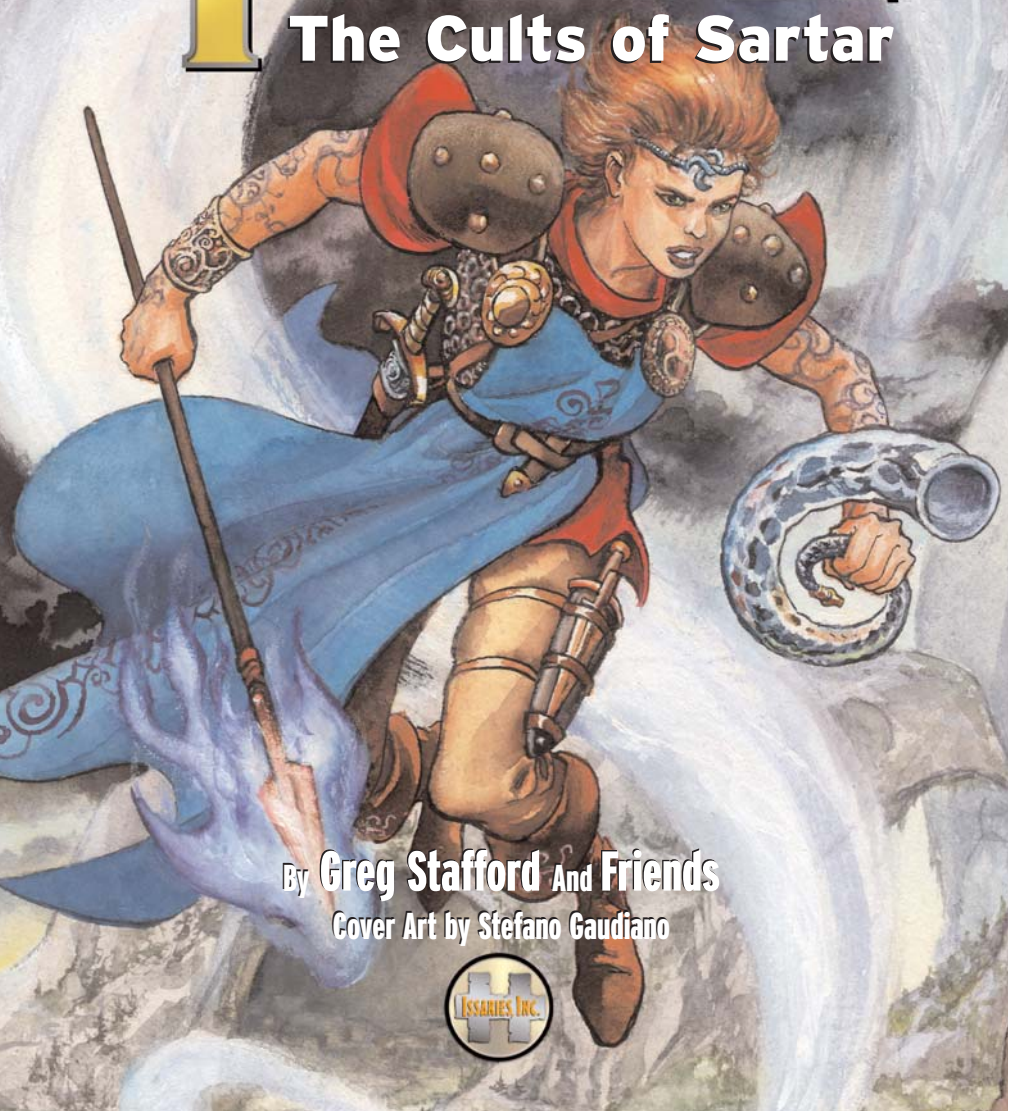


Hero Wars

ISS 1310

STORM TRIBE

The Cults of Sartar



By **Greg Stafford** And Friends

Cover Art by Stefano Gaudiano





STORM TRIBE



Hero Wars



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The Cults of Sartar

By Greg Stafford and Friends

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*Lhankor Mhy Blesses the Readers
of This Book and Blinds Any Who
Would Misuse Its Sacred Secrets.*



Credits and Thanks

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Special thanks to Jeff Kyer, who stepped in at the last moment to plug leaks and fill holes in the book.

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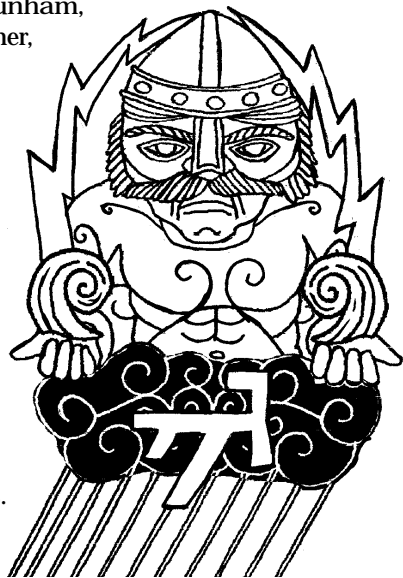
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Glorantha Trading Association

Issaries salutes the volunteers of the Glorantha Trading Association, whose contributions made this book possible. For their generosity, we ask that the Thunder Brothers fight at their side each day and the Weaver Women welcome them home each night.

Heroes

Rex Andrew Bean, *The Book of Drastic Resolutions*, The Clan Coriales, Andrew Cowie, David Dunham, Peter Erickson, Hanataka the Stormer, Andre Jarosch, Andrew Joelson, Christopher Johnson, Richard Katsaros, Hiroto Kawakami, Andrew Kelly, Mark Leymaster of Grammarye, Walter Manbeck, Yoko "Anesan" Miyamoto, Hayato Niitsuma, Roderick Robertson, Randy Tomaszewski, Michael Trout, Bob Vesterman, Nils Weinander, Murase Yoshiyuki, Anonymous.



Runemasters

Reinier Dobbelmann, Anonymous.

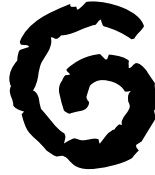
Initiates

Wulf Corbett, Allyn Glosser, Steve Lieb, Anonymous.

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We Are All Orlanthi

*Dead the world, 'til Umath the Free,
Broke Emperor's curse and moved the world.
Umathsons and stalwart liegemen set the world in its ways.
Now all feel the world's winds at their backs.*

Thunder Rebels provides “all” the information needed to play Orlanthi barbarians in **Hero Wars**. The “Orlanthi All” accounts for about 85% of Heortlings. **Storm Tribe** is about the other 15%, those “one in seven or so” who do not conform to the norm of Heortling society:

- Men and women who do not worship Orlanth and Ernalda.
- Men who do not live by plowing, harvesting, fishing, or herding.
- Women who do not live by raising children, harvesting, or husbanding animals.
- Women and men who do not follow normal gender roles.

The Cults of Sartar

Storm Tribe details eleven important and widespread Heortling deities and magic keywords for less important deities and heroes. Readers should note that many of the differences between write-ups are intentional. We cannot hope to provide every detail of every cult, and instead have focused on different facets of each write-up. For example:

- The Elmal cult lists feats available at specific holy places (see pg. 51). Such local feats are found in many Heortling cults, not just Elmal's.
- The Humakt cult provides sample gifts and geases (see pp. 98-99), but some temples, subcults, or hero cults may offer or require others. Worshipers of other gods might obtain similar gifts and geases on heroquests, at holy places, or by joining special subcults or hero cults.
- Vinga's myths show the origin of several feats (see pg. 168), but every feat available from every god has a myth behind it. Devotees travel to the Other Side and participate in these myths. If they are successful and do the things that the god did, they learn the feat.

☽ The Lightbringers

When Orlanth slew the Evil Emperor, he freed the world and brought about the Storm Tribe Age. When Chaos broke through into Glorantha, however, Orlanth repented of his act. He gathered or met a group of six other gods, and together they traveled into the Underworld to bring life back to the dead world. The Lightbringers descended into the Land of the Dead. They suffered terribly, and each failed at a key moment, but finally they atoned for their errors and freed the Sun, Voria, and the other deities of life. Those other gods are Lhankor Mhy, the Sage; Issaries, the Guide; Chalana Arroy, the Healer; Flesh Man, the terrified mortal; and Eurmál, the slippery Trickster. The Seventh is called Ginna Jar, who some say was the *wyter* of the group, the force that linked them to each other and to those left behind who were pledged to help them.

Few Heortlings are active Lightbringers, for the full quest is difficult and dangerous. Each deity has a Lightbringer subcult or aspect that worshippers can join, generally only when they need these special questing powers. These subcults are Downboy (pg. 70), Issaries the Guide (pg. 119), and Orlanth Lightbringer (*Thunder Rebels*, pg. 245). Chalana Arroy and Lhankor Mhy have Lightbringer subcults not described in this book, and Flesh Man and Ginna Jar are not worshipped deities.

Normally, worshippers of any of these deities greet each other as Lightbringer, even if neither of the parties has ever undergone the quest or joined one of the subcults. When one worshipper is an active Lightbringer, however, they can request aid from another Lightbringer. Even if that worshipper has no inclination to go heroquesting, he or she must aid the quester or lose all of their magic. They need not join the Lightbringer on their quest, but if they do not then they must provide something of equal value.



The Lightbringer's Summons

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

After we ate, the healer continued her ritual. I grew chill as she spoke a certain poem, and NorayEEP watched me with alarm.

*Chaos stalks my world.
Broos have bruised me, the Hand has pawed me.
I have taken up the impossible path,
And seek those who must aid my task.
You are not the first of my friends.
Others walked with me to Heal.
The Devil took them, they died.
I failed to save them, Chaos grows.*

This is the Lightbringer's Summons that all must answer or lose the faith of their god. The healer was telling me that she had seen the foe and failed, that she was under geas to return and fight it.

I explained it to NorayEEP. She said, "I have no vows to hunt Chaos. You are my master and owner, but even that cannot overcome my fears. I am no magical warrior or blessed healer."

"Nor I," I said.

Eye-whisper said he detected the ragged ghost of Alain, Sword of Humakt, plaguing the consciousness of the healer. I recalled that that Humakti had prepared an expedition against broos active in Sog's Ruins. The mere thought of a foe that could make a Humakti remain as an undead did chill me to my soul.

When so filled with fear, I always ask Issaries. He answered, saying that the path to herodom lay in Sog's Ruins. Must I go? No, heroquesting for me was voluntary, not compulsory.

But still I was obliged to answer the cult demands that I take my part on a Lightbringer's expedition. A dilemma indeed.

"What price can I pay," I asked, "to fill my spot with something greater?"

"Only god things are better than a Lightbringer with a brave heart," she said. "How could anyone replace your skills?"

"What about a truestone?" I asked.

"An excellent vessel, Goldentongue, but who will fill it?" The question was rhetorical, of course.

Thus, I bought my way out of a heroquest, sending instead a spell-laden stone with all my magic.

The priestess seemed pleased with this trade. I did not feel cheated, for my life path did not lie upon the hero's trail of impossible deeds. But I was poorer, and had even less chance to decently outfit myself in Pavis.



The Making of the Storm Tribe

When Orlanth's marriage to Ernalda was new, he spent much time enjoying the sweet secrets of his bride. At length, however, he grew restless, and began to think again of his enemy the Emperor, who had shamed him and deprived him of his rightful influence in the world. Ernalda saw that he was turbulent inside, and said to him, "You will never beat the Emperor by yourself, for when you fight the Emperor you also fight his tribe, the Fire Tribe. If you really want something to rival what the Emperor has, you must make a new thing, like the Fire Tribe, but better."

Ernalda's words troubled Orlanth, and he walked the world and let them rattle around inside him. The Doubting Wheel rolled towards him, and said that Orlanth should not make a tribe. "If you put yourself above all others, you will be just as bad as the Emperor. You will take freedom from the people, and make unjust decrees. People will expect you to tell them what to do, and in so doing they will steal your own freedom."

Orlanth captured the Doubting Wheel in a great net, and took it home to Ernalda, who cooked it up in a soup until it was small and silver. "It is nothing to worry about now," she said. "Take it and use it to make the tribe I told you about."

Orlanth left again and wandered until he found his brother Yinkin, who was chieftain of the Cat Clan. Yinkin said, "My clan is badly pressed by the Plant Tribe, which fights us for our hunting ground." So Orlanth fought Rustling Veins and the Sharp Green, and bested them. He gave the small silver thing to Yinkin and said, "Now you must join my Storm Tribe." Yinkin agreed to make the Cat Clan part of the Storm Tribe, so long as this new tribe had a way of remembering its good laws.

Orlanth searched for some good laws, and found the Knowing God, who was head of the Marks On Bark Clan. The Stone Tribe had trapped him inside a great cube because he tried to make new knowledge about them, and they hated new things. Orlanth ruined the cube by creating a new poem, which confused it so that it fell apart. Orlanth gave the Knowing God one of Yinkin's old claws, and said, "Now you must join my Storm Tribe, and help us remember our good laws." The Knowing God agreed to make the Marks-on-Bark Clan part of the Storm Tribe, so long as this new tribe had fierce warriors.

So Orlanth looked for fierce warriors, and found his brother Vadrus, who was boss of the Hurt-Everything-Clan. Vadrus wanted to go off to fight the Blue Tribe, and wouldn't listen to Orlanth's plan. So Orlanth said they should arm-wrestle instead. He defeated Vadrus, and gave Vadrus a lock of the Knowing God's beard, saying "Now you must join my Storm Tribe." Vadrus said that the Hurt-Everything-Clan would join the Storm Tribe, but not if Yinkin's Cat Clan

were part of it. "Yinkin scratched me, and I will not attend a moot if he is there," Vadrus said. Orlanth said nothing about Yinkin and went on his way.

Orlanth kept collecting clans. The Talking God agreed to make his Traveling Clan part of the Storm Tribe, so long as it had many cows to trade with. So Orlanth sought out Uralda, who agreed that the Cow Clan should join the Storm Tribe, so long as her clan-mates had enough grain. Orlanth found Esra, who said that the Green Grain Clan would join, but not if the Traveling Clan were part of the tribe, because the Traveling Clan was too anxious to share her with outsiders.

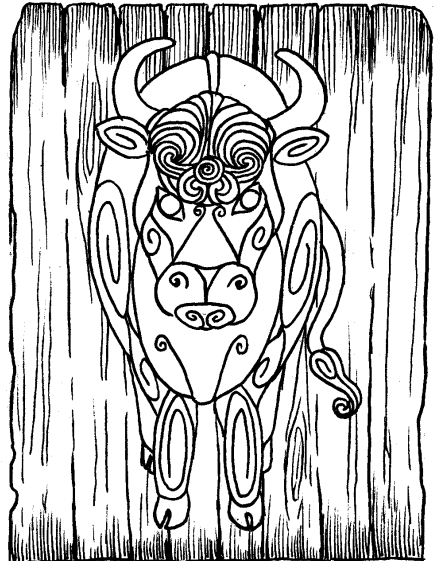
Orlanth collected other clans on his journeys. Some of them we remember today. Others later left the tribe or caused trouble, just like Vadrus' Hurt-Everything-Clan. And some we have forgotten completely.

Orlanth brought them together at one big moot, and soon everyone was fighting and blaming him. "You said Yinkin would not be here!" Vadrus cried. "I will not moot with the Talking God," said Esra angrily. Orlanth was about to fight all of them right then and there, but then Ernalda brought him items of tribal regalia.

She brought him the Chest of Torcs, with which he could gift the clan leaders. She brought the Hall of Understanding, where people could settle their differences by talking them out. She gave him the Crown of Authority, which made people respect his sacral powers and pledge allegiance to him. Most of the clans agreed to make the tribe, but there were still some who were stubborn.

Then warriors from the Night Tribe came and attacked the quarrelling clans, and everyone banded together to fight the hungry enemies. They saw that the night warriors could have destroyed any one clan, but could not destroy all of the clans massed together. The last of the troublemakers settled down and named Orlanth king, and so he made the Storm Ring to govern the new tribe.

Later, he asked Ernalda how the Night Tribe had known to come to the big moot. His bountiful wife just smiled, and Orlanth thought about something else instead.



The Jonstown Compendium

The Jonstown Compendium is a series of books kept in the Lhankor Mhy temple in Jonstown, Sartar. It consists of scraps of material that various scribes have thought worth recording over the years. These scraps have been culled from the minds of great philosophers, collected from the fantastic memories of tribal skalds and lawspeakers, and translated from various odd scrolls and ancient parchments. Each entry is gathered and listed, one after the other, without order, meaning, or editorial labor.

Each entry begins with a number. Sometimes a title of sorts begins an entry, wherein the author or redactor identifies himself. Then follows the text, with individual entries being of any length. One entire volume contains a single entry over 250 pages in length, but most list hundreds of pieces of information.

We have chosen to provide a selection from various volumes of the Jonstown Compendium, selecting the entries primarily for their relevance to other sections of this book. No volume of the Compendium is this focused in its presentation. Most contain amazing amounts of dross and trivial information among the bits of useful knowledge. Such is the habit of the sages of Lhankor Mhy, to value all knowledge, no matter how obscure.

The first selection is below, and the others appear on pages 18, 73, 89, 118, 129, 137, 177, 200, 236, 238, and 241.

Jonstown Compendium #9,899

The Battle of Dura, Karo, and Vanda is where Heortling men go to learn the Fight Elements magic of Daylanus. It takes place on the northern border of the Vingkotling lands.

In the Middle Storm Tribe Age, when Orlanth was strong and expanding, Vingkot assembled a war band to accompany him north to fight the Dara Happans. Although he was king of the tribe and a great warrior, he named Daylanus the Conquering Storm as the Warband Leader, because he could blow out any fire.

The Dara Happan response to this quest is always hard to judge, and is often variable. Because of this, it is a dangerous quest. Command skills are of utmost importance, plotted against the weather, supplies, enemy foes, surprise attacks, and so on. Success or failure at the Watchpost of the Southern Star (an ancient Exchange Site) sends raiders to one of the three battles. However, "duro, kara, and vanda" means "win, draw, and lose," and no quester knows which battle he is at until after the fight has ended.



Become the Thunder!

New Rules and Occupations

*Life is for living, feel to your fullest.
Challenge the challengers, carve out your place.
Faithful to friends, relentless to foes,
Loving to kin, fulfilling your wyrd.*

Disciples

A **disciple** is a worshipper whose connection to his god is complete. He spends 90% of his time doing the god's work, and is as close to a god as a mortal can be. Not all cults support disciples, and disciples of any god are rare. There are probably fewer than five disciples of any one god in Dragon Pass. The Hero Wars are bringing out many more disciples than have been seen in any other age of Glorantha.

Storm Tribe provides Wind Lords as an example of disciples. Narrators should provide similar detail for the disciples of other deities.

During Play

Players who wish to turn their character towards discipleship may only do so with their narrator's approval. He must know the secret of his cult or subcult (as appropriate), and usually must have at least three other appropriate abilities at 1W2. Appropriate abilities are those listed in the cult keywords; depending on the cult, this may include his occupational keyword as well. He must have a cult Virtue at 1W2 or greater. Finally, he must have a relationship of 10W with his supporters, and must convince his temple to support him in all ways, for he has no time to support himself. The temple authorities have a resistance of 10W3 or more to the request for support. Many cults have additional requirements.

The Otherworld will intrude on the hero, who will undergo voluntary and involuntary heroquests. He will also face challenges from ritual enemies during his ascension. This is both his god testing him and his god's enemies trying to prevent his ascension. A successful hero's final quest brings him to his god, who acknowledges him as a disciple.



The character pays 3 hero points to transfer his ability rating from *Devotee of [God]* to *Disciple of [God]*. A disciple of Orlanth, Ernalda, or another great god becomes a disciple of a specific aspect of that deity, not of the great deity itself. Thus, Wind Lords are devotees of Orlanth Adventurous, not just Orlanth. The new disciple loses all other relationship abilities (including *Worship Storm Pantheon*) except for his relationship to his supporters.

Obligations and Disadvantages

The disciple spends 90% of his time and energy emulating his god; the only time remaining is the personal time needed to eat, rest, and the like. He must travel and act as his god directs him to; failure to do so is tantamount to defying the god. These actions will always be appropriate to the god — fighting enemies for Humakt, healing people in need for Chalana Arroy, etc. Most disciples have ritual requirements that they must perform when they meet representatives of certain gods.

A disciple may never worship or use the magic of other gods, not even aspects of the same god. He can never leave the service of his god, except by joining his deity forever in the Otherworld.

He must follow the god's ethics and morals, as expressed in his cult's virtues. If he fails to do so, the god may withhold aid, make magic harder to perform, send an agent of reprisal, or even remove his patronage entirely until the disciple makes amends.

Benefits

The disciple no longer needs to know individual feats (although he retains knowledge of any he does know). He may use the affinities of the god directly with no improvisational modifier, but he is restricted to direct application of those affinities. The narrator may prohibit use of the magic that falls outside the purview of the god.

The disciple may learn any affinity from any subcult of his god or aspect at normal HP cost, with no time or resource requirements (and thus he may learn as many of these affinities as he wishes). He must still travel to an appropriate temple or holy place of the subcult to learn its magic. Disciples always receive a divine companion (see pg. 26) if they do not already have one.

As part of his acceptance, the new disciple receives a gift from his god, which can be an ability, item, or even just secret knowledge. This gift relates to a particular function or deed, and usually manifests as a +5 bonus to certain situations or actions, rituals, and heroquests. The disciple must usually perform a ceremony to invoke this gift, or perform the heroquest exactly as his god did — winning when his god won, losing when his god lost, and making the same decisions that his god did.

✧ Wind Lords

Disciples of Orlanth Adventurous

Wind Lords are disciples of Orlanth Adventurous. They embody the martial and moving aspect of the god, and rarely stay in one place. They emulate Orlanth's early adventures, and spend their time fighting, raiding, and loving.

No mortal can command a Wind Lord, and they may not hold positions where someone might try to command them. Their duties preclude their assumption of the rank of chieftain or king, for they must always be free to follow the winds and move with the storm. They may not serve on the inner ring of their clan or tribe because of the need to be free of such ties, but they may serve as an advisor to the leader of a clan, tribe, or kingdom.

Requirements

To become a Wind Lord, a hero must know the secret of his subcult (and thus must have at least three Orlanth Adventurous affinities at or above 1W2). He must embody all of the Virtues of Great Orlanth and Orlanth Adventurous, and must have a rating of 1W2 or better in at least one of them. He must have at least three other abilities at or above 1W2. These abilities must all come from his aspect or subcult keyword or from the Warrior, Champion, Warband Leader, or Weaponthane keywords (as appropriate).

The candidate must lead a band of like-minded heroes and gain the support of an Orlanth temple. His preparatory heroquests take him against Orlanth's traditional enemies, including the Evil Emperor, the dragons, and the Water and Darkness Tribes. He must also perform a complete Lightbringer's Quest. His final quest is the Repentance Quest, where he must truly repent of a previous deed and work to reverse its effects.

Obligations

Wind Lords are examples for all men to follow. They must lead their band against all foes of the Storm Tribe,



Orlanth Adventurous



aid friends and challenge enemies, and in general do the things that Orlanth Adventurous did. They may be married, but few women will put up with a Wind Lord's constant absences and affairs, and a man's attainment of this status is grounds for divorce.

Wind Lords have many ritual requirements that they must adhere to. When meeting a priest or disciple of Yelm, Yelmalio, or any related solar deity, the disciple must challenge them to a contest by saying the following verse:

*Wandering Sun, Jealous Uncle,
I have a new Toy here, see it?
Test me, Twice if you can.
A treasure for each right answer.*

The two then engage in a contest, often of riddles or martial prowess. The loser of the contest must give a treasure to his opponent for each victory. Protocol demands that each participant suggest a contest. Solar Worshipers in Dragon Pass and the nearby lands know and understand this rite, but those from Dara Happa often do not. If an opponent fails to respond with an appropriate challenge, the Wind Lord may treat him as a foe and attack him without other provocation.

Disciples must be solicitous and gentle with the Earth, their wife and companion. Upon meeting a priestess of the Earth, the disciple must offer to fight on her behalf:

*Sweet Green Woman, Look at me!
I am come, the Conqueror!
None can stand before me.
I am yours, what Dark shall I fight?*

The priestess may then order the disciple to fight any darkness being or force that has troubled her in the last week. If she does so, the disciple may call upon her primary powers at her next rites.

As one who has passed his own Lightbringer's Quest, the Wind Lord must greet Lightbringer priests and disciples as friends. He must aid them if they request it, providing food, drink, or healing as he is able. Tricksters often place themselves under a disciple's protection (and abuse it). The ritual greeting upon meeting another Lightbringer is:

*Good greetings in ill times, friend!
No person can risk the world alone.
Join others you can share with,
They need not be like you.*

Chaos is Orlanth's foulest foe, and can never be bargained with or ignored. Wind Lords challenge beings such as broo and walktapi (see

Anaxial's Roster, pp. 172-187) with the following verse, even if the Chaos creature obviously cannot understand it:

Foul slime, curse of existence, begone!

Turn your back and flee from me.

I will kill you, you are evil.

Lie and whimper before me.

Those that do lie at his feet and beg for their life may be spared, but usually are killed with no stain on the disciple's honor. The disciple must be fight and slay any that defy him. He is not required to fight Chaos that is clearly too powerful, but must return with reinforcements to fight it as soon as possible. Many disciples treat all Lunars as chaotic, even those that are not personally tainted by Chaos.

Benefits

Wind Lords have the immense benefit of accomplishing dangerous tasks for their god. They are subjects of awe, admiration, and the ballads of the skalds. All Orlanthe treat them with respect, and clans are obligated to provide them food and shelter.

Wind Lords may learn the affinity of any Orlanthe Adventurous subcult without any time commitment, simply by paying the normal Hero Point cost. They must give up all membership in and magic gained from subcults of other Orlanthe aspects.

A new Wind Lord receives a divine companion if he does not already have one. This is usually either an alynx or the awakening of his favored sword's daimon soul. If his sword awakens, it may speak with the Wind Lord telepathically as long as he is holding or carrying the sword. An awakened alynx can speak, but only rarely will its communications be understandable by any except the Wind Lord.

Wind Lords gain a bonus of +5 in the ritual situations described above. The bonus does not apply in routine encounters (such as when meeting a solar priest on a road). It applies only when the situation occurs in a ritual or heroquest setting (such as when he meets a solar priest in the proper station of a heroquest). The narrator should decide if the bonus applies in a given instance.

Storm Lords

Orlanthe Thunderous also has disciples, called Storm Lords. They are similar to Wind Lords, with nearly identical requirements and benefits, but with somewhat different obligations. They are more concerned with the weather, commanding the forces of storm, and defending and nurturing the earth. In Sartar, most gather at the Old Wind Temple.



Shared Subcults

Discerning readers may notice some unusual subcults in this book. *Storm Tribe* is supposed to be about the cults other than Orlanth and Ernalda, yet we find some of their subcults in it. These shared subcults bridge two or more cults, and so followers of the same minor deity worship within multiple cults. Most of these shared subcults are uncommon, and the rest are rare. They include:

- Ana Gor, subcult of Esrola, Babeester Gor, Humakt, Maran, and Ty Kora Tek (see pg. 192).
- Drogarsi, subcult of Orlanth Adventurous and Donandar (see pg. 212).
- Harst, subcult of Orlanth Allfather and Issaries (see pg. 117).
- Helamakt, subcult of Orlanth Thunderous and Heler (see pg. 82).
- Minlister, subcult of Ernalda and Orlanth (see pg. 222).
- Nevala, subcult of Esrola and Heler (see pg. 83).
- The Red Woman, subcult of Ernalda and Vinga (see pg. 175).
- Redalda, subcult of Ernalda Allmother and Elmal (see pg. 228).
- Rigsdal, subcult of Orlanth Allfather, Elmal, and Humakt (see pg. 230).
- Skovari, subcult of Ernalda Allmother and Donandar (see pg. 213).

These shared subcults sometimes have different membership requirements. For example, both men and women can join any of the Donandar subcults, but the Orlanth and Ernalda versions restrict membership by gender. In addition, some people worship Redalda or Rigsdal as their primary cult, not as a subcult of another deity. None of these differences violates the Heortlings' sense of mythology or social order.

The existence of shared subcults affects magic in two ways. First, devotees of a subcult often gain special feats in one or both god or aspect's affinities. These feats never carry over to the other deity. Thus, devotees of Drogarsi within Orlanth's cult learn the special **Movement** feats of Sing While Running and Tireless Dance. A devotee of Drogarsi within Donandar's cult does not learn the **Movement** affinity, and may not use these special feats.

Shared subcults also make movement between cults easier. Normally, a worshipper of Orlanth Adventurous who leaves to worship Donandar loses his *Initiate of Orlanth* ability and begins a new *Initiate of Donandar* ability at a rating of 12. However, a worshipper of Drogarsi who switches from Orlanth to Donandar transfers his full *Initiate of Drogarsi* ability rating, as if he had switched between aspects of Orlanth (*Thunder Rebels*, pg. 71). The worshipper also retains the subcult affin-

ity at its full ability rating. Even a devotee who knows the secret of the shared subcult can switch between the two deities (an exception to the normal rule), although he still cannot change subcults. Narrators might even allow the devotee to remain an initiate of the second cult, again in defiance of the normal rules. This mobility is one of the keys to the fluid nature of Heortling religion.

Hero Cults

A **hero cult** is an addition to worship of a god, not a primary focus for devotees and initiates. Any initiate or devotee can join a hero cult of their god to learn its magic. This is usually a single feat, but may be an affinity. Hero cults never act as subcults — worshippers cannot learn a secret of a hero cult as long as they remain a devotee of the main deity.

Membership in a hero cult requires a minimal commitment of resources. Worshippers do not need to spend any hero points to join the subcult, only to learn its magic. Worship usually takes up about 10% of a worshipper's time, but often requires only a special sacrifice on a holy day. Membership is often transient — worshippers join at need, then leave when they wish. Worshippers that leave a hero cult do not retain the hero's magic, but face no divine retribution.

Some hero cults can provide greater benefits to dedicated worshippers. This often involves joining a hero band that derives greater powers from the hero. Many heroes offer a secret to the rare devoted worshipper, but they still do not do so as a subcult of the god. To learn the secret, the worshipper must devote himself to the hero. For some heroes, this involves abandoning the main deity completely. For others, however, the “expanded” hero cult functions as an aspect of the deity; the hero can thus join other subcults of the deity as described on page 67 of *Thunder Rebels* under “Multiple Initiation.” In most cases, the secret learned is the ability to incarnate the hero (see the Otherworld Magic chapter of *Hero Wars*).

Goddess Cults as Growth

When Heortling men worship Orlanth, they might change aspects during their life, or they might not. Many men worship Orlanth Adventurous as young men and then switch to Orlanth Allfather, but others (especially providers) worship Orlanth Allfather their entire life.

The Ernaldan cults are different, and form more of a religious continuum. Most women naturally progress through the cults as they age or undergo certain biological changes. Rites for these later stages are as much an acknowledgement as they are a test or empowerment. A woman begins as a vehicle for Voria, the girl (specifically, the prepu-



Jonstown Compendium #2,997

Umath is the First Storm, who separated earth and sky to make the Air Realm, and who was later punished by being chained between them for all eternity. After Jagrekriand chained Umath, all of his children treated him as if he was dead, except Orlanth. Orlanth stood atop the peak of his mother's house. Kero Fin, the Mighty Mountain, is the place where he was born, the center of the world. All around him the winds raged, covering the broad land with white snow where it wanted to, and baring the frozen earth where it wished. On top of the mountain, Orlanth could see his ancient father, the Prisoner God, tied to Earth and Sky. Orlanth asked him for advice and he replied to his youngest and most faithful son. "I cannot move. The Triad makes the wind. There is One calling you: follow it. There is Another hunting you: avoid it. There is the Third, Unknowable, which you fear."

After listening to these words of wisdom, Orlanth gazed upon the whole of the changing horizon around him. Nine gods he saw:

Winter King, Lord of the North, with his lover frozen for his entertainment

Gore and Gash, one with broken legs and the other with broken teeth

Fog Girl, the only thing moving upon the face of the seas

Iron Man, implacable, crushing the ice underfoot as he chased seals

Urox, doing the dervish dance that hurts his people

Drought, once again escaped from his brass jar

Sky Terror, knocked from the sky and now plucking among the ruins of Agant Faraltilion

Darkness Mother, the Pregnant Darkness who reclines in a cave
Jarani, Son of Ragorn, sometimes called the Mountain Glider.

I did this as well.

It is always icy there. I prayed to Umath, the Grandfather, and I saw him far to the south, chained upon the Spike with his arms in the sky and his legs in the earth. He said to me, "I cannot move. The Triad makes the wind. There is One calling you: follow it. There is Another hunting you: avoid it. There is the Third, Unknowable, which you fear."

I looked about the horizon, but I saw only five gods:

Zorak Zoran, whose evil son had been wounded by the Manthi Stones

Mostal, bearing Death Iron

Bes Gezos, the son of Tyram, plucking among the ruins of Agant Faraltilion

Valind, God of Winter, whose lover was frozen for his entertainment

Jarani, Son of Ragorn, sometimes called the Mountain Glider.

bescent girl). After menstruation, she initiates to Ernalda the Healer. After pregnancy, she moves on to worship Ernalda Allmother. Finally, after menopause, women worship Asrelia and Ty Kora Tek. Ernalda the Queen and Esrola form “side paths” in the religion, and this is a normal part of the progression. Thus, many women, both married and unmarried, are called to worship Esrola instead of Ernalda Allmother. Similarly, many women feel the call of leadership as they mature, and become Ernalda the Queen practitioners.

Although Asrelia and Ty Kora Tek are different goddesses, within the Earth Religion they function together as an aspect of Ernalda. Thus, when a woman reaches menopause and leaves Ernalda, she does not lose all of her magic. Instead, she transfers her relationship to a new mask of the goddess, as if she were only switching aspects (see *Thunder Rebels*, pp. 71-72).

This progression has an additional effect. Normally, a person can only learn one secret during their life, and once they do so they may not change aspects or subcults (*Thunder Rebels*, pg. 71). Ernalda is an exception to these rules, and as long as a woman moves within the age progression, she may violate them. A woman may become a devotee of Ernalda and learn the secret of her subcult. Even if she does this as a young, unmarried woman, she may later give up knowledge of the secret when she changes aspects to Ernalda Allmother or Esrola. She may learn the secret of her new subcult when she is ready, and again may abandon use of that knowledge when she enters menopause and begins to worship Asrelia and Ty Kora Tek.

These exceptions apply only within the progression. Thus, until a woman becomes a mother for the first time, she cannot unlearn a secret and move from Ernalda the Healer to Ernalda Allmother. Similarly, she may not change subcults within an aspect once she has learned the secret, since it is changing aspects, not subcults, that defines the age progression.

On the other hand, a woman cannot choose to ignore this progression, except through normal channels. In practical terms, this means joining another cult. Thus, if a woman bears a child, she naturally joins the Allmother or Esrola cult. If duty or goddess take a mother elsewhere, away from this daily task, then she must effectively abandon her child to perform her job. Naturally, the mother’s clan welcomes the child and raises it as one of their own.

Calendar of Holy Days

The calendars on the following six pages supplement those provided in *Thunder Rebels* (see pp. 104-117). They include only the holy days described in this book.

Fire Season ☉							
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☐ Earth Season ☐

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● Darkness Season ●							
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Y					⚙		Y



Storm Season

	● ●	^ ●	□ ●	☉ ●	π ○	* ○
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				☼	☼	☼
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Y			■			Y



Divine Companions

Worshippers who please their gods through acts and sacrifices, or who perform specific heroquests or ask for special gifts, may be granted a **divine companion** — a daimon that provides advice and magical aid to its “owner.”

As with all daimones, divine companions must inhabit a material body in the Inner World. This is usually an item or animal significant to the god (see below). The body ties the companion to the mortal world — if it is killed or destroyed, the companion returns to the God World. Lengthy heroquests are usually required to regain the companion, if it is possible at all.

There are no set rules to determine how or when a god grants a companion to a follower. As a rough rule of thumb, a hero with *Devotee of [God] 10W2*, who has performed great deeds in the god’s name or performed specific heroquests, is off to a good start. Disciples of a god always have the blessing of a divine companion. Beyond that, generally only devotees receive divine companions, although the occasional dedicated initiates might be so blessed. Many devotees never gain one, others receive theirs on the day they are ordained. Major gods of course grant them more often than do minor gods, but even so they are more common among worshippers of some gods (such as Humakt) than of others (such as Eurmal).

Rules for Divine Companions

The divine companion may be a follower or ally at the whim of the god (and the narrator). The player should record the relationship of *Divine Companion 12* on their character sheet. The ability rating can increase normally.

The companion acts as a follower for the hero, with its abilities tied to the body it inhabits. It can speak to the hero with either true speech or a form of telepathy; either way, only the hero can understand it. The companion has natural ties to the affinities of its parent, so that it may use magic as if it is an initiate, usually at a rating of 10W2 (see *Anaxial’s Roster*, page 190, for details).

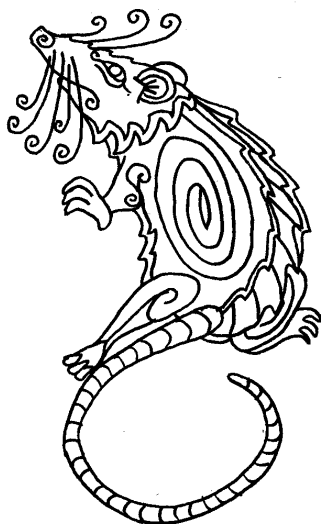
The body that the companion inhabits is empowered by its divinity, and gains special powers. An animal might have one or two abilities raised a full mastery each, a sword might never break, and a basket might hold more than its physical dimensions should allow. The player and the narrator should work together to determine a divine companion’s specific powers; pages 13 and 16 of *Anaxial’s Roster* may help.

Sample Divine Companions

The listing provided here gives sample forms that a divine companion might take. We provide this information only for the gods who receive long write-ups in this book. Narrators must decide what forms are appropriate for a divine companion provided by a minor god.

The listing gives the most common forms for a deity, but are not exclusive. Any form appropriate to the deity and its myths is possible. In the case of Orlanth and Ernalda, the divine companion may come from an aspect or subcult deity, for example, and so might take a different form. Thus, a crowned pigeon might come from Bevara (*Thunder Rebels*, pg. 194), and a divine companion sent by Hedkoranth (*Thunder Rebels*, pg. 240) might inhabit a sling stone, thunderstone, or tortoise instead of a sword, spear, shield, or hawk.

Chalana Arroy	Healing Kit, Dove, Butterfly
Elmal	Spear, Shield, Hawk, Stallion
Eurmial	Spider, Hare, Raven, Fox, Coyote, Fish
Ernalda	Basket, Rug, Cow, Sow
Allmother	Pot
Healer	Medicinal Plant
Queen	Crown, Torc
Esrola	Subcult animal, Basket woven with subcult grain
Heler	Sheep, Ram Horn, Spear
Humakt	Sword; rarely a Raven or Wolf
Issaries	Mule, Pot, Staff, Shop
Lhankor Mhy	Quill Pen, Scroll, Owl
Odayla	Bow
Orlanth	Spear; rarely a Wind
Adventurous	Alynx, Sword
Allfather	Basket, Torc, Ring
Thunderous	Shield, Hawk, Weapon
Urox	Horned Helmet, Bull
Vinga	Spear, Javelin
Yinkin	Alynx





Unusual Occupations

Most Heortlings belong to one of the “Eighteen Professions” (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 39). A rare few follow an unusual occupation, usually because they worship an unusual god.

Basic Occupations

Scribe

Scribes make their living from the written word. Literacy itself is rare among the Heortlings, and few scribes make a living outside the Lhankor Mhy cult. Scribes live and work in the cities, not among the clans. Independent scribes have a Minimal living standard, as there is little call for their services. Almost all scribes belong, or once belonged, to the cult of Lhankor Mhy. With the Lunar influx, a few have joined one of the Lunar or Dara Happan cults.

Physical Abilities: Craft Writing Supplies, Sketch.

Mental Abilities: Read Heortling, Write Heortling.

Personality: Meticulous; Studious, Supercilious, or Obsequious.

Relationships: to Temple, to Clan, or to City.

Magic: Lhankor Mhy or any.

Living Standard: Minimal (independent scribe) or Common (Lhankor Mhy scribe).

Wergild: Cottar.

Equipment: Dagger; parchment, pens, inks, writing board; small house in city with miniscule herb garden.

Disadvantages: Scribes of the Lhankor Mhy cult must follow cult rules as detailed on pg. 130. Independent scribes are viewed either as cast-outs from the Lhankor Mhy cult or as Lunar sympathizers.

Smith

All clans support a smith, who makes and repairs metal tools and weapons. The primary metal used by the Heortlings is bronze, which comes from the bones of slain gods. Other important metals are iron, copper, and tin, but few smiths know how to work these metals, especially iron, which is rare. Most smiths belong to the cult of Gustbran, but some cults maintain their own smiths (see Inginev Redsmith, pg. 103). Heortling smiths are often called Bonesmith or Redsmith (from the color of bronze).

Physical Abilities: Ignore Burn, Strong.

Mental Abilities: Evaluate Metal, Find Metal Ore, Work Bronze.

Personality: Patient or Violent.

Relationships: To patron (usually a clan chieftain, tribal king, or cult temple).

Magic: **Gustbran** or Humakt (Inginew Redson).

Living Standard: Common.

Wergild: Cottar; cult-supported smiths and the rare blacksmith are usually carls.

Equipment: Metalworking tools, half-finished tools and weapons; small house with a forge; an apprentice follower.

Disadvantages: Smiths work for the good of their patron. They may have time to work on their own projects, but are more often at the disposal of their patron.

Advanced Occupations

Clan or Tribal Council Member

Members of a clan or tribe's inner ring are politicians, volunteers who work for the common good. They usually have another full-time occupation, and most are priests, weaponthanes, or the like. Heortling politics rely upon cooperation, since the posts can be elective (although usually it is appointed).

Entry Requirements: Be a solid citizen of the clan (as indicated by an appropriate ability at 10W or more) and be selected by the chieftain or elected by others (relationship to Clan or Tribe at 1W or more).

Physical Abilities: None.

Mental Abilities: Clan Law, Inspire Clan.

Relationships: to Clan or Tribe.

Personality: Any.

Living Standard: Prosperous.

Wergild: Thane (unless already a noble).

Equipment: Expensive weapons and equipment, horses; stead and a family of cottars to work it.

Benefits: Respect of the clan or tribe; political influence in clan or tribal affairs; increased wealth while in office.

Disadvantages: No personal time; huge social responsibility; jealousy of others.

℞ Ritual Enemies ℞

In modern times, most ritual enemies are petty beings. However, they are petty because they have no worshippers, not because they are weak or insignificant. Most appear in specific myths, ceremonies, and initiations, and sometimes even as the agent of reprisal that punishes wrongdoers. A few are actively worshipped by enemies, but most are unknown outside of the Heortling deity's myths.

Even without worship, however, these entities appear when roused. This may happen for any of several reasons. Sometimes an entity may appear at a scheduled event, such as the appearance of Malia's spirits on Chalana Arroy holy days. These entities may accompany traditional foes even if the foes do not worship them. For example, Hedkoranth's foes Venebain, Golagolar, and Sevsalsal often accompany or precede the Dara Happans). Some entities, such as Urain, simply appear without warning or apparent cause. Occasionally, a group of Heortlings or their enemies may generate enough hatred and anger to empower an entity. Any of these causes generate a reaction in the Otherworld that awakens the entity, which appears as a foe or a message, depending on the entity and Heortling deity involved.

When a ritual enemy appears, it is recognizable to any worshipper of the appropriate cult, who can easily defeat it if they follow the correct procedures. The defender simply performs a ceremony that reenacts the original victory, and so overcomes the invader. If the ceremony is not done properly, if the entity is empowered by living foes, or if it is met out of the normal context (such as when heroquesting), it may be more difficult to defeat.

In general, these entities do not appear as the specific enemies of any other cults; they are limited to their specific mythological foes. Contact with other cultures throughout the centuries has revealed correspondences between ritual enemies and the deities and spirits of other pantheons. Eventually, the Heortlings noticed patterns to the appearance of these enemies. For example, whenever worshippers of Shargash or Yelm attack in force Venebain comes first, but when worshippers of Urvairinus come Golagolar precedes them.

This knowledge has spread throughout the centuries, and some people are unscrupulous enough to manipulate it. For centuries, Dara Happans have made special sacrifices to Hedkoranth's foes, who are not part of the Yelm Pantheon. These sacrifices nonetheless strengthen the deities, and sometimes can hold them back so that they act as allies rather than harbingers. The Lunar Empire is trying to reduce these even further so that they are just masks, mere disguises for Shargash, Yelm, and Urvairinus.



Chalana Arroy

Goddess of Healing

*Her touch heals all, Lightbringers' white lady,
No hurt can withstand her soft ministrations,
She healed our chieftain when pain made him mad.
She healed the world, made life come again.*

Chalana Arroy is the greatest healing goddess in Glorantha, perhaps even the source of all healing. She is dedicated to nonviolence and to helping anyone who needs her assistance. No worshipper may bear or use any weapon, tool, or magic intended to harm others, nor may they participate in any harmful activity. During the Darkness, Chalana Arroy joined the Lightbringers and opened the way to the Land of the Dead. She restored life to Orlanth and the other gods and goddesses, and so to the world.

Mythology of Chalana Arroy

Chalana Arroy is an ancient goddess who bears the Life Force that is the power of Creation and Making. At first she was just one of many beings that spread this bountiful blessing without hesitation, resistance or opposition of any sort. Her fellow beings, though, were destroyed, maimed, left behind, or turned into other things. She alone maintained her primal powers.

Chalana Arroy is the daughter of Glorantha. No one knows who her father was. Even in early myths she is the same, already showing the depths of her character. Noted for her kindness and purity, she aided Orlanth, Issaries, Yelm, Humakt, Ernalda, and others in tales. One or all of these gods fathered her son, Arroin, beloved by all the world.

In the War of the Gods, Chalana Arroy made many efforts to heal the wounded, and learned the secrets of many gods' innards and powers. Everyone wished her to their sides, especially as things grew worse and worse, but she never committed herself and never took an active side in any fight.

When the Darkness came and Chaos annihilated the Gloranthan Court, Chalana Arroy met with her son in the center of the world. There they found a being they could not heal, for it was a dead god. Chalana Arroy decided that her inaction no longer worked, though her son urged her to keep her purity for the sake of the cosmos. Flesh Man came while they debated, witless from seeing the end of the world even before it occurred. Arroin used his powers and almost healed the fugitive, but Flesh Man fled before he could finish.



Chalana Arroy

Chalana Arroy decided to act at that moment. She left behind her son and followed Flesh Man to search for the Wound in the Cosmos so that she could heal it. She later met Orlanth and others and became one of the Lightbringers.

In the resurrected world, many things were changed. The secret of Chalana Arroy's success was her decision to act, but once her decision was made she always fell back upon her inner nature to find victory through her magics. On the Lightbringers Quest she neither raised arms nor made decisions, and in the new world she was again non-violent, although she controlled great magics.

Chalana Arroy is Life, more specifically healthy life and the power of healing. Every healing, curing, and return to health is a manifestation of her power. The aletha flower is one of her manifestations, for it first grew where she rested after returning from the Lightbringers Quest.

Healers as Heroes

Chalana Arroy healers do not accompany adventuring parties on simple looting expeditions (and perform divinations to be sure of the motives). In line with their Lightbringer roots, however, healers do go on rescue missions and aid friends against foes or Chaos. They usually walk in the center of any party, distinctively garbed so that all know who they are. Anyone against whom they use their magic is under their protection, unless they later attack the party or the healer. For their services, healers of the cult expect to receive all treasures that might aid their healing.

The Heortlings depict Chalana Arroy as a tall lithe woman, gentle and serene, dressed entirely in white. Her arms are often open in a gesture of friendship and her hands are flexed into gestures for healing feats. Worshipers sometimes represent her as a dove or butterfly.

Otherworld Home and Life After Death

Chalana Arroy lives in the Hall of Healing in the Storm Village in the Storm Realm. From the Hall of Healing initiates may exit to the Green Age, Stagnant Age, Umath's Age, Storm Tribe Age, Vingkotling Age, or Chaos Age. After death, worshippers help her heal the wounds of the cosmos before returning to the inner world as nehalings (see pg. 44).

Healing plants commonly grow over the graves of powerful healers, so temple gardens usually serve as cult graveyards.

Nature of the Cult

Chalana Arroy is the selfless healer who heals all those who seek her aid, even if they are not kin. Her worship will continue until she has healed everything. Dedicated healers of all types worship her.

Chalana Arroy's worship prohibits any form of violence, even in self-defense. The worship of such a non-violent deity is a luxury that few people can afford. Not many wish to throw themselves at the mercy of the world when times are troubled. Thus, her worship is restricted to the most devout healers.

The cult abhors all violence, death, and bloodshed. Members are strict vegetarians, and never use products taken from slain animals. They do not even allow mercy killing for people with incurable wounds or disease: when it comes to a choice between suffering and death, they always choose to allow suffering.

The cult tries to avoid favoritism (even for her fellow Lightbringers), promising to heal any that need it. In practice, individual healers are left to make their own decisions about who gets precedence in healing, who is healed using magic, and so forth. Human nature and cultural values often affect these decisions, of course.

The theory behind this policy is simple and innocent. The healers treat everyone with peace to inspire everyone else to treat them peacefully. "Violence begets violence; Peace begets peace" is the cult's central doctrine. Many Heortlings consider this attitude naive, for there are those who have proved again and again that they hold this attitude in contempt. Broos or trolls want nothing of Chalana Arroy's healing, and regularly make targets of her healers in order to cripple their opponents. Thus, many healers are often afraid near Chaos or Uz.

Attitudes and Relationships

All members of the Storm Tribe Pantheon revere Chalana Arroy as the Great Healer. Even members of most neighboring pantheons (such as the Earth Pantheon of Esrolia, the Praxian Tradition, and the Celestial and Lunar Pantheons of Peloria) treat her in the same manner.

Cults of death or violence are enemies. Malia, the Mother of Disease, is a particular enemy. Humakt's worshippers are often excessive in their use of death, and there is sometimes animosity between the cults, especially with the Sisters of Mercy subcult. Urox is also excessively violent, but his worshippers and Chalana Arroy's have an ancient relationship that allows them to co-exist peacefully most of the time.

Mode of Worship and Sacrifices

Chalana Arroy receives collateral worship at all Lightbringer ceremonies. Every god-talker knows the proper rites to worship Chalana Arroy when illness strikes the clan. The arrival of a healer is the most likely result of divine aid — Chalana Arroy instructs her healers to attend to problems, rather than simply banishing the disease herself.

Chalana Arroy ceremonies are peaceful. Worshippers sing soothing songs and perform healing dances. During ceremonies, worshippers travel to the Hall of Healing, where they purge the fear, anger, and other negative emotions they have accumulated over the past season.

Chalana Arroy accepts sacrifices of flowers, sweet foods, and the parts of medicinal plants and herbs not used in magic. Any sacrifice of blood or animals to Chalana Arroy is utterly repugnant, although she does not object to such sacrifices being made to other gods.

Holy Days

Hospitals and shrines hold celebrations every week on Wild Day. These minor ceremonies remind Heortlings of the pervasive power of mercy and healing.

Each Wild Day of Fertility Week is a holy day. All worshippers attend the ceremonies and the healers and god-talkers conduct ceremonies and engage in ritual healing. The attendant rites involve healers from across many clans and tribes. This is necessary, as the widely scattered worshippers must gather at shrines to give their rituals strength.

Each holy day is dedicated to one aspect of the patient's health. These gatherings allow healers to perform more potent healing than normal. All feats related to the indicated type of healing are easier to perform on these days (use the bonuses for auspicious and holy days provided in the Advanced Magic chapter of *Hero Wars*).

III Mind Healing Day

Wild Day, Fertility Week, Sea Season

The rituals of this day are cerebral in nature. The priests and healers make sacrifices to hold away the spirits of Brain Fever and madness. The collected sacred might cures patients afflicted by these diseases or possessed by spirits. The mad and mentally damaged are ministered to on this day. Heler and his gentle rains help soothe the healers and those in need.

III Soul Healing Day

Wild Day, Fertility Week, Fire Season

Chalana Arroy's protection is often the only bulwark between survival and spiritual annihilation. The rituals of this day pit her might against diseases such as Soul Waste and the spirits of the Soul Devourer. Worshippers praise Elmal's radiant power and reenact the stories that celebrate Chalana's journey from the Fire Tribe. Souls are cleansed and lightened as the myths unfold.

III Body Healing Day

Wild Day, Fertility Week, Earth Season

The Earth has great healing powers and the body is often associated with it. When the worshippers gather, those who have lost limbs or been terribly scarred are cured of their affliction. Earth Season follows on the end of the time of raiding so many warriors who have been maimed during the year pledge to help the Great Healer in thanks for her blessing and mercy. Among the clans, those who serve Ernalda the Healer participate in the rituals, reaffirming the bonds between Chalana Arroy and the nurturing Earth.

‡ Payment for Healing ‡

Healers never *ask* for payment, but custom states that anyone saved from disease, poison, maiming, or death should immediately give the healer's temple half of his available wealth and one-tenth of everything he earns for the next year. This payment goes to the nearest temple on behalf of a wild healer. Most Heortling cults enforce this custom among their worshippers, and anyone benefiting from the cult's services who does not pay might also bring down the wrath of the gods on his clan.

III Fertility Healing Day

Wild Day, Fertility Week, Darkness Season

On this day, Chalana Arroy and her worshippers gather to heal those who have lost their link to the cycles of life. In the rituals, worshippers appease the forces of darkness and reap the rewards of mercy. The story of Xiola Umbar and Chalana Arroy is re-enacted, with the two healing the great demon Urganthar, turning Not Being into Being. Ernalda Allmother and Orlanth Allfather receive worship on this day as the sources of Life.

III Poison Healing Day

Wild Day, Fertility Week, Storm Season

The only time that Chalana Arroy has ever fought was to save Kolat when Sevsaal infected his breath with poison. The demon was defeated and driven away, although he later returned and was slain by Hedkoranth. The ceremonies protect against poison winds, earths, waters, plants, and animals. Worshippers of Hedkoranth participate in these ceremonies, since they help to keep their god's great foe weak.

III Secret Healing Day (Resurrection Day)

Freeze Day, Fate Week, Sacred Time

Chalana Arroy's high holy day is also called Resurrection Day. It is the climax of two weeks of ritual and ceremony for the healers, and commemorates Chalana Arroy's resurrection of Orlanth in the Underworld. This victory of Life over Death was the final barrier the Lightbringers had to pass to succeed in their quest. The rites on this day begin a week-long celebration during which worshippers use this spark of healing to resurrect and heal the rest of the world after the Lightbringers' Return.

Organization

Most clans find Ernalda the Healer sufficient for their needs, and do not support a devotee or priest of Chalana Arroy.

