



Glorantha

THE SECOND AGE



RACES OF GLORANTHA
Volume 1



RACES OF GLORANTHA vOLUME 1

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Races of Glorantha I* the first of two tomes uncovering the cultures, myths and magics of the major sapient species of Glorantha. Included in this first book are three of the most widespread species of the Second Age, the ones which have the most interaction with humanity. These are the Dragonewts, Ducks and Trolls.

Included in this book are detailed descriptions of each race's society, the cults they worship, how to generate Adventurers and how to actually roleplay them in a fun and fascinating way. We hope you enjoy the material presented and see new ways of applying the new *RuneQuest* rules to produce cults and species of your own. May your Glorantha and your *RuneQuest* vary!

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This book combines the three previously published supplements *Dragonewts: A Guide to the Eravssarr*, *Ducks: A Guide to the Durulz* and *Trolls: A Guide to the Uz*. The material has been revised to use the new *RuneQuest* mechanics, has been presented in a more consistent format with some extra information squeezed in.

The book has been broken into three sections, each one covering a specific race and then subdivided into similar chapters.

Chapter One: Dragonewts

The essential things to understand about dragonewts; how they came to be and how they understand themselves. This chapter explains dragonewt motivations on a stage-by-stage basis and how this relates to their detailed mythical background.

Chapter Two: Dragonewt Myths

The creation myth as the dragonewts understand it, relating how the True Dragons came into being, how Chaos was defeated and the role that the dragons played in the education of the other gods of Glorantha.

Chapter Three: Dragonewt Civilisation

A detailed examination of dragonewts across Glorantha; their cities and settlements, their motivations and achievements and their relations with the two great Empires of the Second Age.

Chapter Four: Dragonewt Adventurers

A discussion of dragonewt physiology, including the importance of the egg, reincarnation and expanded rules and notes on creating dragonewt Adventurers.

Chapter Five: Dragonewt Cults

A detailed discussion of the True Dragon cults worshipped by the dragonewts beyond those of the Empire of Wyrms' Friends and the myths supporting them.

Chapter Six: Dragonewt Magic

The basis of all EWF draconic magic is discussed in this chapter, showing how dragonewts use magic differently to all other species.

Chapter Seven: Dragonewt Voices

In which a dragonewt from each stage and the different regions of Glorantha talk of their ways, their hopes and their fears. An insight into the dragonewt mind.

Chapter Eight: Ducks

Everything that makes up the core being of a common duck; how they came to the place they are now and how they look upon themselves and their situation.

Chapter Nine: Duck Myths

This chapter looks at what the ducks know about their history but generally are not telling. How most of them were cursed, how the keets gave up their flight willingly and why the Faceless Enemy is a greater threat than any man, Uz or beast.

Chapter Ten: Duck Civilisation

A collection of the largest concentrations of Durulz appearing throughout the world, even in the strangest of locations, this chapter is a detailed look at how the various sub-flocks of Durulz exist in the world of Glorantha.

Chapter Eleven: Duck Adventurers

This is a look at how to flesh out and create Adventurers from the various Durulz flocks. It talks about the best ways to make the most out of a duck Adventurer and expanded rules on how to create them.

Chapter Twelve: Duck Cults

Although they were cursed and forgotten by one influential god, causing several others to turn away from them, the ducks still have a few of their own cults.

Chapter Thirteen: Duck Magic

Duck cult spells and knacks – techniques of hard-living that allow them to accomplish unlikely things in unlikely ways.

Chapter Fourteen: Duck Voices

This chapter is where several vastly different Durulz from the corners of the world speak up about their lives, their lands, their neighbours and their futures.

Chapter Fifteen: Trolls

A detailed overview of the trolls' culture, personality and physiology, as related from the perspective of an imperial Dragonspeaker cultist preparing a lore scroll for his fellows.

Chapter Sixteen: Troll Myths

The myths and legends of the gods of the Underdark and why Uz are where they are today.

Chapter Seventeen: Troll Civilisation

Contains an outside look at the way trolls of various regions live and how they organise their culture, with a close look at the Opal Seer Caverns in Dagori Inkarth.

Chapter Eighteen: Troll Adventurers

How to create Adventurers with the differing species of trolls, some new equipment and a great deal of advice on how to play an Uz to the hilt.

Chapter Nineteen: Troll Cults

This chapter details some of the myriad of Uz cults and the HeroQuests based on the gods' deeds, exploring in detail cult progression and responsibilities.

Chapter Twenty: Troll Magic

Nasty and brutal troll spells.

Chapter Twenty-one: Troll Voices

An insight into the violent but pragmatic psyche of the troll mind. A handful of Uz speak about their ways and attitude to life.

DRAGONEWTS

'Several Revealer groups have spent in excess of a century, combined time, studying, analysing and collating every shred and scrap of information about this damnable species. Each has admitted defeat. Their behaviour is unfathomable; their lifecycles implausible; their gods non-existent; and their myths impenetrable. For every conclusion we reach, another dragonewt emerges to confound it. Every time we gain agreement on some facet of their species, they wilfully contradict it. One day we will be welcomed as old friends, only to be chased away with klanths the next. Three of the Shelnesta Revealers died in this way. One was eaten alive.

We simply do not, cannot and, most likely, will not understand them. They defy everything we have spent three centuries mastering and my recommendation to the Imperial court is that we cease these futile endeavours and let these would-be dragons (again, their claim: we have no evidence for it) continue in whatever bizarre manner they wish.

It's not as though they're very important, is it?'

So said Spolorfal the Arranger, Dean of Pythos University, in his report to the court of Emperor Ilotos. He was speaking of dragonewts; or rather, he was speaking of the God Learners' inability to fathom them. To a dragonewt, no fathoming is needed. Everything is clear. Everything is cyclical and everything has its purpose. There is no need for rationalisation because rationality is a human concept that strains to impose itself on all that is not. Dragonewts simply are. They understand their place in Time and they understand with absolute clarity their destinies. Humans are inconsequential, even those who have split their tongues to speak Auld Wyrnish. There are only two things of consequence: the egg-nest and the cosmic dragon. All else is ephemera, there to be used or ignored as one feels at the time.

Though the God Learners never grasped this deceptively simple concept, it is there for all to see in the dragonewt prayer, uttered by every dragonewt as it emerges from the egg, or opens its eyes to the morning sun, or slices through another foe, or simply for the joy of it: see the OUROBOROS mantra on page 5.

THE ESSENCE OF DRAGONEWTS

There is no more misunderstood or misinterpreted race anywhere in Glorantha. Dragonewts intrigue, perplex and provoke everyone they come into contact with. The God Learners cannot understand them because dragonewts refuse to let them get close enough to try. The Empire of Wyrms Friends believes it understands them through its own path to draconic enlightenment but it has barely scratched the surface and already the frailty of their grand plan is causing the dragonewts to reveal less and less of what they know of both the present and the future. To the Old Ways Traditionalists, dragonewts are in league with their enemies and were enemies before that. Their god, Orlanth, slew the first dragon and dragonewts have resented that superiority ever since.

The truth of it, as with all things, is far more complex but also deceptively simple. To understand the essence of dragonewts one must appreciate several key concepts.



–	Silence. The infinite. The stillness. The unhatched egg.
O	Zero. The exclamation. The first movements within. A struggle. A peace.
OU	The cry of pain. The ego. First understanding of all that lies before. The Awe.
OUR	Collectiveness. Plurality. Understanding that you are not, and never shall be, alone.
OURO	Collective Emptiness. Understanding that you are alone within many. A single scale.
OUROB	Creation. Life. The crack of the shell beneath the egg-tooth.
OUROBO	Closed infinity. Beyond the egg. Being. Existing. Moving and waking in the World.
OUROBOR	Birth. Moving from shell to nest. The feeling of the sun and the rain and the stirring.
OUROBORO	Nothing. The emptiness. What is left behind and before. The ephemera.
OUROBOROS	‘S’. The Voice. The sound that starts and ends in one breath but echoes infinitely.

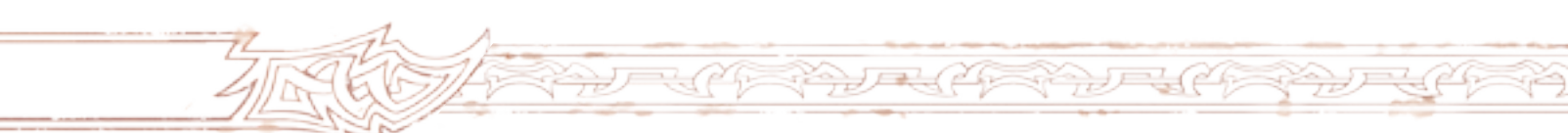
- Immortality. Despite being able to die, every dragonewt is immortal. Death is but a minor inconvenience and, often, not even that. Unlike humans who might be granted or attain immortality; they do not need to unlearn mortal thoughts, feelings and constraints. Indeed, dragonewts do not even consider their immortality. It is as natural as breathing, eating and sleeping (although some dragonewts do none of these things) and therefore requires no understanding or explanation.
- Time does not exist. To an immortal being, time is irrelevant. It matters only to mortals or those who have attained immortality somehow and are therefore still shackled to all the restraints that time imposes. To dragonewts there is only *existence*, a framework in which things can be accomplished or experienced. Dragonewts have little concept of the passage of time. Indeed, the most mature dragonewt stages are aware of all parts of existence simultaneously.
- There is no such thing as success or failure. These are, again, mortal constructions. To a dragonewt a thing is either done or not done. Not doing something does not equal failure; nor does doing something equate to success. It is simply a state of being.
- There is no separation between the mythic and the mundane. Dragonewts do not distinguish between myths and current events. These are, again, mortal concepts and redundant in dragonewt philosophy.
- Experience is *everything*. To deny experience, whatever its extreme, is to be unfulfilled. Mortals deny certain experiences because they are bound by the strictures of Time and notions of success and failure. Dragonewts are

free from such things. To experience something is to gain understanding from it. To deny experience is to deny nature. Experience is Right Action.

The failure of the God Learners to understand dragonewts is because they failed to codify and then grasp these simple precepts. It is not hard to understand why; mortality imposes restraints and forces the mind to develop systems to explain why those restraints should be in place. Dragonewts, free from mortality, have no such barriers. Their actions can be as logical, illogical, cruel or kind as they wish because there is simply no need for any form of restraint. This is not to say that dragonewts are ignorant or unappreciative of consequences: to a dragonewt, the consequences of an action are merely another experience. Restraint denies and there is simply no need for denial.

RIGHT ACTION

Dragonewts follow a code of honour known as Right Action. Right Action varies immeasurably between dragonewts because Right Action is, quite simply, whatever is right, at the time, for the dragonewt based on its understanding of the world. This is therefore not a social code in the conventional sense although all dragonewts are expected to experience certain mythical and mundane concepts before moving on to the next cycle of their life. What these precise concepts are is personal to each dragonewt and they are wired into the dragonewt psyche at the time of its birth. A newborn dragonewt knows that it needs to experience everything. As it makes its way through life it knows it needs to experience fewer things. The more it experiences the more it understands and the closer it becomes to True Dragonhood. Thus, all dragonewts define themselves in terms of what they need to do instead of what they have done.



Right Action is therefore the principle of attaining experience and developing a sense of responsibility for their future actions. It is not a moral code of right or wrong. Right Action contains no interpretations of morality. It *does* contain concepts relating to control and restraint but not restraint in mortal terms, which inevitably is based on morality and denial. Instead, dragonewts interpret restraint as being aware of whether or not the time and emotional state is right to pursue an experience; it is not whether or not the experienced *should* be pursued.

However, Dragonewts are not infallible beings. Sometimes Right Action fails, which can be catastrophic for a dragonewt. Failing to restrain oneself, or failing to learn and gain understanding from an experience, is dishonourable and considered Wrong Action. The outcomes may be identical to those if Right Action had been followed; but that is not the point. If there is no logical (from a dragonewt perspective) justification for a course of action, then the action itself was wrong and should have been postponed until it was a Right Action.

DUTY AND HONOUR

These are of paramount importance to all dragonewts and act as a guide to Right Action. Dragonewts who cannot abide by duty and uphold honour become outcasts, excluded from the draconic lifecycle.

Duty to the Ancestors

This takes two forms: duty to the Ancestral Dragons who taught the gods and duty to the ancestors of the colony who have shaped all that is now. The distinction is clear in the minds and attitudes of dragonewts but not necessarily in action. Essentially it is worshipping dragons and striving to complete the cycle through rebirth and progress towards dragonhood. Where this ceases to be a priority, or where the faith in the ancestors is lost, dragonewts are in danger of being excluded from the draconic lifecycle because they are incapable of Right Action.

Duty to One's Lord

Lordship is not simply one who owns land or controls a colony. Lordship is dependent upon certain physical and personal traits being present in an individual dragonewt and is, in reality, a temporal device. A Lord might be a dragonewt given a specific task to complete, supported by assistants chosen for that role; equally it might be an honoured figure who has consistently achieved Right Action through its lifecycle thus far and so embodies the truest essence of the draconic way. On many occasions it may simply be a matter of charisma and leadership qualities. Individual dragonewts may have several Lords for different things and loyalty




One Called Running

One day, a Crested dragonewt called One Called Running came across a young griffin fallen from its aerie. One Called Running had been searching for the centre of the sky, so it might know the Air Rune and had grown tired. Knowing that the griffin might carry him to the centre of the sky, if taught the Sky Centre Myth chant, One Called Running used his magic to heal the young griffin's torn wing and fed it a human that he had caught the day before. As the griffin crunched on a leg, One Called Running performed the Stone Dance so he might meditate on the Right Action. To find the centre of the sky he needed to be in the sky. He could see it but it was too distant. He might find another way of reaching the sky but here was an opportunity that seemed Right Action. One Called Running finished the Stone Dance and taught the griffin the Sky Centre Myth chant while the creature ate the head. 'That is a griffin song,' said the young griffin. 'And I know where the centre of the sky is because I have been there.'

'Ah,' said One Called Running. 'So you can describe it to me.' And because the griffin had been fed and had its wing mended, it did. One Called Running sat back, grateful for the wisdom. He let the griffin fly back to its aerie and One Called Running returned to his nest.

When One Called Running recounted the nature of the centre of the sky to Gold Fire Apparelled First Born, the ruler of the nest, he realised his mistake. Gold Fire Apparelled First Born pointed out, in words of broken flint, that neither the location nor the description of the centre of the sky were important. What was important was that One Called Running visited it and could retrace his steps, leading other members of the nest who *would* be required to describe it. One Called Running had committed Wrong Action and had told a griffin the sacred Sky Centre Myth chant thereby revealing Gold Fire Apparelled First Born's innermost desires. This was dishonour. One Called Running would not achieve warrior hood until he had found the young griffin, killed it and allowed himself to be eaten by its mother three times in succession. This atonement was Right Action, and, chastised, One Called Running set off to find the young griffin in a much wiser, though less honourable, state of mind.



and duty is expected for each. This might lead to conflicts of interests and seemingly contradictory agendas but to dragonewts this is simply Right Action.

Duty to Repay Debt

If a dragonewt accepts a favour it incurs debt. Debt is burdensome because it must always be repaid no matter how long it takes or what the cost is. This might take many incarnations and often impedes the progress of the dragonewt through a particular stage. Thus dragonewts are inherently cautious of accepting favours unless there is absolutely no alternative and, even then, a dragonewt will spend an inordinate amount of time analysing what the consequences of the debt will be and how it must be repaid. As repaying a debt might incur Wrong Action, potentially considerable amounts of it, favours are thus considered entanglements to be avoided.

OUROBOROS

Fundamental to all these concepts and to the nature of dragonewts themselves is the relationship with the Cosmic Dragon. The form and nature of the Cosmic Dragon is expressed in the OUROBOROS mantra but that is not, as some have thought, the Cosmic Dragon's True name. The mantra simply enables a basic understanding and vocalisation of what the Cosmic Dragon did, does and is. The Cosmic Dragon is therefore very much a philosophy that guides dragonewts through their lifecycles and is a focus for their actions. The Empire of Wyrms Friends believe that the Cosmic Dragon can be created through focused worship, extensions of territory and powerful magics; they believe that the OUROBOROS mantra can be rendered into a physical, mythical being capable of reshaping the world and creating a new cycle of time. Dragonewts know different. They know that the Cosmic Dragon can have no form because none is required. Forms are ephemeral. The true power of the Cosmic Dragon lies in its ideas and the ability of those ideas to transcend physical substance and shape reality, rather than assuming a shape dictated by it.

The dragonewts have tried to communicate this to the EWF and grown tired of the misunderstandings. The EWF thus mistake this as a sign that they are close to realising the Cosmic Dragon and, perhaps terrified of being usurped in importance, the dragonewts are withholding the final, crucial details needed to give the Cosmic Dragon form and substance.

In short, OUROBOROS is the dragonewt lifecycle. It is a compression of the Creation Age into a single, utterable sound: both a prayer and an explanation. It describes and determines what dragonewts and dragons are and will be. From the silence, through to the 'S' sound that indicates a complete cycle, drawn as a dragon swallowing its own tail.

REINCARNATION AND ADVANCEMENT

When a dragonewt colony has an Inhuman King, or Dragonet, presiding, its members reincarnate. When old bodies die the soul migrates back to the original birth-egg and the dragonewt is reborn, sometimes into a new body stage, quite often in the same but always with a new level of maturity and understanding; another step forward towards True dragonhood. Where there is no Inhuman King, reincarnation does not happen and dragonewts are doomed to mortality.

The God Learners have three burning questions.

- Why is reincarnation necessary?
- Why do so many reincarnations not result in a new stage of development?
- Why is the Inhuman King essential to reincarnation?

The answer lies in what each stage of dragonewt existence represents and what each stage understands of themselves, of reality and of the cycle. It is irrevocably tied to OUROBOROS.

The Dragonewt Stages

The path to dragonhood is nothing less than a personal, microcosmic replaying of the God Time of Glorantha and the ages within it. Each stage represents one or more of the God Time ages and the understanding of a dragonewt in each stage reflects the events of that age. Consequently, Right Action at each stage is defined by the mythical necessities of a particular Gloranthan age and it is necessary for each and every dragonewt to fully understand and experience the nature of the age before it can reincarnate into the next stage of development.

Personality Traits

Each stage of development is characterised by a series of inherent personality traits that must be mastered and controlled before advancement to the next stage takes place. The ultimate aim of every dragonewt is to act with conscious deliberation at all times and this means choosing how to act rather than allowing instinct to determine it. The personality traits that must be mastered at each stage are discussed in each stage of development. How these are defined in *RuneQuest* terms is explained in the *Dragonewt Adventurers* chapter.

Crested

Known also as Scout or First stage and, amongst dragonewts, as Orxiliate. This stage represents the Creation and Green Ages where all was new and the Prime Runes had been meditated upon and brought into existence by the Cosmic Dragon. Each



Crested dragonewt is innately tasked with understanding the Six Actions and the Prime Runes. The Six Actions are:

- Silence: Maintaining it when the compulsion is to make oneself heard.
- Secrets: Maintaining them when the compulsion is to tell all one knows.
- Being: Understanding what one is when it is clear one is incomplete.
- Experience: Gaining it, but doing so honourably and with understanding.
- Thought: Learning to use the fledgling mind to form and use thoughts.
- Spirit: Learning to replace the instinctive with the rational.

Thus Crested dragonewts are immature and struggling with the conflicting natures necessitated by creation: their own and the creation of the world. It takes at least six reincarnations before the Crested stage is complete and usually many more because gaining a mastery of the Six Actions and understanding the power and magic of the Prime Runes. From the Crested perspective the Prime Runes are: Air, Beast, Chaos, Darkness, Disorder, Earth, Fire, Harmony, Illusion, Infinity, Law, Magic, Mastery, Movement, Plant, Spirit, Stasis, Truth and

Water. At the Crested stage the key task is to understand the Six Actions and commence the journey of understanding the Prime Runes.

Crested dragonewt (and, indeed, all dragonewts) behaviour is thus dictated by a combination of which of the Six Actions it is understanding, which Prime Runes it has already understood and which Runes it is in the process of learning. Orxiliate dragonewts can only learn the magic of the Prime Runes which they must then forget in order to advance to the next stage. At this point dragon magic is forbidden to them.

The task of understanding the Six Actions is known as Orxilius, after the enemy of the Cosmic Dragon, Orxili. This six-limbed, no headed monster attempted to disrupt the Cosmic Dragon's meditations and was dismembered, limb-by-limb, as the Cosmic Dragon itself became aware of, or created, the Six Actions. The dismemberment of Orxili allowed the Six Actions to come into being and from the monster's body, the Cosmic Egg, from which all True dragons, and thus dragonewts, hatched. Orxilius is the primal process of understanding one's nature and the nature of reality. Once accomplished, the Crested dragonewt has quested through the Creation and Green Ages and enters the Beaked stage.



The Crested dragonewt has five personality traits to master as part of Orxilius. These are the most primitive emotions and traits, key to differentiating the dragonewt from all other creatures:

Aggression and Passivity
 Bravery and Cowardice
 Energy and Laziness
 Stubbornness and Docility
 Dependability and Unreliability

Beaked

Known also as the Warrior or Second stage and, amongst dragonewts, as Golden Shadow, this stage represents the Golden and Dark Ages of Glorantha. In these ages civilisation and rational thought took hold only to be plunged into shadow by the Lesser and Greater darknesses, known as the Age of Terror. In this stage of advancement Beaked dragonewts are equipped, mentally and physically, to build and destroy. They are architects and soldiers, the raisers of the dragonewt cities (under the direction of more advanced stages) and fighters in their defence against Chaos, Time and mortal meddling.

Having passed through Orxilius Beaked dragonewts now learn to master draconic magic having forgotten all other magic, though a residual memory of its power is retained. For the Beaked stage Right Action is to begin the mastery of dragon magic and to build and fight. Its motivations are concerned exclusively with these three things, which can only be accomplished with any degree of effectiveness if the Six Actions of Orxilius have been understood and assimilated into the consciousness.

Newly incarnated Beaked dragonewts embody the Golden and their skin glisten with gold and amber. They are builders and in so doing, learn to use the weapons of their stage: the klanth, the korff, the gami and the utuma. As they gain mastery of these weapons, which they view as tools rather than instruments of death, the golden hues are replaced by greys and blacks representing the shadows of the Darkness Ages. They become more warlike and less concerned with construction and more with defence.

Shadowed Beaked dragonewts devote their thoughts almost wholly to defeating Chaos and re-enacting the principle of Utuma: the dismemberment of enemies and the sacrifice of the self. This echoes the sacrifices made by the Cosmic Dragon, the Ancestral dragons and the gods who died during the Darkness Age. A Beaked dragonewt who does not achieve Right Action is expected to commit Utuma as an act of both atonement and of cleansing. It reincarnates as a Beaked dragonewt if its Wrong Action was not sufficiently serious. If the Wrong Action was acute it reincarnates as a

Crested and must retread Orxilius so that it may know Right Action once more.

Knowing this Beaked dragonewts are careful and cautious despite their increasingly warlike natures. It is not shameful to undergo Orxilius once more but is a significant delay in attaining full dragonhood. Wrong Action is considered to be the victory of Chaos and darkness over reason. Beaked dragonewts who have regressed to Orxiliate thus tend to be focused on mastering, again, the Chaos and Darkness runes so that they will be equipped for victory when they return to the Golden Shadow stage.

Those Beaked dragonewts who build cities, defend them and defeat enemies are ready to leave the Golden and Darkness Ages behind them, committing one final act of Utuma to attain the next stage in their progression.

There are, again, five personality traits requiring mastery before the next stage of development. These are concerned with leadership and lordliness, inherent qualities of the Noble stage:


Curiosity and Apathy
 Leader and Follower
 Impulsive and Cautious
 Calm and Nervous
 Trusting and Suspicious

Noble

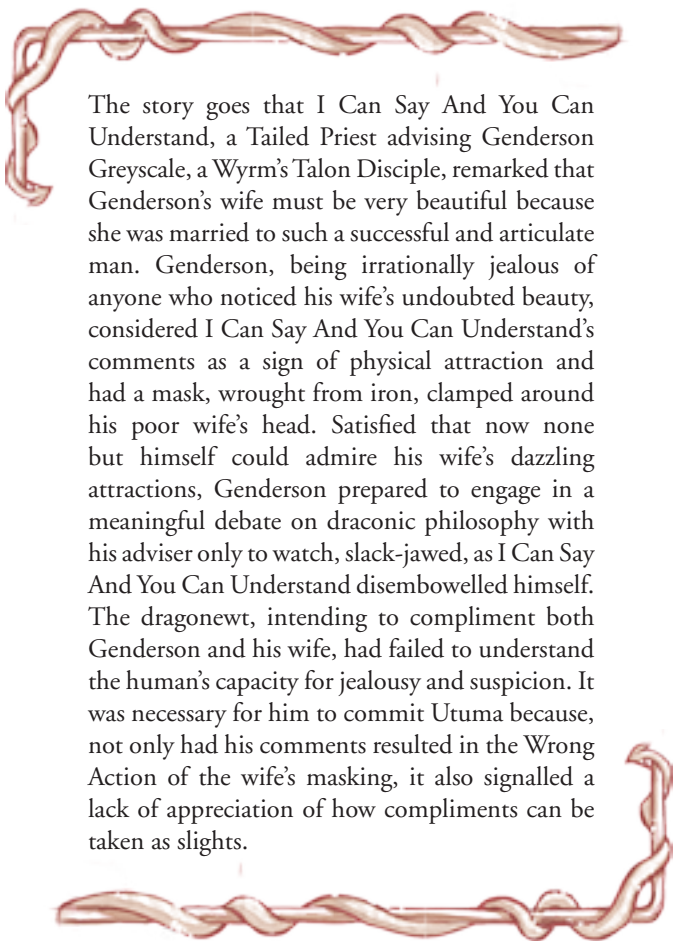
Also known as Tailed Priests, this stage represents The Great Compromise, when the gods had to finally communicate with each other and learn restraint. It was necessary for all the gods to understand the mortal world and how to interact with it. Thus, Noble dragonewts are communicators and leaders. Of all the dragonewt stages they are the best equipped to deal with other races and to embody the notions of peace, negotiation and compromise.

Thus Noble dragonewts are to be found abroad, acting either as emissaries to other races, as wanderers learning more of the mortal world, or, and particularly important during Glorantha's Second Age, as advisers to the humans of the Empire of Wyrms Friends.

All Noble dragonewts are obsessed with language and how to use it as a tool of communication. They call this process Tongue Talking. Right Action is how their communication is perceived by those they interact with and understanding the consequences of this responsibility. Nobles are known to commit Utuma because of mortal failings and this is something humans, in particular, have difficulty in comprehending. If



the underlying reasons were to be studied, and they rarely are, even in the EWF, it would be apparent that a Noble dragonewt commits Utuma because its ability to communicate with non-dragonewts has resulted in consequences that the Noble failed to foresee. Reincarnation following such Utuma is always in the Noble stage but all powers of language and communication must be relearned so that future communication will be clear and its consequences anticipated accurately.



The story goes that I Can Say And You Can Understand, a Tailed Priest advising Genderson Greyscale, a Wyrms' Talon Disciple, remarked that Genderson's wife must be very beautiful because she was married to such a successful and articulate man. Genderson, being irrationally jealous of anyone who noticed his wife's undoubted beauty, considered I Can Say And You Can Understand's comments as a sign of physical attraction and had a mask, wrought from iron, clamped around his poor wife's head. Satisfied that now none but himself could admire his wife's dazzling attractions, Genderson prepared to engage in a meaningful debate on draconic philosophy with his adviser only to watch, slack-jawed, as I Can Say And You Can Understand disembowelled himself. The dragonewt, intending to compliment both Genderson and his wife, had failed to understand the human's capacity for jealousy and suspicion. It was necessary for him to commit Utuma because, not only had his comments resulted in the Wrong Action of the wife's masking, it also signalled a lack of appreciation of how compliments can be taken as slights.

To become a Ruler, or Full Priest, Nobles need to have mastered the following personality traits:

Honour and Dishonour
Generosity and Greed
Patience and Impatience
Extrovert and Introvert

Having mastered both these and the skills of communicating with a wide variety of different races, the Noble dragonewt feels the first signs of wing-growth as its skeleton and muscles

begin to reform. This is painful physically for the dragonewt but is also a time of great joy. This signals the final act of Utuma for this stage and reincarnation as the next.

Ruler

Known also as Full Priests, Winged Priests and, amongst dragonewts, Sky Destined. This stage represents and mirrors the return of light to the world and ascendancy of the sun to the sky. Upon emerging from the egg the newly incarnated Ruler immediately performs the Sun Dance symbolising its emergence from the darkness of its previous incarnations and its newly developed glimpse of True dragonhood. It is accompanied in the dance by all the dragonewts of the nest and is a time of great rejoicing and gladness. The Sun Dance is both ritualistic and practical; as the Ruler dances its wings dry and the bones strengthen allowing the wings to be unfurled fully at the climax of the dance. Ruler dragonewts are always incarnated during Fire Season and when nothing obscures the sun. The Sun Dance always ends as the sun sets, culminating in the unfurling of the new wings.

