their members. Since the Lunars broke up clans and tribes, the traditional support mechanism has broken down. Now maimed warriors, undeserving outlaws, foreigners, and kinless folk congregate around city gates and squares, begging for enough food or coins to survive.

Heortling tradition equates beggars with thieves. Some beggars actually are thieves, or work for thieves. Confidence men have faked mutilations and taken to begging, going home in the evening and stashing their loot.

*Physical Abilities:* Endure Bad Weather, Go Without Food, Hide.

*Mental Abilities:* Beg, Local Area Knowledge, Spot Thug.

*Personality:* Patient, Pitiful.

*Relationships:* Usually none.

*Magic:* Beggars can rarely keep up with worship ceremonies, and so often lapse from the religion. Beggars may have been followers of any god.

*Living Standard:* Minimal.

*Wergild:* Cottar, sometimes Outlaw (see pg. 43).

*Disadvantages:* Beggars are often ill. Many have a mutilation such as an amputated arm or leg, blindness, or deafness. Because they are not supported by their family (or else they would not be beggars), they are not full members of Heortling society.

*Equipment:* Many layers of ratty clothes, scraps of food.

## Craftsperson

Craftspeople make the goods needed by the clan. There are many other subcults dedicated to the other crafts, such as smithing or mining. Heortlings divide crafting into women’s work (making items such as baskets or pots) and men’s work (making larger items such as wagons or plows).

A clan commonly has three crafters: a redsmith (bronze smith), a carpenter and barrel-maker, and one other, most often a potter. Most craftspeople are of the cottar class, though a carl’s wife may be renowned as a crafter without lowering her own or her husband’s wergild. Craftspeople skilled in rare or unusual crafts, who bring income to their clan, may even have a



Prosperous lifestyle, but “low crafters” (such as stickpickers and charcoal burners) have a Minimal Living Standard. Many specialized crafting deities exist, such as Gustbran Bonesmith and Minlister the Brewer. They are covered in **Storm Tribe: The Cults of Sartar**.

*Physical Abilities:* [Craft], Make Minor Equipment.

*Mental Abilities:* Find Necessary Supplies, Haggle.

*Personality:* Inspired, Patient.

*Relationships:* to Clan. Some cities have guilds to which all local crafters of that type belong.

*Magic:* Ernalda Allmother (Orane or **Pella**) for women; Orlanth Allfather (Durev or **Orstan**) for men.

*Unusual Magic:* Gustbran, Lhankor Mhy, Minlister.

*Living Standard:* Common.

*Wergild:* Cottar. Specific trades, such as redsmith, have a carl’s wergild, as might an especially famous or skilled crafter.

*Equipment:* Spear or other weapon for men; equipment necessary to perform craft; hut, chickens, garden plot.

### **Entertainer**

Low entertainers usually provide entertainment for the carls and cottars, not the thanes and nobles. Many low entertainers frequent the towns and cities, simply because they are more likely to make a living among strangers. Some even band together into troupes for defense and to provide shows with multiple acts. Such troupes often travel around over the seasons and years, but the majority of entertainers eke out a hand-to-mouth existence playing street corners and town squares.

Low entertainers include jugglers, fire-eaters, sleight-of-hand artists, sword-swallowers, whistlers and shout-singers, owners of trained animals, acrobats, rope-walkers, and contortionists, clowns and puppeteers, and players of the small pipe or ox-bones.

*Physical Abilities:* [Entertainment ability], Endure Bad Weather, Go Without Food.

*Mental Abilities:* Cadge a Meal, Local Area Knowledge, Play Audience, Spot Sucker.

*Personality:* Joyful.

*Relationships:* to Troupe.

*Magic:* Ernalda Allmother (**Skovara**).

*Unusual Magic:* Donandar, Eurmal.

*Living Standard:* Minimal.

*Wergild:* Cottar.

*Equipment:* Dagger, bundle of clothes, props or musical instruments.



## Redsmith

*This redsmith works a sword blade to an edge. A clan normally has a redsmith to make the specialized tools they need. Redsmiths work bronze, for iron is very rare.*

### Farmer

Farmers form the vast majority of Heortling society. Barley is the primary crop in Sartar, but Heortlings also plant oats, wheat, and rye. The Lunars have introduced maize (corn), but true Heortlings will not touch it, as proper cultivation requires human sacrifice.

*Physical Abilities:* Make Simple Repairs, Manage Stead.

*Mental Abilities:* Domestic Animal Care, Farming, Know Land.

*Personality:* Conservative, Proud, Stubborn.

*Relationships:* to Stead.

*Magic:* Orlanth Allfather (Durev or **Orlanthcarl**) or Orlanth Thunderous (Ohorlanth).

*Unusual Magic:* Barntar, Heler.

*Living Standard:* Common.

*Wergild:* Carl.

*Equipment:* Leather helmet, shield, spear, and dagger; farmstead, small herd of cows or sheep, ox-team and plow (ox-team or plow for half-carls).

### Fisher

When Orlanth tamed the Water Tribe, he stole the secrets of catching and eating its minor members, the fish, frogs, crawdads, and other edible water dwellers. Since then, the Heortlings have fished the rivers. River fishers most often use nets or traps, though many Heortlings enjoy line fishing. Fishers use barbed fish-spears or tridents to catch frogs and large fish.

*Physical Abilities:* Boating, Make Nets, Make Traps, Swim.

*Mental Abilities:* Fishing, [River] Knowledge.

*Personality:* Patient, Taciturn.

*Relationships:* None additional.

*Magic:* Orlanth Allfather (Durev or **Poverri**).

*Unusual Magic:* Engizi.

*Living Standard:* Common.

*Wergild:* Carl. Poor fishermen who do not own a boat have a half-carl's wergild.

*Equipment:* Leather helmet, shield, spear, and dagger; small boat, traps, fishing nets and spear; small farmstead near river.

### Gardener

Few people are full-time gardeners. Most steads have communal gardens overseen by the Hearthmistress or a steadwife, but gardeners make their living out of providing roots, leafy vegetables, and herbs to the stead. Most gardeners have other jobs around the stead, such as handyman, laborer, or kitchen drudge.

*Physical Abilities:* Household Chores, Tend Garden.

*Mental Abilities:* Know Plants, Look Busy.

*Personality:* Long-suffering.

*Relationships:* to Stead.

*Magic:* Ernalda Allmother (Orane or **Overdruva**) for women; Orlanth Allfather (**Durev** or Orlanthcarl) for men.

*Living Standard:* Minimal.

*Wergild:* Cottar.

*Disadvantages:* Looked down upon socially.

*Equipment:* Gardening tools; place in someone else's stead, or small holding with garden, possibly a few pigs or chickens.

### God-talker (**Godi**)

God-talkers are holy people who talk to and about the deities. They have a natural closeness to the immortals, and know how to maintain the sacred lifestyle. What they know they have learned from the community or, more often, from their god.

Most god-talkers have an additional occupation, and officiate only at specific rites during the year. A god-talker working full time at the sacred tasks normally becomes a priest, although that is as much a political occupation as it is a magical one.

*Mental Abilities:* Initiate to [God], Perform Sacrifice, Pray to [god], Sense Gods Nearby, Sense Spirits Nearby.

*Personality:* Pious. Most deities have additional behavior requirements, and failure to adhere to them causes a handicap when using magic from that deity. Every deity has some requirements (even if they appear to be minimal such as the Orlanth and Ernalda requirement of "behave like everyone else"). Other deities are very strict and severe in their minimal standards.

*Relationships:* to Clan, to Tribe, or to Temple.

*Magic:* Any; most god-talkers are devotees of their deity.

*Living Standard:* Common.

*Wergild:* Carl.

*Equipment:* Leather helmet, shield, spear, and dagger for men; ritual equipment and clothing; small house and garden plot.

### Healer

Most steads have a person who knows the basics of healing. This person often accompanies the *fyrd* and stays in the back lines, ready to bind the wounds of the warriors. In rich steads, there may be separate healers for animals and people, but most healers are on call for any medical emergency, from illness to aiding cows in labor.

*Physical Abilities:* First Aid, Gentle Touch.

*Mental Abilities:* Calm Patient, Herbalism, Recognize Illness.

*Personality:* Calm, Empathetic.

*Relationships:* to Patients.

*Magic:* Ernalda the Healer (**Bevara** or any other subcult).

*Unusual Magic:* Chalana Arroy, Heler.

*Living Standard:* Common.

*Wergild:* Cottar.

*Equipment:* First aid kit with bandages, salves, and ordinary medicines.

## **Herder**

The clan's cattle are its greatest wealth. Herdsmen must guard the herds, track strays, ease the birthing pains of their charges, and treat minor illnesses in the upper pastures. Herders move the flocks and herds to the upper pastures in mid Sea Season as soon as the new grass is ankle-deep. The herds stay in the high pastures until the middle of Dark Season, when the herders drive them back down to the steads. They then cull the animals, with yearling bulls sold to market or kept for sacrifices, and old animals salted or smoked to provide meat for the winter. The remaining cows and one bull (usually) stay in the barn until the grass is again green. Young boys of the clan help drive the animals, overseen by the herdsmen, and woe betide the boy who lets the herd stray!

*Physical Abilities:* Butcher, Climb, Ranged Combat (Archery or Sling), Run Long Distance.

*Mental Abilities:* Animal First Aid, Know Herd Animals, Listen, Track, Train Alynx.

*Personality:* Patient, Watchful.

*Relationships:* None additional.

*Magic:* Orlanth Allfather (Durev or **Orolmarn**).

*Unusual Magic:* Heler, Yinkin.

*Wergild:* Carl.

*Living Standard:* Common.

*Equipment:* Leather helmet, shield, spear, bow or sling, and dagger; herd of cows, sheep, or pigs; small house in upper pastures or small stead.

## **Hunter**

Hunters roam the wildlands in search of prey. They hunt game with bow and arrow, javelin, or sling, and set snares for smaller animals. Hunters catch animals at specific times of the year. It is a minor offense to hunt an animal out of season, usually worth a cow to the chieftain, but occasionally more if harm befalls the wild herds due to over-hunting or taking pregnant animals. An especially great hunter might trap an earthshaker, but would not be expected to fight it (that's what warriors are for!).

Hunters usually join the *fyrð* as archers, and so are exempt from the requirement of keeping a spear, shield, and helmet. Their bow marks them as a freeman.

*Physical Abilities:* Butcher, Hide in Cover, Ranged Combat (Archery, Javelin, or Sling), Set Traps, Stalk.

*Mental Abilities:* Know Prey Animals, Listen, Mimic Animal Sounds, Track.

*Personality:* Clever, Patient.

*Relationships:* None additional.

*Magic:* Orlanth Adventurous (Destor, **Ormalaya**, Tatouth, or Varanorlanth) or Orlanth Allfather (Durev).

*Unusual Magic:* Odayla, Yinkin.

*Living Standard:* Minimal.

*Wergild:* Carl.

*Equipment:* Bow and arrows, snares, traps; various furs, skins, teeth, and claws of prey; small stead or hunting camp.

## Merchant

Merchants have many different roles in Heortling society. At the clan level, the local Dishthane oversees the distribution of the grain, cattle, and goods of the clan, receiving the extras from each stead and distributing them to others as the chieftain directs. Tribes have a similar position, whose holder receives, stores, and distributes the taxes sent by clans. Most clan merchants have a cottar's wergild, most tribal merchants a carl's. If a merchant impresses his clan or tribe with his worth he may be appointed a tradethane, with appropriate wergild.

Wandering merchants travel between steads, clans, and tribes buying items locally and selling them farther afield. Most traveling merchants have only one pack animal or none at all. Traveling merchants who have five pack animals or ten thralls have a carl's wergild, and master merchants who own 20 or more animals may earn a thane's wergild.

"Trade Rings" are phenomena that have sprung up since the time of King Sartar. These organizations of traders center on the major cities. Members of the trade ring have free passage through the *tulas* of the local clans and tribes. Traders from independent tribes such as the Colymar usually do not have a relationship to a trade ring.

### Dishtane

The Dishthane runs the chieftain's stead, making sure that the clan's goods are always ready and available, that his household runs smoothly, and that feasts are successful. He or she has the keys to the strong-room and granaries, and is in charge of collecting the clan taxes from the carls. The Dishthane is often the most influential person in the clan, though not often seen as such.

*Physical Abilities:* Carry Heavy Loads, Load Pack Animal.

*Mental Abilities:* Bargain, Care for Mule, Gauge Value, Organize Storehouse.

*Personality:* Clever, Eloquent.

*Relationships:* to Clan, to Tribe, or to Trade Ring.

*Magic:* Esrola (**Esra** or any other subcult) or Ernalda Allmother (Orane or Pella) for women; Orlanth Allfather (Durev or **Harst**) or Adventurous (Destor) for men.

*Unusual Magic:* Asrelia, Issaries.

*Living Standard:* Common.

*Wergild:* Cottar.

*Equipment:* Leather helmet, shield, spear, and dagger for men; trade goods, pack animal (or two slaves); small stead.

### **Skald (High Entertainer)**

Skalds play the lur horn, harp, or pipes, or have memorized the hundreds of stories of the Heortling myths. They play for nobles and princes, and consider themselves far above the “low entertainers.” Some are wanderers, welcome in every clan’s lands, but most support the clan. Skalds are exempt from the clan *fyrð*, but are expected to know how to fight. In practice, most do join the *fyrð* unless appointed as a thane by their clan or tribe.

*Physical Abilities:* Play [Instrument], Sing.

*Mental Abilities:* Compose Poem, Make Satire, Memorize, Sense Emotions.

*Personality:* Clever, Eloquent, Proud.

*Relationships:* None additional.

#### **Tribal Skald**

The tribal skald lives in the king’s household. Although the king normally supports him, he does not have a thane’s wergild. His job is not only to entertain the king and his household, but also to record the history and deeds of the tribe in song and poetry.

The tribal skalds can have powerful positions in society, for they literally have the ears of the people and the leadership. They are immune to combat challenges, and warriors should not attack them in battle. They do not muster with the clan *fyrds*, but attend battles and compose suitable verse to commemorate them. They may enter any clan’s *tula* freely, and may not be hindered or kept when they wish to leave. Because of this, clans and tribes often use them as messengers and ambassadors.

In return for these benefits, a tribal skald gifts his king or other host with entertainment and writes laudatory poems or songs about him. He must be careful not to insult his hosts, as immunity from combat is a generally held right, but is no defense when an enraged warrior attacks.

*Magic:* Orlanth Adventurous (**Drogarsi**).

*Unusual Magic:* Donandar.

*Living Standard:* Common

*Wergild:* Carl

*Equipment:* Dagger; musical instrument; place in chieftain's hall.

### Steadwife

The steadwife maintains the home, looks after the farmyard animals, and performs the small tasks of the home such as sewing, cooking, and cleaning. Steadwives help their husbands (who are usually hunters, herders, farmers, or fishers) during peak periods such as the harvest.

*Physical Abilities:* Butchering, Domestic Chores, Gardening, Manage Household, Weaving; Threshing (farmer's wife); Prepare Fish (fisher's wife); Make Cheese (herder's wife); Prepare Hides (hunter's wife).

*Mental Abilities:* First Aid, Husbandry, Maintain Peace In Stead, Preserve Food, Run Household.

*Personality:* Competent, Loving, Motherly.

*Relationships:* to Stead.

*Magic:* Ernalda Allmother (**Orane**) or any other subcult of Ernalda. Many farmer's wives worship Esrola (Esra), and many herder's wives worship Esrola (Uralda).

*Living Standard:* Common.

*Wergild:* Generally the same as husband (usually cottar or carl).

*Equipment:* Tools and implements; stead, small garden plot, alynxes, geese.

### Stickpicker

Stickpickers cannot afford to maintain a cottar's house and yard. They must make a living collecting wood and scraps from the forest, charcoal, or other lesser "crafts." They are the lowest of the low, above only thralls.

#### Hearthmistress

The hearthmistress is the senior woman of the stead. She assigns tasks, coordinates the household chores, and ensures the well being of all the inhabitants. The hearthmistress is usually the wife of the senior brother, but can just as easily be a grandmother or daughter. The other women of the stead respect her and take her orders (or at least defer to her) because of her knowledge and personality, not because of her social position.

A hearthmistress often has additional abilities beyond those listed above, such as Acute Hearing, Delegate, and Loud Voice. Her Living Standard is at least Common, and will be Prosperous on a large, successful stead. Her wergild is always at least that of a carl.



People occasionally ask them for their help, but no one expects much from a stickpicker. Many poor or maimed members of poor clans are stickpickers, grateful for any place in society, even this one.

*Physical Abilities:* Carry Heavy Burden, Endure Bad Weather, Go Without Food, Running.

*Mental Abilities:* Know Local Area, Know Woods.

*Personality:* Ambitious or Resigned.

*Relationships:* None additional.

*Magic:* Any.

*Living Standard:* Minimal.

*Wergild:* Cottar.

*Equipment:* Dagger for men; bundle of clothes, hidden cache of sticks; secret hiding place.

### **Warrior**

Warriors defend the clan from enemies, and raid their neighbors for cattle, goods or, in some cases, slaves. Although all Heortling men fight, warriors are specialists and do not have another job. Unlike the Four Providers they often do not have their own stead. Instead, a thane or noble supports them. Most warriors fight as heavily-armed skirmishers, using Movement magic to close with their foes, throwing javelins or axes, and either closing with the disordered foe or fleeing out of range if their missiles have no effect.

Most Heortling warriors know enough riding to get to a battle or act as a messenger, but not enough to fight from horseback.

Because Orlanth mastered the weapons of all the elements, many clan warriors use weapons other than Spear or Sword. Clans with ties to the Earth tend to use axes, Elmal clans tend towards spears and javelins, and the rare Darkness clans use maces and mauls. Archery is rarely a warrior skill, but many clan warriors use javelins and thrown axes.

*Physical Abilities:* Acute Hearing, Close Combat (Spear and Shield Fight-ing, one additional [Weapon] Fighting skill), Hide in Cover, Ranged Combat (one [Thrown Weapon] skill), Riding, Running.

*Mental Abilities:* Recognize Foe, Stay Awake.

*Personality:* Boastful, Brave, Loyal to Leader.

*Relationships:* to Clan, Tribe, or Warband.

*Magic:* Orlanth Adventurous (**Destor** or any other subcult), Allfather (Starkval), or Thunderous (any except Ohorlanth).

*Unusual Magic:* Babeester Gor, Elmal, Heler, Humakt, Maran, Urox, Vinga.

*Living Standard:* Common.

*Wergild:* Carl.

*Equipment:* Leather armor and helmet, shield, spear, sword, dagger, or other appropriate weapons; small stead or place in chieftain's hall.

## Advanced Occupations

### Thanes

A noble may make anyone a thane. The hunter who brings in the best beast in the annual Great Hunt becomes the Huntthane, the Clan law-speaker is a Lawthane, and a merchant who makes good bargains on behalf of the tribe may be raised to Tradethane. All thanes have a wergild of 50 cows, and can expect increased gifts both from the chieftain and from those who want their attention and favor. Their living standard is raised one level and they gain a one-time increase in Wealth of +10.

To become a thane a hero must impress his chieftain or another noble. There are no specific abilities required, but most have relevant abilities at 10W or better for a clan position, 10W2 for a tribal position.

The keywords in this section are guidelines for creating narrator characters in these positions. In a high-power game setting, a narrator may allow players to choose these occupations during character generation.

#### The Four Storms

Orlanthi tradition provides any famous warrior with an entourage, as well as a set of weapons. Many myths that depict Orlanth going into combat casually mention his companions. Just as often, the story remains silent on the subject. Everyone knows that companions, servants, and bodyguards naturally accompany the greatest god in the world.

The Four Storms are also called the Fighting Storms. They are the fighting gods, the weapon bearers who defend Orlanth with their lives. He bore them in his fight against Sh'hakarzeel, against Arcka, and in every other important battle. Most stories list them as follows:

- Swordthane on the right, flashing Finovan the Great Attacker
- Shieldthane on the left, mighty Helamak the Great Defender
- Spearthane behind, dauntless Hedkoranth the Hurler
- Backboy watching over all, Enferalda the Supporter

Most weaponthanes have at least these four followers. These are titles, not strict definitions: a backboy (a young man learning the trade of a warrior) usually tends the horses and runs errands and messages, in addition to providing healing. The holder of a position does not need anything special beyond loyalty, nor does the officeholder get any special magic or power, except that of being next to his lord. The greater the individual, the greater his followers, so that a clan's warband leader's followers might each have a servant of their own as well.

The Lightbringer's Arming gives different Weaponthanes, listing mostly specialist deities:

*Look there, the godly warrior strides forth;  
He holds a flashing sword in his hand, and in front is Humakt;  
He bears a shield, and before stands mighty Elmal;  
He bears a spear, and in back stands deadly Orlanth;  
He bears his healing, and behind crouches Heler.*

Most positions are equally open to men and women, at least in theory. Thus, although clan chieftains and tribal kings are usually male, a woman can hold these posts. Dishthanes (see pg. 165) are usually female, and most other thanes usually male. Heads of households are often thanes, however, and can be female as easily as male.

All thanes have a basic occupation. Thus, a clan champion may have been a warrior, farmer, or skald (though he will normally have been a warrior), and will have appropriate abilities from that previous occupation.

### **Champion**

The clan or tribal champion is a special weaponthane (see pg. 172), always a warrior of great renown. He spends his days with a weapon in his hand, training, teaching, or fighting for his community. He represents his clan or tribe in combat, whether ritual, judicial, or on the battlefield. He worships one of the fighting cults, and has probably been a weaponthane in his time, perhaps even a warband leader. He is the best fighter of the community, although it may have several champions, each the best in their particular fighting specialty. The champion often leads a contingent of weaponthanes into battle, and answers challenges.

*Entry Requirements:* Appropriate combat abilities, acknowledged by community as the best fighter in at least one fighting style.

*Physical Abilities:* Close Combat (five different techniques or weapons), Ignore Pain, Strong, Tough.

*Mental Abilities:* Know Neighboring Warriors, See Opponent's Weakness.

*Personality:* Arrogant, Fearless.

*Relationships:* to Clan or to Tribe.

*Living Standard:* Prosperous.

*Wergild:* Thane.

*Benefits:* Glory and the Hero's Portion. The champion receives the best arms and armor in the clan, as well as magical support from all the priests.

*Disadvantages:* Must accept challenges on behalf of the community. Subject to challenges from those who would test their prowess against the clan or tribe's best warrior.

*Equipment:* Good weapons and armor; trophies, arm rings, several horses, fine clothes; a stead, two cottar families to run the stead; four warrior followers as the "Four Storms," two cottar followers as servants.

### **Lawspeaker**

Lawspeakers must know the laws, customs, and ways of their clan, tribe, and the gods. They act as jurors and judges, and are often the chief negotiator with other clans and tribes. All clans and tribes usually have a single lawspeaker who advises the chieftain and king. A lawspeaker might have had almost any occupation before his appointment, but usually needs a high ability rating in Know Heortling Customs.

*Entry Requirements:* Demonstrate knowledge of Heortling customs and laws, and have a reputation for knowledge or impartiality.

*Physical Abilities:* Carve Lawstaff, Emphatic Gestures.

*Mental Abilities:* Detect Emotions, Know Heortling History, Know Heortling Laws, Memorize, Speak with Authority.

*Personality:* Discerning, Impartial.

*Magic:* Lawspeakers worship Orlanth Allfather (**Andrin** for clan lawspeakers, **Jarani** for tribal lawspeakers).

*Unusual Magic:* Lhankor Mhy.

*Relationships:* to Clan or Tribe.

*Living Standard:* Prosperous.

*Wergild:* Thane.

*Equipment:* Stead and half-carls or cottars to work it.