Temples to Chalana Arroy are few, and found only in special holy or traditional spots. Shrines stand in all Heortling cites. Some shrines sit in the wilderness or rural lands, tended by a lone worshipper and supported by grateful locals. Some large cities have a full hospital-temple, but most hold only small temples. Many shrines are the only place particular feats can be learned. Healers often travel from temple to temple.

Chalana Arroy's temples have only a loose organization. A chief priest or high healer runs each temple. A body of healers serves her, each of which is in charge of several initiates. Each ward of large hospital-tem-

ples specializes in a particular malady (wounds, disease, poison, etc.). Wandering healers of the Ferace subcult report to various temples but owe loyalty to none.

Each temple runs itself, with no central authority. The largest temple in Sartar is the House of Peace, in Jonstown. The Grand Hospital in Kethaela is a major center of power. This simply means that one can be sure healers are available who know all the spells and skills.

Membership Requirements

The few worshippers that live with their clan are exempt from attending the clan *fyrđ* as warriors, but they must attend to help heal the injured. Such clan members are often kept isolated far behind the battle line so that their requirement to heal anyone in need does not come into play (i.e., so that they do not heal the enemy's warriors).

Initiate

Anyone with a sincere wish to heal may join the cult, creatures of Chaos excepted (although the legendary Wild Healer of the Rockwood Mountains [a broo] proves that exceptions exist). Men and women are equally welcome, although in practice most members are female.

Initiation to Chalana Arroy includes a visit the Spike in the Green Age, where they see the world as it was before Pain and Death. They feel the pain of the first death, and the struggle to heal those injured by it. This struggle leads her to join the Lightbringer's Quest, where Chalana Arroy discovered the way to reverse Death. They return from Hell and return the Breath of Life to the world.

Initiates take an oath to aid all within the limits of their ability and never to harm a living creature. They must be vegetarians (although most drink milk and eat cheese). Many voluntarily eschew using any products that require the shedding of blood to obtain, and thus wear no leather or furs, use no gut strings, etc. Sheared wool is acceptable, as are milk, cheese, and similar products harvested without bloodshed.



Uniforms



Chalana Arroy healers wear simple and distinctive clothing to set themselves off from the world. This uniform consists of a white shirt or blouse with a sash over the right shoulder. The sash is usually white with a band of color that marks the particular subcult to which the devotee belongs: orange (*Ferace*), brown (*Natyrsa*), green (*Pranjala*), or purple (*Sisters of Mercy*). High healers lack this band of color.



Initiates must spend at least 30% of their time in healing or spreading peace under the direction of a devotee or disciple of the cult. Most initiates attend the city temples; a rare few attend the wandering devotees of the Ferace subcult.

The initiate may not learn any Close Combat or Ranged Combat ability; if they already know any they are expected to buy them down over time, as if they were flaws. Failure to do so is a sign of impiety. The initiate may never use any physical or magical ability that might harm the world or its inhabitants. Doing so incurs Chalana Arroy's wrath and the loss of healing power. Heroes who switch cults to Chalana Arroy need not *immediately* buy down their combat abilities, which remain on their character sheets as temptations until bought down to 12 and removed.

Most Heortlings will protect the life of a Chalana Arroy healer even at the cost of their own. The killing of a Chalana Arroy worshipper is a capital crime in Heortling society. People placed under the protection of a healer are likewise inviolate. Anyone attacking a healer or a creature under her care becomes the target of banumbrolings (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 85), as well as the clansmen around them.

An initiate receives healing at her own temple with any magic available. If she is slain, the temple will make every effort to bring her back. She receives room and board at any Chalana Arroy temple. Most Heortlings welcome Chalana Arroy healers. The goddess' strict neutrality subjects her worshippers to suspicion, however, since they are obligated to heal anyone, even enemies. They must foreswear all violence and bloodshed, and try to convince others to do so as well, which can make it difficult for clans to deal properly with enemies.

A worshipper of Chalana Arroy created using the *Hero Wars* rules belongs to the Pranjala subcult by Default.

Magic Keyword

Physical Abilities: Chirurgery, Restrain Patient.

Mental Abilities: Brew Healing Potion, Find Healing Materials, Mythology of Chalana Arroy, Mythology of the Lightbringers, Sing, Treat Disease, Treat Poison.

Virtues: Calm, Impartial, Merciful, Pacifist.

Affinities: ||| Calm Fear, ||| Heal Wounds.

Devotee

Ideally, a devotee should sever ties with her family and clan to ensure impartiality. However, no rite guarantees this. The cult encourages devotees to give up all relationship abilities other than those with their temple, but acknowledges that this is difficult for most people.

Devotees of Chalana Arroy have the same benefits and disadvantages as initiates. The Chalana Arroy healer is inviolate in the eyes of most people. Anyone harming a healer is outlawed. Healers are always welcome at feasts and festivals. Many Heortling temples set aside a Healer's Room, reserved for any wandering healer who needs a place to stay. Healers are loved by the poor and helpless.

Affinities and Feats:

III **Calm Fear** (Comforting Song, Quiet Everyone, Sleep, Stop Berserk Rage, Stop Panic)

III **Heal Wounds** (Heal Chaos Wound, Heal Dying [5 \mathbb{W}], Heal Injury [15], Heal Poisoned Wound, Regenerate Damage Fully [10 \mathbb{W}], Regrow Severed Limb, Stop Bleeding)

Priest

Priests of Chalana Arroy are in charge of the hospital-temple in smaller cities, or of a ward in a larger hospital-temple. Temples appoint priests based on their faith and relation to the rest of the temple. Thus, a priest should have a rating of 10 \mathbb{W} or greater in *Devotee of Chalana Arroy*, *Mythology of Chalana Arroy*, and *Relationship to [Temple]*.

Priests may not marry, and must divorce their spouse if they have one. They must sever all relationships except the one to the temple. They must obey the Chief Priest of the temple. Most small temples have only one priest, but if there are multiple priests then the one who has been a priest the longest is the chief priest.

High Healer (Disciple)

Disciples are called High Healers or White Women. Only the largest hospital-temples can support even one high healer. Most disciples choose to be wandering healers in emulation of Ferace, although not all belong to his subcult before becoming high healers.

A candidate must know her three affinities to 1 \mathbb{W} 2, three other healing abilities at 1 \mathbb{W} 2 or more, one Virtue to 1 \mathbb{W} 2, and the secret of her subcult. She must have spent the necessary hero points to completely eliminate her knowledge of Close Combat and Ranged Combat. Finally, she must never have slain another person, even before joining Chalana Arroy.

A high healer must be impartial in her healing — she may never show any favoritism in how she heals. They must heal the most seriously injured first, even if the patient is a follower of a Death cult or a member of an enemy people. In return, she gains all of the standard benefits of being a disciple.

Subcults of Chalana Arroy

III☒ Arroin

Arroin is a son of Chalana Arroy, begotten by one or more of the many gods who guarded her during the Gods War. Originally a powerful healer, many Chaos gods attacked Arroin. The most devastating attack came from Grenfalur the Eater, who ate Arroin's magic, leaving him almost dead. He fled to the Center World to await the return of his mother. There he sought refuge with the Aldryami, becoming one of their Protectors during the Great Winter. He found plants, minerals, and waters with healing properties; learned how to set bones and stitch wounds; and discovered how to treat poison and ease the ravages of disease with herbal remedies. He developed those skills to replace his magic, and greeted his mother when she returned at the Dawn.

No worshipper of Chalana Arroy dedicates herself solely to Arroin. All worshippers learn his abilities, and so can always heal as he did, no matter where in the worlds they may find themselves.

III#P Ferace the Wild Healer

Ferace is a goddess of healing who cannot stay in a dwelling once she has healed the inhabitants. Her followers travel from place to place, healing anyone and anything that they meet. Followers may stay at a hospital-temple only long enough to learn new abilities, affinities, and feats, then must move on. Some devotees have a standard route they follow; others go where their heart or the goddess leads them.

Initiates in the subcult must attend a devotee rather than wandering the world alone and unsupervised.

Physical Abilities: Walk Long Distance.

Mental Abilities: Find Path, Well-traveled.

Virtues: Friendly, Wanderlust.

Affinities:

↻ **Travel Safely** (Fade from View, Leap Away from Blow, Refreshing Rest, Run from Danger, Tireless Gait)

III **Calm Fear** *Feats:* Calm Predator, Reassure Stranger.

Secret: Don't Hurt Me (Automatically succeed at a single final action during any contest in which the hero is attempting to avoid an attack, even if she normally would not be allowed a final action. The attack must come from a being on whom she has successfully used any affinity.)



III† Natyrsa Chaos Foe

Like many healing goddesses, Natyrsa cared for all that came to her. When the Great Darkness came, however, she found that she could not heal Chaos. When the Void tore a being from the world before her eyes and disintegrated it, Natyrsa put aside her passivity. She realized that Chaos is not a part of the world, and thus not part of Life. As such, it can and should be destroyed.

Natyrsa's worshippers cannot fight Chaos directly because of their vows. However, they will use magic on Chaos entities and then let others slay them. Because of this, Uroxi and other Chaos fighters prefer Natyrsa's healers to others.

Membership Requirements: The healer must be willing to fight Chaos while maintaining the cult dictates of non-violence. Because of their lack of objectivity, they often have trouble with more traditional healers' passive nature and acceptance (as they see it) of Chaos.

Physical Abilities: Dodge Chaos attack.

Mental Abilities: Recognize Chaos Foe.

Virtues: Brave.

Affinities:

III **Cure Chaos** (Abort Broo Larvae, Detect Chaos, Exorcise Chaos Spirit, Heal Gorp Burn, Resist Chaos Magic)

III **Calm Fear** *Feats:* Alleviate Madness, Stop Chaos Panic.

Secret: Heal All Chaos ritual (The worshipper can completely cure any living thing wounded by Chaos. The resistance is equal to the ability rating used by the Chaos entity in the attack that caused the damage. If the victim took multiple wounds, the resistance is the highest of the ability ratings used. If the healer is victorious, all damage from Chaos wounds disappears. If the healer suffers a defeat, the patient's wounds worsen and the patient's chance of receiving a Chaos taint increases. Even if the patient dies, however, Natyrsa's magic ensures that the remains do not spawn any Chaos entity.)

Worshippers: Natyrsa's followers are less passive than are members of other subcults.



III☞ Pranjala

Pranjala is the mistress of defeating illness, whether it attacks the body, soul, or mind, and regardless of its Otherworld origin. When Malia became evil, a part of her revolted and pulled itself free. The evil portion tried to infect her twin with every known and unknown disease. Pranjala underwent the Hundred Trials, facing each disease in turn and defeating it. She could not heal Malia, for doing so would have destroyed her. Pranjala was the power of healing, not harming, and so she sought refuge instead with Chalana Arroy.

Devotees learn feats by lying on Pranjala's Sickbed and being infected by disease. As Pranjala did, the devotee fights the disease, overpowering it and learning the secret of defeating it.

Physical Abilities: Resist Disease.

Mental Abilities: Sense Disease Spirit.

Affinities:

III **Cure Disease** (Fight Disease Spirit, Fight Illness Daimon, Fight Unhealthy Essence, See Source of Disease, Stop [Disease])

III **Heal Wound Feats:** Prevent Infection.

Secret: **Restore Disease-Ravaged Body ritual** (The hero can take a person whose body has suffered from the effects of disease to Pranjala's Sickbed after the source of the disease [spirit, daimon, etc.] has been removed. There, the victim lies down and the worshipper purges their body of the effects of the disease. The resistance is equal to the total number of ability points lost to disease. If the healer is victorious, the magic restores all lost ability points. If the healer suffers a complete defeat, the patient loses additional points equal to the healer's negative AP total, divided among all affected abilities. This can kill the victim; even if this occurs, the healer will not contract the disease.)

III☞ The Sisters of Mercy

This sisterhood of goddesses are Chalana Arroy's daughters, adopted or otherwise. Malamse, Oronio, and Amprefesne are the three holy Sisters most often invoked. Their worship stems from the time of the Empire of the Wyrms' Friends, and is found in southern Peloria and Maniria. Each of the sisters controls a family of nehaling (healing daimones), which worshippers summon to combat a particular injury or illness. Malamse's daimones combat injuries of the body, Oronio's heal injuries of the mind, and Amprefesne controls daimones that combat illness.



‡ Resurrection in Glorantha ‡

Death is common in Glorantha, for danger is everywhere: enemies, disease, poison, and accidents all take their toll. Chalana Arroy provides the way to reverse the separation of soul and body, restoring life to the dead. Her ability to do this is limited, however, and is much less common than most people believe.

Before a devotee of the Sisters of Mercy can restore life to a body, the healers must reverse the damage that caused death. Normal magic can accomplish this, but its use on a corpse is subject to a -10 penalty, since Chalana Arroy's magic is intended for the living, not the dead.

The devotee must then travel to the Underworld to recover the soul. A Sister of Mercy must reach the soul of the patient before it reaches Havan Vor and convince it to return to life. This is the most difficult part of the quest, for the dead naturally belong in the Underworld, and so resist a return to life. If the healer is victorious over the forces of death, she returns the soul of the patient to his body.

† The Relife Sickness †

Many people who return have the Relife Sickness. They are alive but listless, some part of them perhaps remaining dead after all. Many join Humakt, even if they had no inclination to do so before. Devotees who know the secret of their god are sustained by their experiences, and rarely have this problem. Persons raised by the Sisters have less Relife Sickness than those resurrected by other means. The famous rebel hero Asborn Fourborn was widely acclaimed because he did not suffer from the Relife Sickness despite being resurrected several times.

Some few people return with an opposite effect to the Relife Sickness. Instead of acting as if they are still dead, they gain an almost unnatural respect for life. They find themselves incapable of harming other beings, even if they were bloodthirsty warriors before. Such individuals usually dedicate themselves to Chalana Arroy.

℞ Divine Aid and Resurrection ℞

Divine aid can resurrect a person any time by narrator fiat. Desperate heroes might try to call on their deity at the moment after death to avoid the fatal result. Narrators might offer them a chance for success if they are successful at two things.

First, the player must convince the narrator that his hero's deity could intervene. Then, he should convince the narrator of the great deed (i.e., plot hook) that his hero will undertake in return for this extraordinary divine aid. If the narrator thinks it will be good for the story, she should allow it.

Affinities:

✂ **Otherworld Healing** (Banish Disease Daimon, Command Healing Spirit, Command Nehaling, Heal Daimon, Summon [Nehaling] ritual)

III **Heal Wound Feats:** Restore Health, Restore Strength.

Secret: **Resurrect Other ritual** (Otherworld magic. The worshipper must travel to the Underworld to bring back the soul of the person they are trying to resurrect. The quest is part of the Lightbringers Quest, and is very difficult. If the healer fails, the person immediately goes to the afterlife, even if the full seven days have not elapsed since death.)

Divine Retribution

Chalana Arroy does not act against worshippers that violate cult tenets, who instead simply lose the support of the goddess. They have virtually no resistance to disease and nearly no power to heal themselves. If they try to help others, it results in harm as often as good. In game terms, they suffer a penalty of -5 to -20, depending on their infraction. In the extreme case where a worshipper of Chalana Arroy slays another living being, they lose all magic from the goddess and suffer attacks from the pantheon agents of reprisal.

Persons trying to use magic to heal those shunned by Chalana Arroy always fail, although mundane abilities are not affected.

Nehaling (Healing Daimon)

Ages: All.

Distribution: Worldwide.

Habitat: God World (most realms).

Nehalings are visible but insubstantial daimones. Each has a single healing ability — many cure wounds, others combat sickness, some treat mental illness, etc. Their healing abilities are specific to the type of harm, and do not take improvisational modifiers when used on animals or plants instead of people.

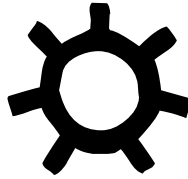
Nehaling

Weapons and Armor: None.

Significant Abilities: None.

Innate Magical Abilities: Avoid Harm 10⚡2, Heal [Affliction] 18 to 15⚡3, Sense [Affliction] 18 to 15⚡3.

Tactics: Nehalings are magically drawn to the type of affliction they can heal. They engulf a patient in their shimmering body and heal the affliction, then return to the Otherworld.



Elmal

Warrior God of the Sun

*Freed from the Fire Tribe was faithful Elmal,
Torch-bearing thane, true to Orlanth.
Stalwart warrior, steady protector,
Loyal defender through the Long Night.*

Elmal is the Sun. He is a weapon companion of Orlanth and a member of the Storm Tribe. He unblinkingly executes any deed needed for the tribe. During the Darkness, he defended the stead from all foes while Orlanth was on his Lightbringers Quest, and so Elmal helped keep the world together so that Orlanth could recreate it at the Dawn.

Mythology of Elmal

Elmal was one of the Fire Tribe, and like all of his brothers served the Emperor during the Stagnant Age. Then Chalana Arroy healed his sight, so that his own brightness no longer blinded him. For the first time, he could see everything around him. Then he saw the true nature of the Fire Tribe, which held the rest of the world as slaves. Elmal left his brothers, saying “Light is important, but it is not the only important thing. I must find and learn these other things now.” Among many such as himself, he wandered the world seeking his true path.

When the Gods War began, he tried to avoid it. When things got worse his honor forced him to act. He performed great deeds, especially slaying Teghern, who had two noses like mammoth trunks, four horns on its head, and four hands upon a snake’s body. After he killed it, Elmal found another god nearby, concealed in a turnip. The other god asked, “Why do you glow so brightly? If you didn’t, you could have hidden from Teghern instead of fighting it.”

Elmal answered, “If I don’t face my foes today, I will have to face them tomorrow.” The other god departed, but whenever he was threatened, he told his attackers about Elmal so that they would attack him instead. In this way, even Elmal’s own brothers came to attack him.



“You took part of the brilliance of our tribe with you, letting Darkness and Chaos in to attack us. Now we will take your brilliance back,” his brothers said.

Elmal responded, “Any one of you could have stopped Darkness and Chaos entering your court, if only you had turned to look outward. My brilliance is my own, not something you can take.” His brothers attacked and nearly killed him, but Elmal refused to fight back. He called upon divine Justice to save him. It did, and he escaped with the last particle of decency of the Fire Tribe in the Justice Spear he bore. After this defeat, his brothers did not want to fight him any more, but they still coveted his brilliance.

Elmal heard that a great leader was assembling the best gods to be his companions. He learned that it was Orlanth, and considering the brutal reputation of the Storm Tribe he almost turned back. He decided to continue and test Orlanth’s honor, to see if he was worthy of Elmal’s allegiance.

Elmal finally met Orlanth as he was about to cross the river into Orlanth’s land. Orlanth would not let him pass unless he stated his name, and when he did Orlanth refused him passage over the bridge. Elmal persisted and the two fought, until Elmal used the Justice Spear to trip both of them into the river. Orlanth could have left Elmal to drown, but he rescued him instead, and thus proved his worth.

Elmal accompanied Orlanth back to his Hall. He was impressed with the peace within the house, although he saw people from the Water, Earth, and Darkness Tribes there among the great host from the Storm Tribe. Elmal agreed to remain for the winter as a guest. The winter was long, and an army of Uz attacked the stead in the deepest part. Before anyone could speak, Elmal raised his spear and helped to drive them off. His reward for his act was a seat in the household. Later a Chaos army attacked, and Elmal again was instrumental in driving them off. Orlanth named him thane and offered him a seat at the high table, which Elmal accepted.

Elmal proved himself many times. He used the Justice Spear to defeat the enemies of the Storm Tribe and to resolve disputes honorably. So great was Orlanth’s trust in Elmal that when he left on the Light-bringer’s Quest he recommended Elmal to the clan, who elected him as their new chieftain.

During the Chaos Age, enemies besieged, assaulted, and infiltrated the clan. Elmal broke the siege, slaughtered the assailants, and discovered the infiltrators with the aid of a kinsman. He received many wounds and lost his best friends and boon companions. When the stead was destroyed and he could barely walk, he climbed to the top of Kero Fin and



continued to shine on those few humans who remained. Yet he never faltered, and he held the household of Orlanth intact for the entire Darkness. In this way, the Vingkotlings survived the Long Night.

When Orlanth returned from the Underworld, he bore a sacred torch. He cast it high into the sky so that it flew to where Elmal waited. Elmal caught it and was healed so that he burned brightly again to welcome the return of Orlanth. Elmal, always loyal, gladly handed the Ring back to Orlanth, who became chieftain again.

Orlanthi tribesmen have worshipped Elmal since the Dawn. Over the centuries, the Elмали have come in contact with many other solar cults. Some worshippers or temples have adopted foreign rites and practices, and each time they did so it led to disaster. In the time of King Tarkalor of Sartar, some temples again held to foreign customs. Trouble arose that threatened to turn to kinstrife.

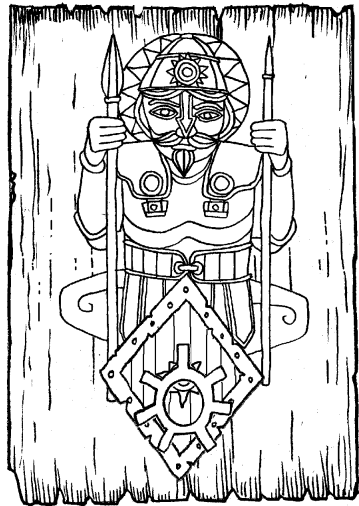
Orlanth pointed out that Elmal's brothers were again trying to make his light their own. Elmal inspired one of his worshippers who had gone wrong how to find what he wanted. Thus it was that the lord Monro discovered that he actually worshipped Yelmalio, not Elmal. He went away with the other dissenters and ended the conflict in the land. Since then, the Elмали have remained true to their original traditions.

Manifestations

Elmal is the Sun that rises in the morning and descends into the Underworld in the evening. His divine power is also present as the loyalty between a chieftain and his thanes. He is present whenever a person endures great hardship in life and survives. The horizon at sunrise is a point of veneration for many rites, especially those dealing with purification, awakening, and rebirth.

Icons and Images

Heortlings depict Elmal as a warrior with a glowing shield, usually with his sun rune upon it. He frequently sits upon a fine horse. His worshippers favor the color yellow.



Elmal

Otherworld Home and Life After Death

Elmal's Shining Hall stands in the Storm Realm. It exits into the Storm Tribe Age, Vingkotling Age, Chaos Age, and Silver Age, into the Sky, and to the top of the Invisible Mountain in the Underworld. After death, Elmal feast, raise and race horses, and relax from the burdens of vigilance and combat as reward for their lives. They always muster to defend the Storm Realm against invaders, however.

Nature of the Cult

Elmal is the Sun in the sky. It still shines upon the world because Elmal is constant and enduring.

Elmal's warriors are a counterpoint to the impetuous adventurers dedicated to Orlanth. They concern themselves with the protection of the stead and its inhabitants. They do not seek adventure or travel and are not stirred by the airy humors that cause Orlanthi to seek out enemies. Worshippers know that their enemies will come to them, and they will be ready. Just as Elmal follows the same course day and night, his worshippers carry out their routines, ever vigilant for some sign that Elmal is testing them. They are the hall thanes and hearth guards, dedicated to the preservation of the clan.

Attitudes and Relationships

Elmal has a special friendship with Chalana Arroy, who first befriended him when he joined the Storm Tribe. He is friendly with the Thunder Brothers, but is often their rival for Orlanth's favor. He and Heler are rivals for the affections of Esrola, the Earth, who takes one of them each summer as a Year-Husband.

Elmal has many enemies. Hordes of Uz arrived on the surface world, but Elmal kept them from taking Orlanth's lands. The Fire Tribe is still jealous of his powers and place of honor, and views him as a traitor. Elmal fought many Chaos monsters, such as Eater of Skin, Author of Sores, and Teller of Lies, and worshippers will endure great hardships to protect their clans and hearths from this great evil.

Mode of Worship and Sacrifices

Elmal receives sacrifices as part of communal worship. He favors sacrifices of gold and horses. Most of Elmal's subcults have their own sacrifices, offered on particular occasions. Elmal Hearthguard receives the weapons of defeated foes; Elmalhara receives the first ripe heads of grain and the last dry grain of the harvest; Beren the Rider receives the bit, bridle, and sometimes other furnishings of captured horses; and



Redalda receives the plaited tails of clan horses after they die. Anatyr the Leader does not receive communal worship in traditional clans, but in Elmal clans he receives some of the collateral sacrifices that would normally belong to Orlanth.

Worshippers often make additional sacrifices, as do Elmal clans. Typical sacrifices are yearling stallions for cleansing, shields for defense, gold for leadership, and reflective objects for vigilance or insight.

Holy Days

Worshippers celebrate weekly holy days every Fire Day, and there is a special holy day in every season except Sea Season. In Elmal clans, these rites involve the entire community, which comes together to revere Elmal through his various aspects and to perform auguries for the upcoming season.

☼ Victorious Sun Day

Fire Day, Fertility Week, Fire Season

Elmal's worshippers patrol the *tula*, inspect fortifications, and conduct purification rituals in preparation for this important day. They stay up all the preceding night, preparing massive bonfires in the form of Elmal's traditional foes. The priests light these at dawn, and they burn all day and through the following night. At noon, the priests perform divinations to determine what defenses they should prepare for the upcoming seasons. The next morning, worshippers gather the ashes from the bonfires to use in making the sacred markings for the rest of the year.

☼ Husband Day

Fire Day, Mobility Week, Earth Season

After standing guard all night and performing a brief ceremony at dawn, married worshippers spend the rest of the day alone with their spouses, while unmarried worshippers compete in a series of traditional contests. Worshippers perform divinations at midnight to determine the nights that will have the greatest need for the star watch.

☼ Truth Day

Fire Day, Truth Week, Darkness Season

On Truth Day, worshippers confess their failings of the past year. Elmal clans renew oaths and commitments, and trials by fire resolve unsettled conflicts. This is the only holy day shared by Elmal and Yelmalo, so most worshippers specifically renew their commitment not to let solar rites corrupt their worship. In Elmal clans, the priests perform divinations to determine the nature of any threats to the clan's magic.



☼ Thane Day

Fire Day, Harmony Week, Storm Season

Thane Day commemorates the day that Orlanth made Elmal a thane. Worshipers perform the “Elmal Guards the Feast” ritual; in Elmal clans this is also the traditional day for the *wapentake*. In non-Elmal clans, the initiates and devotees stand guard while the clan performs the rites. Worshipers renew protective enchantments on this day.

☼ The Long Night (Sacred Time)

Freeze Day, Luck Week to Gods Day, Fate Week of Sacred Time

Although Elmal’s high holy day is Survival Day, all of Sacred Time is important to his worshippers. He becomes a thane on Together Day, is elected chieftain on Lightbringer Day, and almost dies on Survival Day. He perseveres, and on Together Day is rewarded for his loyalty by a glimpse of the Secret Light kindling in the Underworld. Finally, on the last day of Sacred Time, Orlanth’s return heals him.

As the Sun dawns on Prophecy Day, priests prepare for the Rite of the Sacred Brand. They burn with the infusion of Elmal’s renewed sacred flame, and this allows them to heal any worshiper who took wounds from the forces of Chaos or Darkness while defending the community during Sacred Time.

☼ ☼ Survival Day

Fire Day, Luck Week, Sacred Time

All Heortlings sacrifice to Elmal on this day. Elmal worshippers share their god’s greatest trial in ceremonies on this day, renewing their faith in themselves and their god. In Elmal clans all fires are reduced to banked coals, not to be refreshed until Lightbringers’ Return.

Organization

Elmal’s initiates and devotees are usually warriors, but farmers in many clans call on him as well. Even clans that do not have permanent worshippers invoke him for aid in defending the clan, especially against night attacks or Uz.

Holy Places and Temples

Heortlings dedicate the first hearth of any stead to Elmal. As such, it is kept aflame all day and the coals kept banked and smoldering throughout the night, reflecting Elmal’s cyclic journey across the sky and through the Underworld. Few temples are large, so simple seniority usually determines who is in charge. Temples serve their clan, and do not have any predefined hierarchy.



Elmal has many holy places in Heortling lands, especially in Dragon Pass. The top of Kero Fin, from whence he shone throughout the entire Darkness, is his holiest place in the world.

Abrinna's Tears is a small pool at the foot of the Stormwalk Mountains in Heortland. It originated when Elmal saved a minor water goddess from three creatures of Chaos, but then caused her to cry when he refused to join with her. Initiates who worship at this temple can join the cult of Elmal the Chaste.

Feat: Y Resist Seduction.

Lansio, in Ralios, is where Elmal saw the threat that nobody else did. Initiates who worship at this temple can join the cult of Elmal the Vigilant. The temple does not have a shrine to Beren the Rider, and their horses are inferior to those that the Dragon Pass worshippers keep.

○ **Light** *Feat:* See as the Sun.

The now lost temple of Last Wall, in Dorastor, stood on the site where Elmal refused to fight with his brothers. The temple knew secrets of Elmal's mythology known nowhere else, which helped prevent solar pollution of his rites.

Membership Requirements

Elmal receives communal worship from all Heortlings on Victorious Sun Day and Survival Day. In Elmal clans, the worship dedicated to Elmal is substantial and much more frequent. Male children initiate first into Elmal's secrets, and they spend at least one of their first two years as adults serving Elmal.

Initiate

Worshippers of Elmal must be men, except for the Redalda subcult, whose initiates and devotees must be women. In most clans, only those strongly called to Elmal join his cult; in Elmal clans, however, most adult men belong.

Elmal initiates and devotees have the special obligation to provide the Star Watch — the only Heortling patrols that normally roam at night. These patrols are mostly composed of Elmal Hearthguard followers, but initiates of all subcults usually have an obligation to participate at least eight nights per year.

Initiates and devotees of Elmal Hearthguard and Beren the Rider are usually members of the clan warband. In non-Elmal clans, however, they do not participate in raids, instead defending the *tula* when the other warriors are away.



Magic Keyword

Physical Abilities: Endure Pain, Ranged Combat (Javelin), Ride Horse.

Mental Abilities: Mythology of Elmal, Stay Awake.

Virtues: Brave, Steadfast.

Affinities: † **Combat**, ○ **Light**.

Devotee

Devotees value duty and accomplishment over glory. Most live quiet lives focused around their duties. This makes them easily overlooked compared to members of other, more self-promoting, cults.

Affinities and Feats:

† **Combat** (Blazing Spear, Brilliant Shield, Fight Chaos, Fight Uz, Unfaltering Defense)

○ **Light** (Dazzling Flash, Illuminate Surroundings, Resist Darkness, See in Darkness, Unquenchable Light)

Subcults of Elmal

⚔️🗡️ Anatyr the Chieftain

When Orlanth left on the Lightbringer's Quest, Elmal was elected to be chieftain of the clan. Elmal later gave his son Anatyr the right to the clan chieftain's torc after he proved himself an able leader. When Orlanth returned, Elmal gave up the torc and returned to his duties as a thane. A few clans remember Elmal's time of leadership as the last good age. Although they do not go quite so far as to accuse Orlanth of abandoning his people, they keep the traditions of Elmal the Chieftain instead of those of Dar the Leader.

Membership Requirements: Be acclaimed chieftain by the clan.

Mental Abilities: Negotiation, Orate.

Personality: Passionate.

Affinities:

🗡️ **Rule Clan** (Invoke *Wyter*, Protect *Tula*, Radiate Authority, Remind of Duty, Spear of Justice, Summon Clan)

○ **Light Feats:** Beacon, Illuminate Speaker.

Secret: Command Clan (Acts as an integrated passion spirit giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's ability rating to any ability used in the course of commanding any member of the clan.)





⚙️ Beren the Rider

Beren the Rider was a foreigner who came to the lands of the Vingkotlings during the Darkness. He proved his worth and loyalty and won the heart of Redaylde, the daughter of Vingkot. He became the father of the Berenethtelli Tribe of the Vingkotlings. He brought with him the horses of his Hyaloring ancestors, and taught his children how to raise and ride those noble animals.

Physical Abilities: Ride Horse.

Mental Abilities: Herd Horses, Horsemanship, Train Horse.

Virtues: Love Horses.

Affinities:

▽ **Horses** (Befriend Horse, Speak to Horse, Speed Horse, Stay Mounted, Steady Horse)

† **Combat Feats:** Rapid Charge, Sureshot Arrow.

*Secret: **Become One with Horse*** (The hero forges a magical bond with his horse. The horse becomes his divine companion [see pg. 26]. Additionally, the hero may automatically augment any of his steed's abilities with the secret's ability rating. The horse will never allow anyone else to ride or touch it unless the hero tells it to. If the horse dies, the hero may never create another such bond, although it is possible he could gain another divine companion from Elmal.)

⚙️ Elmal Hearthguard

Elmal is Orlanth's weaponthane, and during the Vingkotling Age he defended the Storm Realm many times. His primary weapons were his stout spear and brightly polished shield, but his resolve and courage were what kept the people safe. Most initiates of Elmal worship the Hearthguard subcult, and so defend their clans as their god did.

Mental Abilities: Defensive Tactics, Design and Build Fortifications.

Affinities:

☐ **Defense** (Defend Wall, Endure Wound, Hold Portal, Reflective Shield, Stand Fast)

† **Combat Feats:** Multiple Javelin Throw, Unbreakable Spear.

*Secret: **Survive until Dawn*** (When mortally wounded during a combat in which he has successfully used the **Defense** affinity, the hero's condition is changed from *Dead* or *Dying* to *Injured*. If he does not receive healing before the Sun clears the horizon, he relapses into a *Dead* or *Dying* state. Resistance to healing magic at the exact moment of sunrise is halved.)



☼☿ Elmalhara the Grower

Elmal and Heler were rivals for Esrola in the Storm Tribe Age, and each year she chose one as her Year-Husband. Elmal offered sun-loving flowers and bright, warm weather for growing. Farmers in Elmal clans call on Elmalhara for these gifts. All Heortlings know Elmalhara as the fertile aspect of Elmal, but he rarely has worshippers in non-Elmal clans.

Affinities:

☿ **Grain** (Dry Field, Resist Blight, Sprout Seeds, Sunripen)

○ **Light Feats:** Clear Clouds, Resist Frost.

Secret: Bless Field ritual (Allows the devotee to ignore distance and area effect penalties when blessing a field of grain. If a devotee of Elmal and a devotee of one of the Grain Goddesses [see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 203] are married and use their secrets together, the ability ratings are combined and work as a single ability.)

☼☾ Redalda

Redalda is the daughter of Orlanth and Ernalda. When Elmal joined the Storm Tribe, Orlanth created the Foreigner's Wedding so that Redalda could marry the Sun Thane. Since then, she has been the goddess of horses. Worshipping her is the only way that Heortling women can participate in Elmal's normally male-only cult (although many ceremonies remain restricted to men). They are exempt from the normal requirement to serve in the Star Watch. They generally fight only to defend horses, although some join the *fyrd* with the Vingans and other women warriors.

For the full Redalda keyword, see pg. 228.

○ **Light Feats:** Comforting Glow, Rekindle Hearth Fire.

☼* Rigsdal

Rigsdal is the Night Watchman who never leaves his post at the Pole Star Gate. He is called the "thane's thane," because he serves Elmal as loyally as Elmal serves Orlanth. In the Darkness, Elmal often had to leave to take the torch gift to distant steds. Whenever he did this he left Rigsdal to watch. No matter how long he was gone, he always found Rigsdal awake and alert at his post when he returned with his light.

For the full Rigsdal keyword, see pg. 230.

○ **Light Feats:** Clear Clouds, Look into Brightness.





Divine Retribution

Elmal has two personal agents of reprisal. Reflartings punish those who break oaths sworn by Elmal's name. Yoskati afflict those who break Elmal's trust by abandoning their post, lord, or community. Pantheon agents of reprisal (see *Thunder Rebels*, pp. 81-85) punish other affronts.

Yoskati (Warmth Stealer)

Ages: All.

Habitat: Storm Realm (God World).

Yoskati are daimones that form their bodies out of loose bits of straw or horsehair. They attack worshippers who have violated Elmal's trust, in particular those who let vanity, selfishness, or ambition interfere with their duties. Once a yoskati afflicts a worshipper, neither fire nor sun will properly warm him, nor will any clothing keep the chill away, for the yoskati weakens the victim's internal fire.

Yoskati

Weapons and Armor: None.

Significant Abilities: None.

Innate Magical Abilities: Steal Warmth 20 to 20W2.

Tactics: Yoskati cling to their victim and sap his heat. He can brush them off, if he notices them, and can even tear them apart or burn them, but they always return. They initiate an extended contest that the victim can only resist by magic. The results of the contest last until the next seasonal holy day. At that time, if the victim has not resumed his or her duty in an exemplary way, he may be subject to a new attack.

Reflarting (Blinder)

Ages: All.

Habitat: Storm Realm (God World).

Reflartings are minor daimones that resemble sunbeams. They afflict any member of the Storm Tribe who breaks an oath sworn by Elmal's name. They also afflict worshippers of Elmal who break other oaths, especially those of loyalty or protection.

Reflarting

Weapons and Armor: None.

Significant Abilities: None.

Innate Magical Abilities: Blind 15-20W.

Tactics: Reflartings shine into their victim's eyes, making it difficult to perform any activity that depends on sight. The narrator should apply a penalty to appropriate abilities of 1/4 the reflarting's Blind ability, which should of course be higher for more serious transgressions.

Elmal Guards the Stead

During the Great Darkness, things got so bad that only by leaving could Orlanth knit the shattered world back together. He chose many companions to go on his quest, but did not choose Elmal. This distressed Elmal, for he had proven his loyalty many times. "Why do you punish me in this way?" he asked. "Ever since I joined the Storm Tribe I have served you loyally, fighting always by your side. What have I done to lose your trust?"

And Orlanth said to him, "I do not neglect you, Bright Friend. It is to you that I entrust the greatest task of all: the protection of my people while I am away. You must guard the Storm Realm, for surely our enemies will come here when they learn that I am gone. Although Odayla the Hunter is swift and clever, I cannot trust him to protect the people, for he is a creature of the wilds, and would find our stead a cage. Although Voriof protects the sheep, I cannot trust him to protect the people, for he is not steadfast enough to withstand the onslaught of Chaos. Although Urox is a stout fighter of Chaos, I cannot trust him to protect the people, for the very wildness that makes him a great warrior also makes him unreliable. Only you can I trust; by leaving you behind, I do not reject you, but rather show that I love you more than a kinsman, more than a son, more than a brother. The only light that remains in this darkness is the light shone by your unwavering loyalty." The two gods traded shields to make a bond of love and allegiance between them.

Then Orlanth left on this great quest, and Elmal remained to protect the stead. Many Chaos foes came, and Elmal interposed himself between them and Orlanth's stead.

Eater of Skin came singing the Rending Song, the one that made people bleed. Elmal leapt from his position in front of the stead and drove his spear into the creature's eye. Eater of Skin threw its seven terrible mouths at Elmal, and he stopped every one of them with the shield Orlanth had lent him. Eater of Skin tried to stamp on Elmal with its five crushing feet, each of them the size of a stead. Elmal evaded the first four feet, and deliberately stood beneath the last so that his spear pierced it. Then he seized Eater of Skin and hurled it into the sky, where it burned to ash.

Only after he had defeated the creature did the people see that the fight had broken Elmal into pieces. They despaired, wailing "Our defender is gone!" Yet when morning came, Elmal put himself back together and shone again, for he had been steadfast.

Author of Sores came, and Elmal destroyed her in a battle that was even more ferocious than the last. Despite his victory he was torn



to bits, but when morning came he became whole again, for he had been steadfast.

Finally, Maker of Bad Growth came and tried to slay Elmal by causing the soft parts inside him to multiply like maggots, so that they would burst him open like a too-full sausage. But Elmal was steadfast as always, and in the morning his brightness burned all of the extra pieces away, and burned Maker of Bad Growth, too.

These defeats only increased the hunger of the Chaos Gods, who wanted to destroy Orlanth's stead even more than before. In this way, Elmal drew attention away from other steads of the Vingkotlings, and thus protected them, too. The forces of Chaos decided that it was folly to try to destroy Elmal's physical form, for his brightness remade him every morning. Instead, they would strike at his brightness, and destroy the loyalty that fuelled it.

To perform this terrible task, the Chaos Gods chose Teller of Lies, also called Bad Questioner, also called Breaker of Souls. This being had a thousand forms; most were horrible, but some were beautiful. When it was beautiful, it was at its most dangerous.

Teller of Lies came to Orlanth's stead disguised as a woman Elmal had loved when he belonged to the Fire Tribe. "Elmal, Elmal," it said, "You once loved me, but I was unfaithful to you. Sorrow wracked you and made you weak. Because of me, the upstart god, Orlanth, was able to beat you and steal your pride. Now that the world is dark and you are the only remaining light, I see the error of my ways. I have come to restore my love to you, and restore your pride. Come with me, for I have made a safe place for the two of us. Leave these barbarians, and we will hide away until the darkness ends."

This plea moved Elmal so that his tears fell on the earth and burned the dry grass. The Vingkotlings worried that Elmal would abandon them, but Elmal answered Teller of Lies, saying, "You are not the woman I loved. Even if you were I would not follow you, for Orlanth did not steal my pride. He awakened it. I married into his tribe, and love only my wife. I am loyal to her, and would never betray her, no matter what temptation you offered. Begone." In frustration, Teller of Lies departed.

The next day, Teller of Lies returned, disguised as a blind oracle known to the Storm Tribe. "Elmal, Elmal," it wailed, "Your master, Orlanth, is as good as slain, defeated in the land of the dead." And it showed Elmal an image of his king, trapped in a pit and unable to escape. "You must take his place as King of the Storm Tribe," Teller of Lies told him, "for Orlanth's day is done. Without a king, your beloved tribe will wither and die." Some of Orlanth's people

believed the false oracle and flocked to Elmal's side, offering him a crown.

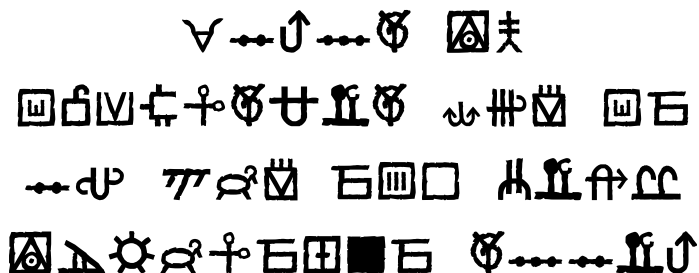
This show of devotion moved Elmal so that he smiled, and his smile blinded some of the people. When he saw this, he said, "This oracle is false. I would not be loyal to Orlanth if I believed him so easily defeated. If some of you wish to call me a king, I will lead you. But this does not mean that I take Orlanth's place, for Orlanth will be my king when he returns." Again Teller of Lies had to slink away, its powers useless in the face of Elmal's great loyalty.

Elmal was afraid that one day he would fall prey to the blandishments of Teller of Lies. He thought, "Being loyal and steadfast is one thing, but I must also be clever. Sometimes the best way to defend is to attack. This Teller of Lies is trying to tear me apart from the inside, and so I must do the same to it."

When Teller of Lies returned, this time in the form of the Emperor Elmal had once served, Elmal did not let it speak. "Lie-Teller, Lie-Teller," he said, "Your dread onslaught is too much for me. You have sapped my strength, and I know when I am beaten. I have taken my soul and put it into this fine stallion. This is my offering to you. I will leave the Storm Tribe and serve Chaos, just as I once left the Bright Tribe to serve Orlanth."

Teller of Lies slavered in hunger and leapt upon the great steed, devouring it whole. But Elmal had tricked it; the horse was not his soul, but was actually Elmal in his bright entirety. Now Elmal was inside Teller of Lies, and he could see that inside was Nothing; its ever-shifting forms masked only emptiness. Armed with this knowledge, Elmal tore Teller of Lies apart from the inside, using the sharpened edges of the shield that Orlanth had given him. Revealed as Nothing, Teller of Lies was destroyed.

From that day until the end of the Darkness, the Chaos Gods left Orlanth's stead alone, for they did not want Elmal getting inside of them and finding out that they were Nothing, too.





Eurmál

Trickster and Fool

*No jape nor trick too hard for the Trickster,
Stole fire from Vestkarthen to warm all mankind,
Was both boon and trouble to his traveling companions,
Stands loyally by Orlanth his lord.*

Eurmál is the Trickster. He is a bane and a blot on all people. No one likes him or what he does. No one trusts him or his worshippers.

Eurmál is the god for whom nothing ever works right. He is a walking jinx, an accident that is continually happening, and a force for randomness. He has no morals, obeys no laws, and is careless with his divine power. He eats to excess, has an insatiable lust, and violates sacred places. He is dangerous to all living beings, including himself. He obeys no rules, has no morals, and violates the laws of men, of the community, and of the gods.

Mythology of Eurmál

Eurmál began as a piece of impudent snot from Ratslaff, the god of disorder on the Gloranthan Council. He mocked everything that Ratslaff said, but could not be picked until Ratslaff tore off his whole nose and ate it. Once eaten it then would not be digested, and eventually caused a fecal flood that drowned Ratslaff. Ratslaff's last expression was Eurmál's laughter.

Eurmál wandered the mythic ages. He always made enemies, never friends, and seemed especially able to make enemies out of his friends. At first, he did things that ridiculed, shook up, or destroyed parts of the world. For instance, he broke a cliff face off the Unbreakable Mountain, just to hear it crash down. He made the seven fishes of Evin mix up so they had sex with their own sisters, and now there are fourteen fish and seven devilfish. He mocked the strong people so they all came to the Strong-arm Contest and were humiliated by being beat by a mouse.



People often killed him for his adventures, such as when he cuckolded Lightface, who angrily made him into the first living target for his spears. He was destroyed, as when Oakfed burnt him to nothing because he had stolen. He was divided up, once by the aquatic creatures so that frog got his ability to sing, turtle got his running power, sunfish got his combat power, and so on. He was dissolved, consumed, atomized, smashed, shattered, and dismembered. However, he was always reassembled, rejuvenated, resurrected, or reborn to new parents. No one could permanently dispose of him, but he could not remain the same either, and so his randomness diminished. Perhaps the rest of the world became more random, so that he was no longer so strange. Perhaps he even learned something. No one knows his reasoning or motivations, but everyone does know that he became a companion of Orlanth.

Orlanth knew Eurmál, of course, and had many reasons to distrust and hate him. Nonetheless, he accepted Eurmál, but only under the strict conditions of the Trickster Bond. Eurmál thought himself very clever in this, for he had acquired protection from the most powerful god in the world. Orlanth too felt it was a good thing, for he had obtained the help of the only creature that would not be discombobulated in the Underworld.

Thus, Eurmál became one of the Lightbringers. Leashed into obedience by his bond, he did deeds of heroism that helped instead of hindered. Maybe he did good because he was in the Underworld, where everything was backwards anyway, and so his tendency to cause trouble reversed and became help. Eurmál seduced Sinjota at the Lower Gates, and later gave birth to the god Yomat. He tricked Zorak Zoran into throwing him and his basket (where the others were hiding) into the briar crevasse. He stole fire from Vestkarthen of the Deep and gave it to humans. He slid everyone past Chavgaz, the Chaos Wolf; made Gugubar vomit forth the Lightbringers after they were swallowed; and turned everyone into women to pass through the No Men Plains. He did many other things that helped the Lightbringers.

Yet even Orlanth could not completely tame Trickster. He made Lhankor Mhy mis-spell, Issaries mis-tell, and Flesh Man dispel, all of them at an inopportune moment that cost them each dearly. He pushed Chalana Arroy into the River of Swords and, worst of all, even betrayed his own protector Orlanth. In the end, however, he redeemed himself when he stole the spark of life from Jagrekriand's secret purse to save Orlanth from where he lay mingled in the dust.

At the Great Compromise, Eurmál held his strand of Arachne Solara's web. Although he let go of his end when the Devil appeared, he still became part of the reconstructed world.

✧ Clan Fines ✧

- If secrets be withheld from the Ring, or falsehood spoken to the moot, that ill come of it, then two cows and lesser outlawry.
- If one loosens what is fastened, frees what is properly locked, or takes what is not of one's blood, then one cow and lesser outlawry.
- If one withholds the true number of one's plantings, herds, or possessions, so that the clan be deceived, then six cows.
- If a free man or woman be imprisoned or bound, except it be a trickster, then two cows.
- If a free man's beard be cut, or a woman's hair shaved, though they say nay, then one cow.
- If the call of blood or kin be refused, in food, shelter, or arms, then two cows and lesser outlawry.
- If a man or woman raises arms against their own kinsmen, then outlawry for them and any of their bloodline who support them.
- If a trickster be hidden from those who seek her, then two sheep and the trickster to your keeping.
- If the sacred way of hospitality be defied, or the example of Orlanth be unheeded, even unto a stranger, then two cows and shame upon the hearth.
- If worthy men do not train at the buttes, nor practice with the wooden blade, nor muster with the *fyrð*, then three sheep.
- If one fit to do so fails to attend the *fyrð*, so that a hearth or byre or granary be burned, or a herd be taken, or blood be spilled, then one cow.
- If a chieftain be disobeyed in the time of the black arrow, or a leader of the *fyrð*, so that others be cut or bleed, then two cows and lesser outlawry.
- If the protection of the chieftain be dishonored, then four cows and a sword.
- If a weaponthane take service with another chieftain, or a chieftain request the blade of a thane already sworn, and no gifting be made to his lord, then five cows.
- If one herds, or plants, or places blessing stones in lands gifted by the chieftain to another bloodline, then one cow and three sheep....

Since Time began, Eurmal has received formal worship by Orlanthe, but his cult has never been widespread or popular. Twice Eurmal himself took human form and came among people. The first time he came, people called him Gbaji, the Deceiver. His story is well known.

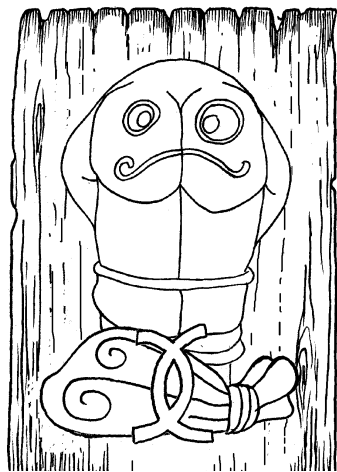
The second time he was called Hofhadalos the Nonwise. He curried favor among the most gullible people of all: the God Learners. He managed to get them to bring every Trickster shrine and holy object into one place in Slontos. Over generations, he managed to make many ridiculous laws, start many false cults, write many false books, and impregnate generations of fools to bear his bloodline. He even created a ruling family by mating with himself, and they became respected in those lands! What a jokester he was! At the end the gods became angry and alarmed, and destroyed the whole region where he had taken over. That is why Slontos sank beneath the waves.

Manifestations

Every bit of bad luck in the world is a manifestation of Eurmal. Every time something unexpected goes wrong, it is because Eurmal is there. Worse yet, the god sometimes enters the world of humans, for he is a shape-changer. He and his manifestations can take any form, but some are more common than others. Animal forms include the raven (also associated with Humakt), coyote or hyena, hare or jackrabbit, fox, and spider. When he takes human form, he often disguises himself as an entertainer, peddler, wanderer, or prostitute. He changes gender whenever he wants to, and sometimes even when he does not.

Icons and Images

Almost no icons of Eurmal exist, for most people consider it bad luck to make images of him. Just seeing his rune can taint a person's whole day. Some shrines use certain types of painted sticks as foci of worship, others use bones carved with signs, special rocks with signs on them, and similar symbols. Where Eurmal is shown, he is always stunted and twisted, misshapen and grotesque in whatever feature is being exercised. If an image shows him being gluttonous he has a huge belly, when spying he has big ears, when being stupid he has a tiny head, and so on.



Eurmal

Otherworld Home and Life After Death

Eurmal has no home. If he stays anywhere it is in Karulinoran, Orlanth's Hall, curled up by the fire and being good in the only place that he has to be good.

Nature of the Cult

Eurmal is the god of randomness, good and bad luck, and of things not occurring as they should. In a sense, part of Eurmal's power is to cause other magic to go awry.

Trickster's life is not pleasant. He gets plenty of laughs, has a full belly, and satisfies his lust every so often, but more often than not he wanders around homeless and lonely, subjected to his own power instead of using it. "No wonder they call me Trickster," he says at the end of many stories, "I even play tricks on myself."

Cosmological Reason for Existence

Eurmal's presence in the social, natural, divine, and historical worlds is one of the natural byproducts of Creation. He exists because he must.

Tricksters have no place in society. They live entirely outside the normal Heortling law, by virtue of their sacred rights. If taken to a court of law a trickster can prove he is an initiate and any Heortling juror will let him go, because he is outside the law. Of course, tricksters have no pro-

大 Sundering Family Ties 大

Kinship is an essential part of Heortling culture and of Orlanthi religion. To be without kin is to be dead.

Nonetheless, some deities' actions are contrary to Orlanth's laws. They include Babeester Gor, Eurmal, Humakt, Urox, and sometimes others. Those deities have dispensation to perform their unspeakable actions without accruing harm to themselves. Nonetheless, those acts are still despicable to all decent people and gods, and would taint all of the worshipper's kin when performed. To protect society from these acts, these cults have rites that sunder a person's normal social and divine bonds. After this severance, their kin are safe from reprisal for their criminal actions. The worshipper's kinsmen are not responsible in any way, and no divine wrath (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 78) accrues to their community for any action the worshipper takes, whether cult-sanctioned or not. Of course, if they commit crimes against Orlanth's laws that their god does not sanction, they may bring down divine wrath onto their temple, congregation, or warband.



tection under law, either. Since everyone knows that all tricksters lie, cheat, steal from everyone, and cause uncanny events and disasters to occur, everyone has one urge. Any juror who finds a person to be an initiate of Euralm will order the mob to hang the thief immediately. Such is what it means to be without protections under law, for even foreigners have more rights than proven tricksters.

Euralm is a part of the Storm Tribe, and his worshippers do have a place in society. Three possible outlets exist for people touched by Trickster:

3. Bond to an Orlanthi chieftain.
2. Take one of the Prescribed Roles.
1. Wander around alone, more or less crazy, and starve to death, because people will lynch him if he goes where they live.

Attitudes and Relationships

Tricksters are, generally, messed up. Their world is not a normal person's; unless they manage to obtain a ritual place, they remain crazy, dysfunctional, and a burden to society. The highest sacred laws of Orlanth require people to acknowledge Euralm, but the social laws do this by imprisoning and abusing him. Everyone knows that Trickster power is dangerous except on sacred occasions. The laws cannot prohibit it, but Orlanth keeps it from spilling over into the clan by the strict taboos and restrictions of the Prescribed Roles and the Trickster Bond.

Mode of Worship, Sacrifices, and Holy Days

Euralm's ceremonies, like all sacred rites, make sense within their own context, but to outsiders they appear bizarre and unusual. Most of the time, tricksters hold them far from the eyes of non-participants. Since it is rare for tricksters to meet, never mind gather to worship, each usually goes off in private to eat his raw meat, put pins in his lips, or do whatever it is that he plans to do.

Tricksters as Heroes

Trickster is one of the most complicated and subtle forces of mythology. Most people who want to play a trickster do not understand him. He is not a funny comedian who plays gags and tricks and makes jokes. If someone tries to prove that Euralm is only a jester, he is deluding himself. The truth about Trickster is that no one wants him around unless he is bonded. And a bonded trickster never has any fun, because his actions are as constrained as those of normal people.