Once the dance is completed Utuma is immediately committed by the new-born Ruler. The old body is burned and at dawn of the next day the Ruler hatches again, with an identical body but this time carrying the emotional and mental understanding of what it now needs to be accomplished during this stage if it is to achieve dragonhood.

The Ruler must master the following personality traits defining Full Priest status. These are traits that allow the world to be understood and shaped; their mastery is essential for every Inhuman King and True Dragon.

Clever and Dull
Innovation and Conservatism
Optimism and Pessimism
Construction and Destruction

Rulers are tied to their nests and spend a large amount of time sleeping and dreaming. In their dream state they interact with all stages of the nest, offering guidance and overseeing the progression of the lesser stages through Orxilius, Golden Shadow and Tongue Talking. When awake they listen to reports from the lesser stages and make decisions based on how they view things from a draconic perspective. Tailed Priests reinterpret these musings in ways the lesser stages can understand and ensure the Ruler's wishes are carried out. For a Ruler dragonewt Right Action is interpreting things from a draconic perspective rather than a dragonewt perspective. They must thus look down upon the world rather than looking around or up. If their perception is accurate then the

lesser stages will act correctly and Right Action is achieved. If direction is given that does not take into account every conceivable angle, opportunity, outcome and nuance, it is Wrong Action. Utuma naturally follows and the reincarnation may well be at the Noble stage, indicating an essential, undraconic immaturity that must be overcome through further communication and exposure to the wider world. Wrong Action amongst Rulers is very rare because, from the vantage point of looking down, all things are visible and can be explained in a variety of ways. Only when consequences cannot be explained draconically, mythically or in mortal terms is Wrong Action determined.

When not dreaming to survey the dragonewt community, Rulers often involve themselves in dream-based draconic HeroQuests to further their understanding of True dragonhood. These quests not only retrace the deeds of the Cosmic and Ancestral dragons but also project forth to participate in quests to come. This prepares the Ruler for the true, Inhuman King stage, whilst also consolidating and supplementing the dreams of True dragons. FutureQuesting also trains the mind in the frightful complexities of existing outside Time and perceiving all things simultaneously. A succession of HeroQuests need to be completed successfully before the Ruler can dream itself into a FutureQuest and, even then, FutureQuesting is undertaken tentatively as even the immensity of the Ruler's mind is fragile when contemplating a reality unconstrained by the linear and the ultimate separation between cause and effect. However, the experiences and knowledge built-up through the preceding stages have been designed to prepare the Ruler dragonewt for such an existence and its FutureQuesting enables it to mould its psyche into a form capable of functioning fully in the God Plane.

As Rulers mature they become more abstract in their communications and thought processes. This progressive tendency towards abstraction finally culminates in all thoughts coalescing into the Egg Dream where the Ruler simultaneously relives its past lives and both absorbs and is absorbed by, its own egg. The Egg Dream grants the Ruler the ultimate powers of creation and reincarnation and, at this point, the dragonewt pauses in its schemes for it is on the brink of Dragonet status. As it is traditional for only one dragonewt society to support only one Inhuman King, it must wait and dream the Egg Dream while it waits, until it can finally hatch in the penultimate stage before True dragonhood.

Dragonet

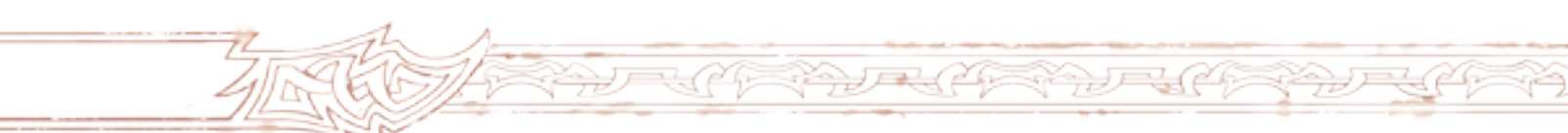
Known also as Inhuman King, this is the stage aspired to by all Ruler dragonewts dreaming the Egg Dream. Only

one Inhuman King can incarnate for its society (although several dragonewt societies exist and thus there are several Inhuman Kings).

Dragonets have achieved almost total dragonhood. Their powers of understanding and mastery of dragon magic gives them complete control over their society. Dragonets enable reincarnation; the Egg Dream has granted them the power, wisdom and insight to decide which lesser stages should reincarnate, when and into what form. They arbitrate Right and Wrong Action and manipulate the eggs of the colony to produce the reincarnated dragonewts at a stage of existence and experience that matches their needs and those of the colony. Dragonets can produce more eggs, which always give birth to new Crested dragonewts, and both watch and judge the souls of those they are responsible for. Dragonets are incapable of Wrong Action. Their minds exist out of Time although their bodies exist within it. They do not dream because it is unnecessary. All things are known to them and all actions and consequences are simultaneous. They do not need food because they have absorbed their own egg through the action of the Egg Dream and are sustained for eternity. All that stands between them and achieving True dragon existence is the will of the Cosmic Dragon itself, so each Inhuman King serves that will unbendingly.

This service is called The Unknowable Secret. Dragonets refer to it but never explain it or reveal it. It is what the humans of the EWF strive to attain but cannot because they are not dragonewts and have not progressed through the essential stages to be able to comprehend and comply with the will of the Cosmic Dragon. Only Obduran the Flyer, a human, has ever come close to knowing the Unknowable Secret and in this he may have had the help of the Inhuman King but that help would have only been given because the Cosmic Dragon willed it to be.

No Dragonet in human reckoning has made the final change to True dragonhood. In fact, no dragonewt or True dragon would ever reveal that the change has been made for fear of exposing the will of the Cosmic Dragon to outside influence. For this reason it is unknowable if the Inhuman King of a dragonewt colony is the same one that has been there all along, or a new Inhuman King incarnated from a waiting, Egg Dreaming, Ruler. Dragonewts do not care: the existence of the Inhuman King is symbolic and they instinctively know that to contemplate its nature is Wrong Action. Only humans, trapped by the curiosity that is a product of living within Time, feel the need for conjecture, thus incurring impurity of thought and motive. This is why no human can ever become a



dragon: wanting to know The Unknowable Secret renders the secret meaningless and closes the path to dragonhood.

Those dragon colonies that have, for one reason or another, placed themselves beyond the draconic cycle, are denied an Inhuman King. Their Rulers either do not start the Egg Dream or find themselves trapped within it. Breaking this cycle requires a draconic HeroQuest undertaken by Ruler dragonewts and this might even be a FutureQuest, only enabling a new Inhuman King to be incarnated at a distant point in the future when it serves the purposes of The Unknowable Secret. Without an Inhuman King no dragonewt can reincarnate and because the Rulers are likely to be bound in their Egg Dream, there is little guidance to prevent Wrong Action and maintain Right Action. Thus do such isolated colonies of dragonewts become less draconic and condemn themselves, certainly in the knowable term, to mortality. These are the Sundered Colonies.

DRAGONEWT EGGS

The source of all draconic life, the egg is the most sacred symbol, magically, spiritually and physically, of all dragonewts. The First Egg was created from the body of the monster Orxili by the Cosmic Dragon and from that came the Ancestral Dragon, who used the halves of the shell to create the Inside and the Outside realms.

The first dragonewt eggs were laid by the Wondrous Mother of Many, who took many mates but cleaved to none of them. Thus was the precedent set. Dragonewts are born from eggs and, like them, the eggs are immortal. They are more than a protective layer for gestation; each egg is deeply magical and tied to the will of the Cosmic Dragon through the protection of the Inhuman Kings.

Dragonewts are destined to be born many times and always from the same egg. After each hatching the egg reassembles itself and awaits the next hatching. The shell is hard and leathery, growing more so with age but never deteriorating. Eggs can be harmed but they always repair; if not totally destroyed. or the withdrawal of the Inhuman King's will, severing the spiritual bond between dragonewt and egg, preventing further rebirths and condemning the dragonewt to mortality.

Dragonewts arrive in the world as adults; there is no physical maturity from an infant through childhood to adulthood. Mentally, new-born dragonewts are innocent to the world but their egg has equipped them with the primal drivers for survival and progress. Higher dragonewt stages provide education and guidance but the egg creates the template.

Every dragonewt is aware of their egg constantly. They instinctively know if their egg is being threatened and, dragonewts fight ceaselessly to protect them. All the eggs of a dragonewt settlement are gathered in a single nest. Thus, in cities such as Dragon's Eye in Dragon Pass, or Absolute Circuitous Fortuity in Ormsland, nests number thousands of eggs. Every nest is guarded by Beaked dragonewts but magical protection exists as well and of the kind that is truly draconic and merciless. The misguided fools who believe that a fragment of dragonewt egg can give eternal life, or cure the most foul of chaos taints, never live to discover the truth of it. As the Inhuman King of Dragon Pass once confided to Vistikos Left Eye, *'One who harms an egg is treated as Orxili was treated. Its limbs are ripped off and its soul devoured. The carcass is thrown to the Ancestral Dragons who make it a plaything and a slave, denying it death but ensuring eternal torment. Only thus is a shell-defiler guaranteed immortality.'*

DRAGONEWT MYTHS

Herein are described the dragonewt cosmology and key myths. These are the creation myths as understood by the True Dragons, Dragonets and Ruler dragonewts. Through its own Dance of Life and Egg each dragonewt becomes steadily more involved in each myth in the order described here and thus attains the enlightenment of True Dragons. The myth cycle reflects and is OUROBOROS; a constant state of rebirth, life, utuma and Right Action.

INFINITY AND THE COSMIC DRAGON

Infinity came first. It was perfect and complete giving simultaneous existence to all that surrounded it, binding all together with no beginning or end. Some called this the God Time but dragonewts and dragons know that the God Time came after.

Something broke infinity. Perhaps it spun too fast or made too much at once but it became broken. One end became the head of the Cosmic Dragon and the other its tail. Knowing it was a broken infinity the Cosmic Dragon's first task was to heal itself and restore infinity but this required meditation. As the Cosmic Dragon meditated the monster, Orxili the Disturber, arose to plague the Cosmic Dragon's meditations. With six limbs and no head all it could do was prod and grasp at the two ends of the Cosmic Dragon attempting to pull it apart as it coiled around itself.

This was but a minor irritation for the Cosmic Dragon but of great consequence for the universe. From its mouth the Cosmic Dragon spoke the first word, which was Silence and Orxili could not utter its blasphemies to disturb the Cosmic Dragon's thoughts. One of the limbs was severed and was cast into the Void. Next Orxili tried to probe the secrets of the Cosmic Dragon's meditation and was bitten again, its limb tumbling to the Void. So was born Secrecy.

Again Orxili tried to disrupt and lost another limb: this was called Being and it would be retrieved by the Cosmic Dragon later and used to make the sky and the world. On its fourth attempt Orxili lost another limb and this the Cosmic Dragon swallowed and thus gained Experience. On the fifth disturbance the Cosmic Dragon tore away Orxili's limb and absorbed it with its mind: this became Thought. Finally Orxili sought to tear at the Cosmic Dragon's soul but it lost again and the final limb became Spirit.

The Cosmic Dragon took the helpless body and the third limb from the Void. From the limb it made the world and the sky, keeping the two apart by the breadth of the limb's fingers. With the world made, the Cosmic Dragon placed the body at its centre and wrapped around it, setting it spinning, thus isolating it from the realms beyond reality. The body became the Cosmic Egg and etched upon it were the Prime Runes. As it span, so it hatched. From it was born the Grand Ancestral Dragon.

The Cosmic Dragon had no use for the limbs it had severed from Orxili and regurgitated the pieces into the Void so it might resume its meditations upon infinity. To purge itself the Cosmic Dragon swallowed its own tail and in so doing infinity was remade and the Cosmic Dragon was at its heart. The limbs of the Disturber were cast to the Nothingness but would one day return, although it could not disrupt infinity now it was remade.

THE GRAND ANCESTRAL DRAGON

The first action of the newly hatched Ancestral Dragon was to meditate and contemplate the universe. Because the Cosmic Dragon had severed the limb of Orxili that tried to steal secrets, the Ancestral Dragon could see into the secrets of the universe and it noted them all as treasures to be shared only with those that were like itself.



Because it was alone in the world its second action was to make servants, which it did from the two halves of the Cosmic Egg, calling one Inside and the other Outside.

Its third action was to make real the six principles of Orxili's disturbance so that they would not interfere with the workings of the world but also to make the world whole again. Thus were born the Six Actions of Orxilius and the Ancestral Dragon created guardians for each of them which were in his own image.

Its fourth action was to return to meditation, now that all was guarded. But while it dreamed, the limbs of Orxili returned from the Void and tried to interfere with the world. One limb became the Oozing Chaos which lapped at the Ancestral Dragon's feet. The Ancestral Dragon took the Disorder rune from the Inside and gave it to the Guardian of Being, who used it to fight back the Ooze. From this battle was born Nakala, the Primal Darkness and the Guardian of Being fashioned a race from it and called it to life with part of the Cosmic Dragon's mantra using the OU and the S sounds. The new race, which chose to dwell beneath the

world, at the Ancestral Dragon's feet, misheard the partial mantra and named itself Uz.

THE FIRST UTUMA

When its meditations were complete the Ancestral Dragon sliced open its loins and created the seas and oceans of the world which flowed freely in defiance of the Oozing Chaos which was now defeated. Then the Ancestral Dragon cut open its belly and gave power to the world through the first gifts of Life, thus defeating the body of Orxili forever.

Next the Ancestral Dragon removed and dismembered its head, creating the Sun, the Stars and the Gods with each of its eyes and the skull of the Ancestral Dragon became the God Plane where their powers would flourish in noble fashions.

From its brain came new servants, identical to the Grand Ancestral Dragon, who taught the Gods how to know and use their powers and how to keep the Oozing Chaos at bay. They taught the gods the First Dance and from which all other dances are derived. The First Dance took place at Dragon Pass and now it is sacred to gods and dragons and the Uz,

who guard its gateways from the Chaos Ooze. When the First Dance was finished, the Ancestral Dragons each laid an egg and the gods returned to the God Plane made from the Grand Ancestral Dragon's skull.

From these eggs hatched the True dragons, which were mighty beings and had substance and form. The Ancestral Dragons, their dance complete, returned to meditate with the Grand Ancestral Dragon and watch the world through the secrets of the universe, accepting worship from the True Dragons and their offspring.

Thus the first utuma of the Grand Ancestral Dragon brought life and order to the world and established the sacrifice of the self and subsequent rebirth, as the Dance of Life and Egg, which all dragonewts follow. From utuma comes the egg and from the egg comes life. Its cycle mirrors the actions of the Cosmic Dragon but is real in the world. And, because the Cosmic Dragon defeated Orxili and remade infinity, so is the Dance of Life and Egg infinite.

THE TRUE DRAGONS

Here are the names of the True Dragons. The list is incomplete because many True Dragons have no need for names or have forgotten those given to them by the Ancestral Dragons. They figure in the myths of many cultures and are venerated as gods by the dragonewts.

- **All Eyes Open But One**, who advised Genert and was the first dragonewt to become a True Dragon.
- **Arangorf**, lover of Drolgard, who found peace with Orlanth.
- **Drang**, known also as **Diamond Storm**, who taught Mostal and made the imperishable stones.
- **Earth Dragon**, who taught Asrelia and protected her as the First Friend.
- **Green Scaled Father**, who taught Flamal and purged the earth with fire to make it fertile.
- **Night Dragon**, who taught Dame Darkness of the Uz.
- **Sun Dragon**, who taught the Sun God.
- **The Emperor of Wisdom**, who taught wisdom to the gods and saw it squandered.
- **The Imperial Fountain of Peace**, known also as **Aroka**, who guides the waters of the world and was slain by Orlanth.
- **The Mover of the Heavens**, known also as **Sh'kaharzeel** and was slain by Orlanth.
- **Wondrous Mother of Many**, who is the Mother of the dragonewts and venerated by all of them.

All Eyes Open But One

When the god Genert required an adviser, he turned to a dragon because he had heard of their wisdom. He hunted through the dragon lands and met many dragons who scorned

his attempts to find counsel, each declaring that they had nothing left to teach to gods and wished to sleep. Eventually Genert found a dragon lazing on its back, belly exposed to the sun, with all but one of its eyes wide open. Genert was intrigued and asked why it did not close all of its eyes. 'So I can be both asleep and awake at the same time and thus miss nothing,' the dragon replied. And Genert knew he had found his adviser.

Arangorf

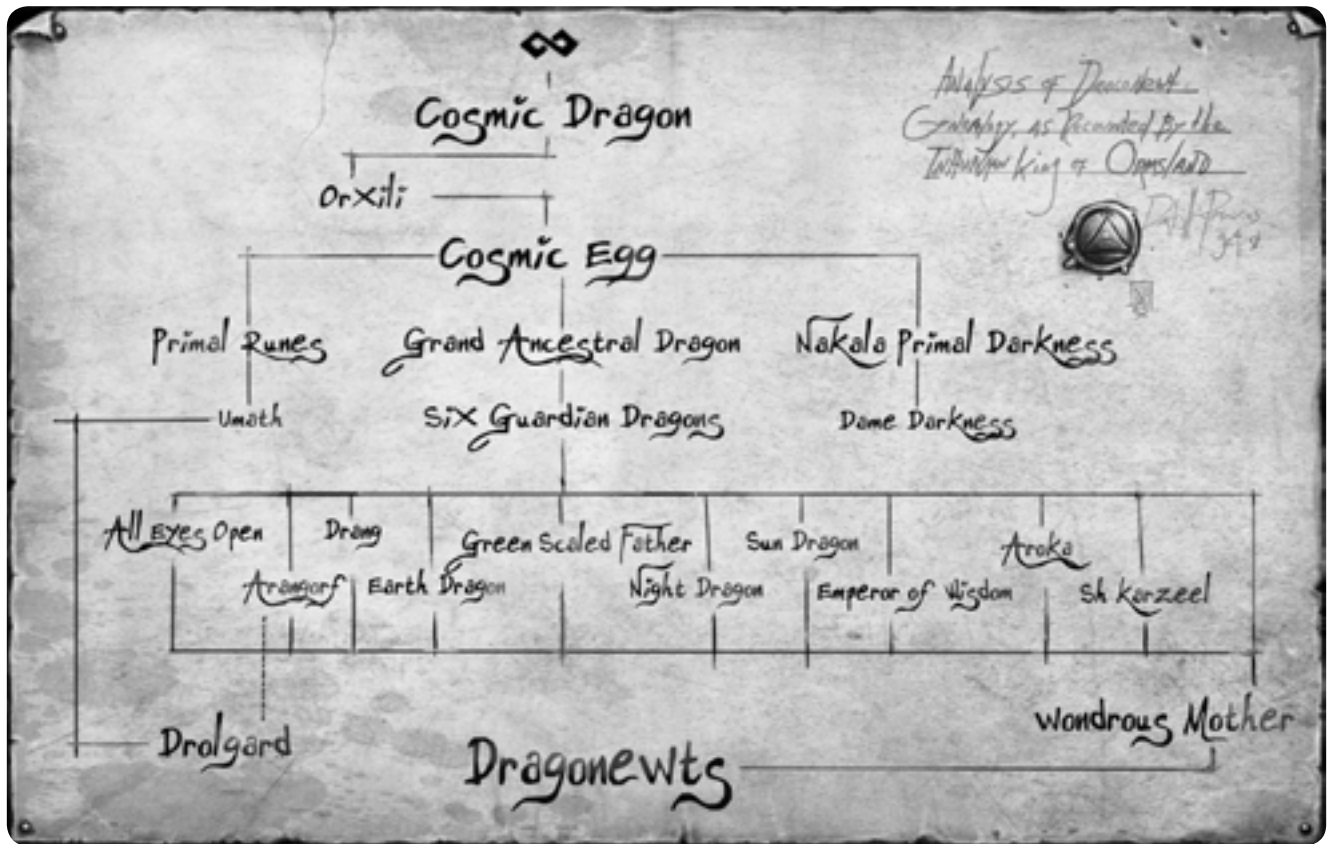
Drolgard, who spoke the dragon language, was taken as a lover by Arangorf. When Orlanth, who had slain Sh'kaharzeel and Aroka, wanted to make peace with the dragons, he called Drolgard to his stead and she brought Arangorf with her. Arangorf took revenge by eating and drinking everything Orlanth owned and then tearing away the roof of the great hall. Arangorf expected Orlanth to fight him but no fight came. Drolgard had urged Orlanth to speak with the dragon and taught him the dancing-praying-chanting language that gave the Storm God the draconic tongue. He and Arangorf then spoke and peace came between the gods and dragons once more, although later Orlanth forgot his oaths and that peace was broken. That is why dragonewts and humans find it so difficult to talk now and must entrust their communications to the Tailed Priests.

Drang

Drang sought Mostal so that he might teach him how to forge the unbreakable stones, also known as diamonds, which are dragon's tears. Mostal thanked Drang for the secret and imprisoned him so that he might make as many diamonds as he needed for the World Machine. Instead, Drang slept and dreamed, his eyes firmly shut so that Mostal would be denied diamonds. That is why diamonds are so rare in Glorantha when once they were abundant.

Earth Dragon and the Protection of Asrelia

When Gata birthed her daughters, Asrelia and Ty Kora Tek, Asrelia was deformed and ugly in the eyes of her mother and could not possibly be a creature of any good for the world. Earth Dragon found Gata abandoning the child in the mouth of a cave, perhaps in the hope she would be eaten by monsters from Chaos. Earth Dragon was sad and angry but did not want to confront Gata because he loved her also. Instead he took Asrelia deep underground and left her with Dame Darkness. Earth Dragon told many lies when questioned over what had happened to the unwanted child but he never revealed her presence. As she grew Asrelia prospered in spirit and kindness, mastering the art of wealth and bounty. She learned to give to the world and to share what was sharable. Earth Dragon understood this and was pleased. Dame Darkness understood it and thus so did the Uz. Thanks to



Earth Dragon's protection Asrelia dwells deep underground even now but shares her wealth with all the peoples of the surface. Though Earth Dragon sleeps his tail is coiled around Asrelia's hearth and whilst he endures, nothing can harm her.

Green Scaled Father

Green Scaled Father stole the Plant Rune from the Inside of the Cosmic Egg and gave it to Flamal. Flamal ate it and developed roots. The roots moved into the earth, disturbing the children of Dame Darkness who sent Zorak Zoran to see what was happening. By this time Green Scaled Father had been caught by the Ancestral Dragons and could not protect Flamal. Thus, while Flamal's roots were devoured by Zorak Zoran, the Green Scaled Father was being punished for creating the first Wrong Action.

Night Dragon and the Teaching of Dame Darkness

When Night Dragon hatched he went beneath the world to thank the new race who had defeated the Oozing Chaos. Dame Darkness welcomed him and told him the name of her people. He gave her the Man rune so that she might create her race from flesh and with it Dame Darkness created Kyger Litor, who bore Korasting. With the Man rune they created more children who became the Sacred Ancestors of the Uz.

Sun Dragon

With scales of burning amber the Sun Dragon taught the Sun God to move across the sky and his light gave life to the world. After this time of teaching the Sun Dragon told the Sun God it was time for him to leave but the Sun God made eloquent petitions and so the Sun Dragon stayed and resides there now, where he acts as a benevolent emperor amongst the court of the Sun God.

The Emperor of Wisdom

The Emperor of Wisdom flew to the Gods Plane carrying the Spirit rune, so that the gods might know inner peace and the harmony of considered responsibility. But the gods, being young and foolish, turned-down this gift. Only Asrelia accepted the gift of wisdom and engendered the beginnings of First Friendship. The gods laughed and danced about the Spirit rune and so squandered the gift of wisdom. The Emperor of Wisdom flew away, disappointed in the frivolity of these children.

The Imperial Fountain of Peace

Orlanth hated dragons after his fight with Sh'kaharzeel and sought out more to challenge them. One was Aroka, who controlled the waters of the world. Aroka was unafraid of the blustering Storm God and fought Orlanth with rain, storms

How Orlanth Slew Sh'kharzeel

A mixture of draconic and Old Ways Traditionalist myths.

One morning Sh'kharzeel awoke to find the world not as he had left it. Behind him was a mountain that soared to the sky and he did not like it. He took to the wing and soared to its summit, finding that it was Kero Fin, a goddess. Sh'kharzeel wanted to eat her but she was too big, so instead he looked about him at the way the world had changed and saw Kero Fin's son, Orlanth, busy at the plough making new lands for his tribe.

Sh'kharzeel went to undo these labours ignoring Kero Fin's warnings. He blasted the crops with fire and ate all the grain in the barns. Next he drank dry the lakes and streams and then went in search of Orlanth.

The Storm God had heard of dragons but had never seen one. At first he thought Sh'kharzeel was Euralm the Trickster and so taunted him awhile. The dragon spat fire and convinced Orlanth he was real. He protested over the reshaping of the lands and how this was unwise because it was not a part of the Cosmic Dragon's designs. Orlanth said he had never heard of this Cosmic Dragon and demanded proof but Sh'kharzeel could offer none because the world had been reshaped many times since it had been the Cosmic Egg. Orlanth shrugged and returned to his ploughing. Angered, Sh'kharzeel burnt Orlanth's plough.

Enraged, Orlanth went to his hall and fetched Death, the weapon he had stolen from Humakt. Sh'kharzeel countered with tooth and claw, so their battle raged across Dragon Pass, which was then not known by that name. Orlanth used the sky as a shield when Sh'kharzeel breathed fire at him and the dragon used the mountains to parry Orlanth's blows with Death. Their fight lasted three days and three nights and around them the earth was undone. When Sh'kharzeel knocked Orlanth flat with a blow from his tail the Shadow Plateau was made; and when Orlanth put out one of the dragon's eyes, Skyfall lake was created.

At last both began to tire. Sh'kharzeel, because he had not eaten for a long time, wearied first and left his spine open to Orlanth's blade. Death cut deep and Sh'kharzeel fell. Orlanth fetched his nets, bound-up the dragon's soul and flung it high into the sky, which was now dark. The net broke open and scattered the dragon's soul as stars, which can be seen even now.

Orlanth left the dragon's body where it was because it was too heavy to carry away and burn. He hoped monsters would eat it. But Sh'kharzeel instead turned to stone and formed the Rockwood Mountains. The cleft made in the dragon's spine by Death is now the place we call Dragon Pass and it amuses Orlanth that in death, the dragon provides a gateway to the lands it tried to unmake.

and floods, turning Orlanth's powers against him. Having bested Sh'kharzeel Orlanth was wise to dragon tricks and used these on Aroka, besting him also. He placed Aroka's skeleton in the sky. Aroka was so big and mighty that its head did not fit in the sky dome and so forms a different pattern of stars which is known as Orlanth's Ring.

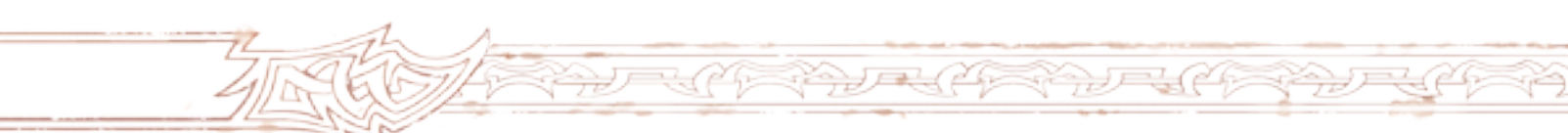
The Mover of the Heavens

Sh'kharzeel flew first to the sky where he surveyed the world below and decided to change parts that were not his liking. This angered certain gods who had been making the world to *their* liking and amongst them was Orlanth. The Storm God challenged Sh'kharzeel and they fought across Glorantha and

into the God Plane and then back to the sky where Orlanth was victorious. He placed the dragon's soul in the sky and imprisoned his bones in Dragon Pass.

Wondrous Mother of Many

The last of the True Dragons to hatch and so eager to mate that she did so before she was ready spiritually or physically. She mated with many dragons and laid many clutches of eggs across the world. Some did not hatch but most did and from them came the first dragonewts who were, like the Wondrous Mother, imperfect. They knew this and petitioned the Wondrous Mother for succour but she was too involved in her mating to listen and so the dragonewts had to learn the



ways of dragonhood for themselves. They did this through talking to gods and True Dragons, who described to them how the only way they could attain True Dragonhood was to re-establish the relationship with the Great Ancestral Dragon and the only way to do this would be re-enact the full draconic being, from the actions of the Cosmic Dragon onwards.