### **Priest or Priestess**

Priests are full-time workers for the gods. They are specialized and unusual, with high status and many benefits. The requirements listed here are a generic average of a wide range of positions, for each deity and temple has its peculiarities. A priest was certainly a god-talker before his appointment.

*Entry Requirements:* The priesthood can be a purely political appointment, but most temples require a minimum ability rating in a primary cult ability or affinity, plus at least a mastery in most secondary ones.

*Physical Abilities:* Chant for Hours, Dance Sacred Dances.

*Mental Abilities:* Lead Worship, Orlanthi Philosophy.

*Relationship:* to Clan, to Tribe, or to Temple.

*Personality:* Almost any (see God-talker, pg. 163).

*Living Standard:* Prosperous.

*Wergild:* Thane.

*Benefits:* Complete support from clan, tribe, or temple; political influence in clan, tribe, or temple affairs.

*Disadvantages:* No personal time.

*Equipment:* Fine clothes, ritual regalia and implements, herds; a stead and two cottar families to run it; three cottar servants.

### **Warband Leader**

The clan warband leader is a special weaponthane (see below). He organizes the clan *fyrð* and warriors during battle, and makes guard and patrol assignments to best guard the *tula*. He is usually a member of the clan's inner ring, and advises them and the chieftain on all aspects of warfare. The clan champion is the warband leader in some clans. More often, however, the chieftain fills this important position with a renowned warrior who thinks more about winning battles than personal glory.

Outlaw warbands must hide from the Lunar authorities, but may still work with their clans clandestinely. Mercenary and outlaw warband leaders have no wer-gild, and often have only a common living, if that. Mercenary warbands have no clan, and roam the world seeking employment.

*Entry Requirements:* Appropriate combat and leadership abilities, or catch the chieftain's eye.

*Physical Abilities:* Close Combat (Shieldwall Fighting, one additional weapon or fighting technique).

*Mental Abilities:* Spot Ambush, Warband Tactics.

*Relationships:* to Clan or to Warband Hero (for mercenary and outlaw bands); to Warband.

*Personality:* Businesslike Fighter.

*Living Standard:* Prosperous.

*Wergild:* Thane.

*Benefits:* Superior equipment. Warband members must give the leader all booty taken, which he redistributes.

*Disadvantages:* At the forefront of battle, and constantly on patrol when not in battle. Expected to take initiative to fight.

*Equipment:* The best weapons and equipment available, a horse; 10-50 warband members, four warrior followers as the "Four Storms."

## **Weaponthane**

Weaponthanes are full-time warriors, and usually live in the chieftain's hall on permanent guard and military duty. They are the best fighters in the clan. They stand in the forefront of battle, leading other warriors and taking risks for the clan. In return, the clan feeds, clothes, and houses them, gives them arms and armor, and gifts them with arm-rings and horses.

*Entry Requirements:* Appropriate combat abilities, and catch the chieftain's eye by deeds or reputation.

*Physical Abilities:* Climb, Close Combat (one additional weapon or fighting technique), Hide in Cover, Riding.

*Mental Abilities:* Ambush, Spot Ambush.

*Relationships:* to Chieftain or to Warband.

*Personality:* Dedicated, Fearless, Professional, or Reckless.

*Living Standard:* Prosperous.

*Wergild:* Thane.

*Benefits:* A place in the chieftain's hall and a chance to earn glory. Receive important missions or jobs.

*Disadvantages:* At the forefront of battle, and constantly on patrol when not in battle. Expected to take initiative to fight.

*Equipment:* Superior arms and armor; fine clothes, access to the chieftain's stables; place in the chieftain's hall or a small stead; one cottar servant, four warrior followers.

## Nobles

All nobles receive their rank from the freemen of the clan or tribe. Most come from among the thanes, but even the lowliest stickpicker can aspire to noble status. Nobles receive support from their clan or tribe, with the wealth of the clan or tribe determining their Living Standard. Most clans can afford to keep a chieftain at a Rich living standard. Poor clans can only support a prosperous chieftain; conversely, most tribal kings have a Very Rich living standard. Other nobles receive a lesser level of support, always at least equal to the community's wealthiest thane. A noble normally receives a one-time +10 increase to his Wealth; if a clan chieftain becomes a tribal king, he gains this increase again.

### Chief Priest or Priestess

The chief priests are the religious leaders of the community. A clan normally has only one each for Ernalda and Orlanth. Independent large temples also have chief priests. The chief priests are responsible for their community's or temple's magical defenses, for resolving disputes between priests and cults, and for leading the ceremonies that honor the gods and enrich the community. In the same way that the chieftain comes from among the thanes, the priests of a clan or temple usually elect one of their own as chief priest. According to tradition, a chief priest or priestess must have ten priests or priestesses who report to him or her. A person selected for this position must already be a priest or priestess.

*Physical Abilities:* Go Without Sleep.

*Mental Abilities:* Bluster, Identify Gods, Heortling Myths, Mythology of [God], See Compromise.

*Relationship:* to Clan, Tribe, or Temple.

*Personality:* Almost any (see God-talker, pg. 163).

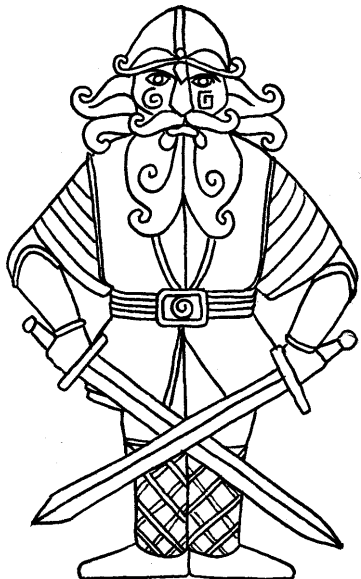
*Living Standard:* Prosperous.

*Wergild:* Noble.

*Benefits:* Complete support from community or temple. Magical support from god-talkers and priests. Political and magical influence in temple and community affairs.

*Disadvantages:* No personal time.

*Equipment:* Fine clothes, ritual regalia and implements; a stead and two cottar families to run it, herds; four warriors and three priests as followers, five cottar servants.



### Clan Chieftain or Tribal King

A chieftain is the leader of a clan. The people choose him, and he governs with the aid of the clan ring. As long as a person meets those requirements he (or less often, she) may vie for the position. The position may be available because a chieftain has retired, died, or been removed by the clansfolk. Any person can challenge the current clan chieftain if they feel that they are better suited for the job. Besides the ritual and traditional requirements set down in the laws, there are no formal requirements, and a chieftain may have had any previous occupation.

A tribal king has similar requirements, but must be acclaimed king by the assembled clans. This is always a political decision, subject to much compromise, since nothing beyond its members' choice requires a clan to remain as part of a tribe. Most kings are chieftains of their own clan, and often remain in both positions.

Kings have the same benefits and requirements as chieftains, but on a larger scale. As with chieftains, the laws set down ritual and traditional requirements, but no other formal requirements to qualify as a tribal king.

Clan chieftains always worship the Orlanth subcult of Dar the Leader. Tribal kings usually worship the Orlanth subcult of Dar the Leader, but some may worship Orlanth Rex. Female tribal kings may instead worship the Ernalda subcult of Orendana the Queen. Only a high king can worship the Orlanth subcult of Vingkot High King.

*Physical Abilities:* Look Imposing.

*Mental Abilities:* Bluster, Debate, See Compromise.

*Relationships:* to Clan (chieftain) or to Tribe (king).

*Personality:* Any.

*Living Standard:* Rich (chieftain) or Very Rich (king).

*Wergild:* Noble.

*Benefits:* Material support from the clan or tribe, chance to affect the policies of the tribe (chieftain) or kingdom (king). Political and martial support from the thanes. Chance to appoint thanes and officers of inner ring.

*Disadvantages:* Always answerable to the clan or the clans of the tribe. All decisions questioned by those who dislike your leadership. Challenges to personal combat and other hazardous duties. Responsible to the clan or tribe. Responsible to the gods. Under the eye of the Lunars.

*Equipment:* Superior arms and armor; fine clothes, the trappings of wealth, horses; large stead and mead hall, herds, three to five cottar families to run stead; four weaponthanes followers as the "Four Storms," five to ten cottar servants.

## Magic Keywords

The following two chapters contain the magic keywords for Orlanth and Ernalda. They are not in the same format as those available elsewhere. Sacrifices, Manifestations, Holy Days, the Other Side, and Other Connections are discussed in other parts of this book, and the keywords do not repeat that information. Orlanth and Ernalda are the foundations of Heortling society. Thus, there are no true Disadvantages associated with their worship (except for the fact that the Lunars have outlawed the worship of Orlanth).

The keywords of an aspect and its subcults are complementary. Thus, a player who worships Bevara the Medic gains all abilities listed in the Ernalda the Healer and Bevara the Medic keywords as if they were a single magic keyword. Each affinity lists several feats available to devotees. These lists are not exhaustive, nor are they intended to be absolute. Narrators may alter the specific feats devotees learn with an affinity, and both narrator and player are free to create additional feats within the affinity.

Each magic keyword in the next two chapters has a Virtues section, each of which lists one or more personality traits. These traits show the expected behavior of worshippers, regardless of whether the hero actually takes the trait as an ability. Thus, players may include these abilities on their character sheet when they choose the keyword, but they do not have to, as long as they exhibit the proper behavior during play.

### “A Chieftain’s Requirements”

— from *Andrin’s Words*

He must be initiated into the clan secrets of Orlanth, and have participated in the Four Yearly Rites, and the Lightbringer Quest in Sacred Time. He must be healthy and spontaneous, just and hospitable. He must have two good horses, a metal helmet and byrnies, two good swords, and six spears. He must know the name of his ally, and know men’s magic, and have a magical item of his own. Furthermore, three clan folk must vouch for him, and relate deeds of honor, judgment, and courage that they have seen. Finally, he must prove his skills against all other candidates for the office in the Chieftain Tests.

### “The Tribal King”

— from *Andrin’s Words*

He must be initiated into the secrets of Orlanth, and into the secrets of another deity. He must succeed at a Crown Test.

The king must protect the weak. He must lead in dealing with all issues of justice through the force of law and arms. He must choose a tribal council. He must muster the people against enemies, and divide all plunder among the clans. He must employ a master smith and a master brewer.

A king can stop into any household of his subjects, and stay for a Day-feed. He is always welcome, with his household, in the home of any noble or full priest. He is the guest of his clan council.



## ☩      Your Leaders      ☩

Although your chieftain rules the clan, he is only one of many important leaders, each the best at their job. You know all of these important people. They may not remember your name yet, but they have probably met you before, recognize you, and know your bloodline. If you have done anything unusual or important, they **will** know your name, and when they meet you again they will ask you tell them and everyone else all about it. You can trust them all. The most powerful and influential people in your clan are:

- The Chieftain
- The Chief Priestess
- The Champion
- The Lawspeaker
- The Tradethane
- The Plowthane
- The Healer
- Several god-talkers
- The weaponthanes

### Do You Need Something?

You are a member of your clan. Just as you support them with your labor and worship, they support you with theirs. If you and your bloodline have a problem, you can go to them and get advice or aid. If you show by your actions that you are important or special enough, you can ask them for help for yourself. For example, you can ask for:

- Healing from the Healer.
- Extra food from the Chief Priestess.
- A horse from the Chieftain. He may lend it to you.
- Weapons from the Champion. He will give you ordinary weapons.
- Armor and good weapons from the Clan Chieftain. They have one old set and one good one, from an ancestor. Unless they make you a weaponthane, all they will do is lend you the old set: if you want good armor and weapons for yourself, you will have to get your own.
- Land to farm on, from the Chieftain. If you deserve it, you will get it at the Clan moot after harvest. When grandpa dies, you can expect that your family will still keep their holding, as long as you have held it well.
- Permission to leave this boring place and seek adventure. Grandpa has to agree, and if he does you must go to the clan to tell them you are leaving. The ring members may offer you a job elsewhere, or bless you to go. You are always welcome back, as long as you do not bring foreign trouble.

### What About Money?

*Money? No one has money. A few coins come to the stead, and a number come through the clan treasury. These are always used as part of our taxes, and are never available to people like you. How about a couple of cows instead?*

# Ernalda

## The Great Goddess

*You are the Fortune, the Powerful One whose visions animate the world. Wherever you look is Life and Power. You are the power before birth, before thought, and before movement. You are the Mother of the Gods and the Pleasure of the World.*

— Invocation to Ernalda

Ernalda is the power that animates the worlds. Her power is everywhere, and with Orlanth she makes the cosmos. Ernalda is so great that the world cannot exist without her. She was born in the Middle Earth, but has conquered the Overearth and Underearth as well. Ernalda is so great that mortals cannot truly comprehend her. Instead, she has manifested herself and her powers as goddesses so that her worshippers can know her and her magic. These include her sister goddesses as well as her aspects.

Beyond these aspects is the hidden power of Great Ernalda, which people cannot see. She is greater than these parts. Only these goddesses, the parts of Ernalda that people can clearly see, know this hidden power. The whole Earth Realm, the God World of the Earth Tribe, is contained within Great Ernalda, and yet is only a part of her being.

## Aspects

Great Ernalda is manifest in four primary aspects. Each has its own symbols, rites, and magic, as well as several subcults. A fifth aspect, Voria the Maiden, is often included in the listing. Voria is the aspect that girls belong to before they are initiated. She is associated with any image of innocence and childhood, especially flowers. No Heortling worships this aspect as an initiate or learns magic from her. Initiation is the end of innocence, and thus of Voria.

## Nature of the Cult

The basic, most core essence of Ernalda is the deep vitalizing force of the universe. She is the Inward Power, and works in complete harmony with her husband, Orlanth, the Outward Power. All people who can reproduce this force worship Ernalda. Only women can do this, of course, and so all Ernalda worshippers are women and all women are Ernalda worshippers.

## Cosmological Reason for Existence

Ernalda is the underlying life force that animates the world and makes things happen. She does not often do things herself, but instead motivates and energizes everything that her Earth Family does. She is the force that keeps everything together.



## Entarios the Supporter



*Entarios is a devotee of Enferalda the Supporter, and is one of the most powerful women in Sartar. Whomever she supports, wins. When her first husband went hunting, he brought back fat stags in winter.*

*Her second husband never lost a fight while she stayed with him. Her clan, where she has lived even since his death, has prospered in every blessing from Ernalda that she has called. She is much-wooed, never won. A small army of admirers have sworn to protect her from anything, and lives in the wilds around her clan. She hates the Empire, and offers beer to the goddesses every day for its destruction.*

## Primary Aspects and Subcults of Ernalda

<b>Ernalda Allmother</b> <i>social aspect</i>	<b>Ernalda the Healer</b> <i>healing aspect</i>	<b>Ernalda the Queen</b> <i>leadership aspect</i>	<b>Esrola the Mother</b> <i>fertility aspect</i>
Eninta the Midwife (pg. 189)	Belveren the Chaos Cleanser (pg. 193)	Kadone the Grounder (pg. 199)	<i>Entra the Pig Mother *</i>
Mahome the Hearth Goddess (pg. 189)	Bevara the Medic (pg. 194)	Kev the Visionary (pg. 199)	Esra the Barley Mother (pg. 204)
Orane the Steadwife (pg. 189)	Enferalda the Supporter (pg. 195)	Orendana the Queen (pg. 200)	<i>Isbarn the Goose Girl *</i>
Overdruva the Forest Friend (pg. 190)	Jera the Herbalist (pg. 195)	Roitina the Ceremonialist (pg. 202)	<i>Nevala the Sheep Mother *</i>
Pella the Potter (pg. 191)	Orventili the Peacemaker (pg. 196)		<i>Pelora the Wheat Mother *</i>
Skovara the Entertainer (pg. 191)	Vorela the Animal Healer (pg. 197)		<i>Suchara the Rye Mother *</i>
Vela the Matchmaker (pg. 192)	Votenevra the Earth Healer (pg. 197)		Uralda the Cow Mother (pg. 204)
			<i>Usara the Oat Mother *</i>

\* Subcults indicated in italics do not receive a full description in this book, see pg. 203 for details.

*"I am the Loom Woman, who binds the universe."*

– Ernalda's first words to Orlanth.

The cosmos is Ernalda's loom. She weaves the world together the way that warp and weft work upon a design. She is called Great Weaver, Basket Maker, Rug Maker, and Net Maker because mortals cannot understand the cosmos, but can know the baskets, rugs, and other objects she inhabits.

*There is always another way.*

– basic Ernaldan Philosophy

Ernalda is the Great Alternative. In the Human World, she teaches that one can always find a way to solve a problem without resorting to the violence of Orlanth. In the Divine World, she is the force that makes peace possible and powerful, so that violence cannot destroy the world again.

## Ernalda's Role in Society

Ernalda is the Heortling Goddess. She is the source, protector, and maker of everything they have, the broad earth that supports everything they do. She organizes their lives: they live off of her bounty, worship her family and household, and are healed by her compassion.

*Where Ernalda locks, life moves. When she locks away, life withers.*

– Ernalda invocation

Death is part of Ernalda's annual cycle. Whenever someone is blessed with abundance it is easy for people to remember her presence, but they must also remember her in times of death, loss, and sorrow. She is Life: the good and the bad, the fertile and the barren, the living and the dead.

*She will not hide from us. Do not hide from me.*

– beginning of many Ernaldan prayers

Ernalda is the Great Goddess, and contains all goddesses within herself. Most prayers to heal, bless children or households, or make magic call on Ernalda directly. Prayers for other things generally invoke Esrola, Maran, or the Household Goddesses, since they are closer to their own powers than is Great Ernalda.

*You are Her vessel of Life.*

– Ernalda priestess blessing

Ernalda is the source of custom, leadership, and ceremony. Custom is "the way things are done" for everyday affairs. All people learn these things from the time they are born. Leadership is the natural power some people have to inspire others and take control when necessary, and also the power of a community to acknowledge these leaders. Ceremony is the way of life, the invocation of magic into the world, and of the world into magic. Through all of these things, Ernalda is the Source of Life.

*She sleeps, she is not dead.*

– Wintertime chant of Ernalda initiates.

Every Darkness Season Ernalda leaves, the deadly cold comes, and the good life runs from everything. The worshippers of Ernalda cover their heads and mourn, as if the goddess were dead. All women learn the secrets of this ceremony, which tells them that “She sleeps, she is not dead.” Such is Ernalda’s secret power — the deities of death accept her as one of their own, yet she is not dead.

*She lives in all women.*

– Where Ernalda resides.

Ernalda is the women’s goddess. She is the essence of the entire Earth Family, including its goddesses, daimones, and worshippers. All Heortling women are members of the cult, and membership in it gives guidelines on how to exercise it.

## Friendly Relations

Orlanth is Ernalda’s permanent partner. He is the chieftain of the Storm Tribe, and with Ernalda is the father of the ancestors. He defends Ernalda, and she shares all of the bounty of the earth with him. All worshippers of Ernalda receive the protection of Orlanth and his worshippers, who are ritually, socially, and morally obligated to defend Ernalda’s women. Priestesses of Ernalda can command the worshippers of Orlanth in more direct ways because of this relationship. Thus, a priestess of Ernalda can command an Orlanth worshipper not just to defend her, but to seek out nearby forces of darkness or Chaos and destroy them for her.

### ☞ Heroic Options

*Thunder Rebels* is a handbook for **Hero Wars**, and by necessity we gloss over many ordinary subcults of both Ernalda and Orlanth. Although we give information on some everyday gods and goddesses, we ignore many deities who are known, well loved, and invoked regularly. We do this because the focus of **Hero Wars** is on heroic action, not daily life.

Ernalda worship includes exciting roles that women can take without going outside of their traditional gender roles. Many god-talkers, rulers, and healers worship Ernalda. Holy women can be ambassadors, Chaos foes, or entertainers, and thus may travel regularly doing their Goddess’ work. Many worshippers participate in battles as healers or supporters, and some subcults have great powers to overcome men in conflict.

Ernalda’s worship is primarily concerned with ending conflict, not creating it. Women heroes who seek violent roles are in the minority. Their combat cults of Vinga and Maran are described in **Storm Tribe: The Cults of Sartar**. Other specialized goddesses appear in that book as well, including Asrelia, Goddess of Wealth, and Ty Kora Tek, Goddess of the Dead.

Ernalda, Esrola, and the other goddesses each have had many husbands. The importance of each “Husband-Protector” varies with the deity and location, but Ernalda maintains friendly relationships with all of them. In turn, they take Orlanth’s place when he cannot protect her, defending and serving the Earth that gives them life. In this way, she weaves her web of relationships across the entire world.

## **Enemies**

Ernalda is the Earth and, according to many, the ultimate prize of the Gods War. Many gods sought to share the Earth, and Ernalda blessed all of them. Some gods sought to possess the Earth, and though they gained land they took nothing of worth. They are not enemies, for they cannot harm the Earth. A few gods sought to destroy the Earth when they could not possess it, and they are the enemies who plague Ernalda rituals. The most important foes are Angdartha, who took away Esrola; Tekakos, who slew Maran; and Nontraya, who came for Ernalda but found only her corpse.

Although the forces of Chaos often despoiled the Earth during the Great Darkness, Ernalda has no specific Chaos foe. She shares Orlanth’s hatred of Chaos, however, and his Chaos enemies (see pg. 211) are hers as well.

## **Sacrifices**

Priestesses and devotees use ritual cloth, clothing, dishes, and jewelry in most ceremonies, and give libations of beer or wine at the start of sacrifices. Like most Heortling deities, Ernalda favors animal sacrifices; boars and sows, ewes, cows, and a variety of barnyard fowl are appropriate. Raw grain (in the husk) is always a part of each ceremony, crushed, burnt, cast into water, or fed to animals, depending on the rite. Worshippers often sacrifice bread baked into the shape of their particular goddess’ rune.

The specific sacrifice Heortlings make to Ernalda depends on the natural products of the season. Thus, in her Spring rites Ernalda receives flowers and first fruits. In Darkness Season, after the culling of the herds, she always receives an animal sacrifice, usually accompanied by bread and beer or cider (depending on the clan).

## **Holy Days**

Ernalda has three types of holy days. Worshippers celebrate weekly holy days every Clay day. All initiates attend these rites, but only the devotees and priestesses spend the entire day in sacrifice and other rituals.

Shared holy days occur about once a season, and revere another goddess along with Ernalda. The entire community meets on these days to celebrate Ernalda and the goddesses, who bring life to the world.

Regular holy days are celebrated every Clay day of Fertility Week. On these days, the priestesses and devotees perform ceremonies, cast auguries, and

make plans for the coming season. These rites involve the entire community, which comes together to revere Ernalda through her various aspects.

Ernalda's high holy day is the regular holy day in Earth Season, Tool Day (see below). The communal rites celebrate and prepare for the beginning of the harvest. The private rites celebrate Great Ernalda, the Creatrix of the Universe, from whom the bounty of the harvest ultimately comes.

## Sea Season

### ☰ Flower Day (Shearing Day)

*Water Day of Harmony Week*

Ernalda Allmother awakens Voria the Spring Maiden, the Newborn who bears the energy of life forward at the new year. The women perform sacred sheep shearing, saving the wool to weave holy vestments. Girls gather many bunches of flowers, unmarried women gather the first fruits of spring-time, and married women bake bread in the shape of flowers and lambs. The women prepare a feast for the entire community from these gifts.

### ☒ Honoring Day

*Clay Day of Fertility Week*

Ernalda and all women are honored on this day with songs and gifts. While the women conduct the inner ceremonies, the men of the community prepare a great feast.

### The Flower of Life

The first Flower Day was at the start of the Golden Age when the Bright Emperor commanded that members of all the gods' tribes live in the Golden City at the center of the world. This need for change distressed many, whose tranquility had been undisturbed during the Green Age. "How can we possibly survive somewhere new? We will die," they said.