Organization

Ha ha ha. No one chooses to join the cult, but Eurmal touches individuals now and then. It is a condemnation to say of someone, “they are Eurmali,” or “better a stickpicker than a Eurmali.”

Holy Places and Temples

Trickster went many places, and wherever he did his deeds he left behind a place where a shrine might be. Tricksters have found many, but outsiders know only a few, including a series of Eurmal Lightbringer Shrines. A couple of places are “luck spots,” where some things just work better, usually because Trickster did something there. Far more common are “bad luck spots” or “mystery spots,” where things just do not quite work right.

Inter-temple Administration

Chuckle.

Temple Organization and Ranks

When multiple tricksters get together, whoever is the last one to get a wedgie is the leader. Or not.

Membership Requirements

Eurmal is always present, both in the life of the gods and in the life of humans. Fortunately, reality is that Orlanth subdued Eurmal, and so people can keep him in his place. Tricksters have to keep in their places, too, and so they worship Eurmal only in the Prescribed Roles or as a bonded servant of a chieftain.

Role in the Religion

The Heortlings tolerate Eurmal because he is necessary for the Lightbringers Quest. He gets collateral worship in every ceremony exclusive to Orlanth (though not in ceremonies without him). Heortling religious rites invoke him with a sprinkle of beer or handful of raw grain even before they call the Good Gods and Goddesses. This early mention and first sacrifice appeases him for the ceremony.

Eurmal’s acknowledged presence in the Storm Tribe gives him a power that most pantheons exclude by utterly rejecting Trickster or transforming him into a more tame form. Thus, Eurmal continues to choose worshippers. The Heortlings tolerate his presence, since several Orlanth ceremonies are more successful when a trickster participates.

Initiation and Devotion

Eurmal does not have initiates or devotees; all worshippers must be disciples. Any less level of commitment causes them to be victimized by their “religion” instead of living. Thus, they cannot work at a job, but must steal to eat, and so on. Most tricksters find it easier to simply go with the flow and take the role given to them by Eurmal.

Trickster (Disciple)

The Prescribed Roles are all disciple-level positions whose upkeep is maintained by local clans. A trickster does not have a choice about what he is once Eurmal touches him. Typically, such a state is recognized by some or many behaviors: chronic distress, chronic sorrow, perversity, making trouble for its own sake, talking to oneself, or any general craziness. Such peculiar behavior is not required per se, but is common. Consequently, it is easy for outsiders to think that the god or cult requires them.

As discussed above, the laws of society do not apply to or protect tricksters, and normal people fear and loathe them. The cult does not teach worshippers any mundane abilities; everything they do must be self-learned.

Magic Available

Tricksters gain access to Eurmal’s magic. This magic has an erratic source, which often causes random effects to the trickster and those around him. The Prescribed Roles and the Trickster Bond (see below) confine this erratic nature with ritual relationships. The erratic effects still occur, but only in the ways defined by the roles. This rarely helps the trickster, but does offer some protection to the normal humans around him.

Eurmal is neither theistic nor animistic nor sorcerous. He seems to partake of all three magic systems, with his powers wobbling back and forth among the Three Otherworlds in erratic cycles and switchbacks. A trickster must independently learn and increase any magic abilities he gains. Trickster magic does not work like affinities, grimoires, or spirits, but more like feats, spells, and talents (although an ability can act as any of these at different times). The nature of Eurmal’s power is such that citing specific feats, spirits, or spells would be an endless and futile task. Nonetheless, the experts agree that Eurmal manifests powers through three runes.

Trickster Runes: 𐌹 **Disorder**, 𐌺 **Change**, 𐌶 **Illusion**.

6 The Trickster Bond 8

Once, Eurmál and Orlanthe made a deal where Orlanthe agreed to protect Eurmál, who in turn agreed to obey Orlanthe. That was the First Promise. Of course, Eurmál cannot keep a promise; he broke his word, and when Orlanthe found out, he killed the liar. Eurmál resurrected himself (though he was now without one ear) and tried again, begging and promising to do better. He was accepted, and fixed his bad ear.

Some time later, Rabbitear (as he was known) could not resist stealing, so Orlanthe killed him again. Rabbitear tricked Raven into bringing him back to life. As payment, Raven stole part of Rabbitear's hiding power and one of his eyes. Eurmál got a mouse eye as a replacement, and went to Orlanthe a third time to beg for protection. Orlanthe agreed, saying, "Listen Mouse-eye: this the third time, this the last time." The two gods swore their oaths again, with some changes. This time Orlanthe defined some ways that Eurmál could still use his powers, limited within the bond. This let Eurmál survive.

Tricksters may seek this solution to their lives. If they wish (and no one can **make** them do this), a trickster can ask for the First Promise. Any initiate of Orlanthe can act as sponsor, though in general the requirements are for "a chieftain." (This is because a chieftain is generally the

What is Illusion?

In Glorantha, **illusion** means "glamour" or "temporary reality." The word "illusion" has narrow connotations in popular usage, where "magic" means "prestidigitation" and "illusion" is the same as "fake." In Glorantha, this is not true.

Eastern philosophy says all of creation is an illusion, and therefore not real. This common knowledge is an error, for the word "illusion" is unfortunately misleading. The term translated as "illusion" is better described as "the power that is used to make the cosmos." This power is the manifestation of divine energy in the material world. In other words, "magic." This understanding that acts of magic make the world is the source of Vithelan mythology, whose stories integrate theism, animism, and sorcery into a single mystical system.

Eurmál's unfortunate position as being not-theistic, not-animistic, and not-sorcerous forces a similar awareness upon him (though whether he is resultantly mystic or just anti-mystic can never be solved). Eurmál knows that the world is temporary, made of glamour. He can thus use his "illusions" to co-create a part of the world. The only difference is that his "illusions" fade sooner than the world's do.

only person with the authority to threaten a trickster into submission, the power to protect him from a mob of right-thinking clansfolk, and the wealth to pay for his transgressions. A chieftain is also the only person likely to have any use for a trickster.) With special oaths and witnesses, the trickster swears to obey the Orlanthi, who in turn vows to protect the trickster from everyone who wants to lynch him. The Orlanthi takes full responsibility for the trickster, “as if it was me myself.” Thereafter, if the trickster does something wrong the Orlanthi is responsible for all fines and payments. If the Orlanthi gets tired of his trickster misbehaving, he can punish him in any way he wants. If people see a trickster, it is usually within the bond.

This self-surrender offers the trickster the best chance to have anything resembling a normal life. It reduces his cult time to a mere 30% of his

ᚠ Bonded Magic ᚠ

Natural magical abilities are common among tricksters. Often these are awful powers: Vomit Regularly, Fall Asleep at Loud Noises, or Involuntarily Swear at Guests in Their Native Language. Occasionally a trickster can do something useful, such as Super Healing, Perfectly Accurate Rock Throwing, or Digest Anything.

The powers that a bonded trickster has are constrained. Natural powers remain, but they are as restricted as the trickster is by the Bond. Significantly, accepting the Bond makes the trickster’s powers all act exactly as if they are feats.

A bonded trickster can seek out special powers from Euralm’s shrines, both those listed below and other more unusual ones. The trickster can only do this with the help and permission of the chieftain. No trickster would normally survive a trek to the known Trickster shrines without protection. Local inhabitants would quickly lynch a stranger trying to sneak into a Euralm shrine. When a chieftain comes with a trickster, however, the decision is not whether to let the trickster have access, it is whether to let the *chieftain* have access. The chieftain is the one who will get credit or blame, not the shrine keepers. Because of this, when chieftains prepare for heroquests where they will rely upon their tricksters, they often travel to shrines where the trickster can acquire useful powers.

Because most shines are effectively unique in nature, no one can really tell what a trickster might be able to do. Any myth or role taken by Trickster can provide a special power, from the trivial (removing his feet so that he cannot walk) to the powerful (killing a person with a single blow from behind).

life instead of the usual 90%. He can live with other people that know who and what he is (and who protect him) without being lynched. He typically has a safe, private place to go where he can have his trickster fits. In return, he spends all of his remaining time serving his Orlanthe master, and must obey all of his commands and restrictions.

Bonded tricksters have certain restrictions. The traditional agreement says the trickster will follow the same social laws as the chieftain, plus any orders that he gives. The agreement also says that the chieftain's commands to the trickster supercede the laws. Most bonds between a trickster and an Orlanthe have additional stipulations, agreed upon at the time the trickster enters the bond. The intent of the Orlanthe is not the defining measure of the agreement. The letter of the agreement governs these additional requirements when there is a dispute.

Although the Trickster Bond is the surest way for an Orlanthe to contain the powers of the trickster, all Heortlings know that no one can fully contain his powers. Thus, there is always danger in accepting a Trickster Bond. Amid all the uncertainty, one thing is sure: there is absolutely no doubt that the trickster will betray his chieftain at some point. It is inevitable, and will occur at a time of tremendous importance. If a trickster dies or leaves before such a betrayal occurs, then the chieftain has acted wisely and deflected a curse. The chieftain most likely accomplishes this by acting a bit ruthlessly towards a former companion. Since this former companion is a trickster, however, most people say "Good job" or "Finally!"

Prescribed Roles

Bonded individuals are not the only way to worship Eurmal. Prescribed roles exist that provide strict outlets for worshippers.

The Heortlings know that Eurmal exists and that he touches people. People become ill and receive healing all the time, but sometimes no one can cure a child of craziness. When someone has gone to all the healers and nothing works, then everyone knows Eurmal has touched him, and so they take him to an Orlanthe god-talker to cure him. The god-talker does the Shouting for Trickster rite, and if possible drives Trickster out of the child. It usually does not come back after that.

If the Trickster remains, the god-talker will call other holy folk to help perform the Rite of Mold and Mold. After the rite, the trickster is either dead or an initiate of Eurmal in one of the Prescribed Roles. No one chooses which role the worshipper will take, except Eurmal himself. We describe several common roles below, but there are many others.

Deadeye the Death-Finder

Eurmal can always find Death. He was the first to find it, deep down below the lowest part of the Underworld. He let Death into the world, and did not tell anyone about it. Orlanth once lamented the absence of his brother Humakt. Eurmal offered to let him see him, and Orlanth agreed. Eurmal 'opened Orlanth's shadow eye' and showed him all around where Humakt's power of Death was devastating the land. The vision was almost enough to drive Orlanth to be a Flesh Man, but the Storm Lord recovered and, to protect humanity, ripped Eurmal into pieces that he then scattered. Where the bits landed there are now Deadeye places.

When ordinary people go across such a region (which is about fifty feet wide), they usually pick up a slight residual curse. This curse settles in their household, causing it to decline in life force, beauty, or usefulness. When a trickster or a Humakti goes across it, however, he gets the Evil Eye, which curses anyone he looks at. If a trickster or Humakti stays the night there and lives (which is rare), they get the Deadeye, which kills people they look at.

Hantrafal showed how to deal with these places. He caught Eurmal in a trap, painted him with stripes, and enclosed the Deadeye Grove with willow sticks warning everyone to stay away from the deadly place. In such spots now an altar made out of a trap sits in the center. The trickster there hides away every week when his offering of food and clothing is set on the altar. He has a little house with a fire that never goes out. Most people avoid him, but any visitor stupid enough to stay with him is allowed to. The trickster must stay within the willow wands, and can leave his shrine only when strong magic compels him to. The only other time he can leave his shrine is if an Orlanthi king asks him, in which case it is voluntary. (It is customary for the king to try to enforce a Bonding in these cases, but tricksters often refuse.) If the trickster leaves at any other time, he dies.

The Deadeyes all have the killing glance. This should make them deadly or blind, but Hantrafal taught a trick that Trickster himself had not known. This trick gives them the Deadeye power, but allows them to see without killing people by keeping one eye shut.

Downboy the Lightbringer

Eurmal accompanied Orlanth into the Underworld, and set the dark guardians off-balance enough that the Lightbringers could seize opportunity for success. This is the most respectable form of Lightbringer among the Prescribed Roles. Because of the centrality of the

Lightbringers Quest to the Orlanth's mythology, there are several Downboy shrines in Sartar and Heortland.

Sit Here is the most famous, if not the most powerful, Eurmal shrine. It got its name when Orlanth said to his bonded man, Eurmal, "Sit here," as he finished his preparations for the original Lightbringer's Quest. Eurmal was so frightened for a moment that he was calm, and all his confusion and anxieties stopped. Now all Trickster magic of any sort ceases there, and tricksters become normal people. The dents from Eurmal's butt are visible there, the so-called "two vales" where Heort and Ezkankekko mustered their armies out of each others sight.

At Sit Here or any other Downboy shrine, an Orlanthi and a trickster may perform the Promise Rite. This sets the terms of their relationship in the quest to come. The Promise Rite is similar to the Trickster Bond, but is more specific and covers only the events of the Lightbringers Quest.

Hisfault the Scapegoat

Ernalda once owned Eurmal, with the usual troubled results. At last, she found a way to make Eurmal useful. She bore a bag of treasures, and after a clever and foolish conversation gave it to him to hold safely. He plundered it and since he was lying when he promised, he thought he would get away with it. However, Ernalda had expected Eurmal to do exactly that, and had given him only a bag full of mistakes, errors, bad luck, tar, feathers, and ashes. Eurmal was marked, and the tribe was able to punish him for his misdeeds. Since then people have been able to purge their communities of mistakes, errors, bad luck, and even divine wrath with a ceremony that places such things into a magical sack. This rite even allows the community to negate the results of divine wrath and concentrate them in the trickster.

The clan members cover the trickster with tar, ashes, and feathers, then whip him with sticks while everyone chants his name. The beating continues until the trickster hides far away in the wilds. If no known trickster is present, the community may appoint someone to take this role for this rite: a person noted for their bad actions, a captured foe, or even an unwitting foreigner. Sometimes Eurmal is among the people in one of his animal forms, which they treat in like manner.

Killer Boy the Destroyer

Killer Boy arrived one day in a large city to kill an enemy. The people in the city were all kind and wonderfully friendly, and they tried to detain him because they wanted to stop his mission. He paused for a while, but in the end destroyed the city, all its residents, and every brick,

stone, and stick used to make it. Everything else left he put into a pile and burned it. Where that pile burned is one of his holy places.

Killer Boy is powerful and dangerous; it is the least common of the Prescribed Roles because of this. The Killer Boy Trickster is a prisoner, but within his cage he can do whatever he wants. He is “fed hatred and anger” in community ceremonies, and as he eats this meal he becomes stronger.

The caretakers know a ritual to release Killer Boy. The first stage awakens Killer Boy and binds him to the task to come. The second part instructs Killer Boy’s dim little brain about the task he will do. Finally, the third part invests Killer Boy with the accumulated magic power and releases him. If part two was successful, Killer Boy goes off to perform his task. If the second part failed, Killer Boy begins to wreak havoc upon those closest to him. He continues on his rampage without rest or common sense until he uses up all his magic or someone kills him. Even if all parts of the ritual are successful, the community may have difficulty returning Killer Boy to his cage (if he even returns to them after completing his task).

Divine Retribution

It is impossible for a trickster to violate his cult or offend his god. Euralm has no secrets, no temples, and no magic to keep out of the wrong hands (since by definition magic in the possession of any trickster is in the “wrong hands”). Tricksters are outside of the law and society; they are not subject to pantheon agents of reprisal, and their actions cannot bring down divine wrath upon their community, unless the community fails to drive them out or abuse them as required.

∴ The Secret Cult ∴

A secret Euralm organization exists. No, it doesn’t.

It is impossible to tell the truth about this. There is no truth.

A far-flung network of individuals remains in hiding, because they worship the Hide in Fear aspect of Euralm. Except they are not hiding, and they are not in fear.

These people know of many hidden shrines and sites to Euralm where tricksters can gain great powers. Actually, the shrines are for silly tricks like Hotfoot and Fart Smell.

The Euralm Story Sequence is the true secret to the mad methodology of the Trickster. It’s a lie to cover them and make excuses.

Jonstown Compendium #33,997

Here are the times Harmast went to the Hero Plane.

First, for a glimpse of Karulinoran, Orlanth's Hall, at his initiation to the god, as everyone goes at the moment of bonding with a god.

Eleven times Harmast visited the God Plane as an initiate, to aid his god at every high holy day ceremony that he attended. Twice he fought the star warriors at the Battle of Thrinbarri Clouds. Four times he stood upon the Lightbringers' Path: at the Bridge of Scythes, at the Crucible Gate, at the Bridge Over Corpses, and Where Karrg was Defeated. At age twenty-one he was a spectator at the wedding of Orlanth and Ernalda. That one was his favorite, he often said afterwards. Once he rode the Wild Winter Winds that covered the world with ice. And once he viewed the Palace of the Sky, from a distance, of course.

On Harmast's eighth journey as an initiate he fought at the Battle of Daranstor, when Elistivoros the Eye unleashed Arikalgor, the giant Night Wolf, which swallowed the entire defending army in one bite. Only Harmast found his way back to life from that battle, because he hauled himself from the River of Corpses on a hawthorn bush. He woke later in his own home temple, where he delivered the tragic news to the tribe.

The last time Harmast entered the Immortal World as an initiate was when he received the Second Initiation. He traveled again to Karulinoran, but this time took a seat among the thanes of the god and drank of the strong, sweet mead. Drogarsi praised Harmast in a song full of such promise that two heroes of old came to him and promised to fight alongside him some day. And it was there that Alusu the Cockster saw him the first time.

The thirteenth time Harmast entered the God World was the first high holy day at which he assisted. Again, the worshippers went to the Battle of Thrinbarri Clouds, where Orlanth's forces overthrew the assembled army of the heavens. But this was the Bad Year, when the Phoenix passed through Alastan's Mirror and a flock of them smothered the loyal assemblies of worshippers. Most priests survived, and Harmast lived through the onslaught of celestial archers that followed. Then he struck Palangio the Vrok (Governor General of Dragon Pass) from his mount. Orlanth came once Harmast did this great deed, and the clean wet winds cleared the sky of foes.

After such a disaster, Harmast could no longer restrain himself. But he refused the path of the Wind Lord, for it was such a one's duty to serve his people, and he could not rightly accept that duty because

he planned to go into the exile of heroquesting upon the Lightbringer's Path.

The fourteenth time was when Harmast went to the Nennorion Tower. He not only gained the Shield, but also went hunting in the Blue Forest beyond.

The fifteenth time he went to the Hill of Gold. He stayed in the God World after his companions had returned, and stalked the trolls to the place where they departed, which Harmast called the Cave of Teeth.



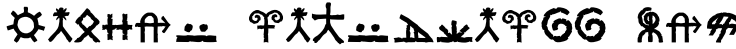
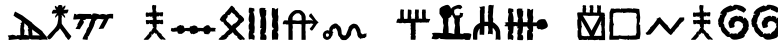
The sixteenth time Harmast went to Lord Aranvark's Cabin, in the Ironwoods, to seek advice for the travel over water. Here Harmast met Hyriam the Scribe, who returned with Harmast to continue preparations.

The last time Harmast went to the God World before his great quest he went to the Firewoods, when Palangio the Vrok drew him into an unfair fight with the Heroquest Draw. Thus did Harmast learned of his unholy link with this nefarious foe.

Harmast traveled to the Hero Plane four separate times on his great Lightbringer's Quest, the first one performed by mortal man. The first time was the Journey to the Gates of Dusk. He departed from the Hill of Orlanth Victorious, ascended and then descended the mountain top, went through Hrelar Amali to the Western Shore, rode the turtle over the waters to the Purple Shores, then passed through Luathela and the Gates of the West.

The second time began in Rausa's Palace in Luathela. On his journey to the Court of Silence, Harmast passed through the Cellars of Dusk, followed the Bottler's Stairway to Casey's Tavern, passed near the Ironwood, crossed the Bridge Over Corpses, and entered the Court of Silence through the Mousehole.

Details of Harmast's twentieth trip, his journey through the Underworld, are not known. Nor do we know much about his experiences in the Dead Court, though he succeeded, passed through the Fires of Ehilm, and returned with Arkat as his prize.



Heler

God of Rain and Loyalty

*Orlanth took Heler from Magasta's dull lair,
Used him as weapon in wars against drought.
Heler the Staunch, his name is a by-word,
Sheep to him sacred, Daga his foe.*

Heler is both the rain that makes the Earth fruitful and the clouds that bring the rain. He is both gentle and warlike, even as rain can be a light sprinkle or a pounding deluge. He came from the Water Tribe, and so is a shapechanger. He has many forms, of which his favorites are the ram, hawk, and alynx; he even turns into a goddess.

Mythology of Heler

Heler began as a portion of Sramake, the cosmic waters that first invaded the land. He was a great leader and overcame every obstacle. He flowed over Keyeval and around Delurso, and the lands bloomed where the river ran. He drowned the bright Emperor, then invaded the sky at the head of Lorion's army, where he suffered his first setback. Jagre-kriand the sky defender knocked Heler out of the Celestial River, confining it to its banks and halting the rising waters forever.

Heler remained powerful, and ruled the middle heavens instead of the highest sky. Huge populations worshipped him during the Flood Era. The boats of the Helerings sailed upon both seas and clouds to bear armies and raiders against everyone. Heler was at the front of many fights, and he helped to overcome Orlanth in his three aquatic defeats.

Heler was also present when the Thunder Brothers defeated the seas. He was beside Worchia at the Trembling Shore when the Fang of the Oceans fell. He was at Thrinbarri when the attacks were pushed back. He was at the Willow Tree when the dew fell from its leaves. Heler switched to craftiness and sent his fleet on a secret mission, but it was surprised, stuck into place, and destroyed. At last, Orlanth gathered all his weapon-thanes, and together they marched upon the Helerings. Heler called his own army together, and the champions on both sides boasted that this

would be the greatest fight of the war. Everyone expected a great nation to fall. Before the fight, however, Heler and Orlanth met in person, and instead of the terrible havoc that was expected, they made a truce and alliance. The Helerings became one of the Three Great Storm Tribes of the Vingkotling Age (the others were the Vingkotlings and the Durevings).

Ui was the god that finally defeated Heler. He hated Heler, who had defeated him in combat three times already, each time chopping off half of his power and vitality. Ui finally sold itself to Chaos and with its touch turned Heler into solid crystal, suspended high up in the air where his worshippers could not reach him with their prayers. The Helerings were then destroyed by Chaos, save for a few surviving colonies along the Manirian shore. Heler remained frozen until Orlanth released him at Lightbringer's Return.

At the Dawn, Heler returned to the living world. The ram roared. The rainbow, dew, and fertile rains swept before him and danced with Voria to awaken new life. Since then, Heler has been an integral part of the Orlanthi religion.

∞ Multiple Names, Multiple Shapes ∞

Heler has an essential aquatic power underlying his true nature: mutability. The nature of water is to take the shape of its container, and a part of water magic is the ability to change shape. Sometimes these shapes have different names or titles. Even individuals who have encountered Heler in different shapes may not recognize that they are the same being.

Heler's early guises provide an excellent example of this phenomenon. His cult acknowledges Urangu, an earlier shape of Heler that was more powerful, called Uruthu by the God Learners. To most Heortlings, Urangu is a neutral water entity, and they do not recognize it as Heler. They have no interactions with Urangu, a being of dual gender whose presence makes them uneasy.

Heortlings interact more comfortably with the one called Tarheler and/or Tarhelera, a being of ancient provenance who participated in some of their creation stories. For example, Tarhelera is the mother of the tolings with Yinkin.

Unknown (or at least unacknowledged) by the Heortlings is another significant meeting with Urangu. Stories tell of how Orlanth freed Heler from Aroka, and another widely known (but less practiced) myth describe Vadrus' slaying of a similar dragon called Enkoshons, thereby liberating Tarena, the Blue Woman. These myths are the Orlanthi parts of the fight between Enbaralor and Keyeval.

Manifestations

Heler is present in every cloud and drop of rain; dew, mist, and rainbows come from him as well. Sheep especially are sacred to him, for they are his children.

Icons and Images

Heler is blue, and whenever Heortlings speak of the Blue God or Blue Goddess, they are talking about Heler or one of his minions.

Images usually depict him as a strong, supple, blue-skinned man, usually quite handsome; at least one tale tells of an affair between Heler and his master's wife. Some worshippers portray him as a horned shepherd god. Heler often appears as a fierce blue ram with shaggy wool, accompanied by clouds. He has many other guises, including alynx, hawk, and blue woman. In his human guises, he sometimes rides a black, blue, or golden Storm Ram.



Heler

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Otherworld Home and Life After Death

Heler's Longhouse is Gapadero, the "three-height mountain," located on the banks of the Engizi River in the Storm Realm. There, rain sheep graze, cloud alynx hunt, and blue hawks fly. This mountain overlooks many other realms, including Daga's Desert. The gardens of Heler's longhouse overflow with trees that yield delicious fruits, sweet smelling flowers, and beautiful goddesses. From Gapadero, worshippers can travel to the Storm Tribe Age or Vingkotling Age. After death, Helerings serve their god in many guises. In all cases, this afterlife is a sexually pleasurable wandering through the *tulas* of the Storm Tribe. These pleasures eventually cause the Helering to be reborn into the Middle World.

When Helerings die, their kin burn the body next to running water, preferably a waterfall. Their breath joins the clouds and their ashes and bones are scattered into the water. Wealthy Helerings are cremated in funeral boats.

Nature of the Cult

Heler is the shared fertility of the Water, the Storm, and the Earth. He is the rainstorm that comes into Kethaela and Kerofinela from the southwest, generally in summer. The Heler storms always rain, usually as

black clouds that unload torrents upon the land, borne forward by very weak but steady southwest winds.

Heler's worshippers have an ambiguous position in Heortling society. A male Heler might be a stead-husband and still attend the *fyrd*, and a female Heler could be both a loom-weaver in winter and a shepherdess in summer. This ambiguity stems from Heler's ability to change gender. Some Heortlings are quite attracted to this ambiguity, and Heler's cult is a refuge for homosexuals in Heortling society.

Attitudes and Relationships

Heler started out as a hostage or captive, but earned his freedom and the trust of his master. His name is a watchword for loyalty, and to be called "staunch as Heler" is a high compliment. He is a great friend of Orlanth's son, Barntar, whom he aids in some stories. When he uses the name Helamakt, Heler is one of the Thunder Brothers.

Heler and Elmal compete in many ways. Both are gods of enemy tribes within the Storm Tribe Pantheon. Both are loyal to Orlanth, trusted more than most other thanes. Their fiercest competition, however, is over the affections of Esrola, the Earth. The results of this friendly rivalry determine the course of the weather in summer and fall.

Heler is an enemy of all the Water Tribe because he has deserted them and their cause. They cursed him, and he is no longer part of their great cycle. Heler is also an enemy of the Sky Tribe because they, as fire beings, fear and loathe all water powers. As do all natural entities, Heler hates Chaos.

Daga is Heler's eternal foe, ever defeated by his rains. In this fight, Orlanth or Barntar usually calls Heler forth to combat the Specter of Drought and imprison him again in his iron jar.

Mode of Worship and Sacrifices

Heler's worship always takes place beneath the open sky, both on hills and in valleys. Worship is a joyful bare-skin communion with Heler and his rain daimones. Rain dances and other rituals often begin under Elmal's blazing midday glare, and usually end with the fall of rain. Sheep are the preferred sacrifice, especially black or blue ones. When the god-talkers burn the god's portions, the flame turns blue.

Holy Days

Each Water Day is a minor holy day for Heler's worshippers, and one Water Day each season is a special holy day. The high holy day is Great Rain Day, which comes in Fire Season when the Heler rains first fall. On this day, all Heortlings worship Heler (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 212).

⚡ Ram Day

Water Day, Disorder Week, Sea Season

This is a great feast day for all Helerings, presided over by Uroth the Ram. Other Heortlings often join in the festivities, whether to bless the flocks for the coming year or simply forget the normal rules for a while. Worshippers call upon Heler on this day to provide bounteous rains for the year's crops.

Shearing Day, a week later, is not a Heler holy day, but his worshippers play important parts in the Ernalda rites (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 183). The seven nights between these two days celebrate the seven weddings of Uroth and Nevala.

⚡ Shining Clouds Day

Water Day, Fertility Week, Fire Season

This is the day when Heler's beauty is celebrated, presided over by Tarena. People gaze into the clouds to observe Heler, and find messages in the shapes he takes in the clouds. Divinations to Heler are more likely to receive a clear answer on this day. Some of Heler's unusual magics only work on Shining Clouds Day, and it is the most propitious day for rain dancing.

⚡ Yuhurol's Feast

Water Day, Stasis Week, Earth Season

This day commemorates Heler's union with Esrola. As the trees turn yellow, worshippers celebrate Heler's promise to return to heal the wounds of autumn and winter, bringing new life and new green to the land. They mourn his passing, then rejoice in the Spring when Yuhurol, Heler the Life-giving Rain, returns to the world.

⚡ Sacrifice Day

Water Day, Harmony Week, Darkness Season

Sacrifice Day is a minor festival. It honors the flocks of the Helerings, and asks for the protection of Voriof the Shepherd from the forces of winter. Animals selected the previous day are named for the gods. As the god-talkers slaughter each animal for the winter, they sacrifice it to Voriof. As each animal dies, so to do the gods. Ernalda and Orlanth are the last two sacrificed; with their deaths, winter truly begins. Finally, only Voriof remains to lead the few remaining beasts to protection from the forces of darkness.



☾ Black Rain Day

Water Day, Mobility Week, Storm Season

Black Rain Day is dedicated to Ereltharol and Helamakt, and commemorates the day of Heler's freezing. It is a sad day, but a necessary one as the people of the *tulas* brave the trials of winter, cold, ice, and hunger with only the smallest part of their god to sustain them.

Organization

Many clans have initiates of Heler, but few have more than one or two. Most tribal kings support a Rainmaker as proof of their worthiness to rule. Heler's worshippers are widespread in Esrolia and Maniria, so that priests and large temples can be maintained.

Holy Places and Temples

Heler has many shrines, most within temples to Orlanth or Esrola. Temples of Heler exist in several cities in Maniria and Esrolia. The oldest, largest, and most important is Bluewater Temple at the headwaters of the Azure River, founded in the one place where Uroth landed in a valley instead of on a mountaintop as he leaped across Genertela.

Lord of the Rains

*Invoke with this song the powerful god,
Renowned Heler; win him by your worship.
A bellowing ram with his quickening streams,
He deposits a seed of life in the plants.*

*Heler the staunch, ever youthful,
He is the Lord of the Rains, our friend,
Helper of Plenty, his name is a byword,
Sheep to him sacred, Daga his foe.*

*O Lord of the Rains, like a ewe yielding milk,
Dripping honey like nectar and pure as pure waters.
Sweet are the waters and clouds of the Storm!
Hawk, alynx, and ram, to our chant be propitious!*

*Heler, O Rain Lord, O ewe yielding milk,
Copious rivers of sweet Rain pour forth!
Heaven-made milk, Fall here on our Earth!
Happy may Durev and Barntar both Plough!*

*May Winds burst forth and lightnings flash,
Plants shoot up, Storm Rains stream,
And sap surge up in every stem!
Heler, glad Rain Lord, release the seed!*

In Maniria and Esrolia, temples always have a chief priest of Uroth, a chief priestess of Tarena, and a chief priest of a third subcult of Heler. The three jointly oversee cult and temple functions and lead all ceremonies. Elsewhere, the few devotees and initiates of each tribe are loosely organized around local shrines and holy places.

Membership Requirements

Initiate

The requirements to join the cult of Heler are similar to those for Orlanth Thunderous. Heler allows both men and women into his cult without favor to either.

Heler's initiates are usually in the minority, and generally obey the Orlanth devotees and priests. Tradition demands that they treat Elmali as rivals, to show everyone that the rain is closer to the heart of the Storm than is the aloof and distant sun. They are not required to act in a sexually ambiguous way, but if they do, they have the freedom and problems that such ambiguity gives.

Magic Keyword

Physical Abilities: Endure Weather, Rain Dancing.

Mental Abilities: Mythology of Heler, Predict Rain.

Virtues: Brave, Fertile, Loyal.

Affinities: ☉ **Clouds**, ⌘ **Rain**.

Note: Heler's **Rain** magic requires sufficient cloud cover to support rain, either naturally or through use of magic.

Devotee

Devotees explore the more esoteric sides of Heler, such as his shape-changing nature and his fertility powers. They tend towards eccentricity, and some behave in an unsettling and androgynous manner. This sexual ambiguity is a liberation for many, and it is god-given, so no Heortling questions it.

God-talkers, priests, and devotees of Heler have the normal prerogatives of their status. They always paint themselves blue and go skyclad (naked) for ceremonies.

Affinities and Feats:

☉ **Clouds** (Call Clouds, Command Cloud Daimon ritual, Fly up to Clouds, Walk on Clouds)

⌘ **Rain** (Call Cleansing Rain, Call Fertile Rain, Call Flooding Rain, Command Rain Daimon ritual, Stop Rain)

Subcults of Heler

⚡⚡ Ereltharol the Black Ram

A drop of Heler escaped Ui, and it grew to be a great warrior during the Darkness Times. This was Ereltharol the Black Ram, who fought beside Vinga and protected Voriof in the Darkness. When the Great Mountain exploded, Ereltharol called the remaining Helerings to him, and they fought against Chaos to keep the center of the world whole. Finally, vicious Urain slaughtered the Black Ram, and his cold blood drained down into the wet caverns of Hell, leaving his wife Ithas bitter and cold.

Ereltharol lives on Orlanth's *tula* with the other weaponthanes, and is always ready for war. His worshippers are brutal by Heortling standards, but they reserve this brutality for enemies and can be sociable when necessary.

Physical Abilities: Close Combat (Spear Fighting), Fight in Rain.

Mental Abilities: Rally Warriors, Strategy.

Affinities:

⚡ **Black Rain** (Chilling Rain, Demoralize Enemies, Extinguish Fires, Soak Through Anything, Turn Earth into Mud)

⚡ **Rain Feats:** Call Hail, Obscure Daylight.

Secret: Last Drop (With a sudden drenching rain or a cloud of mist, the worshipper escapes from a foe if he is losing in any combat. No one sees him leave, for he flows like water around obstacles, through narrow openings, and into hidden places.)

⚡⚡ Helamakt the Warrior

After Orlanth left the tribe in exile, his brothers started making trouble. Heler called himself Helamakt, Heler the Warrior, and followed his lord into exile. He wandered alone for many years, and finally found Orlanth in the middle of a battle. Orlanth was hard-pressed, so Heler leapt into the fray and shielded his lord from the blow even as the clouds shield the earth from the drying sun. Orlanth welcomed his friend, who loyally followed him all the time he was in exile. When Vingkot finally summoned Orlanth back to the tribe, Heler returned with him.



Helamakt

Mental Abilities: Mythology of Thunder Brothers.

Affinities:

† **Combat** (Blow Down Foe, Catch Arrows on Shield, Cutting Wind Blast, Entangling Mist, Shield Attack, Shielding Mist)

卐 **Rain Feats:** Call Killer Rain Gale, Freeze Rain.

Secret: **Fighting Storm** (Acts as an affinity with the following feats: Blinding Shadow, Falling Wind, Freezing Wind, and Searing Bolt. The hero can also use the secret to augment his **Combat**, **Clouds**, and **Rain** affinities.)

Note: Worshipers of Helamakt prefer to fight with magic instead of weapons, and so rarely increase their Close Combat or Ranged Combat abilities to a high level.

卐 𐌆 Nevala the Ewe

Nevala is both the daughter of Esrola and Heler (the child of their Year-Marriage) and a daughter of Ernalda and Uroth the Ram. She is the mother of the many sheep of the land, even as Urotha is the mother of the sheep of the sky. Some worshippers gain their core affinities from Heler, others from Esrola. Although most worshippers are women, men can worship her through Heler.

Affinities:

▽ **Sheep** (Bless Ewe, Cure Sheep Disease, Heal Injured Sheep, Gather Flock, Increase Wool)

卐 **Rain Feats:** Cause Downpour, See through Rain.

Secret: **Bless Sheep** (Allows the devotee to ignore Multiple Target penalties when blessing the clan's flock. It can also augment any affinity used on sheep.)

卐 𐌆 Tarena the Blue Woman

Tarena is the Blue Woman and is known by many names, including Tarhelera and Urotha; some say that she is the mother of Vanganth as well (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 227). Although worshipped as a separate deity, her followers know that she is merely a form of Heler. Using her various names, she is the mother of the many cloud daimones, including the tarenings (cloud hawks), tolings (cloud cats), and urothings (cloud sheep, also called urothtrorol; see *Anaxial's Roster*, pg. 198).

Worship of Tarena is uncommon even among Helerings, for she is often haughty or fickle. She comes and goes as she pleases, and the unseasonable rains that fall when Heler is gone are often hers.





What are Clouds?

Heler is a god and had many wives and children during his travels in the Godtime. His cloud children are daimones, but other clouds are spirits. Most clouds are mixed, neither spirit nor god, but instead potentially either. At some times, the clouds are clearly daimones, which Helerings can easily summon. The clouds that come from the southwest are easier for a Helering to manipulate than for other wind worshippers.

In **Hero War** terms, a Heler worshipper trying to affect the clouds must overcome a resistance of 14 when it is a Helering daimon. When the clouds are spirits or have a mixed nature, they resist with their Might or other appropriate ability. Heler's Command Cloud Daimon feats work on clouds of mixed nature with an improvisational modifier, but do not affect true spirit clouds. Only Tarena worshippers can actually summon a daimon from the God Plane.

Clouds are shapechangers, and only a few have an unchangeable form. Most urothrorol can, for instance, appear in the form of a hawk or alynx just as easily as a ram. Most subcults call forth specific forms. Tarena worshippers, for instance, have magic that calls a cloud in a specific form, and they may not use a feat to summon a cloud daimon in the "wrong" form. Most subcults specifically worship Heler as a sheep, and so Nevala and Ereltharol can only summon cloud sheep, not cloud cats or cloud hawks.

Mental Abilities: Identify Cloud Entity.

Affinities:

☞ **Cloud Mother** (Command Cloud Daimon, See through Clouds, Summon [Cloud Daimon] ritual, Transform Cloud Daimon ritual)

☞ **Clouds Feats:** Bring Clouds Down to Earth, Command Cloud Spirit.

Secret: Become Cloud (The devotee can transform her physical body into cloud. She acts as a cloud in all ways while in this form [and so may be difficult to harm], and can resume her natural form at any time. While in cloud form, all of her **Clouds** and **Cloud Mother** feats gain an automatic bonus of 1/4 the secret's ability rating.)

Note: Although all Helerings use rituals to summon cloud daimones, worshippers of Tarena can perform these feats without performing a ceremony. They can even command spirit clouds!



卐 Uroth the Blue Ram

Uroth the Blue Ram is the primary form taken by Heler. He has shaggy, blue wool, brass thunder hooves, and powerful horns. In this form, he leapt from mountaintop to mountaintop across all of Genertela. After each leap, he married a goddess and fathered sheep, clouds, or other creatures. This is also how Heler appeared when he led the Helerings to war in God Time, when he defended his children against raiders, and when he met with Orlanth and became an ally instead of a foe.

Physical Abilities: Charge, Close Combat (Spear Fighting), Leaping.

Mental Abilities: Seduction.

Virtues: Lustful.

Affinities:

卐 **Ram** (Batter Foe, Bless Ram, Climb Anywhere, Endure Cold, Great Leap, Lead Followers)

☿ **Clouds Feats:** Call Ram Cloud, Call Thunder.

Secret: Pass Barriers (Like water smashing through a gate, the worshipper can bypass strong barriers, whether shield walls, fortified mountain passes, strong doors, rings of warriors protecting enemies, or anything similar. This does not protect him from enemy attack.)

卐 Voriof the Shepherd

Voriof is usually the son of Orlanth and Ernalda, but some myths give Orlanth and Helera as his parents, others Heler and Ernalda. He is part of Orlanth, worshipped at times by all Heortlings. All Heortling males spend their childhood as members of the “cult” of Voriof the Boy (just as their sisters worship Voria), although they learn no magic. All boys leave the childhood cult upon becoming adults (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 58). Voriof is also one of the Four Providers, whose loyalty to his flock is an example of dedication to duty. Finally, he is praised as the guide who saved many Heortlings from death by making them part of his flock, thus allowing him to protect and lead them.

Membership Requirements: Only men can worship Voriof.

Affinities:

☿ **Herd Sheep** (Bless Lamb, Dominate Ram, Find Sheep, Sense Predators, Stay Awake)

卐 **Rain Feats:** See through Mists, See through Rain.

Secret: Defend Flock (Acts as an integrated passion spirit giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret’s ability rating to any ability used by the devotee in the course of defending his flock.)



ꞖꞖꞖ Yuhurol the Golden Ram

Yuhurol is the son of Heler and Esrola, the child of their Year-Marriage. When Orlanth rescued Heler from Aroka, so great was his joy at being alive again that he came to Esrola as the golden ram, and his rains fell to the earth as Yuhurol. Heler can call down magic rains to heal plants, men, and animals, and these fall to earth as the rain that is like light. Evil gods captured Yuhurol in the Great Darkness but could not destroy him, and so Orlanth freed him on the Lightbringers Quest and he returned to the world at the Dawn.

Mental Abilities: Brew Healing Potion, Treat Poison.

Virtues: Merciful.

Affinities:

ꞖꞖꞖ **Healing Rain** (Call Purifying Rain, Call Soothing Rain, Enchant Healing Rainwater, Restore Vitality, Wash Away Blood)

Secret: **Cleanse ꞖꞖꞖ Health ritual** (This ritual calls down a magic rain that can heal the wounds and sickness of any living being it touches. It allows the devotee to ignore Multiple Target penalties when using any healing affinity on either people, animals, or plants, depending on the rain that he calls.)

Divine Retribution

Heler is generous and tolerant, difficult to anger. As such, he has no agents of reprisal of his own that specifically plague his worshippers. When offended, Heler simply withdraws his protection against Daga so that the apostate's clan suffers some sort of drought, impotence, or other dryness until he repents or finds some means of driving the Daga spirit away. Worshipers are also subject to the normal pantheon agents of reprisal.



An Urothtrrol, or Cloudsheep



Humakt

God of War, Death, and Oaths

*Orlanth's fell brother, noble Death-Finder,
Humakt is guardian, protector from foes.
Humakt brought Death to ennoble and free us,
Gave us struggle to make our lives full.*

Humakt is the god of fighting and oaths. He is the greatest fighter and warrior in the Storm Tribe. He lives especially in swords; his magic is to fight, kill, and destroy. Even Great Orlanth made peace only when Humakt agreed to end the Darkness. Humakt does not allow his worshippers to return from death.

Mythology of Humakt

Humakt is a child of Umath, hence one of Orlanth's brothers. The Evil Uncles initiated Humakt and the rest of his brothers in an attempt to kill them. They threw Humakt into the Pit of Conflict. Instead of dying, he defeated all of the other combatants, then climbed out of the Pit on a ladder made of their weapons.

In the Storm Tribe Age, Humakt sought his own true power during the mythic era. He went to the Cosmic Mountain and learned how to fight from ancient Kargan Tor, but he was not satisfied with this knowledge. He went to places where no one had been before and discovered his ultimate power. He showed it to another god (now called Havan Vor), who died. When Humakt saw what his power was capable of, he resolved to use it cautiously and wisely. However, Eurmal stole Death for Orlanth, who used it incautiously and unwisely. This released the power called Old Death into the world. It traveled rapidly from hand to hand, and people and deities began to die.

Theft among kin is forbidden, and when Orlanth broke that bond Humakt severed their kinship forever. He set out across the world to recover Death. It had spread everywhere and the world was full of those poor creatures that were its victims, for they had no place to go.

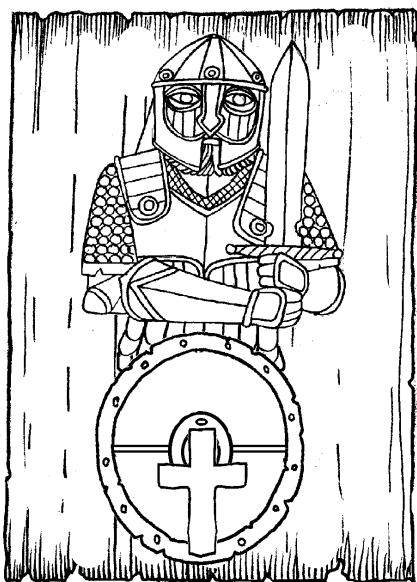
Humakt showed Havan Vor the Doorway to the Underworld, then used that knowledge to separate the living from the dead. The latter collected into Humakt's special place, called the Underworld.

With each victory, Humakt regained more of the Old Death and put it under his control, creating Death. The smaller entities were easy, the moderately powerful ones more difficult, and the great gods the hardest of all, but Humakt never failed. At last, he confronted his greatest foe: his own former brother, who had begun this disaster. Orlanth resisted, insisting upon obedience, but Humakt enforced his own Justice. Humakt was stronger, and so killed Orlanth. Humakt then showed the secret of his honor and justice and let his brother rise again through the Lightbringer's Quest. Afterwards, Orlanth acknowledged Humakt's proper place.

Manifestations

Humakt is present in every weapon (especially the swords of his worshippers) and in every oath taken. Wolves, ravens, and eagles, the scavengers of the battlefield, follow him.

Humakt's greatest worshippers bear his power in the world. They are experts at fighting, killing, and Death, and would rather die than break an oath. They are Living Death, and everyone feels Humakt's presence when they are nearby.



Humakt

Icons and Images

Humakt carries a sword as his weapon, and often a naked sword is his only image. His worshippers always own a sword, for without it they are no better than other men. Wealthy worshippers may have an ornamental sword for display (often with easily-pried off gems in the hilt for ready cash) as well as their working sword. Given the need, any member will keep the working sword and sell the ornamental blade.

Otherworld Home and Life After Death

Sword Hall lies at the bottom of the measureless Cliffs of Shadow, where a broken gash called the Vale of Death would let dead air into the Storm Realm if not for Humakt. From the House of Death, initiates may leave by one of four doors. The first leads to the Storm Tribe Age, before Humakt became one with Death. The second leads to the Vingkotling Age, when Humakt was a mere warrior of Orlanth. The third door leads to the Chaos Age, when Humakt gathered all of the pieces of Old Death and sent all of the living to death. The fourth door leads to the Sky World, for Humakt traveled through all of the worlds on his quest. No door leads to the Underworld, for worshippers know that Sword Hall contains the entire Underworld within its vast, dark halls. Instead, doors inside the hall lead to the underworlds of other gods.

After death, worshippers fight to prepare for the next divine battle. Each day they chop each other into pieces, then heal to do better next time. Worshippers are never resurrected, for Death does not release his grip on those who love him.

The cult cares little about what happens to the corpses of their dead, save that they not rise again. Heortling custom requires that they bury Humakti without cremating them. At funerals the Humakti stand aside, watching the Orlanthe work to honor Death. God-talkers bind the corpse on a board, sword in hand, and bury it horizontally in the urnfield. The god-talkers perform an augury to select a burial site that will not disturb the ancestors. (Many Humakt temples have their own graveyards to keep their dead separate.) The Orlanthe sing a song of victory as they work, careful to never let it stop, and directly on top of the grave they sacrifice a black bull to Humakt. They then hold the feast in the urnfield. Humakti never go back to the site, and never mourn the dead. They stick the deceased worshipper's favored fighting sword into the grave, and these ancient blades stand amidst the fields of many Heortling cemeteries. No one touches them, for anyone who does so is cursed.

Jonstown Compendium #299,234

These things it is fitting to fear:

*Night without flame, Clan without cattle;
Gors without a blade, Beer before battle.*

*Scorn from a woman, Trickster's kiss wet;
Anger of a brother, Chief's challenge unmet.*

*Crime against kinsfolk, A bride's satire biting;
Hearth without children, Predark's close sighting.*

*Praise without wisdom, Words without thought;
Courage lacking honor, effort come to naught.*

Nature of the Cult

Humakt is Honor, the guardian of oaths who ensures that those deeds sworn in his name happen. He also punishes those who swear on his name and do not deliver, whether or not their failure is intentional. Thus, people swear only the most solemn oaths by his name.

Humakt is War, the greatest fighter of the Storm Tribe. Heortlings invoke him before battle, and he is the patron of many warbands, both clan and mercenary. People fear his worshippers, but they are also usually the greatest warriors in the clan, so everyone respects their prowess.

Humakt is Death, always ready to take everything when its time is up. Although death is a part of the universe, it is tinged with sorrow and fear. People fear death, and the Storm Tribe acknowledges Humakt and so gains protection. His initiates serve him by obeying his rules of Justice. He encourages honor and courage, and disdains pointless slaughter. He keeps the road to Hell well populated with warriors, both Humakti and their foes.

Humakti is also something greater than Death, which only his worshippers can learn. He is the Separator and the Divider, and he conquered Death. He separated the living from the dead, the honorable from the deceitful, and the strong from the weak. Despite their fear and lack of understanding of Humakt, everyone benefits from his presence. Humakti carry the unspeakable burden of dealing with death so that others do not need to.

Attitudes and Relationships

Humakt forbids maintaining a body after its soul has left it. Gods and spirits that create zombies, skeletons, vampires, and other undead are anathema to Humakt, and his worshippers oppose any such actions. The necromancer Delecti and the vampire cult of Vivamort are particular targets of Humakt's wrath.

Humakt has a good working relationship with most war gods, especially those that teach their worshippers honorable practices. His worshippers respect even most foreign warrior deities. The Uz god Zorak Zoran is an exception. He is a bloody-handed slaughterer motivated primarily by hate and vengeance, but his greatest offense is that he regularly raises corpses to Unlife. Humakt and Zorak Zoran always fight when they meet, and their worshippers may never be on the same side of a struggle.

Humakt does not single out Chaos as a particular foe, for it is merely one enemy among many. Since most Humakti are members of Heortling society, however, the cult generally supports that battle.

Y The Humakt Duel Y

The Code of Humakt requires that worshippers settle any disagreement with a duel. The formal rules for these duels are simple:

1. Always fight other Humakti fairly.
2. Honor the fallen.
3. Maintain strict truth and confidence.

In practice, worshippers can interpret these rules as they see fit. In general, most worshippers adhere to the following principles during duels :

- The duel applies only to Humakti. All involved parties know that honor and trust are foremost in the minds of the fighters, and a Humakti will only accept a challenge from a non-Humakti if they are certain of his honor.
- The combatants determine how long to fight. Generally, they fight to first blood, so that the contest ends as soon as one participant wounds the other. Humakti may fight to the death over serious matters if both parties agree, although some bands and temples prohibit lethal duels.
- Humakti may use any magic except Humakt's Death secret. Occasional worshippers have taken advantage of this by using foreign magic (such as by trading feats with a Goldentongue worshipper; see pg. 116).
- The loser must pay some reward to the victor, agreed to beforehand. This prize absolves each of the combatants of any further obligations.

Mode of Worship and Sacrifices

Humakt receives worship before every battle, even in clans with no initiates. Orlanth himself asks for Humakt's blessings and help in many stories. His rituals are warlike, and most resemble battle or the *wapen-take*. Ritual combat is a usual feature of worship ceremonies.

The Lord of Death accepts sacrifices of black bulls, black rams, and black roosters for most sacrifices. Some rites require that worshippers sacrifice swords to him. Occasionally, Humakt demands human sacrifice, which Ana Gor performs for him (see pg. 192).

Holy Days

Humakt's cult does not celebrate a weekly holy day, for Death is always present in the world. Worshippers hold special rites during the Death Week of each season. On those days, they offer sacrifices, swear oaths, and venture into the Other Side to acquire gifts and geases (see pg. 98).

† Wavekiller Day

Water Day, Death Week, Sea Season

This holy day celebrates when Humakt led the Storm Tribe to victory over the Sea Tribe. Humakt himself killed Worchha the Fang at the Trembling Shore and turned back the fiercest waters. Whenever people find dead waters now it is because of this victory.

∴ Smithing Day

Fire Day, Death Week, Fire Season

Humakt travels to the Underworld for the first time and finds the Sword of Death. He swears to wield it honorably, and to never allow it to leave his hands. All of Humakt's worshippers acknowledge that their god failed in this task. However, they also know that only by failing and redeeming himself did Humakt attain true Honor.

New weapons are blessed on this day. Swords started or finished on Smithing Day are better than other weapons, and occasionally have a minor magic effect. A sword started on one Smithing Day and finished on another is doubly blessed, occasionally with something special. A sword started and finished on the same Smithing Day is even better.

† Day of Standards

Clay Day, Death Week, Earth Season

Having gained Death, Humakt became the greatest warrior of the Storm Tribe. He frequently led Orlanth's warband, even though he was one just a warrior, because he was so skilled.

On this day, worshippers honor all Humakti warband *wyters* in special ceremonies. The rites often include heroquests to gain new powers for the warband. Many Heortlings call this Peace Day, for the Humakti are usually off in the Otherworld.

† Dark Death Day

Freeze Day, Death Week, Darkness Season

Orlanth's betrayal loosed the power of Old Death into the world. Many dishonorable gods took and wielded the power, perverting its use to evil, disease, and undeath. Humakt created the Darkness so that he

could better tell the good things from the bad, for only he could see clearly by the Light of Death.

On this day, worshippers celebrate Humakt's recovery of Death and his protection against misuse of its powers. Although most people equate this day with his fight against Unlife, Humakti also fight ritual battles against those gods who misused Death (such as Zorak Zoran) or perverted it (such as Malia). Warbands of Humakti often raid a local traditional foe on this day. Although the community praises their actions if they are victorious, many clans fear that the Humakti might bring down the wrath of that foe upon them.

† † Death Day

Winds Day, Death Week, Storm Season

Death Day is Humakt's high holy day, worshipped by all Heortlings. Although outsiders call it his birthday, it actually commemorates the slaying of Grandfather Life and thus the "birth" of Death. They tell the Sword Story, and all worshippers view the creation of the Underworld. They mourn the ways that the gods abused Death before Humakt regained it, then see how Humakt mitigates and controls Death with his deep truth.

† True Honor Day

Clay Day, Luck Week, Sacred Time

This rite is held in secret the day before Orlanth leaves with the Lightbringers. All Humakti leave the clan or temple and travel to a secret place; any non-worshipper that treads on the sacred ground at this time or spies on their rite dies. The Humakti reenact the final battle between Humakt and Orlanth over Death and Honor. At the end, Humakt's honor and mastery are unquestioned, and he kills Orlanth and sends him to Hell for his sins.

Dedicated Orlanth worshippers who seek to go on the Lightbringer's Quest may apply to the Humakti to participate in the rite in Orlanth's place. If they are successful, the Humakti include them in the rite and thus speed their travel into the West.

○ The Death Light of the Shining Sword ○

The swords of Humakti are always shine, and often flash when they are first unsheathed. This Death Light is bright enough for Humakti to see around them as if it was day, but non-Humakti cannot even see the light. Sometimes a Humakti's sword glows brightly enough to light a passage through darkness or to be visible to non-Humakti.