This is why dragonewts are as they are and why they do what they do. The Wondrous Mother of Many, who is still loved by all her offspring, has never returned to instruct them herself and that is why she is sometimes known as Mother Forgotten.

HYKIM AND MIKYH

Dragonewts trace all animals and natural creatures to a pair of similar, dragon-like ancestors called Hykim and Mikyh. Both hatched simultaneously from eggs laid by the Wondrous Mother of Many but were not dragonewts or dragons, although they could take the form of the latter and duly they did.

These egg-born creatures which were not dragons but had dragon form, were the result of the Wondrous Mother mating with the Beast Rune, which she took to be a sort of dragon. Hykim and Mikyh are thus creatures of the Beast Rune and, through subsequent matings with a variety of gods, gave birth to all the beasts of the world, and each has a kernel of dragonhood at its heart, as do all things.

The division between Hykim and Mikyh is unclear. Neither is thought to be male or female but it is considered that Hykim laid eggs and all creatures born from it lay eggs too, whilst Mikyh begets live young and so do her offspring. Once their propagation of the world was complete, Hykim and Mikyh formed together into a single being and retired to the celestial temple of the Grand Ancestral Dragon there to watch the world and contemplate it.

DINOSAURS

Some of the eggs laid by the Wondrous Mother did not hatch properly and create dragonewts; for whatever reason these eggs created the dinosaurs which now roam Glorantha and are considered to be a degenerate dragonewt species that can never attain the draconic path. The God Learners, in formulating their monomyth claim that dinosaurs are traceable to the Hykim myth but this is disputed by dragonewts who have a natural kinship with all dinosaur species.

This kinship has been put to good and constructive use. Dragonewts have always herded dinosaurs and used some of them as mounts or beasts of burden but with the rise of the EWF, dinosaurs have been put to use in the Dragon

Armies forming cavalry units and shock troops, striking fear into the hearts of enemies as ranks of triceratops thunder across the battlefield whilst controlled velociraptors and even tyrannosaurs, prowl the flanks, tearing into opposing forces with bloodthirsty abandon.

DAYS OF STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS

The God Learners would have the world believe that the dragons and dragonewts did nothing when Disorder and Chaos invaded the world but dragonewt myths tell otherwise, involving the Night Dragon in particular against the Chaos invasion. The Night Dragon cult actively seeks-out and challenges Chaos, reinforcing the dragonewt myth rather than the passivity so eagerly postulated by the Jrusteli (most likely in another attempt to discredit the entire notion of draconic superiority).

What is agreed upon is that Chaos killed large numbers of dragonewts. To the dragonewts it was simply Right Action to allow this to happen, since it hastened the rebirth of the slain into the next stage of development. The egg nests were always protected from the ravages of Chaos and so the carnage was only ever temporary. Yet there were two main pockets of resistance against the incursions of Chaos; one of Strength and one of Weakness – again, both approaches were viewed as Right Action by the dragonewts.

Strength was found in Kralorela, where all followed the draconic ideal and could form iron-clad alliances. All creatures, dragonewt, beast and human, banded under the aegis of the Inner Circle of Wisdom which countered the threat of Chaos with a mixture of powerful philosophy, True Dragon magic and the cleansing flame of the Night Dragon, which revelled in destroying Chaos.

Weakness was found in Dragon Pass where the gods squabbled and had thus created a Sundered Land. The dragonewts were part of that Sundering and allowed Chaos to take a certain amount of their number. However one dragonewt Ruler, who took the name Heart of Weakness, decided upon a different strategy and risked entangling his settlement (now thought to be Ghosts Around) in the paths of the other races, humans included. Thus were formed loose alliances and dragonewts marched to the I Fought We Won battle where victory over Chaos was assured.

This action by Heart of Weakness ensured dragonewt equality with all other races particularly the Uz but more critically allowed dragonewts to escape the strictures imposed by Time when the Age of History began.

THE SIX DRAGONS AND THE WAR AGAINST CHAOS

Another Creation Tale

In the beginning, when there was nought but the Void,
Neither men, gods nor the world existed. Nestled both within
And without the vast Emptiness was only Ouroboros,
The Infinite Dragon who existed before even Chaos.

Ouroboros had many thoughts though we know only one,
Called the Dance of Six Dragons. At first they danced only with
Each other but their music disturbed the silence of Chaos
And there rose a being whose existence was begun only to end
That of the Dragons.

Orxili is the best known name for this ancient enemy.
Headless, its six limbs grappled with the dragons to destroy
Them but the power of the Dragons is as unchangeable as the
Void and they tore the giant Orxili asunder. They ripped his
Limbs from the body and cast them into the darkness of the
Outer Emptiness. Each limb later returned, garnering names of
Their own but they were met by other foes than the dragons.

The body of Orxili was placed in the centre of the Emptiness
And set to spinning on its tip like an egg. The Dragons
Gathered around and fanned it with their wings until a world
Settled into quarters, each of which was an element. Inside of all
Was the yolk of the egg, a new Being.

Under the thoughts of the Dragons, Yolk-child grew and
Matured within its shell to become the creature called the
Dragon Guardian. Its first act was to break open the shell
Thereby loosing all of creation by dividing the cosmos from Itself.

After the world was begun this entity, the Dragon Guardian,
Came to be known as the Cosmic Dragon. He is known as the
Watchman of the interior and sometimes as the Master of the Cosmos.

The Cosmic Dragon appointed six other dragons to be his
Assistants. These others are the founders of the Real Dragons in
Glorantha and are the race of dragons which warned against
The Old Giants in the days when the goddess Glorantha
Was but a child.

DRAGONEWT CIVILISATION

'The Inhuman Kings are what we should all aspire to be. They have travelled to the Outside and understand it, embrace it. They have taken the wings of the dragon and flown far and wide. They know the thoughts and dreams of the Great Dragon and help shape them. Inhuman Kings have wisdom, shape worlds and command gods. If it is our destiny to raise the Great Dragon we must shrug off this earthly form and learn to fly.

Only then will we Claim the Scales.'

— Harvensan Greyscale, Wyrms' Fang Exultant

This chapter offers an overview of dragonewts in Glorantha and then in the heartlands of Dragon Pass, Ralios, Kralorela and, to a lesser extent, Slontos. It examines their settlement, worldview and interactions with those who share their lands. Place is important to dragonewts because these landscapes were shaped by the Ancestral Dragons and the True Dragons. Relationships are important to them because depth of relationship is essential to dragonhood. As we shall see, there are some non-dragonewts who are actively striving to enter the same cycle of being and create a similar relationship.

DRAGONEWTS IN GLORANTHA

The heartland of dragonewt civilisation is, and always will be, Dragon Pass. The First Utuma and the First Dance were performed here and it is where the Wondrous Mother of Many laid her first eggs. Dragon Pass is also the birthplace of many gods and, in Kero Fin, where the earth and the sky touch and become one. Dragon Pass is thus deeply sacred to all dragonewts, even those who have never visited it.

However, there are dragonewt colonies everywhere. Ormsland in Ralios supports the second largest community outside

Dragon Pass and its Inhuman King, the Second King, opens his eyes towards the Justeli and the EWF, watching closely. An Inhuman King rules in Kralorela, where men have conversed with dragonewts for longer and with greater eloquence than the Wyrms' Friends and the paths of humans and dragonewts remain divided, as they should be.

Sundered colonies – those that are Outside the draconic cycle – have no Inhuman King and follow their own ways that are alien to all. On the island of Teleos the dragonewt colony tampers in the affairs of humans for reasons difficult to quantify. In Carmania, a small colony of dragonewts assist the renegade, apostate One Tongues against the EWF and its Ruler dragonewt advises the Shah on a sporadic basis fuelling rifts between the Inhuman Kings of Dragon Pass and Ralios. In Tarinwood a tiny colony of dragonewts assists the elves directly, defending the sacred temple complex of Hrelar Amali, which is a haven for Old Ways Traditionalists.

In Dara Happa several dragonewt colonies, including some sundered colonies, have moved closer to the thriving metropolis of Yuthuppa, so that they may perfectly venerate the Golden Dragon Emperor who has emerged from Yelm's kingdom and wrapped itself around the Sun God's temple.

Dragonewts view Glorantha as their world, with all other inhabitants merely as tenants. The greatest issue the dragonewts have with humans is their constant interference, either to become like them, as with the EWF, or to study and plunder, as with the God Learners. The Elder Races, Aldryami and Uz, have no such compunctions, content to understand or not understand the dragonewts.

There is considerable consternation amongst some colony Ruler dragonewts that the EWF has been successful in awakening several True dragons, such as Drang, the Diamond Storm God and the Golden Dragon Emperor. But the Inhuman King of Dragon Pass has reminded each colony that these awakenings are but nothing compared with the purity of the path to dragonhood and are merely parts of the endless replaying of the God Time, when the Ancestral Dragons educated the gods. Now, in Glorantha's Second Age, it is humans who need to be educated and who better to do this than the True Dragons who have slept for so long whilst humans have pursued their mortal follies?

Dragonewt Roads

'We used measuring magic and alchemy and myth-dousing. The results are incontrovertible. Each pillar is positioned in an absolutely straight line. There is no deviation; not the slightest. There are no straighter lines in the whole of Glorantha. When I tried to shift one of the pillars just a fraction, well, you can see what happened.'

— Almakoth Armless, Logistics Faculty Head of the Shelnesta Revealers, reporting to the Imperial Court in Jrustela

The cities of the dragonewts are connected by the magical Dragonewt Roads. No physical road or pathway exists but the connections are made by the square stone plinths that are positioned every 13 kilometres in an absolutely straight line between each city. Each plinth is made from polished obsidian, rune-covered on every surface and seemingly immune to weathering and deliberate attempts to damage. All plinths are inherently magical and were, according to the dragonewts, made by the True Dragons from discarded scales following their matings with the Wondrous Mother of Many.

All dragonewts are able to walk the Dragonewt Roads linking their cities without any need to use their own magic. Stepping onto a road places the dragonewt on both the Inside and the Outside of the shell of the Cosmic Egg. In this way it takes no more than an half an hour to move between pillars enabling vast distances to be traversed with ease. Users of the Dragonewt Roads do not see the mundane world beyond; instead they are aware that they walk the roads of the God Time and see all around them the world as it was when the Ancestral Dragons taught the gods and the first True Dragons were born. Wandering the Dragonewt Roads places the walker into a mythical context, although they cannot interact with it beyond observation. Stepping off the road is to tread the mundane world again and to quickly forget the wonders of the God Time.

Using a Dragonewt Road is easy for dragonewts but less so for other races. It requires the blessing and teaching of either a Ruler dragonewt or the Inhuman King to learn the secret of the Road Dance which permits access to the road and, even then, those taught the secret are bound by dragonewt honour

never to reveal it to another. A few have broken that oath and been hunted by Dream Dragons, always to a pitiful end.

Non-dragonewts using the roads are susceptible to great danger. Dream Dragons and, occasionally, True Dragons use them. If these creatures encounter one that is not of their kin, the reaction is invariably hostile. And, if the wanderer is lucky enough to avoid such contacts, other, draconic spirits lurk along the roads waiting to prey on impure travellers. These powerful spirits are thought to be the restless spirits of dragonewts who have died and not reincarnated because they are outside the draconic lifecycle. This rumour is likely to be true. These unquiet dragonewts spirits are vengeful and cunning, laying traps and ambushes because, lacking true enlightenment, they are angry at the mundane world and seek constant vengeance.

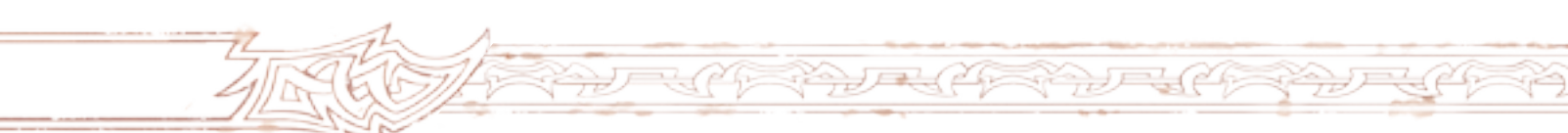
Other denizens of the roads are the Lost Spirits; those non-draconic travellers who wandered for too long or lost their way. Their physical bodies have faded into a grey abstraction but their wills are strong and they seek a way back to the mundane world. They fear dragonewts because they have no power over them but humans and Uz, especially, are favoured vehicles for possession. The minds of these lost spirits are insane and, even when free of the Dragonewt Roads, they wander the mundane world aimlessly, shunning all sustenance, using the host body until it dies of either hunger, thirst or exhaustion.

DRAGONEWTS AND ALDRYAMI

The dragonewts and the elves maintain a respectful distance from each other but have both fought and been allies on past occasions.

For the most part dragonewts have little interest in plants or greenery, being more concerned with their own development but, on occasions (such as at Contemplative Rest in Dragon Pass), certain dragonewts have developed a fixation with things that grow. This has mystified, intrigued and alarmed the Aldryami in equal measure; when dragonewts develop a sudden interest in something they are prone to meddling with its nature, often producing strange or unwanted results. The Aldryami are often unsure of what the dragonewts intend by this: sometimes, as on Teleos, the dragonewts seek to imitate the elves. At others they seem to be investigating the very essence of plant life so that they might distance themselves from it as much as possible.

As a fellow elder race, dragonewts view the Aldryami with reasonable respect. The elf forests pose little threat to



dragonewts as long as territorial boundaries are respected. On the occasions where elves and dragonewts have been enemies it has been for trivial reasons and resolved without any unacceptable degradations in relations. Dragonewt emissaries to elf lords are fairly common, although this is not generally reciprocated. The Aldryami find dragonewt cities overwhelmingly perplexing and only send emissaries to them when absolutely necessary.

DRAGONEWTS AND UZ

Dragonewts believe that the trolls were created by the Grand Ancestral Dragon as part of the creation of Nakala, the Primal Darkness. The trolls, of course, protest this and have their own creation myth sidestepping the dragonewt beliefs, although they do not doubt that, in the God Time, dragons shared power and wisdom with Dame Darkness and thus should command a measure of respect as an elder race.

The Uz and the dragonewts have restricted dealings. Ezkenkekko, the Only Old One, has maintained cordial relations with the Inhuman King of Dragon Pass for centuries and emissaries from both races pass between Shadow Plateau and Dragon's Eye regularly. The Inhuman King, it is said, taught the Only Old One the magic of the Dragonewt Roads but if so, Ezkenkekko rarely uses them.

Like most races Uz consider dragonewts unintelligible. They can grasp the peculiarities immortality brings but they have difficulty understanding the sometimes capricious nature of the dragonewts. Uz value consistency whilst dragonewts often seem to deliberately rail against it. Usually that could be considered a sign of chaos but Uz know dragonewts are anything but chaos-tainted and so find it hard to rationalise dragonewt behaviour.

At the end of the Second Age trolls will aid dragonewts against the Invincible Golden Horde that will march against the dragonewt cities of Dragon Pass, sending warriors from both Dagori Inkarth and Shadow Plateau against the humans. Perhaps the Inhuman Kings and the troll Lords have been sharing secrets: both the EWF and God Learners would pay dearly to know.

DRAGONEWTS AND THE EWF

For centuries the dragonewts have been the benefactors of EWF society and wisdom. They granted knowledge granted to no one else and gave the Original Twelve access to powers reserved previously for Inhuman Kings. As the EWF has progressed, the dragonewts have come to view the

empire with a mixture of incomprehension, admiration and suspicion. By and large the conversion to the draconic path is welcomed because it displays an enlightenment rarely seen amongst humans. But this enlightenment is treated with a distinct unease. The EWF is hungry for secrets and many of them the dragonewts are not ready to share. Several of the Original Twelve, especially Vistikos Left Eye, claim to have had mystical communion with the Cosmic Dragon and this is not something most dragonewts view with much favour. All dragonewts struggle on the path to dragonhood; for a human to claim such a relationship seems odd and inconsistent to them. It might even be equated to jealousy, if the dragonewts were capable of such an emotion.

Because the Inhuman Kings have decreed co-operation with the Wyrmfriends, the dragonewts comply but do so at their own speed and to their own agendas. From what they know of humans, even dragon-enlightened ones, they are an impatient race eager to know before they understand. There is no human equivalent of Orxilius and as this is the first stage all dragonewts must master, they find it difficult to understand how the human draconic path can be anything but flawed.

Of deeper concern is the haste to create the Great Dragon to Be. Raising or creating dragons fits completely with the dragonewt psyche and they welcome the project on that basis. Yet dragonewts are an unhurried race, untroubled by the strictures of Time. The EWF exhibits an indecent amount of haste in wanting to create their dragon and dragonewts proceed down a path of perfection before being ready to make the final metamorphosis to complete dragonhood. The EWF wants to circumvent that process. Parts of it have achieved the necessary wisdom and perfection (as far as they can, trapped in the same body) but most of the EWF is considered unprepared for what they are attempting. The EWF exhibits a flawed understanding of draconic nature that is obsessed with personal power and a desire to remake the world in a different image. That is not the dragonewt way. Whilst dragonewts grow more powerful with each new stage, their lifecycle is dedicated to retracting that power from the material world and channelling it into deep contemplation, just as the Cosmic Dragon contemplates deeply. Humans as a race seem incapable of such contemplation. And, as the Inhuman King of Ormsland has noted more than once, the Cosmic Dragon entered into only one true act of creation and that was to create the world from the remnants of Orxili. Might the EWF be in danger of reversing that divine act?

As the EWF races towards completing its dragon, whilst attempting to hold the outline of the Great Dragon together, there is growing unease and fear amongst the dragonewts that what will arise will not be a dragon at all but a resurrection

'Even your most eloquent and enlightened speak our tongue as though taking a blunt axe to a stone-tree. The sparks and flints scald our eyes and ears but we resent this not, for all communication and the efforts made to it should be treasured and swept to the soul.

But think not that the stone-tree can be felled or the axe sharpened. Even with split tongues and minds you are, and always shall be, wielders of a blunt instrument.'

— Truth's Sharp Endeavour, Noble of Absolute Circuitous Fortuity to a gathering of EWF Auld Wyrnish scholars

of Orxili itself, whose body was used in the creation of the Cosmic Egg. Some of a less pessimistic disposition believe that the body of Orxili will not be resurrected but some of its limbs, taking dragon form, will be. These thoughts have never been articulated to the EWF at any level but they are real and troubling. The Ruler dragonewts and the Inhuman Kings have thus been engaging themselves in FutureQuests in a bid to foresee the truth of the dilemma and thus decide on a course of action. They are close to an answer. The signs are not good. Only the Inhuman Kings know for sure what the outcome of the Great Dragon project would be if allowed to come to fruition and they are not sharing that knowledge but it is clear that some form of defence is being prepared against the EWF's future actions.

Already the Inhuman Kings have decided to share no more secrets with the EWF. Dream orders have been made to limit communications to the mundane and to retract further magical teachings. EWF magicians eager to learn new dragon magic are finding it difficult to engage teachers. Certain EWF mystics, unrelated to the Guiding Council and the Original Twelve, are being offered hints and insights into a potential doom in the hope that they can exert some influence and steer the EWF faithful away from a more tragic course. Petitioning the Guiding Council and Original Twelve is futile; both are entrenched in their obsession and cannot be swayed from realising their impatient vision. It must fall to others who have shown a less obsessive insight to avert the impending tragedy. If they fail, or if the Guiding Council ignores the warnings, then the final acts of dragonewt defence will need to be initiated.

The Guiding Council is aware of this change in dragonewt behaviour and is concerned by it. Dragonewts have always been secretive and impossible to really understand but there has always been a level of co-operation and mutual trust that is now being eroded. The Guiding Council interprets this change and new secrecy correctly but for the wrong reasons. They believe that the dragonewts are withholding secrets because the Great Dragon to Be is nearing completion and they wish to seize its immense power for themselves. They genuinely believe that the dragonewts wish to dominate the World to Come and not to share it. The EWF has genuinely failed to appreciate that the dragonewts foresee not a dragon but a monster, as the result of the project. They have failed to understand that making a dragon of the earth is to tap into the substance of the Cosmic Dragon's enemy and to possibly resurrect it. If the dragonewts are right and Orxili is created in draconic form, imbued with all the wisdom and knowledge it sought to steal from the Cosmic Dragon before the universe was created, it will spell doom for all. In their haste and immaturity, the EWF lacks the subtle insight and understanding dragonewts have spent an eternity developing.


Thus, EWF and dragonewts are set for a collision, fuelled by suspicion and fear on both sides that can have only one outcome. The dragonewts have never exhibited the full extent of their powers but in 134 years' time, they will do so, marching in open revolt against the EWF. In the year 1120, the Inhuman Kings will raise their Deathlines to protect their cities from the Invincible Golden Horde and that will signal the beginning of the Dragonkill. The Ruler dragonewts and Inhuman Kings have already seen parts of this tapestry infolding in their dreams and FutureQuests. They would seek to avert it but most likely understand that it is inevitable and they must, instead, simply prepare for it.

The EWF sees only the signs of a growing treachery amongst the dragonewts. They lack tangible proof and need the dragonewts to complete their project, so their actions must be subtle and carefully staged. But the doubt is there. Distrust is beginning.

The glorious Empire of the Wyrms' Friends will not be destroyed by the God Learners. It will implode in the most spectacular and tragic fashion, almost mirroring the Cosmic Dragon's dismemberment of the troublesome Orxili.

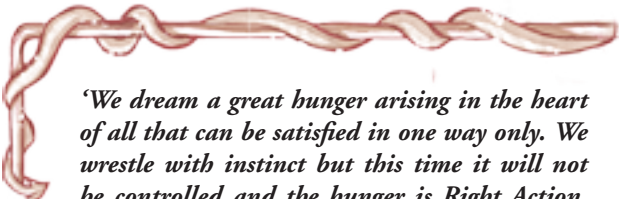
DRAGONEWTS AND THE MIDDLE SEA EMPIRE

The God Learners harbour a natural suspicion of anything unable to comprehend the true greatness of Malkion and the overarching authority of The Abiding Book. They dislike and



fear anything they cannot understand and codify; everything about dragonewts falls into these categories. To the Justeli, dragonewts present a danger of unknowable proportions. Clearly they are the architects of the EWF's power and in this capacity must be enemies. Their cosmology defies everything the God Learners know and understand about the God Time and subsequent ages; it proposes a creation myth that can have little meaning in the physical world but seems to underpin it. As the EWF is an impenetrable enemy, the God Learners seek to impose some semblance of order on draconic cosmology by subtly guiding the founding principles of the more malleable Kralori, who are all too trusting despite their heretical, draconic beliefs.

Fluilea Gencourt's rantings are echoed throughout the Middle Sea Empire. Dragonewts cannot be trusted and have no definable place in the world. Many seek their destruction for



'We dream a great hunger arising in the heart of all that can be satisfied in one way only. We wrestle with instinct but this time it will not be controlled and the hunger is Right Action, though many will regret it. We seek the wisdom of the Cosmic Dragon but it hungers also and channels its needs through us. We are powerless to resist.

It will take time to prepare, this need for satisfaction. Though we cannot suppress our instinctive desires we can exercise our patience. This is Right Action.

I cast my eye over their boundaries and see fraying folly and immature impatient minds, lost in the wilderness of their own power. I listen to their petitions and smile at their promises, so empty and frail like their minds and hearts. I think of them as neglected pets.

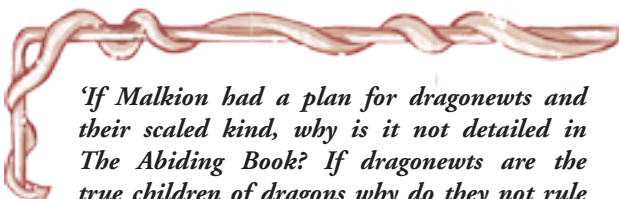
If they would pause to listen the hunger might be averted yet but they are incapable of hearing. I feel pity for them. I return to my dreams and see a field of Gold awaiting consumption and I join with the True Brothers in crossing the Deathline and reclaiming what has always been ours.'

— The Inhuman King of Dragon Pass



the simple reason that they fear what they do not understand and in the God Learner empire, understanding is everything. Fanatics like Gencourt advocate holy war against the dragonewts and have already launched unsuccessful attacks against the dragonewt heartland of Ormsland. They blame the dragonewts for allowing the EWF to press its heretical borders into Middle Sea territory, bringing with it their hated Hunting and Waltzing bands. The God Learners see the Inhuman King as the architect of this plan, a scheming semi-dragon with insane ways attempting to destroy the Middle Sea empire with a war of steady attrition but followed soon, no doubt, by some kind of all-out strike.

Conversely dragonewts throughout Glorantha have little or no interest in the God Learners. There is no new knowledge they can gain from the Justeli because they are mere amateurs in the art of understanding gods. Dragonewts know that the True Dragons taught the gods in many ways, battled them, killed some and were killed. Dragonewts and True Dragons know more about the ways of gods and how they act than even the most powerful Justeli sorcerer. This knowledge is passed to them gradually through dreams and experience. Each new stage of dragonewt development reveals some new knowledge, precisely the kind covered by the God Learners and so the dragonewts learn all they need to know about the nature of gods one step at a time.



'If Malkion had a plan for dragonewts and their scaled kind, why is it not detailed in The Abiding Book? If dragonewts are the true children of dragons why do they not rule Glorantha? Where is their supposed wisdom? Where is the trade? Why are they not listed amongst the eight pure races? Why did that primitive pagan storm god kill dragons? Why are there no dragonewts in Justela?

These are false brethren! A trick! They were born during the Great Darkness and did not precede it. The Wyrmfriends have been beguiled into false beliefs – see how their empire is already crumbling! See how the gap widens between them and the race they so want to emulate!

Raze Dragon's Eye! Raze Absolute Circuitous Fortuity! Kill them all!

— Fluilea Gencourt, arch proselytiser of Dangk



But the dragonewts are not ignorant to the threat the God Learners pose. On several occasions dragonewt armies have marched and fought against Jrusteli incursions. They have won each encounter but they know more will come. In Kralorela, where the God Learners have managed to establish their doctrine of Immanent Mastery and thus get close to the essence of draconic human thinking, the dragonewts have responded by simply sealing their cities against any form of intrusion. The Kralori Inhuman King has not yet erected a Deathline to slay any who might move against Fanzai but would have no hesitation in doing so should the need arise. However the God Learners exercise a certain prudence in the eastern provinces. Their experiments require the assistance of the Kralori and the Kralori would certainly rush to the aid of the dragonewts if their cities were threatened. Thus the God Learners are prevented from violent conduct towards the dragonewt cities and must content themselves with their futile attempts to assemble their monomyth in a way that can account for, fully explain and neutralise, draconic power.

DRAGON PASS

Nowhere is more sacred to dragonewts than Dragon Pass. The ancestral land where the Cosmic Egg first hatched and from where the Grand Ancestral Dragon performed First Dance. It is here that the True Dragons came to teach the gods and here where they will lie. The Inhuman King knows that here, too, is where the True Dragons will take a mighty revenge against humans for their presumptuous ways and in response to a treachery yet to be committed.

There are more dragonewts in Dragon Pass than anywhere else in Glorantha and their ways are more obscure and impenetrable owing to the considerable essence of pure dragonhood that permeates the soil, hangs in the air and charges every boulder, stone and pebble with its energy. This energy powers the magic of The Great Dragon Project helping EWF cities such as Orfanmangostobos and Markanbandanstaros thrive and mutate in the eyes of the non-draconic. The spirit of Sh'kaharzeel rumbles beneath the ground occasionally, angry because Orlanth slew him. Dragonewt Roads criss-cross the basin between the three major colonies.

In Dragon Pass the dragonewts thrive and the three major colonies of Dragon's Eye, Contemplative Rest and Ghosts Around are the largest seen since before the start of Time. The EWF has helped return much draconic power to this land and the dragonewts are grateful for it though wary of how far and how inaccurately the EWF dabbles with it.

Contemplative Rest

Known also as Somnalafinalost this, the second largest dragonewt city is located on the Solfint River amongst the

foothills of the Indigo Mountains. Contemplative Rest sprawls across three hills, rising and falling with the landscape, its low, elongated buildings like barnacles clinging to the side of an upturned ship.

It has no wall but is ringed by many pillars of obsidian, marking its perimeter. Trees wind around the buildings, so there are no streets as such, just a maze of copses and barnacle buildings, dappled by the sunlight threading through the canopy, shaded and sheltered from non-dragonewt view.

'I heard a rumour once that the Clanking City is building its own dragon to battle the Wyrmfriends' monster, when they get round to summoning it. It is made of bronze and gold and is twice the size of the island. It is powered by steam and thaumic energy and its jaws will slice through diamond. It flies without needing to beat its massive metal wings but does so to make the sky crack and bring thunder in its wake. They call this beast Drangmachine but I call it an abomination. Everyone knows the Wyrmfriends will fail. What True Dragon would allow itself to be commanded by humankind? What sort of god allows its faithful to command? Our Drangmachine will not be needed. It might not even work...if it exists at all.'