"There is always another way," said Ernalda. "Let me show you the Flower of Life." Then she showed to the goddesses of her tribe the secret of the commanded change. She turned herself from the tight bud of life to the open blossom, an explosion of life like the effusion of a sweet scent. The others weren't just comforted by this, but excited to flower too. Ernalda told them to wait. She gathered all those who were going to the Emperor's place, and together they planted the beautiful flower gardens that pleased the Emperor and his court.

The first Flower Day celebration among humans was at the Dawn. Ernalda gathered together the forces of life that had been freed by Orlanth and brought them back to the world. First came young Voria, the Flower Girl, who gave the signal for the surviving humans to rejoice. When her footprints bloomed the waiting people came out from their hiding places. She taught them the dance of new life, and promised the dancers that she would come again every time they danced when her flowers bloomed.

This celebration is also called the Shearing Feast. In the blessed and wonderful Storm Age, Ernalda first sheared the sheep of Heler to relieve them of their uncomfortable wool. When she came forth from the Underworld at the Dawn she again sheared Heler of his wool. This caused the overcast sky to clear, so that the stars and sky became visible for the first time in ages.



## Fire Season

⚡ **Hearth Day** (Fire Celebration, Spindle Day)

*Clay Day of Fertility Week*

Ernalda brings forth Mahome, the sacred hearth fire, to empower the women. The woman of the community who has been married the longest lights the sacred fire to bring the Dawn. Women spend the day taming unruly beings that come into the house while the men prepare a feast.

## Earth Season

☒ **Rest Day**

*variable*

Rest Day is held after they bring the harvest in, lay away the hay, and stack the firewood as high as possible. The Asrelia priestesses come forward and present a count of everything, then prescribe the rations for the winter. They carry as many small jars or baskets as the prophesied number of weeks of winter. They drop clay figures into each to show the food that the clan will eat that week. Other markers are dropped into the jars in secret. When the dishthane opens each jar on Gods day, these secret tokens mark the start of one of the winter household rites. The Heortlings of Kerofinela so like Fresh Apple Day that it has become synonymous with good fortune.

☐ ☐ **Tool Day**

*Clay Day of Fertility Week*

On her high holy day, Great Ernalda prepares everyone for the harvest. The people bring forth the tools used in the harvest to be blessed. The priestesses inspect the tools and direct the men to repair them as necessary. All women then decorate the tools, and finally the priestesses bless them.

⊞ **Harvest Day** (Flax Day, Goose Day)

*Clay Day of Movement Week*

Only the women of the community celebrate this holy day. In the rite, Ernalda reveals the secret of Esrola, explaining how she returned from the clutches of Angdartha despite her being cut into many pieces. At dawn, the priestesses reveal the straw figure of Esrola cut from the first sheaf of the harvest. They spend the day singing songs in the Loom House, in the fields, and in the wilds.

At dusk, the women wrap the straw figure in blankets, put it into a basket, and hide it from view. They mourn the goddess and state their hope that someone will take responsibility for the act, express genuine grief, and promise atonement. Finally, they burn the discarded body of Esrola so that she can be reborn again at the turning of the cycle. (The men perform the same ritual the next day [Reaping Day].)

## Darkness Season

### ▣ Loom Blessing

*Clay Day of Fertility Week*

Ernalda the Healer gathers the women together in the Loom House on this day. There, they perform rites to protect themselves, their families, and the entire community. Each brings a part of her loom to be blessed. All of the women assemble a single loom from these pieces and collectively make a shroud for their goddess. Afterwards, the women read omens about the coming winter, and then the entire community consumes the feast of meat and bread.

### ■ Shroud Day

*Freeze Day of Illusion Week*

Tekravand is Ernalda's funeral day. The women cover their heads and mourn, weeping pitifully for their lost goddess. The men try to prevent Nontraya from finding the body, but they are powerless before the power of death. After a day of fasting and ceremony, the women in the Loom House hear the secret: "She sleeps, she is not dead." This gives them the strength and hope that they need to survive until the Spring.

## Storm Season

### ▣ Queen Day

*Clay Day of Fertility Week*

These rites celebrate the role of Ernalda as the Queen of both the Earth and Storm Tribes. Decisions made on this day by female chieftains and queens have the full force of Ernalda behind them in addition to the normal authority of Orlanth.

### □ Wife Day

*Winds Day of Movement Week*

This is Orlanth's high holy day, but Ernalda receives nearly equal time and attention. Ernalda Mother of the Tribe is preeminent here, and she works to support Orlanth on his day in every way possible. She presents him with gifts, and receives his assurances of support. Married couples perform the rites in public, then renew their vows in private before the public feast.

## Holy Places and Temples

Clans normally have a single Ernalda Temple for all the women of the clan plus those who live on their lands. Organization recognizes several leaders selected by consensus; these can come from any aspect, but Ernalda the Leader subcults tend to dominate. The temple is non-hierarchical, with the leaders primarily organizing the rites and fostering consensus. Even in clans that favor one aspect, the temple always includes all aspects and subcults.

### Ernaldaravandi — The Wife Day

Ernalda's most important day in Storm Season is Ernaldaravandi. Ernalda is Orlanth's wife, and worshippers celebrate her role as the Great Wife on her husband's most important day, which the men call Orlantharavandar. Ernalda presents herself in the public ceremonies in a supporting role, praising Orlanth as protector, husband, and source of justice and hospitality. She presents him with clothing and blankets of wool and linen. At the feast, she serves him bread and meat, water and beer, and other food and drink. She asks him ritual questions, listens patiently to his answers, and after each answer leads the worshippers in a paean of praise to the worthy god. In return, she receives pledges of protection and honor and an array of compliments that show her importance to the god. She is revered as the Mother of the Tribe and Queen of the World, and at one point interrupts her husband with the story of "How Peace Was Made." Thus, although she plays a secondary role on her husband's day, she is not submissive or demeaned, for she shows that she has equal status and worth as her great husband.

Other holy places are common. Outdoor places tend to be marked with standing stones or unique geologic features (such as the Red Face or Balancing Rock) that mark places where Ernalda performed some act. Compared to her sisters and subcult goddesses, Ernalda has few sacred places that are hers alone, for most earth sites revere specific, lesser deities. As one might expect, a clan always favors subcults or goddesses that have holy places on their *tula*.

The Loom House serves as a temple to Ernalda as well, and is the site of many of the women's rites. The Loom is Ernalda's essential tool, used to weave the world out of raw materials. Some goddesses (such as Orane the Householder) are famous for their loom work, but others use the interweaving process as well (such as Indeg, who wove the thorn basket).

## Membership Requirements

### Communal Worship

All Heartlings, male and female, are communal members of Ernalda. Men never progress beyond communal worship, except in a few specialized subcults such as Nandan the Birthing Man (see *Storm Tribe: The Cults of Sartar*). Except for the first two years of adulthood, women initiate into one of the aspects and subcults of Ernalda.

### Initiation and Devotion

Initiates and devotees of Ernalda must be women, and must follow her virtues. They learn the mundane abilities taught by their aspect and subcult. Initiates learn the affinities of their aspect and subcult, and may improvise feats from those affinities. Devotees learn the affinities and specific feats of their aspect and subcult.

Ernalda is the Great Goddess, the source of peace and family. She seeks peace and harmony among her people; this is her strength, not a weakness. She expects all of her worshippers to help bring her peace and healing into the world and to nurture life, but also to be proud of themselves and stand up for their own honor and dignity. Worshippers who fail to act according to her virtues will suffer, and may bring a curse down upon their community.

## Priestesses

Most priestesses of Ernalda are devotees. Since appointment to priestess is often political, however, it is possible for an initiate to be selected. All priestesses must abide by their aspect virtues and obey their chief priestess. Individual requirements vary depending on clan and temple politics, but all priestesses must have given birth to a live child at least once in their life and must still be fertile.

## Aspects of Ernalda

### □ Great Ernalda □

*Entry Requirements:* Must be a woman. Worshippers must normally choose an aspect and subcult from among those listed below.

*Virtues:* Nurturing, Proud, Seek Peace.

*Great Secret:* **Be Earth** (Character becomes one with Ernalda and is removed from play.)

*Other Side:* Ernalda's Home is on Orlanth's Stead, where her Loom House can be found right next to Orlanth's Great Hall. Ernalda's Palace is concurrently at the center of the Earth Realm. From her house initiates may exit to the Golden Age or Storm Age. After death, Ernalda's initiates come to her house to help make the Great Tapestry, to eat from the Great Garden, and to tend and be tended by the household goddesses.

### ☒ Ernalda Allmother

Ernalda Allmother is the power of Ernalda in society. She is the "normal" aspect of Ernalda, the one that almost everybody belongs to. She is the source of Society, Life, Love, and Family, and her subcults teach people the magic necessary to fill those roles. Thus, her worshippers are wives and mothers, gardeners and craftswomen, midwives and matchmakers. Her worshippers are expected to stay at home, raise their family, and perhaps manage the stead. They follow the rules of their society as laid down by Ernalda and Orlanth.



Ernalda Allmother is the goddess of Life who manifests herself as Woman. She provides the power to begin new life (especially human life) and to maintain it. She is sometimes called Ernalda Life-Giver or Ernalda the Mother. She is usually depicted holding a child, often with a cradle or a basket. She is matronly; her hair is always in the marriage braids.

## Initiate and Devotee Membership

Members have no special requirements except to follow the aspect virtues in addition to the general virtues. A worshipper of Ernalda the Mother created using the *Hero Wars* rules belongs to the Orane the Steadwife subcult.

## Magic Keyword

*Physical Abilities:* Domestic Chores, Weaving.

*Mental Abilities:* Animal Lore, Control Children, Plant Lore, Mythology of Ernalda.

*Virtues:* Generous, Motherly, Unmerciful to Enemies.

*Affinities:*

- ☒ **Bless Family** (Beautify Self, Comfort Sick Child, Conceal Family, Ease Fears, Make Husband Laugh)
- ☒ **Bless Mothers** (Aid Conception, Aid Contraception, Bless Birth, Bless Domestic Animal, Bless Marriage, Bless Pregnancy)

*Sacrifices:* Ceremonies include sacrifices of bread baked into ritual shapes: lambs and flowers in the spring, geese and spindles in the summer, pigs and harvest tools in the autumn, and cows and runes in the winter.

*Worshippers:* Steadwives, mothers, midwives, craftswomen, matchmakers.

## Ernalda and Her Sisters

Ernalda and her two sisters, Esrola and Maran, are invoked together so regularly that anyone not initiated into the women's secrets is often confused as to whether they are one, two, or three goddesses. One of the easiest ways to understand them is that Ernalda is the insubstantial part of Earth, including the mind, energy, and direction. Esrola is the substance of Earth that this energy acts upon, including earth, bodies, animals, plants, and food. Maran is the action of Earth, both creative (and so she formed the hills and valleys) and destructive (and so she is worshipped or propitiated as the source of earthquakes, avalanches, and sinkholes).

Esrola and Ernalda are particularly intertwined. Many sources treat them as the same entity, usually using just the name Ernalda, and so Esrola is treated in this book as an aspect of Ernalda. Maran, though technically part of the religion, is propitiated more often than worshipped. She receives only collateral worship from most Heortlings. Some few worship her directly, and when this occurs she is treated as a separate goddess. She is described in *Storm Tribe: the Cults of Sartar*.

## Subcults of Ernalda Allmother

### † Eninta the Midwife

Eninta was one of the first daughters of Ernalda, born in the Green Age to assist in the great life-making. She is a kind and patient goddess who assisted in the births of many gods and goddesses. When she was taken in the Gods War everyone was terrified, for they knew that no more life could come into the world. She was rescued from the Underworld, and became midwife to the new world at the Dawning.

*Mental Abilities:* Midwife.

*Affinities:*

- ✕ **Bless Childbirth** (Bless Baby, Ease Labor Pains, Heal Baby in Womb, Know Health of Baby in Womb, Turn Child)
- ☒ **Bless Mothers Feats:** Heal Womb, Let Down Milk.

*Secret: Assist Birth* (Automatically succeed at a single final action during any contest in which the hero has successfully used her **Bless Childbirth** affinity, even if she normally would not be allowed a final action. Thus, both mother and child are more likely to survive the birth.)

### — Mahome the Hearth Goddess

Mahome is the perfect wife. She lit the first hearth fire when her husband Barntar built his longhouse, and coals or sparks from her hearth then lit all of the other hearth fires. She tamed her wild brothers, and so the bonfire, holy fire, and work fire all aid men and gods. She kept her fires burning during the Great Darkness, and the whole world despaired when she was extinguished at last. She was only sleeping (like Ernalda), and she rekindled her hearth when she awoke again at the Dawn.

*Physical Abilities:* Carve Hearthstone.

*Affinities:*

- ⊙ **Bless Hearth** (Calm Anger, Cure Minor Burn, Keep Coals Hot, Light Fire, Put Out Fire, Reduce Fever)
- ☒ **Bless Family Feats:** Keep Children Warm.
- ☒ **Bless Mothers Feats:** Arouse Husband.

*Secret: Control Fire* (Acts as an integrated passion spirit giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's target number to any ability used to control a mundane fire, magical fire, or Otherworld entity with a fiery nature.)

### # Orane the Steadwife

Orane the Steadwife is the wife of Durev, the first householder. She is sometimes called Orane the Weaver, and is the default subcult for most Heortling mothers. Her realm is the family and stead, hearth and harstings. She is more than just a wife and mother, however, as are all women. She wove Dumela, the carpet that flew her and Durev out of the clutches of Endon.

*Affinities:*

‡ **Bless Stead** (Call in the Cats, Cheerful Singing, Clear the Air, Fumigate, Warm Blanket, Weave Cloth without Flaws)

☒ **Bless Family Feats:** Call Children, Cook without Burning.

☒ **Bless Mothers Feats:** Bless Eggs.

*Secret: Mother Knows Best* (Acts as an integrated passion spirit giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's target number to any ability used in the course of convincing her children, her daughters' husbands, or her daughters' children to do what she says.)

## † **Overdruva the Forest Friend**

Overdruva grew up among the living trees and other Aldryami. When the Elf Council committed the Expulsion, she was ejected from their heartland with the other non-plants. When the forest died without its natural residents, Aldrya invited them back. Overdruva did not accept, for she was happy with her husband Orstan the Carpenter. However, she agreed to the Wood Sacrifices instead. Later, during the Second Expulsion, Overdruva and her worshippers alone remained friends with the elves. She negotiated

### **The First Fire Day**

In the Golden Age, when Enalda and her women were handmaidens of the Solar Empress, Enalda brought peace to the households of the women. The goddesses complained to Enalda that their husbands were reckless, sometimes brutal, so that the goddesses' petals had fallen off, and they felt ugly and deformed. They complained, "Surely we will be burned up this way." To help them, Enalda held the first Fire Day celebration.

Enalda said, "There is always another way." She called Mahome and prepared for the celebration. Once everyone had arrived, Mahome showed them the dances to make the fire a safe hearth fire, good for cooking and keeping children warm (and for seducing men's desire towards domestic obedience). The red-breasted swan, sacred to Enalda, fanned the fire with her wings. "When you do this, your wild husbands will calm down."

Everyone was pleased, and they made a monument to mark their accomplishment, which they called the Women's House. After it was made, the women went into it and spun their wool on spindles to make thread. Women still meet on this day, to determine what their community will build during the summer.

After the Dawn, Enalda went among her worshippers on this day, when the grains were standing quietly in the field. The women again celebrated the rite, which they said was Mahome's Birthday. Enalda showed them how to worship Mahome's sacred fire, so that her brothers would come when they were called and be calm fires instead of wild. Mahome's brothers are Aralnala, who heals sick livestock and whose wife is Vorela; Naranala, who purifies profaned items and whose wife is Belveren; Tylendenar, who tests the words of women and men and whose wife is Kev; Faladan, who bears sacrifices to the gods and whose wife is Roitina; Pananala, who fires pottery and whose wife is Pella; Gustbran, who makes bronze and whose wife is Arnna; and Torabran, who burns the dead to set our breath free, whose wife Tekka was the first person cremated. Only Dagaralcbran remained wild, because he had no wife.

Orlanth's peace with Aldrya, and afterwards convinced Vingkot to grant the land of Sivilis to the Forest. When the woods disappeared, Overdruva built a tomb of ironthorn and went to sleep. The elven Awakeners brought her back to life at the Dawn, along with the rest of the plant world.

*Mental Ability:* Aldryami Customs.

*Affinities:*

☯ **Bless Plants** (Bless Grove, Cure Plant Illness, Food Song, Hear Song of Aldrya, Make Soil Fertile)

☒ **Bless Mothers Feats:** Bless Garden.

*Secret: Befriend Forest* (Acts as the special *Elfsense* ability [see *Anaxial's Roster*, pg. 124] and as a relationship. The devotee is part of the Song of Aldrya, and all Aldryami will treat her as if she were of their race.)

### ∪ Pella the Potter

Pella is the goddess of pottery, and can transform simple mud into useful objects. She lives near the kiln of Ernalda's stead, making bowls, cups, and jars. Potters are the third most common craftspeople among the Heortlings. Every clan has at least one good potter, who usually worships Pella.

*Affinities:*

∪ **Pottery** (Bless New Kiln, Color Glaze, Enchant Pottery, Even Heat, Ignite Fire, Pattern Firing)

☒ **Bless Family Feats:** Cook without Burning, Mend Broken Pot.

*Secret: Awaken Pottery* (The worshipper can use this ritual to awaken any item created using her **Pottery** affinity. The object's natural daimon soul becomes active at a power level determined by the victory level and the secret's ability rating. The daimon acts primarily to protect the object from breakage and theft but can also interact with its owner.)

### ↔ Skovara the Entertainer

Skovara was born in the Green Age, and has been entertaining people with her antics and jokes as long as anyone can remember. She knows how and when to make people laugh, cry, love, or hate. Her followers perform all manner of entertainment, but are best loved for their sacred puppet shows. She and her husband Skovari are indistinguishable in the mythos.

*Physical Abilities:* Craft Puppet, Dance, Sing.

*Affinities:*

♣ **Low Entertainment** (Make Audience Afraid, Make Audience Happy, Make Audience Sad, Make Music Without Instrument, Make Puppets Look Real)

☒ **Bless Family Feats:** Get Everyone's Attention, Make Children Laugh.

*Secret: Entertain Audience* (Allows the devotee to ignore Multiple Target penalties during a performance. It can also be used to augment any affinity used on an audience member.)



## ¶ Vela the Matchmaker

Vela is the social power that brings together those who ought to be together. She brings together lovers; she aids true love, not the wild and breathless passion of the demon Uleria that breaks apart everyone it touches. Vela matched Orane with Durev, brought Barntar and Mahome together, and helped Overdruva find Orstan. She is invoked at marriages, and her blessing is sought by many. At times, Vela's worshippers negotiate great matches, like that between Vingkot and his Summer Wife, Liorn the Young and Delees Kodigsdotter, and Heort and Ivarne. People say her matchmaking gives a marriage either a great blessing or a great curse, but either way the couple will have children.

*Mental Abilities:* Negotiate Marriage.

*Affinities:*

✗ **Matchmaking** (Ask Ancestors for Blessing, Assess Boy, Assess Girl, Calm Ardor, Ignite Passion, Reconcile Parents)

☒ **Bless Family Feats:** Bless Courtship.

*Secret:* **Perfect Mate augury** (The matchmaker can cast the rune stones to determine the perfect mate for a petitioner, using the Divination rules [see pg. 74]. She will not learn the name of the mate, of course, but will always gain useful information if the ritual is successful.)

## ▣ Ernalda the Healer

Ernalda the Healer's worshippers are usually healers and young women. Her worshippers maintain the health of the people, society, and the world. Members of these subcults tend to be childless women, and rarely become leaders. Many god-talkers worship subcults of Ernalda the Healer.

Ernalda the Healer is usually depicted with healing herbs and potions. She often holds healing flowers, which indicates that most of Ernalda the Healer's myths occur when she is a young goddess, before her marriages.



## Initiate and Devotee Membership

Members have no special requirements except to follow the aspect virtues in addition to the general virtues. A worshipper of Ernalda the Healer created using the *Hero Wars* rules belongs to the Vorela the Animal Healer or Votenevra the Earth Healer subcult.

## Magic Keyword

*Physical Abilities:* Splint and Bandage.

*Mental Abilities:* First Aid, Find Pure Water, Make Healing Broth, Mythology of Ernalda, Recognize Illness.

*Virtues:* Dedicated, Empathetic.

*Affinities:*

III **Heal People** (Cure [Disease], Diminish Injury, Ease Pain, Prevent Dying, Remove Hurt)

III **Heal Relationships** (Boost Confidence, Kiss and Make Up, Prevent Anger, Reach Consensus, Sting Pride, Stop Argument)

*Sacrifices:* Sacrifices include flowers in bloom, except in Darkness Season. Only a powerful priestess can make the Allblossom flower bloom so that she may sacrifice it.

*Worshippers:* Female healers, village wise women, warband healers. Unlike the pacifists who revere Chalana Arroy, worshippers of Ernalda the Healer are not forbidden to use weapons.

## Subcults of Ernalda the Healer

### ☩ **Belveren the Chaos Cleanser**

Belveren was the first being to heal the damage caused by Chaos. Before Belveren, people had to take nearly impossible measures to neutralize something tainted by Chaos. Objects were destroyed in the Vent or another live volcano; cast into the Hell Crack, the Homeward Ocean, or another bottomless pit; or transformed by the Undying Fire of Dagaralobran or the Ultimate Winds of Orlanth. Belveren was blessed by Ernalda to look at a tainted land, artifact, or person with Ernalda's Eyes, and to cleanse it of Chaos.

Belveren's secret is a ritual that can purify animals, plants, people, objects, or places tainted by Chaos. The ritual is long and dangerous, and involves subjecting the target to all five elements to purify it, but it is the only way for humans to purify tainted objects instead of destroying them.

*Physical Abilities:* Treat Disease.

*Virtues:* Brave.

*Affinities:*

☞ **Resist Chaos** (Exorcise Chaos Spirit, Fight Chaos Daimon, Gather Untainted Food, Restore Disease-Ravaged Body, See Chaos Taint)

☒ **Heal People Feats:** Exorcise Disease Spirit, Heal Chaos Wound.

*Secret:* **Purge Chaos ritual** (This ritual acts as a mystic strike against a target that has been corrupted by Chaos against its will. If the subject of the ritual is a living being, it must resist the ritual. If the devotee attains any level of victory the Chaos taint is purged from the target. If it fails, the object is destroyed but the taint remains, either in the devotee, the land, or a nearby object or living being. If the target of the ritual is naturally chaotic, such as a walktapus, the ritual automatically fails.)

## ☞ Bevara the Medic

Bevara is commonly called “Stretcher and Sticker.” She was important in Dragon Pass during the Silver Age. She once carried the hero Heort out of danger after Uz had wounded him. Since then, her bandages have always healed all Heortlings and all Heortling deer. Her worshippers specialize in attending to wounds inflicted in combat, even when violence and death distract them. Worshippers often function as “combat medics” for warbands. They bear her rune upon an amulet, and often elsewhere, but have no other specific uniform or cult dress.

*Physical Abilities:* Dodge Attack, Restrain Patient.

*Virtues:* Brave, Enduring.

*Affinities:*

☐ **Self Defense** (Carry Patient to Safety, Dodge All Attacks, Earsplitting Scream, Evade Pursuers, Hide Self, Survive Battle)

☒ **Heal People** *Feats:* Heal Heortling Deer, Heal Self Fully [20W].

*Secret:* **Combat Healing** (Instantly use **Healing** affinity on others during combat, even while taking another action.)