Organization

Humakti either remain with their clan or join independent warbands. Most clans have one or two initiates, and clans regularly threatened by undead often have more. Those worshippers are part of the clan warband, and on their seasonal holy days generally travel to a shrine where a devotee leads services. Mercenary warbands exist outside of the clan system, centered upon particular temples. Such warbands usually stay in the same locale, but they may accept commissions as far away as Prax, Fronela, or even Pamaltela.

Most Humakt “temples” are actually just warbands, called battalions (see pg. 105). They are autonomous; if cooperating warband leaders cannot agree on a course of action, they settle the matter with ritual combat (see pg. 91). These warband temples are located where Humakt or his heroes did their great deeds. Certain holy swords are special to the god, and count as mobile shrines. In Sartar, the most famous of these is the Wooden Sword, which formed the center of a hero band that was active for several years following the Lunar invasion.

Membership Requirements

Humakt has no gender bias — men and women are equally welcome. He also welcomes all races as long as they are warriors and swear to keep discipline and uphold the cult’s Code of Honor. Few non-humans (especially Chaos creatures such as broo and bagogi) can maintain this

† The Death House †

Some cities have an actual temple to Humakt, commonly called the Death House, which protects an image and sacred regalia. It also commonly houses a resident devotee and permanent warband. The Death Houses also serve as contact points for mercenaries and those that seek to hire them.

*“I am you, sword.
Give me little death.
Keep me safe.”*

— Entry words for Humakti

With these words, any Humakti may request lodging and board at a Death House. The only guarantee (even for permanent residents) is a place to lie down and sleep (the “little death”) in or near the site, with a sentry on duty if needed. In slang terms, there is a Wake Floor and an Awake Floor, the former where visitors sleep and the latter where they gather. Some Death Houses support Death Swords.

discipline for long, so few join. Temples naturally attract locals and thus tend to be singular in make up. Most Heortling temples, in other words, have only human members. Similarly, a few Aldryami temples exist, and one famous Uz temple operated for a short time in southern Sartar among the Sazdorf Clan.

Initiate

A prospective initiate must have a Humakti battle comrade as a sponsor. He must prove his skills and commitment to the leader of the warband. Initiation reenacts Humakt's own initiation in the Pit of Conflict. The candidate then performs the Severing (see pg. 96), cutting all relationships to his kinfolk and other deities. He wanders the mythic world searching for the power of Death; when he finds it, he takes one gift and its attendant geas from Humakt. If successful in all things, he returns to the world an initiate of Humakt.

Initiates have all normal requirements. They are subject only to their god, their temple, and their Sword (devotee). They must fight with the warband whenever called, and must uphold the Code of Humakt. Their corpses cannot be animated and turned into undead.

The Humakt cult maintains good relations with Chalana Arroy (specifically with the Arroin subcult), so that warriors know they will receive first aid for their battle wounds. Humakti often receive training in mundane healing abilities so that they can minister to themselves and their compatriots.

When Humakti come, children run screaming, women lock doors, and ordinary farmers look away. No one dares look at Death. Humakti are social misfits, killers rather than ordinary fighters, and most Heortlings avoid contact with them. The cult attracts people who do not fit into society, and who are glad to accept the separation from normal place and kin that the cult requires. Most people see Humakti initiates as obsessive about death and ignorant of the joys of real life. Other warriors are uncomfortable around Humakti, for even the warmest subcults are chilly by Heortling standards.

A worshipper of Humakt created using the *Hero Wars* rules belongs to the Hu the Sword subcult by default.

Magic Keyword

Physical Abilities: Close Combat (Dagger Fighting, [Sword] Fighting), Craft Weapon.

Mental Abilities: Mythology of Humakt, Recognize Lie, Warband Tactics.

Virtues: Brave, Honorable.

Affinities: † Death, Y Honor.

Devotee

Humakt's devotees are called Swords. They have all normal requirements of both devotees and Humakti. Swords who leave the cult are cursed by Humakt (see *Divine Retribution*, below). Humakt has no dedicated priests or god-talkers, even at his temples. The Swords conduct all religious duties for their battalions or other followers.

Devotees must take at least one gift and one geas upon becoming a sword. They may take more by undergoing heroquests, but after the third gift their geases become more stringent (see pg. 98).

† The Severing †

A person who joins Humakt truly erases his former relationships (see "Sundering Family Ties" on pg. 63). As such, he does not receive anything that would normally come to him from his kin or community.

Without kinship, a Humakti is not a member of a bloodline or clan. His former kin are not responsible for his crimes, nor can he collect wergild for crimes done to him. He does not help pay clan fines, nor does he collect anything when his bloodline receives gifts. Anyone who has a quarrel with a Humakti must deal with him directly, without the official support of Heortling law.

The worshipper also cuts contact with other gods, leaving Humakt as their sole source of magic. Humakti take no benefit from community worship (and so cannot use divine aid), although they must still participate in the communal rites.

⚔ The Resheathing ⚔

A ceremony exists that allows Humakti to live and operate within Heortling society. The first time that this occurred was after Orlanth proved to Humakt that he could be honorable. In the Underworld, Humakt and Orlanth came to a new agreement, and there forged the simple rules that allow them to work together.

Individuals can undergo this rite after initiation. It is an Orlanthi rite, done as part of the One Day ceremonies (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 215). Although the rite does not enable a Humakti to use divine aid or otherwise benefit magically from membership in the community, it allows him to remain in society without his actions bringing down divine wrath upon his kin. It also ensures that the rest of the clan will accept him, although it can never erase the fear that others feel around him. It also brings him inside the authority of Heortling law, so that he must pay and be paid fines and wergild as normal.

Mental Abilities: Initiate to Humakt, Perform Sacrifice, Pray to Humakt.

Affinities and Feats:

† **Death** (Bless Corpse, Death Song Berserk, Fight Undead, Lay Ghost, Visage of Fear)

Y **Honor** (Empower Oath, Know Truth, Sense Ambush, Sever Relationship, Shame Coward)

Secret: Death (Acts as a mystic strike; if the target's AP are driven to 0 or below he dies. The power of Death manifests differently in each person — some cause death with a glance, other with the cut of their sword, and still others by the touch of their shadow.)

Note: Humakt is unusual in that his secret stems from the core deity, not from the subcults. Thus, devotees of all subcults who choose to learn the secret all learn the same one.

Death Sword (Disciple)

Disciples of Humakt are called Death Swords. They are Death manifest in the world. They radiate their power around them so that plants do not grow near their temple, children sicken, and even the air is chill and stale. Old people sometimes stumble and crawl close to a Death Sword simply to end their lives.

A Death Sword dedicates his life to Death. He spends his life killing, practicing, sacrificing, praying, and teaching Death. He must have the permanent backing of a large warband. He must have a rating of 1W2 or better in Close Combat, Recognize Lie, Mythology of Humakt, Brave, Honorable, and at least three affinities. He must know at least three fighting styles or Close Combat weapon skills. Finally, he must have at least three gifts, and know Humakt's secret.

All normal people fear Death Swords, for their dedication to Death surpasses all social responsibility. Normally, Humakti undergo the Resheathing and practice honor within the larger Heortling social context, but disciples transcend society; they respect only cosmic honor.

Such dedication has often brought these powerful individuals into conflict with those living humans about them. Some have become utterly and totally lost in the grip of their god, becoming a sword of Death among the living. The three most notorious are well known. In the Dawn Age, Harstarkus wiped out ten villages to keep people from spreading a deadly plague. He eventually succumbed to the illness himself and fell on his sword. Fifty years later, Borogos the Terrible randomly murdered women and children, but was allowed to live because he hated Gbaji so much. In the Imperial Age, Jononrol the Fearsome killed everyone in three towns because they feared him. He shouted, "Fear me not, or you fear Life itself." Only Great Herand managed to stop him, for the Wind Lord loved life and did not fear death.

† Humakt's Gifts and Geases Y

Humakt gives magical gifts and geases to worshippers. Although we provide a list of common gifts below, the specific gifts and geases available differ from temple to temple. All gifts and their associated geases are based on the same truth: by properly emulating Humakt, an initiate becomes more like his god. The recipient may choose whatever gift he desires, but he must also assume its concurrent geas. The geases taken by a Humakti may have much or little impact on his career. Breaking a geas is a serious infraction, and subjects the worshipper to the Swordbreaker curse and possible Personal Magic Penalties (see **Thunder Rebels**, pg. 80).

Receiving a gift and geas is a special event, done only on a holy day. Each gift requires a different heroquest. Worshippers may take some gifts multiple times, but this increases the geases associated with them. For example, a devotee can take +10 to a specific Sword Fighting skill, but then cannot use any non-Sword weapon. The narrator may prohibit heroes from taking some gifts and geases twice.

Gift	Effect	Geas
Hu's Combat Blessing	+5 to any [Sword] Fighting skill.	Never use one type of non-sword weapon (e.g., mace, spear, axe, bow, etc.).
Kargan's Combat Blessing	+5 to a Humakt or Warrior keyword ability (except a [Sword] Fighting skill). With the narrator's permission, another ability (such as Strong) may receive the bonus instead.	Remain silent one specified day of the week.
Makla Mann's Blessing	Begin Sense Assassin ability at 12 or raise it by +5.	Never participate in an ambush or otherwise attack someone in secret or from hiding.

Yan Starcere's Armor Blessing	Increase a specific set of armor's armor rank by 3	Never lie to outsiders.
Harstarkus' Blessing	Gain the physical abilities of Resist Poison and Resist Disease at a rating of 12 each, or raise one of these abilities by +5.	Never use poison.
Li Phanquann's Blessing	Begin Sense Undead ability at 12, or raise it by +5.	Additional 10% duty to the cult.
Inginew's Sword Blessing	Raise one sword's weapon rank by 5 against a specific foe species.	Never accept magical healing.
Hu's Sword Blessing	Raise one sword's weapon rank by 5 against all foes.	Never accept healing from a non-Humakti.
Kargan's Weapon Blessing	Raise one non-sword weapon's rank by 5 against all foes.	Never sleep in any building except a temple of Humakt.
Rigsdal's Blessing	Begin Sense Enemies ability at 12, or raise it by +5.	Never accept reward, payment, or gift from any but your commanding officer.
Efrodar's Blessing	Gain the Mental Ability of Survive Battle at a rating of 12 or raise it by +5.	Never leave a battle while it is being fought.
Jononrol's Blessing	Recover 1 AP per round during any physical combat as long as AP are above 0.	Never refuse a challenge to one-on-one combat, even from non-Humakti.



Subcults and Hero Cults of Humakt

Humakt's cult is unusual in that all devotees learn the same secret, regardless of the subcult to which they belong. Because of this, nothing distinguishes Humakt's subcults from his hero cults. A devotee may learn the Death secret through any Humakt subcult, even if it offers only a single feat, as long as he meets all other requirements.

†† Efrogdar Blackhands

Efrogdar Blackhands founded the first all-Humakti military unit. Most simply call him the Leader of Battles. His worshippers are the senior officers of Humakti battalions (see pg. 105). His magic affects the morale and battle prowess of units of men. Multiple target penalties apply normally, and so it is wise for a leader not to rely upon it alone for success.

Membership Requirements: Must have served as a Ten-thane in at least two different battles.

Mental Abilities: Survive Battle.

Virtues: Disciplined, Obedient.

Affinities:

⊞ **Battle Command** (Orderly Retreat, Rally Warriors, Stand Fast, Unbreakable Formation, Voice of Command)

†† Hiia Swordsman

The Grazelanders adopted this one-armed warrior from Kethaela around 1360. For thirty years, he fought Uz, Lunars, and Heortlings. Despite his successes, during his life the cult of Humakt was small among his adopted people, and after his death it all but died out. The Feathered Horse Queen revived the cult and transformed it into her personal bodyguard. Hiia's worshippers still guard the Feathered Horse Queen.

Hiia's followers only rarely allow a non-Grazelander to join, and then only if he can already ride and fight on horseback. The Grazelanders forbid Hiia's worship among the *vendref* (Heortling slaves). Worshippers fight with sword and shield, even when mounted. They decorate their shields and armor with shells. They may never use poison in any form.

Membership Requirements: Be accepted into the bodyguard of the Feathered Horse Queen.

Physical Abilities: Close Combat (Sword and Shield Fighting).

Virtues: Arrogant, High-spirited, Loyal.



Affinities:

† **Strongblade** (Cut Metal, Cut Stone, Cut Wood, Truesword Stroke, Unbreakable Blade)

† **Death Feats:** Fight to the Death, Slay Spirit.

†† Hu the Sword

Hu is the face of Humakt most often seen by the rest of the world. Followers of Humakt the Sword are the masters of sword combat, and live up to the common expectation that a Humakti be stern and grim. They disdain all other weapons, even if they do not have a geas that requires them to.

Virtues: Fatalistic, Taciturn.

Affinities:

† **Sword Combat** (Cut Deep, Decapitate Foe, Great Blow, Sword Help, Truesword Stroke)

† **Death Feats:** Shield Destroyer, Weapon Destroyer (this feat will not destroy swords, only other weapons).

†† Indrodar Greydog

Indrodar Greydog was a weaponthane of Queen Lismelder at the time of the Mad-Blood War. In addition to all the normal duties of a war thane in troubled times, he sought for seven years in the Upland Marsh for the corpse of his queen. In those horrible times he learned special ways to destroy zombies, release ghosts, and destroy bones with a sword touch. He learned magic that was better because it was more specific to the needs of his people. He is now well known throughout Sartar.

His shrine in the Lismelder lands has many initiates, and Humakti come from all of the nearby clans to Indrodar's Necklace to learn these powers. Once in their life, any worshipper who has obtained the magic must go on a quest into the Marsh. This may be done at their choice, but they must go if ordered by the cult.

Virtues: Dedicated, Hate Undead.

Affinities:

† **Destroy Undead** (Crumble Bones, Decapitate Zombie, Rend Ghost)





Curiosities of Sartar: A Death Drake

The duck people of Sartar are reknown for their adoration of the Death God (who in their accent is called "Hueymakt"). Many hold the alliance of this diminutive, almost comical people with the dread Death God to be just another fathomless mystery of Dragon Pass. In fact, the durulz are sworn to destroy Delecti, and they find Humakt's anti-undead powers useful in the accomplishment of that goal.

† Inginew Redson

In the Gods War, Humakt lost his original sword and needed replacements, so Inginew made them for him. Inginew's father was Gustbran the Smith, but Inginew specialized and so surpassed even his father. He made many famous blades: the Diamond Blade; the first sword forged from iron, called Uz-Cleaver; Mazta's Invisible Sword; the Wind Sword; and many others. Initiates first learn metallurgy and basic weapon crafting, then may learn to enchant metal and make magical weapons.

Membership Requirements: Know Craft Weapon at 5 ω or better.

Mental Abilities: Work Iron.

Affinities:

✠ **Sword Enchantment rituals** (Enchant Bronze, Enchant Iron, Enchant Silver, Imbue Sword with Magic, Strengthen Metal)

† **Death Feats:** Enchant [Banesword] ritual.

†† Kargan the Warrior

Followers of Kargan say the Sword is only a symbol, and that Humakt resides in all weapons. They attempt to prove this through their deeds, and so the warriors are masters of weapons and styles of combat. Many roam the world simply seeking unusual weapons and fighting styles. Despite their protestations, only their swords, and not their other weapons, glow with the Death Light of the Shining Sword.

Physical Abilities: Close Combat ([Weapon] Fighting), [Fighting Style].

Virtues: Boastful, Independent.

Affinities:

† **Combat** (Blinding Fury, Disarm Foe, Great Blow, Unbreakable Weapon, [Weapon] Help)

† **Death Feats:** Shield Destroyer, Terrify Opponent.

†† Li Phanquann

Li Phanquann was active in the Imperial Age, working for the Empire of the Wyrms' Friends. He came from the Far East, and Humakti call him the Eastern Hero. He knew a way to sense the power of Unlife, and led a famous expedition through the Wastes to destroy them. He even wounded the evil vampire god Vivamort in the Underworld. His magic is widespread now among Humakti.

† **Death Feats:** Detect Undead, Wound Vampire.



†† Makla Mann

Makla Mann means “Unfailing Bondsman.” Humakti revere Makla Mann because of his unbreakable loyalty, and sacrifice to him when they feel weak. Makla Mann never failed in his true loyalty, although everyone including his own cult brothers told him to and fought to make him do so. Yet he never wavered, and stories of his loyalty have even passed outside his cult.

Only initiates know the truth behind these tales. They began during the Gbaji Wars when a Humakti would not abandon his lord, Arkat the Betrayer. Despite the condemnation of his temple, the worshipper proved that his actions were not wrong because his sword never broke.

Virtues: Loyal, Ruthless.

Affinities:

Y **Loyalty** (Fight to the Death, Inspire Loyalty, Sense Disloyalty, Stand Loyal)

Disadvantages: Worshipers may receive no healing from Chalana Arroy healers.

†* Rigsdal

Rigsdal is the Night Watchman who guards the stead when Humakt and the other weaponhanes leave at night. Worshipers call him “Humakt’s Eye,” because he always watches the sky even when Humakt cannot. When Eurmalk first came sneaking onto the *tula*, Rigsdal who saw him despite his illusions. He reported his presence to Humakt, who thus gained the Sword of Death, which Eurmalk had stolen.

For the full Rigsdal keyword, see pg. 230.

Y **Honor** *Feats:* Identify Traitor, See Past Illusion.

†† Yan Starcere

In the Dawn Age, Yan Starcere was a great defender of the innocent against monsters, whether of Chaos, Dara Happa, or the sorcerers. Even many non-Humakti remember him as a wandering protector. He has several shrines, from Maniria to Tarsh. His worship is widespread, and many worshippers join his subcult solely to learn his special feat, which can only be learned and retained by adhering to his virtues.

Virtues: Gallant, Independent.

Feat: Parry Blow.



Divine Retribution

Humakt has no daimones that serve as agents of reprisal. Instead, Humakt himself curses all apostate worshippers. This curse is the Swordbreaker, which no Humakti can fight or resist. It shatters any sword picked up by a member who has broken the Code of Humakt.

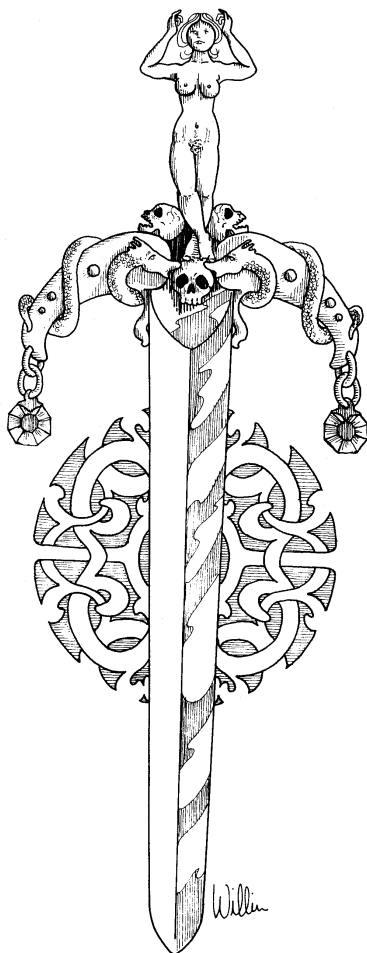
Humakt punishes those who abandon him completely by robbing them of their gifts while increasing the magnitude of their geases.

The Thousand Humakti

Humakti warbands have formed in the past that number hundreds of members. These Humakti Battalions are military units with the iron discipline necessary for deadly efficiency. Efrogdar Blackhands founded the first such military organization in the Dawn Age to fight against Gbaji. Many of the original battalions have maintained a presence since then, although often with only a couple of dozen members for decades at a time.

The Humakti Battalion is commonly known as “The Thousand Humakti.” The name comes from the times when there were enough Humakti to fill their ranks completely. This has only occurred a few times in history, against Gbaji and then the True Golden Horde.

A Warleader heads a Humakti Battalion, and ideally commands ten Hundred-thanes. Each Hundred-thane commands ten Ten-thanes, who each command nine initiates. In practice, this structure is never complete. As many officer positions as possible are always filled, but an officer must have at least two followers to establish his rank. Thus, a Humakti Battalion might consist of only fifteen men, but even so one will



be the Warleader, two will be Hundred-thanes, and four will be Ten-thanes. Some battalions augment their staffing by allowing officers to hold two positions at the same time.

Senior Officers

The **Warleader** is the ultimate commander of the battalion. Normally, the Hundred-thanes elect one of their own number to fill the position when a warleader dies or resigns. At this level, his *Close Combat* is less important than his relationship to the unit. As commander, he should have a *Relationship to [Battalion]* and *Warband Tactics* of 10W2 each.

The Warleader has a special squad of initiates or devotees who serve as his bodyguard. On the battlefield, the Standard Bearer and the Horn Blower always attend him.

A **Hundred-thane** is an experienced warrior who commands a hundred men. He must be a devotee, and must have spent at least 2 years as a Ten-thane. He is expected to have *Close Combat 10W2* and *Warband Tactics 10W*. He has a Shieldman and Swordman, who act as his bodyguards; a servant, who looks after his gear; and a secretary, who takes care of the administration of the unit.

Junior Officers

The **Ten-thane** is a junior officer who leads a squad of up to nine initiates. A Ten-thane should know *Warband Tactics* and have *Close Combat 5W* or better. He is responsible to his men and to his superiors.

‡ To Marry or Not to Marry? ‡

Humakti have two dominant philosophies about marriage. No one has ever proven one more right than the other. No Humakti escapes this question, and each must eventually decide which path to follow.

The *Bare Blades* philosophy allows no marriage, relationship, or sex, because Humakt is Death and his initiates are incarnations of Death. This philosophy views the children of Humakti as the equivalent of undead (although no Humakti has been able to use their undead-destroying powers on such children). Practitioners receive a blessing from Humakt to be happy without a mate if they abstain from all such contact.

The *Hoods* philosophy says that it is acceptable to participate in carnal relations and other pleasures of life. Humakt is Death, and his initiates consequently gain a special sensitivity to Life. Practitioners receive a blessing from Humakt to be happy with a mate.

The **Standard Bearer** must guard the warband standard that holds warband *wyter* with his life. He must have *Close Combat 15w* or better. He commands a special squad of devotees who must guard the standard and take it up if he falls.

The **Horn Blower** is part of the warband leader's bodyguard. He must have *Play Horn 10w* or better. During battles, he relays the commands of the Warleader to the Hundred-Thanes through horn blasts. Some battalions use bagpipes or drums instead of horns to relay commands.

Each hundred usually has an **Armorer** (and assistants) responsible for its equipment. He should have *Craft Weapon 10w* or better.

Each hundred has a **Healer** trained by the Arroin subcult of Chalana Arroy. Since many warriors have geases against magical healing, First Aid is the standard, and healers should have at least *First Aid 5w*.

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Humakt the Champion

When you grew up, you were told about the trickster Eurmál, and how he found the sword called Death. They told you that Eurmál killed Grandfather Life with it, which was true. They said he showed it to Humakt, which was also true. Then they told you that Humakt used the sword to cut his family ties to Orlanth and his brothers. But that was not true. We allow them to say it because of what was decided in the true story. The story I tell you today as you cut your ties to your kin and form a new bond with Humakt. You are not to tell the true story to others; this is part of your test, to see if you are strong enough to sever those ties and keep them cut.

When Orlanth saw the thing called Death, he was not yet king of the Storm Tribe, and he had not yet proven his honor. Before Humakt could lend Orlanth the sword, he had to be sure that Orlanth would respect it properly.

The first time Orlanth came to Humakt, seeking his gift, he tried to treat Humakt like a thrall. Humakt told him that he had the bearing of a god who would rule over most things, but that he would never rule over Death. Orlanth could not accept this, and so he fought against Humakt for sixteen days and sixteen nights. Orlanth was not slain, but many of his thanes were, and he wept.

Orlanth came a second time seeking Death, and this time he treated Humakt like a cottar. Humakt told him that safety and shelter were small things compared to the might of Death. Orlanth could not accept that it was not a fair exchange, and so he fought against Humakt for four days and four nights. Orlanth was not slain, but many of his carls were, and again he wept.

The third time Orlanth came to Humakt, he treated our god like a carl. Humakt told Orlanth that a thing, once killed, could never be the same. Orlanth could not accept that Humakt held a greater power than he did, and so Orlanth fought against him for a day and a night. Orlanth was not slain, but many of his cottars and thralls were.

Then some enemies came. Orlanth was too tired to fight, but Humakt was refreshed, for these were his special foes. They were many, so it took a day and night to dispatch them all to hell, but Humakt did so. Then Orlanth admitted that Humakt was the greater warrior.

Finally, Orlanth spoke to Humakt and treated him honorably, as a thane. "You shall have a place in my tribe, not as my brother, but as my champion. You shall be a weaponthane among weaponthanes, and you shall sit at my side and on the Ring. Your weaponthanes shall answer only to you.

"Now I humbly beg of you, let me borrow that sword of yours." And Humakt, convinced finally of Orlanth's honor, gave him the sword.



Issaries

God of Communication and Trade

*Issaries found the way of the dead,
Broke Darkness of Silence that covered the world.
Issaries chose trails, was scout for the Lightbringers,
Now merchants and heralds worship his name.*

Issaries is the Talking God, who helped Orlanth unify the Storm Tribe by showing the various clans how to talk to one another. He is also the god of trade. He established values, showed people how to profit from strangers instead of just fighting them, and made marketplace rules that allowed trade even between rival clans.

Mythology of Issaries

Issaries is the son of Larnste and Harana Ilor, both members of the Gloranthan Court who were mighty in their day. He wandered far from his birthplace, and learned many things. His first task was to bear messages between Sky and Earth as they flirted, before they conceived their terrible child.

In the Golden Age, he once conciliated a peace between the Emperor and the barbarian Orlanth. He made something from nothing by breeding mules from some animals he borrowed from friends. He often walked alone, where no one else had been. He settled for a while at Kurza, Out There; at Naraza, Hidden; and at Garza, Trading Camp. His sons were born during his journeys, and they and other people followed Issaries in his travels.

Eventually, Issaries joined the Storm Tribe, and Orlanth made Issaries his voice. When the world fell apart, Issaries prepared his Great Passage, finding the right path and making sure it was safe. He traveled to the end of the world to make the impossible peace so that life could start to come together again. During his travels, he faced a terrible foe that confounded his efforts to trade and communicate. Hu is called "the Nine Silences" because of the powers that he used to attack

Issaries. His name, a breathy puff, is the only sound he ever makes, and it has a thousand variations to carry his magic.

The most difficult path he ever followed was into the Halls of the Slain with the Lifebringers. Issaries was the guide, for only he had traveled to all of the lands that they negotiated. He successfully bargained with the Underworld Ferryman, and one of his roles now is as guide of the dead for the Storm Pantheon.

After the Dawn, Issaries' sons carried his secrets to men, and their wisdom aided the spread of civilization. The cult spread widely during the Imperial Age, but most of those worshippers died alongside the God Learners. The cult's records rarely mention those days, lest members become associated again with evildoers.

Manifestations

Issaries is present in every word of speech, in every exchange, and in every merchant's scale. He is the patron of travelers and journeys, and a good road is a favorite sign of his presence.

Icons and Images

Issaries is depicted carrying a stout staff, often giving the sign of peace, and never carrying weapons. Small wooden statuettes are his most common representations. Human-sized statues stand in temples, alongside major trade routes, at important crossroads, and at other sacred sites.



Issaries

Otherworld Home and Life after Death

Issaries has his Traders' Hall and Tent near Orlanth's Stead in the Storm Realm where he brings his worshippers swiftly and safely after death. The Traders' Hall is the base for messengers and traders who journey across the realm and into others. From here, worshippers may exit to the Stagnant Age, Umath's Age, Storm Tribe Age, and Vingkotling Age. Harst's Granary and Garzeen's Market are nearby, and Gultha sets up his Trading Tent whenever he returns home. Although Issaries often leads souls to the Underworld, his worshippers cannot travel there directly from his Otherworld home.

Nature of the Cult

Issaries empowers all true communication. He and his children facilitate exchange and cooperation between people, even as the god is the Universal Merchant. His worshippers are the communicators, guides, and conciliators of the Heortlings. Issaries is also the psychopomp of the Storm Tribe, who guides the dead to the Underworld.

Attitudes and Relationships

Issaries worshippers maintain a friendly rivalry with the followers of Lhankor Mhy. Both cults collect stories and lore, but Issaries' worshippers share their knowledge and news freely.

Issaries' cult maintains strict neutrality with the merchant gods of other pantheons. The most common gods they deal with are Argan Argar, Uz god of surface darkness, and Lokarnos, Solar god of wagons. This neutrality extends even to the hated Lunars, and worshippers honor their duties to Etyries, Lunar goddess of trade and communication, though often grudgingly.

In prior ages, the followers of Issaries were passionate in their pursuit of the cult ideals of peace and neutrality. In modern times, these are principles that Harst and Garzeen worshippers see as secondary to their community and cultural loyalties. In the Imperial Age, however, Issaries merchants traveled all across Glorantha, and remnants of their egalitarian policies remain in the cult even today.

Mode of Worship, Sacrifices, and Holy Days

Issaries is worshipped regularly by the Heortlings, but he receives more prayers than sacrifices from communal worshippers. He receives collateral worship at every sacrifice, since all sacrifices are exchanges between mortals and gods. All Heortlings call on Issaries for aid and inspiration whenever they seek to trade goods, begin a journey, or tell a story. All Heortling funeral rites call upon Issaries to lead the soul of the worshipper to Havan Vor so that it reaches the afterlife safely.

Tribal market days (held the Wild Day of Mobility Week in each season) are cult holy days. Unlike most cults, Issaries' seasonal holy days are not especially elaborate or sacred days. Every marketplace is a home for the god, and every exchange of goods and currency gives him power. Only the high holy day, Secret Way Day, is particularly sacred, being one of the "Twenty-eight Days" of the Heortling sacred calendar.

The annual great market is on Gods Day of Harmony Week in Earth Season. It is no more sacred than any other market day, although Issaries worshippers often promise great bargains on this day.

Secret Way Day

Wild Day, Luck Week, Sacred Time

Issaries' high holy day falls in the middle of the Lightbringer's Quest. When the Lightbringers were lost and without hope, with no way to move forward, Issaries found the secret way that allowed them to pass from the trackless Underworld into the Hall of the Dead. He faced Hu's final silence, and learned how to speak without sound. This confounded Hu, who could not exist in the presence of communication. Issaries spoke to the dead, and they gathered around Hu and made him a part of them again.

Worshippers celebrate on this day by offering the best of their goods to the god, burning them and scattering the ashes to the winds.

Organization

Issaries has worshippers throughout Heortling lands. His subcults represent specific job types within the Heortling mercantile system. Harst is the collector of Spare Grain into silos, worshipped mostly among the clans and in rural communities. Garzeen is the intermediary, patron of shopkeepers and other urban merchants. Gultha, called Goldentongue, is the wanderer, whose primary assets are wit, stories, and the goods (both necessary and exotic) that he carries.

Holy Places and Temples

Most Heortling clans have a shrine to Harst, every city shop has a shrine to Garzeen, and every wandering merchant sets up a shrine to Gultha when he stops to trade. Tribes normally exert trade control within their territories. If trading is a major economic resource, they will have at least a small temple to Issaries. Other temples are found in large urban centers or at locations where major trade routes meet. These temples are often the home base of a large trade ring, which acts as a merchant guild.

Most temples and trade rings annually elect a chief priest; his authority is ceremonial, not commercial. The most successful traders, or those with the favor of influential political leaders, wield true power in the cult. The master of any market is the senior Issaries worshipper of the host community. The cult does not officially discriminate against members of any subcult. In practice, however, worshippers of Garzeen hold most positions of authority, since Harst worshippers are generally less sophisticated and Gultha worshippers usually do not stay around long enough to fulfill their duties.

Membership Requirements

Merchants and traders worship Issaries. They must treat their communities fairly and not cheat anyone in them. Many worshippers profess a “neutral honesty,” but the cult does not punish worshippers for cheating customers who are not community members.

Worshippers must follow the principles of the subcult to which they belong. Membership is open to either men or women. Barring specific local prejudice, followers of Issaries are always welcomed (or at least reasonably treated) wherever they enter Heortling lands. Worshippers within a clan are usually exempt from attending the *fyrð*.

The laws of the Lunar occupation favor the worshippers of Etyries over those of Issaries merchants (especially those operating outside of the clan). As such, many are losing control of their traditional markets. Despite this, a member may not treat worshippers of other merchant gods differently from other customers. Thus, when an Issaries merchant is conducting business, he cannot refuse to bargain with an Etyries merchant simply because she is a Lunar. He may serve other customers first, but if he wishes to avoid the Lunar merchant he must leave or close up his shop completely.

Initiate

A member of the cult must sponsor a prospective member, who must meet normal requirements. In practice, most merchants begin as apprentices. The nature of the cult is such that the job of being or serving a merchant is very compatible with religious duties. Thus, although most apprentices are initiates, they may be devotees if they wish.

A worshipper of Issaries created using the *Hero Wars* rules belongs to the Gultha Goldentongue subcult by default.

Magic Keyword

Physical Abilities: Identify Goods by Touch.

Mental Abilities: Mythology of Issaries, Mythology of Lightbringers, Speak Tradetalk, Tally.

Virtues: Astute, Honest, Thrifty.

Affinities: ‡ **Communication**, ‡ **Merchant**.

Note: Tally is a special form of writing used to note costs, inventories, debts, and other financial transactions. It is a book-keeping system, not a written language, but can denote basic concepts in Tradetalk. Tally is a cult secret, never taught to outsiders.

▽ Mules ▽

Mules are the favored animals of the cult. Issaries borrowed a horse and a donkey from two friends, then crossbred them to make something from nothing, the mule. They are useful to merchants as work beasts and trade items. They are especially useful to traveling merchants, who can claim to horse haters that they are 'not-horses' and to horse lovers that they are 'horse-kin.'

Devotee

Devotees normally fulfill the social and mercantile requirements for their community. Trade rings usually choose devotees over initiates of similar proficiency to fill vacancies.

Affinities and Feats:

- + **Communication** (Clear-voice Shout, Convince Buyer, Convince Seller, Entertain with Voice, Talk with Hands)
- + **Merchant** (Bless Market, Evaluate Currency, Identify Thief, Lock Box, Recognize Magical Object)

Subcults of Issaries

+ ⚡ Garzeen Silvertongue

Garzeen, or 'Middleman', is the second son of Issaries. He gained popularity where towns and cities developed. At first people gathered but could not communicate, so Garzeen taught them his own language, known as Tradetalk. Some people were willing to pay for his other aid, and so he found his first profession. He took barter as did his brother Harst, but also invented the art of trading goods for money, and so he grew wealthy. He is now the patron of intermediaries, factors, and shopkeepers, who ply their trade in towns and cities.

Garzeen's worshippers often display their wealth and status with excessive dress or luxury.

Physical Abilities: Tireless Voice.

Mental Abilities: Orate.

Affinities:

- + **Middleman** (Enhance Appearance of Goods, Evaluate Quality, Sense Theft, Weights and Measures)
- + **Merchant Feats:** Hide Booby Trap, Make Safety Alarm.

Secret: **Guarantee Profit** (Automatically succeed at a single final action during any contest in which the hero has successfully used his **Middleman** or **Merchant** affinity but has not yet made a profit on the deal.)



Curiosities of Sartar: A Goldentongue Merchant

Here is a fairly typical merchant of the type that leads and escorts caravans from foreign cities and distant lands. These traders often indulge in foreign trappings, like this fellow wearing the latest Aeolian fashion.



‡ † Gultha Goldentongue

The third son of Issaries was Gultha the Wanderer. He refused to stay in one place, and so exploited the ways of their father. Gultha roamed widely during the Godtime, and once came across two gods arguing over who had the best powers. Gultha could see that each power had its own benefits in the right situation, and showed the gods a way to exchange powers for a time so that they could appreciate the usefulness of each other's magic. In this way, Gultha brought peace and understanding, and the two gods each gifted him for his ingenuity.

Gultha is the god of traders that travel among the clans and cities trading with their Harst and Garzeen brothers. Others journey into foreign lands seeking new knowledge, goods, and trade for their people.

Physical Abilities: Close Combat (Staff Fighting).

Mental Abilities: Mapping, Orate, Organize Caravan, Sing, Speak [Language].

Virtues: Wanderlust.

Affinities:

≈ **Travel** (Cover Tracks, Detect Ambush, Find Escape Route, Locate Trail, Protection while Sleeping)

‡ **Communication Feats:** Be Understood, Friendly Greeting.

Secret: Trade Feats (Ritual magic. Two willing participants each give knowledge of a feat to the other. The devotee may be one of the participants, but does not have to be. The magic may be used in a single contest at the original owner's ability rating, and becomes unavailable to the original owner until it has been used in this manner. Use of the magic by one party does not require that the other person immediately use the magic he received.)

☞ *A Humakti warrior named Kallai approaches Orkarlman, wishing to trade magic. After a period of bargaining (during which Orkarlman forces Kallai to pay him two sheep), the merchant agrees to trade feats with Kallai.*

Kallai wants to learn the merchant's Protection while Sleeping feat so that he can rest easily when he travels through Telmori territory the next week. In return, he offers his Bless Corpse feat to Orkarlman, who earlier mentioned that he would be traveling near the Upland Marsh. Orkarlman agrees and conducts his ritual. Orkarlman suddenly understands how to Bless Corpse while at the same time forgetting the knowledge of the Protection while Sleeping feat.



Three days later, a horrible zombie stumbles out of the Marsh and lumbers toward Orklarman. As soon as the zombie is close, Orklarman uses the Bless Corpse feat in an attempt to dispel the evil magic that animates the zombie. An extended contest ensues between the 6W ability rating of Kallai's Death affinity and the zombie's Stench of Terror 8W (the narrator chooses to use the zombie's highest ability rating as the resistance). After several exchanges, Orklarman reduces the zombie's AP to -3. Because the contest did not involve combat, the narrator rules that this marginal victory deactivates the zombie temporarily. Rather than wait around, Orklarman quickly gathers his gear and leads his mule away.

Later that night, after setting up camp in a defensible spot, Orklarman remembers the Protection while Sleeping feat. Since he has no way of knowing what happened to Kallai, he simply uses the feat to ensure that he has a safe sleep, glad that he does not have to keep watch until dawn.

‡ ‡ Harst Bronzetongue

Harst is the clan merchant god and the inventor of barter. He taught the people of Dragon Pass to speak, but when he sought the hand of the daughter of Yudam-aryam he was refused because he had no way to provide for a family. Harst went to his friends and asked for a handful of spare grain from each. With this, he bargained for clay pots from his brother. He traded these pots to the people who had given him the grain, thus repaying them and making another profit. He won his wife, established trade in Dragon Pass, and gained the nickname "Spare Grain."

Harst's cult is shared with Orlanth Allfather. Orlanthi Harst see trading as secondary to their life within the clan, whereas Issaries Harst merchants dedicate their lives to trading and view themselves as specialists. All Harst worshippers prefer to barter commodities such as crafts, livestock, and foodstuffs, since money is not very useful in rural areas.

Mental Abilities: Evaluate Resources.

Affinities:

‡ **Store Goods** (Count Goods, Evaluate Livestock, Evaluate Quality of Goods, Keep Grain Dry, Lock Storage Building)

‡ **Communication Feats:** Speak with Hands.

‡ **Merchant Feats:** Bless Storage Building.

Secret: Communicate with Strangers (Acts as an integrated passion spirit giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's rating to any ability used to communicate with someone whose language the devotee does not speak.)





Jonstown Compendium #299,235

Ten Stories People Love To Share:

The Lightbringer's Quest, or How the World was Put Back Together. The greatest story of all, a day and a night in its full telling, and all in meter sharp as a spear's point.

Harmast's Saga. How a barefoot, goat-eating stickpicker became the greatest hero of the Heortlings. Two must sing this tale together, trading line for line.

'Nalda's Blessing, or the Pleasures of the Good Earth. A beautiful, sentimental hymn unique to each clan, which describes the beauty and magic of the *tula* so that all who hear it are moved to tears. In Sacred Time, it is part of the Boundary Ritual.

The Wooing of Ernalda. The tale of how the Storm Lord won the Fairest Bride through many trials, and so united two great tribes. It gives practical advice in the ways of romance for women and men.

What Eurmál Did Next. A series of light-hearted and often bawdy trickster tales. Favorites stories include "Elmal and the Three Blue Sheep," "The Great Contest" (Eurmál's rivalry with stuffy Elmal), and "How Eurmál Lost His Penis."

Heort's Saga. Tales of survival in the Chaos Age, and the part played by your ancestors. This saga contains strong magic, and the breaths of ancestors may rise about the hearth as their descendants sing it.

The Triumph of Tarkalor. The dramatic lay of the great Sartarite king who defeated the Lunars. Part of the much-longer Chant of the Storm Princes, a great epic that runs from Colymar to Sartar to Salinarg.

Sartar's Road. The mystery of Sartar: how one man became a god and built a mighty kingdom. May his flame burn again!

The Saga of House Vinga. Even clans that do not worship her love the Redheaded Daughter. The most famous story is that of Tenostere of the Vestantes, "the Fightin'est Woman," who defeated every male challenger in the land. She died with King Rastagar at the Last Royal Betrayal. The saga also includes the stories of the Red-Headed Lodge of the Berenethelli Tribe, famous for the many Vingans it produced.

Clan genealogies, founders' tales, exploits of the ancestors, and cattle boasts. Are we not heroes also? When reciting genealogies, be careful you don't miss any names, lest your neighbors become upset! Cattle boasts are tales of your own deeds, and if they make a good story or poem they will be repeated and your fame will spread.

H H Issaries the Guide

Issaries the Guide leads the souls of the dead to Havan Vor for judgment. When a member of the Storm Tribe dies, Issaries comes for them even if they die far from home. In payment for this service, a portion of all grave goods burned or buried with a person belongs to Issaries.

Few people worship Issaries the Guide regularly. Instead, he receives sacrifice during all funeral rites, along with Orlanth and Ernalda. Issaries the Guide is also the Lightbringer aspect of the god, and it is in this role that he occasionally receives active worship, although people rarely become devotees of this subcult.

Membership Requirements: Most worshippers are preparing to perform the Lightbringers Quest.

Physical Abilities: Tireless.

Mental Abilities: Know Heortling Underworld, Sense Ghost.

Virtues: Brave.

Affinities:

✦ **Secret Way rituals** (Find Hidden Way, Locate Lost Soul, Open Doorway to Havan Vor)

✦ **Communication Feats:** Speak to Ghost, Speak to Mind.

Secret: Underworld Guide (This ability negates the -20 Alien World modifier that the hero would otherwise suffer in the Underworld. It can also augment any ability used to navigate through the Underworld.)

Hero Cults of Issaries

Herald Goodword

Hero Cult of Gultha Goldentongue

During the course of his wanderings, Gultha met Kurzana, a daughter of Lhankor Mhy called Mother Language. He sought her hand in marriage, and won it only after performing many tasks for the God of Knowledge. The two had a son, Herald, but they did not stay together. Herald combined the abilities of both parents. He did not trade goods, but served as a messenger, carrying words and tokens between friends and enemies. He first learned this skill when going back and forth between his parents, who would not speak to each other.

Herald always performed his missions with honesty and good will, no matter who the other parties were. Orlanth sent him to bear words of peace to the Uz, the Sorcerers, and once even to the Dragons. His cult was common in Dragon Pass during the Imperial Age, but in the modern era, it is much less common. Only a few tribal kings employ heralds, although large cities sometimes have members who work for hire.

Membership Requirements: Be honorable and a competent rider.

Physical Abilities: Ride.

Mental Abilities: Diplomat, Memorize Words, Speak [Language].

Virtues: Honest, Reliable.

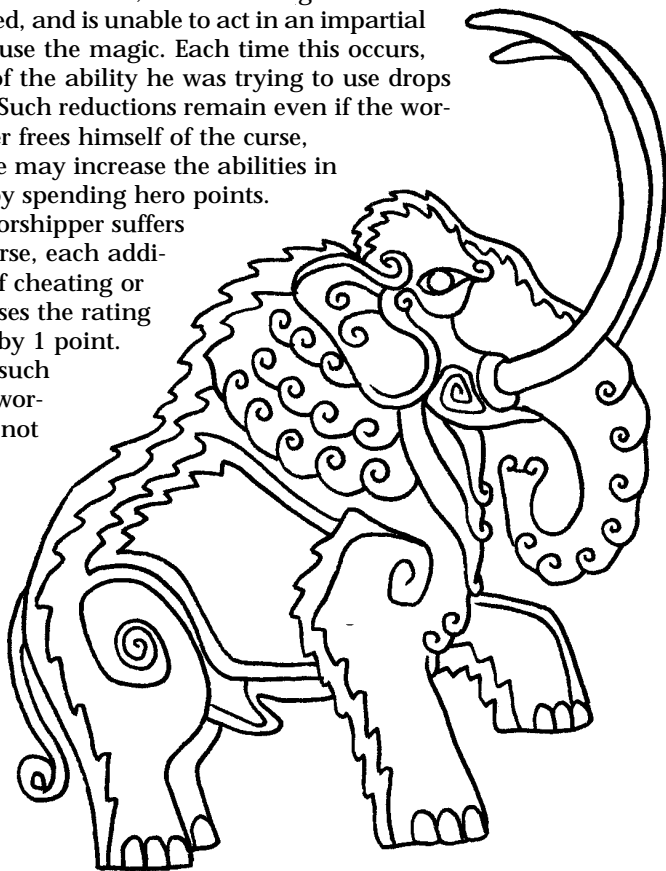
Feats: Protect Message, Recite Message Perfectly.

Divine Retribution

Worshippers of Issaries are subject to the normal pantheon agents of reprisal. Additionally, Issaries curses worshippers who cheat or steal from members of their community. The curse gives the victim a flaw named **Raw Greed** at a rating determined by the number and magnitude of the victim's crimes. Whenever the victim tries to conduct trade, settle a dispute, or use Issaries magic, he must overcome the flaw. If he fails, he becomes agitated and self-interested, and is unable to act in an impartial manner or use the magic. Each time this occurs, the rating of the ability he was trying to use drops by 1 point. Such reductions remain even if the worshipper later frees himself of the curse, although he may increase the abilities in the future by spending hero points.

Once the worshipper suffers from the curse, each additional act of cheating or theft increases the rating of the flaw by 1 point.

As with all such curses, the worshipper cannot use hero points to buy it down, but most perform proper atonement.



Issaries the Conciliator

Issaries teaches that traveling, trading, and talking are connected, like a trade route. If one of those things is broken, everything shatters.

This is a story of the time when everything had shattered. Trade stopped, so Issaries set out along his very long trade route to find out what the problem was. He convinced the Know-It-All God to come and assist him, because it was a confused time and things were often mixed up, and he wanted Mhy's advice. He convinced Urox to come along, because there were many bad things that might attack him, and the Storm Bull was good at beating things up.

Issaries searched for a long time to find the problem. Finally, he found a place where the people were suffering greatly. He visited a clan called the Digging Stick People. Their *tula* was the battleground for the Long-Noses and the Big-Teeth, two peoples who were fighting each other. Whenever they fought, they trampled the Digging Stick pastures. Hungry soldiers stole and ate their cows. The armies also captured and ransomed the carls to get money for weapons. The armies even pressed the weaponthanes into service, so that they had to risk their lives for no reward. Because of this, they did not have the time to talk to anyone or the resources to trade.

Storm Bull said, "It is good to see fighting. There's another battle coming up, the biggest battle of all. Everyone should practice."

Know-It-All said, "These people are not the same as our people. Legally, we are not obligated to help them."

But Issaries said, "Storm Bull, if a big important battle is coming up, all peoples must learn to fight only their real foes. Know-It-All, the things we have in common with these people are more important than the things that separate us. I must help them."

Know-It-All had never been generous, so he refused to help. So Issaries went to talk to the Long-Noses with Storm Bull to protect him. Issaries spoke to their priestess, who was troublesome. "We have no cause to make peace with the Big-Teeth. They have always attacked and killed us. They take our leaders, our priests, our healers, and our thanes." Then she lowered her voice and, through her enormous nose, whispered a shameful secret. "Then, the Big-Teeth devour our flesh and prevent our bones from being interred in my holy, secret place. We can never make peace with them so long as they eat us."

Next, Issaries went to talk to the Big-Teeth. They were very fierce, and said that Storm Bull smelled like food to them. When Issaries suggested they make peace with the Long-Noses, their warleader

laughed. "It has long been decreed that we should eat the Long-Noses, for they are large and juicy and flavorful. They can eat the grasses of the plains and the leaves of the forest, but we cannot. We won't starve just to please others. We could eat your two-legs instead, devour the villagers whose land you are so concerned about. But I don't think you would consider that a good solution. We can't do as you ask, for how does one make peace with one's dinner?"

Issaries was at a loss, so he asked Know-It-All for answers. Know-It-All told him that the Long-Noses were, except for their noses, their fur, and their teeth, just like very large cows. Know-It-All also said that the Big-Teeth were just very big alynxes, and that Issaries should treat them like pets.

So Storm Bull went to the Long-Nose encampment and romanced the priestess. Then Issaries said to her, "The Big-Teeth are always going to eat some of you. If you can accept that bad thing, perhaps other things could be made better."

Then Storm Bull went to the Long-Tooth encampment, fought the warleader, and showed him who was boss. Again, Issaries spoke. "You must eat, but right now the Long-Noses exact a heavy toll for each of them you succeed in taking. If you are willing to lose some of your choices, other things could be made better."

So the two agreed to meet. The priestess accepted the Big-Teeth's right to eat some of her people. The warleader agreed that his people would only attack the old, the sick, and the cottars of the Long-Noses. He also agreed that the Big-Teeth would meet the Long-Noses during Earth Season and turn over the bones of the eaten, so that they might be interred in the secret, holy way, and their spirits sent to the right place.

It was not long before the two groups started trading things other than the bones of the dead, and the people whose *tula* was once trampled soon joined in the trading as well. Gradually this spread through the world, as trade led to talking, talking allowed travel, and travel permitted trade. Thus did Issaries repair his trade route.





Lhankor Mhy

God of Knowledge and Literacy

*Finder of riddles, he knows the world's secrets,
Rescued all wisdom from ignorance's gloom.
Helped save the world during the Gods War,
Now lawspeakers and elders call for his praise.*

Lhankor Mhy is the wisest of the Heortling deities. He knows the laws, customs, and histories of the people, as well as things about foreign places, peoples, and gods (though many people think a lot of this extra knowledge is useless trivia). He even knows how to read. Lhankor Mhy is the Graybeard, and his priests must all have beards, so women and other worshippers without them wear false beards. Lhankor Mhy is a Lightbringer, for he liberated the Light of Knowledge that the Darkness had extinguished.

Mythology of Lhankor Mhy

Lhankor Mhy was born to Orenoar, Mistress of Truth, as she stood upon Mostal, the Mountain of Law. Some worshippers say that Acos, the God of Law, was his sire, but others say that the Mountain itself fathered him. For ages, Lhankor Mhy lived upon the great Mountain of Law and sang songs of Knowledge and Power. He could discern and state the Cosmic Law that ruled gods. He remembered everything he ever saw or learned, although he was not asked to tell about anything until Orlanth wanted to know where to find the weapon that could kill Sh'hakarzeel the Dragon.

During the Darkness, gods and goddesses of all forms of Light followed Yelm to Hell. One of these was Elasa, the Mistress of the Light of Knowledge, and Lhankor Mhy and his followers were suddenly bereft of inspiration. Lhankor Mhy invented writing to share himself with his followers, and when he set out to find his wife they used these documents to access his power.

Lhankor Mhy suffered many trials along the way, and helped form the Lightbringers. He succeeded and failed at different times. He knew how to defeat Konagog and Vonagog, was left speechless because he was right, and could not write because he proved he could. He provided the key to Orlanth at the Riddling End, and so was the key to success. When he returned with the victorious Lightbringers, Elasa returned with him, and inspiration was his again.

Lhankor Mhy embraces all knowledge, something that mortals cannot do. Their knowledge must always be incomplete, and what they know does not always apply to their problems. Yet many follow Lhankor Mhy's constant thirst for knowledge, and his worshippers constantly accumulate information.

Manifestations

Lhankor Mhy is present in every thought, but especially in writing. The few remaining pieces of the Mountain of Law, called truestone, hold special meaning for the cult, for they are the last remnant of the original knowledge and law of the world. Such pieces can hold powerful magic, and the cult hoards the few pieces they have in secret locations.

Otherworld Home and Life After Death

Worshippers of Lhankor Mhy travel to his Great Study near Orlanth's Stead in the Storm Realm. Although his library there is vast, in truth this is but the anteroom to his Grand Library, which exists beyond the borders of the Storm Realm. Only worshippers of Lhankor Mhy can travel from the Great Study to the Grand Library, and once there they sit at the feet of the Eternal Source of Knowledge. Their time in the Library before rebirth depends on how well they have fulfilled their quest of for knowledge. From the Grand Library, worshippers can travel to the Stagnant Age, Umath's Age, Storm Tribe Age, Vingkotling Age, or Chaos Age.

Priests read long accounts of the knowledge and literary accomplishments of worshippers during the normal Heortling funeral services.



Lhankor Mhy

Nature of the Cult

Lhankor Mhy is the Seeker and the Sage, and his worshippers provide the same service to mortals that Lhankor Mhy provides to the gods. They do not work for free, however, and charge money, service, or new knowledge for their information. They also constantly seek knowledge.

Although the Lhankor Mhy cult is rife with internal politics, most worshippers stay out of community politics. They advise all, maintaining strict neutrality. A chief priest of the cult is often an adviser to the ruling body of a region, but just as often is not. The rare follower of Lhankor Mhy in a clan is often a thane, but is not automatically the clan's Lawthane or part of its inner ring (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 25 and 169).

Most Lhankor Mhy worshippers reside in the city temples, not among the clans. Lhankor Mhy temples are always libraries, repositories of scrolls, books, and other written documents that require large staffs of apprentices and sages to maintain.

Attitudes and Relationships

Lhankor Mhy is Orlanth's Lawthane and is also one of the Lightbringers. His worshippers favor Lightbringer cults even over other Heortlings if all other factors are equal.

The cult dislikes any who limit or destroy knowledge. Worshippers have a great disdain for followers of gods such as Humakt and Urox, who fight and kill without concern for the knowledge they destroy in the process. The greatest hatred is for Chaos, which destroyed the mythical Mountain of Law known as the Spike. Lhankor Mhy's particular foes are Thanatar (also called Tien), who beheaded Elasa and sent her to hell, and Atyar, the devourer of knowledge who tried to steal Lhankor Mhy's thoughts in the Underworld.

Lhankor Mhy remains above the quarrels of other gods, and is an impartial adviser to all. His worshippers have no binding ties to any element, and can advise Sun, Wind, or Earth with equal ease. Such idealism is sought, of course, but Lhankor Mhy's inclusion in the Storm Tribe require members to hate Chaos and Orlanth's other enemies. Historically, the cult's neutrality has allowed it to thrive when the Heortling peoples expanded into Peloria, Ralios, and other lands. In the modern era, however, the cult does not cooperate well with members of the Lunar Religion. Cult doctrines require that the temples allow all knowledge seekers to share space. Thus, for example, the Pavis temple now has a wing given over to the Lunar worshippers of Irrippi Ontor. Relationships between the two groups are always strained, although members are less hostile to the Dara Happan priests of Buserian that sometimes accompany Irrippi's brown sages.