— Bruyant Openwing, Openwing Revealers, discussing the secrets of the Clanking City with friends.

There is an innate peace to the city, hence its name, and it lacks the strictures of Dragon's Eye or the insular animosity of Ghosts Around but this is still a dragonewt city and that makes it inherently different. The dragonewts here are fascinated by the interaction of the trees with the city itself and many of the Crested dragonewts are skilled arboralists either with a natural talent for the forest or learned from the elves that sometimes visit Contemplative Rest.

The Solfint River flows softly by but the observant may notice that on every other day its current reverses and it seems to flow uphill. The dragonewts are responsible but never explain the magic employed in changing its course, save to cite the kiss of the Aroka, the Imperial Fountain of Peace, who they claim

Dragonewt Cities of Dragon Pass In the Second Age



mated here with the Wondrous Mother to produce the eggs from which the city is built.

The dragonewts are largely ambivalent to non dragonewt visitors. When the EWF emissaries arrive, as they frequently do, lodging is offered in one of the outlying buildings and they are kept fed and watered, regarded often as they might regard trees. Waiting for an audience with the Ruler, Lord One Ex, can be a lengthy business. Lord One Ex spends a great deal of time either dreaming or FutureQuesting and, when engaged with the mundane world, has little time for mortals save those who can bring news that interests him.

Lord One Ex is highly respected amongst his peers. He holds counsel with both the Inhuman King of Dragon Pass and the Second King of Ormsland. Like his subjects he is fascinated with trees and his skin is covered with moss and is curiously bark-like in texture. He communicates through several Nobles, each called Jkurl but each emulating the bark of a different tree. Silver Birch Jkurl speaks to non-dragonewt visitors who have blond or grey hair. Oak Jkurl speaks to those

who have brown or black and Cedar Jkurl speaks with those who are bald or who wear hats. The first question asked of every visitor is how many trees can they name: every answer is always wrong, because the dragonewts have given every tree in their forests its own, unique name and none, save perhaps Aldryami, can question each and every tree.

Lord One Ex claims to have seen a future when the whole world will be a single forest, even the seas, and is guiding Contemplative Rest towards that far-off day. EWF scholars interpret this as a sign that the whole of the forest, the earth and the Indigo Mountains are, perhaps, the outer trappings of Aroka but this has never been confirmed nor denied by the Jkurls.

The Beaked dragonewts guard Contemplative Rest with the same zeal of any warrior dragonewt but they shun the usual steeds of demi-birds and dinosaurs. Instead they ride tamed boar which have been magically manipulated to grow to twice the usual size. The boar's tusks are traditionally studded with small blades of flint, making them savage natural weapons and

some of the boar-riders have developed tusks themselves but they can never be mistaken for Tusk Riders.

The eggs of Contemplative Rest are deep underground. When a dragonewt is born or reborn, it must struggle to the surface breaking through the soil emulating a newly grown sapling. Elves find this practice distasteful, believing it to mock Aldrya. The dragonewts do not understand why such offence is so easily taken but are not about to change their habits.

Contemplative Rest is renowned for its healing. But this is healing of an unconventional, dragonewtish kind. The sick or injured are literally planted in the earth and watered daily. An acorn or seed is slipped under the tongue of the patient and they are instructed to remain still, silent and not to chew. After several days the patient finds himself growing out of the ground, his ailment, be it disease or injury, fully cured. Yet there is a downside to this healing. The seed or acorn is absorbed into the body during the healing process and, perhaps months or even years later, the healed part of the body, or a random area, if it was a sickness, begins to bud and then sprout a twiglet. This is not painful and the twig may be snapped off but it always regrows. If left, it forms a full branch, in time, and, given long enough, the entire mortal body takes root and becomes a tree, absorbing the remains of the host. This seems grotesque but happens steadily and in tandem with the failings of old age. As the body withers so the tree takes over, creating a new life from the one that is passing.

Dragon's Eye

Also known as Darfostalabos but only in the scraping tongue of human-spoken Auld Wyrnish, Dragon's Eye is the first and foremost city of the dragonewts. It was built during the First Dance and it dances still, its buildings, streets and avenues calmly shifting their shape through various configurations and forms, directed by the dreams and desires of the Inhuman King and the Ruler dragonewts. It can never stop changing, never stop being reborn, because that is its nature, like the First Dance and like its inhabitants. This mutability of form is disorienting to the non-dragonewt mind but each and every dragonewt understands the truth of it and can easily navigate the reforming streets without any difficulty, reading the underlying shadow paths as accurately as any fixed map.

The outer walls of the city rise for 50 metres and then curve inwards, gracefully, like the bowl of an egg, for a further 20. The wall shimmers with a rainbow iridescence hurtful to non-dragonewt eyes and the grand gate, shaped like a dragon's maw shifts ominously as though awaiting new food. Humans find the appearance of the gate oddly disturbing; dragonewts are often amused at their reaction.

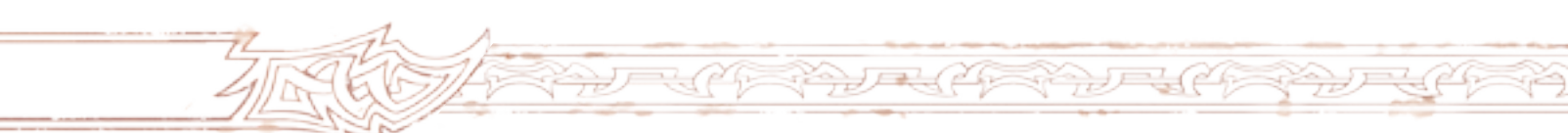
The buildings are made from obsidian and glass and have a pourous look to them. The city is arranged as a series of

concentric bands radiating from the palace of the Inhuman King at the centre. Those closest to the outer wall are single-storey and egg-like, belonging to Crested dragonewts. The second is the province of the Beaked dragonewts who maintain the city and defend it. Here are to be found the earthshaker pens where the demi-birds and dinosaurs are kept; a vast array of corrals and huge enclosures echoing to the snorts and roars of the triceratops, tyrannosaurs and stegosaus held within. Some of these dinosaurs have been given a rudimentary intelligence by the Inhuman King and permitted the power of speech. Those that can be trusted are allowed to roam free but are still under the command of the Beaked dragonewts who bred them.

The next band is home to the Nobles, along with the temples of the city. A thick band of creamy-white, oddly regular structures that serve as temples, homes and places of conference, depending on what is to be discussed. All visitors, especially non-dragonewts, must report to The Welcoming Maw of Drang where Hust'akalarazing, foremost of the Tailed Priests, counts, measures and scores all visitors according to a scale of his own devising. The procedure involves being weighed against a demi-bird feather, then measured with a tapeworm and then being subjected to a series of mental tests involving backwards riddles, paint-blot interpretation and what Hust'akalarazing refers to fondly as his 'Waiting Game'. This involves remaining stock-still whilst several klanth-wielding Beaked dragonewts dance around the individual making mock strikes with intensifying ferocity and accuracy at random parts of the body. Those who scream, flee or weep are deemed to have passed the test and won the game. Those who stand stock-still, showing no fear, receive a frown, are offered their tape measure to eat and then weighed again. This can take days. Eventually, with no apparent reason, Hust'akalarazing allows the visitors to go after having stamped their left foot with his own personal seal.

The temples are multitude. The largest venerates The Wondrous Mother of Many, built in the shape of a clutch of giant eggs, encircled by a loving tail of immense size; but almost all True Dragons and the Grand Ancestral Dragon have temples dedicated to them. Some are small and discreet but others are brash and imposing. Tailed Priests wander amongst the temples, perform their meditative dances in the plazas in between, or engage in bizarre acts (to non-dragonewts) mimicking utuma or the dismemberment of Orxili (using live props).

At the centre of the city is the palace of the Inhuman King and the Nest. The palace soars skyward for a mile and a half but is not visible from outside the city wall. It is a glistening needle structure of amber and gold fashioned after the left incisor of the Grand Ancestral Dragon. At its base the towers of the Ruler dragonewts (and there are several) compete for space



and the buildings, shaped like dragon scales, creak as they inch ever nearer to the fluid walls of the palace.

The Inhuman King is known by no other name, even to Ruler dragonewts. He is rarely seen outside the palace but occasionally takes to the wing from the highest parapet, soaring down and through the city surveying its activities. On days when he feels like it – and Hust'akalarazing seems the best judge of these – the Inhuman King accepts visitors and will listen to petitions, give advice or ignore them completely. All such meetings are conducted by one of Hust'akalarazing's lieutenants, all experienced communicators with non-dragonewts, who are used to interpreting the Inhuman King's often impenetrable musings or confirming to unbelieving ears the astounding clarity and profundity of a particular vision or gobbet of wisdom.

The palace is largely hollow, save for the audience rooms at its summit, and lacks stairs. Access to these areas, for those without wings, is provided by a series of levitating blocks of obsidian that continually rise and fall from the ground level, sometimes halting abruptly and forcing a leap to another, or rising straight up at gut-wrenching speed to the Arrival Lounge beneath the great throne room. Most dragonewts have no need to come here because their needs are attended to by the Ruler dragonewts or through the Inhuman King's own dreams but emissaries from the EWF are frequent and the Inhuman King has permitted a small enclave, rather like a rather richly appointed shanty-town of tents and small buildings, to be erected around the edge of the ground level, surrounding the rising and falling blocks. No one is permitted to rise to the Arrival Lounge without Hust'akalarazing's express permission and that usually requires measurement and testing although not the Waiting Game. Questions must be asked in advance and answers might be offered immediately or take days to arrive depending on the Inhuman King's other duties.

The leader of the palace EWF settlement is Vandenplas Wyrmingfriend, a somewhat pompous Wyrms' Hand Triumphant originally from Pald. He claims to have the Inhuman King's ear and a deep, abiding friendship with Hust'akalarazing and there is no doubting his fondness for eating tape measures (which he likes deep-fried). All audiences with the Inhuman King are supposed to be approved by him first but it is common for Hust'akalarazing to overrule him and even openly contradict him. He occupies a tent made from samite which has been given the grand title of First Awning of the Imperial Dance. His pomposity is despised in the Grand Council of EWF but there is little doubting his skill in proselytising and positioning him here panders to his yearning for personal dragonhood whilst distancing him from the true matters of running the Great Dragon Project.

Beyond the palace and guarded by demi-bird and dinosaur riding Beaked dragonewts, is the Nest. This immense,

domed building is where the egg of every dragonewt native to Dragon's Eye, is kept. There are thousands of eggs, some unhatched, some newly hatched, some rehatching and some broken into shards – marking a dragonewt who has fallen from the draconic path and been expelled. The Nest has an overwhelming smell reminiscent of burnt almond and no non-dragonewt is ever permitted entry to the Nest as it is the most sacred and private place in the whole city. Those who stray too near are quickly intercepted and warned with a violent but non-lethal response. Further transgressions are rewarded with a deepening brutality and outright persistence leads to death. The Beaked guardians make no effort to communicate with non-dragonewts, save to attack them. Those who reside in the EWF settlement within the palace know better than to approach the Nest but sometimes fail to warn newcomers, as a harsh experience is often the best teacher.

Ghosts Around

Seated at the top of the Feyghost River, Ghosts Around is off-limits to even the Dragon Speakers of the EWF. Like Contemplative Rest it is a forest-bound city but it does not radiate the strange calm of its more northerly cousin, being fiercely protective of its woodlands and letting non-dragonewts enter only on pain of death.

The 'ghosts' of Ghosts Around are the dragonewts. This sorrowing enclave laments the neglect of the Wondrous Mother of Many, considering themselves lost and way less in times when direction and guidance are paramount. The human gods are blamed for this. According to the myths of Ghosts Around the Wondrous Mother was driven away when Orlanth slew Sh'kaharzeel and she cannot return while Orlanth still lives. Humans, Orlanthi in particular, are viewed with much hatred, so much so that the Ruler dragonewt, *I Am Ghosts*, has sanctioned raiding parties of Beaked dragonewts to use the Dragonewt Roads to roam far and wide taking revenge against any and all Orlanthi they can find.

The cult of Orlanth the Dragon naturally wishes to dispel this worldview and show that Orlanth made peace with the dragons and learned the dragon tongue; but the last emissary they sent to Ghosts Around returned neatly packaged in six small wicker baskets, his soul flaked in a wineskin. Petitions are now made more circuitously through the Inhuman King and sympathetic Tailed Priests who can enter the lands of Ghosts Around unharmed.

The city is gloomy and small. Magic keeps the skies overcast directly above it, in mourning for dead Sh'kaharzeel. The buildings are made from black rock, each shaped like a dragon talon and pointing inwards to the Skull Pavilion, the Ruler's home, which is fashioned in the shape of Sh'kaharzeel's skull in miniature. The city is filled with constant wailing as the lesser

Tower of Original Twelve and Vistikos Left Eye

At one edge of Dragon's Eye, but shifting from time-to-time in response to his dreams, is the self-generated tower of Vistikos Left Eye, First Wyrmfriend. The tower is a double helix connected by slivers of gleaming mother of pearl, tapering to a graceful spire that sits in the full shadow of the Inhuman King's palace. This is more than symbolic. There are no guards around the tower; none are needed. The ghosts within take care of all intruders by eating their minds.

Over the centuries of the EWF's ascension the Original Twelve dragon speakers have become less engaged with the mortal world and now never leave their tower. Only Vistikos Left Eye retains anything of the human condition and even that is merely a shell. Of his 11 companions, only their names remain and these names roam the helix in search of people to tell themselves to. Sometimes they appear as shadows of their former selves but for the most are a gaggle of whispers that float through the labyrinthine passages of the tower in draconic meditative conference. Their material forms are irrelevant since they will one day be reborn into something beautiful. In the Dragon's Eye Nest, 11 newly laid eggs stir and rest again, hinting perhaps at the transformation that they are undergoing.

Vistikos occupies the central suite of the tower. He is naked always, skin leathery and parched like dying leaves. His eyes no longer perceive the mortal world and peer instead into the unutterable void where Orxili waits to repeat its torments of the Cosmic Dragon's meditations. Vistikos tries in vain to contact the Cosmic Dragon once more, to finalise the stages for raising the Great Dragon, for bringing apotheosis to an entire empire. The Cosmic Dragon never answers. Now and then a tantalising vision brightens Vistikos's half-dreams and he begins the Ouroboros chant but it always eludes him and he is plunged into the Void once more.

The Inhuman King visits Vistikos Left Eye via dreams and the two share a dialogue of sorts where the Inhuman King shares news from the empire whilst Vistikos pleads for guidance and enlightenment. The dreams of the Inhuman King occasionally reveal something of the grand plan as retrieved from a FutureQuest and Vistikos weeps silent tears. The Inhuman King pats its belly where a new, bright egg is beginning and assures Vistikos that all will be well.

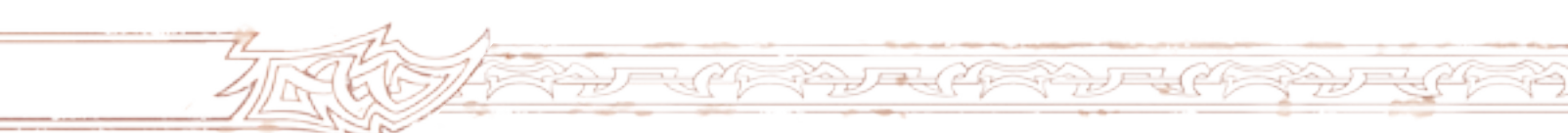
These are not comforting dreams or thoughts. The path to draconic enlightenment is a long one and filled with torments. There are no short-cuts. The dragonewts know this and now Vistikos, who has sought short-cuts all his life is beginning to know it too.

stages of dragonewt are led in screaming and sobbing prayers for their lost father and mother. Utuma is a daily occurrence amongst the Tailed Priests as they enact Sh'kaharzeel's death throes. Effigies of Orlanth hang from the trees all around Ghosts Around, used as target practice by the dragonewts and each enchanted to thunder an apology for killing a dragon and driving a mother away with each weapon strike. The effigies act as sentries for the city. Anyone passing within a metre or two of a hanged effigy causes it to begin sobbing and apologising, the volume rising every few seconds until its voice can be heard in the city itself.

Beaked dragonewts patrol the stretches of the Feyghost River on demi-birds, awaiting the apologies of the effigies. These are fierce and uncompromising fighters seeking constant revenge against humans and human gods; humans, even Wyrmfriends, can expect no warning of an attack and no mercy.

Inside the city the dragonewts are divided into the Father and Mother castes. Father castes venerate Sh'kaharzeel and perpetually mourn his death. The Nobles and Ruler are creating a spell to resurrect him from the mountains, almost in parody of the Great Dragon Project. They seek the bones, blood and skin of Orlanthi to complete it. Enigmatic hints have filtered from Dragon's Eye that the Father caste knows it can gain some drops of Orlanth's blood and are preparing HeroQuests to get it.

The Mother caste venerates the Wondrous Mother of Many, lost now as she hunts for dead Sh'kaharzeel. Its members re-enact the many matings of the Wondrous Mother sometimes using Orlanthi females (Ernaldans and Vingans are preferred for this) as surrogates for the Dragon Mother. Eggs do not result of course but dragon mating is dreadful to behold and involves much blood. The Mother caste has a HeroQuest of its own in preparation; to find the Wondrous Mother and



make her return to Ghosts Around to guide her children. The HeroQuest they prepare involves re-enacting the myth of the Wondrous Mother's first skin-shedding and requires some of her scales, thought to be hidden somewhere in the Skyfall Lake. Beaked and Crested are sent there regularly to hunt for the scales so the HeroQuest can begin.

I Am Ghosts is a forthright and zealous leader of his nest. He has no trust in the EWF and arguments with the Rulers of other cities are frequent. Having dealings with humans is Wrong Action in his jewelled eyes and thus Wrong Action in the minds of all Ghosts Around dragonewts. The EWF, if it is to attain any credibility, should spend an eternity of pain for seeking to emulate dragonewt ways and in no way can their Great Dragon Project be considered atonement for what they have done to dragon kind. His dreams are dire warnings of a massacre on a scale unseen since the God Time when all True Dragons (and he considers his own apotheosis close) will descend upon the region and take revenge for Orlanth and the EWF's sins. Grim mutterings of a Golden Tribe filter out from Ghosts Around and both intrigue and alarm the EWF. The Inhuman King has ceased to understand I Am Ghosts' motives and leaves him to pursue his own course, much to the annoyance of the EWF, which sees I Am Ghosts as a painful barrier to their long-term aims.

High Wyrm

Perched high in the Quivin Mountains High Wyrm, or Qui'qui'quiandalost, is carved from the rock of Wyrm Peak and completely encircles the summit of this mountain. It is hidden by clouds and has no physical paths linking it with the lower reaches, only Dragonewt Roads that require no physical landscape for their routes.

The city threads deep into the peak itself but the outside rock – almost a kilometre of it – is intricately carved with the complete draconic creation myth in runes no larger than fingernails. These carvings are unbroken, forming a single, coiled strand of writing that winds to the summit where a mighty plinth of granite bears the culmination of the mantra: OUROBOROS. Crested and Noble dragonewts maintain the carvings, cleaning them, re-etching them, making corrections, so that the outer rock face is always a hive of activity with dragonewts either clinging to meagre handholds while they work or supported by wood and bone scaffolds. The sound of chiselling and scratching echoes around High Wyrm, reaching down below the clouds, where the unwitting might take it to be the sound of wyrm claws tapping impatiently on the summit.

Beaked dragonewts ride pteranodon, caught in the higher peaks of the Quivin range, but demi-birds are bred in the inner caves of the city and used on the Dragonewt Roads when passage needs to be swift. The pteranodon cannot be persuaded to fly into the Dragonewt pathways, fearing what

they will encounter, yet demi-birds lack their wit and go where their riders tell them to.

High Wyrm has three Rulers: Lords *I Follow You, You Follow Me* and *I Follow Both*. They are all enthusiastic, or as enthusiastic as any dragonewt dares to be, indulgers of the EWF. I Follow You believes the Great Dragon will want High Wyrm as its roost and so the creation myth must be continually etched until it is perfect. You Follow Me is sceptical of this but likes the patterns of the carving; and I Follow Both is engaged on a prolonged FutureQuest to see the outcomes of the new Dragon Empire when the EWF's plans come to fruition. EWF emissaries are thus frequently sent to High Wyrm to question the Tailed Priests and see if I Follow Both has returned with news.

The sole speaker for the city is called High Born Last Passing, noted for his fledgling wings indicating an imminent rebirth into the Ruler stage. His tail is long and whip-like and it has been tattooed with an exact replica of the carvings on the outside of the mountain. Several Crested dragonewts are in constant attendance, amending and maintaining the tattoo to perfectly mirror the work on the rock. This is no easy task as High Born Last Passing is constantly on the move, either parading around the inner caves or abroad in Dragon Pass visiting Dragon's Eye or Contemplative Rest. High Born Last Passing enjoys discourse with humans, especially on draconic matters, and seeks news of the empire's fortunes in Ralios. He is also oddly sympathetic to Ghosts Around, despite their opposing views and believes the dragonewts of that city have misunderstood the mythical reasons for the Wondrous Mother's absence and Sh'kaharzeel's death at Orlanth's hands. 'Lord I Follow Both should have the answer very soon, when he finishes his FutureQuest', he promises. 'And then I can follow utuma and become 'Lord We Are All The Same', he adds, cryptically.

The lesser stages of the city are actively engaged in a hunt for... something. High Wyrm dragonewts are often found abroad in Dragon Pass, nets and sacks in hands, peering under rocks, climbing trees, knee-deep in marshes or studying individual dirt-trails for hours – sometimes days – on end before scooping a handful of dust into their bags. The activity seems to particularly concern Crested dragonewts although Beaked dragonewts join in the search with equal enthusiasm. High Born Last Passing claims to have no idea what it is they search for, save for something that is lost, found and then lost again, perhaps by I Follow You or You Follow Me. If disturbed in their searching the dragonewts are likely to become violent; either that or they begin a minute scrutiny of whoever has disturbed them, perhaps trying to put them in their sacks or nets. In the centre of the Grand Hall Cave of the city is a great pile of detritus collected from across Dragon Pass that a small army of dragonewts sifts through and then stacks neatly into a seemingly random order that clearly means something to them.

Sundered Colonies

There are four smaller dragonewt cities in Dragon Pass that are sundered colonies; that is, their members have exiled themselves from the draconic lifecycle and condemned themselves to mortality. There are no nests of eggs, no rebirth, no Inhuman King. One might expect these sundered colonies to be miserable isolated places and to most dragonewts they are but to other races they are far more accessible and easier – sometimes – to understand than the main cities.

The EWF in particular finds the sundered colonies attractive for gathering insights into the draconic mindset. The protocols are more relaxed and, sensing mortality, dragonewts of different stages are prepared to enter into dialogue.

Marsh Reach

This small colony of mostly Beaked and Noble dragonewts has taken over an abandoned fortress – or built one so that it appears to be an abandoned fortress – on the southern bank of the Krikans River between Bevjarn and Orin Jistrel. The outer walls are tumbledown and moss-covered whilst the inner structures are clean and in good repair. It is home to 200-300 dragonewts who follow a path they call No Gods Allowed. Their central tenet is that the Cosmic Dragon has been killed by Orxili and thus Glorantha is adrift in Time. This, they claim, is why the EWF has risen to power. It is why the Wondrous Mother deserted the dragonewts. It is why chaos came when the sun died. To them, all gods are dead and the dragonewt progression to True Dragonhood is a false path, a metaphor for a lingering death.

The beliefs of Marsh Reach are heretical to dragonewts and its Ruler, Uh'tharaston Unblinking, understands the dichotomy. When he was reborn as a Ruler dragonewt the scales fell from his eyes and he could see that they were alone in the world. He shared his thoughts with some of the priests of Dragon's Eye and a few agreed. They shared their thoughts with a few Beaked and Cresteds, who also believed. There was no option but to leave Dragon's Eye (and this exodus took place 500 years ago) and found their own settlement.

In the intervening time Marsh Reach has been relatively prosperous. It attracts the godless of all species who can come here and receive enigmatic reassurance from Uh'tharaston that, indeed, all gods are dead and that mortality is a full stop to existence. Occasional attacks by Wyrmfriends have been avoided because Uh'tharaston pledges dragonewt troops to the War Dragons every so often. Uh'tharaston is actually sympathetic to the EWF message; he hopes a new god will be created to replace the ones that are dead and fight Orxili.

But Uh'tharaston has also welcomed God Learners. The Jrusteli spy and assassin, Mother Jheugar, has visited Marsh Reach to learn

secrets that can be used against the EWF and has learned much. She wanders Dragon Pass in disguise and returns to Marsh Reach now and again for fresh news. She is a dangerous dog in the midwinter because her ultimate agenda is to slay the Original Twelve.

Khovoralost Pax

A ragged and sprawling enclave in a lost valley of Orogvalteland, Khovoralost Pax ('We Have No Place Our Minds Have Broken') is a city occupied solely by Crested dragonewts who have not mastered their instinctive urges and continually engaged in Wrong Action. This is a city of feral exiles who are, in dragonewt thinking, little better than savages. They have developed some unhealthy human ways, such as wearing clothing and engaging in a semblance of a mating ritual and they choose to eat whoever strays into their valley. They herd triceratops and consider all, save dinosaurs, to be enemies.

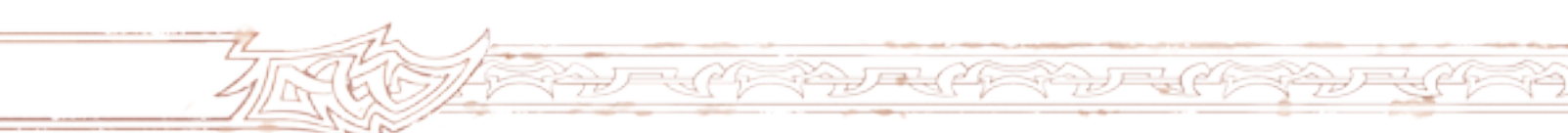
As creatures of pure instinct their aggression is assured but their motives are as unfathomable as any dragonewt. Leaders are selected by trial of combat and replaced continually. They exist in a state of constant war because they lack higher stages to guide their actions. They worship a triceratops god, Thunderhead Horned Thrice, but only when it suits them.

It is said that the Crested of Khovoralost Pax know the secrets of Whitewall ruin and can communicate with the spirits guarding it. Warrior dragonewts from other cities sometimes come here to challenge the strongest in order to test their fighting skills. Most win but those that do not are eaten and their bones made into the Scarecrow Fence that surrounds the valley, alongside the bones of the dead leaders.

For some reason the dragonewts of Khovoralost Pax value sea-shells, which they wear about their necks like strings of pearls. It is thought these shells somehow power their magic, which is weak compared to dragon magic, or simply remind them of their birth eggs, from which they are now irrevocably distanced.

Wyrms' Foot

In the shadow of the Rockwood Mountains, due west of Nevelmarkan, Wyrms' Foot is an uneasy mixture of dragonewts and Old Ways Traditionalists. These dragonewts have accepted Sh'kaharzeel's slaughter at Orlanth's hands and thus completely fallen from the draconic path. The city, which was built by righteous dragonewts who abandoned it for Ghosts Around and Dragon's Eye, is well protected by a high wall of obsidian and frequent patrols of Renderer-riding Beaked dragonewts. Whilst it is very much a dragonewt city, it displays clearly Orlanthi trappings. There is a great hall, a Lhankor Mhy shrine and various totems, carved of brontosaurus bone, representing the various gods of the Storm Tribe.



The dragonewts believe Orlanth proved dragon mortality and that this is no longer the time of dragons or dragonewts. Moving outside the draconic cycle is therefore Right Action because it confers mortality, just as Sh'kaharzeel discovered when he tried to reshape the world and was opposed by Orlanth. Thus the EWF are the enemy and the Wyrms' Foot dragonewts delight in the failure of the EWF's plans and are heartened to hear that the edges of the empire are fraying.

The nominal ruler is a Tailed Priest called Forktongue Alacrity. He communicates with the human members of the settlement because, naturally, few of them speak Auld Wyrnish. He has stopped short of joining one of the Old Ways cults but happily tolerates their existence within the walls of Wyrms' Foot and appears intrigued by the Storm Tribe myths.