## ☞ Enferalda the Supporter

Orlanth once complained that fighting was getting more difficult and he was getting hurt more often. When Ernalda asked if there was another way, Orlanth said “No, just my way.” She then convinced Orlanth to let one of her servants go along to heal him when he got hurt. She disguised herself as Enferalda and traveled along with her husband as he went on adventure. She bore her own pack, plus food, water, and extra gear. Orlanth was surprised. “You can’t carry all of that!” he said. She only smiled and continued walking, for she bore her burdens with Endurance, a little friend who never got tired. *The Swan’s Burden* tells the story of how she taught Orlanth to find success where his simple, straight-ahead approach failed. His resistance to Enferalda’s flirting provides an amusing exchange, and Orlanthdovar (Orlanth the Faithful) is invoked at wedding ceremonies.

*Physical Abilities:* Strong.

*Mental Abilities:* Encourage Others.

*Virtues:* Enduring.

*Affinities:*

☐ **Endurance** (Bear Heavy Burden, Go Without Food, Ignore Pain, Go Without Sleep, Remain Standing, Survive Battle)

☒ **Heal People** *Feats:* Make Less Tired.

*Secret:* **Bear Any Burden** (The devotee can carry any object or burden without tiring. They must be able to pick up the object and hold it in their arms or hands, but can then carry it for any length of time, while performing any action or while traveling through any terrain that they could traverse if they were not carrying the object.)

## Heortling Deer (White Deer, Winter Deer)

*Ages:* Darkness (Silver Age only), History (Dawn Age only).

*Distribution:* Dragon Pass.

*Habitat:* Hills, mountains.

*Distinct Abilities:* Cunning 10w, Large 18, Strong 18.

*Innate Magical Abilities:* Outrun Hunter 5w2, Travel to Storm Realm 15w.

When they were alive, the Heortling Deer were closely associated with Heort the Founder, who belonged to the Winter Deer Clan. Both the deer and his clan died out shortly after the Dawn. The people of Dragon Pass still follow Heort's laws and customs. The Heortling Deer remain as their magical protectors and appear to Heortlings in times of need.

Whenever a Heortling offers a general prayer to their gods to ask for help, the gods often send a Heortling Deer to carry their aid. The deer may lead the Heortling along a hidden path, chase off a dangerous foe, or even possess a magical ability that will aid the person in distress. Once the prayer has been answered, the deer disappears again.

### III Jera the Herbalist

Jera holds Ernalda's healing kit. A long time after Ernalda died, Jera put her ear to the ground. She heard Ernalda sleeping, and so knew that she was not dead. She listened to her mother, who told her of the few remaining parts of the world that still held the power to heal. Jera did as she was told and drew up the sleeping power of the Earth into these things. She turned them into medicines that could be saved and used on other people.

Each of Jera's feats must be used in conjunction with one of her **Heal People** feats. If the hero receives any level of victory, she creates a medicine with an ability rating equal to her ability rating in the **Heal People** affinity. The medicine can be saved or given to another person, and the appropriate feat takes effect when it is used. A worshipper of Jera cannot create medicines based on the feats in her **Heal Relationship** ability.

*☞ The winter has been hard, and many people suffer from illness. Ferena the Herbalist wants to make extra medicines to give to the neighboring steads, in case the weather makes it difficult for her to travel. She uses her Make Medicine affinity to create a Cure Creeping Chills potion. She spends all day preparing the ingredients and brewing enough potion for ten doses. Her player makes a roll against her Make Medicine 10w (as it is winter, the narrator assigns a -5 modifier to reflect the difficulty of obtaining the ingredients for this many doses) and achieves a minor victory. She has created ten doses. When each dose is used, the narrator treats the attempt as if Ferena herself was there using her Heal People 2w affinity to cure the disease.*

Although best known as herbalists, Jera's worshippers work with all of the earth's healing manifestations. In addition to gathering herbs, they use loams and waters, animal organs, and magic rocks.

*Mental Abilities:* Find Herbs, Preserve Herbs.

*Affinities:*

☸ **Make Medicine** (Brew Healing Potion, Distill Ingredients, Harvest Healing Organs, Identify Healing Spirits, Locate Healing Loom)

☒ **Heal People** *Feats:* Restore Endurance, Restore Strength.

*Secret:* **Earthpower** (Instantly use **Heal People** affinity on self while skin is in contact with bare earth, even while taking another action. This ability cannot be turned into a medicine.)

### ☸ **Orventili the Peacemaker**

After Ernalda first used the Rug of Peace she entrusted it to Orventili. She and her supporters carried it throughout the world, and every time they stopped they made peace. Orventili provided the place for Orlanth and Heler to sit and come to terms and ended the First Accidental Feud between the Kodigvarings and the Durevings. All great kings and chieftains have sat on the Rug of Peace in their time, from Heort the founder to Sartar and Tarkalor, the Kings of Sartar.

After Ernalda died and Orlanth left, Orventili's peacemaking failed, and the Rug became heavier and harder to unroll. At last, at Overweary Creek, Orventili rolled herself into the Rug and fell asleep. She awoke in the Underworld when Orlanth found Ernalda. For the first time in ages, her peacemaking was successful when Orlanth and Yelm sat upon the Rug and negotiated the Great Compromise. Orventili is chaste, and owns no property except the Rug of Peace. She makes new baskets each time she unrolls the Rug, and lives entirely upon the gifts of others.

#### **How Peace Was Made**

Trouble is easy to make but hard to end. "Better to stop it from happening," said Ernalda. She determined to make something to help her create a lasting peace. She sat at her loom and wove a magnificent carpet, Orventili, the Rug of Peace. She put her face in the center, where the basket goes, so that all who sought peace would feel her gaze upon them. She put runes of power around the edges to bind the participants. She marked places on the rug for the two parties to sit, and for the four supporters behind each of them, and for the two peacekeepers. More runes marked the places where each person should place their gifts.

Ernalda and her assistants bore the rug upon their shoulders to Engimal, where Orlanth was fighting against an enemy that Ernalda thought could be a friend. Ernalda called to her husband to stop fighting for a time and come join her in her pavilion. He came and sat on Orventili where she directed him. While he was resting Ernalda called to his foe, whom she had known before. Engizi came in through the other door. Ernalda offered him her hospitality before Orlanth could object, and he took his place upon the Peace Rug. Ernalda then sat between the two gods and helped them negotiate a peace. They finally came to terms, and Orlanth welcomed his foe into his realm, which was Engizi's realm as well.

After that the promise was made again many times. Although it was sometimes strained it was real, each moment adding to the reality. So Ernalda's Peace was made, bit by bit.

*Mental Abilities:* Detect Emotions, Negotiate Settlement.

*Affinities:*

III **Peace Rug** (End Feud ritual, Forge Alliance ritual, Put Down Weapons, Sanctify Peace Rug ritual, See Both Sides)

☒ **Heal Relationships** *Feats:* Calm Passions, Find Compromise.

*Secret:* **Oath of Peace ritual** (The devotee can weave an oath between the participants at the time a peace is agreed upon. The participants gain a bonus of 1/4 the secret's ability rating to any ability used in attempts to abide by the agreement made on the Peace Rug. They take a penalty of 1/4 the secret's ability rating to any action they take that breaks the accord. Once both sides have broken the agreement, the oath ends.)

### U **Vorela the Animal Healer**

When Angdartha took Esrola away, all of the plants went to sleep. But people still lived off their animals, so Angdartha sent his servants to capture or kill all of the beasts. Some were only wounded by the servants, and managed to escape. Yinkin was one of those who escaped. He led the other animals to Vorela, and she healed them of their wounds. When Esrola returned she blessed Vorela for saving her children.

Vorela teaches no special **Heal People** or **Heal Relationships** feats. However, her devotees can use any of those feats on domestic animals without an improvisational modifier.

*Affinities:*

III **Heal Domestic Animal** (Banish Fleas and Ticks, Cure [Animal Disease], Destroy Bullsitch Infestation, Suck Poison, Understand Domestic Beast)

*Secret:* **Heal Herd** (Allows the devotee to ignore Multiple Target penalties when healing a herd, flock, or other group of domestic animals. It can also be used to augment any healing affinity used on animals.)

### U **Votenevra the Earth Healer**

Throughout the Vingkotling Age, the world was torn by violence and war. Although Ernalda recognized this as part of Nature, she would not stand by when the violence harmed her Earth. She often walked across the wounded earth with her entourage healing the blasted land, repairing the broken hills and valleys and replanting sacred lands with seeds, daimones, and prayers. At those times she called herself *Votenevra*. When her time came to leave, she walked across all of the earth putting the plants, animals, people, and daimones to sleep so that they would survive the Great Darkness. After the Dawn, she gave this power to her daughter *Votenevra*, who retraced her mother's steps to awaken the whole world.

*Votenevra* has no husband. She is often said to be another name for *Voria*, the Spring Maiden.

*Affinities:*

III **Heal Earth** (Close Man-made Hole, Divert Flood, Prevent Drying, Melt Frost, Sense Illness in Earth, Support Plant Against Wind)

☒ **Heal Relationships** *Feats:* Appease Sinkhole, Know Earth's Needs.

*Secret: Healing Sleep* (If the devotee is victorious in a contest against any plant, animal, earth daimon, or worshipper of Ernalda, the target falls into a deep sleep, appearing dead to all but magical senses. Any damage or illness will be suspended, doing no further harm to the entity. The entity will awaken again in the Spring (perhaps many years later, depending on the affliction), fully healed. [This cannot remove disease spirits from a host; see *Anaxial's Roster*, pg. 225.]

## ☒ Ernalda the Queen

Worshippers of Ernalda the Queen look out for the welfare of the community, organize women into temples and women's groups, and maintain the balance of power between men and women. Most worshippers join these subcults when they acquire positions of responsibility, and so tend to be older and more experienced.

Ernalda the Queen is pictured sitting behind a basket. Her head is covered, so it is impossible to tell whether her hair is braided. This is fitting, for Ernalda is Queen because of her own powers, not those of any husband she might have.



## Initiate and Devotee Membership

Members have no special requirements unless indicated below. All worshippers must follow the aspect virtues in addition to Ernalda's general virtues. A worshipper of Ernalda the Queen created using the *Hero Wars* rules belongs to the Orendana the Queen subcult.

## Magic Keyword

*Physical Abilities:* Meaningful Glare.

*Mental Abilities:* Mythology of Ernalda, Orate, Persuade.

*Virtues:* Just, Strong-willed, Unmerciful to Enemies.

*Affinities:*

☒ **Earth Queen** (Command Earth Animal, Command Earth Daimon, Dismiss Earth Elemental, Exorcise Earth Spirit, Enchant Copper ritual, Summon [Earth Daimon])

III **Find Another Way** (Calm Anger, Create Ring, Rally Women, Shame Husband, Stop Argument, Think of the Children)

*Sacrifices:* Worshipers of Ernalda the Queen are specialists and often make special sacrifices. Jewelry, keys and torcs (either metal or made of bread), and other signs of female leadership are common. Animal sacrifices are always of cows or swans.

*Worshippers:* Female leaders, priestesses.

## Subcults of Ernalda the Queen

### ♣ Kadone the Grounder

Kadone can make anything heavier, and can make anything in the air fall to the ground. One time in the Vingkotling Age, the Thunder Brothers got into an argument with some of the Household Goddesses. Vinga outshouted her brothers, which made them angry. They flew away on a great wind, which knocked down the furniture, blew the feathers off the geese, and in general made a big mess. Kadone mustered her power and used it to bring the flyers back to earth with a great crash. The Thunder Brothers were unable to escape their responsibilities. They realized the error of their ways, and were reconciled with their wives and sisters.

*Affinities:*

☐ **Heaviness** (Force Flyer to Ground, Keep Object on Ground, Make Person Heavy, Make Object Heavy)

☑ **Earth Queen Feats:** Banish Air Daimon, Dismiss Air Elemental, Exorcise Air Spirit.

*Secret: Grounding ritual* (This ritual must be performed in conjunction with one of the devotee's **Heaviness** feats. It creates an area of sacred ground that lasts as long as the four coins used to demark the area remain buried. The selected feat automatically takes affect whenever an appropriate target enters the area.)

☞ *Kestalda is sanctifying a temple to Ernalda. She uses her **Grounding ritual** secret and her **Keep Object on Ground** feat to prevent anyone from insulting the goddess by leaving the sacred ground inside the temple precincts. As long as the coins remain buried, anything that stands on the temple grounds must successfully overcome her **Heaviness 5W2** ability rating to jump, fly, or even climb a tree.*

### ♠ Kev the Visionary

Kev is Ernalda's voice in the world when she can be heard in no other way. When the Vingkotling men were fighting each other in the Malaterran War, their wives wished they would stop, then the goddesses asked them to stop, and finally Ernalda told them to stop. When they continued despite this, the ground cracked open and Kev walked up out of the Earth. She stood before the men of all four tribes and terrified them with a vivid vision of poisoned earth. They immediately stopped the war, and the leaders met at Kevside to accept the Earth's punishment. Kev disclosed another vision that showed the results of their actions, and they knew that Ernalda had forgiven them. They set up the Oracle of Kev in gratitude.



As the world worsened, people stopped heeding Kev. Her visions of death and destruction grew increasingly terrifying, until at last the future of Chaos overcame her. She left the Oracle (which was later destroyed by Vevkoban the Chaos Horse) and wandered the world seeking anyone who would listen to her. In the Underworld, she showed her visions to the dead gods. They accepted the truth at last, and so abandoned their disagreements. Kev then disclosed her vision of the recreated world, and together all of the gods created the Great Compromise she had shown to them.

*Affinities:*

♠ **Visions** (Discern Truth, Know Results, Resist Madness, See Visions Clearly, Understand Motivations, Understand Omens)

☒ **Earth Queen Feats:** Perceive Other World, Stop Conflict.

*Secret:* **Disclose Visions ritual** (This ritual makes the hero's visions visible to others. It must be performed in the presence of one or more targets, who may resist. If the devotee is victorious, the visions are real to everyone whom see defeated.)

### ☞ **Orendana the Queen**

Ernalda is Queen of the Earth Tribe, and her edicts have the power of the Earth behind them. Women chieftains and queens are as accepted as male ones in Heortling society, if less common. Although many women leaders worship Dar the Leader (see pg. 231), some worship Orendana the Queen, especially in matriarchal clans and tribes.

Orendana always holds the sacred torc of leadership, which is always made of pure copper. No one can simply join her cult. Only the community members can confer this rank and status upon their chosen leader.

*Mental Abilities:* Commanding Presence.

*Affinities:*

♠ **Leadership** (Command Meeting, Regal Aura, Shout Over Crowd, Silence Opponent, Stare Down)

☒ **Earth Queen Feats:** Command Ernalda Priestess, Summon Husband-Protectors.

*Secret:* **Get Job Done** (Acts as an integrated passion spirit giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's target number to any ability used to make sure that a job gets done. This bonus applies only to the appropriate community — a woman's household, a matriarch's tribe or city, etc.)

### **Earth Daimones**

A variety of daimones serve Ernalda and the Earth Family. They are common in the Earth Realm, but rare in the Storm Realm (though a few are always found in Ernalda's garden). In addition to belnans (pg. 82), esnans (pg. 83), and drimans (pg. 205), we describe two common types here. The narrator should create others as needed.

## Gornan (Earthshaker, Trembler)

*Ages:* Green, Golden, Storm, Darkness.

*Habitat:* Earth Realm (God World).

Gornans shake the ground or specific objects, and take great joy in knocking things down. They especially enjoy destroying buildings to prove the superiority of nature over man's accomplishments. Many living earthshakers (such as brotards, see *Anaxial's Roster* pg. 145) live in the Dragon Pass area, and their divine kin appear much the same.

### Gornan

*Weapons and Armor:* Armored Hide Λ8.

*Significant Abilities:* Large 18♣, Strong 10♣3.

*Innate Magical Abilities:* Knock Down Structure 10♣3, Shake Earth 18♣.

*Tactics:* Gornans attack buildings or other objects, shaking them until they collapse or fall over. They may act in concert if the object is too large for one to destroy. A typical Heortling longhouse is roughly 10♣5 in size. If they attempt to use their Strong ability to lift objects off the ground, their ability rating is halved.

## Talosi (Swallower)

*Ages:* Green, Golden, Storm.

*Habitat:* Earth Realm (God World).

Talosi appear as serpents when they leave the earth. They swim through the earth as if it was water, and so can move undetected unless someone is specifically looking for them. They can open holes and tunnels as they move, or leave the ground intact behind them. They can move through loose soil and sand, but cannot leave the way open behind them in such loose earth.

Talosi can carry things through the ground, and so are often used as messengers or to safeguard sacred objects. They can even carry living beings in this way. Once it moves into the earth, a talosi (and anything it carries) is essentially immune to physical attacks.

### Talosi

*Weapons and Armor:* Swallow Victim 10♣4Λ0.

*Significant Abilities:* Large 10♣, Strong 10♣.

*Innate Magical Abilities:* Swallow Object 10♣4.

*Tactics:* The talosi opens its "mouth" directly beneath the feet of the target, dropping it into a hole that instantly closes. The target is carried through the earth (with barely enough air to breathe if alive), until it arrives at the summoner's location. Inanimate objects usually take no damage, but living beings may be somewhat the worse for wear when they arrive, though essentially unharmed.

## ⚡ Roitina the Ceremonialist

A long time after Ernalda taught everyone the goose dance the people tried it, but the seeds did not sprout, the eggs did not hatch, and the ewes and cows did not give milk. Mothers' breasts dried up, and no natural or magical act caused pregnancy. Roitina was a singer who felt the eyes of Ernalda upon her. She organized a group and taught them a new set of songs, moves, and practices to increase the potency of the Goose Dance. They were successful, and afterwards whenever magic failed Roitina and her singers were called out again. Later, when Ernalda married Orlanth, Roitina taught people the Clan-Making Dance, and they formed the first clans (see pg. 22).

Roitina succumbed to the Darkness when a silence demon devoured her. At Ernalda's Awakening, she was one of the first to be seen. She sang as the other goddesses came alive again, and then went among all of the surviving people to teach them the sacred dances again.

Roitina teaches no special **Earth Queen** or **Find Another Way** feats. However, if one of those feats is performed as a ritual, a devotee can augment it with her **Earth Rituals** affinity (in addition to the bonuses gained from the ritual itself).

*Mental Abilities:* Know Earth Rituals.

*Affinities:*

✦ **Earth Rituals** (Augment Clan-Making Dance, Augment Flower Dance, Augment Fire Dance, Augment Flax Dance, Augment Funeral Dance, Augment Goose Dance, Augment Sacrifice Dance)

*Secret:* **Restart Ceremony** (The hero automatically succeeds at a single final action during any contest in which she has successfully used her **Earth Rituals** affinity, even if she normally would not be allowed a final action.)

## ⊞ Esrola the Earth Mother

Esrola is the Manifest Earth, the Goddess in physical form. She is the material from which all else comes, the fabric of the Earth. All the earth is her body, and so all animals, plants, and lands stem from her. As worshipped by the Heortlings, however, her realm includes domestic plants and animals and the earth of the clan *tula*. With various husbands, she is the mother of the many grain goddesses and animal mothers. More generally, she is the source of the great abundance and fertility that comes from the domesticated earth and nourishes Orlanthi society.



Esrola wove the first basket, and her images always show her pulling her bounty from a basket. She usually holds an animal or grain, possibly both, since the domestic animals and plants are her daughters. She is always

shown with the marriage braids. In some clans, her hair is decorated with a trinket given to her by her favored husband (as known in that clan's myths); frequently, this is a symbol either of Heler or Elmal.

## Initiate and Devotee Membership

Members have no special requirements except to follow the aspect virtues in addition to Ernalda's general virtues.

## Magic Keyword

*Physical Abilities:* Make Basket.

*Mental Abilities:* Know Animals, Know Plants, Mythology of Ernalda.

*Virtues:* Motherly, Prudent.

*Affinities:*

▼ **Bless Domestic Animals** (Calm Animal, Ease Animal Birth, Locate Stray Animal, Protect Animal from Disease, Sense Predators)

⦿ **Bless Domestic Plants** (Protect Plants from Birds, Protect Plants from Cold, Protect Plants from Disease, Protect Plants from Heat, Protect Plants from Insects, Protect Plants from Storms)

*Sacrifices:* Esrola prefers animal or harvest sacrifices. Worshippers of each subcult favor their crop or animal, of course.

*Worshippers:* Wives of farmers and herders.

*Notes:* Esrola's affinities work only on domestic animals and plants kept by Heortlings. As broad abilities, they take an improvisational modifier when used on a specific crop or animal. The affinities do not work on other animals or plants, such as alynxes or the foreign maize.

### The Grain Goddesses

The Grain Goddesses are always worshipped with Ernalda or Esrola. Their shrines are common in Earth temples. At agricultural festivals, every clan has a chorus of grain-singers who wear plants in their hair and sing the community parts. The Grain Goddesses worshipped by the Heortlings are Esra the Barley Mother (✳), Pelora the Wheat Mother (✴), Suchara the Rye Mother (✵), and Usara the Oat Mother (✶). There is no goddess of gardens, but Esrola's magic works on garden vegetables.

### The Animal Mothers

The Animal Mothers are always worshipped with Ernalda or Esrola. Some animals do not have Heortling goddesses, showing their foreign origin. The Animal Mothers worshipped by the Heortlings are Entra the Pig Mother (✷), Nevala the Sheep Mother (✸), and Uralda the Cow Mother (✹). Isbarn the Goose Girl (✺) tends the fowl (geese, ducks, and chickens); although not their mother, she has similar magic. One other important goddess, Redalda the Horse Mother, has a different origin and so is not one of Esrola's subcults. She is described in *Storm Tribe, the Cults of Sartar*.

A worshipper of Esrola never suffers an improvisational modifier when using the affinities on her subcult animal or plant. Thus, a worshipper of Suchara does not receive an improvisational modifier to her **Bless Domestic Plants** affinity when she blesses rye, but she does take a penalty when she blesses other plants, such as oats or cabbage.

## Sample Esrola Subcults

*Thunder Rebels* details only one subcult from each of the two categories of goddesses listed above. Other subcults are easily derived from these.

### ✿ **Esra the Barley Mother**

Esra was already widely worshipped by the end of the Green Age. So common is her worship by the Heortlings that she is often confused with her mother Esrola, and each is sometimes referred to using the other's name. Esra is famous as the mother of Minlister the Brewer, another favored god.

*Affinities:*

☿ **Barley** (Bless Barley, Cure Barley Disease, Ease Barley Harvest, Improve Barley Seeds, Keep Stored Barley Dry)

*Secret:* **Bless Barley Field** (Allows the devotee to ignore Distance and area effect penalties when blessing the clan's barley. It can also be used to augment any affinity used on barley.)

### 𐌹𐌺 **Uralda the Cow Mother**

Uralda is the mother of all cattle, and as such is the Heortlings' favored animal goddess. The cows produce as many calves and as much milk as they do because of Uralda's blessings, and a clan that stints on sacrifices to Uralda is a poor one.

*Affinities:*

♋ **Cattle** (Bless Bull, Bless Calf, Bless Cow, Calm Cattle, Increase Milk)

*Secret:* **Bless Cattle Herd** (Allows the devotee to ignore Multiple Target penalties when blessing the clan's cattle. It can also be used to augment any affinity used on cattle.)

## Subservient Cults

### Agents of Reprisal

Ernalda has only one agent of reprisal to punish her initiates and devotees specifically. Other agents of reprisal (see pg. 80) often accompany them, depending on the worshipper's specific crimes.

## Driman (Heavy)

*Ages:* Green, Golden, Storm, Darkness.

*Habitat:* Earth Realm (God World).