Mode of Worship and Sacrifices

Worship ceremonies are invariably long and wordy. Worshippers wend their way through the magic of words into a heightened state of awareness where they drift amidst pure knowledge. Normal people who attend usually fall into a stupor of confusion and boredom.

Lhankor Mhy usually receives sacrifices of sheep, whose skins the cult uses to make parchment. Communal worshippers must donate cattle for sacrifice if they wish to benefit from the ceremony or the knowledge of the priests; in this way, sages of the cult often eat beef (apprentices eat mutton except on feast days). Lhankor Mhy especially loves sacrifices of books, scrolls, and maps, which he accumulates in his immortal library. A schism exists within the cult about whether it is better to sacrifice original documents or the only copy of documents, or whether student practice sheets are acceptable.

Holy Days

Each season initiates gather during Truth Week at temples for ceremonies and examinations. The last day of the week is the seasonal holy day of the cult. Initiates gather to pray and make sacrifices of their work to keep the god strong, continue the Prophecy Day rites of the previous year, and make public announcements. Those who did well on their examinations attend the sacrificial feast; those who did poorly serve the sages and eat the leftovers.

⤴ Literacy ⤵

Among the Heortlings, reading runes is widespread. Everyone knows the runes of the storm pantheon even though they no mortal language uses them as a script or alphabet. True literacy is a particular attribute of Lhankor Mhy, however, one that the cult jealously guards. The cult so closely keeps this secret that they often treat with disdain those few other Heortlings who can read, claiming that they have stolen cult secrets.

Lhankor Mhy invented three scripts, two vocabularies, and one code system. Most documents are in either “cat scratching” (the Southern script used by Heortling and surrounding peoples), or “dog scratching” (used by the Alakorings of Tarsh and surrounding peoples). Both scripts use the common vocabulary that more or less reproduces many Heortling sounds. The third script, “stone scratching,” is difficult to learn, and the cult uses it only for magical formulae. This script uses the second vocabulary, whose words change in meaning according to the Elasa Secrets, a complex code system that must be learned separately.

Lhankor Mhy's holy days are a gradual progression of the powers of learning and the mind, from thought to prophecy. Thus do the masks of Lhankor Mhy show themselves in the world.

Y Thought Day

Gods Day, Truth Week, Sea Season

This day celebrates the end of the ignorance of the Green Age. It is the birth of Lhankor Mhy, and so of thought and intelligence. Worshippers spend the day in quiet contemplation and study. The week-long examinations involve testing apprentices on the memorization of facts and lists of names.

Y Knowledge Day

Gods Day, Truth Week, Fire Season

This day celebrates Lhankor Mhy's seeking throughout the Golden Age for knowledge. None knew of his abilities or sought his council, and so he amassed a body of knowledge and lore that he shared with no one. Sages and scholars share their vast knowledge with the apprentices and each other during the rites. The week-long examinations involve testing apprentices on knowledge of their primary area of study.

Y Truth Day (Graduation Day, Sage Day)

Gods Day, Truth Week, Earth Season

Truth is the Light of Knowledge, and this day celebrates the union of Lhankor Mhy with Elasa. The god acquires inspiration from this union, and worshippers seek the same so that they can learn to understand the truth instead of just knowing facts. The week-long examinations involve testing apprentices on their ability to reason and think creatively.

Truth Day is also called Graduation Day because it is the day when apprentices who successfully completed all of their exams at the end of the previous season graduate from their apprenticeship. Since most such apprentices become sages, the day is also known as Sage Day.

Y Law Day

Gods Day, Truth Week, Darkness Season

Law Day celebrates Lhankor Mhy as Lawthane of the Storm Tribe. The god at last has a home and a community to share his knowledge with, and he learns all of the laws of men, gods, and the universe. The Law Day rites are communal among the clans, for whom Lhankor Knowing is just one of several gods of law. In the temple libraries, worshippers listen to recitations of law and legal precedent. The week-long exams involve testing apprentices on their knowledge of laws and customs.

Y Wisdom Day

Gods Day, Truth Week, Storm Season

Wisdom was the result of Lhankor Mhy's seeking and finding. As he advised Orlanth and wandered the world, he learned that wisdom comes only from experience and a broad base of knowledge. Apprentices benefit from the accumulated wisdom of their masters, who spend the day advising their students on the knowledge that cannot come from books. The week-long examinations test apprentices on their ability to use common sense and experience to solve problems and disputes.

Y Y Prophecy Day (Apprentice Day)

Gods Day, Fate Week, Sacred Time

Lhankor Mhy's high holy day celebrates the end of the Lightbringer's Quest, the recreation of the world, and his reunion with the Light of Knowledge. All Heortlings attend the sacrifices on this day. It is the last day of the Sacred Time and the moment before Time begins. The wise men, "those who know," cast the net of knowledge into the future, derived from the events of the previous two weeks. The priests make prophetic statements of warning and blessing for the year to come. Sometimes this is in the form of a rite, begun to ensure something come true. These ceremonies are the most efficacious of all their rites.

Prophecy Day is also called Apprentice Day, because it is the day when new apprentices are generally accepted into the cult.

Organization

The Lhankor Mhy cult consists of several large organizations that cooperate but do not obey each other. These organizations ignore tribal and national borders; each has its own temple hierarchy at a particular cult library. High priests reside at five of the six Great Libraries.

The greatest temple is the Final Information Library, established by the Pharaoh in the Holy Country when he replaced the chief priests of several rival organizations. He built it on the spot where Lhankor Mhy had rested with his bride when Time began. The god was present when the Pharaoh opened the temple and transferred the contents of several formerly competing libraries into its vast halls. Worshippers came from all across Esrolia, Caladraland, Heortland, and even distant Pavis to join the new temple.

Nearly as famous is the Jonstown Temple, founded by one of King Sartar's companions. It draws worshippers from all across Sartar, Tarsh, and Prax. Despite its fame, the Jonstown Temple is not one of the Great Libraries. The other Great Libraries are Derensev, in Volsaxiland, whose

sages are noted for their oratory skills; Hevduran Dege Library, center of the Sword Sages, in Esrolia; Jevdur, a remnant of the Gods Age that has strange writings chipped into its many stone corridors; Jelenkev School, famous for its copying of manuscripts, in southern Heortland; and the Laraval Library in Tarsh, now called the “iron books” because its books and scrolls could not be taken out by the Lunar Empire, which closed the temple and covered the doors with iron to prevent anyone else from using them.

Although the network of Knowledge Temples is close and well established, large gatherings of sages from different temples are uncommon. The Holy Country temple scholars are highly regarded and often wield the most social influence. Any inter-temple discussion is presided over by the senior sage or scholar that specializes in the field under discussion.

Wild Sages

Wild Sages exist outside of the temples, solitary researchers who emulate their god by becoming Seekers. They probe into ruins, explore new places, and investigate strange phenomena. They are often disdainful of their cloistered compatriots, and the disregard is mutual. Most return only on holy days, but some observe the rites in the field and rarely come to a temple for religious observances.

Jonstown Compendium #1,483

What Alfgar Whitecloak, chieftain of the Gray Fox Clan of the Sambari, heard from a man in Backford:

“There is a warrior king there who wears a hart’s mask and helmet. Daimones built his great hall many ages ago. He is king of a Ring of Iron, and every counselor is a heroquester or a chieftain in hiding.”

Why did you leave? “Me, the son of a wheelwright? I would be lucky to hold some nobleman’s horse and sleep in the snow outside the Hall. I prefer this place, our world, where my own might and right can earn me some deserved recognition. I would rather be a chieftain of peasants than be a peasant chieftain among the likes of Heort’s Hall.”

Are they dead, then? “Not now. Not all of them. But soon. How can they live up there, sitting in their ice-cold hall without food or drink — nothing but prayer. How will they fight, most of them like skeletons sheathed in ice, if they live at all. It is not a place for normal men.”

And you saw Egil Cragbrow? “Indeed, from your description it could be none other. And upon his brow he wore a sacred crown, like the Sartar barbarian kings wear, and upon his arm was a quicksilver ring set with an obsidian stone, much like the one you wear, sir.”

Temple Organization and Ranks

A Chief Librarian presides over each temple of Lhankor Mhy. Three subordinates oversee specific duties: the Provost of Apprentices, the Chief of Loremasters, and the Chief Priest. All must be sages (devotees).

The Provost of Apprentices arranges for room and board for the apprentices and other students. He is also responsible for collecting payment for instruction and for maintenance of the temple grounds.

The Chief of Loremasters administers all non-magical instruction, organizes the collection, and reviews all foreign artifacts. He also coordinates with the Provost of Apprentices to ensure the copying of scrolls and books. The larger temples have specialized assistants for each of these tasks, titled Head Loremasters.

The Chief Priest leads sacrifice and prayers, maintains the temple's magical defenses, and is in charge of all magical training. He must be an experienced priest in addition to being a sage.

Membership Requirements

Apprentice (Initiate)

Initiation requires that the applicant become an apprentice. He or she must pass a test to prove intelligence, obedience, and other traits that characterize one blessed by the god. If accepted, he pays for his training by service to the cult, performing menial tasks assigned by the Provost of Apprentices. Although the cult does not officially condone the practice, apprentices from wealthy families can sometimes avoid many tasks in return for donations from their family.

Once initiated, the worshipper must vow to speak only truth to cult members. He may not marry until he finishes his apprenticeship. He must have a beard, either real or fake. The usual color of a fake beard is gray or white, and worshippers often dye real beards gray. Apprentices must follow the orders of any sage (with the Provost of Apprentice's orders taking precedence over any others) and must attend the holy day rites and examinations. The few worshippers found among the clans are exempt from service in the *fyrd*. Normal Heortlings, being hard-working, physically active people, generally hold Lhankor Mhy worshippers in contempt or incredulity.

Service, study, and religious obligations take up about 30% each of an apprentice's time; as such, they do not have the time to be devotees. In return, they have a place to sleep in the temple, often a dormitory shared with other apprentices. The cult feeds them and gives them one set of clothes each year on Thought Day.

⚔ Temple Libraries ⚔

Although the cult of Lhankor Mhy is dedicated to the collection of knowledge, it has never developed a consistent classification system. Sages often spend years getting to know the collection so that they are familiar with the location of items relating to their specialties. Often, they add to the confusion by starting their own private library from material they take from the main Library.

Thus, although all the knowledge of the world may be somewhere in a Lhankor Mhy temple, it might take years to find a particular item. Every Chief Librarian traditionally vows to catalogue the library, but they rarely live long enough to fully implement and document their system. The next Chief Librarian invariably has a new system.

In areas such as Pavis and Jonstown, where new information and artifacts come in every week, the sages have long since realized that order is impossible. Until the arrival of a cult hero to bring law out of disorder, worshippers often merely look for a free shelf or build a new one. Many sages believe that these (and probably other) libraries contain areas completely covered by later construction.

Y Temple Shape Y

The Great Libraries all follow the same architectural pattern. Each has a central building built in the shape of Lhankor Mhy's Truth Rune. Even smaller temples have this shape if possible, although this is often limited by local terrain or other buildings.

Each arm of the temple has a special function, with additional functions for the center juncture. The layout of the Pavis temple is typical of the layout used by the cult when there is space.

Center Juncture (lower level): Temple of Knowledge, Court of Philosophy, Library of Originals.

Center Juncture (upper level): Quarters for Chief Librarian, Provost of Apprentices, Chief Loremaster, and Chief Priest.

Left Arm (lower level): Rooms for training, study, and examinations.

Left Arm (upper level): Senior Apprentice quarters.

Right Arm (lower level): Rooms for training, study, and examinations.

Right Arm (upper level): Quarters for sages and scholars.

Base Arm (lower level): Public training areas, including space rented to other temples. (In practice, most of this space ends up filled with records and other storage.)

Base Arm (upper level): Junior Apprentice quarters.

Until he has proved himself capable of mastering a subject, an apprentice receives instruction in history, culture, and reading and writing. Apprentices receive training as scribes (see pg. 28). They must compile a study plan with the aid of the Provost of Apprentices. This course of study consists of one or two mental abilities that the apprentice will explore. Advancement in the cult relies on successful completion of this study plan. The study plan can include field trips to research sites or the God Plane under the supervision of a senior advisor.

Once an apprentice fulfills the requirements of his study plan (usually by learning a single ability to 10 ω or two abilities to 7 ω each), he may remain an initiate as a Senior Apprentice, or may become a Sage (devotee). The choice is up to the worshipper, and there is no stigma in the cult for remaining a “senior” for many years. (Note: these requirements preclude beginning characters from starting as senior apprentices or devotees of Lhankor Mhy. This is an example of the stringent requirements imposed by this cult on its members. Narrators are free to lower these requirements for player heroes, requiring either one mental ability at 5 ω or two mental abilities at 1 ω each.)

Apprentices also learn Lhankor Mhy’s affinities. Most temples require that apprentices support the priests and sages instead of working magic themselves. A worshipper of Lhankor Mhy created using the *Hero Wars* rules belongs to the Lhankor Knowing subcult by default.

Physical Abilities: Craft Writing Supplies, Talk for Hours.

Mental Abilities: Academic Debate, Know [Library], Know Trivia, Mythology of Lhankor Mhy, Mythology of Lightbringers, Read [Local Language], Read [Language], [Subject] Lore, Write [Local Language], Write [Language].

Virtues: Exacting, Law-abiding, Studious, Truthful.

Affinities: Υ **Knowledge**, \rceil **Literacy**.

Senior Apprentice

Senior Apprentices continue their research. They retain their service requirement of 30% of their time, but spend it teaching apprentices and assisting their sponsoring sage in his or her research instead of cleaning, cooking, and the like. They rank above other apprentices both religiously and academically.

Sage (Devotee)

A sage has proven himself the master of a single subject that makes him worthy of being a teacher and researcher. A sage may research on his free time, although most specialize in the one they mastered for their study plan.

Sages spend 60% of their time serving the cult, but now the tasks are teaching or research rather than maintenance. Some devotees choose to become Wild Sages, but most prefer the comfort and safety of the temple. Sages may only marry other sages or those who would qualify as sages if they joined. This again is marrying Truth with Knowledge.

Affinities and Feats:

Y **Knowledge** (Clairvoyance [use the Magic Distance chart from *Hero Wars*], Find Obscure Fact [D+10 to D+30 depending on the obscurity], Interpret Spoken Language, Read Mind [D+20], See Past Events [D+10 to D+50 depending on how far in the past])

Y **Literacy** (Duplicate Document ritual, Reconstruct Document ritual, Search Library, Translate Document [must be able to speak the language in question], Unfading Letters)

Scholar (Disciple)

Lhankor Mhy's disciples are called Scholars, although some temples have quaint local titles, such as Professor or Learned Sage. They spend all of their time delving deep into obscure subjects. Most resemble the image of the absent-minded professor: incredibly knowledgeable about their (often esoteric) field, but incapable of functioning in normal society. A candidate must meet the normal requirements for discipleship. He must know how to Read and Write at least one language at 1W2 and must have four other mental abilities at 1W2 or better. These can be from different areas of study, but usually relate to a single area of expertise.

Subcults of Lhankor Mhy

Yƿ Chernan the Seeker

Chernan was a follower of Lhankor Mhy during the Vingkotling Age. Despite the dangers, he followed in the footsteps of his god and so discovered many new things. His followers are explorers and field researchers, and most Wild Sages belong to his subcult.

Virtues: Independent.

Affinities:

Y **Exploration** (Dodge Falling Objects, Remove Dust, See in the Dark, Sense Danger, Waterproof Pack)

Secret: See **History ritual** (This ritual allows the user to see the history of an object he holds or a place he is in. He may speed up or slow down the rate at which the history unfolds. He may use his senses — mundane or magical — to investigate the history, but he cannot affect it.)





Yŷ The Gray Ones

The Gray Ones were a group who avoided Chaos and found the way to safety before the onset of Time. It is from them that the cult learned the art of making maps, but they also taught the art of copying documents so that the cult could better preserve knowledge. Many cult daimones are Gray Ones, and it is because of them that worshippers originally gained the common nickname of 'Gray Sages.'

Mental Ability: Mapping, Memorize Details.

Affinities:

⌞ **Copying** (Copy Text Perfectly, Draw Accurately, Dry Ink, Erase Error, Illustrate Text Beautifully)

Secret: **Find the Way ritual** (This summons one of the Gray Ones to guide the summoner and anyone who follows him. The Gray One finds the safest path, and tells the summoner of any dangers or enemies ahead.)

Y† Hevduran the Sword Sage

Hevduran was a follower of Lhankor Mhy in the Vingkotling Age. He became so outraged at the foes disturbing him that he finally took up weapons himself. He even wrote the first book on fighting techniques. Most sages consider Hevduran to be perverse, a bastardization of their ideals. These same worshippers praise the Sword Sages as defenders of the innermost shrines against invasive forces. Since the coming of the Lunars, Hevduran's cult has become more popular in Sartar and Pavis.

Physical Abilities: Close Combat ([Sword] Fighting), Talk while Fighting.

Mental Abilities: [Local Enemy] Tactics.

Virtues: Brave.

Affinities:

† **Combat** (Artful Blade, Block Attack, Distract with Words, Find Opponent's Weakness, Surprise Attacker)

Secret: **Defend Knowledge** (Acts as an integrated passion spirit, giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's rating to any ability used to defend any form of knowledge from destruction.)

Y✱ Lhankor Knowing

Lhankor Knowing is the Lawthane of the Storm Tribe. Worshippers among the clans usually belong to this subcult, which also has members in the cities. They maintain the chronicles of their temples, record the decisions of courts, and hire out as investigators, interrogators, and experts.



Affinities:

△ **Law** (Cite Precedent, Find Loophole, Impress Jurors, Interrogate Witness, Locate Evidence)

Secret: Reveal Truth (Acts as a mystic strike with the asking of a single question. In addition to contest results, if driven to 0 AP or below the magic forces the target person or object to speak, reveal, or otherwise make the Truth known.)

YY Torvald the Alchemist

Lhankor Mhy lived during the Golden Age, before many things were created or changed. He was the first to learn of the different Otherworlds, and he alone knew how to use all their magics. When the Spike was destroyed, it became harder to draw on the Otherworlds. Each time he used knowledge he had learned in one world, knowledge from the others became more difficult to use. Being the Lord of Knowledge, he realized that he had to make a choice. In the end, he chose to be a god so that he could best serve his lord, Orlanth.

But Lhankor Mhy was ever loath to part with anything, particularly knowledge. Using the Marking Quill, he created the Great Scrolls. On each, he transcribed some of the knowledge from the Sorcery Plane. When he left on the Lightbringer's Quest, he entrusted the scrolls to his followers. During the Darkness, enemies stole some of the scrolls, monsters ate others, and some of his own followers burned them to keep warm. When the Dawning came, only a few remained scattered throughout the world. One of his followers named Torvald had managed to retain several, mostly detailing knowledge of alchemy. He and his followers continued to protect them and to seek the lost scrolls. His cult was popular during the Imperial Age, and still has adherents today.

Learning the scrolls is a difficult and time consuming process, for each is written in a different code. Once a worshipper deciphers a scroll, he can spend 5 hero points to gain it as a grimoire. The worshipper can thereafter cast the spells contained in the scroll as described in the Sorcerous Magic chapter of *Hero Wars*.

Sorcery comes difficult to the cult. Most worshippers cannot create talismans for their spells, and so can only cast them by using the scrolls. Additionally, the cult has found it impossible to accurately copy the scrolls, even with magic, so each temple hoards and protects the scrolls that it has. Finally, use of sorcery pollutes the worshipper spiritually. Torvald's worshippers retain Lhankor Mhy's base affinities, but take a penalty when using the affinities or calling on divine aid. This penalty





of -10 for initiates and -20 for devotees also applies as a Dangerous or Alien modifier when the worshipper is in the God World, even if he is in the Storm Realm.

Many Lhankor Mhy temples contain a few Great Scrolls. Each guards theirs jealously, and Torvald's worshippers can only study or use them under close supervision. Over half of the scrolls contain alchemical formulae (equivalent to spells), so most people view Torvald's worshippers primarily as alchemists. (Many of the other scrolls have spells to translate various languages.) The worshipper must use his Alchemy ability to create the substance properly. If he achieves any level of victory, the potion or other substance gains a rating equal to his target number in the formula. The spell then takes effect when someone ingests, applies, or otherwise uses the substance as specified in the scroll.

Torvald's subcult was one of those that moved to the Final Information Library. One of the jobs of the Chief Alchemist there is to keep track of the Great Scrolls. The subcult has records of 147 scrolls contained in Lhankor Mhy temples; of these, only 32 hold more than one formula or spell. (This count is of the codes used to read the scrolls. Thus, the greatest of the "scrolls" is Torvald's Alchemical Record, a collection of twenty-six pieces of parchment that contains eleven alchemical formulae.)

Mental Abilities: Alchemy, Create Portal of Power, Distill Ingredients, Read [Grimoire Code], Symbolic Sight.

Secret: Create Talisman (The worshipper can use the secret to create a talisman for any spell that he has learned from one of the Great Scrolls. Each spell must link to a different talisman, and the quill needed for each is unique, requiring individual preparations, a different type of feather, and a unique linking ritual.)

Disadvantages: Overly conservative Heortlings may view worshippers as sorcerers. Use of sorcery impairs the worshipper's ability to use theistic magic, as described above.

Note: Worshippers of Torvald use sacrifice, not veneration. Their worship does not count as Misapplied Worship, however, so they do not have to spend extra HP to learn or increase the subcult's magical abilities.

Hero Cults of Lhankor Mhy

Dilfar Deepsighted

Dilfar's cult provides a good income to those temples that worship him by evaluating jewelry and other treasures. In most places, they do this for local political and religious leaders. In others, such as in Pavis, they frequently sell their services to "adventurers," who bring back a lot of junk and the occasional valuable item from the adjacent Big Rubble. The cult usually charges a percentage of the value, but charge a minimum fee if asked to use magic, even if the item turns out to be worthless.

Mental Ability: Evaluate Treasure.

Y Knowledge Feats: Learn Magic Ability of Object ritual.

Irnar, Sartar's Lawspeaker

Irnar was King Sartar's lawspeaker, one of the companions who entered Kerofinela with the hero. Wherever Sartar met opposition by Heortlings, Irnar was there to cite precedents, speak the truth, and show the people that there was another way. He receives worship only in Boldhome, Jonstown, Swenstown, and Wilmskirk, for he created the laws that govern the city rings.

Mental Abilities: Know City Ring Law.

Δ Law Feats: Negotiate Compromise, Sway Listeners.

Jonstown Compendium #12,310

These are the Heortling Tribes, united by Heort in the Silver Age:

The Koroltes, named for Korol, third son of Vingkot's Summer Wife, centered on Korolstead. It was one of the Vingkotling Tribes.

The Orgorvaltes, named for Orgorvale, older daughter of Vingkot's Summer Wife, centered on Ulaninstead. It was one of the Vingkotling Tribes.

The Vestantes, named for Vestene, younger daughter of Vingkot's Summer Wife, centered on Goralfstead. It was one of the Vingkotling Tribes.

The Berenethtelli, named for Beren, husband of Redaylde (the youngest daughter of Vingkot's Winter Wife), centered on Berenstead. It was one of the Vingkotling Tribes.

The Infithtelli, named for Infithe, middle daughter of Vingkot's Winter Wife, centered on Deksarshill. It was one of the Vingkotling Tribes.

The Pennenteli, named for Penene, oldest daughter of Vingkot's Winter Wife, centered on Penentelada. It was one of the Vingkotling Tribes.

The Liornvuli, formed from the Lastralgortelli Tribe of the Vingkotlings, named for Liorn the Young, star husband of Deleen Kodisdottir, centered on Karfonstead.

The Forosilvuli, formed from the Lastralgortelli Tribe of the Vingkotlings, named for Forosil Ferocious, star husband of Ornore Koroldottir, centered on Uraldastead.

The Stravuli, formed from the Jorganostelli Tribe of the Vingkotlings, named for Stravul, centered on Iliastead.

The Garanvuli, named for Garan, star lover of Serias, centered on Iliabervor.

The Sedenorvuli, named for Sedenor, centered on Sedenorshill.

Divine Retribution

On the Lightbringers Quest, Lhankor Mhy confronted Jolsedar the Brain Flayer. He could not out-think or out-reason the demon of ignorance. Lhankor Mhy allowed the demon to enter him, for he knew that his knowledge was too great for it to take. It exploded, and Lhankor Mhy captured its arms and tentacles as his servants, known as jolsedarings.

If a member violates cult dictates by lying to another worshipper or falsifying data, Lhankor Mhy releases a jolsedaring to pursue him. Lhankor Mhy is the god of knowledge, and always knows when a worshipper has committed such a crime. As such, the apostate's community or temple never suffers for this type of crime (only).

The jolsedarings are mindless demons that destroy their victims' knowledge and intelligence. Eventually, the apostate loses all knowledge. If the worshipper repents and swears to undertake a quest for knowledge (as determined by divination), the jolsedaring returns to the Underworld. Lost knowledge does not return, and must be learned again by study and the expenditure of hero points.

Jolsedaring (Brain Flayer)

Ages: All.

Habitat: Underworld.

Jolsedarings cannot be seen, for they enter a victim's body and possess them as if a spirit. Although they have a *Hidden Possession* ability rating, they are automatically successful in possessing an apostate worshipper of Lhankor Mhy.

Jolsedaring

Weapons and Armor: None.

Significant Abilities: None.

Innate Magical Abilities: Devour Knowledge 5W, Hidden Possession 20.

Tactics: Once a jolsedaring has possessed a victim, it begins to shred and devour the host's knowledge. Each week it attacks one of its host's mental abilities. If it is victorious, the ability's rating is reduced as if the jolsedaring had used a Tap Mental spell on the victim. The creature does not have a Tap Pool, and it is incapable of returning devoured knowledge. If all Mental Abilities fall to 0 the victim dies and becomes a new jolsedaring. Once the victim dies, the jolsedaring leaves the body and seeks a new victim or returns to the Underworld, as appropriate.





Odayla

The Deep Hunter

*Orlanth's son, strong Odayla,
Beast-wrestler born in bear's shape.
Wandering hunter, wild woods-dweller,
Conquers the Bear, captures any beast.*

Odayla is the god of hunting, famous for wrestling the Great Bear into submission. He is one of the Thunder Brothers (though he rarely gathers with them), and during the Darkness he gave the Heortlings the skills and magic they needed to stay alive.

Mythology of Odayla

When Orlanth made his first exploration, he caught a brief glimpse of a fabulous being. Orlanth the Hunter stalked with every tool and skill he had, but he never caught her. When he finally gave up, she stalked *him*, and she caught him even though he tried to elude her. Her name was Velhara, but most of the time she is called Lady of the Wild. They denned together until she littered, but then Velhara told Orlanth that he must leave. She presented two cubs to Orlanth, but only one looked like him, and he told Velhara to keep the other. He returned to his stead with his son Ormalaya, and Velhara stayed in the wild with the other, whom she named Odayla.

Odayla was born in the shape of a bear, and he was full of the wilderness. He lived with the wild things, and learned the magic of each creature that dwelt in the wilderness. He learned of the cycles of seasons, magic, and souls that surrounded all, including him.

Odayla learned everything he could, but he was not satisfied, for as he grew he discovered parts of himself he had not known before. All of the wild creatures had a father, for that was the way of nature, yet he did not. He went to his mother and asked her why he alone did not have a father. She answered that he did have a father, Varanorlanth, who had abandoned him. Odayla longed to meet his father, but Velhara warned him that the world of gods was different from the wildlands, and that



his father would never accept him as long as he was a creature of the wilds. Even if he could change himself, she knew that he could never be truly happy with his father, for he would always be part wild.

Odayla sought a way to tame his nature so that he could find his father. At last he sought his final prey, the Great Bear that walked the Wild World and the God World. Odayla learned to travel secretly in foreign realms. He became invisible to people, then animals, and finally even gods. He learned to read every sign, even the spoor that rain washed away. Odayla the Hunter stalked with every tool and skill he had, but he never caught the bear. When he finally gave up, however, the bear began to stalk him, and though he did everything to avoid it, it caught him.

The two beings, god and beast, fell upon each other and wrestled, and for hours neither could best the other. In the end, one slew the other and took his skin to wear. Some Orlanthi say the Great Bear was the eventual victor, but others say Odayla was. Odayla's worshippers alone know that there were never two beings, for Odayla *is* the Great Bear.

Once he had mastered the beast, Odayla traveled to Orlanth's stead wearing his former skin as a cloak. He was greeted as a stranger, for none knew him. Ormalaya performed the Hospitality Greeting, but did not recognize his own brother. Finally, Odayla came to Orlanth. He greeted him as father, and when Orlanth claimed no knowledge of him Odayla revealed his true nature and spoke his mother's name. All of the alynxes fled in fear when he growled at them. Everyone was afraid except for Ormalaya, who took the skin off the bear so that it became his brother again. Orlanth acknowledged Odayla as his son, and welcomed him into his household.

Odayla stayed with his kinfolk, showing them what he had learned in the wilderness. He showed how to outwit both prey and enemies, and how to hide from danger. After a time, however, he grew restless, for everything was too tame. No one would let him eat the alynxes, and everyone disturbed him when he tried to sleep through the winter as he used to. Finally, he decided to return to the wilds. He taught his brother his final secret, the special chants and rites that return the souls of prey animals to Velhara so they can be reborn. Then he left his father's home. Back in the wild, he found that he was no longer one of the wild things as he had been before. He still hunted, but now he was an outsider, albeit one who knew the wilds better than any other.

Odayla often helped Orlanth and the Vingkotlings after that, but he was always distant, living in the wilds, rarely showing up at the stead of the great god. Each time he came he brought food to his kinsmen, but he always returned to the wilds when he could no longer stand

being in the stead. He never took a wife, for none of the women of the stead would commit themselves even to a Year-Marriage with a husband who was rarely there. Despite this, he fathered sons and daughters, many of whom followed his solitary hunting ways.

Then came the Darkness. Odayla slept and woke as he needed to. Each time he awakened he found more of his kinsmen living in the wilds, their steeds destroyed. He welcomed them, and taught them secrets he had not told even to his brother. He showed them how to distinguish life from death, how to hide from monsters and Chaos, and finally how to hide even from Death by going to sleep.

Eventually, Darkness gave way to Chaos. Whenever Odayla woke, fewer of his followers awakened with him. At last, he awoke to a world that was completely dark, with no life anywhere. He hunted everywhere, but could find no prey. He grew weaker and weaker, and finally came across the corpse of a dead god. Eating it was the only way to survive, but when Odayla discovered that it was the body of his father he knew that his time had come. He lay down and went to sleep, the final sleep that is Death.

Odayla's death was life for the world, however, for in the Otherworld he awakened beside his father. He awakened the dead god, and thus taught him that death and sleep are the same thing. Orlanth rose and thanked his son, then went in search of his other companions, who were also dead. When he saw his father on his way, Odayla woke and life returned to the world.

In Sylila and elsewhere, his followers awakened from hibernation as well. They were numerous at the Dawn, for his magic was instrumental in preserving many people through the Great Winter. His worship was particularly strong in Sylila, but he is known in Ralios, southern Peloria, and Maniria as god, bear, or both. As tribes met, his worship often provided a common ground, and Odayla again acted as a mediator between the known and unknown, the settled and the unsettling.

As time passed, and agriculture and pastoralism spread, Odayla receded with the wilds. He became the Deep Hunter, whose worshippers leave their steeds and families to live and hunt in the wilds.

Manifestations

Odayla is present in the sacred weapons used to hunt game, especially the special "bear bows." Although many people call him the Great Bear, he is associated specifically with the Ringed Bears of Sylila (where almost no other bears are found), which have spread south into Dragon Pass and the uplands of the Maniria coast.

Odayla is also visible as the constellation known as the Hunter. Sometimes worshippers, especially Sylilans, say that the constellation known as Orlanth's Ring is the Sky Bear.

Icons and Images

Worshippers depict Odayla with his bow or as the great ringed bear. The cult uses a series of runic markings that symbolize various prey animals and plants. Worshippers adorn their tools and clothing with these runes, and use them as tattoos to commemorate special hunts and events. They paint the shrines with layers of stylized animal images. Some extremely old sites have painted runes on them whose symbolism is unknown.



Odayla

Otherworld Home and Life After Death

Odayla's Camp is hidden in the Forest of the Winds near the Storm Eagle Tree, at the base of Bear Mountain in the Storm Realm. From this Camp, worshippers may exit to the Storm Tribe Age or Vingkotling Age, or into the Sky Realm that borders the far side of the forest. Only worshippers who travel there while hibernating can travel to the Chaos Age. After death, Odaylans range across the wilds of the Great Forest, stalking and trapping immortal beasts in the thrill of the Eternal Hunt. They also search for the best place to be reborn in the Inner World.

Nature of the Cult

Odayla is the power that leads people out of civilization, into the wilds where they dwell on the boundary between the cultivated lands and the wilderness. Odayla is the guide for those who leave behind the familiar and enter the mysterious and ancient landscape that predates the first people.

Odayla's followers provide food primarily for themselves, but also for their families and fellow clansmen. Although their Ormalayan brothers return home each night with the prey they have caught, Odaylans often go weeks or seasons at a time without seeing another human, and might go years without returning to their home. They sometimes mediate with the wilderness powers (such as Aldryami or hsunchen) for their kinsmen.

All Odaylans know that they need human contact, but they meet this need in different ways. Many remain in the wilds for seasons or years at a time, avoiding human contact when possible and coming to any local settlement only when they need goods or close human contact. Many Odaylans gather into small hunting bands that hunt separately but live together in the wilds. A few Odaylans marry and take their family with them into the wilds, though few women will abandon all human contact to live in this manner.

Mode of Worship

Odaylans practice worship in every part of the hunt: while preparing, during the butchering, and in the feast that follows. Chants and songs focus their minds, muscles, magic, and instincts both before and during the hunt. They follow many restrictions, and they often appear fussy and involved with strange details.

Hunters come singly to their sacred places to worship Odayla and Velhara. Their rites sometimes appear almost shamanic to outsiders, for they involve wild drumming, dancing, and the consumption of special, potent drinks and foods. Many worshippers become beasts during the rites, returning with scars and sometimes insights into their prey and competing predators.

Odaylans often engage in hunting quests: formal, magical journeys in the wilderness. The goal of these quests is not to kill the beast for food, but to gain greater understanding of it. If the quest is successful, the hunter usually returns with a Beast Charm (see pg. 150). Hunters sometimes return instead with an increase in a hunting skill or a special ability to capture that species of animal.

Attitudes and Relationships

Odayla is one of the Thunder Brothers, since he is a notable son of Orlanth. He often rejects their company, however, and he remains apart most of the time. His worshippers see themselves as superior to their Ormalayan brothers because their hunting skills are broader — they fish, hunt land animals and birds, and gather berries, honey, and other foodstuffs.

◀ The Cult of Odayla in Sylila ▶

Odayla's cult is uncommon in Heortling lands, but is widespread in Sylila. There, worshippers say that Odayla is Orlanth's brother, not his son. The cult supplants worship of Ormalaya and Yinkin almost entirely. It takes the same form as the major Heortling deities, with core affinities and several subcults.



Odayla has no real enemies except Chaos. He has a friendly rival with the other hunting gods, Yinkin and Ormalaya. Several stories pit Odayla against Barntar, who often encroaches upon the wilderness to clear farmland. In the Barntar stories, Barntar wins, driving Odayla into the wilds. In the Odaylan stories, however, Odayla wins because he escapes to the wilds.

Sacrifices

Odaylans always leave a part of their prey for the god. Primary prey animals include wild cattle, deer, rabbits, wild pig, wild sheep, and waterfowl. Butchery requires precision to return the beast to the natural cycle of life and death and to gain the most meat and material from the carcass. Chants and songs accompany this activity.

Hunters take their prey's last breath into themselves. They also eat a portion of the animal's liver, usually freshly cut from the warm corpse.

Holy Days

Most hunters gather only for seasonal rites. Some mimic prey animals while others show how Odayla captures them. They paint their shrines and the walls of caves with images of the hunt, life, and death. Odayla does not have a community holy day except in Sylila. Because most Odaylans rarely return to their community, they often do not participate in the normal communal rites; they do not suffer for this. On the other hand, when Odaylans are close to a community, local worshippers of Ormalaya (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 225) often join their rites.

Odayla has numerous rites throughout the year that celebrate his deeds, marvelous hunts of the past, and the changing of the seasons and prey animals. Local weather and the practices of prey animals determine when these rites occur. The following calendar of seasonal rites shows only the most common.

↖ Spring Morn

Freeze Day, Disorder Week, Sea Season

Odaylans celebrate the advent of spring and the returning bounty of the wilderness. They make small offerings — beer, colorful strings and ribbons, and small beads are common — at the trees and in the meadows that lie just beyond their families' steads.

↖ Fish Festival

Water Day, Fertility Week, Sea Season

On this day, Odaylans hold fishing contests and tell tales of past catches, with hunters competing to see who can tell the most outlandish story.

↩ Berry Festival

Fire Day, Harmony Week, Fire Season

Heortlings celebrate this day as a minor festival worshipping Ernalda's daughter Indeg, the wife of Ormalaya, seeking the bounty of summer at the edges of the wilderness. Odaylans must travel to the closest community (whether or not it is their own) and give some of the berries they have gathered to the clan's eldest Asrelian, who then redistributes them to the families. Worshippers always leave some berries on each bush for the Great Bear.

↩ Fox Rite

Wild Day, Illusion Week, Fire Season

Many Odaylans hunt on this day without tools or weapons, relying on their wiles and knowledge of the wilderness to find and kill their prey. In this manner, the cult tests prospective initiates. Any prize is noteworthy, but worshippers know that to perform such a brave act is worthy of initiation.

↩ Stag Day

Wild Day, Disorder Week, Earth Season

Odaylans return to their family, community, or hunting band after their hunt. Less skilled hunters often begin their hunt a week or two before to ensure that they have a gift of food to bring. Worshippers burn the heart and liver and let the winds carry the sweet smell of flesh to Odayla to remind him to guide his followers in the seasons of scarcity to come.

↩ Wild's Feast

Wild Day, Mobility Week, Earth Season

This is a dangerous day to hunt, for often hunter becomes prey in a dangerous, ritual reversal. Some hunters refuse to hunt on this day, but others view it as a challenge to survive and perhaps even return with game. Occasionally an aging hunter chooses this day to test himself against the wilderness. If he fails to return, the other hunters know it was his time to join the god. Any initiate who wishes to become a devotee must hunt on this day so that he can master his own beast.

↩ Wolf Hunt

Freeze Day, Disorder Week, Darkness Season

On this day, Odaylans must leave civilization to renew their eternal conflict with the wolves, their greatest competitors. Killing a wolf on this day is especially lucky and has the practical benefit of reducing the danger to hunters, unless Telmori dwell nearby.

↪ Furring Day

Clay Day, Death Week, Darkness Season

Odaylans prepare pelts throughout the year. On Furring Day, hunters seek Odayla's blessing before returning to their community (or one nearby) to trade for needed goods, such as weapons. A hunter always gifts one or more furs to the Earth priestess. Such items often become part of Ernalda's regalia, "warming the great goddess." Less social Odaylans may bring the gift and then leave immediately without trading, or even leave it in the wild at an isolated holy place.

↪ Flint Blessing Day

Wild Day, Harmony Week, Storm Season

Odaylans spend this day alone cleaning, repairing, and sharpening their tools. The steady, often repetitive work forges a ritual link between the hunter and his tools, separating him from the wildlands even as his lifestyle joins him to them. Each hunter also spends the day preparing for his meeting with the Lady of the Wild on Gifting Day.

⌘ Gifting Day (The Lady's Day)

Gods Day, Harmony Week, Storm Season

Odaylans gather on this day after the solitude of Flint Blessing Day. They honor the power and mystery of Velhara, the Lady of the Wild. Some worshippers hunt and offer their catch, others leave a ritual item (often a bow or a work in bone created over the course of the past year) deep in the wilderness or at a sacred place. Each year some hunters never return from their excursions into the wilds. Special ceremonies celebrate their hunts and send them to the god. These ceremonies lead directly into the rites that begin the Great Hunt.

↪↪ The Great Hunt

Gods Day, Harmony Week, Storm Season through

Gods Day, Death Week, Storm Season

Although every hunt is sacred, the annual Great Hunt is the greatest challenge. The hunter who returns with the most noteworthy prey by the end of the hunt is that year's champion. Worshippers remember the fabulous hunts of cult heroes.

At Dusk on Gifting Day, hunters (including hunters who worship Ormalaya, Yinkin, and other gods) go into the wilderness. During the week, they return one at a time with their prizes; some never return. In Heortland, where there are few Odaylans, the Great Hunt lasts but a single day and night (beginning on Wild Day of Death Week). In Aggar and

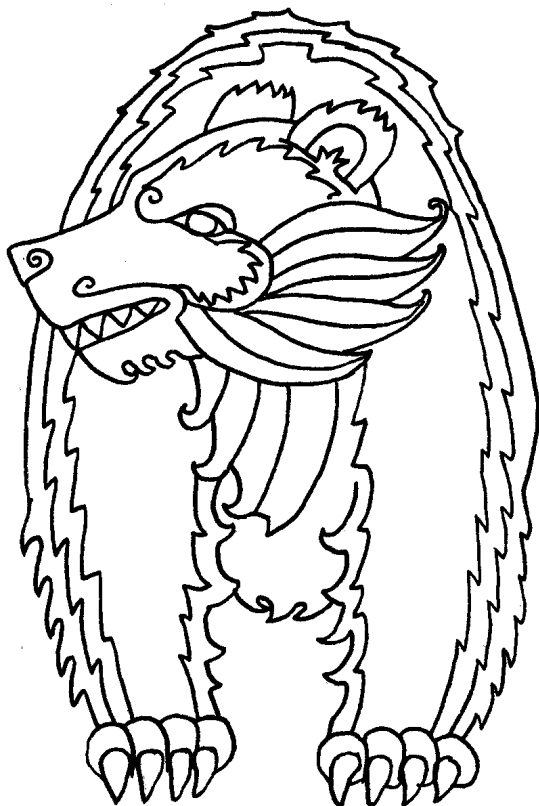
Skanthiland, hunters do not gather beforehand, and all arrive at their sacred places on the last day of the hunt to display their catch. In Sylila, even non-hunters of Odayla clans participate in the Great Hunt, and if one actually wins it shows that Odayla has chosen him.

At Dusk on the last day, the Master Hunters seek Odayla's signs to tell them who is the winner. That prey animal is then sacrificed to Odayla in its entirety, and the other prey animals form the feast for the worshippers.

▽ **Bear Day**

Variable (Storm Season)

The Great Bear begins to awaken from its hibernation on this day, which Odaylans celebrate when they see the first bear or its spoor. Odaylans give great significance to any omens observed on this day.



Organization

Odayla welcomes both women and men. Male and female worshippers are equal, but there are differences in their worship. For example, only women may hunt certain prey animals, because of ancient pacts and quests. Followers of Odayla are found throughout Heortling lands and in many neighboring lands as well.

Holy Places and Temples

Odaylans revere the power and mystery of the wilderness, and all of their holy places are far from settled lands. Many are sacred because of mythic acts or ancient hunts. Hunters can point to cliffs scored by the claws of the Great Bear, valleys cut by the fall of Odayla's spear, and rough, overgrown country where his prey attempted in vain to hide. Rituals, sacred blood, and paintings of prey and predator suffuse these places with potent magic.

Bear Mountain is a great crest of bare, ochre rock in the Autumn Mountains of southern Peloria. It is where Odayla hibernated the final time, and so is where he awakened at the Dawn. Additionally, every land has its own Bear Hill, Grizzly Peak, or Odayla's Rock, usually said to be the place where Odayla wrestled the Great Bear into submission.

Odayla does not have formal temples. Worshippers tend to be extremely loose in their organization, and there are rarely formal links between individuals or bands. Master Hunters are respected wherever they travel, but no single hunter automatically dominates a group of hunters.

Membership Requirements

Heortlings acknowledge Odayla's place in the Storm Tribe, but also realize that he has a special relationship with the wilderness. He is a provider and is the master of obscure but special mysteries.

Hunters are peripheral to most clan activities, and the deep hunters are almost strangers, so uncommon are they most of the time. Clans view the deep hunters as odd compared to the regular clan hunters, who view the wilds as a hostile place and usually return each night to their stead. Children displaying some affinity for the wilderness and the hunt receive training and guidance until they come of age and formally initiate into the mysteries of Odayla.

Deep Hunter (Initiate)

Men and women wishing to initiate to Odayla must show an affinity for the wilderness. Anyone may test himself against the wilderness, and true Odaylans always survive. The children of hunters often follow his

path, but even many children of Odaylans worship Ormalaya or another Orlanthe deity instead.

Initiations typically take place in Sea or Fire Seasons, more rarely in Earth Season. Older hunters instruct those seeking initiation, paint them for the sacred hunt, and send them into the wilderness. If the candidate survives and returns with their catch and sanctified hunting weapon, Odayla has chosen them. Only those who are truly to be Odayla's survive, so the Master Hunters are strict in their testing of those seeking to join the cult.

The hunter must pursue his prey, and this is always a great challenge even for an accomplished hunter. The seeker finally wounds his prey, and as it dies he must promise to carry a portion of its life within himself so that it can return to life in the future. The initiate returns and gives his prey to the community, the last such gift he will give as a full member. He leaves with his fellow hunters, and away from settled lands they celebrate his initiation with drumming and dancing as he relates his story for them. The Master Hunters sometimes tattoo him with a stylized image of the prey animal he caught, but if he received any scars from the prey animal they become his initiation marks.

Odayla is different from many Heortling deities in that he has no sub-cults. Instead, Odayla himself provides all three affinities to his worshippers. Worshippers may receive Beast Charms from kolatings if they succeed in special sacred hunts. In return for these fetishes, the deep hunter must hunt for the shaman for whatever length of time the two agree upon before the Odaylan performs the hunt.

Magic Keyword

Physical Abilities: Climbing, Wrestling.

Mental Abilities: Find Shelter, Fishing, Know Plants, Mythology of Odayla, Mythology of the Thunder Brothers.

Virtues: Brave, Persistent, Respectful of Nature.

Affinities: ♡ **Bear**, ∴ **Hide**, ⚡ **Hunting**.

Master Hunter (Devotee)

Most hunters become devotees after a gradual increase in their abilities and challenges, culminating in the Bear Hunt. Many initiates have beast quests in which they encounter the Great Bear, but he is usually only glimpsed, and he is never the object of the hunt itself.

The hunter and the Great Bear both know when the time has arrived for the Bear Hunt. It is by far the most challenging hunting quest the Odaylan will ever experience, so narrators should describe it accordingly. The hunt repeats important quests, challenges, and disasters of

▽ Beast Charms R

Beast Charms are an important source of magic for Odaylans. As they engage in hunting quests, Odaylans encounter and learn of the beasts of the wild and begin to discover the mystery of their own inner beast nature. Rather than merely killing a beast, Odaylans on hunting quests can instead choose to gain a mastery over the animal. Many hunting quests involve a ritual agreement between an Odaylan and a kolating shaman. If the Odaylan succeeds in the quest, he breathes in the prey animal's last breath in a special ritual. He then returns to the kolating, who takes the breath from him and binds it into a special fetish called a Beast Charm.

Beast Charms take many forms: a necklace or bracelet of teeth or feathers, a pouch of animal parts, or tattoos or scars symbolizing the hunter's special relationship with the beast. Experienced hunters may have many different beast charms. All beast charms are animist fetishes that allow the hunter to use a single magical ability from the spirit contained inside. The worshipper *cannot* change this ability. The hunter can use a given charm one time per day at a set ability rating, which cannot be increased (although a hunter can reenact the same quest later to seek a more powerful charm). Possession of Beast Charms also sometimes affects the hunter's personality, causing them to exhibit some personality trait of the animal. Whether this is severe enough to warrant a Flaw or Personality Trait is up to the narrator and player.

Odaylans must spend twice as many hero points as normal to gain Beast Charms, since using them is Misapplied Worship. Unlike normal fetishes, however, Beast Charms do not cause Odaylans to take a penalty to their theistic magic use. We provide examples below, but players and narrators are free to change the details or to create others.

Beast	Primary Challenge	Ability	Personality
Badger	Stubborn	Digging	Grumpy
Deer	Archery	Alert	Jumpy
Eagle	Climbing	Keen Eyesight	Proud
Rabbit	Stalk	Alert	Lusty
Thrush	Hide in Cover	Sing	Vain
Waterfowl	Stalk	Eat Mud	Noisy
Wild Cattle	Wrestling	Strong	Slow-witted
Wild Pig	Running	Smell Food	Short-tempered
Wild Sheep	Jumping	Know Weather	Stubborn

the hunter's past, and ends with him meeting the Great Bear, which he must slay. When he breathes in its life, he finds that he has killed himself, for he is the Great Bear. Although the worshipper knows this, the actual realization of his own death is a powerful experience that transforms him. When he returns wearing his own bear skin he is a devotee, with full access to Odayla's magic.

Affinities and Feats:

▼ **Bear** (Bear's Hide, Bear's Strength, Foraging, Hibernate, Identify Scent, Terrify Prey)

∴ **Hide** (Hide in Foliage, Mask Scent, Move Silently, Remain Motionless, Walk among Prey)

◄ **Hunting** (Acute Vision, Arrow Sureshot, Attract Game Animal, Run over Snow)

Secret: Sleep Back to Life (A devotee who dies of injuries can heal himself and return to life. This magic will not work if his body is eaten or destroyed or if the devotee died from anything but wounds. Other hunters usually return the body to a sacred place, there to recover or not, but this is not necessary. In the wilderness, normal animals will not disturb the body, for they know it is not food.

Over the course of a few days to many weeks [depending upon the body's condition], the corpse heals completely. At that time, the devotee awakens. Until his body recovers, the hunter's soul moves through the Otherworld. Some devotees know to begin certain quests with Sleep Back to Life, dying and then continuing the quest on the Other Side before returning to their bodies. They must be cautious, however, for anything that happens to the quester may affect his body's ability to heal and thus cause true death.)

Hero Cults of Odayla

Among the Heortlings, Odayla has no subcults: all members worship him directly and learn the same magic. However, numerous hunters of the past have small hero cults devoted to them. These cults tend to be local. Most provide only a single feat in exchange for the hunter following the ancient hero's taboo. We give three examples, but the cult has many great hunting heroes.

Kudran Golden Feather

Kudran hunted the hills and heaths of northern Sartar. He discovered a hunting path that took him to Umath's Age. He slew several of the mighty raptors of that era and returned with their feathers, from which he constructed arrows that flew farther than any other hunter's. Those who complete his quest learn a feat that gives their arrows a range up to ten times greater than normal arrows.



Membership Requirements: Worshippers must always slay at least one bird during any hunt, and must always carry a feather from each bird slain. They may never possess a Beast Charm made from a bird's spirit.

◀ **Hunting Feat:** Longfaring Arrow.

Mabar the Fisherman

Mabar was a master fisherman from Aggar who swam up the rivers of his land to their sources. His hero cult teaches hunters the ability of Fishing to such great heights that it seems magical. Those skilled in his ways can even track fish from the shore.

Membership Requirements: Members may only fish, not hunt, during Fertility Week of each season.

▼ **Bear Feat:** Scent Underwater Fish.

Ranoo Longlegs

Ranoo was a Sylilan hunter famous for his ability to chase his prey for days, finally exhausting it. His hero cult teaches a feat that grants stamina, but which causes the hunter to collapse upon completion of his hunt. This collapse lasts for as long as his hunt did.

Membership Requirements: Never ride in a chariot, wagon, or other man-made vehicle.

◀ **Hunting Feat:** Run without Tiring.

Divine Retribution

Worshippers of Odayla are subject to the normal pantheon agents of reprisal, although their religion exempts them from certain requirements of society.

An initiate who defies the ways of Odayla or who is driven from the cult suffers the Curse of Odayla. The hunter's smell offends animals, drives away prey, and draws predators and parasites to him. He grows clumsy with the tools of the hunt, and his spear and bow break easily. Depending on the degree of offense, accidents may befall him in the wilderness. A few mistakes can easily kill a man.

Hunters who have offended Odayla must seek atonement by going alone into the wilderness without their weapons. They must give up all of the Beast Charms and must hunt and slay an animal during a hunting quest. If they are truly repentant the hunt will succeed, and Odayla will lift his curse.



Urox

Berserk Chaos-Killer and Desert Storm

*Untamed beast, savage passion,
Your mad berserk fury beats even Chaos.
Your wild winds lead the war against Chaos.
You hold vile Wakboth under mountains of stone.*

Urox is the most wild and bestial of the good storm gods, the destroyer of Chaos. He is violence and raw, unthinking strength, guided by instinct and the sensitivities of a god. He is the god of the eastern dust storm that leaves destruction in its wake and whose touch can scour flesh from bone. He is the god of berserks and the Praxian savages. He is a bad god, but necessary, and better than the alternative.

Mythology of Urox

Urox is Orlanth's unruly brother. He was second only to Vadrus in his lust for violence. In Umath's Age, Urox led his sons down from the Cosmic Mountain into the world, where they befriended the peoples and wed the goddesses. In the Storm Tribe Age, the furious god often fought on behalf of the Earth against Vadrus and Humakt, the chill North Winds. During the Gods War, Urox came into his power, for his nature matched the violence and trouble of the era. He often went on rampages and destroyed great tracts of life, such as the time his followers devoured all of the vegetation of the earth to prove how powerful they were.

As time went on, Urox reveled in fighting and his power of destruction. He contributed to the Great Darkness by goring the fire god Vestkarthen, whom the Uz later imprisoned. When Fear and Death came, openly seeking victims among the immortals, Urox was foremost in battle. He killed many gods and sent them to the Underworld. He taught Death's virtues when he slew his own brother, vile Ragnaglar, with his iron horns. Even with such victories, the god could not stop the devastation caused by the coming of Wakboth.

Wakboth is the incarnation of Chaos, an abomination, a loophole in the Laws of Creation. Wakboth is motivated only by evil and destructiveness. It had slain many gods before it came upon Urox' final defense to the east of Dragon Pass. The fight was desperate and doomed. All Urox' people knew that survival was only one of the possible horrors in their future. A clean death seemed impossible.

Urox was backed by righteous outrage and strengthened by passion, two things of which Chaos knows little. Although all he loved died about him, he stood firm, aided by all the world.

Urox should have died there. His ear was torn off, leaving him forever maimed and poisoning the earth where it landed. Mortally wounded, Wakboth flung his broken form to the ground. The Earth, his last ally, healed him. Although the place where he landed became dead and lifeless, Urox lived. The god-beast leapt up anew, and was again thrown down. He cried out in defiance, and the cosmos itself responded. From the edge of the world came hurtling a piece of the shattered Cosmic Mountain. It bounced once or twice across the earth and came to Urox. He took it in hand and crushed Wakboth, pinning him beneath tons of petrified Law. The cube of law pulped Wakboth, who has remained buried beneath the huge block of adamant ever since.