But dragonewts are still dragonewts and the humans find it impossible to understand their practices. Every few days Forktongue Alacrity or another Tailed Priest begins a dance that soon engages every member of the dragonewt colony which becomes ever more feverish until it abruptly stops. Everyone stands stock-still for a day and a night making an odd gulping sound. Eventually the colony returns to normal and not a single dragonewt has any recollection of performing the dance. If humans or other races attempt to join in, the dragonewts become violent, turning upon those who are trying to dance with varying degrees of ferocity. When this dance is in full-flow and during the standing time, the Orlanthi keep their distance.

Leader of the Orlanthi is Oruman Orumanson, a Wind Lord and emissary from Hendrikiland, related by blood to King Androfin. From Wyrms' Foot he co-ordinates raids and more subtle schemes against the EWF. Presently he is mustering warriors and magicians to join the siege of the Clanking City and has considerable dragonewt support. Oruman is red-haired and blessed with an immense bushy beard. He loves stories and demands a tale from any who come to Wyrms' Foot seeking sanctuary from the EWF. Naturally he is a wanted man and the Guiding Council has a large bounty on his head. Thus far they have held back from raiding Wyrms' Foot because, even though the dragonewts are beyond the Inhuman King's influence, it has been made clear that attacking a dragonewt city is forbidden. Also, Oruman's warriors, despite their foul pagan ways, will be useful in the siege of Zistorwal. Subtle methods will be needed if Oruman is to be silenced.

Liornalmarost

The most westerly of the dragonewt cities and a sundered colony, is Liornalmarost ('Between The Rivers of the Mind and Soul, Cleansed'). It is built on Liorn isle in Gosland. It is a place of high, blunt-topped towers that lean at peculiar angles and look as though they have been melted. Its geometry is anything but mundane and gravity does not work in the expected ways here. It is quite possible to fall upwards or to

stand upright on the side of a building. The dragonewts have no problems in negotiating such peculiarities but visitors, of which there are few, become nauseous within a few minutes and many are simply paralysed by the experience.

The dragonewts of Liornalmarost do not know why they are sundered. They are faithful to the draconic path and venerate the Ancestral Dragons. They have nests and eggs but they do not reincarnate. Some speculate that one of the Ruler dragonewts challenged the Inhuman King and condemned the colony to exile but the four Ruler dragonewts deny any such action.

As a result the entire city strives to re-enter the draconic cycle and try to discover what Right Action must be taken to regain the Inhuman King's blessing, or create an Inhuman King of their own. They are zealous supporters of the EWF and haters of the Old Way Traditionalists, regularly offering their best Beaked warriors to assist the War Dragons in their efforts against the enemies of the empire.

All four Ruler dragonewts spend their time HeroQuesting or FutureQuesting in a bid to find an answer to their city's predicament. First-Way-Ruler attempts the Orxili HeroQuest to see if clues lie in the disruption of the Cosmic Dragon's meditation. Another-Way-Ruler performs the Sh'kaharzeel HeroQuest to beat Orlanth and remake the world so that the city reunites with the Inhuman King. Third-Way-Ruler performs the Unspeakable Quest of the Wars to Come in a bid to find security of purpose and divine whether or not Liornalmarost regains its pathway; and Hindmost-Ruler performs the Egg Dream continually, attempting to become a new Inhuman King.

The dragonewts believe that the strange behaviour of gravity is a result of these conflicting HeroQuests but cannot voice their opinions because it would not be Right Action. A group of Beaked dragonewts have formed the Downwards Up band to scour the world for the source of gravity and return it to Liornalmarost whilst the Noble priests travel to Dragon's Eye and Olorost to make petitions for heroes to assist them in their bid to reclaim the draconic path.

RALIOS

The dragonewts of Ralios are confined to the northerly realm of Ormsland. This is ancient dragon territory and the Inhuman King, known to the EWF as The Second King, claims to have witnessed the building of Hrelar Amali and to know its secret.

Unlike Dragon Pass, where the EWF holds almost total power and there are few God Learner incursions, Ralios is pressed from both sides. The EWF is gaining ground, especially in the north, whilst the Jrusteli hold sway across much of the

region. For a long time this has been of little consequence to the dragonewts. Their myths defy categorisation and intercut with so many others that the God Learners have a great deal of difficulty in penetrating them. Even if they did, the draconic myth-world is filled with both True Dragons and Ancestral Dragons, mighty primal concepts that even God Learner sorcery cannot harm. The draconic myth cycle is thus largely secure from interference and so the dragonewts can generally ignore the Middle Sea Empire.


The Wyrmfriends are different. They are persistent and have made a series of leaps in mythical understanding, through the speaking of Auld Wyrmish, to be able to understand and appreciate the inherent power of the draconic way. Whilst the Inhuman King of Dragon Pass has accepted this spiritual surge of understanding, the Inhuman King of Ormsland is of a more cynical nature. It knows humans are at their most dangerous when they partially understand a thing. For this reason the Second King was resolute in having no dealings with the EWF, so that draconic purity could be preserved.

Ormsland

Ormsland is a bowl of pleasant pasture guarded by the curving range of the Nidan Mountains, known as Jaw Bone to the dragonewts. The craggy hills surrounding Ormsland are draconic in shape and relief, shadowing the features of dragons and dragonewts in various stages of progression. These are not sculptures or petrified dragons; they are a reaction of the landscape to the natural and ancient draconic power flooding the area.

There are countless small dragonewt towns, for want of a better description, brightly hued coral-like structures glittering amidst the grasslands. All are circular in pattern and, if one takes a bird's eye view, one sees that the array of the circular towns forms a pattern. To human eyes there is clearly design here but its significance is intangible. To dragonewts the pattern of settlements forms the OUROBOROS mantra with each town being a syllable of the prayer. The single main city, Absolute Circuitous Fortuity, is the prayer complete. As in Dragon Pass, dragonewts are a common sight in and around Ormsland and their motivations every bit as obscure. On certain days of the year the entire populations of the smaller towns exchange settlements in rotation, moving in circulatory migration from one to the next. The next year the direction changes with dragonewts moving back the way they came. In Earth Season great pits are dug outside the settlement of Ock and all the Beaked dragonewts throw themselves into it whilst the Tailed Priests lead the Cresteds in a bizarre, high-kneed capering dance around the pit. The Beaked dragonewts within dig small trenches for themselves and curl into a foetal position and snore loudly. In the settlement of Kco the entire population simply vanishes for precisely two and a half days and then reappears in the settlement of Oko some 20 kilometres distant. A ritual, non-violent fight between the two settlements occurs and then the Kco residents returned, elated, to their original homes. In Koo the Crested dragonewts weave gaudy flags of grass and brontosaur dung which they drape around the buildings, revelling in the awful stench. The flags are then eaten on the day before the next circulatory migration.





These days Ormsland belongs to both dragonewts and human settlements but it was not always thus. The Inhuman King rejected the EWF presence for centuries, preferring spiritual purity. Between 639 and 641 the Inhuman King of Dragon Pass began to petition the Inhuman King of Ormsland via a series of compelling dreams and mutual FutureQuests. After centuries of resistance the Ormsland King relented and allowed a small group of Wyrmfriends to enter Ormsland and establish settlements. These small towns were a cover for proselytising Wyrmfriends who took their Hunting and Waltzing Bands into the Stygian empire in a bid for mass conversion. This brought war to Ormsland and the Inhuman King gleefully expelled the EWF whilst still acknowledging it as a power to be considered.

The petitions between Inhuman Kings, now known amongst dragonewts as The Sleep of No Dreaming, began again and lasted this time for two centuries. In 875 the Ormsland King relented again (or was defeated; no one is sure) and the EWF returned, this time reinforced by draconised Orlanthi, Dara Happan hoplites and Earth-Shaker cavalry, to tackle the God Learner forces that had arranged themselves on the Ormsland border, preparing for invasion.

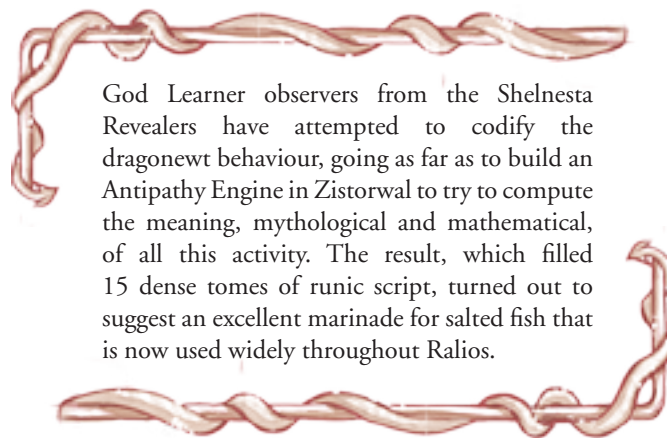
That invasion did not happen but it is an ever-present threat. The EWF are bold and arrogant; their Hunting and Waltzing Bands antagonise the God Learners in the same way they antagonised the Stygians. But for some reason the Ormsland Inhuman King tolerates it. No one knows why but clearly something happened in The Sleep of No Dreaming that established a balance of power between the two Inhuman Kings and it persists even now.

Absolute Circuitous Fortuity

The great city of Ormsland has the semblance of a jagged, circular, coral reef. From above, it clearly forms the pattern of a dragon attempting to devour its own tail. The craggy, needle-like buildings are interconnected by rope bridges and wefts of glimmering magical force that seem to be the strings of a musical instrument. Indeed, the entire city can be played like one, with dragonewts hanging from the rope bridges by specially constructed harnesses and plucking at the wefts of force which cause the buildings to vibrate and emit sound. Different neighbourhoods are tuned to different scales and on the dragonewts' holiest days Absolute Circuitous Fortuity is played from dawn until dusk creating a soft, lilting symphony that rises on the wind and carries across Ormsland. The Inhuman King claims to have written this symphony and his interpreters say it is a lullaby for the Cosmic Dragon to help it sleep after its struggles against Orxili.

Thus Absolute Circuitous Fortuity, or Ourborolanagalost as it is known to the dragonewts, is arranged into districts forming a great circle, at the centre of which is the Inhuman

King's palace. The palace resembles a gigantic egg, balanced precariously on its narrow tip. The shell is artfully cracked in places, allowing ingress and egress, and it shimmers through a multitude of colours, some of which have no human names, in time to the city-wide symphony.



God Learner observers from the Shelnesta Revealers have attempted to codify the dragonewt behaviour, going as far as to build an Antipathy Engine in Zistorwal to try to compute the meaning, mythological and mathematical, of all this activity. The result, which filled 15 dense tomes of runic script, turned out to suggest an excellent marinade for salted fish that is now used widely throughout Ralios.

Ourborolanagalost Districts

Humans cannot pronounce the dragonewt names for the different districts, even those who are highly fluent in Auld Wyrnish, so the following names are those accorded by Wyrmfriender scholars.

Harp District

So called because the wefts of force between the buildings are tightly arranged in an almost harp-like fashion. This is a large district, home to a selection of Crested and Beaked dragonewts who all dye their hands purple, using the crushed petals of the mussuvius flower that grows only in the Ormsland meadows. The district has no Tailed Priests but it venerates the True Dragon Green Scaled Father and two unnamed Ancestral Dragons. Visitors of any species are only allowed into Harp District if their hands are dyed mussuvius purple. The dye is mildly caustic to human skin, causing a deep burning sensation and mild nausea that passes after several hours. The dye is not indelible but takes a great deal of scrubbing with dock leaves and crushed lime moss to remove. Those who do not have dyed hands are quickly spotted by the Beaked dragonewts who administer a sound beating and then force the intruder to have both hands and feet dyed before being expelled from the district.

As the name suggests, the district, when played, creates a harp-like sound but of a much lower frequency. The harp is tuned by adjusting the angle of the connecting buildings. Beaked dragonewts do this using triceratops to nudge the craggy towers this way and that, whilst Crested dragonewts pluck at the strings to check the pitch. Occasionally a string snaps and flails around with a life of its own, sparking against the

buildings and eventually fizzling into nothingness. This is a time of great mourning in Harp District with several utumas being committed in penitence.

Boom District

The buildings here are round and squat, like flattened sea-urchins. It makes a sound like kettle drums when played and is occupied mostly by Crested dragonewts. The whole district venerates Sh'kaharzeel and Apowpeartell, the Tailed Priest who leads the district, claims that each building is one of the warts taken from Sh'kaharzeel's hide when he fell to Orlanth in the God Time.

The district runs to distinct rhythms. All actions are aligned to the constant beat hammered out by the dragonewt drummers who pluck the drum wefts between the buildings. The rhythm varies in intensity; persistent and fast for activities requiring speed and haste; slow and sonorous for more meditative exercises. It never stops. The drumming infiltrates dreams and dictates their patterns and clarity. Non-dragonewts can expect a headache for the first few days but this subsides as one becomes inured to the rhythms.

Life in Boom district is thus regimented and consistent. One day blends into another and the dragonewts like it this way as it aids Right Action and prevents instinct from taking over from discipline. Outside Boom district its members still move and communicate rhythmically, their actions and speech mentally attuned to the precise beats that they would hear if in the district. Distance is no barrier; dragonewts from Boom who visit Dragon's Eye maintain their attenuation perfectly.

Choir District

So called because its music resembles the sung voice. All its residents communicate in song, too, ensuring melody and rhyme fit the subject under discussion perfectly. All dragonewts of the district are altered magically to ensure perfect pitch and sweetness of voice. Crested dragonewts are the sopranos, Beaked the tenors and Nobles the bass. Being reborn to another stage alters the voice automatically.

The streets of Choir are alive with 10,000 simultaneous songs. There is no hint of a cacophony, all voices, irrespective of conversation, blend harmoniously. When the choir wefts are plucked to produce music the effect is physically and emotionally staggering. Humans are known to be frozen to the spot, weeping with either joy or heartbreak at the dragonewt song's beauty. Outsiders are not expected to sing but after a few hours it is hard for them to avoid it. The natural melodies and the immense dragonewt choir seems to attune the mind to song-patterns and even if one's singing voice is less than perfect, it does not seem to matter. Rhyming structures form naturally and questions seem to be posed as a middle-eight.

The buildings of Choir District are taller and narrower than other districts, as though musical notes on a staff (if dragonewts had such things) and unsuited to anything but single occupancy. They are arranged in symmetrical rows, wefts strung between them and narrow balconies jutting from each side to enable music to be made without the need for a harness. Spiritually the district venerates Arangorf who learned music from Drolgard after taming Orlanth and supposedly had the sweetest of draconic singing voices.

Trumpet District

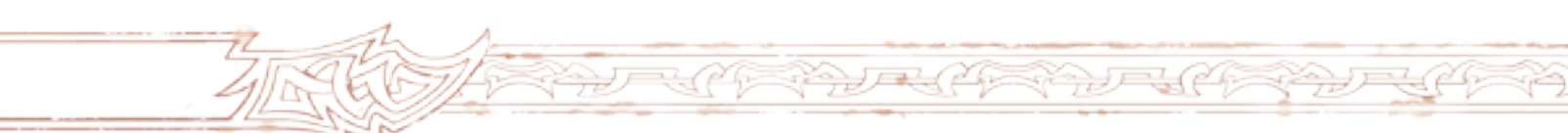
The buildings of this district are long, low-lying tubes, open at each end and arranged in rows of eight. It is occupied mostly by Beaked and Crested dragonewts but a Ruler also has its nest here. Iast'antias is a recently incarnated Ruler who is still spiritually tied to the Trumpet district but is slowly learning to break from it and move in to Regal Throne Dreamtime to join the other Ruler stages.

The district venerates the Wondrous Mother of Many and The Emperor of Wisdom, who blew the first trumpet to call the gods of the world to order during the God Time. Both dragons are worshipped at the same temple, a conical accretion of tiny pebbles, large boulders, wattle and daub which is said to resemble First Trumpet. Outside the temple are eight triceratops-horn trumpets inlaid with gold filigree, jet and blood-quartz stolen from the Mostali of Bad Deal. The Mostali want the blood-quartz back.

Naturally enough the district is the horn section of the city orchestra. The tube-like buildings act as a cavalcade of magical trumpets when the music wefts are plucked but is capable of a range of sounds no mundane acoustic trumpet could ever manage. Iast'antias is the district's finest musician, his skills increased to a phenomenal level with his rebirth as a Ruler dragonewt. He is capable of playing three buildings simultaneously through a combination of skill, agility and a special pike-like tool of his own devising. He knows that soon he must break his pike and retire to Regal Throne Dreamtime so he may begin the preparation for Egg Dream and HeroQuesting but until that urge becomes irresistible he continues to play whenever he can, inspiring the lesser stages to emulate his virtuosity.

Regal Throne Dreamtime

A small district of slab-like nest buildings forming a circle around a circular sand garden 100 metres in diameter, this is the retreat of the six Ruler dragonewts of Absolute Circuitous Fortuity. There are no musical wefts between the buildings but the sand garden, covered in a fine layer of grey sand, is raked into a mind-defying array of runes and draconic symbols that are magically resistant to disturbance by wind or footfall.



A line of obsidian pillars, resembling Dragonewt Road plinths in miniature, encircles the sand garden. This is a Dreamcatcher of the Inhuman King's devising, designed to ensnare nightmares and unwanted dreams and channel them into the runes of the sand garden where they are dissipated amongst the designs. Setting foot in the sand garden is dangerous for mortal minds, which risk being instantly assailed by a hundred thousand dissolving nightmares and disturbing dreams. A Wyrmspeaker, Justerius Scarfeather, crossed the Dreamline once and found his mind warped to chaos. His madness was so bad that the Inhuman King had to eat him to end the torment and even that was not enough. The remnants of Justerius Scarfeather's mind are still trapped in the sand garden occasionally whispering for a release that will never come.

The Ruler dragonewts are rarely seen, usually only on the days when the city is played when they attend the Inhuman King. Communication with them is through dreams and the Tailed Priests who conduct the interpretations and the occasional vocalised message. Regal Throne Dreamtime is in the shadow of the Inhuman King's palace, so that dream communion between the Rulers and the King is at its most potent.

Outside Inside

This is the outsider's district, home to Wyrmfriends on official Guiding Council business, or simply because the peculiarity of Absolute Circuitous Fortuity appeals to them and they seek enlightenment from it. The district is of human design, with conventional buildings and streets, magically insulated from the constant musical emanations of the dragonewt quarters.

The district is a place of diverse interests, all of them draconic or dragonewtish.

The *True Dragon Chroniclers*, led by Iverach Sungolden, a Dara Happan Sun Dragon convert, aim to do what the God Learners have so far failed to achieve: prepare a true account of draconic creation with a mind to mythical understanding. To this end the 30 strong group continually entertains a selection of Tailed Priests with finely prepared dinners of varying styles, anxiously writing down the lengthy, incoherent myth interpretations each Tailed Priest offers. The days are spent trying to unravel the contradictions and esoteric side-references to myths that inevitably elude them but claim enlightenment nonetheless. Iverach arrogantly claims to have formulated an underlying theme that explains draconic diversity but can never properly articulate it, either finding he has forgotten an important precept or misunderstood a particular point or moral. The problem lies in the True Dragon Chroniclers' chronic disorganisation and there is a grudging respect for the diligent God Learner approach although no one would ever utter such a thing in public.

The *Iridescent School of Auld Wyrmish*, run by the ferocious Argutha Scalespeak, a Buserian outcast from Yuthuppa, teaches the draconic language to those who can pay her exorbitant fees. She has no tolerance of failure and her almost militaristic vocabulary tests drive even the hardest to tears and sleepless nights. Despite the fearsome reputation of both school and schoolmistress, Argutha is never short of students. Her methods, as brutal as they are (certainly a form of ritual humiliation and incisive character assassination), get results and her claims to be able to teach Auld Wyrmish in a fraction of the usual time stands-up to scrutiny. But her bullying tactics have earned her enemies and a whispering campaign linking her in a torrid affair with Barlken, the renegade Wyrmfriender priest, is beginning to undermine her reputation.

The extravagantly named *Ourborolanagalost Symphonic Appreciation Society* is a bohemian collective of music scholars, poseurs, minstrels and the tone-deaf who seek to create and record the music of the dragonewt city. Using a flawed musical notation system of their own devising, long evenings are spent trying to recreate the complex passages of the Ourborolanagalost symphony from memory and conjecture. Creative tensions run high in the group, with harp expert Mhelandra Dragondaughter frequently rubbishing any worthwhile efforts that are deemed more profound than her own. Her woodwind section has been replaced twice and the flute players are no longer on speaking terms with her. Mhelandra's tantrums are subtly encouraged by the louche Tarthain Rendregorn, a Carmanian alcoholic with no visible musical talent but an unusually large capacity for the locally brewed Scaled Ale. He knows enough musical theory to be able to argue the finer points of notation but his abilities, aside from drinking, end there. Mhelandra hangs on his every, smoothly-slurred, word, believing his alcoholism lends him a divine insight into the dragonewts' musical structure. Even with Tarthain's daring and colourful fashion sense, they do not make an attractive couple.

The Guiding Council's representatives are known as the *Clawed Conciliators*. As well as being the official EWF emissaries from Olorost they are a Hunting and Waltzing Band in their own right. They have the right to commune with the Inhuman King on a semi-regular basis and communicate constant updates and news via their Tailed Priest liaison officer, I Who Am None. The leader of the Conciliators is Fargavan Highclaw, Wyrms' Fang Exultant of the Order of Crimson Purity, a politically astute operator and cool-headed killer of EWF foes. Outwardly he is pleasant and approachable but his hands are stained with the blood of uncountable sacrifices in the name of draconic purity. His job is to watch Absolute Circuitous Fortuity for insurgents and unbelievers, communicate the Guiding Council's actions and wishes to the Inhuman King, when this proves necessary and to strengthen

the empire's bonds in the region. His lieutenant is the alluring Glanhadracis, another Wyrms' Fang Exultant but this time of the Siblings of the Immortal Flesh and Soul. She is devoted to attaining physical perfection, which is much in evidence and her task is to co-ordinate the Hunting and Waltzing Bands operating throughout Ralios. She has a more specific task: to discover precisely what it is the dragonewts are withholding from the Guiding Council. There have been dark mutterings of an unshared secret obtained during a FutureQuest that has grave consequences for the empire if not acted upon. Her job is to discover it, uncover any perceived dragonewt treachery and report back. Third of the Conciliators is Vesterian Oakladen, a bear of a man with a reputation for random violence and a marked dedication to its use as a diplomatic art form. A Wyrms' Fang Exultant of the Adepts of Inhuman Mastery, he is a skilled master of dinosaurs and is responsible for Earth Shaker divisions in Ralios. He seems also to have an affinity with the dragonewts, who much prefer doing business with Vesterian than they do Fargavan or Glanhadracis.

The renegade priest, Barlken, was once a Wyrms' Talon Disciple of the Siblings of Immaculate Flesh and Soul. For reasons unknown he was selected by the Inhuman King for a discrete audience in which certain secrets (so he claims) were made known to him. Since then, Barlken has enjoyed several private audiences with the King and revels in the self-proclaimed title *Wyrms' Claw Exultant Revelator of Personal Connection*. Those intrigued by Barlken's notion that personal draconisation can be attained without a priesthood channel have thus formed The Personal Connection Revelators, seeking to emulate Barlken's successes. Attracting the misguided and the foolhardy, the Revelators actively try to strike-up personal relationships with the dragonewts of the city, often placing themselves in extreme danger as a result. A few have gone as far as building their own eggs from which they ritually hatch every few days in an attempt to replicate the dragonewt cycle of being. Barlken, now an almost constant resident of the Inhuman King's palace, is distanced from this activity but a zealous proselytiser nonetheless. He enjoys the Inhuman King's protection and thus the Personal Connection Revelators believe they do too. The Clawed Conciliators consider the Revelators an aberration but have resisted smashing the sect (which would be easy) because there is a chance, yet, that it may yield information valuable to the Guiding Council concerning the dragonewts' great secret. Barlken himself is in an uneasy position, having to share an audience with the Inhuman King with Fargavan Highclaw. The two men despise each other but Fargavan is unable to act directly against Barlken for that would injure the EWF's overall relationships in Ormsland. Barlken thus grows bolder in his fierce testimony of Personal Insight and gathers more followers daily. A blood spillage between the empire's devout and this increasingly heretical sect cannot be far away.

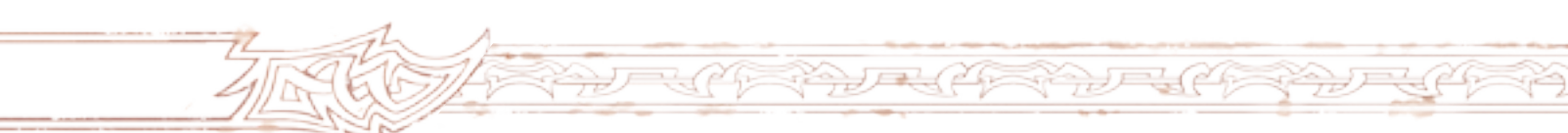
Thronekeep Triumphant

At the very centre of the city is Thronekeep Triumphant, the palace of the Inhuman King. Shaped like a gigantic dragonewt plinth the palace is hewn from obsidian but flickers with an amber iridescence that is at once disturbing and welcoming. Surrounding its base are the squat, single-occupancy dwellings of the army of Noble dragonewts selected as personal communicators for the Inhuman Kings, The Benders of Tongues. All business, petitions, audience requests and information must pass through their clearing house. Requests are inscribed in Auld Wyrmish on slivers of bark which are weighed in the immense scales housed in the Comatorium, as the clearing house is known, against a scale taken from the Inhuman King's own hide. The tip of the scales determines the urgency of the enquiry. If the enquiry is outweighed by the Inhuman King's scale, the enquiry is returned to the enquirer, who is told to meditate upon its true intent, thus improving its gravity.

Only with a weighed enquiry can access be gained to the obsidian palace. It is labyrinthine within, a stark contrast with the emptiness of the Dragon Pass equivalent. Passages defy mapping and a Bender of Tongues is needed to guide the visitor to where the Inhuman King is to be found, which might be in any one of several hundred chambers on any one of 20 separate levels, some of them underground. The palace is dimly lit and almost unbearably warm. Some liken it to being inside a dragonewt egg and they are not far wrong. The interior walls hum gently to different, indistinct rhythms and one has a sense of being both inside and outside simultaneously. Throughout is the unmistakable musk of dragon scent, a mixture of burned almond and lavender, touched with brimstone.

The palace is home to more Noble dragonewts who administer to the Inhuman King's personal needs. A guard of elite Beaked dragonewts patrols listlessly. They have never needed to fight an intruder; the Inhuman King's magic renders it pointless but if pressed they fight to kill. To guard the Palace guarantees a Beaked dragonewt resurrection as a Noble, so they welcome the opportunity, although slaying belligerent intruders figures large in their priorities.

On the 15th above-floor level is the suite of rooms given to Barlken the Renegade. He swaggers about the palace with the arrogance of one who considers himself the holder of a deep and powerful secret. His rooms are furnished with draconic relics and gifts that he displays proudly and reverently. A lectern supports a thick, half written tome of closely scrawled Auld Wyrmish detailing his every audience with the Inhuman King and his interpretations of the exchanges. He continually hints at a 'Great Becoming' which, of course, he takes as a signal that the Great Dragon will shortly be complete and



arise to reshape the world. Yet other, darker, passages hint at an unease he feels sometimes, at how the Inhuman King lets slip too much too easily and without the cryptic meanings usually veiling dragonewt pronouncements. Glanhadracis of the Clawed Conciliators would pay dearly for what this tome contains, whilst Fargavan would pay anything to see Barlken removed entirely from the equation.

The Inhuman King is a more visible presence than his Dragon Pass counterpart. A six metre tall creature of black and gold with shimmering wings of midnight blue and coal-bright eyes, the Inhuman King is a careful, non-committal communicator always attended by one of the Benders of Tongues who translates his deeply growled, highly ancient dialect of Auld Wyrmish. Verbal contact is never handled directly although piercing eye contact is maintained throughout. His power needs little explanation: as an Inhuman King he has access to the philosophies and knowledge of the True Dragons and, occasionally, the ability to wind the OUROBOROS mantra into a tangible weave, creating and destroying with equal ease. Amongst the EWF there is the perception that the Inhuman King of Ormsland is subservient to the Inhuman King of Dragon Pass but that is a gross simplification. These are creatures equal in power and status, of one mind but following separate strands of the same agenda. Their thoughts and plans are secrets to them alone. The tantalising hints dropped to the likes of Barlken and, occasionally, Fargavan, are loose threads from their grand tapestry.

The Inhuman King of Ormsland resisted human taint for centuries and expelled Wyrmfriends once before. To be accommodating now hints at clear purpose rather than the pressure of a peer. And it is deciphering this purpose that now concerns the Guiding Council of the EWF, as its empire begins an inexorable slide into decay.