In the Inner World, drimans inhabit an object possessed by the worshipper. If the worshipper loses or throws away the object, the driman simply leaves it and enters another, thus remaining with the worshipper at all times. The object inhabited becomes heavier and clumsier to use. In game terms, a driman acts as a spirit of possession, giving the user of the item a penalty of 1/10 the driman's Heavy rating when using the object it currently inhabits. If the attempt to use the object results in defeat, it will drop from their hands and fall to the earth, possibly breaking.

Drimans afflict Ernalda worshippers who harm the earth in specific ways. They plague worshippers of Ernalda Allmother who harm a member of their family or community, worshippers of Ernalda the Healer who refuse to aid a member of their family or community, worshippers of Ernalda the Queen who order a member of their family or community to commit a wrongful act, and worshippers of Esrola who kill an animal or harvest a crop without the proper rituals. The driman will always inhabit the object most appropriate to the worshipper. Thus, a driman that afflicts a worshipper of Ernalda the Queen will usually inhabit her torc of leadership. If she takes the torc off, the driman will inhabit her jewelry or her robes. A driman that afflicts an Esrola worshipper, on the other hand, will inhabit tools or baskets.

### Driman

*Weapons and Armor:* None.

*Significant Abilities:* None.

*Innate Magical Abilities:* Heavy 10W.

*Tactics:* Once a driman inhabits an item, its Heavy becomes an attribute of the object. The driman does not act directly, but its presence causes the worshipper to take the penalty described above.



*Voria, Spring Maiden*



## Elmlandti Bluespruce



*Elmlandti is a disciple of Ohorlanth. He is not a rebel by choice, being a friendly and home-loving fellow at heart. But he cannot dismiss his relationship to his god, and when the Empire outlawed Orlanth worship he took to the winds. Now he and his followers fly everywhere, around and about in an endless worship service to the storm god. Imperial troops sneer and call him the "Little Rebel Wind," but he has wreaked havoc upon them many times.*



# Orlanth



## The Great God

*You are the wind, you are the Breath, you are the Motion of the Cosmos! Where change is needed, you make it! Where people gather, you are there! The wind blowing and the rain falling, that is you! You are the Father of the Gods and the Maker of the World*

— Invocation to Orlanth

Orlanth is the power that moves the universe. His power is everywhere, and with Ernalda he makes the cosmos. Orlanth is so great that the world cannot exist without him. He was born in the Middle Air, but conquered the Sky, the Underworld, and everything between. Orlanth is so great that mortals cannot truly comprehend him. Instead, he has manifested himself and his powers as gods so that his worshippers can know him and his magic.

Beyond these aspects is the hidden power of Great Orlanth, which people cannot see. He is greater than these parts. Only these gods, the parts of Orlanth that people can clearly see, know this hidden power. The whole Storm Realm, the God World of the Storm Tribe, is contained within Great Orlanth, and yet is only a part of his being.

## Aspects

Great Orlanth is manifest in four primary aspects. Each has its own symbols, rites, and magic, as well as several subcults. A few people worship special aspects that confer special powers on them in addition to the ones they gain from their primary aspect.

## The Thunder Brothers

The Thunder Brothers are a loose collection of Storm deities, the second and third generation of storm gods. They are Orlanth's thanes and have their own special powers, but are only worshipped as subcults of Orlanth. They most often appear and act as a collective in important myths.

During normal Orlanth worship, all of the men become part of this group. A Thunder Brother rarely receives individual sacrifice unless a clan has him as a specific patron, and then only on Brothers' Day (see pg. 214). More often, they receive worship through Orlanth. When he is absent, one of the other Thunder Brothers leads them, as Finovan did at the Plundering of Aron.

Some of the Thunder Brothers have their own home in the Storm Realm (such as Starkval's Guardhouse in Aedin's Gap or Vanganth's Aerie on Flint Ridge). They have a collective home as well, the Thunder Barracks, which guards the entrance to Storm Village. Here they and their worshippers eat heartily, compete against each other in sport, and have the company of good women when they wish. From the Thunder Barracks, worshippers can enter the Storm Tribe Age and Vingkotling Age.



## Primary Aspects and Subcults of Orlanth

<b>Orlanth Adventurous</b> <i>martial and adventuring aspect</i>	<b>Orlanth Allfather</b> <i>social aspect</i>	<b>Orlanth Thunderous</b> <i>weather aspect</i>	<b>Special Aspects</b>
Desemborth the Thief (pg. 221)	Andrin the Lawspeaker (pg. 231)	Daylanus the Conquering Wind (pg. 239)	Orlanth Lawmaker (pg. 243)
Destor the Adventurer (pg. 222)	Dar the Leader (pg. 231)	Hedkoranth, the Thunder Slinger (pg. 240)	Orlanth the Faithful Husband (pg. 244)
Drogarsi the Skald (pg. 223)	Durev the Householder (pg. 232)	Helamakt, the Fighting Storm (pg. 240)	Orlanth Lightbringer (pg. 245)
Finovan the Raider (pg. 223)	Harst the Reeve (pg. 233)	Ohorlanth the Thunderer (pg. 241)	Orlanth Rex (pg. 245)
Mastakos Mover (pg. 224)	Jarani Lawman (pg. 233)	Vingkot Victorious (pg. 242)	
Niskis the Lover (pg. 225)	Orlanthcarl the Farmer (pg. 235)	Yavor Lightning (pg. 243)	
Ormalaya the Hunter (pg. 225)	Orolmarn the Herder (pg. 235)		
Orvanshagor Dragonslayer (pg. 226)	Orstan the Carpenter (pg. 235)		
Tatouth the Scout (pg. 22)	Poverri the Fisherman (pg. 236)		
Vanganth the Flyer (pg. 227)	Starkval the Weaponthane (pg. 237)		
Varanorlanth the Wild (pg. 227)	Vingkot High King (pg. 237)		
Vingkot Champion (pg. 229)			

## Nature of the Cult

The basic, core essence of Orlanth is the vital motive force of the universe. He is Active, and works in complete harmony with his wife Ernalda, who is Passive. All active people worship Orlanth. Like Orlanth, men are active. Thus, all Orlanth worshippers are men and all men worship Orlanth .

## Cosmological Reason for Existence

Orlanth is the maker and upholder of Cosmic Law. He permeates the entire world and is responsible for safeguarding it and his worshippers.

*Air breathed, the world lived.*

– Second line of the birth prayer

Orlanth is the Air that every living thing breathes. Mortals call him Breath of the World, Great Storm, Outer Wind, and Primal Air because they cannot understand the cosmos, but can know the winds and storms that he controls and vitalizes.

*"Violence is always an option."*

– Umath's first words.

Orlanth is the Great Mover. His father Umath broke the stale and dead world in order to let life enter it. Since then, violent change has been a constant power. In the Human World, Orlanth teaches that people can use force not just to cause problems, but to solve them. In the Divine World, he controls this power of violence so that it cannot destroy the world again.

## Orlanth's Role in Society

Orlanth is the Heortling God. He is the source, protector, and maker of all that they do. They follow his examples, worship his family and household, and uphold his virtues.

*No one can make you do anything.*

– First Law of Umath.

Orlanth makes people individuals, but he is also the force of responsibility. To Orlanth, the First Law means that people must take responsibility for their actions if the world is to be a good one. Actions have consequences, and those consequences are what make everyone part of the larger world.

*Vingkot, Heort, and Andrin made the laws. Orlanth is the law.*

– from *Andrin's Words*

Orlanth is the Great God. He made the laws that govern people, societies, and the cosmos so that everything would know its proper place. He is the binding force that keeps society together. His Storm Tribe shows the proper way to live both with kinsmen and strangers. His human worshippers follow similar patterns of governance.

*No one is more important to us than those with whom we live. Solitude is for outlaws, holy people, and madmen.*

— from Heort's laws

Orlanth's social power is manifest in the communal worship of his people. His actions made people who they are, and his power is in every act that makes a man a Heortling adult. Orlanth makes people to be individuals, but also shows them the way to fit into the larger world. No one can be a success without help, and every man needs the cooperation of his kin.

*Leaders get power from followers.*

— opening speech for all Orlanth Chieftain ceremonies.

Orlanth is leadership, but not Imperial Majesty. Gods and men obey him because he is wise and honorable, not because he will hurt or outlaw them if they disobey. So great is his virtue that he accepted exile from the Storm Tribe when his brothers used his own laws against him. This is the essence of his Justice: even the highest king is a servant of the lowliest stickpicker.

*"The good man does everything."*

— Orlanth's reply when asked what he could do.

Orlanth is the model for all men. He is as comfortable with a plow as he is with a sword, crown, or thunderbolt. His worship includes everything an Orlanthi needs to know, whether farming, combat, leadership, or the wind.

*"Errors are made and fixed."*

— Orlanth's reply when asked about losing Death into the world.

Responsibility is one of the highest virtues that a man can display. No one is perfect, not even Great Orlanth; everyone makes mistakes. If Orlanth causes a problem, he fixes it with courage, perseverance, cleverness, and help from his family and friends. He expects all of his followers to accept their responsibilities and correct their mistakes in the same way.

## Friendly Relations

Ernalda is Orlanth's permanent partner. She is queen of the Earth Family, and with Orlanth is the mother of the ancestors. He defends her, and she shares all of the bounty of the earth with him. He shares all of his sacrifices with Ernalda, and offers sacrifice to her Earth Family when appropriate.

Orlanth is friends with many gods, most of whom were exiled from their own tribes. He welcomed them and thus formed the Storm Tribe, the first collection of gods that included deities from different tribes. Orlanth gained the agreement of a Fire god, a Water god, and Earth goddesses to abide together in peace. He made peace with all of the other Cosmological Gods, and so made the world what it is today.

## Enemies

Orlanth is the Primal Air. He was the last son of Umath, born after the depredations of the older, more brutal Umathsons. He inherited the reputation of his brothers, and had enemies before he left his mother's cave. With his worshippers, he overcame most of his foes during the Gods War. Until foreigners become friends, they are enemies. Orlanth's worshippers rely upon his protection when dealing with someone who is not their kinsmen (see pg. 34).

Orlanth upholds the Cosmic Law and so hates Chaos in all its forms. Wakboth, the greatest Chaos god, is his personal foe. No peace exists or can exist between Orlanth and Wakboth. All of Orlanth's worshippers are obligated to destroy Chaos wherever they find it.

Other gods are enemies, but they are not like Wakboth. Most gods are part of the Great Compromise and must exist within the fabric of the universe. The greatest are Orlanth's cosmological foes. Their actions and conflicts helped to create the turbulent world that Orlanth rules. His major foes are Deloradella, Queen of the Darkness Tribe; Karjakan, King of Spirits; Magasta, Lord of the Water Tribe; Sedenya, the Red Goddess; Sh'hakarzeel, the Cosmic Dragon; Yelm, Emperor of the Fire Tribe; and Zzabur, the Arch Sorcerer.

## Sacrifices

Priests and devotees of Orlanth use ritual tools, weapons, and instruments in their ceremonies, which always involve clouds, wind, rain, and great noise. They give libations of beer and mead at the start of sacrifices. Sacrifices often include bales of burnt barley, oats, rye, or wheat. Like most Heortling deities, Orlanth favors animal sacrifices, usually cattle (especially red bulls) or sheep (especially blue rams). Depending on the aspect and holy day, worshippers may make other sacrifices, such as boars during Dark Season.

## Holy Days

Orlanth has three types of holy days. Worshippers celebrate weekly holy days every Winds day. All initiates attend these rites, but only the devotees and priests spend the entire day in sacrifice and other rituals.

Worshippers celebrate regular holy days every Winds day of Mobility week. On these days, the priests and devotees perform ceremonies and cast auguries. These rites involve the entire community, which comes together to revere Orlanth through his various aspects. These holy days are important socially as well as religiously, for they occur at the end of the season and usually involve preparations for the next season. For example, the Earth Season holy day includes auguries to determine the course the weather will take over the winter.

Special holy days coincide with atmospheric events. Thus, Heortling clans celebrate Tribute Day after there has been snow on the ground two mornings in a row. The entire community attends special holy days. Rather than seeking general blessings, on these days the community sends its prayers to request favorable weather in the upcoming season.

Orlanth's high holy day is the regular holy day in Storm Season, One Day (see below). The communal rites celebrate and prepare for the beginning of the harvest. The private rites celebrate Great Orlanth, the Creator of the Universe. After the communal ceremonies end at dusk, devotees and initiates continue their own ceremonies for another two weeks in preparation for the battles of Sacred Time (see pg. 116).

## Sea Season

### ⚡ Thunder Day

*variable*

Thunder Day celebrates Ohorlanth, whose great storms bring fertility. Divinations conducted during Storm Season tell when the storm will arrive, and the community holds a great festival on the day it enters Dragon Pass. This is usually early in the season, but can come anytime between Orlanth's high holy day (in Storm Season) and the fifth week of Sea Season.

God-talkers and priests conduct divinations on this day to determine when Heler will arrive during Fire Season.

### ⚔ Sword Day

*Winds Day of Mobility Week*

The Sword Day rites of Orlanth the Warrior are unambiguously martial in nature. Priests and devotees of Orlanth Adventurous make sacrifices to defend the *tula* and ask for help in upcoming raids. Worshippers reenact "The Arming of Orlanth," then participate in any one of numerous stories of Orlanth's battles. The god-talkers usually select the specific myth based upon the foes they expect to face (or make) during the summer.

All freemen are required to attend the muster of the *fyrđ* on this day. Each man must bring his weapons and armor for inspection. The warband leader fines those who shirk their duty, attend with substandard equipment, or cannot perform simple tests due to their girth, lack of breath, or laziness. The weaponthanes often seek volunteers for the summer raiding at this muster while leaders plan for the defense of the community.

## Fire Season

### ☔ Great Rain Day

*variable*

Great Rain Day comes when the Heler Rains fall. The ceremonies praise Heler for his life-giving rains, which nourish crops and cleanse the world.

Worshippers of Orlanth Adventurous paint themselves with woad on this day, but do not fight unless attacked by enemies. Worshippers of Orlanth Allfather burn grain in blue pots, then douse the pots in Heler's rains and thus preserve them unharmed for the next year. Worshippers of Orlanth Thunderous throw off their blue robes and go skyclad throughout the day, basking in Heler's blessed rains.

If the Sea Season divinations do not give a time for Heler's arrival, the entire clan performs emergency rites until he comes, for without his presence Daga, God of Drought, will wither the crops and leave the people to starve.

God-talkers and priests conduct divinations on this day to determine when Vinga will arrive during Earth Season.

### ✠ Lawstaff Day

*Winds Day of Mobility Week*

Lawstaff Day is Orlanth Allfather's high holy day. Depending on the clan, however, many people associate this day specifically with Dar, Vingkot, or Orlanth Rex. Regardless of these differences, on Lawstaff Day everyone praises the Lawgivers — Orlanthandrin, Vingkot, Jarani, Heort, and Andrin. The chieftain, king, or lawspeaker recites these laws at sacred sites. Although the regular tribal moot is the next day, kings hold a Law Moot after the morning sacrifices. At the Law Moot, they rule on important cases between clans. Decisions made on Lawstaff Day cannot be overturned.

## Earth Season

### ☐ Defense Day

*variable*

Earth Season is a time of calm weather and weak winds. Towards the end of the season, however, the winds grow stronger, and eventually Vinga, the Defender Storm, comes. Sometimes she comes early and sometimes late, but she always comes. When her storm strikes the people praise Orlanth and his daughter with sacrifices and ask for protection from Uz and outlaws.

God-talkers and priests conduct divinations on this day to determine when Valind and his followers will arrive during Darkness Season.

### ☪ Reaping Day

*Winds Day of Mobility Week*

Orlanthcarl leads the reapers to the fields on this day. At night the men gather in secret, drink the bitter drink, and weep and lament over the slaughter they must do to the Goddess. At dawn the priests bring out the second sheaf cut in the harvest (knotted into human shape) and give it a sacrifice of sheep. The men then work all day while they fast. They pause at certain times to pray to the straw figure and spill libations of water, beer, or blood onto the ground, then go back to work.

At sunset, the end of Winds day, the men bury the straw figure to carry their prayers to Ernalda. They admit their responsibility, express genuine grief, and promise atonement so that the goddess will not curse them for cutting her. The men pray all night. If they perform the ceremony properly and the Sun rises the next day, they know that Ernalda has forgiven them.

## **Darkness Season**

### **☞ Tribute Day**

*variable*

Tribute Day heralds the true beginning of winter. Occasional snows and frosts occur even as early as the end of Earth Season, but when snow stays on the ground for two full days then everyone knows that Valind's time is at hand. The Tribute Day rites involve the Tribute Sacrifices. Each clan knows local umbroli and storms, and they offer a sacrifice to each asking that they spare the clan. The priests and god-talkers dress up the meager sacrifices with ribbons, polished stones, and bits of metal to entice the wild Vadrudi into accepting the offerings.

God-talkers and priests conduct divinations on this day to determine when the Thunder Brothers will arrive during Storm Season.

### **∞ Protection Day**

*Winds Day of Mobility Week*

Protection Day is Orlanth Thunderous' high holy day. Heortlings worship all Air on this day, summoning every wind, cloud, storm, and weather deity to come to Dragon Pass. When enough power has accumulated from the sacrifices and all of the deities are present then the Great Thunder rolls unceasingly across the Pass, chasing away the cold winter. This usually occurs sometime after the winter solstice, and so Orlanth usually receives credit for ending the Long Night as well.

## **Storm Season**

### **☞ Brothers' Day**

*variable*

Brothers' Day occurs when the first warm wind blows after the snows of winter. Individual Thunder Brother winds and storms blow throughout the season with no predictable pattern, but eventually they all gather and help Orlanth to fight off the forces of winter. Worshippers of Orlanth take to the skies and the Otherworld to help fight against the cold winds and destructive storms. The collective strength of the Thunder Brothers is too great for Valind and the Vadrudi to resist. Together they call Ohorlanth, the greatest storm among them. His winds begin to blow on this day and continue until his arrival on Thunder Day. Although snow often does fall after Brothers' Day, the winds grow warmer, and everyone knows that winter will finally end.

God-talkers and priests conduct divinations on this day to determine when Ohorlanth will arrive, usually during Sea Season.

### 🌀🌀 One Day

*Winds Day of Mobility Week*

Orlanth's birthday is his high holy day. All initiates go to his Great Hall and help their god in one of his mythological battles. The Orlanthei decorate every holy place with kites, flags, and colored smoke. Clans who do not celebrate this day will have no wind over their *tula* for the upcoming year. Priests and devotees carefully sacrifice of bulls, rams, and the occasional horse or exotic beast to achieve maximum success and luck.

Heortlings worship Great Orlanth's three primary aspects on this day, for he is One God. In the darkness before dawn, he musters out as the Warrior to combat his winter foes. During the day, he gives out from the clan's stores to the hungry as the Allfather. At dusk, unmarried worshippers retire to Orlanth's Hall as the Thunder prepares the world for the coming of Spring. Married worshippers join their wives in private celebrations, for Orlanth's high holy day is also one of Ernalda's holy days.

## Holy Places and Temples

Heortling temples are usually natural places that provide access to the Otherworld. Kero Fin is Orlanth's mother, and one of his earliest names is Mountain Wind. He holds hilltops as sacred; where there is no hill, even a slight rise can become a mountain for the worshippers once the ceremony begins. Notable trees, unusual plants, or unique stones and carvings often mark sacred sites.

The Heortlings worship Orlanth in the open air (even during storms), not inside stuffy buildings. Orlanthei love to be in the rain, and expect to feel it at every ceremony. Only the city shrines and Rex temples have roofs, and even those cover only the sacred statues, not the worshippers.



### ORLANTH HAS BEEN CHAINED!



The Lunars claim to have chained Orlanth. They have shut most of the city temples and say that they have squeezed Orlanth into Whitewall, which will fall any day. Many people receive no answer to their prayers, and so have fallen to despair. Many believe the Lunars are about to triumph.

Others know that no one can imprison Orlanth, who is Freedom itself. Men still meet on hilltops from Heortland to Far Point, in places that the Lunars cannot patrol. On those hidden hilltops, men still hear the voice of Orlanth. It whispers of rebellion, and of the coming of the Hero Wars.



## Heroic Options

Worship of Orlanth among the Heortlings is extensive and complex, for his subcults include dozens of aspects, names, and deities. The Heortlings commonly worship some of these subcults but many are unusual or rare. As always there are variations among clans, but in general we can divide his worship into five categories.

### Warband Cults

Most warriors and young men worship these deities and subcults. As much as 85% of a clan's warband worship one of these deities (in varying ratios).

- Daylanus, the Conquering Wind
- Destor the Adventurer
- Finovan the Raider
- Hedkoranth the Thunder Slinger
- Helamakt, the Fighting Storm
- Starkval the Weaponthane
- Tatouth the Scout

### Specialty Cults

Few people worship these deities, although each tribe usually has a clan that reveres one of them. Players whose heroes worship one of these subcults should remember that because these subcults are unusual, finding other worshippers of the same deity may prove difficult.

- Drogarsi the Skald
- Mastakos Mover
- Niskis the Lover
- Orvanshagor
- Vanganth the Flyer
- Vingkot Champion
- Vingkot Victorious
- Yavor Lightning

### Occupational Cults

The Heortlings commonly worship all of these subcults. Although their worshippers account for 85% of all Orlanthi carls and cottars, they are rarely heroic.

- Durev the Householder
- Harst the Reeve
- Ohorlanth the Thunderer
- Ormalaya the Hunter
- Orstan the Carpenter
- Poverri the Fisherman



*Hedkoranth*

### Social Status Cults

The Heortlings commonly worship all of these subcults. Few men are leaders, lawspeakers, or lightbringers, however, and so few men actually worship these deities. Members of Advanced Occupations (see pg. 169) often worship them, and players whose heroes aspire to those social positions will usually worship the appropriate subcult at that time.

- Andrin the Lawspeaker
- Dar the Leader
- Jarani the Lawman
- Orlanth Lightbringer
- Orlanth Rex
- Vingkot High King

### Ancient Cults

Orlanth is the originator of many skills and occupations, and in the earliest times people worshipped him for these things. The subcults listed here are his aspects from that era. They reflect the way that people worshipped Orlanth during the Storm Tribe Age. As other deities learned to do these things Orlanth passed on the power to them. Those younger deities are now actively worshipped, but the ancient cults of Orlanth are uncommon. Few people initiate to them, and most people never meet a devotee of one of these gods. They are remnants of an ancient cult whose raw powers have been refined by thousands of years of worship.

In some cases, worship of these deities is non-existent, so we do not even provide keywords. However, all of these ancient cults do receive sacrifices. People recognize them as the sources of the powers used by the “modern” gods, and invoke or mention them at appropriate times. Because of this, they receive collateral sacrifice and worship. For example, the ceremonies to Durev, Barntar, and the agricultural deities always acknowledge Orlanthcarl as the first farmer, and ask his blessing as they carry out the work that he began. Furthermore, some of them receive special sacrifices to invoke their blessings whenever a clan performs the deeds that the ancient gods did.

- Desemborth, Orlanth the Thief
- Orlanthandrin, Orlanth the Lawmaker
- Orlanthcarl, Orlanth the Farmer
- Orlanthdovar, Orlanth the Faithful Husband
- Orolmarn, Orlanth the Herdsman
- Varanorlanth, Orlanth the Wild

## Membership Requirements

### Communal Worship

All Heortlings, male and female, are communal members of Orlanth. Women never progress beyond communal worship, except in a few specialized subcults such as Vinga (see *Storm Tribe: The Cults of Sartar*). Except for the first two years of adulthood, all men initiate into one of the aspects and subcults of Orlanth.