The effort nearly killed Urox, who dragged himself to the Storm Hills, where he became the last living god to fall to Death. This was salvation, however, for when Wakboth came to the Land of the Dead Urox was waiting for him. All of Urox' allies were there with him, of course, but Wakboth was alone. Urox leapt into the fray once more. When the battle was at its fiercest, Arachne Solara responded to his cry for aid, wrapping Wakboth in her inescapable webs. She devoured Chaos, and Urox led the gods into the new world as he had done so long ago in Umath's Age.

After the Dawn, worship of Urox spread, but the lack of any central organization prevented concerted action by his worshippers. Instead, there are many tales of brave battles against festering pockets of Chaos. Still, all Heortlings remember that when the Darkness was at its worst and Chaos entered the world, Urox rose to the challenge. Because of this, society tolerates his worshippers.

Manifestations

Urox is the desert wind that blows into Dragon Pass from Prax without warning in any season. Sandstorms are common manifestations of his power, as is the berserker rage that his worshippers embrace. Although other gods have this power, Heortlings know that this power comes from Urox.

Icons and Images

The Heortlings usually depict Urox as a bull-headed man. Even when shown without a bull's head, he always has horns on his helmet.

Otherworld Home and Life After Death

Urox has no stead in the Storm Realm, just wild camps where he and his followers rest with their aurochs herds. He and his worshippers travel back and forth between his Winter Camp at the top of the Spiral Mountain and his Summer Camps in the Bull Fields. From his camps, worshippers can exit to Umath's Age, the Storm Tribe Age, the Vingkotling Age, the Chaos Age, or the Eternal Battle.

All worshippers join in Urox' glorious life of struggle after death, fighting against the encroaching Chaos.

Uroxi do not burn their dead. Instead, they make a pile of bones and skulls, then seat the warrior on it with his weapons, armor, and other favored possessions. The skulls of bulls are commonly used, but bones from other aggressive animals (such as boars, bears, or wolves) are also acceptable. If the warrior had a favored mount, it is slain and he sits atop it instead. The Uroxi leave the grisly remains to defy passersby and frighten off Chaos. The rites conclude with a song of fear, fury, and fighting to summon a violent wind to carry off the departing soul. Although some of these frightful, desiccated guardians stand watch over the urnfields, most stand wherever the warrior died, often far from settled lands.

Urox personally pursues the souls of worshippers slain by Chaos, even to the pits of entropy beyond the cosmos. This assures his warriors a greater chance of survival after death.

Nature of the Cult

The primary purpose of Urox is to prevent the rise of Wakboth or any associated form of Chaos. His worshippers go wherever Chaos might be; since Chaos can arise anywhere, they can be found anywhere as well.

Urox is the Desert Wind, rough and raw, capable of scrubbing the earth clean with its passage. He is the ruthless power of righteous purifying



Urox



rage, and all Heortlings call on him when they need this power in their lives. The political power of the cult is small, at least insofar as determining tribal policies and politics. However, the number and power of any local berserks always influences a chieftain or king's decisions.

Everyone knows of Urox. Wherever the powers of the middle air are hated and despised, Urox is there. He is popular where sudden fury and uncontrollable rage are respected or simply cannot be suppressed. His worship can be generalized with the statement that it is popular among savages, and the more savage they are, the more popular he is.

Uroxi dislike anything that does not conform to their crude and simple cult. They exercise this dislike through contempt for others and their way of life (even if they partake of the contemptible lifestyle). They distrust strangers and their gods, and scorn anyone weaker than them.

Socially, Uroxi berserks are unacceptable. They characteristically act with total disregard for any tribal taboos or manners, and they are frightful enough that they can sometimes avoid punishment even for murder. Normal people consider all Uroxi to be mindless brutes: deranged and dangerous, barely human. These opinions are correct, but the fear of Chaos overrides the temporary discomfort that people must suffer to have the Uroxi around. Most men fear Chaos, but the Uroxi seek it out, and that alone makes normal people respect them even as they fear them.



The Eternal Battle



The god Urox and the great spirit Storm Bull are the same entity. A divinity having both a spirit and a god aspect is unusual. Even more unusual is that both theist and animist members worship together, and neither takes the Alien World modifier in the "wrong" Otherworld once they have learned Urox' secret.

The nature of this strange reality comes from the god's home in the Eternal Battle. The Eternal Battle is a cosmic anomaly — a hole that exists equally inside both time and myth, and that connects the Spirit Plane, God Plane, Inner World, and Realm of Chaos. It is a fragmented myth where the conflict of Urox and Wakboth continues. Within its deafening howl are Chaos things, remnant entities, and the lost souls of the Great Darkness all mixed and tumbling about each other. Nothing is safe there, but in that non-Time the Transcendent Bull rewards his followers with magic. Dedicated followers can join the Bull at his Final Briefing, where he hands out affinities and spirits indiscriminately. There, styrmens integrate spirits and khans of the Storm Bull learn affinities and feats.



Attitudes and Relationships

Whereas relationships to friendly gods define most gods, Urox is defined by his enemies. Even his allies are such only because they aid him in this battle. He is friendly to other Chaos foes, even gods that would otherwise be enemies, such as Zorak Zoran.

Urox has a special relationship with Chalana Arroy, for she healed Urox' many wounds after his fight against the Devil. Her healers know magic to calm the berserk frenzy when the need for it is past, and Uroxi take a penalty of -10 when they attempt to resist her magic. Although many Uroxi resent this ability and so avoid her healers, others welcome the benefits provided by Chalana Arroy. These warriors protect her healers and seek out their blessings in preference to those of other healing deities. They especially favor the worshippers of the Natyrsa sub-cult, who hate Chaos almost as much as they do.

Urox has many enemies, for he fought many gods during the Darkness. His greatest enemy is Chaos, and Uroxi will join with enemies to fight the One Evil. This hatred of Chaos is absolute and allows for no exceptions: "Any Chaos is all Chaos" is a popular motto of worshippers.

Mode of Worship and Sacrifices

Uroxi rites tend to resemble drunken brawls, with rough games, casually random violence, and copious amounts of beer and mead. Favored sacrifices include bulls and weapons. Gifts of dead Chaos things offend him — he does not want broos and walktapi in his tent! Some worshippers take vows to kill Chaos or die trying, and the cult honors such berserks with special ceremonies.

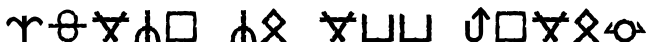
Holy Days

Urox has no weekly holy days, for worshippers of the Bull always feel the power of their god within them. They do hold special rites once each season. Sensible people stay far away from Uroxi rites, for they are dangerous to outsiders. Most Heortling ceremonies invoke Urox as the Protector against Chaos, and so he receives frequent collateral worship.

No Wound Day

Freeze Day, Stasis Week, Sea Season

This is the day that Chalana Arroy healed Urox so that he could rise again. His rage calmed, and he led the world back to life. His rites on these days always end in a drunken stupor, and so the rest of the world is spared the normal destruction his rites cause.





☞ Horn Day

Water Day, Stasis Week, Fire Season

Horn Day celebrates Urox' victory during his initiation in the Animal Corral. New styrmen receive their weapons if they survive the rites; many heroquests start on this day as well. All Uroxi must present themselves to their jarl with their weapons and armor, for the following weeks see many raids against Chaos.

☞ Earth Day (Rutting Day)

Clay Day, Stasis Week, Earth Season

Worshippers celebrate Urox' marriage to the Earth. Urox is interested primarily in the Fertility aspects of marriage, and the ceremonies resemble mass orgies. This celebration is more important in Prax, where Storm Bull is the permanent partner of Eiritha, their great spirit.

☞ Extinguish Day

Winds Day, Stasis Week, Darkness Season

Extinguish Day commemorates Urox' victory over Vestkarthen, who thought that he was better than Orlanth and Urox. He had been an ally of Urox' father, but during the Vingkotling Age he went wild and began despoiling the earth. Orlanth sent Urox to deal with him, and the Wild Wind gored him so that his heat flowed out and he cooled. Worshippers of Maran often join Urox on this day, for she is an ally against Chaos and another who defeated Vestkarthen.

☞ Wild Wind Day

Fire Day, Stasis Week, Storm Season

Wild Wind Day celebrates Urox' storm powers, which saved the world. It begins a two-day orgy of destruction that leads into Beat Devil Day. Uroxi conduct special raids to capture Chaos things for use in the high holy day rites on Wild Day. Of course, most of the Chaos things encountered are slain, with only the toughest and most dangerous taken alive for the high holy day rites.

☐ Marrying the Earth ☐

Urox married many Earth goddesses in Umath's Age and fathered many children. Urox' worshippers may marry only devotees or priestesses of Earth goddesses (or the equivalent in Prax, usually Herd Women of the great spirit Eiritha). They may take many wives, but may not take concubines. Many cultists never marry, for the cult does not prohibit casual sex.



Beat Devil Day (Bellow Day, Great Urox Day)

Wild Day, Stasis Week, Storm Season

Urox' high holy day reenacts his defeat of Wakboth. The greatest celebrations occur at the Block, in Prax, and every member of the cult tries to attend the celebrations there at least once in his life. During the rites, worshippers fight captured Chaos things bravely and fiercely. Each time part of a worshipper is sliced off, mutated, or crushed, part of the world comes forward. Fire and Ice give aid, as do Light and Dark, Strong and Weak, High and Low. When Urox is held in the air, he draws strength from his breath. Each styrman makes a final assault and is thrown to the earth. As the Sun sets they are battered and broken, barely able to stand. As one, they make a final cry of anger, despair, and defiance, and the universe itself hears their call. A stone falls from the sky, and together they rise and crush the foe with rocks, weapons, and bare fists. The healers come forward once it is safe, calming their rage and healing the wounds taken for the sake of the entire world.

This is also the day that all Heortlings worship Urox. Bellow Day honors Urox if his worshippers can prove their worth by overcoming a Chaos thing in combat. If the Uroxi champion is successful, the community gives him and his followers food, drink, and almost any amenity desired. If the champion fails, the local king or chieftain casts the Uroxi out for the rest of the season, allowing them back only for the special anti-Chaos rites of Sacred Time.

Beat Devil Day falls on the same day as a minor Yinkin holy day. Uroxi often single out Yinkini for ridicule and abuse during the early parts of the rites, before the fight with Wakboth.

Worshippers spend the days after Beat Devil Day fighting Chaos monsters and raiding known Chaos nests. Clans and cities near places such as Larnste's Print in Heortland and Ginijji in Dragon Pass both fear and welcome this influx of Chaos-fighting berserks.

Organization

Many Heortling clans include an Uroxi among their weaponthanes. Most Uroxi belong to one of several independent warbands that wander about at the direction of their god, killing Chaos and straining the hospitality of settled folk.

Shrines to Urox are common, but he has no permanent temples in Sartar. Uroxi warbands permanently populate several sacred sites, two of which are especially famous. The Block, a huge chunk of truestone located in Prax, is the most sacred Urox place in the world. Worshippers guard it constantly to prevent the Devil from rising again. Although

pieces of truestone can be found all around, attracting many pilgrims and treasure seekers, the Uroxi never use this magic, and usually hunt down anyone else who takes one. Instead, they put them back so that the weight that holds down the Devil does not lessen.

Stormwalk Mountain, the highest peak in the Storm Hills, was formed from the body of a giant whose head Urox twisted off. At the top of this mountain graze Urox' herds of *zarur* (see *Anaxial's Roster*, pg. 34), guarded by his son Baskelos.

Urox Heroquest Paths

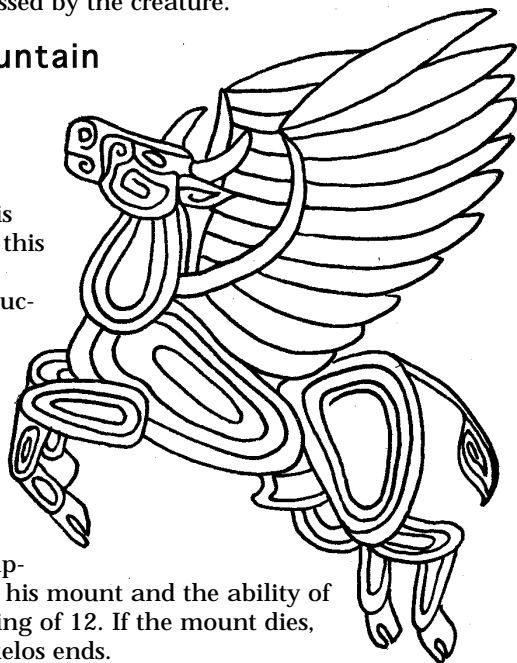
The Horns of Minotauros

The minotaurs is descended from Urox' son Minotauros. Although few minotaurs worship Urox (for as many are animists as theists), they are friendly to members of this hero cult. Uroxi receive no feats from Minotauros, but some have minotaur followers.

One heroquest path of Minotauros is the Horn Quest, where a successful Uroxi returns with a pair of bull's horns growing from their head. These horns have a normal weapon rank of $\Lambda 2$, but against Chaos they have $\Lambda 5$ and ignore any chaotic armor (as opposed to natural or worn armor) possessed by the creature.

Stormwalk Mountain

The giant Baskelos guards Urox' herd of *zarur* on Stormwalk Mountain. An Uroxi that wishes to join this hero cult must follow this heroquest path and befriend Baskelos. If successfully, he must spend 10% of his time guarding the sky bulls. In return, he may try to tame one bull to be his riding mount. This in itself is a difficult task, but if the worshipper succeeds he gains his mount and the ability of Ride Sky Bull at a rating of 12. If the mount dies, his obligation to Baskelos ends.





Known Chaos nests are holy because Chaos is there. They thus attract Uroxi warbands, who guard against excursions of Chaos hordes and raid into the area.

Uroxi Warbands

Worshippers are always loyal to the jarl that accepted them into the cult. Each jarl has many styrmens in his following. Individual styrmens in clans leave to fight Chaos and to worship with other Uroxi on holy days.

Jarls lead most Uroxi warbands, and the word of a jarl is law to his followers. Styrmens are only beholden to their leader, and jarls are only beholden to Urox. If two jarls meet, a ritual duel of head butting determines seniority. The winner is the superior for the length of the meeting. A styrmans may even challenge a jarl for dominance, as long as he does not challenge his ownleader. Whenever a fury jarl is present, however, all Uroxi present acknowledge him as leader.

Uroxi warbands are independent of any clan or tribe. An Uroxi may act as weaponthane to a clan chieftain or tribal king, but must answer the call of his jarl, even against the wishes of his chieftain. Jarls may never serve a temporal lord in this manner. Jarls arrange their followers into whatever organization is required for the job at hand.

Membership Requirements

Those who feel the terrible call to fight Chaos worship Urox. He has no initiates, dedicated priests, or god-talkers; all followers must be devotees or disciples. The jarls conduct all religious duties for their followers.

Styrmans (Devotee)

An applicant must be armed with magic or weapons and must be free of the taint Chaos. Other considerations depend on the jarl that inducts him. Women are accepted, but few join.

The initiation ritual revisits Urox' tempestuous past. The candidate is thrown into the Animal Corral and must tame the wild beasts and smash the carnivores as Urox did. He then mates with many goddesses, and his sons spread over the earth. He fights all comers, from his own kin to the awfulness of the Predark. Finally, he fights his own personal Devil, and learns of the need for the support of those who love him — his wives and battle companions. Many Uroxi meet defeat at this last





part of the quest, and those that do may never attempt to join the cult again. Some even die in their struggle with Wakboth.

Wounds taken from this final battle become the styrman's initiation scars. Although the wounds heal, their pain remains. Whenever any Chaos entity comes within about fifty feet of the Uroxi the pain returns, thus alerting him to the presence of Chaos. The pain is generally greater for more powerful or tainted entities, but does not inform the worshipper of the location or nature of the entity. Some Uroxi experience the pain of Chaos in other ways, perhaps reflecting hidden scars — as a foul odor, an ache in their head or bones, or an unnatural rage.

Styrmens have all of the advantages and obligations of devotion. They must attend their warband's *wapentake* on holy days, and must join all Chaos-fighting expeditions. They may leave their jarl temporarily with his permission, but must be present for at least half the year, and must return immediately if called. Styrmens are required to investigate any hints or rumors of Chaos presence personally, and to summon their jarl to help kill any Chaos they cannot destroy on their own.

⚔ Fines for Hearth-breaking ⚔

- If a hearth stone be broken or befouled, or others be incited to break such a stone, then four cows and lesser outlawry.
- If a man lay with one not his wife, or a woman lay with one not her husband, or if one married lays with a thrall, or visits a body priestess without good cause, then three cows each occurrence.
- If a man seize a woman's breast, though she say nay, or a woman goad a young man to his shame, though he beg silence, then two sheep.
- If a spirit or daimon be summoned within four walls, then one cow; if an evil spirit or demon within four walls, then two cows and cleansing.
- If madness or passion be called down within the walls of the stead, and kin be cut, or allies or guests, and no enemy be near, then one cow.
- If meats unwholesome be served in the pot, be they green with age, from strange beasts, or limb of duck, so that ill come of it, then two sheep.
- If one given to Death shares hearth with a pregnant woman, then one cow against the mistress of the hearth.
- If an Uroxi be denied his beer, that ill come of it, then one cow....

Jarls are responsible for maintaining their followers and seeing to their readiness for action. They provide food, weapons, and magic, and most provide styrmen with steeds, plunder, and other favors. If a styrman leaves his jarl, he loses these benefits. If a jarl dies, each of his styrmen must petition to join another jarl's warband or form his own. An Uroxi cannot serve the god except by following or leading.

Magic Keyword

Physical Abilities: Close Combat (Greatsword Fighting, Maul Fighting, or Greataxe Fighting; Two [Weapon] Fighting), Ignore Pain, Tough.

Mental Abilities: Intimidate, Mythology of Urox.

Special Magical Abilities: Sense Chaos.

Virtues: Brave, Fanatic, Hate Chaos.

Affinities and Feats:

☞ **Anti-Chaos** (Face Chaos Bravely, Righteous Outrage, Shield against Chaos, Smash Chaos Foe, Strength of Desperation)

† **Berserk Combat** (Double Blow, Fight while Dying, Great Blow, Ignore Wounds, Smash Down Opponent)

♁ **Wild Wind** (Call Dust Storm, Command Wild Umbroli, Scouring Wind Blast, Weapon Slices Like the Wind)

Secret: **Urox' Wapentake** (Devotees who learn Urox' affinities to 1♁2 each may attend his *wapentake* in the Eternal Battle. There, they may integrate spirits from the Storm Bull Practice of the Praxian Tradition as if they are animists. They take no penalties to magic use or in the Otherworld for using spirits, and do not pay any extra hero points due to Misapplied Worship.)

Note: All of the feats of the **Berserk Combat** affinity use the rules for berserk magic (see **Hero Wars**), as does any ability they augment.

Jarl (Warband Leader)

Jarls are Uroxi who lead other styrmen. They are also called the Bull's Head or, more familiarly, simply Bulls. They have proven themselves in battle against Chaos and other foes, and so command absolute respect from their followers. They act as both warband leaders and god-talkers of Urox. Jarl is essentially an advanced occupation, and styrmen who wish to lead their own bands must learn the necessary religious abilities or they are unlikely to attract followers.

Jarls function as god-talkers in addition to their Chaos fighting duties; they gain no magical benefits, but may bring new styrmen into wor-

ship of the Bull. Such Uroxi are always subject to the jarl's commands until he releases them to become jarls themselves. The only respect a jarl owes is to his god, the jarl who initiated him, and to whoever can best him in battle. He owes obedience only to his god, and is free to follow Urox' winds wherever they lead him, at the disposal of no man.

Entry Requirements: Must have the approval of his jarl to follow no man, only the Bull. He must be a renowned warrior and Chaos fighter (as indicated by Close Combat and Sense Chaos of 10 ω or more each), with at least four styrmén willing to follow him. He must have journeyed to Urox' *Wapentake* and integrated a spirit.

Mental Abilities: Initiate to Urox, Perform Sacrifice, Pray to Urox.

Relationships: to Followers.

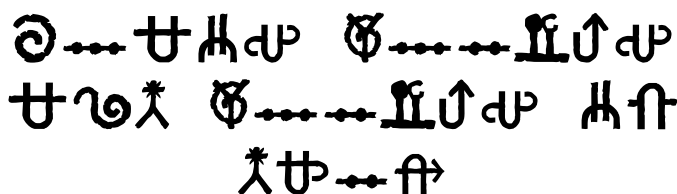
Fury Jarl (Disciple)

A disciple of Urox is known as a Fury Jarl, Rage Jarl, or Storm Jarl. Some people call them Storm Khans, a title taken from the Storm Bull Practice of Prax. Disciples of Urox are relatively common, with several at the Block and as many as half a dozen in Dragon Pass.

Although a prospective fury jarl need not be a jarl, most are, for only years of leadership can properly prepare a follower of the Bull to become one with the god. An Uroxi does not need the permission of his jarl to attempt the Fury Jarl Rites, for no man can gainsay the Bull when he chooses his personal followers.

The candidate must have served his jarl faithfully, and must have shown extraordinary courage and skill against Chaos. He must have at least 1 ω 2 in Close Combat, Sense Chaos, a cult virtue, the three affinities, and one other appropriate ability. He must have integrated at least one spirit at Urox' *Wapentake*.

Fury Jarls are beholden only to Urox, and always attract a large following of styrmén and jarls. Although nominally under the authority of Orlanth and his laws, most Uroxi ignore the niceties of Heortling culture. Anyone insulted or wronged by a fury jarl is welcome to try his luck at getting him to pay wergild or other fines.



Subcults and Hero Cults of Urox

Urox is single-minded, and has no subcults. He does have several hero cults, which generally teach special feats or combat techniques. Many warbands have exclusive access to a minor hero cult, and so teach an ability such as Strong or one of various fighting or weapon techniques.

Binstarnif Awe

Binstarnif Awe was a Pol Joni hero, though he had orange skin. He trained his horse to stand despite its natural fear of Chaos, and he teaches others to do this as well. A worshipper must kill any mount that flees from Chaos despite this magic.

☞ **Anti-Chaos Feat:** Fearless Mount.

Divine Retribution

Urox sends his Foul Breath against shirkers, cowards, and those who abandon their sacred duty for weaker gods. It is a foul-smelling wind, full of powdered dung, biting ants, spines from cactus, and other nasty things. It constantly surrounds the malefactor, warning those around him of Urox' displeasure. As bad as the smell and stinging is for those near him, they are even worse for the apostate, who has difficulty breathing and acting normally within the miasma.

Normal social interactions are impossible with the Foul Breath surrounding the apostate. Additionally, he takes a penalty to any Urox magic or physical activity that he attempts. The penalty varies with his crimes. A styrman who shirks his duty or ignores the call of his jarl takes a penalty of -3 to -5 for a season or two. One who flees from Chaos or abandons the Bull might take a penalty of -15 to -20 or more until he makes atonement.

Urox also punishes those who abandon his worship by intensifying their sensitivity to Chaos and the pain that it brings them. He then removes all magic gained from his worship, so that the worshipper cannot effectively fight it.

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Vinga

Goddess of Protection and War

*Red-headed Vinga, valiant avenger,
Bold battle-woman, brave spear thrower,
Daring and dauntless, defends the helpless,
Loyal Daughter, laughing warrior.*

Vinga is the warrior goddess for women, and is also a primary protector of the Heortlings. She especially protects the helpless — the lost child or threatened woman, the defenseless village — and inspires the seemingly defenseless to defend themselves. Even before the Darkness had begun, the Loyal Daughter stepped to the fore and guarded the tribe. She organized defenses and drove off the Uz. Her worshippers wear their skirt over men's clothing and dye their hair red.

Mythology of Vinga

The childhood of the divinities in the Storm Tribe Age was wondrous and perfect. The gods and goddesses, all young and unformed, played together. Vinga played hard, whether at hurley, javelin throwing, or running, and with laughter and high spirits she encouraged her playmates to surpass themselves.

In those days, no one knew what their role was to be, so they did everything to see what they did best. Vinga tried many things, and even when she did not succeed she learned a trick or treasure or gained a friendship. Most of the gods and goddesses of the stead loved her as a good-natured, loyal daughter to her parents, full of laughter and courage.

The first time Vinga lost her temper was when Elmal the Defender told her to keep off the palisades. "This is no place for a woman," he sneered. Vinga's fury was so great that her hair turned a fiery red. Her stormy wrath eclipsed even the bright torch of Elmal's righteousness, and the two raged on and on, scaring the cattle and keeping everyone awake until Heler doused them both with his most miserable rain. Afterwards it seemed that Red Vinga did not laugh quite as much. She

became more determined, however, and even her parents thought twice before provoking her anger.

As Vinga grew into a beautiful young woman, some gods began to dislike her growing familiarity with things they thought no goddess should know. Others desired her as a pleasure-mate or marriage match. Vinga always turned the pride and desire of these gods to her own advantage before sending them on their way. Some loved her for who she was, and Vinga returned their affection with friendship and fierce loyalty.

When the clan mustered to defend the *tula* the first time, Vinga was only one of many goddesses who went. It did not take long for every sensible goddess to realize that these battles were worse than the rough and tumble games that the gods played. Before long, most stayed home and sought another way, but the Loyal Daughter endured.

Vinga brawled with the best at Harar Bridge. At Cheserosos, when the Old Sea ambushed Orlanth, she stubbornly held her place in the shield-wall and spoke only of final victory. She fought at Doreros and escaped when Hancheros drowned the *fyr*. She could not avoid the reach of Madadan, who swept her up at Kongarl with the rest of the women. She labored beside the other prisoners to dig the Dral Air Tunnel, and so was one of the escapees. At Thrinbarri Roofs, she fought with sword and shield. When Jiril tried to flee, she cut him down like a cowardly Vadrudi. She honorably spared him when he surrendered, but forced him to relinquish his powers. At these battles, Vinga sometimes fought among the War Women and sometimes among the Thunder Brothers.

After the Battles of Thrinbarri, the Thunder Brothers fought to destroy the greater sea gods and dry the lands. Vingkot led them to conquer the peoples and settle the recovered lands, from Sivilis to Velun. During this time, Vinga stayed at home to learn from her female kin. She joined the Weaver Women in the Loom House, and was as adept in the arts of the hearth and stead as she was at fighting. She even made their same old tasks easier one day when she measured out fields for her mother and sisters by hurling her javelin exactly one mile from each marker rock.

☐ **Vingan Defeats** ☐

Vingans admit to their goddess' losses in the Gods War. Foolish men occasionally view this as a sign of Vinga's inferiority, for almost none of the Thunder Brothers has such events in their public mythology. Those men are stupid. If they ventured deeper into their own gods' myths, they would find that most of them were at Cheserosos, Doreros, and Kongarl. Whenever men cast such taunts, a typical Vingan response is to say, "You were there," and leave it at that.



Vinga taught manners to people. She was one of the Great Twelve who cracked skulls and stopped all provocative speech, fighting at table, and bone throwing. The Loyal Daughter showed the power of words as a weapon, a shield, and a gift. She stood beside her mother when Ernalda spoke the Belittle Words, which were sharp enough to prevent kinstrife and so dangerous that they made Orlanth bleed.

One event, towards the end of the Vingkotling Age, catalyzed Vinga's committed powers. The gods were gone — Orlanth had departed on his Great Journey, Elmal was taking his torch gift to the Shiver Bone clans, and Vingkot was off fighting the Vadrudi, who were plundering the northern regions. But not all of the Vadrudi were so far away. Valind appeared upon his thundering ice ram and sought to plunder the undefended stead. Ten good demigods, *fyrmen* all, rose to stop him. They fell, for simple farmers could not face such a wild and violent monster. The goddesses all ran to hide or tell Ernalda, but Mahome stopped stone cold, frozen in place by Valind's magic. If Valind took her, all the Vingkotling hearths would go out. Perhaps Ernalda could do something if that occurred, but Vinga did not wait to see.

Vinga shielded Mahome, and in fury cast her javelin to deter the advancing Valind. He threw a blanket of deep snow upon the ground, but Vinga wrapped her cloak around Mahome and leapt onto a tree-top. She rushed at him, dancing across branches and leaping from tree to tree. He made the snow deeper, even over the treetops, but Vinga ran over the snow as if it were hard earth. Vinga then showed the powers that she had taken from Jiril. Her Defender Wind howled around the stead and flew into the face of the god. The snows and cold winds locked in combat with her gentle rain and warm breezes, so that only Valind remained. Valind closed to slice his opponent with his icy spear, but dancing Vinga again cast her wind-fed javelin, and it bit so deep that he bled icy blood. Her second javelin would have killed him if he had stayed, but cowardly Valind turned and ran, so it slew his icy ram instead. Vinga pursued him as far as the boundary stones, and from that spot threw another deadly missile when he was a mile away. She returned and sacrificed the ram to Orlanth, so that he would know his daughter had remained loyal.

When the Thunder Brothers returned and heard what had happened they were ashamed, and swore it would never happen again. Together

† The War Women †

Several goddesses in the religion are combative and warlike, and when they gather they are called the War Women. They include Vinga, Maran Devor, Erantha Gor, Babeester Gor, Bevara, and Enferalda.

they devised watch schedules and patrols, and the weaponthanes set guardian stones to thunder and shout if an enemy approached. Vinga did not need their aid, however, and since then her Defender Storm has protected the Heortlings from Valind and his followers.

As the Vingkotling Age dwindled to the Great Darkness fewer and fewer folk remained, and Vinga was one of those who took on greater tasks. When Odayla brought the starving Cattle Orphans to the stead, Vinga taught them to be men. When Elmal was lost and wounded in the Stone Forest, Vinga tracked him with her Bright Eye, found food to restore his strength, killed his adversary with Elmal's own spear, then forged a path to bring him safely home. She killed the Uz ravager Gash Gra Nak with a plow borrowed from Barntar, and bluffed the Eat You Army by having Voriof mount straw warriors on the backs of his many sheep. On Grizzly Peak, Vinga protected her friend Drenyan Red Claw from the Marching Teeth as she labored to give birth to Heort the Swift.

As death overtook the cosmos, the gods of war went away one by one, until only Elmal remained. Even he was ill with cold, and sometimes he wrapped himself so close with his blankets that he was practically dark. All that time, Vinga protected the stead. When Orlanth and Ernalda's own houses were empty and Thunder Town was silent, with fallen roofs and cold hearths, when the herds of cattle and sheep were scattered and no more, Vinga continued to visit the places where people lived. Her power was instrumental in helping to inspire and defend the remnant humans in their chilly, isolated steads.

When Uz attacked, Vinga met the Dark Folk with cunning. When unthinking Chaos sought to devour, she met it with fury and a bronze javelin. If the enemy threatened to overwhelm the stead, she retreated to protect those in her care, but always struck back swiftly and in unexpected ways. Only once did Vinga sleep at her post. Even then, it was so that she could go to guard Ernalda and clutch her portion of the Cosmic Web that imprisoned Wakboth.

Many Heortlings worshipped Vinga at the Dawn. Although myths, hope-and-laughter songs, and sometimes ribald campfire tales of Vinga's exploits spread rapidly with Lightbringer missionaries in the Dawn Age, her cult and direct worship did not. Even today, Vinga is known in many regions where she is not worshipped. She has some followers in Ralios, but the cult never took root in Talastar or elsewhere in Peloria.

Manifestations

Vinga is present in all of her followers, but more generally wherever women must defend themselves or seek vengeance alone. She is also present at difficult childbirths.

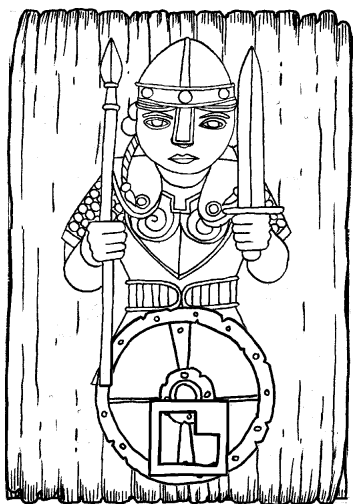
Icons and Images

Heortlings portray Vinga as a young woman wearing a warrior's helmet. She is often laughing or smiling. Most commonly, she holds a javelin in one hand and raises the other in a gesture of protection or reassurance. The image of a single open eye with a storm whirl as its pupil invokes Vinga and denotes her presence.

Otherworld Home and Life After Death

The Red-Headed Lodge stands by the Twisted Flint Spire on Orlanth's Stead in the Storm Realm. From there, initiates may exit to the Vingkotling Age or Chaos Age. After death, Vingans feast, hunt, and relax from the burdens of combat as reward for their lives. They may go to Orlanth's Hall or visit any of the Thunder Brothers when they want to enjoy men.

Women who die in childbirth are honored at the Red-Headed Lodge, for they too are heroes who bravely gave their lives in service to the clan.



Vinga

Nature of the Cult

Vinga is the goddess who does a god's job of fighting enemies. She is the protector of the hearth when all men are gone and an expression of the courage of women. She is a goddess in her own right, but at the same time functions as an aspect of Great Orlanth. Her worshippers understand that she is Orlanth's compassion.

Role of the Cult in the Society

Vinga is the Heortlings' favorite female warrior goddess. Vingans do work that men normally do. She is closely identified with her father Orlanth, and is one of the Thunder Brothers. She provides a place for assertive, gifted, or independent women who feel the call of an adventurous life. She also gives a home to those who have lost family through violence. Temporary membership in the cult provides a mechanism for aggrieved women to seek their own revenge.

The goddess is bold and adventurous, full of life and laughter, reckless but always artful. She is a lover of many, sometimes bawdy, but is a deadly adversary when provoked. She is a Loyal Daughter to her par-

ents and kin, but she also has a fiercely independent, willful streak. She is resourceful and crafty, and has the ability to turn her anger into fierce and focussed compassion. Though often a peacemaker, her terrible fury brings vengeance against those who violate the sacred hearth.

Vinga is the protector of the helpless and those who do not fight. She inspires them to extraordinary acts, and often finds unexpected solutions through the abilities of those she defends. A fierce and cunning warrior, Vinga's main weapon is the wisdom of women that always seeks another way, aided by quick wits and laughter. Her best defense is courage and sudden movement.

Attitudes and Relationships

Vinga has strong connections to Orlanth, the Thunder Brothers, and the War Women. She has a sometimes hostile rivalry with Elmal, resulting from their mutual responsibility for protecting the stead and the different ways they go about it. Elmal is a mighty warrior, and finds it easy to give orders. Vinga obeys her father, however, but rarely anyone else, and so the two are often at odds. "I shall protect the women," is Elmal's proud boast. "We women can protect ourselves," is Vinga's willful reply.

Vinga's enemies are those who threaten the stead or harm the helpless. Her greatest foes are the Uz, Chaos, and the Valinding gods of ice and winter.

大 Common Reactions to Vingans 大

The Heortling religion allows great tolerance, and its egalitarian ideals are easy to accept when unconventional people are absent. However, worshippers of deities such as Nandan and Vinga often face resistance from the common Heortling confronted with their presence. Most stead folk lead relatively closed lives, and many assume that the way they live is the way everyone is supposed to live. Thus, gender bias is one of the most persistent problems Vingans face. The skalds sing of the equality of Vinga with the other Thunder Brothers, but bumpkin clan folk are more likely to feel resentment, embarrassment, or strained hostility towards her worshippers. Some men are fearful that a woman might best them in combat. And despite their gratitude for Vinga's protection, some women cannot understand why a sister might give up the security of a stead to carouse, boast, and fight among the men.

Narrators can choose to make these reactions as much or as little trouble in their game as they wish. In the end, Vinga perseveres, and even the most backward clansfolk learn more of the true Orlanthi Way through contact with her worshippers.



Mode of Worship and Sacrifices

Public sacrifices to Vinga are of red cows. Private sacrifices to Vinga are of female red deer. These graceful creatures are sacred to the goddess, for they defend their young with great ferocity and courage. Individual worshippers offer locks of hair, spearheads, or the sweat of their brow. When Vingans seek victory in battle, they sacrifice a snow-white ram to the goddess.

Vingans conduct their ceremonies in the open air, usually by the Vinga Poles (ornamented and warded keypost pillars that are part of a defensive palisade).

Holy Days

Vinga has no weekly or regular seasonal holy days. She receives worship as one of the Thunder Brothers at all Orlanth ceremonies. She also receives collateral worship as one of the War Women on Axe Day (see pg. 203), Gor Day (see pg. 221), and Loom Blessing Day (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 185).

Vinga receives more formal worship on Orlanth's seasonal holy days, especially Sword Day (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 212). As protector of the hearth, she receives worship on Ernalda's holy day of Mahomravand (Hearth Day: Clay Day, Fertility Week, Fire Season). She receives public worship from all Heortlings on Defense Day, her high holy day, and on Brothers Day (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 214).

☐☐ Defense Day

Variable

Defense Day is celebrated by all Heortlings when the first Defender Storm strikes (usually in late Earth Season or early Darkness Season). On this day, many women of the clan bear weapons and strut and boast as men do, to general merriment. In private ceremonies, permanent worshippers offer a single female red deer to the goddess. The god-talkers cure the sacrificial hide and fashion it into a magic shield, which they then award to the bravest Vingans.

⓪ Vingans and Lunars ⓪

The Lunar authorities have banned worship of Orlanth. Despite their close relationship to the Storm Father, however, most Vingans do not attract undue attention. There are exceptions — the Lunars have actively suppressed Vinga's worship in Pavis, within Kheldon tribal lands, and among certain clans of other rebellious tribes.

Organization

Vinga's worship is widespread throughout Orlanthi territory. Only women worship Vinga, who in return gives them access to Orlanth's magic. Her cult has many local variations of focus and custom. In some areas, for example, her worshippers know her not as the daughter of Orlanth and Ernalda but as a human hero from Heort's time. Regardless of other customs, however, all Vingans offer protection to the helpless.

Vingans are common among warbands dedicated to the War Women. These bands are similar to other Heortling warbands, but accept only women. Several warbands dedicated solely to Vinga also exist.

Holy Places and Temples

Vinga's center of power in Sartar is the Fort of Mists, a temple magically hidden among the Quivin Mountains. Other temples are located in Boldhome, Jonstown, at Last Cast (to the south of the Old Wind Temple), and in Pavis. Another important temple, Defender's Fort, stood in the hills north of Swenstown, but Lunar forces destroyed it after Starbrow's Rebellion. Four times it has been magically rebuilt overnight, and four times the Lunars have razed it again.

Membership Requirements

Any Heortling woman who has undergone Ernalda's initiation (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 60) may join Vinga as a permanent member after convincing three sponsors (a devotee of Vinga, a god-talker or champion of Orlanth, and an Ernalda priestess) of her sincerity and fitness. Dedication to Vinga is similar to Orlanth's initiation (*ibid.*). When the candidate returns she crops her hair, dyes it red (usually with henna) and, in a special ceremony, receives her weapons from the Ernalda priestess.

Women may also worship Vinga by joining the subcult of the Red Woman (a subcult shared with Ernalda). Such membership is temporary: having accomplished her vengeance or assisted in defending the clan, the woman normally returns to her former lifestyle. Some women may be permanently changed by this experience and undergo Orlanth initiation to become a permanent Vingans.

☐ Appearance ☐

Vingans have a distinct appearance. They often decorate their face, hands, and feet in dot patterns that proclaim their feats. All have red hair and wear a knee-length skirt worn over men's trousers. Not all redheaded women are Vingans, but anyone wearing the combined clothing is.



Initiate

Heartlings (and the *Hero Wars* rules) treat Vingans as if they are worshippers of Orlanth Adventurous (see *Thunder Rebels*, pp. 219-221), although she has different feats. Whatever male worshippers do, the Vingans do also. In most cases, wherever the Orlanth cult says “men only” it actually means “men and initiated Vingans only.”

Vinga is one of the Thunder Brothers. Her initiates muster with the *fyrd*; they usually fight in the shieldwall, but often take special duties in defense of non-combatants. They attend weapons practice and follow the commands of their Orlanthi leaders. In return, they have all the advantages of male worshippers.

Worshippers of Vinga created using the *Hero Wars* rules belong to the Vinga the Spearwoman subcult by default.

Magic Keyword

Physical Abilities: Close Combat (Spear Fighting), *Fyrd* Combat, Jump, Ranged Combat (Javelin), Running.

Mental Abilities: Boast, Mythology of the Thunder Brothers, Mythology of Vinga, Sense Change in Weather, Track, Wilderness Survival.

Virtues: Active, Loyal, Proud. Worshippers also adhere to Orlanth's Great Virtues (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 219).

Affinities: † **Combat**, ≈ **Movement**.

Loyal Daughter (Devotee)

Devotees are known as ‘Loyal Daughters’ or simply ‘Daughters.’ They are full-time warriors, most as members of the clan warband. They are often palisade defenders, but can be weaponthanes, forward scouts, explorers, or emissaries as well as any man. They must put themselves forward in battle, challenging enemies to single combat and accepting challenges in return. Many Vingans remain behind to defend the stead and the women and children when the warband leaves.

Affinities and Feats:

† **Combat** (Deadly Spear Throw, Fight against Rapist, Fight against Uz, Leaping Shield, Mile Javelin Throw, Spear Help)

≈ **Movement** (Burst of Speed, Dodge Missiles, Leap over Water, Run on Treetop, Run upon Snow)

Subcults of Vinga

In addition to Vinga's personal subcults, initiates and devotees may join any aspect or subcult of Orlanth. In practice, most Vingans join Thunder Brother subcults such as Destor, Daylanus, and Helamakt, but

a female farmer might worship Orlanthcarl, for example, and a Vingian chieftain would certainly worship Dar. Although rare, it is even possible for a Vingian to worship only Orlanth subcults and none of those listed below.

Although Vingans can join any subcult of Orlanth, male worshippers of Orlanth may never join any of the subcults listed below.

Defender Storm

Vinga is the daughter of Orlanth, and so she commands a wind. No one knew this at first, but when she fought Valind she revealed the power of the Defender Storm. It was at this time that the Thunder Brothers accepted her into their ranks as an equal. She comes each year when the first winter winds blow from the north, and stays as long as she can. She holds back the forces of winter so that the people can better prepare against its coming. She then departs the Inner World to defend Orlanth's own stead throughout the Darkness, but returns in Storm Season with Ohorlanth and the rest of the Thunder Brothers.

Vinga the Defender Storm has few initiates or devotees, but all Heortlings sacrifice to her during the public Defense Day rites.

Affinities:

6 Defender Storm (Melt Ice, Prevent Frost, Shield Stops Wind, Warm Wind, Wash away Snow)

† **Combat Feats:** Aid Throw with Wind, Piercing Shriek.

Secret: Defeat Winter (Automatically succeed at a single final action during any contest in which the hero has successfully used her **Defender Storm** affinity, even if she normally would not be allowed a final action.)

† The Red Woman

"Every childless widow among the Kheldon Tribe dyed her hair red that winter."

So says a chronicle of the Hero Wars in Sartar.

Vinga is the last defense for women. When a woman screams for help and it arrives, that is Vinga's power, whether the help is a door opening, an enemy falling down, or an empty boat appearing along a river. This is how most women experience Vinga, for only they can use divine aid to call upon her.



A formal commitment is also possible, called the Red Woman. The Red Woman is the blade-strength of all women. Any woman may invoke her when faced with an overwhelming personal loss that demands vengeance (such as the violent death of a child or husband) or if an overwhelming enemy threatens the clan. To do this, she must dye her hair red and swear the Red Vows before the moot or at any Orlanth ceremony. The worshipper must renounce her fertility, which Ernalda keeps safely until the Red Woman's vengeance or other task is completed. Sometimes the mere act of taking the vow shames previously unwilling men into providing assistance.

A woman who has taken the Red Vows is called a Red Woman. She remains a worshipper of Ernalda, but also joins the subcult of The Red Woman. The worshipper may join a local Vingana band (which will arm and train her) or demand training and assistance from the clan warband. The temporary worshipper gains Vinga's **Combat** and **Movement** affinities and the Red Woman's **Inspire Non-combatant** affinity for as long as she remains a member of the subcult. She may not join the other Vinga subcults or become a devotee unless she becomes a permanent Vingana. Once she leaves, she is released from her Vows and loses all of her Vinga magic.

Affinities:

↳ **Inspire Non-combatants.**

☒† Vinga the Avenger

Vinga the Avenger is another name for the Red Woman. When a wandering Chaos obscenity killed her lover and hearth-mates, Vinga's fury and despair knew no bounds. Gustbran took the goddess' grief and forged it into a blade called Vengeance. The Loyal Daughter took the sword and tracked the raider's bloody trail over nine raw mountains and eight terrible valleys. Finding the killer and its spawn in their lair, she enacted a vengeance so terrible and complete that even the monster's name is lost to our knowing.

Permanent Vingans may join this subcult, and they do not have to take the Red Vows to do so unless they wish to learn the subcult secret. Once they take the Red Vows, they may never regain their fertility from Ernalda. Vinga the Avenger does not receive any special feats from Vinga or any of Ernalda's aspects.



Jonstown Compendium #307,299

Naldara Three Crops was an Ernalda matchmaker of the Shouting Rock clan. When raiding Grazers burned her stead and killed her entire family, Naldara took the path of the Red Woman. For five years she pursued her enemies like a demon, living alone in the wilderness and howling above their camps at night. In time, she slew every male in the band. She then returned to her clan, broke her spear before the altar, and quietly remarried.

Affinities and Feats:

☐ **Inspire Non-combatants** (Follow Me, Last Ditch Effort, Now I'm Angry, Surprise Yourself, There is Always a Way)

Secret: Blade of Vengeance (The devotee may take the Red Vows and then seek the assistance of a Gustbran devotee in forging her own personal Blade of Vengeance. While she uses the magic sword, she adds the secret's ability rating to her **Close Combat** ability and **Combat** affinity. She may only do this when facing a foe that has personally wronged her by killing or raping a battle companion or close family member. At other times, the secret has no effect.)

☐☐ Vinga the Spearwoman

Vinga the Spearwoman is the most common subcult of the goddess. Her worshippers dedicate themselves to protecting the hearth and fighting against the clan's enemies. Worshippers value cleverness and cunning over brute martial strength, but are also proud of their ability to fight as well as any man.

Affinities:

☐ **Protection** (Find Lost Child, Heal Injury, Make Fire, Restore Morale, Shield Non-combatant)

Secret: Defend the Helpless (The hero may instantly use her **Protection** affinity to defend a helpless target [whether a child, downed warrior, or defenseless village], even while taking another action.)

Divine Retribution

Vinga relies upon Orlanth to enact divine retribution. She has no agents or curses of her own that she sends against worshippers.





How Vinga Joined the Thunder Brothers

When Vinga became a woman, she rejected the boring life of a steadwife and decided to join her father's household. Ernalda saw that Vinga had made up her mind, so she gave her a hide shield and the bronze javelin that Orlanth had given her. Her sisters cried and told her not to go, but Vinga cut her hair and dyed it red, then put on a warrior's clothes. Only Enferalda supported her sister by giving her an amulet to give her strength when she needed it.

Vinga knew that she must prove her worthiness to join the Thunder Brothers. She had been many places and spoken to many people, and she knew that a giant named Bansh Bone-biter had recently moved to Bear Mountain. The Thunder Brothers had not yet decided to attack him, so Vinga decided to kill him before they could, and thus prove that she was the equal of any of them.

When Bansh heard Vinga, he rushed out to meet her. She challenged him, and he accepted by inviting her to dinner. "Your lovely limbs will be fine broiling over my fire."

"That is not to be," said Vinga, and she threw a javelin at Bansh. It bounced off of his bronze breastplate, so she aimed the next one at his head, but he held up his arm and it bounced off his vambraces. Then Bansh took up a bow he had made from the sinews and leg bones of his victims. He shot an arrow tipped with a tooth at Vinga, but she dodged it. Then Bansh shot two arrows at once, so Vinga dodged one and struck the other aside with her shield. She rushed forward, then drew her sword and in the very same motion cut off Bansh's head.

Vinga set out for the Thunder Barracks. She presented herself to her father, who was training with his brothers. "My lord, I wish to join your household and serve faithfully among your companions."

Orlanth looked at his daughter in a new way, for she had never before carried a shield. He also saw the looks of anger and disdain on the faces of his sons, and he thought that perhaps Vinga could teach them a much-needed lesson of respect for women. "My daughter, many wish to join, but only those who are qualified may do so. What talent can you add to my household?"

Vinga took out the head and said, "I have slain giants."

Hedkoranth laughed and shouted, "That's Bansh Bone-biter. Hey, Starkval, didn't you swear that *you* would kill him?"

Although some of the Thunder Brothers seemed impressed with Vinga's deed, Starkval merely pointed to a post nearby that held a giant head with four eyes. He said, "I killed Kankstank Neversleep, who rests only half his eyes at once. He killed many people and ate their souls. Bansh Bone-biter swore loyalty to him." The praise for Starkval was much louder. Orlanth said, "Starkval slays giants."

"I can do many things," Vinga replied. "Test me at anything."

So the Thunder Brothers held a series of contests. All of them participated in each one, and crowds of people came to watch the great free-for-all.

Hedkoranth proposed the first contest, and all the Thunder Brothers took up their slings. They whirled the stones above their heads, and the howling was so loud that the onlookers covered their ears. Orlanth shouted above the noise, and all of the Thunder Brothers released their casts. Vinga's stone went as far as Hedkoranth's, but his returned to his hand while hers did not, and so she lost.

Drogarsi proposed that they all dance. They danced the Papou, the Sword Dance, and the Thrush Walk, and Vinga danced more gracefully than any of the men. Then Drogarsi called to the musicians to play their fastest tunes, and each of the Thunder Brothers stumbled or quit. Vinga had the gift from her sister to aid her, however, and finally only she and Drogarsi remained. She missed a step, however, and as the musicians sat gasping for breath Orlanth pronounced Drogarsi the winner.

Vanganth said that they should all fly, so each called his wind, ram, or breath to bear him aloft. Vinga called her own wind, which most of her brothers did not even know existed, and she flew as high and as fast as Vanganth. When they landed, however, Orlanth judged Vanganth the winner, for he had flown on his own, without needing something to carry him.

And so each Thunder Brother proposed a contest. In the end, Vinga had not won a single one, and most of the Thunder Brothers teased and taunted her for her failure. She simply said, "You lost most of them, too," and presented herself again to her father. She asked, "My lord, have you any one companion who slays giants, slings, dances, flies, and does everything better than all but one of your sons?"

Orlanth smiled at his daughter. "You know I do not. You have done well, because every man you contested with is the best in all the world in his specialty. You have proved yourself worthy to join my companions." When he said this, most of the Thunder Brothers exclaimed in surprise.

Only Finovan, the shrewdest of Orlanth's sons, dared to speak. "My Father, all of your companions can do something better than every-

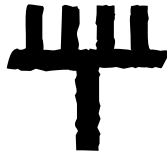
one. Hedkoranth is the best slinger, Drogarsi the best dancer, Vanganth the best flyer, and none can best me at the cattle raid. My sister is second best at many things, but second best is not good enough in battle. She must prove herself not just to you, but to us as well. If she cannot best *all* of us at something then she will never be one of us, even should you command us to take her in."

Vinga looked at her brothers and saw that Finovan's words were true: unless she could best every one of them at a single skill, they would never respect her. She responded to all of them, not just Finovan. "Each of you has proposed a contest, but I have not. Let each of you take up a javelin and we will see who is the better man."

On the field, Vinga let her brothers throw first. Each did great deeds, such as when Barntar threw his so hard that it stuck all the way into the ground, or when Ormalaya threw three javelins into a target so that each split the previous one. When they had all finished, Vinga stepped forward. She turned three circles and let her javelin fly with a piercing shriek, and all of her brothers watched in admiration as it flew a full mile and shattered the marking stone at the border of the next field.

A great shout erupted from the crowd gathered nearby, and all of the Thunder Brothers echoed it. Finovan smiled cleverly at Vinga, and the Thunder Brothers carried her into the Thunder Barracks on their shields so that they could toast their newest member with Minlister's best brew.





Yinkin

God of Alynxes, Hunting, and Sensuality

*Yellow-eyed Alynx, Yinkin the hunter,
Orlanth's brother, bed-friend to many,
Serpentbeast's foe, father of clouds,
Silent and sinuous stalker and lover.*

Yinkin is the Alynx God. He is famous for his stalking, his unending sensuality, and his loyalty to his brother Orlanth. He helped Orlanth many times, and saved him in the Darkness so that he could finish his Lightbringer's Quest. He is a favorite with all the goddesses, and his children have all played their part in the Gods Age. Though loyal to Orlanth, however, he is still his own cat; he remains willful and solitary, as befits a hunter.

Mythology of Yinkin

Yinkin is the son of Kero Fin, Mountain Mother, and Fralar, King of the Carnivores. Born in the Whistling Caves of his mother, his earliest life was solitary. He groomed, stalked, explored, and learned to bite before anyone knew his name. In the primeval forest of Esjenen [of the Orlanthi] and Orandaro [of the Hsunchen] he crept and followed every creature. None could escape him by hiding, running, or changing shape.

Many goddesses desired the handsome alynx, but he was very hot, and only one of them could curl up with him without burning. One day, Eurmal fed Yinkin catnip so that he fell into a deep sleep. Then Eurmal led the Bad Dogs to him and helped them to steal his heat, so that he was only normal temperature. Yinkin did not mind, however, because it let him get closer to more goddesses. He seduced and loved each differently, and each bore a different litter after he left. Every one still waits for him and is glad when their tom comes by.

In the Gods War, Yinkin had to choose between his nature and his kin when the Serpentbeast Brotherhood demanded that he join them or die. Orlanth swept through Orandaro to save Yinkin, and asked only

for fraternal duty in return. Later, the Brotherhood seized Yinkin again and demanded that he follow only his father, the great beast spirit Fralar. Yinkin stayed loyal to the Thunderer, who freed him again. That was when Yinkin decided to be a god and not a spirit. The Serpentbeast Brotherhood mustered all the hsunchen and invaded again, trying to carry away all of the god animals. Yinkin defeated the Brotherhood and kept many creatures alive that did not come from the Spirit World.

The fraternal loyalty of Yinkin and Orlanth is legendary. When Yinkin was still a cub Orlanth accidentally blew him out of the cave so that he hurtled towards the rocks below. Orlanth rescued him because that is what brothers do. The two traveled together many times, often competing for the affections of the same goddess. Later, when Urox bullied Yinkin, Orlanth soundly beat the Bull with a lariat and stick. Yinkin in turn also saved his brother several times. They worked together during the Gods War. Yinkin even accompanied Orlanth when he left in exile, and saved him when he caught the scent of an invisible enemy that was waiting in ambush.

After Orlanth left the world Yinkin wandered the wilds, helping lost humans and preying upon monsters. He taught people to hunt, and left litters of his descendants to help the humans. As the snow deepened so that even gods had difficulties, Yinkin slept in snow caves. The world continued to cool down until no one could tell the difference between life and death, and Yinkin left his cave to hunt less and less often.