DARA HAPPA

Dara Happa and the Oslir valley was never strong dragonewt territory – until, that is, the Golden Dragon emerged from the Sun God's court, passed the Ten Tests and deposed the existing Sun Emperor, Urvanyar, stealing his heart and eyes. The Golden Dragon is now worshipped as Emperor and it has wrapped itself around the temple of Yelm in Yuthuppa, the first True Dragon to emerge from its resting place since Time itself began.

This momentous event was a beacon to both EWF and dragonewts. The former took it as a signal that their Great Dragon Project was reaching to the True Dragons and drawing them as allies. To the latter, it was a signal to establish new colonies in a land they had previously ignored. In this they had Wyrmfriending backing and the assent of the Inhuman King of Dragon Pass, so creating new cities in Dara Happa

was Right Action and in keeping with the draconic path. Two new cities have been built, smaller than those of Dragon Pass and Ralios but significant nonetheless. They are New Gold Dream and Ten Tests Passed. Both are less than 30 years old but already they have developed reasonable populations and their own identities.

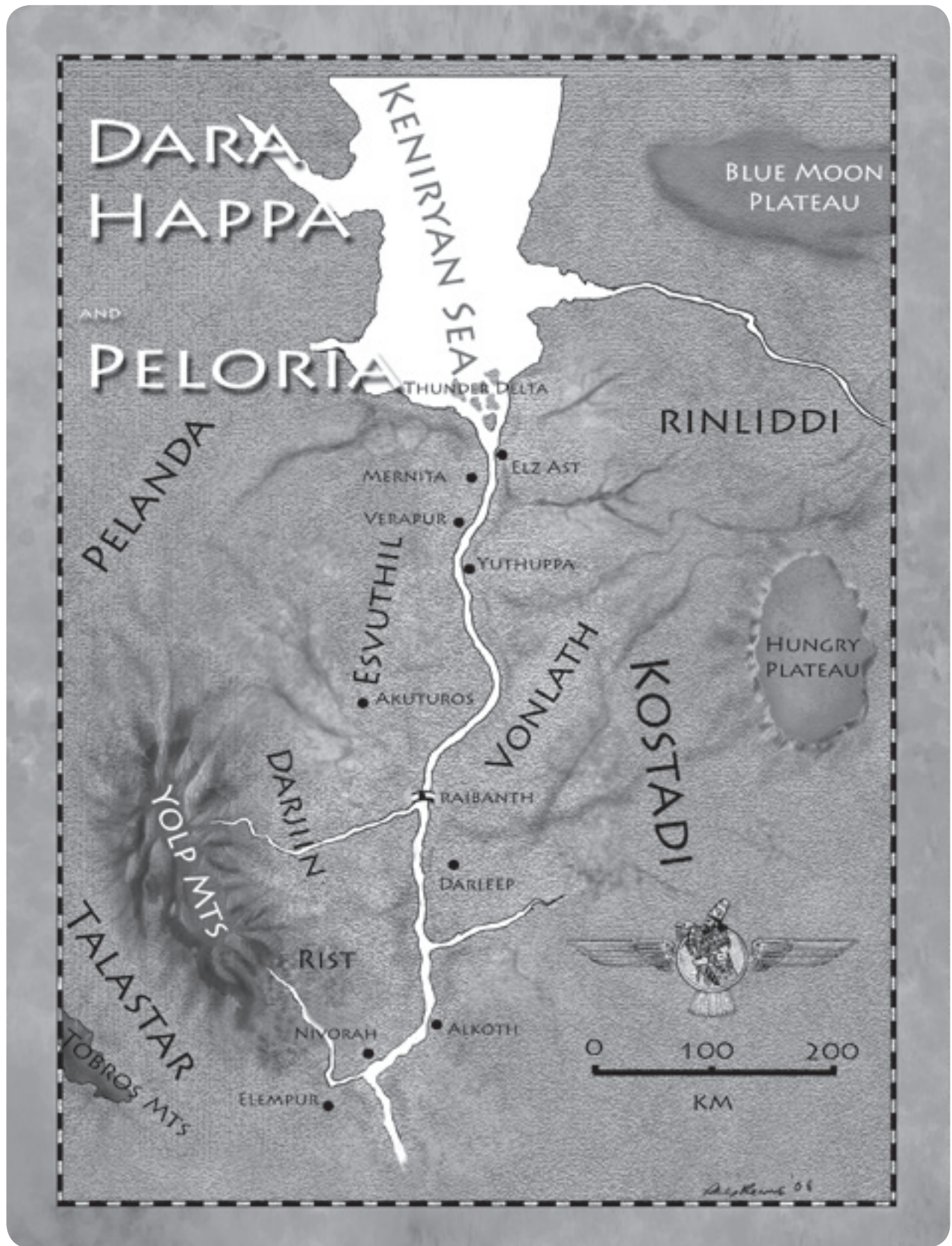
The native Dara Happans, utterly unused to dragonewts, have found it difficult to accept their presence. Their bizarre cities and even more bizarre behaviour sits uneasily with the essentially peasant ways of the valley villages. The ruling class, a little more attuned to the strange, have attempted to accept the dragonewts as best they can but still have difficulties understanding this strange race that has suddenly foisted itself into their lands. The Golden Sun Emperor, being above such lowly matters, offers no guidance but the EWF agents in the region have been quick to point out that dragonewts are allies and teachers; an essential part of the EWF membrane. Some noble Dara Happans, like Olstavius Suncleansed, believe the dragonewts can be 'humanised' and have set up missions on the outskirts of the two cities in a bid to introduce a more human approach to their routines. Others, like the violent and brooding Mermestis All-Light, believe the dragonewts to be an invading army sent by Yelm to test the purity of the sun-faithful. He promotes holy war against the dragonewt cities, spreading vile rumours of human sacrifice, chaos worship and baby-eating. Some believe this contemptible vitriol and there are stirrings of resentment in Raibanth and the many clusters of villages along the Oslir River.

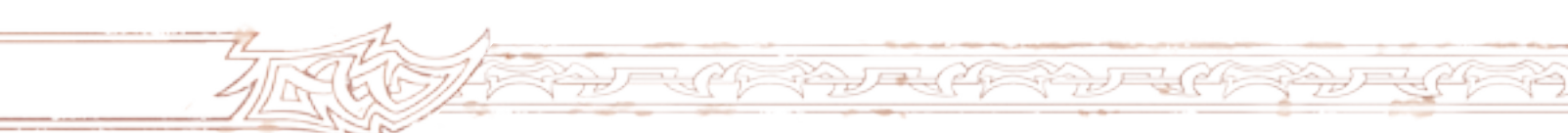
In Yuthuppa, where the Golden Sun Emperor lazes around the Yelmic temple, a more sanguine attitude has taken root. It is seen as a natural progression and even, perhaps, a gift from Yelm, that the draconic path should reach an ascendancy in their city. The dragonewt cities are welcomed here, even if it is with bewilderment.

New Gold Dream

Located on the eastern bank of the Oslir and in sight of Yuthuppa, New Gold Dream is a concentration of spiralling towers of gold-coloured stone breaking from the pasture, each tower engraved with draconic symbols and runes. All windows face towards the temple of Yelm and the entire settlement is dedicated towards the veneration of the Golden Sun Dragon but not the sun. There is no Dara Happa solar imagery anywhere in New Gold Dream and Yelm's name is never mentioned. To those Dara Happa's suspicious of the dragonewts' motivation and sure of their heresy, the absence of Yelmic veneration is proof of it.

New Gold Dream offers hope to dragonewts exiled from the draconic way. On the orders of the Inhuman King of Ormsland any sundered dragonewt who comes to New





Gold Dream and successfully passes the New Ten Tests will be restored to the draconic cycle. The New Ten Tests are a series of fearsome ordeals designed to test the capacity for Right Action and might almost amount to an earth-bound HeroQuest. Failure results in death for the dragonewt but success results in immediate reincarnation at the Crested stage, with all memories of their past life expunged.

Thus the city is a magnet for dispossessed dragonewts from across Ralios and even into Dragon Pass. With them come human Wyrmfriender pilgrims. Word has spread that the Golden Sun Dragon performs miracles on a daily basis to those who prostrate themselves at its feet and offer to convert to its worship. The Wyrmic Solar Way organisation is a group of miracle-receivers who enthusiastically guide human arrivals at New Gold Dream in the ceremonies necessary to receive a miracle (for a fee), pointing to all the sundered dragonewts who have been swept back onto the draconic path as proof (for a further fee). Maulharik Brighteye leads the Wyrmic Solar Way, inciting hatred from ardent Wyrmfrienders and Old Ways Traditionalists alike. He has become something of an expert on the solar/draconic relationship having obtained a dense text from Kustria that is undoubtedly of God Learner origin. He quotes chapter and verse in the human quarter of New Gold Dream, leading the growing rag-tag army of miracle-seekers in prayer, song and dance. His methods are dangerous. He proposes integration with the dragonewts (who must surely be the Golden Sun God's children) and preaches against the Wyrmfrienders. Agents are undoubtedly moving against him: The Children of the Ten Talons want to silence his heresy; the dragonewts want to avoid taint; and the God Learners want their book back.

New Gold Dream is under the auspices of the Ruler dragonewt Empires Rise and Fall. He is less prone to sleeping than most Ruler dragonewts and maintains a visible presence, sitting at the top of a thick dragonewt plinth in the centre of the city, adopting a pose mimicing that of the Golden Sun Dragon. He sees all that happens and likes little of it. His communication with the Inhuman King of Ralios is constant and dreamlike; he is instructed not to intervene until told. His gaze is thus malevolent and knowing. He sends Nobles across New Gold Dream to watch the humans flocking into the new city and to ensure that the New Ten Tests being undertaken by the sundered dragonewts is every bit as arduous as it should be.

The chief speakers to the humans are the Noble dragonewts Araana'thal and Laht'anaara. The former's hide is blue whilst the latter's is red. They engage in enthusiastic discourse with humans and Maulharik Brighteye in particular, offering typically cryptic and unhelpful insights into the solar/draconic relationship that are more a hindrance than a help. The dragonewt rune is being worn by many of Maulharik's faithful, tattooed into place by Araana'thal whilst Laht'anaara

walks on its hands around the disciple. Some are then led away and invited to take the New Ten Tests, which Maulharik considers to be the ultimate blessing. No one is sure what happens to these people but one eagle-eyed pilgrim has noted a slight increase in the Crested dragonewt population. Perhaps Maulharik's wishes for closer integration are being granted but not in ways he might welcome.

Ten Tests Passed

The city of Ten Tests Passed appears to be a far more traditional dragonewt colony. Carved into the hills overlooking the route between Yuthuppa and Elz Ast it is a settlement populated primarily with Beaked and Crested dragonewts with only one Noble and one Ruler. The Ruler slumbers in the deep chambers of the new city whilst the Beaked dragonewts excavate and build in the hills around it. The Crested dragonewts scour the hills and uplands for stones conforming to particular geometric properties known only to them whilst undergoing their Orxilius meditations. The Noble dragonewt, Thal'raana, simply spends its time conveying the Ruler's dreamed orders and has little time for interaction with non-dragonewts.

The colony is given over to receiving those dragonewts returned to the draconic path in New Gold Dream. It has a new clutch of birth-eggs in the chambers surrounding the Ruler although the first reincarnations are not expected for some time. The regime here is strict, ensuring no dragonewt will fall from the draconic path ever again. Some of the Crested dragonewts that migrate up from New Gold Dream are strangely deficient in the basic dragonewt instincts and Thal'raana is having to spend time ensuring they fully understand the needs of Orxilius so they might pursue the draconic path with dedication and rigour.

Outsiders, unless they are dragonewts, are not welcome in Ten Tests Passed. Beaked dragonewts wielding klanths and riding demi-birds quickly drive away the curious and the lost. The settlement has gained an unhealthy reputation amongst the human settlements scattered along the Yuthuppa/Elz Ast route and they are fearful of some wyrmish plot to devour the entire region.

KRALORELA

Kralorela was attuned to draconic cycles long before the people of the west split their tongues to learn Auld Wyrnish. There has long been an acceptance of the differences between human and draconic kind and none have chosen to – or dared to – narrow that gap. Like the Wyrmfrienders there is a deeply-held belief that the universe was created by the Cosmic Dragon and that, by treading the path to enlightenment, one can become a dragon upon death and dwell amongst the Ancestral Dragons in the Cosmic Dragon's court.

Yet this is a personal, discreet philosophy. Kralori do not seek to emulate dragons or replicate their powers. Kralori do not attempt to form enclaves in the four dragonewt colonies and do not seek droplets of draconic wisdom from the Inhuman King of Fanzai's maw. The division between the two races is clearly delineated and sacrosanct. As a result, the dragonewts of Kralorela and its human occupants maintain a respectful distance, even under the doctrines of Immanent Mastery, which accelerates the path to draconic ascension. The philosophy of 'Two Paths to the Same Destination' represents this racial and cultural division and contrasts sharply with the somewhat destructive road driven by the EWF. Kralori believe in realising the inner dragon through personal endeavour. There is no single Great Dragon entity that can be awoken or created through emulating draconic ways: such creation lies solely in the hands of the Cosmic and Ancestral Dragons and *their* wills cannot be forced.

Kralorela has four dragonewt colonies and its own Inhuman King, known to the Kralori as 'The Celestial Representative'. Two of the colonies are located in the province of Hopeful Centrality. The third is in Green Contemplation whilst the fourth and largest, Fanzai, is located deep in the Fethlon jungle in the south of the region.

Interaction between Kralori and dragonewts is minimal. Occasional Noble dragonewt representatives are sent to the various provincial governments but this is largely a courtesy with little or no political or diplomatic intent. There is none of the interaction that takes place in Dragon Pass or Ormsland and the dragonewts who have heard tell of such dealings are perturbed at the opportunities for taint. There are dark mutterings that only woe can come of such liaisons and the Cosmic Dragon must have some higher purpose in mind to allow it to happen. Most of the concern centres on the nature of the Great Dragon to Be: what place would such a creature have in the celestial hierarchy? Is this an awakening of an ancient dragon such as Sh'kaharzeel or Aroka, or is it a new creation entirely? If it is a new creation would this challenge the existing celestial order? Would it challenge the Cosmic Dragon itself? How 'human' would such a dragon be if composed of human souls?

The result is deep negativity about the entire EWF project and a profound rejection of the few emissaries who have been sent to Kralorela to further the EWF's aims. It is not known if the Inhuman Kings of Dragon Pass, Ormsland and Kralorela are communicating with each other or have assumed diametrically opposing views. Such matters are for them; not for the rank and file.

Whilst the EWF has been given short-shrift, the God Learners have taken a more circuitous route. The Path of

Immanent Mastery is largely a God Learner device designed to explain the Kralori celestial religion in terms that can be neatly categorised and explained from a Malkioni viewpoint whilst still remaining draconic. The God Learners would have loved such an opportunity to apply the same approach with the EWF but the EWF had already adopted an entrenched philosophical position that has been as unyielding as dragon-forged obsidian. The Kralori, on the other hand, preach toleration of differing view points and were quite open to the theories expounded by the God Learners which, through subtle Justeli machinations, formed the basis for Immanent Mastery.

As a result there are God Learner study enclaves scattered throughout Kralorela that observe the dragonewts surreptitiously. Their studies are, by necessity, haphazard and incomplete. It is impossible to penetrate the magical defences of Fanzai, even with Zistorite sorcerous siege-breaking machines. Thus the God Learners have to work with scraps of information here and a few unqualified facts there. Their chief source of information is an outlaw dragonewt named Beliefs Never Held. This Noble was once a member of the Fanzai colony but fell from the draconic path in quite a spectacular fashion in an event it refers to as My Soul Sundering. The circumstances of this fall from grace are unintelligible to even the God Learner's best scholars and mythicists but having something to do with a certain sort of draconic enlightenment that codified, in easily understandable terms, is a universal theory for Right and Wrong Action.

Beliefs Never Held lives amongst the God Learners in Shiji Mori and enjoys a semi-exalted status. His existence is a closely guarded secret because the Imperial Decree is death to anyone who breaks the Two Paths, Same Destination doctrine. The God Learners thus keep their dragonewt in a state of opulence and hidden beneath a building in Shiji Mori known only by the codename 'I Believe It'. Beliefs Never Held attempts to explain draconic thinking and cosmology in between lengthy bouts of eating gourmet foods, drinking gallons of fine wines and ritually burning, one page at a time, a small mountain range of rare books the God Learners have provided. Only a small, select group of 'Believers' are given access to the dragonewt and they frantically scribble down each and every word it utters, recording every action (or lack of it) in a bid to learn something that fundamentally explains what makes dragonewts tick.

Thus the God Learners flirt with great danger; not from the dragonewts, who seem to accept that some of their number will stray but from the Kralori, who would exact a fearsome revenge if they were to discover Beliefs Never Held's existence.

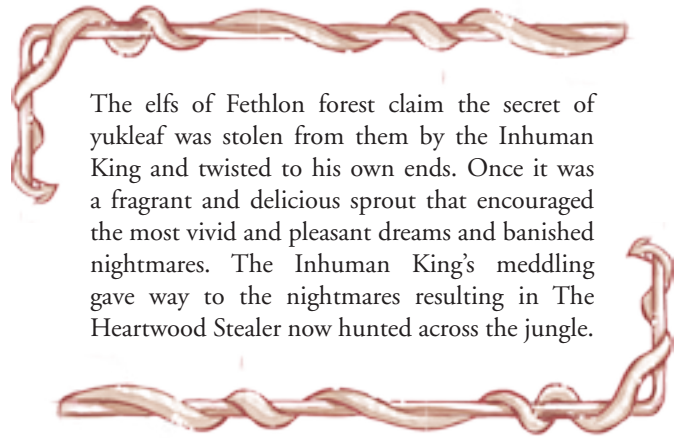
Fanzai

Foremost of the Kralori dragonewt colonies, Fanzai is located deep in the heart of the mighty Fethlon jungle and protected by complex draconic magics predating even the current Inhuman King. The termite mound-like buildings can be glimpsed towering above the trees but there are no internal paths to it. Anyone attempting to get close to the city inevitably becomes lost or finds themselves on the edge of the jungle no nearer to it. The only way into Fanzai is via one of the Dragonewt Roads linking all four dragonewt colonies together. Even God Learner sorcery has been unable to map the Dragonewt Roads of Kralorela, despite many efforts to do so, and they have been unable to make the pathways to Fanzai reveal themselves.

Both Beaked and Noble dragonewts patrol the jungle on demi-birds hunting for the semi-legendary creature called The Heart Wood Stealer, a being supposedly dreamed into existence by the Inhuman King which then ran amok in the Fethlon jungle feeding on anything of a magical nature. The Beaked dragonewts treat the hunt for the Heart Wood Stealer almost like a chivalric quest with an unnamed great honour to be bestowed on the one who finds and kills this nightmare.

Fanzai is an unruly cluster of organically shaped towers, resembling termite mounds, from semi-digested wood chewed from the surrounding forest. The mounds are immense; the tallest, Cathedral Mound, which is home to the Inhuman King, is close to a kilometre high and half as broad. The rest of the city is arranged along a north-south axis with a smaller group of mounds circling the Cathedral. At the northern most edge of the city is a strange array of tree stumps of differing heights, devoid of bark and branches, that have been flattened at the top. There is one stump for each dragonewt and whilst no one knows how many inhabit Fanzai, it is in the thousands. It is the practice of the entire city to emerge from the mounds at dusk and dawn, climb onto the tree stumps, raise their arms to the sky and emit a single, high-pitched keening that echoes the length and breadth of the forest. It lasts one minute precisely and then all dragonewts either retreat to the mounds or go about their daily business.

The mounds are interconnected by rope bridges so that they appear to be strung together like a length of malformed pearls. At ground level the spaces between the mounds have been cultivated for vegetable growing, specifically a curious, cabbage-like plant with spiny leaves and a quite devastatingly poor aroma. The plant has no name in Auld Wyrnish but humans who have come into contact with it have named it *yukleaf*. No amount of culinary wizardry can render it palatable to humans but the dragonewts eat it raw and claim it enhances their ability to dream and create whilst doing so.



The elves of Fethlon forest claim the secret of yukleaf was stolen from them by the Inhuman King and twisted to his own ends. Once it was a fragrant and delicious sprout that encouraged the most vivid and pleasant dreams and banished nightmares. The Inhuman King's meddling gave way to the nightmares resulting in The Heartwood Stealer now hunted across the jungle.

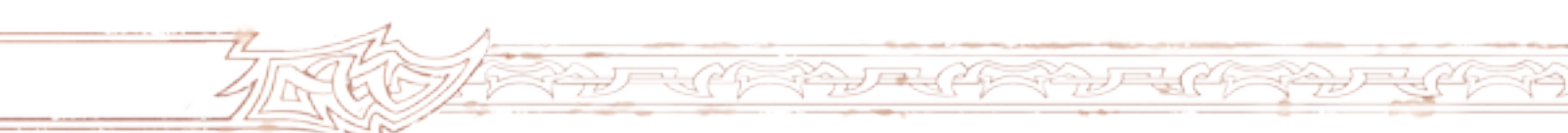
Fanzai aided the Embyli elves during the Leaf War, when the Mreli, seduced by God Learner promises, turned against the Embyli and a bitter struggle waged through the jungle. The Inhuman King and his Ruler dragonewts offered powerful dream magic to torment both the Mreli and their God Learner masters. Since then the Embyli have maintained good relations with the dragonewts although the Mreli have not forgotten the callous dream-power of the Inhuman King and try never to mention Fanzai or its populace.

The Inhuman King of Fanzai believes itself to be close to transforming into a True Dragon and preparations for this momentous event are underway throughout Fanzai and the surrounding jungle. The Inhuman King's dreams have been becoming more urgent of late and emissaries from distant Ormsland and Slontos have begun to arrive. The dragonewts are building a new palace for the soon-to-be-born dragon, a tortuous structure of jungle hardwoods, thick river mud, an immense quantity of leaves and bones scavenged from the jungle floor. The dragonewts have fashioned their behaviour into that of soldier ants, carrying all manner of materials for the new palace in a highly regimented fashion using scent-trails and other dream-created devices to act as a template for this monstrous edifice. The Tailed and Full Priests sing healing rituals night and day attempting to soothe the Inhuman King's fitful slumber as dragon apotheosis draws near and the whole city awaits the great transformation as eagerly as an expectant father awaits his first child.

Ghlevestnas

Ghlevestnas is located in Green Contemplation. Seemingly built entirely of jade, with a deep, mirror-still lake at its centre, the city is controlled by the Inhuman King of Fanzai but administered by its single Ruler dragonewt, Lord Jade Father. Jade Father has been a Ruler for a considerable period of time





and expects to reincarnate as the next Inhuman King once the present King has been reborn as a True Dragon. Thus, Lord Father Jade is undergoing a series of arduous FutureQuests to acquire the wisdom needed to become the supreme ruler of the Kralori dragonewts. For this purpose Lord Jade Father has immersed itself in the centre of the lake in the middle of the city, only its head showing above the surface. Noble dragonewts paddled around the Ruler in small coracles muttering prayers and the OUROBOROS mantra, hoping to speed Lord Jade Father through its trials. Some of Lord Jade's dreams have taken physical form in the city: a huge tree of brilliant orange; a statue carved from a single, massive ruby, of a woman, arising from the earth, clutching a pearl moon in both hands; and a strange obelisk that spins of its own accord and emits peculiar music, almost like a language.

The dragonewts of Ghlevestnas are, like their Fanzai counterparts, desperately awaiting the forthcoming transformations. Thus they are more active than usual and almost frenzied in their duties, influenced, no doubt, by Lord Jade Father's FutureQuests and dream creations.

Bouruobs Prime and Secondary

Hopeful Centrality has two dragonewt settlements, the smaller of the four. Bouruob Prime and Bouruob Secondary. Both are too small to be called cities and enclaves are a better description. They are also peculiar in that each is a mirror image of the other in almost precise detail. The buildings are a mixture of the low and prosaic and the tall and splendid. In a reversal of most dragonewt settlements the towers are occupied by the Crested and Beaked stages whilst the smaller, less ostentatious buildings are occupied by the Nobles and Rulers.

The tenet within the two Bouruobs is that one works down towards dragonhood, just as the Cosmic Dragon worked downwards when creating the Cosmic Egg. Thus height is an inverted symbol of status and ostentation an indication of taint.

Despite being twins in almost every detail there is animosity between the two. In the centre of each Bouruob is a huge, egg-shaped piece of onyx representing the Cosmic Egg. The egg spins magically but in Bouruob Prime the spin is clockwise whilst in Secondary it is widdershins. Each claims to have the correct interpretation and because agreement can never be reached, neither settlement is on communicating terms. The Inhuman King refuses to intervene because it is too wrapped-up in impending dragonhood, so it is left to the fractious Ruler dragonewts of the Bouruobs to resolve their differences themselves. Neither shows the slightest inclination to do so.

When dragonewts from the two Bouruobs meet, they will either ignore each other completely or quickly fall into accusing each other of Wrong Action. Fights are common, followed by the utuma of the victor as it realises the futility of the argument.

SLONTOS

The lands of Slontos run across the south of Genertela, separated from Ralios by the Halkiv Mountains, Mislal Mountains and Tarin Mountains. The immense Tarinwood and Arstola forest mark its northern territory.

The dragonewt colonies are centred on the Ryzel hills and in particular the citadel of Ryzelhold. The region has a new Inhuman King in the 10th century, the previous having achieved dragonhood and promptly burrowed into the Ryzel hills to sleep. The history of this enclave of dragonewts has not been a happy one. In the First Age, the Ryzel dragonewts served Palangio Iron Vrok, the emperor of Dara Happa, as mercenary-slaves and were brought to Ryzel to fight on Palangio's behalf. It is thought they were sundered dragonewts who had no Inhuman King at the time (although the dragonewts dispute this) but later developed one when Palangio's magical power over them weakened through the theft of the All Seeing Staff.

As mercenary slaves the dragonewts attracted a fearsome reputation and grim tales of their deeds haunt Slontos even now. And there is no denying that the Slontos dragonewts are a far more aggressive race than their northern and eastern cousins. The majority of the two colonies are Beaked dragonewts and, since the transformation of the new Inhuman King, there are no Ruler stages at all and it is the Rulers who traditionally provide the necessary guidance to the lesser stages.

The Slontos colonies are disinterested in the EWF, the God Learners and the Golden Sun Dragon of Dara Happa. They have their own, unrelated agenda that is kept to themselves, furthering their already dark and unpleasant reputation. The people of Slontos avoid the Dragonewt Plinths as though they were remnants of chaos. Dragonewt parties are given a wide berth by merchant caravans and Slontian warriors are eager to claim dragonewt hides as trophies.

Something went wrong amongst the dragonewts of Slontos. Badly wrong.

Ryzelhold

Ryzelhold clings to the rising hillside like ivy to ancient tree bark, its misshapen dwellings appearing as warts and boils on the skin of the land. The dragonewts have burrowed deep into



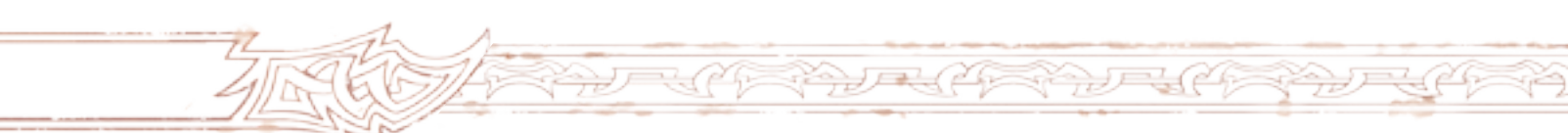
the hillside so as to be closer to their apotheosised Inhuman King, the newest True Dragon that has already been named Ryzelharakasiil.

Beaked dragonewts patrol the outlying edges of Ryzelhold on tamed, enchanted velociraptors, their tails and foot claws trimmed with ferocious spikes of obsidian. Those who stray too near are driven away amid a flurry of slingshot bullets and wickedly carved throwing stars of razor flint. If that does not deter them, then the velociraptors are unleashed.

No human has entered Ryzelhold and lived. The approach to the city is daunting enough, passing through the stunted, sparsely leafed trees that even elves have forsaken and the constant dinosaur patrols maintain a sense of fear and menace about the place. The very air carries a menace not normally associated with dragonewts; a metallic claustrophobia and a deep sense of foreboding as half-shapes flit between the gnarled branches and a series of low growls mingle with the creaking of ancient branches. When dragonewts strike at those who dare pass their borders, they do so without warning and

mercy. Velociraptors are spurred forward and allowed to strike with only mental guidance from the Beaked warriors who hang from the rough saddles, wielding klanth at the heads and legs of their enemies. Survivors are dragged back to Ryzelhold; the dead are left to rot where they lie.