### Initiation and Devotion

Initiates and devotees of Orlanth must be men, and must follow his virtues. They learn the mundane abilities taught by their aspect and subcult. Initiates learn the affinities of their aspect and subcult, and may improvise feats from those affinities. Devotees learn the affinities and specific feats of their aspect and subcult.

Orlanth is the example for all men. His actions recreated the world, and his virtues keep it safe. He expects all of his worshippers to emulate him in their thoughts and deeds. Worshippers who fail to act properly suffer, and may bring a curse down upon their community.

Orlanth has six virtues, the ideal that Orlanthis must follow. They are Courage, Generosity, personal Honor, social Justice, Piety, and Wisdom. An unstated virtue of great importance is Independence, which most people recognize as the inalienable right of each person to make their own decisions. The Orlanthis believe that an individual is responsible to his clan first, to himself second, and beyond that to anyone to whom he pledges himself. He must always maintain responsibility for his own actions, however, and this is the true power of Independence.

### Priests

Most priests of Orlanth are devotees. Since appointment to the priesthood is often political, however, it is possible for an initiate to be selected. All priests must abide by their aspect virtues and obey their chief priest. Individual requirements vary depending on clan and temple politics.

Priests of Orlanth are sometimes known as Storm Voices. They must always have their sacred regalia so that they can create a holy place to Orlanth atop any hill. They must carry the sacred objects in an ox-drawn wagon with two or more wheels. Other requirements vary with the clan, temple, and aspect worshipped. Priests of Orlanth Adventurous must be warriors, for example, while priests of Orlanth Allfather are often great kings.

## Aspects of Orlanth

### Ⓒ Great Orlanth Ⓒ

*Entry Requirements:* Must be a man. Worshippers must normally choose an aspect and subcult from among those listed below.

*Virtues:* Brave, Generous, Honorable, Just, Pious, Wise.

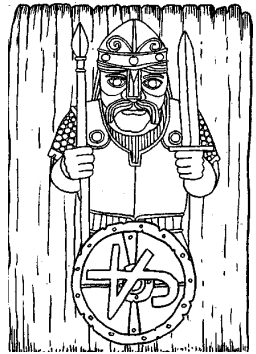
*Great Secret:* **Be Air** (Character becomes one with Orlanth and is removed from play.)

*Other Side:* Orlanth's Great Hall stands at the center of Orlanth's Stead, which is at the center of the Storm Realm. From his hall initiates may exit to the Umath Age, Storm Tribe Age, Vingkotling Age, Chaos Age, or Silver Age or travel into the Sky or Underworld. Orlanth himself welcomes all his followers, who after death spend eternity feasting and hunting, riding border patrols, and leading living worshippers when they come to the realm.

### ⚔ Orlanth Adventurous

Orlanth Adventurous is the aspect young men and warriors worship. The cult provides protection for society, an outlet for aggression, and an accepted path for men with wanderlust. In general, this aspect includes anything Orlanth did that took him away from his home.

Worshippers depict Orlanth Adventurous with a shield and his favored weapons (as determined by the worshipping clan). The clan warband is the most prominent presence of Orlanth Adventurous for most Heortlings.



### Warbands

Every clan has a temple to Orlanth Adventurous in the bodies of its *fyrmen* and weaponthanes. All clans have members who follow the way of the Warrior. Even a pure Peace Clan has several men who protect the herd from predators and take certain parts in rituals. Even in times of peace, their ceremonies resemble the *wapentake* (see pg. 24) and preparations for war, with members jostling each other and boasting to attract their leaders' attention.

The clan chieftain selects the leader of the warband. He must consider many complex social and religious issues. Often, he selects the clan champion to lead the warband. The clan's chief priest selects a god-talker or priest to lead rituals for the warband. This individual is always a devotee of Orlanth Adventurous when possible.

Warbands are usually part of a clan or tribe, and thus obey the chieftain or king. Before the Lunar invasion, Orlanth Adventurous was the second most popular aspect of Orlanth after Orlanth Allfather. The Lunars have forbidden Orlanth's rites, and outlaw anyone convicted of worshipping him. Because of this, some warbands are now independent of such social burdens. Although most such bands claim to be freedom fighters, some are little better than mercenaries or outlaws.

No priest of Orlanth Adventurous commands the loyalty of all warbands by religious right. When warbands join the person best qualified becomes the leader. If conflict arises about leadership, the two warriors usually settle the issue with a variation of the Champion's Battle (see pg. 45). Regardless of the outcome, however, each warband determines its own fate. The leaders of warbands can make or break alliances at their discretion. Some alliances may withstand the tests of time, but most last only as long as needed, usually a season or two.

Some solitary or wandering subcults of Orlanth Adventurous are not worshipped through the warband. Their initiates are generally welcome at any Orlanth ceremony.

## Initiate and Devotee Membership

Initiates of Orlanth Adventurous muster with the *fjrd* and must follow the aspect virtues in addition to Orlanth's general virtues. They cannot worship any deity that forbids violence, for they must pledge themselves and their swords to Orlanth and the clan's warband. A worshipper of Orlanth Adventurous created using the **Hero Wars** rules belongs to the Destor the Adventurer subcult by default.

Initiates spend their cult time training, worshipping Orlanth, and fighting with the warband. Most form a "reserve" for the warband, called up only in times of war or raiding. Weaponthanes often select the best initiates as one of their "Four Storms" supporters (see pg. 169). Devotees are always full-time warriors. They are often weaponthanes, and spend their time patrolling the *tula*, raiding, and practicing their skills.

An existing warband member must sponsor an initiate who seeks to join. The sponsor swears that he knows the initiate, and accepts responsibility for him during a probationary period. This period normally lasts about a year but can be as short as the initiation ceremony for trusted individuals. Warband members must give all loot taken in battle to their warband leader (who in turn returns a portion to his followers). They must follow the commands of their leaders, especially in battle.

Initiates of Orlanth Adventurous may demand aid from other members of the Storm Tribe, but the other gods may demand payment afterwards. The price must meet the standards set forth in Orlanth's Aid:

### Orlanth's Aid

*Breath is in everyone: all Air is your friend  
All Air must move for storm or breeze,  
Answer the call for assistance  
Then charge what is fair, in your own eye.*

*Pay all debts, even if it breaks you  
Especially those gained in emergency.  
If you demand payment in your turn  
You will expect to be paid.*

*Give freely! Do not break a friend.  
In emergencies a fair man will aid  
But take praise and cheers for pay.  
Do it free, they will too.*

In addition to the requirements given under Initiate Membership, a devotee must to put himself forward in battle, challenging enemy warriors to single combat and accepting challenges in return. Failure to make or accept such a challenge is seen as cowardice by both the cult and the god.

## Magic Keyword

*Physical Abilities:* Close Combat ([Weapon] Fighting), Dodge Attack, Jump.

*Mental Abilities:* Boast, Brew Woad, Mythology of Orlanth, Mythology of the Thunder Brothers, Sense Change in Weather.

*Virtues:* Active, Proud, Responsible.

*Affinities:*

† **Combat** (Aid Throw With Wind, Armor of Woad, Enchant Silver ritual, Flickering Blade, Leaping Shield, Overbear Foe, [Weapon] Help)

∞ **Movement** (Burst of Speed, Leap Over Obstacle, Run On Mud, Run up Cliffs, Sunset Leap)

*Worshippers:* Warriors, explorers and scouts, hunters, skalds, young men.

*Sacrifices:* Worshippers of Orlanth Adventurous sacrifice Orlanth's Portion of all weapons and loot taken on the battlefield. They also offer specific sacrifices, such as spearheads on Lawstaff Day and eagles on One Day.

## Subcults of Orlanth Adventurous

### ☞ Desemborth the Thief

Orlanth called himself Desemborth when he first took something from another god. He was a prisoner of Lord Kavan, who locked him in the Ebon Cage. Yinkin helped him escape, and Orlanth took the Sandals of Darkness to hide from Elvor, who had made them. The two brothers fled, but their foes still hunt them.

Desemborth has the power to take and to hide. As Desemborth, Orlanth stole a sword from his brother, rescued his wife from a city, took a cauldron from a rival, and cut sustenance from a dead cow. He was the warrior who cut out his share and more from the creatures at the Plundering of Aron, and escaped while the other warriors fought the defending Face Guards.

Only outsiders call Desemborth a thief, for Heortlings know that it is only stealing if done from kin. No true Heortling is a professional thief, and a worshipper of Desemborth must be absolutely loyal to ensure his place among his kin. Although Desemborth does occasionally steal from relatives, he does so only to return a stolen object to its true owner, and always gives the proper portion to his chieftain.

*Physical Abilities:* Move Quietly, Remain Motionless.

*Virtues:* Loyalty, Patience.

*Affinities:*

⚔ **Stealth** (Avoid Trap, Invisible Hand, No Scent, Silent in Darkness, Stand Unseen)

⚔ **Movement Feats:** Squeeze Through Gap, Walk without Footprints.

*Secret: Leave No Trace* (With a gentle gust of wind or a noise on the breeze, the worshipper escapes a trap or cage. No one sees him escape; his captors simply find his cell empty, the noose dangling unattended, or a trail ending at a sheer cliff.)

*Disadvantages:* Desemborth is often the target of Darkness attacks, the family and friends of Elvor trying to regain the Sandals of Darkness.

### ⚔ Destor the Adventurer

Destor is the son of Varanorlanth, and was part of the Discovery Band that explored Esjenen with his father. He learned how to anticipate what lay ahead by what he had seen. His specialty was to find ways through places where no one had been before. He is the exploring wind, always curious of what lies over the next hill or through the next pass.

#### **The Warriors Rivalry**

Several of the Thunder Brothers are noted for their friendly rivalry. Of course, all warriors compete for Orlanth's attention and rewards, including specialists such as Humakt, Elmal, and Heler. But these seven are the foremost warriors of Orlanth's own household.

- Daylanus the Conqueror
- Destor the Adventurer
- Finovan the Raider
- Hedkoranth the Thunder Slinger
- Helamakt the Fighting Storm
- Starkval the Weaponthane
- Vinga the Adventuress

Destor the Adventurer is the default subcult of Orlanth Adventurous. His stories occur when Orlanth was young, full of life and energy and without the commitments of later life (such as a family or even a clan). His wandering nature appeals to many Orlanthi who do not know what life will bring them or what they will bring to life. His worshippers say that he is the essential form of Orlanth, worshipped without any intermediary. "We do not seek special powers," they say. "We are Orlanth, who is all."

*Virtues:* Curious, Wanderlust.

*Affinities:*

Ⓔ **Wind** (Call Clouds, Call Wind, Drive Away Clouds, Hear Words on the Wind, Summon Umbroli)

Ⓔ **Movement Feats:** Find a Way, Lift Object With Winds.

*Secret:* **Last Gasp Recovery** (Automatically succeed at a single final action during any contest in which the hero has successfully used his **Wind** affinity, even if he normally would not be allowed a final action.)

#### Ⓐ Drogarsi the Skald

Drogarsi was the name Orlanth used when he faced the Solar Emperor in the Tests of Dance and Music. He invented the horn, the pipes, and other instruments, and learned to play many more, such as the harp of the Emperor's son and the drums of Deloradella's spawn. He invented the dances that Heortling men still perform — the Sword Dance, the Courting Dance, and the Victory Dance, among others. When Drogarsi was hurt in the Darkness, his sword and horn broken, the foreigner Donandar came and restored him so that he could continue on his quest.

*Physical Abilities:* Dance, Sing.

*Affinities:*

Ⓔ **High Entertainment** (Ridiculing Song, Sorrowful Ballad, Uplifting Anthem, Vengeful Dirge, Wind Carries Song)

Ⓔ **Movement Feats:** Sing while Running, Tireless Dance.

*Secret:* **Battle Paeon** (Allows the devotee to ignore Multiple Target penalties when using his **High Entertainment** affinity to aid his clan or tribe in battle. All persons affected must be able to hear the skald's song.)

#### Ⓒ Finovan the Raider

Finovan is the greatest raider of the Storm Tribe, and especially loves the cattle raid. He is famous for his skill with the sword, and is the swordthane of the Four Fighting Storms. He wields the lightning weapon called the Searing Bolt, a long-reaching sword that he took on an especially daring raid. He rides upon Rolling Thunder, a magnificent horse that he took during another raid. It can run over land, water, or air with equal ease. After his victory at the Plundering of Aron, Orlanth gave Finovan the dwarf-wrought helmet called Spare Me that once protected the head of a water god.



Finovan led the Thunder Brothers when they recovered the stolen animals at the Plundering of Aron. He took less action than others who followed his orders. He did cleave Urovin, one of the Face Guards that fell upon the raiders as they escaped. His senses were keen, his leadership true, and his decisions right, and so the Heortlings call him the Champion of Aron.

*Physical Abilities:* Move Quietly, Running.

*Mental Abilities:* Know Domestic Animals.

*Virtues:* Bold, Patient.

*Affinities:*

☛ **Raiding** (Attract Herd, Camouflage Animal, Hide Animal Tracks, Silence Herd Animal)

† **Combat Feats:** Rolling Thunder, Searing Bolt, Spare Me.

*Secret:* **Cattle Raider** (Allows the devotee to ignore Multiple Target penalties when using his **Raiding** affinity on cattle.)

## ☞ Mastakos Mover

Mastakos is Orlanth's Charioteer and (more generally) the god of Movement. No one claims him merely as a guise of Orlanth, but no one worships him as a separate deity. He is the source of the general **Movement** affinity taught by Orlanth Adventurous. He is the planet that crosses the sky more swiftly than any other, then steps across the dome in an instant to start his journey again. His worshippers are wanderers, never happy in one place unless they are serving as charioteer for a king.

Mastakos was born in the Undersea, kept hidden by Magasta at the bottom of Daliath's Well of Wisdom. Orlanth quested mightily for a power that would let him move anywhere in the cosmos, and finally won the right to drink from the Well. He drained the cup dry, and at the bottom found Mastakos, who became his companion. Since then, Mastakos has only stopped moving once, when outlaws wounded him. Orlanth rescued and healed him so that the Three-Legged Sign was again whole upon his breast.

*Physical Abilities:* Dance, Drive Chariot, Keep Balance, Running.

*Affinities:*

☞ **Westfaring Movement** (Balance Leap, Carry Companion, Ignore Pleas to Stop, Land on Both Feet, Move Through Dance, Instantly Travel Anywhere Within Sight [D+20], Travel into the West, Walk on Water)

☞ **Movement Feats:** Follow in Footsteps, Never Get Stuck.

*Secret:* **Return Home** (The devotee can create a special holy place. Thereafter, he can instantly travel to this "home" by performing a special ritual. This movement can only be opposed by magic, for the devotee enters the Storm Realm and leaps to his home from First Step. He does not take the normal D+40 modifier for directed teleportation [see the Basic Magic chapter of *Hero Wars*], but does have to overcome the barrier between worlds normally. A devotee can only have one such "home" at a time; if he creates a new one, the previous one becomes unavailable.)

### ♁ Niskis the Lover

Orlanth first called himself Niskis when he seduced Mumela, the Arstolan Elf Princess. He used this name many times as he fathered a series of children (some of whom are counted among the Thunder Brothers). He used the same name and powers when courting Ernalda, and occasionally even after he was married to her. He used other names (such as Dashing Veradash) less often, usually as disguises to avoid husbands and brothers. Niskis and Yinkin feature in an amusing series of stories detailing their youthful exploits with women, called "The Tales of Tat and Tol."

Niskis' characteristic weather is when rain falls from the clear sky.

*Physical Abilities:* Go Without Sleep, Running.

*Virtues:* Amorous.

*Affinities:*

♣ **Sensuality** (Caress of Passion, Endearing Eyes, Handsome Stranger, Stay Awake, Virility)

♃ **Movement Feats:** Leap Through Window.

*Secret: Please Women* (When the hero leaves a woman after any length of time, she holds no rancor for him and is always completely satisfied with his attentions. He never leaves her with anything she does not desire, such as tears, pain, or an unwanted child.)

### ♃ Ormalaya the Hunter

The first tale of Ormalaya tells how Varanorlanth chose him as one of the Discovery Band. He already carried his bow and arrows, and he helped Varanorlanth to explore the world. He led people into the wilderness and helped them to live by teaching them to hunt. He was one of the raiders in the famous Plundering of Aron. He went home when Hedkoranth got more praise than he did, and thereafter is not counted among the Thunder Brothers. His wife is Indeg, who made the thorn basket that always has another handful of dried berries in it.

Ormalaya is the Deep Hunter. He does not live in the Thunder Barracks, but instead has a hunting lodge at the edge of the *tula*. One wall of his house holds his hunting trophies, including the heads of the Five Majestic Beasts.

*Physical Abilities:* Remain Motionless.

*Affinities:*

♁ **Hunting** (Attract Prey Animal, Conceal Hunter, Hide Scent, Invisible Pitfall, Sure Throw)

♃ **Movement Feats:** Avoid Claws, Run Up Tree.

*Secret: Track Prey Over Any Terrain* (Allows the devotee to follow prey over any terrain without slowing. As long as he is tracking a specific prey animal and does not lose its trail he can walk on water, up cliffs, or through otherwise impassible terrain.)

### ⚡ Orvanshagor Dragonslayer

Orlanth killed many dragons. Sh'hakarzeel was the first, but others of note include Aroka, Femman the Coral Dragon, and Drathdaw the Stone Dragon that tried to mate with Kero Fin. When Alakoring came to Dragon Pass to slay the dragons of the EWF, he sacrificed first to Orvanshagor.

Orvanshagor receives regular sacrifice every year on Dragonslayer Day to keep him strong, so that the dragons no longer bother the inhabitants of the world. Whenever someone goes to fight against dragons or their kin they sacrifice to him. Only a great hero such as Alakoring Dragonbreaker, whose sole purpose was to slay dragons, would worship Orvanshagor as an initiate or devotee.

*Mental Abilities:* Know Draconic Behavior, Track.

*Virtues:* Valorous.

*Affinities:*

† **Fight Dragons** (Lightning Fast Strike, Pierce Dragon Armor, Scorn Dragon Wound, Shield Soul, Swallow Fear)

⤿ **Movement Feats:** Dodge Dragon Breath, Leap Onto Dragon.

*Secret: Find Dragon Weakness* (Otherworld ability. The hero must travel into the Otherworld to discover the secret of a specific dragon. If the hero is successful and locates the correct myth, he returns with knowledge of a secret weakness of that dragon. Thereafter, the hero can use the secret to augment any ability fighting that draconic foe. Note that to use the secret against any draconic creature, the hero must discover from which true dragon the creature descends.)

### ⚔ Tatouth the Scout

Tatouth is the son of Destor. He learned the ways of the wilderness from his father and grandfather, who often sent him back to the Discovery Band with news of the lands ahead. His powers are those that let a man go safely through regions he knows and still find new things. He specializes in looking for enemies ahead, finding ways for a raiding band to march safely, and locating the paths to return home quickly and safely.

*Mental Abilities:* Track.

*Virtues:* Cautious, Curious.

*Affinities:*

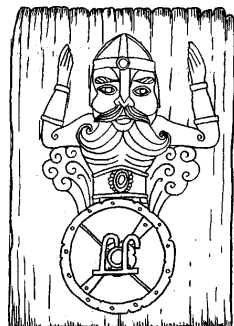
⤿ **Scouting** (Find Path, Long Seeing, Remember Route, See Local Daimones, See Nature Spirits)

⤿ **Movement Feats:** Fall Softly, Rock-jumping.

*Secret: Come Back Safely* (The scout can always retrace his route and return home, even if the path has changed. If slain, his soul will return to inform his family of his death.)

### ☪ Vanganth the Flyer

Vanganth is the god of flying, who taught humans how to fly on the winds in their own bodies, as the gods do. Even among the Orlanthe flyers are rare, and it is they who worship Vanganth. Vanganth is the best, fastest, and farthest flyer of the Thunder Brothers. His entire family learned to fly, and they turned the tide at the Battle of Second Killer Waves. His worshippers depict him with the defender shielded but no weapons, for he rarely engages in mortal forms of combat. He always flies upon a wind.



All Orlanthe fly on holy days, but only Vanganth and his followers can call the winds to carry their heavier-than-air bodies at any time or fly as high as the cloudhawks. To fly, the Vanganthe exhale their breath to bear them aloft, invisible to the naked eye but visible to magic sight as a ram, hawk, or alynx. Vanganth himself turns into those shapes in his myths. Monsters killed Vanganth in the Darkness, and the Lightbringers freed him.

*Physical Abilities:* Fight while Flying, Throw Sword.

*Mental Abilities:* Discern Air Currents.

*Virtues:* Daredevil.

*Affinities:*

☪ **Flight** (Aerial Maneuvering, Avoid Lightning, Fly Carrying Additional Weight, Fly Fast, Fly High)

☿ **Movement Feats:** Fly Against the Wind.

*Secret:* **Seven Winds Flight** (Acts as an affinity with the following feats: Attack with Windblast, Dive from Above, Fly in Darkness, Fly through Clouds, Hover, Knock Down Flyer, Reverse Direction in Midair. The hero can also use the secret to augment his normal **Flight** affinity.)

### ♁ Varanorlanth, Orlanth the Wild

When Orlanth set out to explore the world he took the name Varanorlanth. He discovered or invented the ways to survive without stead, weapons, or kin. Afterwards, he went back home to Dini and recruited the Discovery Band to go with him into the wilds.

Varanorlanth disdains armor and often even clothing. He invented the magical blue dye called woad used by his people and even the other Thunder Brothers. He never uses any tools except sticks, stones, and ropes that he finds and works with his own hands and the other tools that he has made. He lives in the open land, beneath Orlanth's sky, and so never has to worry about roofs, herds, or crops. He is uncomfortable in cities, towns, and even buildings, where his magic is useless.

## Orlanth in the Wilderness

Everyone lived on the Mountain. No one could tell anything apart, even themselves. Orlanth was first, when he noticed that he was different from his sisters, and then that his brothers were different from him. Then he saw that some beings were gods, but some were mortals, some were animals, and some were even stranger beings. He looked out and saw a vast land spread out beneath the Mountain. He leapt into the air and blew all the way around the world, exploring it and seeing its potential, turning this way and that when something caught his attention. The world was primeval territory, virgin and untouched. It was utterly wild, and inhabited only by the first things.

Orlanth went back to Dini, where he had been living, and told his companions what he had seen. He concluded by saying, "I think we should go there."

"Not us," said his sisters, who never liked to move anywhere. "It's too wild and dangerous." And everyone who liked his sisters decided that they would stay in Dini.

Orlanth left to explore the lands without them. He dressed himself with fringed clothing, to blend into the wilds; with a cowl and cap, to hide his face; with strong boots to move over stone, brush, or sand; and with his javelins, knife, and striker.

He went alone and called himself Varanorlanth, Orlanth the Wild. He learned how to live off the land, where the different trees and fields were, and what daimones and spirits and essences lived among them. He learned how to recognize the dangers and how to confront or avoid them. He learned how to listen to the voice of the wild that was ancient when Orlanth was young.

Varanorlanth met a goddess called Velhara, the Lady of the Wild, and sat with her around his campfire. As she was composing the "Song of the Hunt" with him, Varanorlanth boasted that no one could best him. Velhara mocked him and vanished from the camp. He set out after her, but the five Majestic Beasts delayed him. He outran Fa, the Earth Deer; wrestled Grar, the Green Rock Lion; killed Dursela the Manticore and cut off its tail with his striker; turned Rurudram, the great horned beetle, on its back; and brought down Iti, the Variegated Eagle. Finally, Varanorlanth caught Sashaka the Devil fish using Dursela's stinger as hook, Fa's sinews as a line, Grar's heart as a plumb, Iti's feathers as a lure, and Rurudram's carapace as a boat.