Yinkin wandered this Land of the Dead, growing weaker and weaker, for there were no creatures to hunt. He happened upon the Frozen Man. Instead of eating the corpse-cold man, he licked him until he thawed. Yinkin was delighted to find that it was his own brother, Orlanth, who fed Yinkin his last rations and went on with his Lightbringer's Quest, which strengthened Yinkin so that he was present when Arachne Solara cast the Net of the Great Compromise. He marched with Orlanth into the reborn world, and even today is worshipped everywhere the Storm Tribe is known.

Manifestations

Yinkin is present in all of his children (whether mundane or magical), and in certain lovemaking and hunting techniques.



Yinkin

Icons and Images

Heortling clans picture Yinkin in different ways. Some depict him as an alynx, always the primary breed worshipped by the clan. Others show him as a man with alynx features, or rarely as a man with an alynx head. No matter what form he takes, Yinkin always has the long tail of an alynx. Male Yinkini often trim their beards to make themselves look more like alynxes.

Otherworld Home and Life After Death

Yinkin has a place by the hearth in Orlanth's Stead, but his real home is in the Forest of Winds in the Storm Realm. From his hidden lair, initiates may exit to Umath's Age, the Storm Tribe Age, the Vingkotling Age, or the Chaos Age. After death, Yinkini stalk elusive game through those dangerous woods, exulting in the risk and excitement of the hunt. When they hunt with Yinkin, no worshipper can tell the humans and cats apart.

Nature of the Cult

Yinkin is the Alynx God, the great soul of all alynxes. The Great Alynx was once a spirit and a god, but he chose to be the latter so that he could stay with his brother. By so choosing, he both enhanced his reason for being and robbed himself of his spirit nature. There are no spirit alynxes, only Yinkin, and so there are no alynx hsunchen.

Yinkin helped the Orlanthei through the Vingkotling Age and early Chaos Age, teaching them to be self sufficient by hunting and showing them how to fight off Chaos. He showed people the true meaning of loyalty and the bond between brothers, and he never doubted that Orlanth would return. All Heortlings keep alynxes as pets and work animals in memory of this bond.

As hunters, scouts, and teachers of courting skills, Yinkini are loyal to their clans. Individuals often serve the clan chieftain or tribal king, mirroring Yinkin's relationship to Orlanth. In many myths, Yinkin is the secret perception of Orlanth, and Heortlings praise his worshippers for their sixth sense. Yinkini are not truly warriors, however, and some Heortlings see their activities as being antisocial and a waste of time.

Attitudes and Relationships

Individual Yinkini and Orlanthei are always friendly, even if the two are strangers. Worshippers of Yinkin's paramours traditionally welcome Yinkin worshippers into their homes for the special "alynx form" of marriage that lasts nine days and then must end.

Because Yinkin denied his father, Fralar, and fought against the Serpentbeast Brotherhood, all beast spirits (and their hsunchen worshippers) are hostile to Yinkin. Telmori especially despise Yinkin, as do those who love or worship dogs. The beast men of Beast Valley have no liking for Yinkin. Urox cultists must, by tradition, bully Yinkini until defeated by Orlanthe in a ritual battle. The bullying rarely leads to great injury, and sometimes the Uroxi do not even best the Yinkini.

Mode of Worship and Sacrifices

Yinkin's ceremonies are more cat-like than human-like, with worshippers circling, leaping, hissing, and yowling throughout the rites. Worshipers always decorate themselves in an alynx costume, even if it is just a necklace of claws or a strap-on tail. Music from instruments strung with cat gut accompanies all of the dances and ritual cat fights.

On his public holy day, Yinkin accepts kidneys burnt in the fire. After using his love making powers initiates leave an offering of sweets at the edge of a forest. Yinkin also receives a portion of every kill made by his worshippers, which worshippers leave with reverence near the kill site.

Holy Days

𐄎 Catnip Day

Wild Day, Stasis Week, Sea Season

The Catnapping Incident celebrates Yinkin's cooling to his present temperature. Usually the trickster drugs the Yinkini, then the clan pours water on him after he falls asleep. Sometimes they have him hide, search him out, and then dunk him in water. The rite can turn dangerous if the Bad Dogs show up, so the clan usually posts warriors at the edges of the *tula* to keep watch.

𐄎 Cat Nap Day

Fire Day, Harmony Week, Fire Season

Cat Nap day is also called Lazy Cat Day. The longest day of the year is of course a favored day for alynxes and their worshippers.

𐄎 Wooing Day

Wild Day, Harmony Week, Earth Season

On this day, Yinkin visits each goddess to celebrate his virility and the art of seduction. Yinkini approach non-worshippers of the opposite sex with ritual seduction magics, which generally end with ceremonial sex conducted in private. Children of these matings are always Yinkin initiates when they grow up.

卐 Litter Day

Freeze Day, Disorder Week, Darkness Season

On the first day of Darkness Season, Yinkini reenact the coming of Yinkin to the peoples. Worshippers bring a litter of kittens that symbolizes the original litters left behind by Yinkin. They always present the litter to the maiden who was wooed in Earth Season, who then presents the kittens to the clan chieftain.

卐 The Great Hunt

Gods Day, Harmony Week, Storm Season through

Gods Day, Death Week, Storm Season

All the hunting gods participate in the Great Hunt (see pp. 146-147), hunting for the finest game and then returning the catch to their leader's table. Hsunchen often try to interfere with the Yinkini in this hunt, making it particularly dangerous for them.

卐 卐 Yinkin Day (Lover's Day)

Fire Day, Harmony Week, Storm Season

Yinkin's high holy day celebrates the birth of the world's greatest lover. All Heortlings publicly worship Yinkin on this day, offering his sacrifices to the clan alynxes. After the public rites, worshippers track down some foe of Yinkin in a sacred hunt, and the devotees read prophecies in its entrails.

卐 Catlight Day

Water Day, Fate Week, Sacred Time

Catlight Day celebrates Yinkin's finding of the Frozen Man and licking Orlanth back to life. For days and nights before, worshippers fast to remember the hunger that Yinkin felt in the Land of the Dead. After they find Orlanth, they receive food from the Orlanthi to break their fast.

卐 Return Day

Winds Day, Fate Week, Sacred Time

Return Day is important to the Yinkini, who remember that they were the first to greet Orlanth when he returned gloriously from the Underworld with light and warmth. They compete on this day with the worshippers of Elmal, Vinga, and other Living Gods to be the first to see and greet the clan's leaders as they return from their own quest.

Organization

There are Yinkin worshippers in most clans, with a local devotee or family tending his shrine somewhere on the *tula*. Although devotees from within each clan or tribe gather to celebrate special holy days and sacrifices, there is no inter-temple organization. Depending on the group and the holy day, the most accomplished hunter or lover leads the rites. Shrines are the only temples to Yinkin, usually hidden in forests or high hills where game and alynxes are found together. Most temples to Orlanth Adventurous contain a shrine to Yinkin as well.

Kero Fin Mountain is holy to Yinkini, as are the rare groves or patches of woodland that remain from Esjenen, the primeval forest of the Orlanthi. The 'litter sites' are also holy, although they hold no shrines. Yinkini sometimes travel to these sites to gain gifts from each of Yinkin's children. The sites are scattered across Dragon Pass, Kethaela, and Ralios.

Membership Requirements

Yinkin is solitary; if he shares time with anybody, it is a lover. His initiation ceremony requires the candidate to stay in the wilds for a year. If the initiate can survive alone and without human contact, depending only on Yinkin and himself, then the god has truly chosen him. Most candidates exhibit traits as they are growing up that show Yinkin has chosen them: their father or mother may be a Yinkini, or the alynxes of the clan may show an unusual affection for them.

Initiate

Heortlings wishing to join Yinkin must meet all of the normal requirements. Membership is equally open to men and women. Yinkin has few initiates, for most worshippers choose to become devotees.

Worshippers of Yinkin created using the *Hero Wars* rules are members of the Gavren the Hunter subcult by default.



Magic Keyword

Physical Abilities: Close Combat (Claw and Bite Fighting), Climb, Dodge, Jump.

Mental Abilities: Acute Hearing, Flirt, Light Sleeper, Mythology of Yinkin.

Virtues: Curious, Hedonistic, Loyal.

Affinities: ♧ **Hunting**, ♠ **Sensuality**.

Devotee

Yinkin has few initiates, and devotees have no special requirements or obligations beyond the normal ones. Most people chosen by Yinkin become devotees so that they are as close as possible to their god.

Affinities and Feats:

♧ **Hunting** (Grow Claws, Leap from Hiding, Move without Sound, Paralyzing Bite, Scent Foe)

♠ **Sensuality** (Feel No Guilt, Preen Self, Seduce, Sleep Anywhere)

Secret: Become Alynx (The devotee can transform into alynx shape. Any ability that the shape remains able to use retains its full ability rating; including Yinkin magic. While transformed, the secret acts as an **Alynx** affinity from which he can improvise abilities appropriate to the shape.)

Notes: Although each subcult has its own secret, all transform the devotee into an alynx. The difference between two secrets is the breed of alynx that the worshipper becomes. For information on the various breeds of alynx mentioned here, see *Anaxial's Roster*, pp. 36-38.

Subcults of Yinkin

♣♩ Alusar the Spy

Alusar was the son of Yinkin and a goddess known only as Eyes in the Dark. He was small and dark, and quickly gained a notorious reputation for independence and for spying. He could track down any being he wished, and he often did so simply to learn their secrets. His prowess at spying was so great that he sneaked into Yelm's Palace one time and saw Orlanth kill the Emperor. He was not blinded like everyone else, and he saw where Yelm went when he disappeared.

Affinities:

♣♩ **Perception** (Identify Scent, Ferret out Secret, Find Hidden Thing, See in Dark, See Hidden Being)



𐌸𐌹 Gavren the Hunter

Gavren the Lurker is the child of Yinkin and Velhara, the Lady of the Wild, for even she could not resist Yinkin's advances when he came upon her one day in the wilds. Their child inherited the solitary nature of each deity, and he spent most of his time far from settled lands hunting the prey of the Forest of the Winds. He was loyal to his sire, however, and he always came when Yinkin called him. He even came once when Yinkin wanted to call him but was too weak to do so, and he fed his crippled father until his wounds had healed.

Gavren followed his father's example and mated with many goddesses to produce the breed of alynx that bears his name. He favored earth goddesses, and several times gained a mate by preventing the Uz from despoiling the earth. He once clawed great Karrg, the Uz war god, who in turn killed several of his litters. His hatred for the Uz war god knows no bounds.

Mental Abilities: Evaluate Food Quality.

Virtues: Hate Uz.

Affinities:

‡ **Wilderness Survival** (Cat's Leap, Land Safely, Recognize Threats Nearby, Sense Enemies, Squeeze through Narrow Place)

𐌸𐌺 Hevren the Chaser

Hevren is the oldest of Yinkin's children, born to Mahome after Yinkin lay with her for the first time. He had long legs and large teeth, and although he loved the warmth his mother offered at his hearth, he loved even more to run and chase in the wilds. He was so fast that he and his children used to run down the great Veng birds of Peloria. Even today, he prefers sacrifices of chickens and ducks to wild prey.

Affinities:

𐌺 **Chasing** (Herd Animal, Leap Far, Leap High, Run Down Prey, Stay Warm)

𐌸𐌾 Murni the Mouser

Murni was the runt of the litter when the alynx ancestors were born. Once Ernalda had to abandon her stead, and only Voria would hide Murni. Murni kept their dark hiding place clear of mice, and Voria let him sleep on her lap so that both stayed warm. At first, Ernalda thought an invader was present, but Voria showed her mother the little creature and it became one of Ernalda's favorites.



Affinities:

◀ **Hunt Rodents** (Bite Rodent in Half, Detect Rodents, Hunt by Scent, Squeeze through Narrow Opening, Terrify Rodent)

卍 **Tol, Cloud-Yinkin**

Tol is the name that Yinkin used when he seduced Tarhelera, a goddess as seductive and beautiful as he was. He stayed with her for three times nine days, and each time she bore a different litter of cloud cats. When the Serpentbeast Brotherhood came to take Yinkin away the third and last time, he fought them as Tol, showing that his passion extended to something other than mating. He fought Telmor tooth to tooth and claw to claw, sliced Mralot with his claws despite his great wounds, and finally hid away when he sensed his father Fralar entering the fray.

Affinities:

▼ **Fight Hsunchen** (Fight Tooth and Claw, Hide from Spirits, Hurt Spirits, Ignore Wounds, Sense Hsunchen Nearby)

Divine Retribution

Worshippers of Yinkin are subject to the normal divine wrath and agents of reprisal of the Storm Tribe Pantheon. Additionally, Yinkin himself punishes any worshipper who harms an alynx. This curse applies to any communal member who has called on Yinkin for divine aid at any time in their life.

The transgressor is never safe when alynxes are nearby, for they treat him as if he is a dog. No alynx will warm itself at his hearth or take food from him. Instead, they hiss whenever he comes near, and may pounce on him or bite his legs before running away. Any Heortling automatically distrusts a person that alynxes treat in this manner.

Well-known Yinkin Heroquests

The Whistling Caves

Each Yinkini tries to climb to the top of Mount Kero Fin at least once in his life. Many never return. The goal is to find the Whistling Caves and perform the rite to enter Godtime. There, the worshipper meets young Orlanth, who buffets the Yinkini with his winds and blows him off the side of the mountains. If he succeeds in a test against his Loyalty, the god will rush to save him and let him down gently.

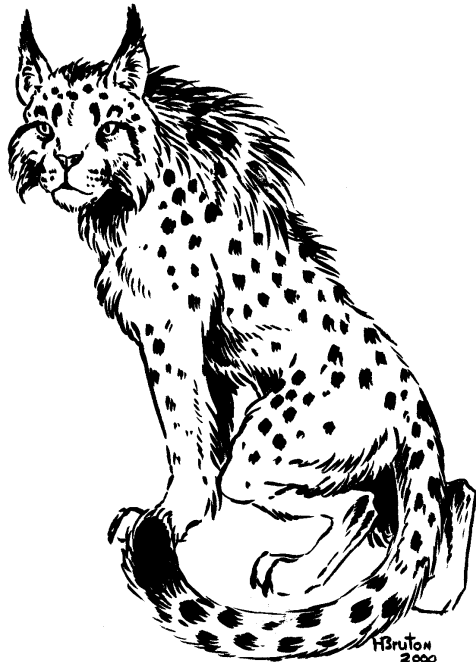




Worshippers who complete this quest successfully gain a special Umbroli ally called Nine Lives. Any time the devotee is in danger of death, the Umbroli saves him if it can. Each time it attempts to rescue the Yinkini, it takes a small piece of the devotee's tail (even if he does not yet know the cult secret and have one). After the eighth time it departs forever, leaving the Yinkini with a bobbed tail that is (or will be) only 1/9 as long as normal.

The Wolf Death

At the end of Litter Day, a Yinkini can try to travel to meet Telmor and fight him Tooth to Tooth and Claw to Claw. Worshippers of any subcult sacrifice to Tol the Cloud Cat before performing this quest. If the Yinkini is victorious over the Serpentbeast Brotherhood and Telmor, wolves will take fewer game animals on the clan's *tula* that year, so that game is more abundant for the clan's hunters. If the Yinkini is defeated, however, then beast spirits will plague the clan and take twice as many game animals as normal during the next year (more if the hero receives a Complete Defeat). Since the support of the clan is critical to the quest's success, a Yinkini will never attempt it without Extraordinary Support from his entire clan.





Minor Deities

Specialized Gods and Goddesses

*Great among gifters, storm gods gave magic,
Taught runes to godi, first among followers.
Godi teach feats, wise men learn them.
Magic lets all men work with the world.*

The two Great Deities rule, Major Gods and Goddesses oversee society, and the Minor Deities provide special services. They have few worshippers, but receive sacrifices for their unusual blessings. Nonetheless, they perform important tasks when needed, provide local color for narrators, and offer insights into Heortling society. We provide eighteen examples of such minor gods.

These cults do not always follow the standards set forth in *Hero Wars* or *Thunder Rebels*. Some have one, two, or three affinities but no subcults, others accept only devotees as worshippers. A few have many more worshippers in other lands, and in those places might display more magic. For example, some Heortlings worship Maran, but she is more important at the Shaker Temple. There, she takes the same form as most of the important Heortling deities, with core affinities and several subcults.



✕ Ana Gor

Goddess of Death and Human Sacrifice

Ana Gor was born when the first knife killed the first ancestor. As blood soaked the earth and life slipped into death, the doorway between Worlds opened. Ana Gor stepped forth from the God World to be the Goddess of Death. At first she was unconfined and traveled the world freely. No one knew what she was even when people were dying around her. Her depredations helped bring about the terrible Darkness.

A cloaked goddess once came to Orlanth's Hall. This was during the Vingkotling Age, when anyone not recognized was feared. No one invited her in, but she came anyway. At assembly, Ernalda engaged the stranger and threw back her cloak to show the tribe that she was Death. Humakt engaged her to see who was stronger; he was victorious, took control of her power, and changed the nature of her bloodshed forever. She was bereft of worshippers and power and thrown out of the world. That could have been the end of her, but she returned because people called upon her to obtain power by using human blood. Each time she came back another deity conquered her and cast her out, including Ty Kora Tek, Babeester Gor, Maran, and Esrola. Despite these defeats she always returned, and when the gods made the Great Compromise they discovered that she was part of it.

Ana Gor is the goddess of human sacrifice, for only through her can a human being's life force empower magic without damning or destroying the soul. She has no permanent place of her own, but oversees the rites of whatever deity's altars are used for her sacrifice. Orlanth and Ernalda abhor her presence, and they and their worshippers never participate in or authorize her rites. Only under the most rare and special circumstances may Humakt, Ty Kora Tek, Babeester Gor, Maran, or Esrola perform her rites. At any other time human sacrifice is an act of Chaos. Each of these deities has their own restrictions on the sacrifices that they will perform, whose detail is beyond the scope of this book.





Membership Requirements: None. Worship is temporary in most cases.

Physical Abilities: Prepare Human Sacrifice.

Mental Abilities: Mythology of Ana Gor.

Virtues: Merciless, Proud.

Affinities:

× **Sacrifice Human ritual** (Appease Earth, Assure Fertility, Lift Curse from Community, Sacrifice Apostate, Sacrifice Sacred King, Stop Plague)

Secret: None.

Manifestations: The ancient knife that is used for her sacrifices.

Worshippers: Ana Gor is very rarely worshipped, but is known throughout Orlanthe lands.

Holy Days: None.

Sacrifices: Ana Gor accepts only human sacrifice.

Other Side: Her home, the Beautiful Place, is said to be the most pleasant place in the land of the dead, a reward to those who offer the ultimate sacrifice of their lives to the gods.

Other Connections: Ana Gor is worshipped only as a subcult of Humakt, Ty Kora Tek, Babeester Gor, Maran, or Esrola.

Disadvantages: Everyone is terrified of her worshippers if they are superstitious. Even if they are understanding and philosophical, they consider members of this cult to be antisocial and dangerous.

× Sorana Tor 大

Sorana Tor is a Dragon Pass subcult of Ana Gor, for at times the goddess possesses her dominant priestess. Thus, Sorana Tor is Ana Gor, and although her body has changed, the goddess herself has indeed walked in Dragon Pass repeatedly. King Baltalbos tried to exorcise her cult and replace worship with a new goddess. She received him in the end. The madman Lokamayadon tried to wipe her out but failed. In the Dragon Era, both Two Mong Dragon and, later, Green Mong Dragonet tried, and both were ultimately failures as a result.

Finally, the Dragonkill depopulated the temple. Nonetheless, when Arim the Pauper came to Dragon Pass he found the goddess waiting for him. "It will always be," says Sorana Tor, "because when Havan Vor was killed, his blood spilled here."

Sorana Tor receives regular worship at the Shaker Temple of Dragon Pass. Her high priestess there may learn the secret of the subcult and embody Ana Gor so that she can bear a child to become the sacrificial king. This is not mere incarnation, for the goddess possesses the individual worshipper until her death.



▣ Asrelia and Ty Kora Tek ▣

Giver of Plenty, Keeper and Holder

Asrelia was young during the Green Age, and she roamed so far and wide across the body of her mother, the Earth, that the Heortlings now call that time Asrelia's Age. She bore three great daughters, Ernalda, Esrola, and Maran, to unknown fathers. During the Stagnant Age, she watched as other gods freely took the wealth of the Earth. She saved as much as she could, hiding it within the earth; but grew sad and bitter over everything else that was lost. During the Storm Tribe Age, her daughters left her to take husbands or make their own lives. Asrelia departed from the world and took refuge with her sister, Ty Kora Tek. When her daughters' protectors and powers could not save them during the Darkness, Asrelia took them and hid them away with her. After Orlanth found Ernalda in the Underworld, Ernalda convinced Asrelia to share her hoarded riches and so together they brought the world back to life.

Ty Kora Tek is the twin sister of Asrelia. When Asrelia wanted to leave their mother and enter the world, Ty Kora Tek did not. She broke apart a darkness god, then used his parts to make a hidden cave where she could hide. In the Gods War, Humakt, Eurmalk, Orlanth, and other gods released Death into the world and sent hordes of terrified souls and spirits wandering about without a place to be. Ty Kora Tek aided and sheltered those stricken by the new power. When some tried to leave she would not release them, saying, "The world is mad, and I cannot let you out into the wildness, where you would be slain forever." She especially took care



Asrelia

of the Earth Tribe, and the earth was conquered because she hid so many Goddesses. She kept everything until Ernalda brought Asrelia back to her. Ty Kora Tek then gave her sister an empty, cracked pot. When Asrelia got to her own house, she found that the pot had become a full basket, which she emptied into the hollow world to fill it again.

Ty Kora Tek is the goddess who keeps all good things. She is greedy for souls and material wealth; once she takes something into her vast caverns she never releases it. She is a gaunt and wasted goddess, hollow inside, who brings sorrow to everyone



and makes absence known to all. She is also the goddess who fills the emptiness so that the living may live, takes away and holds the sorrow, and makes absence mean nothing. Asrelia is the goddess of all that is valuable deep inside the earth, dispensing what Ty Kora Tek has taken.

Heortlings address worshippers of Asrelia and Ty Kora Tek as “Grandmother.” They demand respect and dispense advice in return. Most of the time, they sit by the fire, correct their daughters and granddaughters, and fret about the wealth and future of the clan. They tell the younger women how to maintain the household and make it prosper. They praise or upbraid the young men who call, then point out their good and bad points to the young women after they leave. They keep the clan’s winter stores, dispensing them throughout the cold weeks so that the children do not starve.

Worshippers are also corpse handlers and ghost talkers. They lay out the dead, preserving them for seven days against the chance of return and preparing the corpse for last rites. Once the seven days are past, the body is treated with the normal Heortling rites (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 87). They also exorcise ghosts that plague their community, protecting their living descendants from the dead.

Asrelia and Ty Kora Tek are unusual in that worshippers must belong to both goddesses. In addition to learning the feats of the cult affinities, they may learn both goddesses’ secrets. In fact, a devotee must learn both secrets at the same time (paying the hero point cost for each separately), or they may not learn either.

Worshippers: Old women, grandmothers. Although some worshippers may favor one goddess over the other, all do the work of both goddesses in the world.

Membership Requirements: Must be an Ernaldan woman past child-bearing age.

Physical Abilities: Prepare Corpse.

Mental Abilities: Evaluate Resources, Find Hidden Object, Genealogy, Ghost Lore, Mythology of Asrelia and Ty Kora Tek.

Asrelia Virtues: Discerning, Frugal, Wise.

Ty Kora Tek Virtues: Grasping, Introspective, Quiet.

Affinities:

- ✕ **Dead People** (Bury the Dead ritual, Call Lost Souls, Fight Ghost, See Spirits, Sense Ghost, Talk to Soul ritual)
- ▣ **Distribute** (Account for Wealth, Discern Secret, Know Needs, Make Goods Go Further, Reveal Hidden Object)
- **Receive** (Handle Corpse Safely, Hide Wealth, Protect Secret from Discovery, Preserve Object from Damage, Stop Thief, Store Goods Safely)

Asrelia Secret: One More Bite (A grandmother can rummage around in her sacred bag or basket and find a scrawny handful of old grain, dried apple, or other detritus, as long as it goes to a hungry child. She can do this only if no other food is available.)

Ty Kora Tek Secret: Open Way Ritual (The worshipper can open a doorway into Ty Kora Tek's Cavern of Silence and force any ghost through.)

Manifestations: Asrelia is present in hidden treasures, unexpected gifts, and the goods stored to get a clan through the winter. Heortlings invoke her aid to help the clan through the winter. Non-initiates often ask her aid in gaining or keeping wealth, or for luck in love. Ty Kora Tek is the Silence of the Grave. Few Heortlings call on her for aid. Asrelia and Ty Kora Tek have few holy places of their own, but often have a shrine within Babeester Gor, Ernalda, Esrola, and Maran temples.

Holy Days: Worshipers offer sacrifices to Asrelia on Treasure Day (Freeze Day, Fertility Week, Earth Season), when Asrelia begins to gather the good things to her. This process is completed on Rest Day, when the clan celebrates the end of the harvest (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 184).

Ty Kora Tek receives public worship from all Heortlings on Shroud Day (Freeze Day, Illusion Week, Darkness Season; see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 185). Her own worshippers offer prayers and sacrifice on the Night of Lost Souls (Clay Day of Truth Week in Storm Season), the last day of the Living Year and the first day of the Time of the Dead.

Sacrifices: Asrelia receives communal sacrifices of yearlings of any hoofed species. Personal sacrifices involve a supplicant burying a "great" treasure in the earth. The treasure must be valuable to the petitioner or Asrelia, but does not have to have a mundane worth.

All dead things pass through Ty Kora Tek's hands, and so are sacrifices to the goddess. She receives sacrifices of black hens on Shroud Day and during funeral rites. Her dedicated worshippers sacrifice black hens, black dogs, and sometimes more frightful things in her private rites.

Other Side: Asrelia's abode is in the Earth Realm. She sits close to Ernalda, whether on the throne, at the loom, or in the fields. Worshipers can depart from her Green Arbor to the Green Age, Stagnant Age, Umath's Age, and Storm Tribe Age. At the foot of her stool is a tiny hole that most people cannot see, where she puts treasures. Inside this hole is her vast Treasure Vault. It also leads to the Cavern of Silence deep under the earth, where Ty Kora Tek tends the souls of the dead. Her home has exits to other parts of the Underworld and to the Earth Realm. She does not allow anyone to leave to go into any ages of the world.

Other Connections: Asrelia and Ty Kora Tek are inseparable, and worshippers are always initiates of both. Ty Kora Tek is often counted as part of the Darkness Pantheon as well. Her followers usually have good relationships with Humakt (who separates the Dead from the Living) and Issaries (who leads the Dead to their proper afterlife).

Disadvantages: Only those that naturally come with old age.



What are Ghosts?

Ghosts are the immaterial remains of a dead person. They normally go to the Other Side, but sometimes remain in the Mortal World. Some ghosts are the souls of theists, some the spirits of animists, and some the essential essences of monotheists. No matter their origin, however, ghosts are unable or unwilling to travel to their afterlife. Some are filled with rage, love, or another emotion, some have left some task unfulfilled, and some are simply lost and cannot find their way.

Ghosts are most easily combated by members of their own culture. Thus, theists deal most easily with ghostly souls, animists with ghostly spirits, and sorcerers with ghostly essences. When a magician attempts to interact with a ghost from the "wrong" world, the normal Alien World penalty (-20) applies.

Every culture in Glorantha has specialists who deal with ghosts. The Heortlings have three deities that deal with ghosts: Ty Kora Tek, Humakt, and Issaries. Each year on the Night of Lost Souls Ty Kora Tek worshippers call all the lost or wandering souls and send them through their temple ground to her Silent Cavern. Since some souls do not wish to go or are otherwise hostile, normal Heortlings stay in their houses on this night. At other times of the year, a devotee of Ty Kora Tek opens the doorway between the Human and God Worlds and then coaxes, entices, or forces a ghost through.

Any ghost overcome by a Ty Kora Tek worshipper find itself in her Silent Cavern, even if they originated as a spirit or essence. There they stay until Return Day, when Ty Kora Tek releases the Heortling ghosts to Issaries. Foreign ghosts usually remain prisoners in the Underworld. Mortals or gods can release these ghosts if they are willing to brave an alien part of the Underworld. Some of these ghosts may even be recognizable and contacted, but they cannot speak while in Ty Kora Tek's realm.

Humakt also deal with ghosts, and work closely with Ty Kora Tek when a ghost is exorcised. Whereas Ty Kora Tek entices or cajoles ghosts, Humakt simply slays them, opening a rift in the veil between the worlds with his sword and forcing them through. Ghosts slain by Humakt end up in his personal realm, and cannot be resurrected or contacted by normal means.

Issaries the Guide can lead a Heortling ghost to its proper afterlife if it is willing, but he cannot force a ghost to follow him on the Path of the Dead. Worshippers of Issaries the Guide are rare, but this ability is critical to any person or party who undertakes the Lightbringer's Quest, for without it the quest cannot succeed.



Umath and Asrelia

Do you remember the Making War? It's why we have sex. Orlanth and Ernalda taught us this blessing, and make the most pleasant thing into a sacred action of cosmic bliss. But even they had to work this out, for they were the inheritors of this urge, not the originators.

The Making War went on and on, but the Old Gods could not defeat their Predark foes. Finally, they exercised their magic of creation. They created Umath, the champion, who conquered the Chaos giant. The Predark was driven away, and Umath created his camp.

Umath went to the Old Gods to ask for his reward. In those days, all of the gods and goddesses were in pairs. The Council of Pairs was made up of balanced Powers, like Stasis and Change or Love and Conflict. The Elder Gods were matched, like Maker and Grower. The Elemental deities were also all matched, each great goddess with a husband, and each great god with a wife. That was the way of the world.

Umath, too, had a mate, a match, a partner. He had seen her when he returned the whole herd of delighted shell horses back to their home, led by their mother. Umath had been made to free her, and he did, and returned her home. She never had a mate, nor had anyone been born before him who was intended for her.

So Umath the Champion returned to the Citadel, where the Old Gods waited. The ceiling overhead was as broad as the sky, and its floor was great enough to hold all the beings of the world. "Great Ones," said Umath, "Great Ones of the World. I am me, come here to receive what I deserve. Where is she, Asrelia, the Mother of the Shell Horses?"

They knew what he was talking about, for that coupling was the way of the world. He had come for his mate. When they didn't say anything, Umath thought that maybe they didn't understand, since he was still new compared to them. So he made his request again, louder this time. "She?" asked one of the gods. "She is not yours. She is ours, as she was before and still is now. We will not change that. Your request is inappropriate, in error, and wrong."

"Wrong? She is my purpose, the goddess for whom I was born. We fit perfectly."

"No," said the herald. "Your request is inappropriate, in error, and wrong. We forbid it. You will not be allowed, and the world both created and uncreated is set against you. You may not, can not, and must not do this."



This was so. I tell you because I saw it myself, with these two eyes. All the Old Gods were lined up like a wall, solid and impassable, unwilling or unable to let Umath and Asrelia come together. The Old Gods kept them apart.

Two sounds then erupted in the Citadel Court, neither of which had been heard in that perfect place before. First was a sad weeping from Asrelia when she understood that she could never fulfill her desire to be with Umath. The mournful sound sank to the floor and collected in a corner, and was so heavy that it cracked the beautiful tile there.

Second, Umath thundered anger, so volatile that it collected swirling and burning in the beam tops and punched a hole right through the dome the way an arrow can pierce armor, neat and clean. It went out like smoke through a smoke hole.

Umath could probably have destroyed everything right then and there, but he was still so new that he feared maybe he really just didn't understand. After all, he had just slain the monster Howling Void, and cut its body up to be the world. He did what the Old Gods expected of him, and naturally expected that they would never betray him and themselves. A natural alliance bound them both, and for the Old Gods to deny that bond was unnatural. Umath didn't know that, but he felt it, and so he didn't know how to act.

Umath left, and the Old Gods locked the gates behind him and kept him out forever after. They then worked their magic and made their own secret places in the new world that Umath had made. Of course, Umath had his own camp, like this one, to keep them out. They put Asrelia away in one of their own places, where she remained forever, never to find her true mate and husband. Umath worked for ten thousand years to return to Asrelia, and she spent that much time trying to reach him, but their union never occurred.

So Umath and Asrelia never joined, and once the separation began, it continued. Soon there were other couples intended for each other that never met each other. Then some of the couples even broke apart, and the world began to fill with longing. We feel that longing now because we were born into that yearning world. It isn't something that we do, or make, or want. It just is, for us. It isn't a fault to feel that way.

Not just people had those unfulfilled desires. Lots of different gods and goddesses had those longings, and after another ten thousand years, they began to try to fill themselves with each other. They spawned a generation of new gods and goddesses. The deities of the new generation were of course heirs of their parents, but because their parents had not been intended for each other, each



and all held different measures of different powers. They all had one thing in common: the desire to be complete again.

That's us. We're the children of those desires. We are the children of Umath and Asrelia, the first people hurt that way. We are their descendants, and so we are all hurt that way. We all know that. We can't change who we are, any more than we can change the damage that the Old Gods did to Umath and Asrelia to make them into the powers of violence and separation.

Have you ever looked at a girl and felt something strange? That is Umath striving for Asrelia. You feel it? That is proof you're of Umath's tribe. Like him, we have to find our mate, who is hidden. You are boys, you don't know yet. You think you want something, eh? Something warm and wet, eh? That's nothing compared to the desire you will feel when you are men, and after you truly feel a loss. That is a terrible way to feel, and it used to be the way that everyone felt: all of us, all the Heortlings.

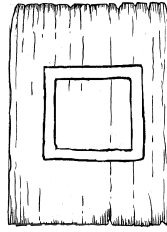
Orlanth and Ernalda saved us. They showed us how to fix that hurt. Orlanth was the son of Umath, and Ernalda was the daughter of Asrelia. They are in our tribe, and they had the same feeling. I don't know if they knew what it was at first, but they are the ones who taught us what it is, and how to fix it. What did Orlanth and Ernalda really get? What did they give us? This: the way to be whole again. They found each other, and they made the way to stay together. They gave that to us. That is one of the many blessings of the gods.

If you are lucky enough to find your mate, you will know. Even when you find your perfect mate, the power of the Old Gods works against you, and it is hard to stay together. But it is worth the struggle.

Jonstown Compendium #1,471

A traditional Earth temple cant from the Holy Country:

"The number of the true Earth goddesses is six. First are the sisters, Ty Kora Tek and Asrelia. Ty Kora Tek was firm and grasping, and was barren. Asrelia was generous and rich, and had two daughters. Asrelia's daughters were Maran Gor and Ernalda. Maran Gor was cold and frightful, and was barren. Ernalda was warm and fertile and had two daughters. Ernalda's daughters were Babeester Gor and Voria. Babeester Gor was daubed in gore and slaughter, and was barren. Voria was loving and good, but the Gods War came and ended the theogony."



Gata (Earth Rune)



Ty Kora Tek



Asrelia



Esrola



Maran



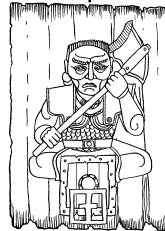
Ernalda



Vinga



Nandan



Babeester Gor



Voria

Generations of the Earth Tribe

Babeester Gor

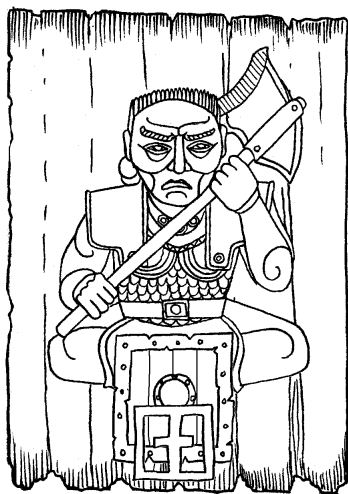
Avenging Goddess, Guardian of the Earth Family

Babeester Gor was born from her mother's dead body. She peered around and saw everything there was to see, and then set off upon her task as the Earth Avenger. She knew how to find the murderers of her kinswomen, and knew the powers to make them know fear, suffer terribly, and die. With her great axe she killed everything that had harmed her mother, especially the *talokans*, whom she exterminated, man, woman, child, and deity, and whose blood she brewed to be her deadly ale. This drink, or perhaps another made from Babeester's own blood, once fortified Orlanth when he was in the Underworld.

Babeester Gor killed all of her foes with her great axe until at last she faced Ovodaka, the Last Guardian, who held the goddesses prisoner. Babeester Gor let Ovodaka kill her. She then came back to life by drinking her own blood, and killed Ovodaka. Babeester Gor (often now called Ura — the Pleasant One) took the role of Earth Guardian to prevent anyone else from harming the earth. She stood vigilantly over Ernalda's corpse until the Dawn, when Ernalda rose from her deep slumber and took her dear daughter into her loving arms. Since then, devotees of Babeester Gor have stood guard in Ernalda's temples and avenged her wrongs.

Babeester Gor is the Goddess of Revenge and Terror, worshipped wherever Ernalda is. Worshippers must drink the blood beer to use their best magic, and so often appear tipsy. They are celibate, ruthless, murderous, unsociable, and terrifying. They ritually paint their faces and limbs black for specific tasks or to gain magical protection against weapons. For example, red hands and feet with black arms and legs indicate that they are man-killing. White on right limbs and green on the left indicates that they are spirit killing. Red and yellow face with yellow and red stripes along the arms and legs indicates that they intend to kill an entire bloodline, clan, or other kin group.

Worshippers: Women warriors; hard, cold, and dangerous women intent upon the tasks of protection and revenge.



Babeester Gor



Membership Requirements: Must be a woman. Worshippers must become initiates for a one-year trial period, during which aptitudes and attitudes are tested. Afterwards, the worshipper must become a devotee or leave the cult. Initiates must never love, make love, have sex, become pregnant, or even fake affection with anything but their goddess. Devotees avoid all physical contact with other living entities.

Physical Abilities: Close Combat (Axe and Shield Fighting, Great Axe Fighting), Listen, Ranged Combat (Thrown Axe).

Mental Abilities: Mythology of Babeester Gor, Track.

Virtues: Determined, Ruthless.

Affinities:

▣ **Blood Beer** (Axe Berserk, Death Paint ritual, Make Blood Beer, Scream of Fear, Shout of Pain)

† **Combat** (Enchant Copper ritual, Enchant Iron ritual, Slashing Blow, Unbreakable Shield)

▣ **Sacred Revenge** (Blast Enemy, Follow Any Trail, Go without Sleep, See in Darkness, Sense Enemy Nearby)

Secret: Earth Avenger (Acts as an integrated passion spirit, giving a bonus of 1/4 the secret's ability rating to any ability used to avenge an Earth Temple or a female worshipper of any Heortling earth goddess.)

Manifestations: Babeester Gor is present in every wish of revenge upon people who did wrong to women.

Holy Days: Worshippers dedicate or rededicate themselves on the high holy day called Babeester Day, commemorating the goddess' taking the title of Gor. This ceremony is on the Freeze Day of Death Week in Earth Season. Babeester Gor's public holy day is called Axe Day by most Heortlings, but is known as Blessing Day to her worshippers. It falls on the Wild Day of Disorder Week in Darkness Season.

Sacrifices: Many clans offer Babeester Gor propitiatory sacrifices on Axe Day. Her worshippers must let their own blood. Clans and earth women give sacrifices of black hens, black calves, and black sows to call down her vengeance against someone who has wronged the earth.

Other Side: Babeester Gor's Axe Hall is on the Screaming Isle in the Sea of Blood that collected at the bottom of the Valley of the Corpse in the Earth Realm. From her Hall, worshippers exit only to the Chaos Age. After death, worshippers become agents of revenge sent by the goddess to earth to answer the curses of women wronged by men.

Other Connections: Babeester Gor has a shrine in every Heortling Earth goddess temple, for she is always one of the two Door Guards.

Disadvantages: The singular dedication of worshippers cuts them off from society. They do not even take part in many of the otherwise obligatory ceremonies, especially any whose objective is pleasure, light, fertility, or similar blessings.

Barntar

The Plowman

Barntar the Plowman is the son of Orlanth and Ernalda. When Daga hid him away from the people and they went hungry, Ernalda went to the Underworld to find him. When Orlanth bruised his son's feelings and he refused to plow, Ernalda showed her husband the pact that honored their son and made him happy. When the Stone People came and turned the earth to rock, Barntar worked for nine years and nine days until he had plowed it again. When the Plant People covered the earth with noxious weeds, he did not rest until he had pulled each one up. Grape Woman sometimes tempts him, but some god or another always rescues him so that he can return to his fields.

Barntar is the god of farmers. When thoughtless chieftains or haughty weaponthanes abuse the rights of the carls, Barntar's simple honesty reminds them that the farmers are the backbone of the clan. His worshippers are the honest carls who work hard to feed the people of their clan and bloodline.

Worshippers: Farmers.

Membership Requirements: Be a farmer or the son of a farmer.


Physical Abilities: Endure Hardship.


Mental Abilities: Know Weather, Mythology of Barntar.

Virtues: Honest, Hard-working, Responsible.

Affinities:

 **Agriculture** (Dry Wet Field, Kill Weeds, Move Stones, Plow Hard Earth)

 **Domestic Animals** (Dominate Ram, Outsmart Pig, Tame Bull, Whistle for Cats)

 **Honest Work** (Sober Up, Strong as an Ox, Sway Others with Honesty, Tireless Labor)

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. It even allows the devotee to plow in a forest or through solid rock. The narrator assigns the resistance to farming in such difficult terrain.)



Barntar



How to Solve Kinstrife

During the Storm Tribe Age, the gods and their peoples were often at war against each other. This began when they found special items that they could not share, like Barntar's Plow, the ironbound, silver horn called Shouter, and the great brewing vat called Karni. Though difficult, these struggles were not really kinstrife. Then real shortages began, and the struggles grew critical.

Vadrus was always the tough guy. He liked to brawl, and all his kinsmen were brawlers. As individuals, the Vadrudi were tough fighters, difficult to beat. But Vadrus always encouraged them to gang up together against their foes, not ever caring anything for the duel. "Duels're nothing but a damned Orlanthi trick," they would say. "Do you think we're stupid? Orlanth has magical weapons!" Vadrus grew so desperate that he invented slavery, and then sold his slaves to the ice demons in return for their help. That was when balance was lost, for after that our goddess Ernalda had no place to stand where she was not wary of her health. Her bed was frozen and her limbs were numb. Stability was gone entirely.

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Manifestations: Barntar is present in every one of his plows, in straight furrows, and in the smell of new-turned earth.

Holy Days: Barntar' high holy day is Plow Blessing Day, celebrated on the Winds Day of Harmony Week in Sea Season.

Sacrifices: Barntar receives sacrifices of oxen. He never asks a farmer to give up his livelihood — a farmer should feed his family even before the gods.

Other Side: Barntar's Big House (half of which is divided into stalls for his oxen) lies in Orlanth's Stead in the Storm Realm. From his house, worshippers can travel to the Vingkotling Age. After death, faithful initiates continue to serve the god by working his fields and tending his cattle until they return to life.

Other Connections: Barntar's wife is Mahome (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 189). The Lunar occupiers of Dragon Pass accept Barntar as an alternative to Orlanth.

Disadvantages: Farmers are often at odds with the clan warriors and weaponthanes.

Notes: The Barntar Plow is lighter than the heavy mortarboard plow. That plow is not suitable for use in heavy soils, but Barntar's magic helps his plow dig deeper with less effort.



One time Vadrus and his household raided Ernardela. Orlanth was gone, like he often was. Vinga wasn't around in those days, either, so when Vadrus and his brutes came by they really roughed up the women and children. They broke many of the buildings and took away herds of animals.

Great Barntar was living there at the time, and he was a brave son of Orlanth. Of course, he tried to defend his family and stop the thieves. Great Barntar seized his spear and shield and cast forth his challenge, but without any warning all of the Vadrudi ganged up on him. With hard weapons and cruel hearts, they sent the best of carls to Land of the Dead. Before this, Barntar had been killed, but never so he could not return to life. This time, Barntar was Dead. He grew cold and stiff.

When Orlanth and his men returned they found the women mourning Barntar. They had cleaned the body, and they had prepared a great pyre. Their actions there made the first funeral ceremony.

Orlanth then spoke his Praise of Carl:

Hard worker, loyal farmer, you are the tribe.

The father serves the son, the air serves the earth.

The Thane serves the Carl, who serves his good parents.

Feed your children first, Carl, before the thanes.

Orlanth was determined to avenge this terrible slight. He gathered his own household and all the other heroes of the Vingkotlings, and they set off across the great ice to Vadrus' filthy hall. Vadrus had erected a huge wall of ice around his stead, but the vengeance of Elmal the Burner was so great that the wall melted away before him. Orlanth and his men rushed through the watery gap.

Vadrus and his thanes were waiting there. Vadrus raised his hands and halted everyone with a shout. "A duel!" He challenged Orlanth to a duel, one on one. Orlanth agreed, of course, because he had honor and Vadrus had spoken the words correctly. Vadrus smiled, because he was going to cheat again of course. He'd done it before. All of his household warriors secretly prepared to join the fight against Orlanth. Orlanth, always honorable, prepared himself and his weapons.

After all the proper formalities, Orlanth and Vadrus each leapt at the other, howling and roaring with the voices of all their worshippers crying out in support of their storm.

Then suddenly, without any warning, all of Orlanth's household raised their weapons and attacked Vadrus' thanes. The Vadrudi were all eyeing Orlanth, looking for a chance to strike, and were completely surprised. Most were so badly wounded in the first attack that they



just ran away, howling. One, named Valind, threw himself to the floor and surrendered. Vadrus was abandoned by his nothing thanes.

In the fair fight that followed Orlanth thrashed Vadrus, and with a backwards wrestling throw twisted him so that he was never again able to stand upright or fight properly. His hall was plundered, broken, and cast all about. Then, holding Vadrus underfoot and helpless, Orlanth declared that hereafter all of the holdings of Vadrus belonged to Valind, Vadrus' most cowardly son. Valind accepted this honor from Orlanth, and swore a promise. Of course, it was a Vadrudi promise, and he planned rebellion. After Orlanth left, however, the other Vadrudi showed up to protest. They didn't agree that their fathers' possession should be Valind's. They then fought among themselves relentlessly, which kept Valind too busy to betray Orlanth. And although the Vadrudi are terrible and still sometimes unite to fall upon us with their deadly winters, they are, as we say, out of this story.

After the deadly frozen winters ceased, however, life was no longer as good as it had been. "How can this be fixed?" asked Orlanth of his household. "We have not been unjust." Indeed, Orlanth had maintained Justice, for he had acted well within the boundaries of right, exacting a small price from Vadrus for the death of Barntar.

The Stone Lawspeaker, whose views were not changeable, insisted that the cosmic balance would reset with another death. "Justice demands revenge for repayment," he reminded everyone.

"Wergild can be paid to halt blood feud," countered Orlanth, for he had made that law.

"Collect from yourself? That is no more solution than slaying another of your tribe!" Orlanth was always the chieftain, and relied upon all his council for advice. Chalana Arroy's prevailed.

"How can this be healed?" asked Orlanth.

"It can not be," she said. "This is a grief without limits. There can be no balancing in this, only sorrow."

"What can we do?" asked Orlanth.

"Weep," said the healer. "Be sorrowful. Make a new effigy and summon your evil into it. Give it your tears. After a year, you will know what to do. After three years, you will be as healed as you can be."

They did as Chalana Arroy advised. Even many sons of Vadrus came and offered their tears and sorrow. After a year, Orlanth burned the effigy in a sacred fire. After two more years, most of them could no longer weep, though the empty place remained. In that way, they remedied kinstrife, as well as it can ever be remedied.



Brastalos

Goddess of the Calm Air

Brastalos is the Calm Air, a bastion of peace within Orlanth's tumultuous family. She is calm where he is violent, passive where he is active, peaceful where he is turbulent. When she is present, the wind slows or stops, thunder ceases, and the clouds part to reveal the clear sky. She comes to Dragon Pass and Heortland in Fire Season, bringing fair weather as a respite from the storms. Her parentage is uncertain; sometimes she is said to be a daughter of Kolat (and so Orlanth's neice), other times a daughter of Umath (and so Orlanth's sister).

Worshippers: God-talkers and healers.

Membership Requirements: Women and men can join Brastalos' cult; even devotees are rare, and she has no initiates among the Heortlings. Her cult is acceptable in the Storm Tribe Pantheon where foreign cults with similar magic (such as Molanni) are not.

Physical Abilities: Endure Weather.

Mental Abilities: Mythology of Brastalos, Mythology of Orlanth, Sense Change in Weather.

Virtues: Calm, Patient.

Affinities:

III **Still Air** (Calm Anger, Pacify Combatants, Part Clouds, Silence Thunder, Stop Wind)

Secret: Eye of the Storm (Automatically acts as the mystic counter Refute against any use of weather or storm powers used near the devotee.)

Manifestations: Brastalos' presence can be felt whenever the winds calm and the clouds clear, especially in the middle of a storm.

Holy Days: Brastalos' holy day is Still Day, celebrated on Clay Day, Disorder Week, Earth Season. On this day, all Heortling women and men worship in separate groups, led by her worshippers if there are any among the clan, or by the priests of Orlanth and Ernalda, respectively.

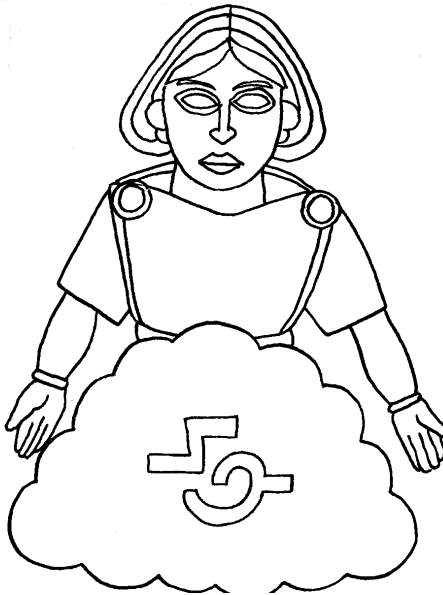
Sacrifices: Most people sacrifice to Brastalos only on Still Day. Men offer Brastalos boars and roosters, asking that she not come when they need the power of the storm behind them. The women offer geese and sows, and ask that she come when they need peace instead of violence.

Other Side: Brastalos has a small hut somewhere on the Belligerent Shore that forms the border between the Storm Realm and the Sea Realm. There, the wind is always still and no clouds cover the sky. Worshipers know that this is not her true home, which lies at the center of Orlanth, but from this place they can travel to Umath's Age, the Storm Tribe Age, or the Vingkotling Age.



Other Connections: Brastalos is the mate of Magasta, great god of the Sea Gods Pantheon. She made the two great gods of storm and sea stop fighting.

Disadvantages: Orlanth initiates and devotees often resent worshippers of Brastalos and their weather-calming magic, although this is only because they do not understand that she is the Inside of Orlanth, the calm eye at the center of his storm.



Brastalos

Donandar

God of the Cosmic Music

Donandar is the high god of music. He is descended from transcendent beings, and transcendence is a key to his being. He is the son of two gods from the Gloranthan Court, named Ralforisus and Tylenea. Sometimes his parents are called Perfect Music and Illusion; in another they are Time and Space; in a third Rhythm and Tone; and even just drum and stick or right hand and left hand.

Donandar wandered the world and wherever he stopped he performed and left behind a part of himself. These are the many musical deities, powers, and eternal songs of the cosmos. Some came from his voice and movement, as deities often make things. Others he conceived with partners, as is also the way of the gods. He changed sex several times to please his partner. He was always happy and brought pleasure wherever he went, until the Gods War. He was helpless against the disharmony and darkness, which eventually killed him. He was so weak in the Underworld that he could not hold onto the Great Net. His children did not let him go even in death, and supported him so that he became part of the Great Compromise. Some worshippers say that Donandar himself forms the harmonious strands of the Web of the World.

Donandar is experienced only through performance, hence only performers learn of him. (The God Learners discovered Donandar — some fools actually claimed to have created him— and said he was the principle of rhythm and tone that underlies all music. They wrote a book about it.) Since Time, only musicians have worshipped him (practically in secret). He is a high god, and so requires subcults to manifest his power. His worship always occurs in conjunction with or through a more familiar deity. Those deities all have their own existence and story that does not include him. Thus, Heortling women worship Skovara and rarely worry about her wayward father.

Donandar exists at the edge of the divine cultures, just as his worshippers exist on the fringe of human culture. He is an outsider, a deity whose touch is a mark of strangeness. Some of that strangeness is manifest when the entertainer performs, for at that time the Otherworld comes alive for all listeners. The strangeness is also manifest in the way that worshippers have no desire to earn a living, but instead beg from others for entertaining them. Perhaps strangest of all is that members find their strangeness to be their source of pleasure, not a weakness.

Musicians can choose to leave their normal god or goddess and instead worship Donandar. The practices of their subcult do not change, but



they gain the benefits listed below instead of the benefits offered by the regular deity. Thus, Heortling skalds can worship Drogarsi as either a subcult of Orlanth (court musician) or Donandar (wandering bard). A low entertainer can be a dance leader at the temple and hence worship a subcult of Ernalda, or can go to town as a puppet entertainer and Donandar worshipper.

Donandar is a “name god.” Heortling stories mention Donandar, but they do not sacrifice to him, for his rites transcend normal cultural ways. Nonetheless, he receives some collateral sacrifice simply because he is related to worshipped deities such as Skovara and Drogarsi. The gods and people of the Heortlings know that Donandar follows different rules, and therefore his cult has exceptions. The most persistent presence of this power is the desire of Donandar people to wander and move about instead of staying at home. The Donandar cult provides that outlet for people.

Donandar transcends gender, including his own. In the usual Heortling version of the myths, he is Drogarsi’s mother and Skovara’s father. In the Donandar versions, however, he is Skovara’s mother and Drogarsi’s father! Thus, his entertainment cults ignore normal gender restrictions, such as the Orlanthi restricting worship of Drogarsi to men and of Skovara to women. By worshipping through Donandar, men can worship Skovara and women can worship Drogarsi.

Donandar transcends pantheons, and members of entertainment gods often wander far from their homelands. For example, Molamin the Choreographer (see below) and Hyraos the Harper come from the Dara Happan Pantheon, but are found wherever Donandar is known. Other

III Donandar’s Magic ∴

All Donandar worshippers are by definition initiates. Even if a worshipper is a devotee of a subcult, he or she remains an initiate of Donandar. Consequently, all worshippers must improvise feats from the **Entertaining Music** and **Entrancement** affinities. Devotees of a subcult may still use their subcult’s feats without penalty.

We list sample feats and suggested modifiers for Heortling worshippers of Donandar to provide guidelines for narrators and players.

III **Entertaining Music**: Perfect Pitch (-1), Unforgettable Melody (-3), Sing Any Note (-5), Feel Tones (-8), Make Music Visible (-10).

∴ **Entrancement**: Animate Puppet’s Face (-3), Vocal Sound Effects (-3), Imitate Bird Songs (-5), Sing in Another Language (-5), Weave Illusion with Words (-10).

deities harmonized by Donandar include Dathar (a Praxian god who plays the ribcage harp and “low blow” pipes) and Danfathar, a syrinx-playing god of the Talastar wilds. Even Hombobobom, the Uz drummer, acknowledges an affinity with Donandar and other musicians.