What, then, is the secret of the dragonewts' aggression in this region? How were they commanded by a human and then left to become such a dark and brooding enclave? Palangio the Iron Vrok certainly enslaved the dragonewts to act as warriors for his southern campaigns and the old tales tell of the All Seeing Staff being the tool by which this was accomplished. God Learner research has determined that the All Seeing Staff was made from a part of a limb of Orxili and so able to exert power over the immature stages of draconic evolution. If true, it would explain why the dragonewts were enslaved but not why their aggressive tendencies have remained. And the All Seeing Staff has been lost, supposedly stolen, yet no one knows by whom. Its theft broke the Iron Vrok's control but why did the dragonewts remain in Slontos where Palangio continued his occupation? Again, there are no discernible answers.



The EWF has devoted time and effort to studying these First Age happenings. The Guiding Council believes the All Seeing Staff is in the possession of the dragonewts of Ryzelhold and, as something made from Orxili, it continually disturbs and disrupts the dragonewt psychology, making them more primal beings and hindering Right Action. This would explain why so few dragonewts have reincarnated as Nobles and Rulers. It might also explain why their Inhuman King achieved dragonhood so recently. The All Seeing Staff, if genuinely a piece of Orxili, might provide knowledge or magic unlocking the deepest meditations of the Cosmic Dragon and thus the power to ascend to dragonhood.

And so it is that the EWF has launched its quest for the All Seeing Staff. Hunting and Waltzing bands are moving into Slontos, especially the towns of Gualar and Bemelor, and preparing to enter Ryzelhold to find and steal the All Seeing Staff for themselves. It is too great a prize to be ignored: if it can command dragonewts and provide insight into the Cosmic Dragon's schemes, it would be, perhaps, the key to raising The Great Dragon to Be. But the EWF expects strong resistance and knows its quest will be hard-fought. Dragonewts, when angered, command magics that, whilst similar to the Wyrmfriender's dragon magic, is far more potent. The Hunting and Waltzing bands are moving warily and taking their time. They are well-funded, hungry for information and willing to pay for it.

Naturally enough, the God Learners of Ralios have heard the self-same rumours and sent *their* agents to Slontos. The All Seeing Staff, dubious though they are of its existence, is too fine a prize to ignore and would, if the legend was true, unlock the entire draconic myth cycle, allowing it to be taken and merged with the God Learner monomyth.

In Slontos, dragonewts, Wyrmfrienders and God Learners are about to clash.

TELEOS

The island of Teleos, located in the eastern Homeward Ocean, is entirely forested and was originally settled by dragonewts during the Dawn Age. This is a sundered colony; there is no Inhuman King and no reincarnation and it has always been this way.

The stories told about Teleos say that the dragonewts stole the power of dream magic from the Inhuman King and were cast out of Dragon Pass for their crimes. On Teleos they have pursued a course of experimentation that led to strange magics

warping the whole area, unfettered dream spells that subtly alter those who come into contact with them. Since humans settled on Teleos, during the First Age, these dream magics have resulted in the development of six human tribes, each with a different colour of skin and completely incompatible life views. The dragonewts may have engineered this development process deliberately, or may simply be studying the way the dream magic has affected the human species but it is, without a doubt, something the dragonewts take great interest in and study relentlessly.

In the Second Age the dragonewts occupy a series of settlements, some over ground and some below, called The Shifts. Each is named for a colour matching that of the separate human tribes and located close to the human settlements. The dragonewts of each Shift appear to function independently; each has a Ruler dragonewt, for instance, but they also co-operate in their Shifting Council which meets twice a year and circulates amongst the Shifts determined by the roll of a large dragon bone die with 12 sides, each face one of the Shift colours. As the Teleos dragonewts are cut off from the draconic lifecycle their eccentricities of behaviour are lessened and the time spent with both the Embyli elves of the island and the humans, has made them a more approachable and comprehensible race.

Blue Shift

All the dragonewts dye their hides into mottled shades of blue. They concern themselves with the study of blueness: in the sky, in water, in plants and rocks, especially. They believe the Cosmic Dragon was blue throughout and inhabits a kingdom of deepest blue whilst dreaming blue dreams. The Ruler dragonewt, Blue Shift Exultant Wonderer, bathes in a nearby spring infused with the petals of blue flowers and emerges the same colour. The dragonewts are friendly and affable. They hold regular Blue Study Days where the blue-skinned humans of the island are invited to Blue Shift and encouraged to take part in a series of games whilst the dragonewts watch politely from raised tiers of stone. Naturally the games are all part of the blueness study experiment and Blue Shift Exultant Wonderer believes it has established an undoubted connection between different hues of blue and running speed. Javelin hurling seems resistant to blueness, whilst jumping and stretching games are actively penalised by it.

Green Shift

As one might imagine, Green Shift concerns itself with greenness but especially plants. The Shift has close and harmonious links with the Embyli of Pearl Lovers House

(who are known as the Dragon Elves as a result of this liaison). An experiment is being developed by the Ruler dragonewt, Green Shift Thrower, whereby dragonewts will pretend to be elves. This is an audacious plan as dragonewts do not have a natural affinity with things that grow and it is the subject of considerable disagreement at the Shifting Council which, perhaps with reason, postulates that if dragonewts pretend to be elves, surely they will take root and sprout branches. Green Shift Thrower maintains this is unlikely to happen and has promised to meditate on the plan for 500 years although its impatience is clear.

Orange Shift

Orange Shift co-ordinates the annual Child Swap ritual that involves most of the Teleos humans. The practice is one of human origin but clearly appeals to the dragonewts who observe with great intent how the Child Swap is agreed and then executed. Along with the local Embyli, the Orange Shift dragonewts are trying to understand the communication cycles existing within the Child Swap ritual but having little success.

Orange Shift is ruled by I Am Curious, a Ruler dragonewt who claims to have achieved Ruler stage without first being a Noble dragonewt. Its lack of a proper tail suggests there is some truth in this assertion and it is the source of great debate at the Shifting Council.

Purple Shift

The Purple Shift dragonewts are fascinated by clothing and finery. They take a close interest in the purple tribe's craftsmanship and all Beaked dragonewts of Purple Shift wear a resplendent purple cloak crafted for them by the humans. The Ruler dragonewt, Purple Shift Controller Imperative, goes as far as wearing hats and jackets and, occasionally, a pair of moccasins woven from purple-dyed palm leaves. The clothing fascination is a constant source of wonderment amongst the dragonewt population and in particular the fickleness of fashion. Whenever Purple Shift Controller Imperative changes the style of its cloak or hat, every dragonewt immediately burns its own garment, marches down to the purple tribe settlements and demands a new version mirroring the style of Imperative's. The dragonewts of Blue Shift believe that this

behaviour is the result of a lack of blue in the garments, whilst the dragonewts of Red Shift secretly admire the ability to adopt new trends and wish they had the same daring.

Red Shift

Red Shift dragonewts are adepts at languages, including one of their own which they claim was dreamed into existence by the Ruler dragonewt Red Leader Singletongue. All stages speak a halting version of the human tongue and are fluent in the language of the Embyli; thus they often act as communicators for all the dragonewts on the island and command great respect. Singletongue spends much time dreaming, hoping to find a way of explaining why Teleos is a sundered colony but with little interest in developing a way back to the draconic path. The rest of the colony spend a great deal of time dealing with Singletongue's dream manifestations that escape and run amok from time-to-time. None of the dream manifestations are necessarily dangerous (although the six-legged blue whale that was dreamed into existence recently inadvertently squashed an entire red human settlement) but they can be embarrassing. One particular example is the Dream Gorp that occupies an otherwise pleasant lake close to Red Shift city. Unlike a true gorp it is harmless but its appearance is disgusting especially when it starts to sing in Auld Wyrnish.

Yellow Shift

The Yellow Shift dragonewts spend a great deal of time studying the trade and commerce practices of the yellow human tribes, who are adepts at striking deals. The dragonewts have developed a fiendishly complicated accounting system based around pebbles and oyster shells which, whilst unfailingly accurate, also tends to drive humans mad when it is explained to them. The Ruler dragonewt, Yellow Shift Gold Standard, has recently started to consider the development of a common currency that will supplant the pebble and oyster system and be more understandable to the yellow humans although, so far, the Nobles, who act as accountants, have dismissed it as far too simplistic and open to fiscal irregularities of cosmic proportions. Yellow Shift Gold Standard intends to float the concept of a currency past the next Shifting Council and has the Crested dragonewts of the settlement minting a selection of 650 separate coin denominations from the gold seams found beneath Yellow Shift's hills.

DRAGONEWT ADVENTURERS

Dragonewts do not make for good RuneQuest Adventurers.

Being immortal, being tied into a perpetual cycle of rebirth, being motivated by Right Action, which is always personal to a dragonewt, means it is extremely difficult to play a dragonewt Adventurer. They are better suited to act as Non-Player Characters and protagonists where their obscure and unfathomable behaviour and motivations can be handled in a far more abstract manner by the Games Master. However, someone, somewhere will always want to play a dragonewt and there is never any harm in experiencing new things. Indeed, restraining oneself from new experiences is counter to the dragonewt philosophy, so here are the guidelines for creating dragonewt Adventurers, either as Adventurers or NPCs.

All dragonewts are creations of the Grand Ancestral Dragon and created in its image. The life stages of the dragonewts reflect the six actions of the Cosmic Dragon and are representative of its cosmic meditations. Naturally the significance of their lifecycle is not fully understood by dragonewts until they reach the Ruler stage and the infinite mysteries of the universe are revealed to them. Even then, they are recipients of only a part of the whole truth. Only True Dragons reach anything approaching the enlightenment of either the Cosmic or Grand Ancestral dragon.

Each stage, then, is part of a journey; physical, mental and spiritual. Dragonewts are born with instincts they must learn to control, whilst denying themselves no experience. Each stage poses a different challenge and a different level of refinement of the whole. The inherent aggression of the Beaked dragonewts needs to be tempered with restraint. Nobles must learn to communicate but not become corrupt. Rulers must learn to rule but not dictate. By the time a dragonewt reaches the point where it can become an Inhuman King it has reached the cusp of draconic enlightenment – something the human Wyrmfriends strive for but can never truly attain. At that point, True Dragonhood beckons and with it the final stage of a long, long lifecycle. As an Inhuman King enters into full dragonhood it experiences a level of epiphany reserved for very few and achieves its ultimate reward: the ability to rest for entire lifetimes if it wishes, until summoned by the Grand Ancestral Dragon to carry out the Cosmic Dragon's will.

EGGS

Dragonewt eggs are laid by a True Dragon, a rare occurrence that establishes a nest but also ensures a fixed population. Egg laying has never been witnessed by human eyes but those who speculate on such matters in the EWF imagine hundreds of eggs being laid in a single clutch; perhaps thousands; or perhaps several dragons co-operating to establish a single nest.

In some cases Inhuman Kings have claimed to be able to create eggs through dream magic although little or no proof of this exists. To all intents and purposes the dragonewt population in Second Age Glorantha is fixed. Only sundered dragonewts die and are not reborn but such mortality levels are relatively low on any kind of human scale and are of little concern to other dragonewts which are secure in their immortality.

Eggs are a little less than human-sized and leathery, resembling dragonhide. The substance of the shell is difficult to damage and only a hatching dragonewt is capable of pushing its way through the membranes of the egg, which naturally reforms as the dragonewt crawls into the outside world.

If one could see inside an egg, one would not see the traditional ova components of yolk sac and albumen. Instead one would see a grayish-black void and floating at its centre a tiny pulsing light, which is the proto-soul of the dragonewt. When a dragonewt's physical body dies the proto-soul senses the returning of the full soul to the egg and begins to weave a new body frame from the stuff of the surrounding void. A complex magical formula, driven partly by the proto-soul, partly by the birthing dragonewt and partly by the Inhuman King's psychic link to every egg in its sphere of influence, decides the form of the body to be taken for the next hatching. This might be of the same stage, a lesser stage, or a higher one, depending on the maturity, purity and psychic development of the dragonewt.

Forming the new body takes a day at its fastest but can be longer, depending on the stage of the development. When formed the dragonewt instinctively prises itself free of the



shell, emerging fully-formed in whatever stage it is destined to take next. A short period of disorientation follows, as the dragonewt reorders its memories and experiences and begins to assimilate new abilities or effects as determined by its stage. The disorientation lasts for a number of hours equal to the dragonewt's POW. Usually the dragonewt simply sits by its egg waiting for clarity to develop but occasionally a dragonewt may stumble around in dismay, dumbstruck by its surroundings as it tries to recall who and what it is.

Dragonewts have an innate psychic bond with their birth egg. They know when it is under threat and act to preserve it whenever practical.

GENERAL PHYSIOLOGY

Dragonewts are bipedal reptilians, scale-covered and warm-blooded. The lifecycle consists of several metamorphoses with each stage becoming more draconic in appearance than the last. All stages of development share a number of reptilian traits that, whilst diminishing with reincarnation, are never truly lost.

All dragonewts are binocular and possess excellent visual acuity and depth of field. They perceive colours in the standard spectrum although Rulers and Inhuman Kings are able to perceive the draconic spectrum which is a mixture of emotions and philosophical leanings represented as colours that have no human comparison.

Hearing is not particularly acute but develops through the lifecycles. In the Crested and Beaked stages hearing is compensated for by the ability to sense ground vibrations and shifts in air pressure, so their perceptive traits are not considered to be lacking. The senses of taste and smell are finely developed, even in Crested dragonewts. Extremely subtle variations in taste and scent can be detected easily at all stages and become more refined with time. Noble dragonewts, which are omnivorous, are often considered to be gourmands due to the refinement of their palates.

Dragonewts do not possess any form of sexual or reproductive organs. There is no equivalence of mating and dragonewts,

whilst communal, do not form any kind of one-to-one kinship, ties or family groups. One higher stage dragonewt, such as a Noble, will dominate lesser stages but purely to achieve communal goals.

All dragonewts are born left-handed and remain that way until achieving True Dragonhood.

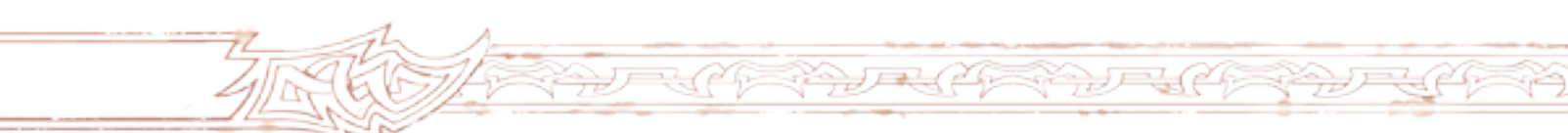
DRAGONEWT LIMITATIONS

As has been established by now, almost all dragonewts are tied into a cycle of rebirth, gradually working their way through more powerful but more focused stages, until they reach True Dragonhood.

Regular contact with outsiders is usually assigned to one individual in a group, always a Noble, who tries to act according to human expectations. It learns human languages and learns to write or otherwise communicate ideas to humans.

Barbarian Dragonewts

It is rare for lesser stage dragonewts to interact with other species, because it is easy for those below the Noble stage to become isolated from the draconic path if they 'taint' themselves with too much intermingling. They lack the maturity of mind and purpose to engage in regular discourse and still maintain pure draconic integrity; the more Crested and Beaked dragonewts interact with humans, the more their minds and souls begin to adapt to impure human ways – even those who are ardent members of draconic cults.



Designated interpreters may have guards, servants and so on, and it is not unknown for these dragonewts to become outlaws or, as they are more commonly known, barbarians. They essentially absorb so many human thought processes that they become unable to reconcile the human psyche with that of the draconic path. Pure dragonewts recognise this as 'insanity'. It manifests in curiosity with human motives and desires and rapidly builds into an obsession with the kind of mortal freedom humans take for granted. 'Insane dragonewts' are quickly spotted and exiled from the draconic path, so their taint will not infect the rest of the nest. The usual result is for the dragonewt to become an outlaw. Cast out from its settlement the outlaw can try to make its way on its own, adopt human customs and find sanctuary with them, or retreat to a settlement such as one of the Sundered Colonies of Dragon Pass, where all inhabitants are outside the draconic cycle for one reason or another. When an outlaw dragonewt dies, it is not reincarnated and never reappears. No one knows where its soul goes.

Outlaw dragonewts are by far the best choice for Adventurers. They are unshackled by the strict and unintelligible codes of the major dragonewt settlements and may freely adopt more human characteristics making them easier for players to relate to. Of course, outlaw dragonewts are still considerably strange by human standards but they can, at the very least, communicate with humans without any other hindrance than a halting ability to speak a human language. With Games Master approval, a player can select an outlaw dragonewt as his Adventurer.

Traditional Dragonewts

Normal dragonewts, on the other hand, are useful tools for Games Masters. For Wyrmfriends, dragonewts are the mysterious benefactors of the draconic cults who have allied themselves with the Great Dragon Project. They have allowed Wyrmfriends into their cities and engaged in limited co-operation to achieve the majesty of the Great Dragon to Be. In this respect they are allies, patrons and, on occasions, companions on missions of importance to the EWF. Where dragonewts accompany a party of human Adventurers, all communication is channelled through a Noble dragonewt. The lower stages never engage in direct communication primarily because they cannot but also because they wish to avoid taint.

CREATING A DRAGONEWT ADVENTURER

The checklist for creating a dragonewt Adventurer is as follows:

- All Adventurers dragonewts begin as Crested dragonewts. If the Games Master permits it, a dragonewt Adventurer can begin at the Beaked stage but the player must work with the Games Master to determine what the preceding lifecycle held for the Crested dragonewt. Together they should outline some of the events the previous incarnation was involved in and what its previous cultural background may have been. It is perfectly plausible for a Crested dragonewt to have been from a traditional background but to have become barbarian in its later incarnation. If so, the reason why needs to be established. No Adventurer should begin at either the Noble or Ruler stage.
- Determine Cultural Background, according to the Cultural Background Table. This determines professions and skills available to dragonewt Adventurers, depending on their cultural origin: barbarian or traditional.
- Determine the dragonewt's current profession. This is dependent on the dragonewt's stage of development and determines the rest of the dragonewt's skills.
- Select a cult for the dragonewt to belong to, referring to the Dragonewt Cults chapter beginning on page 65 but depending on the Cultural Background the cult may be dragonewt, EWF or even a non-draconic cult, if the Adventurer is a barbarian dragonewt. For EWF and human cults, refer to *Cults of Glorantha* as appropriate.
- Determine the magic or effects known by the dragonewt, referring to the Magic chapter. For Crested dragonewts determine the Common Magic known and for Beaked and Noble dragonewts, the effects they have reincarnated with. Rulers and Inhuman Kings know *all* the available dragonewt effects.
- Allocate the Free Skill Points to remaining skills and to buy new advanced skills. The number of Free Skill Points depends on the number of previous incarnations of the dragonewt's particular stage.

DRAGONEWT CHARACTERISTICS

First Stage: Crested Dragonewt (Scout)

The smallest of the dragonewt species and sometimes referred to as 'Scouts' (although this term is considered derogatory by dragonewts). They resemble a cross between human and freshwater newt, with an angular head, large, round, unblinking eyes and a crest running from above the eye ridge to the nape of the neck. The crest can be raised and lowered at will and is used to indicate emotional states: erect when calm; flattened to the head when panicked, confused or under stress.

The limbs are slender to the point of being scrawny, with long, thin fingers and opposable thumbs. The feet are twin-toed. The legs possess a traditional human-like knee but this is modified in later stages to a pair of reverse joints much like the hind legs of quadruped mammals.

The hide is smooth and drab-coloured although many display mottling or dappling of the skin as they mature. The tail begins as a bony nub, elongating with age and as its body enlarges and reincarnates.

Crested dragonewts are exclusively vegetarian with no desire to eat meat, although they hunt it for others happily and are trained to do so by Beaked and Noble dragonewts. Unlike other herbivores they do not need to consume large quantities of vegetable matter to survive; a handful of nuts



and berries will suffice and even grass provides nutrition if nothing else is available.

Crested dragonewts look, and act, inferior to the higher stages. They are subservient when in the company of Beaked or Nobles and actively terrified of Ruler dragonewts. When encountered singly or in small groups they are easily influenced with a natural deference to anyone showing a degree of authority.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	2D6	7	1-2	Tail	1/4
CON	3D6	11	3-5	Right Leg	1/4
SIZ	2D6	7	6-8	Left Leg	1/4
DEX	2D6+9	16	9-11	Abdomen	1/5
INT	4D6	14	12	Chest	1/6
POW	2D6	7	13-15	Right Arm	1/3
CHA	3D6	11	16-18	Left Arm	1/3
			19-20	Head	1/4
Combat Actions		3	Typical Armour: Scales (AP 1)		
Damage Modifier		-1D4	Traits: Reincarnation		
Magic Points		7			
Movement		8m			
Strike Rank		+15			

Second Stage: Beaked Dragonewt (Warrior)

Larger and stockier than the Crested stage, Beaked dragonewts have developed bony ridges across the body and a thickening of the skin lending a more menacing appearance. The round, bewildered gaze of the Crested has been replaced with a narrow, stony stare and the crest has shrunk to form a spiny ridge that now extends almost the length of the backbone.

The limbs are thicker and stronger. Musculature is vastly improved as are general reactions. The mouth has elongated and narrowed, forming a tough, bony beak filled with rows of small, sharp teeth. The hands have developed claws but these do not impede manual dexterity. As the dragonewt matures, its skin begins to develop more horns, spines and warty protrusions. The tail is almost full length and covered in thick scales with occasional spikes and spine-like protrusions.

Body colourings are more varied. The drab grey-green of the Crested stage is replaced with darker and lighter hues, especially across the chest and abdomen. Gold

and amber spots or stripes are not uncommon and appear to follow a particular pattern for a specific nest or clutch.

The inferiority complex of the Crested stage has been lost. Beaked dragonewts are naturally more aggressive and ready to challenge for position in social groupings, unless a Noble or Ruler is present. Whilst more aggressive as a breed, Beaked dragonewts are considered and fluid in their actions and movements, exhibiting inner control and confidence in their bodies. They are not easy to startle or intimidate, even for Noble dragonewts.

Beaked dragonewts are exclusively carnivorous and hunt their own meat unless there is a handy Crested dragonewt to do it for them. Meat is eaten raw but always killed first. Bones are reserved for crafting tools and weapons, as are skins and hides which may be used for crafting shelters and armour.

Beaked dragonewts are able builders. They possess a very fine degree of hand-eye co-ordination and visual perception allowing them to accurately gauge distances and measurements without the need for any form of measuring equipment.



	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	2D6+12	19	1-2	Tail	6/8
CON	3D6+6	17	3-5	Right Leg	6/8
SIZ	2D6+12	19	6-8	Left Leg	6/8
DEX	2D6+3	10	9-11	Abdomen	6/9
INT	4D6	14	12	Chest	6/10
POW	2D6+6	13	13-15	Right Arm	6/7
CHA	3D6+3	14	16-18	Left Arm	6/7
			19-20	Head	6/8

Combat Actions	2
Damage Modifier	+1D6
Magic Points	13
Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+12

Typical Armour: Scales (AP 6)

Traits: Reincarnation

Third Stage: Noble Dragonewt (Tailed Priest)

The Noble stage sees the dragonewt adopting clearly draconic physical characteristics. Neck wattles are common as is a lateral crest running between the dragonewt's ears. Frills of skin decorate the arms and torso and the tail is now almost fully developed into a long, whip-like limb that tapers to a point and is often covered in small spines or warts and more frills of skin.

Skin colouration is far more varied; Nobles display all manner of skin colourations, often with bright, primary colours replacing the drab colours of previous stages. Colours in different parts of the body, such as the face, can alter subtly with mood and emotion and frequently at the dragonewt's particular whim. Scent glands have also developed across the body, giving the Noble a distinctive and sometimes unpleasant (to humans) aroma.

Nobles are omnivorous and have a developed taste for cooked food. Some have the reputation of being gourmands enjoying complicated dishes that excite all the senses. Banquets held exclusively for Nobles, cooked by Nobles, are common with dragonewt chefs competing to prepare and serve the most intricate dishes.



	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	2D6+6	13	1-2	Tail	3/6
CON	3D6+6	17	3-5	Right Leg	3/6
SIZ	2D6+6	13	6-8	Left Leg	3/6
DEX	2D6+6	13	9-11	Abdomen	3/7
INT	4D6	14	12	Chest	3/8
POW	2D6+12	19	13-15	Right Arm	3/5
CHA	3D6+6	17	16-18	Left Arm	3/5
			19-20	Head	3/6
Combat Actions		3	Typical Armour: Scales (AP 3)		
Damage Modifier		+1D2	Traits: Reincarnation		
Magic Points		19			
Movement		8m			
Strike Rank		+14			

Fourth Stage: Ruler Dragonewt (Full Priest)

Ruler dragonewts resemble Nobles but are larger and equipped with wings. The sociable tendencies of the Noble stage have been lost and Rulers are rarely found beyond the nest or their cities, with much time spent dreaming and questing.

The wings are full, powerful and follow the colouration of the body but typically with a darker underside. Rulers are capable of flight and shun any other form of transport. They also shun the use of handheld weapons, making full use of the range of draconic effects now at their disposal.

They express little interest in food and may require none whatsoever.



	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	4D6+12	26	1-2	Tail	9/9
CON	3D6+6	17	3-4	Right Leg	9/9
SIZ	4D6+12	26	5-6	Left Leg	9/9
DEX	2D6+6	13	7-8	Abdomen	9/10
INT	4D6	14	9-10	Chest	9/11
POW	2D6+18	25	11-12	Right Wing	9/8
CHA	3D6+12	23	13-14	Left Wing	9/8
			15-17	Right Arm	9/8
			18-19	Left Arm	9/8
			20	Head	9/9

Combat Actions	3
Damage Modifier	+1D12
Magic Points	25
Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+14

Typical Armour: Scales (AP 9)

Traits: Reincarnation

Inhuman Kings

As these are rare, powerful and unique beings, game statistics are of little relevance here. Should they prove necessary, use the Characteristics for a Ruler dragonewt and double the INT and POW values.

SPECIAL RULES

In addition to their variant Characteristics, dragonewt Adventurers possess an additional ability lacked by other races.

Reincarnation

Dragonewts are reborn many times and the process has no upper limit. Every time the dragonewt reincarnates, it is reborn in the city or nest where its birth egg is stored, irrespective of where it dies.

When a dragonewt Adventurer reincarnates as a new stage, its Characteristics are rerolled according to the Characteristics for that stage and all Abilities are recalculated appropriately. New magic, such as the Dragonewt Effects discussed in the Dragonewt Magic chapter are determined and, in the case of Crested dragonewts, the Common Magic skill is forgotten.

Most skills revert to their initial values, including Right Action. The dragonewt's skills can be improved using the new Free Skill Points base value as described later in this chapter. However, some skills *remain at their previous value* and may be increased using the Free Skill Points. These skills are:

- Draconic Illumination
- All Draconic Lore skills
- Language (Auld Wyrmmish)
- Utuma

Hero Points accrued during the previous stage are retained but any Heroic Abilities are lost. The dragonewt remembers its previous incarnations perfectly and all events associated with them, although its physical appearance will now have changed beyond all previous recognition and so will its personality. The new stage measures Right Action progression against the new set of Personality Traits summarised in the text box on page 59 of this chapter.

The dragonewt must also select a new Profession relevant to its stage: the Games Master may decide what the new profession will be, or it can be the player's choice. The dragonewt Adventurer can also join a new cult if it so wishes.

Reincarnating as a Ruler Dragonewt

When a dragonewt reincarnates at the Ruler stage, options for adventuring become very limited. Rulers spend most

of their time in deep contemplation, HeroQuesting and FutureQuesting; they are close to True Dragonhood and are, to all intents and purposes, beyond the mundane world. At this point it is probably wise for the dragonewt Adventurer to retire, unless the Games Master intends to continue the campaign at an advanced level involving detailed HeroQuests and FutureQuests.

DRAGONEWT BACKGROUNDS

There are four principle Cultural Backgrounds available to dragonewt Adventurers: Barbarian, Sundered, Traditionalist and Wyrmmfriend.

Barbarian

These are the outlaws of the dragonewt species. They have adopted non-dragonewt practices, may follow human cults and are completely cut-off from their eggs and nests. Barbarians do not reincarnate although, through choice, they can attempt to re-enter the draconic lifecycle and regain immortality, yet this generally involves complete regeneration as a Crested dragonewt shorn of all previous knowledge and experience.

Barbarians are often itinerants, acting as mercenaries or lone crusaders, engaged on humanlike endeavours or obscure quests of their own devising. Barbarian Dragonewts are found in Dara Happa, Dragon Pass, Kralorela, Ormsland, Slontos and Teleos.

Sundered

Sundered dragonewts belong to a colony and are, to all intents and purposes, either Traditionalists or Wyrmmfriends but have somehow become exempt from the draconic path because they have no Inhuman King governing their reincarnation. Sundered dragonewts lack either the will or inclination to become Barbarians but some may follow this path when it becomes obvious they have little hope of regaining the draconic lifecycle.