Varanorlanth never caught Velhara, so Orlanth returned to Dini and told everyone what he had found. He called the land Esjenen, the First Land. Many people were interested this time, but again his sisters complained. "Look at these animals that we have now," they said. "How could you lead all of us through that strange place?"

Orlanth went again into Esjenen, this time accompanied by the Discovery Band that he organized. He and his followers wandered through the wide lands, and Varanorlanth showed them what they needed to know. In that way they explored Esjenen, and discovered many new things and hidden peoples. During this time, Destor the Explorer and Ormalaya the Hunter first gained their skills.

When the Discovery Band finally returned, they convinced even Orlanth's sisters to move into the new land for now there were many people who knew the ways of the wild lands and could protect them. As they prepared to leave several of Orlanth's uncles showed up and, one by one, talked people out of going. One by one, Orlanth talked them into going again. At last, the Great Migration Downland set off, all the gods and people with their herds. Tactouch the Scout made sure people got ahead safely and Orolmam taught people how to control the animals so that they moved where the people wanted. Thus was the world below the Mountain populated.

*Physical Abilities:* Close Combat (Unarmed Combat), Craft Tools.

*Mental Abilities:* Wilderness Survival.

*Affinities:*

‡ **Live in Wilderness** (Avoid Enemies, Burrow in Earth, Find Edible Food, Find Potable Water, Sense Danger, Wild Strength)

∞ **Movement Feats:** Outrun Pursuer, Run Like the Wind.

*Secret: Survive Anywhere* (The devotee can find food and materials necessary to survive and adapt to any clime. He never suffers the Alien World penalty in any Otherworld, instead treating all God Plane realms as Safe and the other two Otherworlds as Dangerous.)

### ✧ Vingkot Champion

Vingkot was a great leader, a maker of laws, a strong worker, and a powerful warrior. No one ever disobeyed him, because he was always right. When the Uz came, Vingkot defended his people. Starkval said that he should command the *fyrð* to defend the tribe, but Vingkot said there was a better way. He led the Thunder Brothers into the darkness so that the battles would destroy the Uz lands, not the Storm Tribe's. When the Uz saw him coming they sent out their best warriors to fight the Champion's Battle. One by one, Vingkot defeated them, and the Uz scattered like shadows before the light.

Heartlings sacrifice to Vingkot for aid against the Uz, but only clans with a traditional hatred of that race support permanent worshippers.

*Mental Abilities:* Know Troll Tactics, Sense Ambush.

*Affinities:*

○ **Fight Trolls** (Break Bludgeons, Bright Spear, Cripple Troll, Enchant Iron ritual, Scatter Shadows, See in Dark, Tooth-shattering Armor)

∞ **Movement Feats:** Nightjumping, Run in Darkness.

*Secret: Command Followers* (Acts as an integrated passion spirit giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's target number to any ability used in the course of commanding any follower who is sworn to the devotee.)

### ✧ Orlanth Allfather

Orlanth Allfather is the power of Orlanth in society. He is the "normal" aspect of Orlanth, the one that everyone acknowledges, and the one that almost everybody belongs to. He is the source of Society, Life, Law, and Justice, and his subcults teach people the skills and magic necessary to fill those roles. Thus, his worshippers are providers and crafters, lawspeakers and weaponthanes, and chieftains and kings. Orlanth Allfather's worshippers expect to stay at home, defend the stead, and possibly learn a craft or lead the clan. They follow the rules of society as laid down by Orlanth and Ernalda. They seek the security of a well-ordered society, not the glory of battle or adventure.

Worshippers distinguish between “sub-aspects” of Orlanth Allfather, recognizing three levels in society: Provider (sometimes called Orlanth the Farmer because the farmers often produce more food than the other providers combined), Law-speaker (sometimes generalized as Orlanth the Thane), and Leader (occasionally generalized as Orlanth the Noble). Worshippers usually depict him in “normal” clothes sitting behind a basket. Images of subcult deities often appear similar, differing only in the deity’s rune and the object(s) that they hold.



## Initiate and Devotee Membership

Initiates of Orlanth Allfather most often worship Durev the Householder, Orlanthcarl the Farmer, Poverri the Fisherman, Orstan the Carpenter, or Orolmarn the Herder. They work hard to provide food for their clan and family. They attend the *wapentake* and attend the *fyrð* with their weapons, but they neither want nor expect adventure.

Members have no special requirements except to follow the aspect virtues in addition to the general virtues. A worshipper of Orlanth Allfather created using the **Hero Wars** rules belongs to the Durev the Householder subcult by default. Although god-talkers might worship any subcult of Orlanth Allfather, most devotees worship the subcults of the Lawspeakers (Andrin or Jarani) or the Weaponthane (Starkval). Special subcults are available only to chieftains and kings (Dar, Vingkot).

## Magic Keyword

*Mental Abilities:* Mythology of Orlanth, Sense Change in Weather.

*Virtues:* Fatherly, Hard-working, Responsible.

*Affinities:*

⌘ **Allfather** (Lead by Example, Protect Home, Silencing Bellow, Summon Family)

▲ **Making** (Acclaim Chieftain, Bless New Building, Bless Tools, Oversee Marriage ritual, Work Hard)

*Sacrifices:* Worshippers sacrifice the products of their labor to Orlanth Allfather. Thus, farmers sacrifice grain, fishermen give part of their catch, and leaders make their just decisions for the god. The whole clan gives special sacrifices as well, such as fine jars on Reaping Day.

*Worshippers:* Providers, craftsmen, lawspeakers, leaders, weaponthanes.

*Note:* In addition to those listed above, some subcults have feats in the **Allfather** affinity that are available only to their worshippers. These reflect the variations of a community *wyter* rather than unique magic. Thus, a clan chieftain casts his magic through the clan *wyter*, and thus affects his clan rather than an individual stead or an entire tribe.

## Subcults of Orlanth Allfather

### ↔↔↔ Andrin the Lawspeaker

Andrin teaches the laws of the classes and the clans, for he was Heort's lawspeaker. He tells what damages apply for stealing apples, skipping a harvest day, not helping to dig the ditches, or making rude remarks to the cattle. The lawspeakers and god-talkers invoke him at the start of every clan moot, during every tribal meeting, and to witness official exchanges of goods in trade.

*Entry Requirements:* Be appointed a lawspeaker (see pg. 170).

*Physical Abilities:* Talk for Hours.

*Mental Abilities:* Find Weakness in Argument.

*Virtues:* Just, Persistent.

*Affinities:*

△ **Clan Law** (Be Impartial, Cite Precedent, Find Compromise, Know Qualifications, Know True Motive)

✂ **Allfather Feats:** Determine Kinship, Open Moot.

*Secret: Speak Heort's Law* (When the devotee successfully uses his **Heortling Law** affinity, all parties to the judgement know that he has spoken the truth. This gives a penalty of 1/4 the secret's target number to any ability used by the losing party to resist or oppose the judgement and isolates the clan from divine wrath [see pg. 78] for their actions.)

### ✂ Dar the Leader

Orlanth formed the first clan. He called himself Orlanthdar (or simply Dar, Chief) when he made and wore the first torc when his equals elected him to be chieftain. He later formed the first tribe, and wore the first crown when his equals elected him to be king. He is the arbitrator and the power of leadership, which fills the leader at council. Dar himself selected his assistants — his divine thanes — to help and advise him.

No one can simply join Dar's cult. The free men and women of the clan or tribe must confer membership upon their chieftain or king, respectively. Worshipers of Dar must personify Orlanth's virtues even more than do other Orlanthi, especially the virtues of Honor and Justice. Theoretically, all members of the clan or tribe's inner ring are members of this cult, but they receive only their status of thane from this worship, and may not learn Dar's magic.

Dar is present whenever a clan or tribe selects a leader by placing the torc, sword, and key at his feet. Dar started the custom that chieftains receive a part of all harvests and herds (to distribute to the clan as needed), the third of any triplets born to man or beast, and all loot taken from the battlefield. He started the custom that kings receive a part of all harvests and herds (to support the tribe), fees for use of the tribal court and market, the Day-feeding of his household, and all loot from battles at which he fights.



The magic of Dar the Leader differs depending on whether the worshipper is a clan chieftain or a tribal king. In *Hero Wars*, we make an artificial distinction by providing two keywords to reflect this. All clan chieftains worship Dar the Chieftain. Most tribal kings worship Dar the King.

### **Dar the Chieftain**

*Entry Requirements:* Be acclaimed chieftain by the clan.

*Mental Abilities:* Dominate Meeting, Intimidate, Negotiation, Sense Mood of Crowd.

*Affinities:*

⚔ **Lead Clan** (Cast Out of Clan, Instill Pride, Invoke *Wyter*, Protect *Tula*, Sense Dishonor)

⚔ **Allfather Feats:** Make Clan Ring, Rally Clan, Summon Clan.

*Secret: Command Clan* (Acts as an integrated passion spirit giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's target number to any ability used in the course of commanding any member of the clan.)

### **Dar the King**

*Entry Requirements:* Be acclaimed king by the tribe.

*Mental Abilities:* Dominate Meeting, Intimidate, Negotiation, Sense Mood of Crowd.

*Affinities:*

⚔ **Lead Tribe** (Cast Out of Tribe, Instill Pride, Invoke *Wyter*, Protect *Tula*, Sense Dishonor)

⚔ **Allfather Feats:** Make Tribal Ring, Rally Tribe, Summon Tribe.

*Secret: Command Tribe* (Acts as an integrated passion spirit giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's target number to any ability used in the course of commanding any member of the tribe.)

### **† Durev the Householder**

Durev is the Great Carl, worshipped by more Heortling men than any other deity. Orlanth was the first god to link beasts to plow and lay seed to earth under the raining sky, and Barntar is the best plowman, but Durev made farming a livelihood. Durev and his wife Orane created most of the ways of the farmer, and raised a huge family and prosperous household. They were so wealthy that they owned five of the Ten Vingkotling Treasures. Durev solved every problem until foreigners began burning and flooding out his land. Then he participated in the First Law-making, speaking for the carls as Vingkot spoke for the nobles and Starkval for the thanes.

Durev is a simple god. He does not like violence, trade goods, fancy legal talk, or anything else that drives people away. He works hard for his family,



cares for his herds, repairs the house and grain bins, and makes the household sacrifices. He is the leader of all the other working gods. His stories are full of love for his family and dedication to his people. His stable presence is what orders society and allows everyone to live together and prosper.

*Affinities:*

♣ **Family** (Bless Child, Calm Child's Fear, Happy Home, Intimidate Sons, Please Wife, "Yes Dear" Conciliation)

⚔ **Allfather Feats:** Rally Family, Summon Household.

*Secret:* **Head of Household** (Acts as an integrated passion spirit giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's target number to any ability used in the course of getting members of the household to do what he wants.)

## ⚔ Harst the Reeve

Harst the Reeve is the Collector and Dispenser. When Orlanth formed his Storm Tribe, many of the gods could not talk to each other. Harst went among them and learned a little of each of their tongues, and then he created a new language from these fragments. All of the gods learned this language to communicate with each other until they could learn Stormtongue. Harst taught another language, called Tradetalk, to mortals as well.

He receives all of the taxes of Orlanth's followers and all of the extras that each stead produces, and then distributes them where the chief directs. He always knows what resources the entire clan has, and what their needs will be for the coming seasons. He keeps all of the spare goods at his granary, and so people often call him Spare Grain. Every season he goes to the Tribal Market to trade the clan's extras for things that they need. At the end of the Vingkotling Age, when food was scarce and times were hard, Harst's foresight allowed the remnants of the Storm Tribe to survive until Orlanth returned at the Dawn.

*Mental Abilities:* Evaluate Resources, Speak Tradetalk.

*Virtues:* Thrifty.

*Affinities:*

⚔ **Store Goods** (Count Goods, Evaluate Livestock, Evaluate Quality of Goods, Keep Grain Dry, Lock Storage Building)

⚠ **Making Feats:** Bless Cart, Bless Granary.

*Secret:* **Communicate with Strangers** (Acts as an integrated passion spirit giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's target number to any ability used in the course of communicating with someone whose language the devotee does not speak.)

## ↔ Jarani the Lawstaff

Jarani was the first human to hold the Lawstaff that Orlanth made. He lived on Arrowmound with his family. Other Orlanthi, who were not his kinsmen, disputed his holding of the great mountain. Jarani asked God to help prove his claim to the site, and Orlanth came with the Lawstaff and

### Using the Lawstaff

Only one of Jarani's devotees can obtain the Lawstaff by successfully completing the Lawstaff heroquest. The quest is difficult, as are all attempts to take something concrete and permanent out of the God World. Success is rare but worth the effort for lawspeakers who want to wield the power of Orlanth, the ultimate source of Justice.

A holder of the Lawstaff must not use it casually, but only as a last resort when all other attempts to determine Justice have failed. Use of the Lawstaff attracts spectators from miles around. For centuries afterwards, lawspeakers will cite judgements made with the Lawstaff as precedent.

To find judgement, the Jarani Lawman goes to the sacred ground, which Orlanthi holy men and Ernalda holy women must measure, bless, and ward. Witnesses and officers stand in a shielded area. Spectators stand as near as they dare, always outside the sacred ground, which is the seat of Justice itself. Aall men fear to tread upon it, lest Orlanth also judge them during the rite.

Each litigant has one representative to bear his collective Justice to the ring. All of his or her supporters, patrons, backers, and other helpers stand behind, linked to the speaker by their holy men. Priests pray and use feats to help in the case. The Jarani Lawman raises the Lawstaff and calls on his god. Slowly, the Otherworld becomes visible, until the whole site appears as the top of Arrowmount Mountain. A hard and chill wind blows, and snow covers all the ground except the bare cliffs. Around the participants stand a hundred poles, each a log cut like a fletched lawstaff; these are the arrows of justice that Orlanth hurls into the world. The Lawman lowers the Lawstaff horizontally, each litigant takes hold of one end, and the contest begins.

Every fact, trick, connection, magical inference, oracle, and act that the litigants bring to this case come forth in a rush of divine review. Each supporter is pulled into the web of interconnections focused on the speaker. When everyone is involved, engaged in full or in part according to their commitments, then Jarani calls on Orlanth's Justice and reveals in that instant the final judgement of God. With a blast of cold wind deep in their souls, the winners and losers both know the results of Orlanth's Justice. The Human World comes back into view, and the lawspeaker formally announces the results of the ritual.

its rituals. Justice proved Jarani's claim; when the foe disobeyed the ruling and attacked Jarani, Orlanth himself came to help. Later, Heort the founder traveled to Arrowmount to get the Lawstaff from Jarani for the Heortlings.

*Entry Requirements:* Be appointed a tribal lawspeaker (see pg. 170).

*Mental Abilities:* Find Weakness in Argument, Sense Mood of Crowd.

*Virtues:* Impartial, Just.

*Affinities:*

△ **Tribal Law** (Be Impartial, Cite Precedent, Interrogate Witness, Know Unseen Factors, Respect My Authority, Sense Dissent)

✳ **Allfather Feats:** Open Moot, Summon Jurors.

*Secret: Use Lawstaff* (To learn the secret, the devotee must have successfully completed the Lawstaff Quest, a heroquest. When he successfully uses his **Tribal Law** affinity, all parties to the judgement know that he has spoken the truth. Any member of the losing party who tries to resist or oppose the judgement takes a penalty of 1/4 the secret's target number.)

### ☪ Orlanthcarl, Orlanth the Farmer

Orlanth had to prove his worth to Ernalda before she would marry him. One of his tasks was to show that he could provide for her and the people who would make up their tribe. With only a rope and a stick, he subdued the great bull. He then cleared the land of forest and rocks, yoked the bull to a plow, and planted his seed. When people celebrate these actions they call upon Orlanthcarl, Orlanth the Farmer.

*Affinities:*

☪ **Farming** (Control Oxen, Move Stones, Remove Plants, Strong as an Ox, Tireless Labor)

☩ **Allfather Feats:** Protect Fields, Summon Farmhands.

*Secret: Plow Any Field* (Acts as an integrated passion spirit giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's target number to any ability used in the course of plowing a field or planting crops. The secret also allows the devotee to plow even in a forest or through solid rock. The narrator assigns the resistance to farming of difficult terrain.)

### ☪ Orolmarn, Orlanth the Herder

One time, the Lord of Beasts challenged Orlanth to a set of contests. The Lord of Beasts placed as his wager his own children. Orlanth called himself Orolmarn when he accepted the challenge and placed as his wager his son Voriof, the Great Ram. Orolmarn won every contest except for the one that sent the beast men into the forests (and even this was a victory, because they wanted to go anyway). In that manner, Orolmarn won bulls, boars, stallions, roosters, ganders, and other useful animals for the Vingkotlings. Although Orlanth is now the Lord of Beasts, Orolmarn is his name as the herdsman for all of these animals, not just his own sheep.

*Affinities:*

☪ **Herding** (Direct Alynx, Dominate Herd Leader, Find Herd, See through Mists, Sense Predators, Stay Awake)

☩ **Allfather Feats:** Summon Herdsmen.

*Secret: Track Stray* (Allows the hero to use his **Herding** affinity to follow a strayed animal anywhere, even if it has been hidden by magic or entered the Otherworld. In the latter case, the secret acts as *Spirit World Travel* or a similar ability to enter the appropriate Otherworld, find the animal, and return to the Inner World with it.)

### ☪ Orstan the Carpenter

Orlanth is the Great Maker. He made the whole world, and the craft gods now hold a part of that power. Of them all, Orstan the Carpenter is the most popular. The one or two professional wood workers in each clan worship Orstan and provide lumber to their clan for everyday use. Clans also invoke Orstan any time they raise a building, float a boat, or construct a wagon.

Orstan built Durev's huge hamlet, but made the best house for himself. He built it of living wood — doors and windows open at a command, and seats, benches, and beds form out of the walls at a word. With his wife Overdruva, Orstan knows the secret words that allow him to harvest wood without disturbing the Aldryami.

*Affinities:*

† **Work Wood** (Appease Tree, Bend Wood, Dry Wood, Join Wood, Make Good Lumber, Season Wood)

▲ **Making Feats:** Bless Building, Repair Damaged Wood.

*Secret:* **Awaken Wood** (The worshipper can use this ritual to awaken anything created using his **Work Wood** affinity. The thing's natural daimon soul becomes active at a power level determined by the victory level and the secret's ability rating. The daimon acts primarily to protect the object from damage and theft but can also interact with its owner.)

### ↑ Poverri the Fisherman

Poverri and Pelaskos are the twin fishermen. They know how to catch food from the waters, an ability they took from the sea gods during the Vingkotling Age. Pelaskos followed the waters when they receded but Poverri stayed, content to pull fish and other food from the rivers and lakes. Most clans have only a few initiates who fish the local streams, but people along the major rivers look to Poverri as their primary Provider.

Poverri performed his greatest act when he cast his Mighty Line and hooked Doventharo, the Monster of the Deep. The struggle was great, and any other line and pole would have broken. They exchanged words, and Poverri tricked the monster into trading places. The monster thought this meant changing from prey to predator, but instead it meant casting it high up on land and sending Poverri into the waters. Poverri had gotten wet before, and simply ran back along his pole out of the water. He then gutted Doventharo and fed the entire Storm Tribe for a week on its carcass. This was a huge loss to the Sea Forces at the time when they were still expanding.

*Mental Abilities:* Know Local Waterways.

*Affinities:*

‡ **Fishing** (Attract Fish, Irresistible Fish Lure, Resist Current, Strengthen Net, Unbreakable Line)

▲ **Making Feats:** Bless Boat, Seal Leaks.

*Secret:* **Catch any Water Creature** (Automatically succeed at a single final action during any contest in which the hero has successfully used his **Fishing** affinity, even if he normally would not be allowed a final action.)

*Disadvantages:* Many water deities dislike Poverri because of his theft of their secrets. Poverri usually has specific agreements with local river gods, and so his worshippers do not suffer from their anger.

## † Starkval the Weaponthane

Starkval is the leader of the *fyrð*, and so leads the defense of the stead and clan. When Orlanth fortified the *tula* he appointed Starkval to be the defender at Aedin's Wall. Orlanth gave Starkval the spear called Gutburner, the sword named White Hilt, and the coat of mail called Turnspear. Elmal rewarded Starkval for defending the stead and gave him Henrer the Rainbow Horse, a companion who can talk, think, and joke as well as fight.

Starkval spoke for the thanes at the First Lawmaking and obtained the rights for that social class. He is especially famous for his command of the Storm Realm defenses when the giants attacked, when the Uz attacked, and when the Mostali attacked. He is the full-time weaponthane and receives sacrifice when the clan expects enemies to attack them on their own *tula* (where Starkval's magic is strongest).

*Mental Abilities:* Ambush, Mythology of the Thunder Brothers.

*Virtues:* Proud.

*Affinities:*

† **Combat** (Fight Giants, Fight Mostali, Fight Uz, Spearhelp, Turn Blow)

✠ **Allfather Feats:** Command *Fyrðman*, Muster *Fyrð*, Rally *Fyrð*.

*Secret:* **Lead Fyrð** (Allows the devotee to ignore Multiple Target penalties when using his **Combat** affinity, and can also be used to augment any other affinity used on the *fyrð*.)

## ✠ Vingkot High King

Vingkot is the greatest son of Orlanth. Vingkot was the first king of the humans of the Vingkotling Tribe. Later, when Orlanth was banished, the tribe gathered to select a new king. With Kero Fin's blessing, they made Vingkot high king of all the Storm People. Valind claimed this right, but Vingkot proved his right to rule by defeating the Vadruði and driving the invading ice into the far north.

Vingkot High King appears differently than does Dar the King. Both hold the torc of leadership, usually worn as a crown or around the neck. However, Vingkot also holds a lawstaff or scepter, to show that he is the source of law and justice. Additionally, Vingkot is the source of divine kingship (i.e., a dynastic practice) and so never stands behind a basket. Instead, he stands on a mountain (either Arrowmound or Kero Fin).

No one can simply join the cult of Vingkot High King. Only the tribal kings can confer membership upon a high king. Theoretically, all members of the high king's inner ring are members of this cult, but they receive only their status of thane from this worship, and may not learn Vingkot's magic.



*Entry Requirements:* Be crowned king by four or more tribes. High kings usually have appropriate leadership abilities from previous worship of Dar the Leader.

*Affinities:*

⚔ **Rule Kingdom** (Defend Kingdom, Find Compromise, Intimidate Subordinate Leader, Invoke *Wyter*, Lead Warriors, Storm Voice)

⚔ **Allfather Feats:** Make High King's Ring, Rally People, Summon Followers.

*Secret: Command Followers* (Acts as an integrated passion spirit giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's target number to any ability used in the course of commanding any follower who is sworn to the devotee.)

## ∞ Orlanth Thunderous

Orlanth Thunderous is the storm that holds all the powers of the Primal Air. He brings the rain so that the crops will grow and the streams will flow. He is in every wind that blows and every breath people take. His worshippers keep the winds and storms of the world moving.

All hills are sacred to Orlanth; the open air is the only temple he needs or wants. Kero Fin, Orlanth's Mother, is sacred to the cult, as are lightning-struck trees and rocks. His rites take place in the wild, on hilltops and under lightning-blasted trees. Worshipers fly the sacred kites, light pots of colored smoke, and tie flags and ribbons so that they dance in the breeze. No matter how calm or clear the weather when their rites begin, worshippers welcome the wild winds and rain that always accompany their rituals. They always picture Orlanth standing upon or within a storm, holding his lightning spears and wearing his helmet.



## Initiate and Devotee Membership

Initiates of Orlanth Thunderous dedicate themselves to the free winds and open air. They command the breezes and clouds, and call the rain to wet the fields or drown their foes. They attend the *wapentake* and the *fyrð* with their weapons, as do all Orlanthi men.