Worshippers: Professional musicians, entertainers who use music.

Membership Requirements: Donandar grants Membership during a perfect musical experience. The worshipper need not already belong to a subcult, but he must join one before he can learn Donandar’s magic.

Physical Abilities: Harmonize with Strangers, Play [Instrument], Sing, Walk Long Distance.

Mental Abilities: Memorize Music, Mythology of Donandar, Read Emotions.

Affinities: III **Entertaining Music**, ∴ **Entrancement**.

Manifestations: All music and rhythm come from Donandar, manifested through the instruments, voice, and movements of his worshippers. He is present in all musical instruments.

Holy Days: Each subcult has its own holy day, but Donandar himself has none.

Sacrifices: Worship services take the form of public performances. Instead of offering sacrifices of animals or goods, worshippers dedicate their skills and time during the performance to Donandar and the subcult god whose special day it is.

Other Side: Donandar’s Troupe moves throughout the realms of several pantheons. Worshippers are safe as long as they remain within the group, but take the normal Otherworld Safety modifiers if they leave it. Worshippers may also travel with Donandar during the Storm Tribe Age, Vingkotling Age, or Chaos Age. Worship of Donandar does not affect the normal assurances of an afterlife granted by an initiate’s actual pantheon.

Other Connections: Worshippers often say that the subcult gods are Donandar’s siblings, although each has other genealogies. Initiates often call each other brother and sister.

Disadvantages: Worshippers can only be initiates of Donandar, even if they are devoted to a subcult. Thus, they always take improvisational modifiers when using feats from his affinities. Also, because some members break normal cultural restrictions, and because of the cult’s essentially itinerant nature, all worshippers are treated with a certain amount of suspicion and mistrust wherever they go.

➤ Drogarsi the Skald

Drogarsi was born in the Storm Age. His songs and poems stirred men to courage and braced them for battle, but they were useless when he was alone. During the Darkness, Drogarsi fell to Chaos, his sword broken and his trumpet shattered. Even Chalana Arroy could not save



him, for a horde of mindless things chewed away parts of him even as she healed the wounds they caused. Donandar came and played so entrancingly that the swarming monsters stopped eating to join in the dance, and thus he saved Drogarsi's life.

For the full Drogarsi keyword, see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 223. A devotee who knows Drogarsi's secret ignores Multiple Target penalties when using any affinity to aid his troupe in battle (real or performed).

Molamin the Choreographer

Molamin was born in the Golden Age, where he entertained the nobles at the Grand Imperial Palace of the Sun. He danced to the perfect music of Hyraos' harp, and so impressed Yelm that the Emperor made him Choreographer of the Stars and Conductor of the Celestial Choir. When Yelm died the star dancers fell to earth and the music of the spheres fell silent. Molamin's abilities were useless alone, and so he could not resist when trolls caged him so that he could not move or speak. Donandar came and intervened with a gift of hymns to Kyger Litor so flattering that she freed Molamin.

Molamin is a Dara Happan god, and as such is a foreigner in Sartar. However, Donandar's cult included him long before the coming of the Lunars, and entertainers include the occasional Heortling worshipper of Molamin.

Physical Abilities: Dance, Remain Motionless.

Mental Abilities: Organize Performers.

Virtues: Disciplined.

Affinities:

||| **Choreography** (Attract Attention, Enforce Correct Motion, Harmonious Conjunction, Isolate Imperfection, Perfect Timing)

Secret: Harmonize Movement (The devotee must move exactly as he wants the target(s) to move. If he is victorious, the target(s) mimic his movements exactly. If the devotee uses the secret on a group of willing performers [whether they are dancing or playing an instrument], he ignores Multiple Target penalties.)

Skovara and Skovari, the Entertainers

Skovari and Skovara were born and/or married in the Green Age, when everyone was equal and love was strong. During the Darkness, their trust and love failed them, and a tribe that turned to evil captured them. As the cannibals prepared to eat the gods, Donandar arrived and freed them, charming the ogres into giving up their evil ways.

For the full Skovara and Skovari keyword, see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 191.

Engizi the Skyriver Titan

God of The River

Engizi is the god of the first water to fall from the sky to create a winding current flowing downhill. He was the first to do this, and so he is called The River. Other rivers are imitations of him.

Engizi was a warlord of the Water Tribe who led the watery invasion of the Sky in the Gods War. His great enemy was the Pole Star, whose Star Captains killed so many of Engizi's followers that the Sky turned blue from their blood. Engizi and his warriors returned to the sky many times.

During the Great Darkness, a poisonous spear-god named Korang the Slayer tried to kill everything in Dragon Pass. He destroyed some gods and others fled before his might. Engizi fought bravely, but the Chaos god was too strong. Korang wounded Engizi, who would have died if not for the sacrifice of his lover, Hard Earth. He tried to flee to his home in the sky, but Korang struck him a fatal wound as Engizi leaped up. In death Engizi finally defeated his foe, for from the fatal wound a deluge of blood spurted out and drowned Korang and his city of slaves.

Engizi's blood was pure water. It ran back down to the earth and began to refill the dried out oceans. In the Sky World, his two greatest followers saw what had happened. They leapt from the sky to the earth and created their own rivers, adding the waters of the Creek and Stream to his so that his lifeblood did not wash away. Engizi's wound never closed, for it was his death wound.

Engizi is the eternal thunderstorm that hangs over Skyfall Lake and flows through Sartar as The River. His waters are pure when they fall from the sky. Creeks and streams that flow into Skyfall Lake begin to dilute the pure waters, a process which the tributaries of The River continue and The Creek and The Stream complete. When the three merge and mix they become the Creekstream River, which flows ordinary water. Standing in the pure waters of The River above the Up-land Marsh gives worshippers a +5 bonus when using Engizi's magic.



Engizi



Worshippers: Fishermen and durulz (see *Anaxial's Roster*, pg. 138) who live along the banks of The River or the Creekstream River in Sartar.

Membership Requirements: None.

Physical Abilities: Make Nets, Swim.

Mental Abilities: Fishing, Know River, Mythology of Engizi, Navigate Upland Marsh.

Virtues: Hate Chaos, Hate Delecti, Stubborn.

Affinities:

~ **Engizi** (Cleansing Waters, Drown Chaos Enemy, Swim Up River, Wash Enemy Down River)

~ **River** (Breathe River Water, Command River Daimon, Float Object, Speak with River Creatures, Unbreakable Net)

Secret: **Swim Back from Death** (Otherworld Magic. The worshipper can attempt to return from Death using his Swim ability. He must be able to enter The River before death, and his death wound must be such that his life's blood flows into the waters. If the devotee is successful, and survives the journey through the Otherworlds, he swims back to earth through the Sky Falls on the next Sea Season holy day.)

Manifestations: Engizi is present in the waters of the Skyfall Storm, The River, and in the Celestial River in the sky.

Holy Days: Engizi's holy days are the Water Day of Movement Week in Sea Season and the Water Day of Death Week in Darkness Season. The first celebrates his birth, when he left the oceans to move onto land. The second day mourns when Korang the Slayer gave him his death wound.

Sacrifices: Engizi receives sacrifices of cattle or sheep, whose blood must flow into The River. Some Heortlings sacrifice a hen or geese to him before they set out in their boats, or to prevent flooding in Sea Season and Storm Season.

Other Side: Engizi's waters rise from the River Styx in the Underworld; into the sky where they are visible as the Celestial River; down through the Sky Falls to be The River in the Inner World; and through the Homeward Ocean and Magasta's Pool back into the Underworld. Engizi's River also passes through the Storm Realm, and worshippers who swim in its waters may emerge in the Storm Tribe Age, Vingkotling Age, or Chaos Age.

Other Connections: Engizi's worshippers are friendly to all river cults and practices, especially worshippers of Ssorssharn, great spirit of the Creek, who is Engizi's brother.

Disadvantages: Because of the tainted nature of the Upland Marsh, worshippers take a -10 penalty when using Engizi's magic in its waters.



Gustbran Bonesmith

God of Redsmiths

Gustbran is Orlanth's Master Smith. He is the son of Vestkarthen, but was exiled from the Fire Tribe because his desire to make new things was the same as rebellion. "You are as bad as that foolish god Orlanth," said the Emperor's sycophants. So Gustbran journeyed to Orlanth's Stead to join the Storm Tribe. When asked what he could do for Orlanth, the cunning smith showed him the keen weapons and stout armor he had made. When he promised to make more if given a place to work, Orlanth agreed to protect him. Gustbran has served Orlanth loyally ever since.

Every smithy is a shrine to Gustbran; he requires no other worship site. All clans need someone to make or repair metal objects. Every clan chieftain supports at least one Gustbran smith and his apprentices, who provide weapons for his warriors and plows for his carls. Full worship of Gustbran requires devotion.

Worshippers: Smiths.

Membership Requirements: Become an apprentice to a smith. Worshippers are exempt from attending the clan *fyrð*, but must make weapons for their clan to support the *fyrðmen* and warriors.

Physical Abilities: None.

Mental Abilities: Mythology of Gustbran.

Virtues: Hard Working, Taciturn.

Affinities:

- ⊔ **Bronze** (Alloy Copper and Tin, Purify Bronze, Repair Metal Item, See into Bronze, Strengthen Metal)
- ⊙ **Fire** (Contain Fire in Forge, Intensify Fire, Keep Fire Burning, Resist Heat)
- ⚒ **Smith** (Beat Metal Tirelessly, Handle Hot Metal, Unbreakable Hammer, Unyielding Anvil)

Can I Be a Blacksmith?

Bronze is the primary metal worked by Heortling smiths, since deposits of the pure metal are found throughout Dragon Pass. Because bronze deposits come from the bones of dead gods, Gustbran is often called Boneman. Because of bronze's ruddy color, many people call those who work it redsmiths.

Iron is rare, and so are the blacksmiths who work it. Working iron is far more difficult than working bronze. Gustbran's knowledge does not include working iron, and his magic will not assist the process.

Secret: Forge Enchantment (The smith can use this ritual to awaken an item created using any of his affinities. The item'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.

Many smiths learn techniques that allow them to forge the daimon soul into a special enchantment instead of the more common one given above. Some are relatively common, such as *Weapon Hits Harder* or *Armor Weighs Less*. Others are more unique and powerful, such as the *Lightning Spears* made by Tal Graysmith or the *Undead Cleaving Swords* of the Goodsword Clan. A smith must travel to Gustbran's Forge each time he wishes to learn one of these special techniques.)

Manifestations: Gustbran is present in the fire used for forging, the tools used to work or cast metal, and the arm and eye of the smith.

Holy Days: Worshippers celebrate Forge Day and the birth of Gustbran on the Clay Day of Harmony Week in Fire Season. Gustbran's high holy day is Bonfire Day, celebrated on the Fire Day of Harmony Week in Earth Season. This rite reenacts Gustbran's exile from the Fire Tribe and his acceptance into the Storm Tribe by Orlanth.

Sacrifices: Worshippers sacrifice their best works to Gustbran. The manner of sacrifice is up to the worshipper: he might destroy it in his forge or gift it to his community to arm their champion or hero.

Other Side: Gustbran's Smithy is on Orlanth's Stead in the Storm Realm, and from there worshippers can travel to the Storm Tribe Age or Vingkotling Age. Devotees know that Gustbran's Forge lies deep within the earth. They journey there to learn secrets of metal and enchantment, and can exit to the Stagnant Age, Umath's Age, Storm Tribe Age, or Vingkotling Age.

Other Connections: Gustbran once hid inside the cloak of his sister Mahome the Hearth Fire, who along with his wife Arnna is one of the Household Goddesses.

Disadvantages: Smithing is a rare and exacting craft, a sacred profession. Gustbran's affinities and feats require that the worshipper exercise his craft at his forge; he cannot use his magic "on the spot" or without proper equipment.



Gustbran



Kero Fin

Mother of Mountains

Kero Fin is the greatest mountain in Dragon Pass. She is the daughter of elder deities and the mother of mighty gods. When her sons were young, she sang to the snow and made it comfort them instead of chilling their bones. A coterie of perfect shadow cats attends her and surrounds her in cloud form.

Kero Fin is majestic and eternal, honored by all and dominated by none. All of the inhabitants of Dragon Pass, even the dragonewts, acknowledge her sovereignty. She was once widely worshipped as a mother goddess and the helper of childbirth, but now other cults have superseded her worship in most places. Initiates and devotees are rare, and usually enter her worship through another goddess. Heortling clans erect shrines to her, but her only temple is the mountain itself.

Worshippers: Kero Fin has few dedicated worshippers, mostly god-talkers; they tend to be older women, but men and young women may also join her worship.



Kero Fin



Membership Requirements: Initiates and devotees must always live within sight of the greatest mountain.

Physical Abilities: Climbing.

Mental Abilities: Dragon Pass Geography, Genealogy, Know Local Plants and Animals, Midwife, Mythology of Kero Fin.

Virtues: Dignified, Motherly, Patient.

Affinities:

☒ **Mother Goddess** (Bless Birth, Bless Marriage, Comfort Child, Discover Ancestry, Influence Own Children)

⚔ **Mountain Mother** (Call Alynxes, Cause Avalanche, Make it Snow, Mountain Wind, Stop Ascent)

Secret: Sovereignty (Kero Fin is the source of life and sovereignty in Dragon Pass, and all those who draw life from it or try to rule it must have her blessing. Only she and her chosen followers can truly grant this.)

Manifestations: Kero Fin's greatest manifestation is the mountain itself. She is the source of sovereignty for Dragon Pass, anciently known as Kerofinela. A man must gain her blessing before he can become King of Dragon Pass.

Holy Days: All Orlanth worship ceremonies held near her mountain use Kero Fin as their gateway to the Storm Realm (see **Thunder Rebels**, pp. 119-120), and so she receives a portion of Orlanth's worship on those days. She also receives collateral worship at ceremonies celebrating the birth of her children. Her few worshippers sacrifice to her on Birth Day, the first day of the year; and on her high holy day, called King Day (Winds Day, Stasis Week, Fire Season). This is the day that she will give her sovereignty to the King of Dragon Pass. Those who visit her sacred mountain wisely seek her blessing.

Sacrifices: Alynxes are the most valued, but almost any domestic animal is acceptable to Kero Fin. The animal volunteers for the task; no knife is used nor any blood shed. Instead, the animal curls up on the altar and dies, then is burnt whole.

Other Side: Kero Fin is itself a magical place that extends into the God World. From her peaks in the Storm Realm, her worshippers can travel to the Green Age, Stagnant Age, Umath's Age, Storm Tribe Age, Ving-kotling Age, Chaos Age, and Silver Age.

Other Connections: Kero Fin is the mother of several gods of the Storm Tribe, including Orlanth, Yinkin, Inora, Quivin, and Velhara.

Disadvantages: Kero Fin's magic works only within the ancient boundaries of Kerofinela.

▣ Maran Gor

Goddess of Fighting, Quakebeasts, and Earthquakes

In the Green Age, Maran helped make the world. She went far and wide raising mountains and hills, opening crevices and valleys, and splitting the earth with volcanoes and earthquakes. Her favorite creations were the huge quakebeasts that shook the earth whenever the lumbered past. Alas, most were destroyed during the Gods War, and Maran became hard, bitter, and vengeful. She took up her Axe and Club to avenge her children, and is worshipped by those who seek the carnage that is her most precious gift. Her followers are a grim people with a crude but fulfilling religion, one suited to their harsh lifestyle.

Maran Gor is the One Who Makes the Earthquakes. Many of her worshippers are warrior women, but others are magicians of tremendous power. To create their greatest effects her devotees must work together, otherwise their quakes are weak and localized. The cult does not often use its great power because it takes time to gather enough devotees and accumulate significant magical force to use their feats.

Worshippers: Maran has few worshippers except at the Shaker Temple.

Most of her worshippers are warriors or god-talkers. Somewhat paradoxically, Maran's worshippers are most common in Peace Clans, where they form the guard for the chieftain and are part of the *fyrd*.

Membership Requirements: Most worshippers are female, but men may initiate to her (only) by sacrificing their masculinity to Maran and becoming eunuchs. Initiates must obey their high priestess on pain of death. They may not directly till the soil or herd beasts for their livelihood, and must eat raw meat, fish, or fowl as their breakfast daily.

Physical Abilities: Close Combat (Axe Fighting, Mace Fighting), Endurance.

Mental Abilities: Mythology of Maran.

Virtues: Active, Relentless.

Affinities:

- **Earth Making** (Cause Landslide, Divert Stream, Move Rocks, Open Trench, Raise Earth, Solidify Dust)
- ▣ **Earth Shaker** (Collapse Building, Create Fissure, Earth Tremor, Knock Down Foe, Shake Down Chaos)
- ▣ **Quakebeast** (Control [Quakebeast], Great Strength, Ponderous Step, Rockskin)

Secret: **Shake Earth ritual** (This ritual allows two or more devotees to combine their Earth Shaker feats to create a greater effect. Initiates may not support the ritual with magical power. The devotees add their secrets'

ability ratings together to determine the area [in acres] affected by the ritual without increased resistance. All devotees must use the same feat.)

Manifestations: Maran is the Active Earth. Her best known manifestations are earthquakes, since they are common in Kethaela and Kerofinela. However, she is present in any natural movement of the earth.

Holy Days: Maran's holy days fall on the Clay Day of Disorder Week in each season. On these days, worshippers often make a pilgrimage to the Shaker Temple on Mount Kerofin. These great gatherings are the source of much of Maran's might. Maran's high holy day falls on the Clay Day of Death Week in Dark Season, commemorating her adding the title "Gor" to her name. None save her worshippers approach the Shaker Temple lest they find themselves participating in her ceremonies as victims or enemies. She is also propitiated by all Heortlings on Shutting the Door Day (Wild Day, Fertility Week, Earth Season).

Sacrifices: Maran receives collateral worship at every Earth ceremony. Her worshippers regularly sacrifice blood and life to the Hungry Earth. She is often propitiated, and most Heortling clans make only token offerings. At the holy day rituals she receives boars, and on some special occasions requires dogs.

Other Side: Maran's Shifting Palace is deep within the Earth Realm. It constantly rumbles and quakes, for it is made of living earth daimones that move to change the size or shape of the house as she desires. From the Palace, worshippers may enter the Green Age, Stagnant Age, Umath's Age, Storm Tribe Age, Vingkotling Age, Chaos Age, or the Underworld. Maran worshippers are urned whole, and when their corpse urns are buried the earth opens to receive them.

Other Connections: Maran receives worship in conjunction with Ernalda, her sister, and many people consider her an aspect of the Great Goddess. She has rivalries with most male combat-oriented gods, but is friendly with Babeester Gor. Maran is the enemy of Chaos or anything else that harms her children or the Earth Family, including Vad-rudi, hsunchen, and Aldryami.

Disadvantages: Outsiders view Maran's worshippers as dangerous (men) or strange (women).



Maran Gor

⚡ Minlister

God of Ale and Brewing

Minlister is one of the Household Gods, Orlanth's Master Brewer. He uses a huge cauldron named Karni that Orlanth took from the water gods. He made many drinks in it, but none was perfect until once Minlister fell into the vat himself. Afterwards he could brew beer, ale, mead, or ambrosia, as he desired, without doing more than filling Karni with water and placing his hand in it.

Minlister brews the delectable and magical libations of the gods, and his followers do the same in the mortal realm. All good folk honor his unique creations and their special gifts of pleasure and sometimes magic. Minlister has a special relationship with the natural world, coaxing out its delicious secrets in beers, ales, mead, wine, and other liquors. Minlister is a shared subcult of Orlanth and Ernalda, but generally does not get special feats from aspect affinities.

Worshippers: Brewers.

Membership Requirements: Worshippers must already be an initiate or devotee of any aspect of Orlanth or Ernalda. Apprentices may be initiates, but when their apprenticeship ends they must become devotees. The worshipper must receive full support from his clan or a patron. Usually, only tribal kings and the chieftains of wealthy clans can support a Minlister worshipper and his or her apprentices.

Physical Abilities: None.

Mental Abilities: Beekeeping, Brewing, Mythology of Minlister.

Virtues: Good-natured, Secretive.

Affinities:

⚡ **Brewing** (Brew Cold Beer, Brew Good Ale, Make Mead, Brew Strong Beer, Distill Liquor)

Secret: **Brew Divine Mead** (The presence of Minlister fills this magical drink. Each use is unique; one batch may give strength to the weak, hope to the despairing, or even life to the dead. The drink's effects have a power level determined by the victory level and the



Minlister



secret's ability rating. The effect is diluted if more than one person drinks of the mead.)

Manifestations: Minlister is both the god who brews the drink and the drink itself. Many Heortling households contain a small, wood-carved figure of Minlister standing atop the family's supply of beer or ale. Minlister's draughts are perfect. When the drink is not then it is because Eurmál ruined it, and when drinkers feel terrible after too much brew that is also Eurmál's fault.

Holy Days: Brewers worship as part of the regular Orlanth or Ernalda rites, as appropriate. Private celebrations throughout the year commemorate Minlister's birth, the taking of Karni from the water gods, and his acceptance as Orlanth's Master Brewer. His high holy day, Mead Day, falls on the Clay Day of Mobility Week in Storm Season, when he first brewed himself into mead.

Sacrifices: Worshippers make images of their god out of grain and honey and then burn them. Worshippers give gallons of drink to all of the deities on holy days, blessed and usually given back by the deity to the congregation as part of the feast.

Other Side: Minlister's Brewery lies adjacent to Orlanth's Hall. After death, worshippers serve as apprentices or assistants to Minlister as he brews a never-ending supply of drink for his lord's household.

Other Connections: Minlister is the son of Esrola by Elmal (who took the shape of a rare king bee).

Disadvantages: Worshippers must abandon worship of all other gods and all other subcults of Orlanth and Ernalda).



Nandan

The Housekeeper

Nandan was just one of many nameless daimones in the tribe until Vinga took all of the women one day and went to war. Afterwards the children starved, became ill, and wore filthy rags, so Nandan stepped in to fill the gap. Since that time, Ernalda has chosen some men to serve her, and they follow Nandan to become part of the Goddess.

Nandan is the god worshipped by women who are born in the shape of men. Many people do not understand this, and so believe it is simply the cult of men who do women's work. Nandan is an aspect of Ernalda, and worshippers can join any subcult of Ernalda or Esrola as if they are women. Devotees of Nandan must learn their subcult secret (as is normal for Ernalda), for Nandan himself does not provide one.

Worshippers: Women who have the shape of men.

Membership Requirements: Must be a woman born into a man's body.

Worshippers are exempt from attending the clan *fyr*.

Physical Abilities: Housework, Spinning and Weaving.

Mental Abilities: Animal Lore, Control Children, First Aid, Plant Lore, Mythology of Ernalda.

Virtues: Generous, Motherly, Unmerciful to Enemies.



Nandan

Pelaskos

Sea Fishing God

Pelaskos and his brother Poverri are the Twin Fishers of the Storm Tribe. In the Gods War, they worked closely to provide for the tribe. Together, they learned how to hunt with net and line, harpoon and hand. When the seas receded, Pelaskos followed them while his brother remained behind. Before Pelaskos left, Orstan the Carpenter built him his boat *Clever Eyes*, and he began to fish upon the wide sea. He is thus the god of taking fish from the sea instead of from the rivers and lakes.

Along the shore, Pelaskos met new people and taught them his skills. In the Darkness, he trapped Oskippos, a terrible sea demon that stalked fishermen and anyone who lived near the water. Instead of slaying the demon, Pelaskos forced it to allow his followers to fish the depths. The demon consented so quickly that Pelaskos feared treachery, so he also forced the demon to give him a wife as hostage. Oskippos agreed, and after he returned to the depths Illuriad swam ashore. She has never been happy away from her kin, and she nags Pelaskos constantly. Their relationship is something of a joke among inland fishermen, whose god Poverri and his wife Natelna (a daughter of Ernalda) have a happy marriage.

Worshippers: Coastal fishermen; inland clans do not worship Pelaskos. Clans that live along the shores of Choralinthor Bay or the Rozgali Sea count Pelaskos, not Poverri, as one of the Four Providers. He has many worshippers among the non-Heortling peoples of Kethaela as well.

Membership Requirements: Be a fisherman or the son of a fisherman.

Physical Ability: Endure Weather, Repair Boat.

Mental Ability: Know Fishing Grounds, Know [Sea], Navigate, Predict Weather.

Virtues: Patient, Taciturn.

Affinities:

~ **Boats** (Bless Boat, Quick Knot, Resilient Hull, Sail into Wind, Seal Leak)

♂ **Fishing** (Attract Good Catch, Enticing Fish Lure, Inescapable Net, Reel in Fish, Strengthen Fishing Line)

~ **Overcome Sea** (Avoid Reefs, Crest Waves, Keep Boat Afloat, Point to Nearest Land, Predict Tides)

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.)

Manifestations: Pelaskos is present when fishermen cast their nets into the water, launch their boats, and catch fish. Every boat is sacred to him.



Holy Days: Pelaskos is worshipped at different times throughout the year, especially when the fishing season for each type of fish begins. His high holy day is Hook and Line Day (Water Day, Fertility Week, Storm Season). On that day, worshippers reenact the building of Clever Eyes, the capture of Oskippos, Pelaskos' marriage to Illuriad, and his first catch in his new home.

Sacrifices: Worshippers throw back part of every catch to fulfill the agreement with Oskippos. Of course, most fishermen throw back the smaller fish and least edible part of their catch.

Other Side: Pelaskos' Dock juts into the Endless Sea near the mouth of the Engizi River. From there, worshippers can sail with Pelaskos on Clever Eyes or their own boats to fish with net and harpoon, or can sail into the Storm Tribe Age or Vingkotling Age. At the end of the day, they retire to his shack, repair the boats and nets, and share their catch with their families.

Other Connections: Pelaskos' twin Poverri still visits his brother. The two gods and their worshippers have a friendly rivalry, but neither really understands the other's actions in staying with or leaving the Storm Tribe.

Disadvantages: Many Water Tribe beings resent Pelaskos' hunting of their kin, but as long as his worshippers conduct the proper sacrifices to the waters their actions are tolerated. In Kethaela, the local mermen regulate the cult's actions, restricting the amount and types of fish and other sea animals that they can catch. These fish are always part of the sacrifices returned to the sea each day.



Redalda

Horse Goddess

Redalda is a daughter of Orlanth and Ernalda, but was not always the goddess of horses. She was the only one of Orlanth's kin who did not laugh at the horse when it first arrived at his stead with Elmal. She came to admire and love Elmal because of how he cared for and tended the noble animal. She prevailed upon her parents for permission to marry Elmal, and they created the Foreigner's Wedding so that he could marry into the tribe. Much to her chagrin, however, he did not want to marry her! At least, not immediately: the great warrior explained that she had to prove that she loved the horses as much as he did. She did, and more, for she proved that she could even become a horse herself. On their wedding night, she and Elmal rode wildly off together, and she has tended, healed, and loved his horses ever since.

A few clans traditionally worship Redalda as a goddess in her own right instead of Ernalda Allmother. Although they do not receive three affinities (as do worshippers of Ernalda), the love they feel for their horses makes up for this apparent shortfall. Redalda's worshippers make the best horse grooms and breeders, and also track the descent of their clan's horses. Worshippers of Redalda can use any affinity or feat they know on horses (when appropriate) without an improvisational modifier.

Worshippers: Grooms, trainers, breeders, and lovers of horses. Rarely, Redalda is the most common goddess worshipped by a clan's young women and wives.





Membership Requirements: Men or women can join after they promise to love and tend horses as if they are people.

Physical Abilities: Ride Horse.

Mental Abilities: Horse Breeding, Horse Doctor, Horsemanship, Mythology of Redalda, Tend Horses.

Virtues: Love Horses, Persistent, Prudent.

Affinities:

☒ **Bless Family** (Bless Birth, Comfort Family, Heal Hurt, Make Spouse Laugh, Prevent Anger)

▽ **Bless Horses** (Bless Horse, Calm Horse, Cure [Horse Disease], Heal Horse, Speak with Horse, Sense Predators)

Secret: **Become Horse** (Allows the devotee to transform into horse shape. Any ability that the shape is capable of using remains at its full ability rating, including Redalda's magic. While transformed, the devotee may use the secret as a **Horse** affinity from which she can improvise any ability appropriate to her shape.)

Manifestations: All horses are manifestations of Redalda.

Holy Days: Regardless of a worshipper's cult, Redalda receives sacrifices on Honoring Day and Harvest Day (which followers call Horse Day in their portion of the rites). See *Thunder Rebels*, pp. 183-184 for more information. Worshippers also attend other rites of their "parent" cult.

Sacrifices: Redalda will not suffer any horse to be hurt or killed, and her worshippers ritually protest (but do not interfere) whenever her beloved animals are sacrificed to any other Heortling god. Her worshippers make effigies covered with the furs of wolf, sakkar, lion, and similar grassland predators, then burn them for the goddess.

Other Side: Redalda's Stable stands near Elmal's Longhouse on Orlanth's Stead. From there, Redalda and her worshippers ride their horses in the Storm Tribe Age and Vingkotling Age.

Other Connections: Many clans worship Redalda as a subcult of Ernalda Allmother or Elmal; she is never worshipped as a subcult of Esrola. Such worshippers receive their deity's base affinities plus Redalda's **Bless Horses** affinity (only).

Disadvantages: None significant.



Redalda

* Rigsdal

The Night Watchman

“Stand watch,” was the last thing that Orlanth said to Rigsdal before he gave him the great horn Shouter. Although faced with many threats Rigsdal stayed at his post, never wavering from his duty. The worst threats were the doubts and temptations that arose during the long, cold nights, but Rigsdal’s purpose never flagged. Once, the Uz tried to sneak up on the Vingkotlings, but Rigsdal revealed their creeping forms with his light. Once, Wakboth made the entire universe go to sleep so that he could invade the Vingkotling lands. So great was Rigsdal’s dedication that only one eye slept at a time. He thus saw the Chaos horde approach and drove off the foe with his javelins. Even today, anyone can see his javelins in the sky on occasion, and so the Heortlings know that Rigsdal still watches over them.

Rigsdal is a noted warrior of the Storm Tribe, and served his chieftains valiantly through the ages. He was the one light that never moved from its place even when all else wandered erratically. He is still visible at his post in the sky as the Pole Star.

Worshippers: Warriors and night watchmen.

Membership Requirements: None. Most worshippers are devotees.

Physical Abilities: Endure Cold, Keen Hearing, Keen Vision.

Mental Abilities: Alert.

Virtues: Reliable, Resolute.

Affinities:

† **Combat** (Falling Star Javelin, Fight Chaos, Fight Uz, Illuminate Battlefield, Stay at Your Post)

* **Night Watchman** (Awakening Shout, Remind of Duty, Resist Doubts, Resist Temptation, Sense Approaching Enemy)

∞ **Vigilance** (Hear Any Sound, Ignore Distraction, Night Vision, See Far, Sleep with One Eye Open)

Secret: **Never Sleep** (The worshipper can stay awake for any length of time, as long as he remains at his post. When he finally does sleep, he need only sleep for a full day to awaken completely refreshed at Dusk, ready for another night of duty.)

Manifestations: The Pole Star is Rigsdal’s best known manifestation.

Holy Days: Rigsdal receives worship on the Winter Solstice (Fire Day, Illusion Week, Darkness Season), when he has his longest watch.

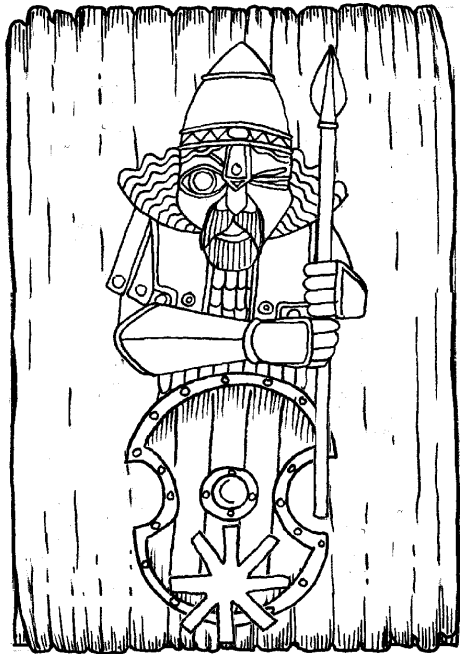
Sacrifices: Worshippers offer a ram to Rigsdal on his holy day, as do all Heortlings any time they need extra vigilance.



Other Side: Rigsdal's Guard Tower overlooks the entire Storm Realm. From its heights, worshippers can look down on the Storm Tribe Age, Vingkotling Age, Chaos Age, and Silver Age.

Other Connections: Many Heortlings worship Rigsdal as a subcult of Or-lanth Allfather, Humakt, or Elmal. Such worshippers receive their god's base affinities plus Rigsdal's **Vigilance** affinity (only). Some Heortlings dedicate themselves to Rigsdal alone, and they are legendary in their devotion to their duty.

Disadvantages: None significant.



Rigsdal



The Gathering of the Goddesses

Ty Kora Tek is the title, not name, of the Shrouded Good Elder Goddess. No one dares speak her name aloud, except in the midst of her sacred ceremonies, for to do so invites the wrath of her wretched, avenging daughters.

Ty Kora Tek first made herself known when Asrelia, her sister, went from their common home to begin her own life. She stood in the doorway with a shawl over her head, and lamented her sister's departure. "Come back, I beg you."

"Not yet," said Asrelia.

When Asrelia was kept from marrying her natural husband, Ty Kora Tek appeared in the doorway of the Judgement Room, mourning, and asking Asrelia to return.

"Come back, I invite you."

"Not yet," said Asrelia.

Asrelia had many children, but most important are the triplet daughters: Esrola the Most, Maran the Great, and Ernalda the Least. When the daughters of Asrelia went to the Emperor's Palace, Ty Kora Tek appeared at the doorway, shrouded and wailing to the young goddesses. "Come back, I implore you."

Esrola turned away in horror and hid behind her sisters, Maran stood still, and Ernalda moved to step forward until Asrelia stepped in front of her daughters. "Not yet," she said. And so the sisters went to the Golden City.

"I will never be easy again," said Ty Kora Tek, and left. No one saw her again until Death came into the world. When Death proliferated it sometimes took the form of creatures that came out of Ty Kora Tek's hidden places.

One day a shadow came to Esrola, who was hiding in her favorite temple in Alkana [now the site of modern Nochet City, at the mouth of the Lysos River in Kethaela]. Esrola was terrified as a host of creatures swarmed from the shadow and dragged her away. All that remained were the drops of her tears and blood that fell to the ground and became the blood millet and hard corn that the Heartlings harvested in the Darkness Age. Everyone was simply terrified, but Ernalda began to cry and wail, and soon many others did too, even though they did not understand what they were doing.

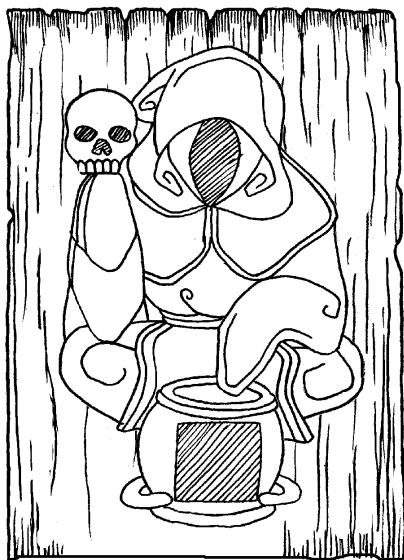
Maran had a foe, a god called Tekakos who was made of rock and hated her movement. Every attempt he made to overcome her failed until he gave away his own spirit, a thing he didn't need. He gave it



to Ty Kora Tek, who in turn sent out her creatures again to haul Maran away. Afterwards, the earth stopped moving and the mountains no longer grew. With Maran gone, the Goddesses felt exposed and more frightened, and Ernalda again led them in mourning.

Ernalda had an enemy named Nontraya, whose love she had spurned, and who had sworn everlasting vengeance on her for it. He spawned the race of *talokans* to execute his revenge. He got Ty Kora Tek to help, and with her horde came to the house of Ernalda to take her away. On their way they met a funeral procession that bore Ernalda's covered body on a bier. The crowd all wore shrouds and mourned with a terrible racket of cymbals and wailing. Nontraya suspected a trick, so he called forth all his *talokans* to witness for him. When he pulled back the shroud to inspect the evidence and saw that Ernalda was truly a corpse, he left. The mourners took the bier to Ty Kora Tek, who received the corpse and bore it across the threshold into the Underworld. She lifted her shroud to look upon Ernalda, and the Great Goddess got up from her bower and went to weave the cloth of the dead for Ty Kora Tek.

Heortling women reenact this event every Darkness Season, when the deadly cold comes and life runs from everything. They cover their heads and mourn, weeping and wailing pitifully for their lost goddess. In this way, they learn the secret of this ceremony, which lets them all say, "She sleeps, she is not dead." This is the secret power of Ernalda — the deities of death accept her as one of their own, yet she really only sleeps.



Ty Kora Tek

Valind

God of Winter

Valind inherited his father's powers and holdings when Orlanth defeated Vadrus. He keeps them only by playing his brothers, the Vadrudi, off against each other and by distracting them with raids and battles. The rest of the Storm Tribe barely tolerates Valind; he is a relation, but one that most wish to keep far away. He is one of the Thunder Brothers (though rarely welcome as such), and as such some people consider his cult a subcult of Orlanth Thunderous. Many Heortlings view him as a coward, for he surrendered and offered to serve as a thrall when Orlanth conquered the Vadrudi.

In winter, the Valind Storm blows snow and cold winds off the ice cap and south across the continent, so that they gather at Dragon Pass. Worshippers normally live in the wilderness, often high in the mountains, but are fearsome fighters. Valind has a family of subservient gods and daimones, his children, brothers, cousins, and other remnants of the Vadrudi (see *Thunder Rebels*, pg. 123).

Worshippers: Warriors and raiders, often loners. Valind is disloyal and something of a whiner, likened to a bad child — Heortlings use “valinding” as a common synonym for “brat.” Many worshippers leave their steeds and live in caves high on the sides of mountains, supporting themselves by hunting or raiding.

Membership Requirements: Reject traditional leaders.

Physical Abilities: Close Combat (Spear and Shield Fighting, Sword and Shield Fighting), Ranged Combat (Javelin), Tough.

Mental Abilities: Mythology of Valind, Predict Storm.

Virtues: Boisterous, Cruel, Obstinate, Rebellious.

Affinities:

- ⊕ **North Wind** (Command North Wind Umbroli, Cutting Wind, Freezing Breath, Raise Wind, Turn Wind)
- ⊕ **Snow Storm** (Blinding Snow Flurry, Blizzard, Call Clouds, Driving Sleet, Howling Shout)
- **Winter King** (Command Holtri [see *Anaxial's Roster*, pg. 194], Crack Metal, Icy Spear, Shatter Tree, Speak to Hrimthur [see *Anaxial's Roster*, pg. 153], Walk on Ice or Snow)

Secret: Survive Winter (Acts as a magical ability to resist any manifestation of ice or winter, including cold, blizzards, and even Valind's own magic. If the worshipper possesses an appropriate defense with a higher rating, he adds the rating of the secret to that ability.)



Manifestations: Valind is the winter storm. He controls all manifestations of winter, each of which is a follower: sleet, hail, and snow; the black Ithas clouds and the Inora cold; and even the “lazy wind” that blows through a person’s clothes instead of going around them.

Holy Days: Valind’s high holy day is Great Snow Day, celebrated on the Winds Day of Disorder Week in Darkness Season. Worshipers strip naked; paint themselves in patterns of gray, white, and blue; and hunt, raid, or otherwise vent the fury of the storm. The raids continue throughout Darkness Season, though they rarely have the fury of the initial raid. Other Heortlings propitiate Valind on Tribute Day, sacrificing white animals to hold the worst of the winter at bay.

Sacrifices: Valind prefers sacrifices of weapons or white animals.

Other Side: Valind’s Winter Palace rises far out on the edge of the Storm Realm, high atop the great glacier. From here, worshippers can travel to the Storm Tribe Age, Vingkotling Age, and Chaos Age. After death, they join the Vadrudi in raiding the Solar Realm, Sea Gods Realm, and occasionally even the Storm Realm.

Other Connections: The Vadrudi are unruly and violent, and Valind can rarely force them into concerted action. The Uz god Himile, Source of Cold, often aids Valind. Valind’s greatest enemy is the Pelorian hero named Kalikos, who stole a magic ice crystal from him in the Gods War. The hero opposes him every year, keeping him from sallying out in full force and covering all of Glorantha with snow.

Disadvantages: Heortlings hold worshippers of Valind in less regard than they do Uroxi. No leader will accept them, and they accept no leader except the toughest Valind devotee they know.

Notes: Unlike other Heortlings, Valind’s worshippers will eat goat.



Valind

*Savage Valind, god of winter,
Sweeps the earth with ice
from the north.*

*Ally to Orlanth, sometimes
wayward and willful,*

*Each year takes the earth in
his grip.*

Jonstown Compendium #37,396

These are the Nine Greatest Heroes of Sartar.

Heort the Founder, who learned the secrets of I Fought We Won from Second Son and united his people. He is remembered in all our prayers.

Vargast Redhand, who killed Lokamayadon at the Battle of the Verge and so freed Orlanth. Though he fell to Palangio the Iron Vrok, he is remembered with prayers, sacrifices, and a flight on the day that the New Men return from their initiation, before the harvest.

Harmast Barefoot, the first human being to travel upon the Light-bringer's Quest. Before him, no single person even knew the whole story. He receives sacrifices on Initiation Day and whenever a hero seeks to follow his path to the Underworld and back.

Hendreik Freeman, the unconquered raider who resisted the Gbaji Empire. He helped Harmast, supported Arkat, made Owenreth High King of the Heortlings, and started the Larnsti brotherhood. He receives sacrifice today on the Gods Day of Movement Week in Sea Season.

Jarankol the Solarslayer, the son of Owenreth the Exile. Jarankol began his life fighting, and led his army to sack Dara Happa instead of following Arkat to death in Dorastor. He receives sacrifices of bull calves today whenever someone is going to fight the Dara Happsans.

Alakoring Dragonbreaker, who forced the EWF to release Orlanth from his dragon prison. He slew the Elder Storm Dragon, closed the Open Door to the Dragon's Aerie, and brought the secrets of Orlanth Rex to men so that the Heortlings would be safe from foolish priests. He officiates at every sacrifice to Orvanshagor Dragon-slayer and Orlanth Rex.

Varantol the Mangler, who opposed the God Learners and united people to destroy these mechanical foes. He is still called the Machine Destroyer because of the havoc he wreaked on them. He could breathe fire, a power that enabled him to melt all of the evil machines. Varantol receives sacrifice on the Clay Day of Death Week in Earth Season

Gustin Hammer, the loyal thane to King Andrin who died for his lord many times fighting against the false god called the Pharaoh. He retired twice, once in shame when he failed to save his king's life, and once in disgust when the king came back as a slave of the Pharaoh. He is said to live even now, and receives sacrifice from the Heortlings who continue to resist the rule of the Pharaoh.

Sartar the Founder, who learned the secrets of Transformation from Larnste and united his people. He is remembered in all our prayers.



Orlanthi Heroes

Mortals Who Became Gods

*Humans are wind-born, freest of free.
Orlanth Breath-giver gives you first lungful.
Follow the winds, like Orlanth before you.
Yours is the path-choice, make it and live.*

Heortling history revolves around great heroes. Many performed great deeds or fought specific foes, and receive sacrifice from people who seek to learn their magic. The following hero cults are all common in Dragon Pass. Any member of Orlanth's cult may learn the magic listed here, although many provide greater abilities to dedicated worshippers.

Other less important heroes are known. Many of King Sartar's companions, such as Geo, receive worship from members of the organizations they founded. Hero bands form around obscure entities and unique artifacts, such as the Temple of the Wooden Sword that was active in Sartar for several years after the Lunar invasion. Local clans and tribes have their own heroes, often ancestors, which they revere at every ceremony.

Æ Alakoring

Dragonbreaker

Alakoring saved the Orlanthis from one of the two great foes of the Imperial Age. He liberated the Heortlings from enslavement by the Dragon Empire, which is called Youf or EWF and drawn as **W**. The dragons tricked the priests and priestesses, but Alakoring came from Ralios and slew many dragons, including the Diamond Storm Dragon and the Empire's leaders. To ensure



Alakoring Dragonbreaker

that the priests could never again lead the people astray, Alakoring introduced the laws of Orlanth Rex. His army destroyed much of the Empire, liberating all but the heart of Dragon Pass before elves killed him. His impact was so great on the northern peoples that they now call themselves Alakorings, although most of them are not his descendants. Heartlings remember Alakoring with sacrifices on Presentation Day (Gods Day, Mobility Week, Fire Season).

† **Fight Dragons** *Feat:* Avoid Dragon's Best Attack.

Gorangi Vak, the Bulltamer

Gorangi Vak lived in the First Age. Bad kings ruled his land, so he sought to be a model of Orlanth's virtues. He was so successful that the Orlanthi remember him even today.

Gorangi also revealed the Stormwalk heroquest path. The hero must climb the mountain, overcome Urox with only a stick and a lasso, defeat the guardian Baskelos, and then wrestle a *zarur* sky bull into submission. If the hero succeeds, he gains the sky bull as a mount (see pg. 160) but becomes an enemy of all Uroxi. Most heroes who attempt this path sacrifice to Gorangi Vak on Stick and Rope Day (Wild Day, Disorder Week, Sea Season). His feat causes a berserk Uroxi to stumble, fall, and knock himself unconscious during a fight as long as the hero has used only a stick and a lasso during the contest.

Physical Abilities: Close Combat (Lasso Fighting, Lasso and Stick Fighting).

† **Combat** *Feat:* Knock Out Uroxi.

Jonstown Compendium #1,464

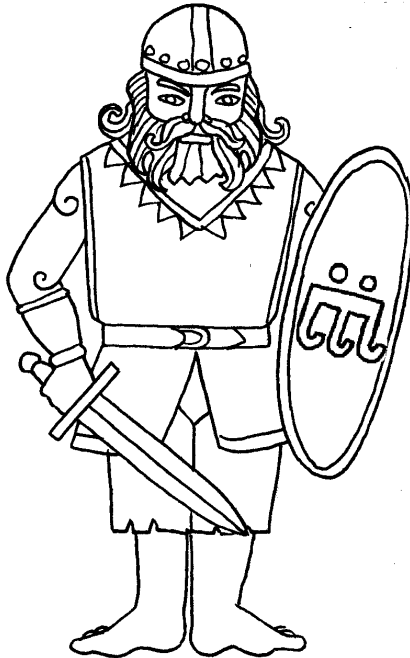
Here are the heroquests of Harmast, a peasant who rose to duty:

1. To gain awakening;
2. To gain the blessing of King Heort and Orlanth Adventurous;
3. To scout the path to the Hidden Gate;
4. To arm himself, wherein he gained his sword, shield, and boots;
5. To ambush Jajamokki;
6. Upon the Lightbringer's path to the Land of the Dead he discovered Arkat and freed him;
7. To regain his plow and sow from Jajamokki;
8. Upon the Lightbringer's path again he was wounded but returned with the keys of Kartolin to aid Talor, whom the Westerners call the Laughing Warrior;
9. The Sky Giant's Castle;
10. The return from the Court of Silence.

ᚼ Harmast Barefoot

Harmast was the first human being to travel upon the Lightbringer's Quest. Gbaji had enslaved, driven into hiding, or killed all of the Heortlings. Amidst the turmoil, Harmast learned, speculated, and finally acted. He traveled through the Hero Age and God World and returned with Arkat, who later destroyed Gbaji. His story is the great initiation story of the modern era, and he always receives sacrifices on the Winds Day of Stasis Week in Sea Season. Although this is called Initiation Day, and most clans try to begin their initiations on this day, in practice they begin the initiation rites when they can, as close to this day as possible. Anyone seeking to perform the full Lightbringer Quest sacrifices to him or one of his companions for useful magic.

λ *Lightbringer Feat: Find Help.*



Harmast Barefoot

Heort the Founder

Heort is the greatest hero of the Heortlings. At the end of the Chaos Age, he taught the few remaining Vingkotlings about I Fought We Won. This is the great secret of being a Heortling, for it allows humans to have a chance against Chaos. He learned this secret from Second Son, who had fought against the Predark since long before Heort was born.

Heort freed Ivarne from the Ice Tomb where enemies had imprisoned her a hundred generations earlier. They had many blessed children. He taught the Vingkotlings all the rules they needed to live, and everything that it means to be an Orlanthi now, and so the survivors renamed themselves in his honor. He was the ancestor of many of the clans that survive today.

Heort taught a way to achieve unity among all the races, even the Uz, Aldryami, and Mostali, whom he brought together to fight the Unity Battle. This unity repelled Chaos so that their army was unable to fight, and so was destroyed. Afterwards, he did what was best for his people, and supported Ezkankekko, an Uz, when he formed the Unity Council that ruled the land during the Dawn Age.

Heort receives some of every sacrifice, and his invocation begins every ceremony. No one initiates or devotes to Heort, for he is the founder of the entire culture and religion. He is ubiquitous, and his pictures and iconography appear often in Heortling temples and tribal artwork.



Heort the Founder

☞ Renvald Meldekbane

When the God Learners came in the Imperial Age, Renvald was one of many who tried to fight them. He failed (as did many others), but unlike most he used his failure against his foe. Driven by evil sorcerers into an alien Otherworld, Renvald discovered secret signs of a lost god, and after many years returned to his people bearing the Azure Shield and the Viridian Spear. He killed sorcerers one by one, and finally joined the siege of the Clanking City. For ten years, he helped to lead the battle there, and at the climax of the siege he entered the city itself. Just as he was about to slay the Flesh Machine, however, the Mostali betrayed him. His magic was useless against his former allies, and he watched helplessly as the Viridian Spear broke against iron shields.

Wounded almost to death, Renvald fled with the Azure Shield as the Mostali took credit for the victory and kept everyone from their rightful plunder. Renvald's followers burned his body after he died, and now many Heortlings sacrifice to him on Sword Day (Winds Day, Mobility Week, Sea Season) when they fear sorcery. The Lunar Empire has outlawed his worship, but rumors persist of a small hero band that retains the Azure Shield and uses its magic to confound the invaders.

Mental Abilities: Recognize Sorcerer.

Virtues: Hate Sorcery.

✞ **Fight Sorcery** *Feat:* Block Spell.

Jonstown Compendium #1,459

Never kid a king about his happiness;

A sorcerer about his soul;

A priest about his callouses;

A warrior about his lifespan;

A peasant about his holidays.

No man likes jokes about what is not.

☪ Sartar the Founder

Sartar is the hero who came to Kerofinela 150 years ago and created a mighty kingdom. He founded four great cities, linking them with roads. Sartar magically erected the walls of each city in a single night. The first was Wilmskirk, built to settle a war between tribes. Jonstown was next, named for Hauberk Jon, a mighty wolf-slayer. Third was Swens-town, built at the request of Swen Leapfoot of the Balkoth. Boldhome was last, built to fulfill an ancient prophecy and to rule the kingdom. Sartar formed the tribes that surrounded each city into confederations, and so unified the tribes.

Sartar ruled wisely for many years, and lit the Flame of Sartar at his apotheosis. His dynasty ruled well until the coming of the Lunars, who murdered many of the princes and then finally conquered the land a generation ago. Although there have been several rebellions, all have been crushed by the Lunars.

No one has been able to worship Sartar since evil Lunar sorcerers extinguished his Flame. Nonetheless, those who do not fear the Empire meet on Founder's Day and offer sacrifice to Sartar. He moves in secret now, giving hope to those who seek his heir.



Sartar the Founder

Vogarth the Strong Man

Vogarth is famous for being the strongest (and dumbest) man in the world. He performed many deeds during the Silver Age to protect innocent people. He performed twelve great feats of strength to prove himself worthy of becoming one of the Silver Kings, the Husband-Protectors of legendary Queen Merngala. He is famous for being hard working and honest, and even his lack of intelligence was a virtue for the hero.

Many people remember Vogarth's good deeds, and they offer him sacrifices on Plow Blessing Day (see pg. 205). Worshippers gain no magic from these sacrifices. The rare person who seeks Vogarth's blessing can devote himself to the hero. The devotee must have or take a *Slow-witted* flaw, which he may not buy down. Any time he increases his *Strong* rating, he must raise the flaw at the same time, so that they always have the same rating. Once he has *Strong* and *Slow-witted* at 10W2 each, the devotee may learn Vogarth's secret.

Physical Abilities: Strong.

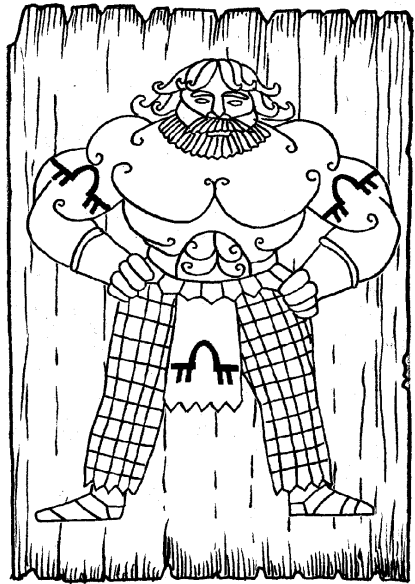
Virtues: Honest, Slow-witted.

Secret: **Heroform Vogarth** (Incarnation ability.)

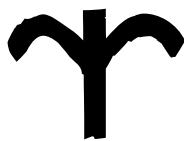
Vogarth Heroform

Significant Abilities: Hard Working 10W, Honest 15W2, Slow-witted 17W2, Strong 7W4.

Although a devotee of Vogarth should tell the truth, obey the rules, and work only for good, he *must* do this while incarnating the hero. If he does not, or even if he thinks about anything too hard, Vogarth cannot remain. Thus, use of a mental ability involving logic, knowledge, or any sort of reasoning immediately causes the hero to face an identity challenge (see the Otherworld Magic chapter of *Hero Wars*).



Vogarth the Strong Man



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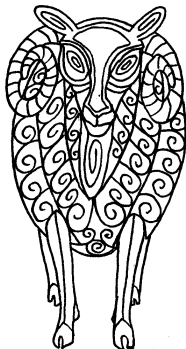
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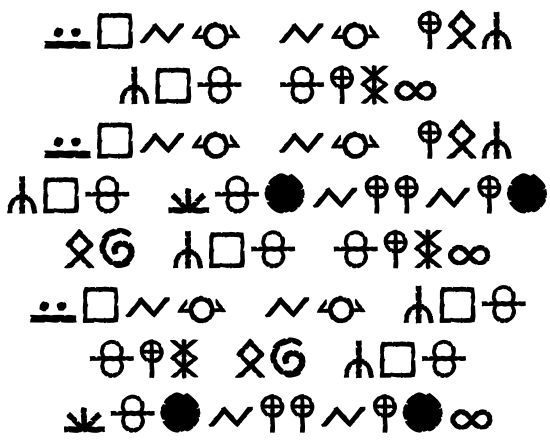


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