Members have no special requirements except to follow the aspect virtues in addition to the general virtues. A worshipper of Orlanth Thunderous created using the **Hero Wars** rules belongs to the Daylanus the Conquering Wind subcult by default.

Devotees of Orlanth Thunderous always go skyclad (naked) during rites. They often paint or tattoo their bodies with designs of power. A devotee may not cut or tie his hair or beard, which must flow freely in the wind.

Even small clans have at least one god-talker of Orlanth Thunderous. Large clans have full priests with their retinues of one or two priest or god-talker followers. The Wind Temple (in the Storm Hills) is an unusual cult center with its own (more complex) organization.

## Magic Keyword

*Physical Abilities:* Endure Weather.

*Mental Abilities:* Mythology of Orlanth, Mythology of the Thunder Brothers, Predict Weather.

*Virtues:* Dynamic, Proud.

*Affinities:*

☉ **Storm** (Call Clouds, Gentle Rain, Start Thunderstorm, Storm Voice)

☉ **Wind** (Command Air Daimones, Drive Away Clouds, Raise or Lower Wind, Snatch Breath, Still Whirlwind, Turn Wind)

*Worshippers:* Warriors, farmers, god-talkers.

*Note:* In addition to those listed above, some subcults have feats in the **Storm** affinity that are available only to their worshippers.

## Subcults of Orlanth Thunderous

### ☉ Daylanus the Conquering Wind (Default Subcult)

During the Vingkotling Age, Orlanth and his family faced many foes. Uz, Aldryami, and Mostali overran farms; solar warriors burned steads; and the waters flooded the land. Daylanus conquered the warriors that accompanied each invasion, proving the superiority of Air over all of the other elements. He always took his conquered foes' weapons and presented them to Orlanth, who in turn returned the best ones to him. Thus, he carries the Bright Spear taken from the north, the Barbeester Axe taken from the west, the Black Mace taken from the east, and the three-pronged Trident taken from the south. His worshippers favor these unusual weapons even when their clans and other warriors use more the more traditional spear or sword.

*Physical Abilities:* Close Combat (Axe Fighting, Mace Fighting, Spear Fighting, Trident Fighting)

*Affinities:*

† **Fight Elements** (Enchant Tin ritual, Fight Darkness, Fight Earth, Fight Fire, Fight Water)

☉ **Wind Feats:** Blow Away Shadows, Blow Out Fire, Push Waves with Wind.

*Secret:* **Conquer Elements** (The worshipper gains an edge equal to 1/4 the secret's ability rating when using his **Fight Elements** or **Storm** affinity against an entity tied to the element of Darkness, Earth, Fire, or Water. This edge works in the manner described under "The Elemental Progression" in the Advanced Magic chapter of *Hero Wars*.)



## ☉ Hedkoranth the Thunder Slinger

Hedkoranth is the power of the Thunderstone. Orlanth accepted a challenge from Opanbobos the Great Thrower. Orlanth sought advice from Lhankor Mhy, who told him to take up the Talking Flint. He did so and the flint cut out his heart. Such was Orlanth's power that he did not die. Instead, he made his heart and the flint into Great Weighty, the Thunderstone, and with it destroyed Opanbobos at his own game. Later, Orlanth bestowed the stone upon Hedkoranth, his son by Arvena.

Hedkoranth appears in the hailstorm. His sling is never empty; he can throw thunderstone after thunderstone, no matter how long the battle. He is one of Orlanth's Four Fighting Storms, the spearthane. He can make the Thunderstone do great marvels and tricks. Its powers made him the victor at many battles: at Thrinbarri of the Clouds he defeated Venebain with the stone, at Thrinbarri of the Stone he defeated Golagolar, and at Thrinbarri of the Roofs he overcame Sevsalsal.

*Physical Abilities:* Ranged Combat (Sling), Throw Stones.

*Affinities:*

☉ **Thunderstone** (Detect Enemies, Enchant Thunder Stone ritual, Hurl Thunder Stone, Throw Far, Thunder Sling)

☉ **Storm Feats:** Direct Hail, Start Hailstorm.

*Secret:* **Return Thunderstone** (Any thunderstone hurled automatically returns to the devotee's hand, even if it missed the target. If opposed with appropriate magic (only), the return requires an unrelated action and the secret must overcome the resisting magic.)

*Disadvantages:* Hedkoranth is often the target of Darkness attacks, the family and friends of Opanbobos the Great Thrower trying to regain the magical sling.

## 71 Helamakt the Fighting Storm

Helamakt is the Fighting Storm. Although he is a mediocre warrior with weapons, he uses his winds to fight for him instead. He has the Four Winds as followers: his swordthane is the Freezing Wind, his shieldthane is the Blinding Shadow, his spearthane is the Searing Bolt, and his backboy is the Falling Wind. Helamakt always has these four daimones as companions, but they are more powerful when he summons great storm clouds (in any season). Helamakt is also the Great Defender, for Orlanth gave him the Shield of Arran to hold. He himself is Orlanth's shieldthane.

Helamakt was one of the Thunder Brothers that fought at Thrinbarri. He was also at the Plundering of Aron, and there revealed the Sivin Event. When Aldryami ambushed the raiders Helamakt released Blinding Shadow, which blinded the elves for a moment. Then Searing Bolt leapt from the clouds and burnt up most of the ambushing army.

*Affinities:*

† **Combat** (Blow Down Foe, Catch Arrows on Shield, Cutting Wind Blast, Entangling Gust, Shield Attack)

Ⓔ **Storm Feats:** Call Snow, Killer Rain Gale.

*Secret:* **Fighting Storm** (Acts as an affinity with the following feats: Blinding Shadow, Falling Wind, Freezing Wind, and Searing Bolt. The hero can use the secret to augment his **Combat**, **Storm**, and **Wind** affinities.)

*Note:* Worshipers prefer to fight with magic instead of weapons, and so rarely increase Close Combat or Ranged Combat to a high level.

## ∞ Ohorlanth the Great Storm

Ohorlanth is the Great Storm, especially the good Thunderstorm that comes in from the northwest bearing the fertile rains of Spring. He blows wild or gentle, steady or erratic, but always in motion. When he was born, he grew so fast that he had to move out of his cradle in a minute, his house in an hour, and his stead in a day. He grew so large that he turned himself into the insubstantial wind so that he would not harm any of his kin. He breathes out storms with every breath.



Ohorlanth is the primary storm of Orlanth, his best-known form. Ohorlanth commands all of the other winds and storms; he is sometimes called King of the Umbroli or even just Umbrol. He knows the winds of all the seasons. People sacrifice to Ohorlanth to bring things back to normal



## THE SEVEN WINDS



Everyone knows the Four Fighting Storms, Orlanth's thanes who fight with him. Their defense is great, but they can be defeated. Once they defended the whole world, but now it is all they can do to defend their lord, Orlanth. The Lunars know that when they defeat these thanes with their false storms, the god will be weakened.

Everyone knows the Seven Storms, for they form the air around us. Their magic is great, but they can be defeated. Once they filled the whole world, but the Lunars have forced them into tiny prisons. Six storms have fallen to the evil sorcery of the Lunar Empire, and they have trapped the seventh inside Whitewall. The Lunars believe that when Whitewall falls so too does the last storm.

But the Lunars know only what they can know. The Primal Air moves inside and outside the world, beyond the perceptions of normal men. Everyone knows the Seven Storms, but when they fail then the Seven Winds will come to fill the void at last.

when winds strike out of season. At other times, people pray to Ohorlanth to send unseasonal winds to aid them.

Although he is always welcome at the Thunder Barracks, Ohorlanth has no permanent home of his own. He flies free in the Air of the Storm Realm, defending the borders, and travels into the Inner World in the proper season. He was one of the Thunder Brothers that fought at Thrinbarri.

*Affinities:*

⊗ **Thunderstorm** (Crushing Noise, Drenching Rain, Drive Storm, Storm Darkness, Terrifying Storm)

⊗ **Storm Feats:** Fertilizing Rain, Melt Ice, Overcome Other Storm.

*Secret: Thunderbolt* (Acts as a combat ability. It affects only targets against whom the devotee has successfully used his **Storm** or **Thunderstorm** affinity during the current contest, but does not take the normal Multiple Opponents penalty described in the Rules chapter of *Hero Wars*. In addition to contest results, any target reduced to 0 AP or below by this attack is rendered unconscious.)

### ✧ **Vingkot Victorious**

Vingkot was a great warrior who defended the land of Kerofinela against all who would plunder it or enslave his people. When the Dara Happans came to avenge the death of the Evil Emperor, Vingkot led his sons and warriors to meet them like a storm reaching into the north. Vingkot defeated army after army and plundered city after city. He returned home victorious only after he ensured that the Dara Happans would not return.

The Dara Happans have never learned their lesson, and time after time they try to invade the Heortling lands. Vingkot Victorious has remained popular throughout the ages. His worshippers fought against Nysalor's Golden Empire in the Dawn Age and the EWF in the Imperial Age. They also fought against the Lunar Empire when it invaded Tarsh and then Sartar, and the Lunars laughed to see the once-victorious god defeated. Vingkot's worshippers know, however, that he has lost battles in the past. This does not mean that he will lose the war, and they have erected secret shrines to the god in many places.

*Physical Skills:* Close Combat (Spear and Shield Fighting).

*Mental Skills:* Ambush, Know Dara Happan Tactics.

*Affinities:*

✧ **Fight Dara Happans** (Blunt Spears, Break Shield, Disrupt Enemy Line, Raise Courage, Resist Solar Magic, Shout of Victory)

⊗ **Storm Feats:** Block Sun with Clouds, Reaching Storm.

*Secret: Command Followers* (Acts as an integrated passion spirit giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's target number to any ability used in the course of commanding any follower who is sworn to the devotee.)

## ⚡ Yavor Lightning

Before his death, Yavor was one of the foremost warriors of the Fire Tribe, who called him the Great Fulguration. He wore bright silver armor and carried three spears, one in each hand plus a third that came from above. Twice Yavor cut off Umath's head. The first time Umath nearly extinguished Yavor, but the second time Yavor extinguished himself and thereby escaped unharmed. Yavor cut off Umath's head and made deadly darts out of his brain after Jagrekriand killed the old god.

During the Gods War, Orlanth at last came face to face with Yavor. After a long struggle he disarmed Yavor, cut his head off, and imprisoned his parts as the lightning weapons. These famous weapons are among the most powerful that the Storm Tribe possesses: the spear Gutburner, the javelin Treeburner, and the Stormspear bolt of power that sears through the clouds and air without touching the ground at all.

Orlanth left in the Darkness and Elmal became chieftain. Once, when the clan was in danger, Elmal heard a voice whispering in his ear. He found the head of Yavor hidden behind a scratched piece of wood. Elmal saw the rune on Yavor's forehead and knew him to be a kinsman. He took Yavor's advice and again saved the stead from disaster. Because Yavor's counsel had been true, Elmal gave him his arms back, since their bearers were all dead. Yavor made peace with Orlanth at the Dawn, and is one of the Thunder Brothers.

*Affinities:*

⚡ **Lightning** (Ball Lightning, Blinding Flash, Dodge Thrown Weapon, Lightning Fast Strike,, Shatter Tree, Throw Lightning Javelin)

*Secret: Ride the Lightning* (The devotee can toss a lightning javelin and ride it to his target, as long as it is within normal throwing range. He can then use 1/4 his secret's ability rating as a bonus to any appropriate physical ability used during an ensuing contest.)

## Special Orlanth Aspects

### ⚡ Orlanthanandrin, Orlanth the Law Maker

At first there was only Umath's Law: "No one can make you do anything." This law could not resolve disputes, and the gods were always fighting to see who would triumph. Orlanth found a better way for people to live together by making first hospitality, then clans, then tribes, and finally the great Storm Kingdom. He made many laws, but as more laws were made it became harder to resolve disputes, since each side could claim a right according to one or another of Orlanth's laws.

Orlanth first stated the laws when he made the world, and later stated each law that resulted from one of his great deeds. He called himself Orlanthanandrin when he created these Cosmic Laws. As his responsibilities grew he handed off the task of repeating the laws to others, but Orlanth remains the source and sole speaker of the divine laws that govern the universe.

### Layers of Law

Successive generations have had to restate the laws for new conditions, resulting in several layers of laws. The most universal are Heort's Laws, as Andrin spoke them. They are the customary laws that govern the relationships between kinsmen, and so make up the law of bloodlines and clans. Every clan has a lawspeaker who is responsible for memorizing these laws and remembering the decisions of cases based upon them.

Vingkot's Laws are broader than Heort's Laws. They govern relationships between all Orlanathi, even if they are not kinsmen, and so are the laws of tribes. Vingkot spoke these laws when he was High King of the Storm Tribe, and Orlanth later affirmed each law his son had made. When the first dispute between Vingkot's Laws came to blows at Arrowmound, Orlanth taught Jarani how to use the lawstaff to interpret them correctly. Every tribe has a lawspeaker who is responsible for memorizing these laws and remembering the decisions of cases based upon them.

Orlanthanandrin's Laws are the cosmic laws of the universe. No human studies them to settle lawsuits or insults; he has no initiates or devotees, and teaches no magic. Nonetheless, the Heortlings sacrifice to him at every law court and every moot, for he is Orlanth's Justice.

## ☪ Orlanthdovar, Orlanth the Faithful

*Ever thine, in the peace of your arms, in the love of your bosom and the comfort of your womb I will rest when I can, sweet Green Woman, between battles for justice and peace, between fear and the dying of love for the earth, which is my curse and my blessing and the way of my life.*

— Orlanth's Pledge to Ernalda

As a youth, Orlanth took fathered many children. He never stayed around for long, however, for he was young and full of lust and wanderlust. Although he later found and accepted some of these children, in those days he did not see them born, and so they did not have a place in his heart.

It was only much later, after Orlanth rescued Ernalda from the Emperor and then married her, that he knew the love of family. He held his first child of marriage in his arms, and the innocence of the baby Barntar touched him to the core of his being. He saw beyond love to devotion, the true love that only a parent can know for their child. On that day he named himself Orlanthdovar, Orlanth the Faithful, and swore that he would never abandon his family. Even while outlawed he returned to be with his wife and kiss each of his sleeping children before reluctantly sneaking away again.

Orlanthdovar is the head of the Storm Family, the faithful husband and devoted father. No man initiates or devotes himself to Orlanthdovar alone, but he has a small shrine in every family's home. Men invoke him when they take a Wife or Love-wife with marriage vows of equal status (see pg. 20) and when his children are born. Orlanthdovar provides no magic to his worshippers, but families that ignore his sacrifices are unhappy ones, filled with rancor and sadness.

## ✠ Orlanth Lightbringer

When the world was falling apart, Orlanth understood his part. He recognized the errors that he had made, and resolved to correct them and restore the cosmos. The Heortlings call him Lifebringer and Lightbringer, because his actions returned Life and Light to the World.

Everyone tells the story of Orlanth's quest at Sacred Time. Everyone accompanies him on the Westfaring as he meets the other Lightbringers. Everyone aids him during his battles and negotiations. Everyone sees the Gates of Dusk and passes beyond them. Everyone goes to the Land of the Dead and the Emperor's Cold Court. Everyone is tested by the Emperor and the 294 judges, and feels the burning of the Requirement of Proof. Everyone comes to terms with the Emperor, recovers the Grand Order, and leads the joyous gods and goddesses back to life.

No one initiates or devotes to Orlanth Lightbringer, for he gives no specific magic. Few men perform the full Lightbringers' Quest, because its actions change the world forever. The original Lightbringers conquered Death to bring the dead gods back to life. In the Dawn Age, Harmast quested to find a force to counter Gbaji, and again to find a force to counter Arkat.

Such powerful heroquesting is rare. All who perform the Lightbringers' Quest prepare themselves for Orlanth's encounters and tests, but few are able to prepare themselves for their own. A lightbringer encounters everyone that he has harmed in life, is confronted by his personal enemies, and faces his own failures. No one knows how many heroes have failed the quest, but even the known failures greatly outnumber those who have succeeded at the entire quest.

The result of each Lightbringers' Quest is unique. The hero has no control over who or what he returns with. As was the case with Arkat, sometimes the solution is as bad as the problem itself.

## ⚔ Orlanth Rex

Orlanth has always fought dragons and won, even when they defeated him using trickery. In the Imperial age, one of Orlanth's worshippers tricked him into swallowing a dragon seed that devoured his inner self. Obduran the Traitor then persuaded the Heortling priests to betray their gods. This allowed the dragons to take control of the world.

Alakoring was an Orlanthe hero from the far land of Ralios. He killed many dragons, including Drang the Diamond Storm Dragon. He freed Orlanth of the parasitic Inner Dragon. The Inner Dragon ate its way out, and Alakoring's power saved the god from another imprisonment. He thus freed his people from the priests, who were worshippers of the great Dragon Secret.

Alakoring taught his secrets to the tribes. He instituted a new kingship rite that prevented the priests from betraying Orlanth again. Afterwards, the cult of Orlanth Rex spread throughout the Heortling lands.

Only an elected tribal king can join the cult of Orlanth Rex. The Rex Kingship rites occasionally replace the Dar rites completely, but usually they are additional, with their expenses absorbed by the tribe. Members of a Rex King's inner ring may join Orlanth Rex, but they receive only their status of thane from this worship, and may not learn the Orlanth Rex magic.

*Entry Requirements:* Must be crowned a tribal king using the Alakoring rites.

*Mental Abilities:* Find Weakness in Argument, Intimidate Priest.

*Affinities:*

**W Authority** (Command Orlanth Worshipper, Overawe Crowd, Regal Aura, Sense Dishonor, Stop Orlanth Magic, Weaken Priestly Authority)

*Secret: Command Storm Tribe* (Acts as an integrated passion spirit, giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's target number to any ability used in ordering any theistic storm worshipper to perform a task.)

### **The Rex Statue**

Orlanth Rex requires his worshippers to have a statue of him and his wife. They are usually about human size, and made of wood, though some are made of stone. A Rex priest must bless the statues, so that Orlanth and Ernalda awaken inside them.

Every tribe or kingdom that uses the Rex Kingship rites has a small temple building to protect these statues. These temples are always at the place that the people meet to elect and recognize their king, give him his torc, and raise the thunder of the *wapentake*. Most Rex temple buildings are only big enough to cover the statues of Orlanth the King and Ernalda the Queen. They have doors that open to an open area where worshippers gather. The fire altar, at ground level and about fifteen feet wide, stands in front of the temple doors.

Sacrifices to Orlanth Rex are of black bulls and images made of fertile barley stalks. As usual, worshippers burn the bones and fat on the sacred fire to the right of the statue, and cook the meat on Ernalda's fire to the left.

Large temples spacious enough to hold worshippers inside are rare, found only in Boldhome, Alda-chur, and distant Pavis. Before the Lunar conquest, some cities in Tarsh also maintained such temples. All are large enough to include about a hundred people in the ceremonies. Even those temples, however, have roofs that are mostly open to the sky.

## Subservient Cults

### Agents of Reprisal

Orlanth has only two agents of reprisal that he sends to punish his initiates and devotees specifically. Other agents of reprisal (see pp. 81-85) often accompany them, depending on the worshipper's specific crimes.

### Manmolaning (Breath Stealer)

*Ages:* All.

*Habitat:* Storm Realm (God World).

Manmolanings are minor daimones that manifest as small whirlwinds and dust devils. They plague worshippers of Orlanth who fail to uphold his Six Virtues, making it difficult for them to breathe, exert themselves, or use magic.

#### Manmolaning

*Weapons and Armor:* None.

*Significant Abilities:* None.

*Innate Magical Abilities:* Steal Breath 20.

*Tactics:* A manmolaning attacks by engulfing its victim in an invisible whirlwind. As long as it remains, the victim will have difficulty breathing properly. This affects his concentration and ability to perform physical activity. In game terms, the daimon affects the hero as if it were a passion spirit (see the Animism chapter of **Hero Wars**). Thus, a victim engulfed by a manmolaning with Steal Breath 10 $\omega$  suffers a -2 modifier (1/10 the manmolaning's ability rating) to any ability that requires concentration or physical exertion.

### Ohorakoring (Storm Fury)

*Ages:* Storm Age, Darkness Age.

*Habitat:* Storm Realm (God World).

Ohorakorings are hideous bat-winged daimones that punish Orlanth rulers who abuse their power. They also pursue any god-talker or priest who vows obedience to an Orlanth Rex king and then disobeys his commands. They attack one time per offense, with each additional offense (no matter what reparations were made previously) resulting in a more powerful enforcer coming. If the hero drives off an ohorakoring it returns to the Storm Realm, and a more powerful daimon will soon arrive to punish him.

#### Ohorakoring

*Weapons and Armor:* None.

*Significant Abilities:* None.

*Innate Magical Abilities:* Black Breath 5 $\omega$ .

*Tactics:* Ohorakorings blow their black breath onto their victim. Only magic can defend against this attack, which can result in wounds or even death. Additionally, the black breath chills the soul of the worshipper. Each time the ohorakoring receives a victory during the contest, the worshipper takes a -1 penalty when using any magic. The penalty is cumulative, and remains until the worshipper makes proper restitution.



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
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# Biographies

## John Hughes

John Hughes is an anthropologist by training, a mythologist by instinct, and an Orlanthe by passion and thickness of skull. He dwells with his wife Philippa in the leafy suburbs of Canberra, Australia. John has been active in the Glorantha and Australian roleplaying communities for nearly twenty years. He contributes to *Tales of the Reaching Moon* and other Gloranthan magazines, and can often be found asking the wrong sorts of questions on the internet Glorantha Digest. Despite his long involvement with the Lozenge, John is an ardent tealophile. He has silver grey hair and quite likes pointy suede boots.

## Robin D. Laws

Robin D. Laws has been designing games for a living since 1993. His credits include the hit roleplaying game *Feng Shui*, the *Over the Edge* novel *Pierced Heart, Pantheon and Other Roleplaying Games*, and co-designer credits for the trading card game *Shadowfist*. Robin is the author of over a dozen roleplaying sourcebooks and adventures, and a contributor to many more. His publishers include Wizards of the Coast, FASA, Pinnacle, Mayfair, and Steve Jackson Games. Robin also served as a member of the design team for another exciting Glorantha project, the computer game *King of Dragon Pass* from A-Sharp. Robin lives in Toronto, well-known as the best city in the world, with his lovely wife Valerie. In his secret identity, he indulges his interest in cinema and continues to accumulate an alarming number of CDs.

## Roderick Robertson

Roderick is a native Californian who never learned to drive. He is married, with many pets. He has a BA in Medieval Studies, and has worked in libraries and as a computer programmer, but left the corporate world in 1999 to pursue a lucrative career in the roleplaying industry. He is line developer for the *Pendragon* roleplaying game, as well as acquisitions editor for *Hero Wars*. He recently sold his home in Silicon Valley to move back to the Sierra Foothills, building a house on the family ranch and taking care of his mother.

## Greg Stafford

Greg Stafford discovered Glorantha in 1966 and began a life-long creative effort to explore and publish the world. In 1974 he began his first company, Chaosium. He published the first Gloranthan game the next year, *White Bear and Red Moon*, followed in 1977 by *Nomad Gods*. In 1978 *RuneQuest* was published, a revolutionary and popular roleplaying game based upon Glorantha. Since then he has contributed to dozens of supplements and hundreds of articles. Glorantha and *Hero Wars* continue his commitment to Glorantha.

Greg is also game designer, developer, and author of *Pendragon*, the award-winning game on Arthurian Roleplaying and its supplements; five other board games, and another six roleplaying games and books. Greg is also one of the game designers for *King of Dragon Pass* from A Sharp.

Greg was born in 1948, is married to Suzanne Courteau, and has three children: Noah, Alisha and Jason. He is currently employed by Issaries, Inc. which he founded in 1998.



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