Sundered Dragonewts are found in Dara Happa, Dragon Pass, Ormsland, Slontos and Teleos.

Traditionalist

Most dragonewts are Traditionalists. They dwell in the major settlements under the auspices of an Inhuman King, belong only to dragonewt cults and are intent on pursuing full dragonhood. They are preoccupied with all things draconic with little interest or time for the schemes of the EWF.

Traditionalist Dragonewts are found in Dara Happa, Dragon Pass, Kralorela and Ormsland.

Wyrmfriend

These are dragonewts that have firmly adopted the philosophies and goals of the EWF, although they still retain the draconic path. Wyrmfriend dragonewts have often been commanded to adopt Wyrmfriend ideals by either a Ruler or an Inhuman King, either through a genuine need to guide and inform Wyrmfriend activities, or to exert a proxy influence amongst those Wyrmfriends that may be operating in ways contrary to dragonewt plans. Either way, Wyrmfriend dragonewts may join EWF draconic cults (but not progress through them) and take part in EWF-organised endeavours.

Wyrmfriend Dragonewts are found in Dara Happa, Dragon Pass and Ormsland.

Dragonewt Cultural Backgrounds

Background	Common Skill Bonuses	Combat Styles	Advanced Skill Bonuses	Professions	Starting Money
Barbarian	Culture (Own) +30%, Insight +10%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Resilience +10% Choose two of the following skills and gain a +10% bonus to each: Drive, Evade, Persistence, Ride*	Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	Language (Auld Wyrmish) +50% Select Three Craft (Any), Healing, Lore (Any), Play Instrument, Survival, Tracking	Crested Animal Trainer, Craftsman, Explorer, Herdsman, Hunter, Soldier Beaked Animal Trainer, Craftsman, Explorer, Hunter, Mercenary, Miner, Soldier Noble Diplomat, Explorer, Merchant, Physician, Priest, Scholar	4D6x20 Silver
Sundered	Culture (Own) +30%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Resilience +10% Choose two of the following skills and gain a +10% bonus to each: Dance, Drive, Evade, Persistence, Ride*	Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	Language (Auld Wyrmish) +50%, Lore (Cult Theology), Utuma Select Two Craft (Any), Healing, Lore (Any), Play Instrument, Survival, Tracking	Crested: Craftsman, Hunter, Soldier Beaked Animal Trainer, Craftsman, Explorer, Hunter, Miner, Soldier Noble Diplomat, Physician, Priest	4D6x30 Silver
Traditionalist	Culture (Own) +30%, Dance +10%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Resilience +10% Choose two of the following skills and gain a +5% bonus to each: Drive, Evade, Persistence, Ride*	Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	Draconic Illumination, Language (Auld Wyrmish) +50%, Right Action, Utuma Select One Craft (Any), Healing, Lore (Any), Play Instrument, Survival, Tracking	Crested: Craftsman, Hunter, Soldier Beaked Animal Trainer, Craftsman, Explorer, Hunter, Miner, Soldier Noble Diplomat, Physician, Priest	4D6x50 Silver

Background	Common Skill Bonuses	Combat Styles	Advanced Skill Bonuses	Professions	Starting Money
Wyrmfriend	Culture (Own) +30%, Dance +10%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Resilience +10% Choose two of the following skills and gain a +5% bonus to each: Drive, Evade, Insight, Ride*	Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	Draconic Illumination, Language (Auld Wyrnish) +50%, Right Action, Utuma Select One Craft (Any), Healing, Lore (Any), Play Instrument, Survival, Tracking	Crested: Craftsman, Hunter, Soldier Beaked Animal Trainer, Craftsman, Explorer, Hunter, Mercenary, Miner, Soldier Noble Diplomat, Physician, Priest	4D6x100 Silver

* Riders must choose the species associated with their skill: *Demi-Birds* or *Dinosaurs*.

DRAGONEWT PROFESSIONS

Dragonewt professions do not differ greatly from their non-dragonewt counterparts in terms of the skills available. Animal Trainers always specialise in either Demi-Birds, Dinosaurs or Herd Beasts and Priests are always priests of a particular dragonewt cult but not an EWF cult.

Dragonewt Professions

Profession	Common Skill Bonuses	Advanced Skills
Animal Trainer	Drive +5%, First Aid +5%, Influence +10%, Persistence +10%, Ride +10%	Lore (Specific Animal)
Craftsman	Evaluate +20%, Influence +5%, Persistence +5%	Craft (Bone, Obsidian, Stone or Wood)
		Select One Craft (Other), Engineering, Mechanisms
Diplomat	Influence +20%, Perception +10%	Select Two Courtesy, Culture (Other), Language (Any), Lore (Any)
Explorer	Perception +5%, Resilience +5%, Ride +10%	Select Three Culture (Other), Language (Any), Lore (Foreign Region), Survival, Tracking
Herdsmen	Athletics +10%, First Aid +10%, Lore (Regional) +10%, Resilience +10%	Survival
Hunter	Lore (Regional) +10%, Stealth +10%	Survival, Tracking
	Choose one ranged based Combat Style and gain a +10% bonus to it	
Mercenary	Select Two Athletics +5%, Drive +5%, Evade +5%, Evaluate +5%, Resilience +5%, Ride +5% Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	Culture (Other)

Profession	Common Skill Bonuses	Advanced Skills
Merchant	Evaluate +20%, Influence +5%, Insight +5%	Select Two Commerce, Culture (Other), Language (Trade Talk)
Miner	Athletics +10%, Brawn +10%, Resilience +10%	Select Two Craft (Mining), Engineering, Lore (Mineral)
Physician	First Aid +20%, Insight +5%, Lore (Regional) +10%, Perception +5%	Healing
Priest	Influence +20%, Persistence +10%	Lore (Cult Theology), Pact (Cult)
Scholar	Evaluate +5%, Lore (Regional) +5%, Persistence +10%	Lore (Any)
Soldier	Evade +10%, Resilience +10%, Unarmed +10%	Select Two Engineering, Healing, Language, Lore (Other)

Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each

Dragonewt Combat Styles

Dragonewts use the following weapons, either singularly or in combination, as part of their Combat Styles. This book assumes a default of one two-handed or two single-handed weapons per style but Games Masters may freely include as many as is fitting for his campaign.

Close Combat: Gami, Klanth, Ptsath, Utuma, Unarmed

Ranged Combat: Bone Bow, Chokin, Samarin, Tzath, Sling

NEW SKILLS FOR DRAGONEWTS

Dragonewts have two new Advanced Skills: Right Action and Utuma. Both skills reflect the inherent peculiarities of dragonewts and the Right Action skill is fundamental to progression through the draconic life cycle.

Right Action (INT+POW)

This skill is used in two different ways.

First, whenever a dragonewt needs to make a crucial decision, it always struggles with the overwhelming desire to act through instinct rather than conscious choice. The Right Action skill measures how well the dragonewt can master its instincts.

A Right Action test is required whenever a dragonewt is faced with making a decision that involves one of the pair of Personality Traits summarised here. If the test succeeds then the dragonewt has acted with consideration and control and thus performed Right Action. It may act in a way determined by *either* of the Personality Traits. If the test fails, then instinct has prevailed and Wrong Action occurs. The dragonewt *must* act in a manner reflected by the *second* of the paired Personality Traits.

For example, Eye Golden Laughter is a Crested dragonewt with a Right Action skill of 41%. It is commanded by a Beaked dragonewt to kill a deer because the Beaked dragonewt is hungry. This challenges Eye Golden Laughter's Stubbornness and Docility traits pairing, so a Right Action test is needed. Eye Golden Laughter's test is a 40, a success and thus indicates that whatever it does, it will be Right Action and justifiable as such. The Crested dragonewt dutifully loads its sling and takes aim at the beautiful stag it has been contemplating for the last three hours.

Later, Eye Golden Laughter is commanded by the same Beaked dragonewt to attack a broo that has been seen lurking in the woods near Contemplative Rest. This challenges Eye Golden Laughter's Bravery and Cowardice traits and calls for another Right Action test. This time the dice roll is a 66 – a failure. Eye Golden Laughter's Cowardice, the second of the trait pairing, prevails and instead of attacking the broo, the Crested dragonewt skulks in the bushes, hoping the beastman will grow bored and depart. Eye Golden Laughter has just committed Wrong Action.

Whenever Right Action occurs, the Right Action skill increases automatically by 1 point. If the Right Action test was a critical

success, it increases by 2 points. Every time the Skill Test fails (ie, Wrong Action occurs), the Right Action skill decreases by 1 point. If the test was a fumble, then it decreases by 2 points.

The second use for the Right Action skill is as a measure of how close to reincarnation, to the next stage, the dragonewt is. When the Right Action skill reaches 100% or more, the dragonewt is ready for rebirth as the next, higher stage. The rebirth is not automatic; and it occurs only when the dragonewt dies honourably – either as a result of combat or an utuma commanded by a higher stage that has recognised the dragonewt’s maturity. If the dragonewt dies or commits utuma (and the utuma is found to be Right Action through a successful test) before its Right Action skill reaches 100%, it is reborn in the same stage but with additional skill points as noted in the Free Skill Points section of this chapter.

If the dragonewt dies *dishonourably* or its Utuma Skill Test is fumbled (see the Utuma skill), then the dragonewt reincarnates as the same stage but with all skills and abilities reduced to the initial values for that stage.

For example, after many years and many trials, Eye Golden Laughter’s Right Action skill has reached 102%. It knows it is ready for rebirth as a Beaked dragonewt. One of the Noble dragonewts has been watching Eye Golden Laughter and senses the dragonewt is ready. It commands Eye Golden Laughter to perform the sacred meditation and then commit utuma, permitting the transformation into a Beaked dragonewt. Eye Golden Laughter takes itself into the wilds of Dragon Pass, offers prayers to The Wondrous Mother of Many and uses its Utuma skill successfully. Eye Golden Laughter enters the Void of the egg birth and, after a short while, rehatches in Contemplative Rest as a fully fledged Beaked dragonewt.

Had its Utuma roll failed, Eye Golden Laughter would have been reborn as a Crested dragonewt, for clearly it still has things to learn in this stage. Also, had the Utuma test been a fumble, Eye Golden Laughter would be reborn as a basic Crested dragonewt, forced to repeat this stage from humble beginnings.

The Right Action skill can be improved like any other **RuneQuest** skill using improvement rolls. However Right Action only ever increases by 1 point when advanced in this way.

Right Action also improves automatically as the dragonewt improves in other, key skills as summarised in the following table. Right Action improves by 1 point every time one of the skills corresponding to its stage of development is improved.

Dragonewt Right Action Improvement Table

Stage	Skills
Crested	Athletics, Common Magic, Dance, Perception
Beaked	All Combat skills, Evade, Ride
Noble	All Language and Lore Skills

Personality Traits Summary

Crested Dragonewts

*Aggression and Passivity
Bravery and Cowardice
Energy and Laziness*

*Stubbornness and Docility
Dependability and Unreliability*

Beaked Dragonewts

*Curiosity and Apathy
Leader and Follower
Impulsive and Cautious
Calm and Nervous
Trusting and Suspicious*

Noble Dragonewts

*Honour and Dishonour
Generosity and Greed
Patience and Impatience
Extrovert and Introvert*

Ruler Dragonewts

*Clever and Dull
Innovation and Conservatism
Optimism and Pessimism
Construction and Destruction*

Utuma (CON+POW)

Utuma is a skill available to most dragonewts as it is part of their personalities, channelled from the will of the Grand Ancestral Dragon. For any other species, Wyrmfriends for instance, it is considered an esoteric skill to learn, since most species do not reincarnate and therefore it may only ever be used once.

Utuma is used as a skill to commit ritual suicide using either the utuma weapon or a dragonbone blade. A successful test

against the skill indicates that the dragonewt has killed itself effectively and destroyed all vital parts, including its skin, so that no part of its body can be used for tainted purposes. Failing the test indicates death but not the destruction of the vitals, meaning that the skin (and other organs) can be used after the dragonewt's death, as described in the section on utuma in this chapter.

If the test is fumbled then the dragonewt has failed to redeem its honour and must relive its current incarnation again. All skills are returned to their initial values and the dragonewt Adventurer must fulfil precisely the same advancement criteria before it can be reborn again.

FREE SKILL POINTS

The Free Skill Points available to dragonewt Adventurers depend on the lifecycle stage and the number of incarnations experienced within that stage, plus those of the stages before. Whilst it is possible for a dragonewt to experience infinite reincarnations within the same stage, for practical purposes the number of previous incarnations is determined by a dice roll.

When allocating Free Skill Points, dragonewts are not restricted to the usual limits placed upon increasing existing skills and buying new ones.

Crested Dragonewts

All Crested dragonewts begin with 150 Free Skill Points, plus 10 additional skill points for each Crested reincarnation. Roll 3D6 to determine how many times the dragonewt has been reborn in the Crested stage and then multiply the result by 10 to determine how many Free Skill Points are available.

For example: Spectral Receiver is a Crested dragonewt. The 3D6 roll results in a 12 indicating 12 previous Crested incarnations. Multiplying 12 by 10 gives 120 which is added to the 150 base Free Skill Points to give 270 Free Skill Points in total.

Beaked Dragonewts

All Beaked dragonewts begin with 300 Free Skill Points, plus 10 additional skill points for each Beaked reincarnation. Roll 2D6 to determine how many times the dragonewt has been reborn in the Beaked stage and then multiply the result by 10 to determine how many Free Skill Points are available.

For example: Black Faraway Klanth is a Beaked dragonewt. The 2D6 roll results in a 6 indicating six previous Beaked incarnations. Multiplying 6 by 10 gives 60 which is added to the 300 base Free Skill Points to give 360 Free Skill Points in total.

Noble Dragonewts

Nobles begin with 500 Free Skill Points, plus 10 additional skill points for each Noble reincarnation. Roll 1D10 to determine the number of Noble reincarnations and multiply the result by 10 to determine how many Free Skill Points are available.

For example: Singer of Sh'kaharzeel Songs is a Noble dragonewt. The 1D10 roll gives a 4, indicating four previous incarnations as a Noble, and thus 40 points to be added to the Noble Free Skill Points, for 540 Free Skill Points.

Rulers and Inhuman Kings

If it should prove necessary to determine the Free Skill Points for either of these stages, consider the Free Skill Points available to be $1D4+1 \times 500$ for Rulers and $1D4+1 \times 1,000$ for Inhuman Kings.

DRAGONEWT EQUIPMENT

Just as dragonewts themselves are exotic and difficult to understand, so too are the weapons and tools the race employs. Dragonewts do not refine and forge metal, so all implements must be formed of bone, stone or wood. Shields are not used in dragonewt culture (with the exception of the Qua, which is more weapon than shield), though a barbarian dragonewt may certainly use one if it wishes.

Gami: A gami is a three-pronged swordcatcher made of dragonbone, exceptionally effective at parrying. A gami works like a Main Gauche increasing the damage blocked by one step (it is treated as a Large weapon when parrying). A Gami can freely use the Combat Manoeuvre of Pin Weapon without needing to roll a critical success. The gami is presented to all newly hatched Beaked dragonewts as a sign of their new status.

Klanth: A klanth is a weapon constructed of flint blades set into a wooden haft. It is normally used one handed by dragonewts of sufficient strength, two handed by others. A few rare klanths are constructed of dragon bone rather than wood and have AP/HP of 8/18. A ritual klanth is always presented to a newly incarnated Beaked dragonewt as part of the general welcoming ceremony for attaining this stage.

Ptsath: A spear by any other name, it has a carefully napped flint or obsidian head, each one uniquely shaped with razor sharp spurs and flanges, for that particular dragonewt. When used to impale a victim the fragile, decorative barbs tend to break off, causing a further 1d3 points of damage per round of using/flexing the location even after the Ptsath is withdrawn, until the fragments are removed by surgery. The location can be healed with the splinters left in but if used again, the

Close Combat Weapons

Weapon	Handedness	Damage Dice	STR/DEX	Size	Reach	Combat Manoeuvres	ENC	AP/HP	Cost
Gami	Single	1D6+3	15/9	M	M	Pin Weapon	1	4/8	80 SP
Klanth	Single	1D10	17/9	L	L	Bleed, Sunder	2	4/12	100 SP
	Double	2D6	9/9						
Ptsath	Single	1D8+1	5/5	M	L	Impale	1	4/5	20 SP
	Double	1D10+1		L	VL			4/10	30 SP
Utuma	Single	1D6	9/7	M	M	Bleed	1	6/10	60 SP
Unarmed	—	1D4+1	—	S/M	T/S	Bleed, Grip, Take Weapon	—	—	—

Ranged Weapons

Weapon	Handedness	Damage	Damage Modifier	Range	Load	STR/DEX	SIZ	Combat Manoeuvres	ENC	AP/HP	Cost
Bone Bow	Double	1D10	Y	200m	1	19/9	E	Impale	2	8/8	500 SP
Chokin	Single	1D4+1	Y	20m	—	-/9	M	Impale	—	1/1	50 SP
Samarin	Single	1D6	Y	20m	—	-/9	M	Impale	—	1/2	35 SP
Sling	Single	1D8	Y	200m	1	-/11	L	Stun Location	—	1/2	5 SP
Tzath	Single	1D8	Y	30m	—	5/9	H	Impale, Pin Weapon (Shield)	1	3/8	20 SP

fragments cause further damage. A Ptsath can only inflict this sort of wound once, after which it acts as a normal spear.

Utuma: This weapon is the dragonewt version of a shortsword. Usually, it is a reinforced flint blade but a very rare utuma is made from dragon bone. These have an AP/HP of 8/12. All dragonewt stages use an utuma, both for defence and the ritual suicide of the same name.

Unarmed: Although not specifically a separate weapon, the claws, teeth and tail of dragonewts are more capable of inflicting damage than the limbs of other humanoids, due to their natural functionality to pierce, tear and club. The Size and Reach of a dragonewt's unarmed attacks depend on its SIZ Characteristic. Unarmed attacks of dragonewts under SIZ 20 are considered Small and Touch. Those of SIZ 20 and over are Medium and Short.

Bone Bow: This is a massive recurved bow made of dragon bone and strung with pteranodon tendon. It is capable of punching through the largest shields and is used strictly by Beaked dragonewts.

Chokin and Samarin: These are small throwing weapons made either of flint or obsidian, which can impale. The dragonewt may throw up to three chokin or four samarin at the same time during a single Combat Action. The dragonewt may not mix the two weapons in a single throw – for example, he may not throw two chokin and one samarin. For each additional weapon thrown at one time, the dragonewt must subtract 10% from the chance to hit for all weapons thrown.

For example, if a dragonewt with a Throwing skill of 50% throws one samarin, its chance to hit is 50%. If it throws two at once, the chance to hit falls to 30% for each. If it throws three, it has a 20% chance for any of them to hit and if it attempts to throw four, its chance to hit is only 10%.

Sling: A dragonewt's sling is essentially identical to any other sling, save that the pouch is often made of human or dragonewt skin. It is also the main missile weapon of Crested dragonewts and is shunned by higher stages.

Tzath: Throwing javelins which have similarly shaped flint or obsidian heads as Ptsath, including the nasty ability of breaking off in the wound.



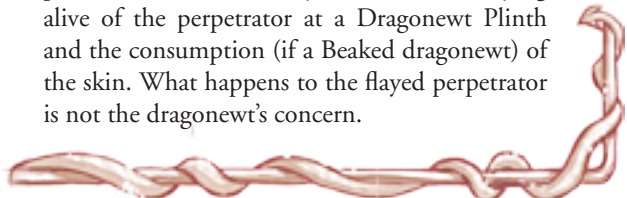
Dragonewt Hide

Dragonewt hide offers natural armour protection: Crested dragonewts gain 1AP per Hit Location; Beaked gain 6AP; Nobles gain 3AP and Rulers gain 9AP.

The hide of a dragonewt is highly prized in some quarters for its lightness and flexibility. Unscrupulous mercenaries have been known to hunt live dragonewts solely for their skins, which are then taken to skilled craftsmen who turn the skin into light, flexible, unrestrictive armour. This might be good news for armourers but it is dreadful for dragonewts, even those who have willingly died or shed a body naturally and are about to reincarnate.

Any dragonewt that has its skin flayed from the body finds its reincarnation cycle disrupted. It cannot progress to the next stage in its cycle and even when reincarnating into the same stage, the time spent regenerating in the egg is increased by 1D6 days.

The Right Action for any dragonewt who has its hide taken is revenge. This restores the natural rhythms of the lifecycle and punishes the offender. Dragonewts, particularly Beaked stages, will go to extraordinary lengths to track down and punish those responsible for desecrating the flesh of the previous body. Upon reincarnation the dragonewt automatically knows the identity of the defiler and is bound by Right Action to seek-out and punish the wrong-doer. The punishment ritual is always the same: the flaying alive of the perpetrator at a Dragonewt Plinth and the consumption (if a Beaked dragonewt) of the skin. What happens to the flayed perpetrator is not the dragonewt's concern.



UTUMA

The act of utuma is that of ritual suicide using the shortsword of the same name. Utuma is invited for a variety of reasons: either because self-sacrifice of the current body is Right Action; or, a particularly serious Wrong Action cannot be rectified in

any other way; or because a particular ritual demands utuma to enable progression to the next stage of existence.

Utuma is never undertaken lightly by any dragonewt. There is no guarantee that the following reincarnation will offer advancement on the draconic path and so the decision to commit it must be absolutely unequivocal, or it requires a great deal of meditation and contemplation beforehand.

The utuma ritual is never conducted in public. Every dragonewt will find a place of quiet seclusion to undergo the act and is unlikely to indicate its intentions beforehand. The act itself is conducted in silence and requires a quick slicing of the belly with the utuma sword. Death follows within minutes during which the dragonewt continues to meditate on what the next reincarnation will hold.

Clearly barbarian and sundered dragonewts face a stark choice: utuma for them means final death, because there is no path to reincarnation. In such circumstances the dragonewt is only likely to consider utuma where considerable debt has been incurred or dishonour attracted. Where the actions of a barbarian or sundered dragonewt benefit other dragonewts some small consolation might be found in the dragonewt reincarnating as a new, Crested dragonewt, although this chance is very small and always at the Games Master's discretion.

ROLEPLAYING DRAGONEWTS

Of all the races in Glorantha, the dragonewts are the most alien. They do not think in linear terms, they make capricious decisions and every rebirth places some new quirk to its unfathomable personality. To be short, roleplaying a dragonewt is almost impossible.

Adding a dragonewt Adventurer to a campaign however, can be a tremendous amount of fun, especially if the player goes out of his way to act in weird but inscrutable ways. Acting out such peculiar mannerisms can provide a straight faced comic element to a game, or perhaps a slowly growing fear or dread, the rest of the party unable to fathom what the dragonewt Adventurer will do next, or whether it is even on their side!

How to Play a Dragonewt

- View everything as though it has mystic significance: a leaf falling is because the Cosmic Dragon has willed it; a raindrop is a tear from slain Sh'kaharzeel's eyes; a roll of thunder is Orxili's limbs attempting to reassemble. Once the mystic significance of something has been established, it must be contemplated. Do so now.

- Deny no experience. If it is on offer and it would not incur debt or dishonour: do it. But do it only after determining that it is Right Action. This means meditating on the choice, seeking the views of a higher stage or someone in authority. But dragonewts do not balk at things that might otherwise turn human stomachs, as long as there is no debt to be incurred.
- The slightest kindness incurs debt. Debts between dragonewts are easily repaid but debts between other species must be repaid in kind and promptly. Find something unique and unusual that will repay whatever debt you believe has been incurred. It might be a body part. It might be a cup of your own tears. It might be your life. What you offer in return should cancel the debt completely.
- Struggle against instinct constantly. Everything that happens to you is likely to challenge your Personality Traits so struggle with choices and always strive for Right Action. The instinct must be controlled. Wrestle with that every day, finding challenge in everything.
- Speak cryptically. You view the world in mythical terms and as you progress you will learn more secrets that humans can never know. Drop dark hints about the future. Mangle facts about the past. Speak of the future as though it had happened and the past as though it will. Be deliberately vague on detail but crystal clear on generalities.
- Do the opposite of what is expected. If companions use a bridge to cross a river, you should swim across it. If they run from a fight, you should run towards it.
- Spend long periods contemplating the universe. Speak to no one. Refuse to move. Remain motionless. Only when you are ready, having contemplated Right Action should you break the meditation.
- Think and do strange, stream of consciousness things all the time. Be and act bizarrely. Never be predictable. Ever.

Motivations

Dragonewt behaviour is always bizarre to humans and it is impossible to describe or explain it in any kind of rational terms. For Games Masters, some guidance to orchestrating their bizarre behaviour follows.

Mastery of Self

Crested dragonewts are obsessed with mastering their instincts. They do this through focusing on mastering a particular rune

or a particular character trait linked to Orxilius. This manifests itself with what might be termed 'Obsessive Compulsive Disorder'. They fixate on particular patterns of behaviour and become distressed or violent when unable to complete it.

Right Action

Right Action (and the avoidance of Wrong Action) is central to the dragonewt psyche. What may seem obvious to a human may not necessarily be obvious to a dragonewt. Neither is behaving collectively. It is quite common for a group of dragonewts to behave in ways that are seemingly at odds with each other. To them, this is natural and most likely constitutes Right Action at the time. At other times, dragonewts act in concert and unison, co-ordinating their activities to perfectly complement those of their fellows. Humans are likely to struggle to find a rationale to explain their behaviour and any questions directed to the Noble communicator for the group are likely to be met with a cryptic (or even no) response.

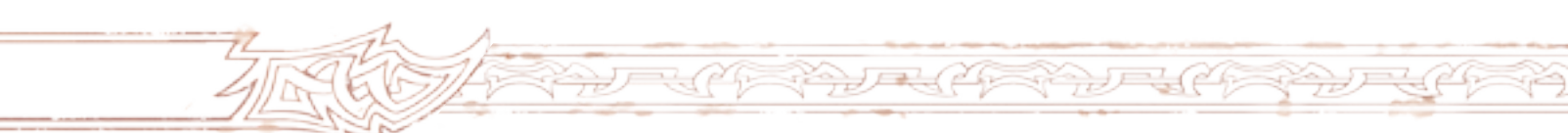
Experience Everything

Dragonewts, especially Crested, seek out new experiences actively, even if it is only once. A dragonewt might wander into a combat unarmed and passive, to experience violence first-hand and thus be better prepared next time. Instead of using the bridge to ford the river, a dragonewt wades through, although it cannot swim, to experience the power of the water.



Repay Debts

All dragonewts are obsessed with repaying debts. They do not seek debt and perceive simple acts as deeds of great charity. Repaying that debt might take the most bizarre of forms and be seemingly unrelated to the favour. Sometimes repayment might be gifts or reciprocal actions; it might even take the form of self-sacrifice in the form of utuma. The decision as



to what constitutes repayment is in the dragonewt's hands and that repayment may even be unpalatable in the eyes of a human.

Use Violence

Beaked dragonewts are obsessed with defence, battle and honour. The most extreme violence might be used against the most meagre of foes. Insults and slights are taken all too readily and the vengeance of a Beaked dragonewt is ferocious indeed, particularly where debt might be involved.

Be Obsessive

Being immortal, dragonewts have no concept of time's passage. Simple tasks that should take minutes are drawn out for hours or days as the dragonewt meditates, obsesses or becomes uninterested. Conversely complex tasks requiring time and dedication are rushed and haphazard simply because that is how the dragonewt thinks it should be done. Dragonewts have no concept of age and do not understand the differences between children, adults and the elderly. They know that humans decay but see that as a sign of taint rather than an ageing process.

Blind to Gender

Neither do they fully understand the concept of gender. To a dragonewt there is no perceivable difference between males and females, although most Nobles grasp the basic precepts of why separate sexes are necessary for reproduction. They do understand the concept of motherhood and familial care; it is a constant sorrow to most dragonewts that the Wondrous Mother of Many did not remain to tutor her children to the required degree.

Comprehend Worship

Dragonewts understand what gods are but do not understand why humans worship them. They know that gods exist outside

of time but to dragonewts that is nothing special. Possessing great power is similarly not something to be especially proud of, as their Rulers and Inhuman King exhibit similar powers but are not gods.

NAMES

Dragonewt names are always esoteric. They may describe the dragonewt's appearance, its personality, its philosophical viewpoint, its experiences, or be completely unconnected with anything in the dragonewt's character at all. All Crested dragonewts are named by a Noble given responsibility for the task and they choose whatever name they feel best represents that particular dragonewt.

Beaked dragonewts may either keep their Crested name or choose a new one of their own devising; the Nobles do not take any responsibility for the task.

Nobles never retain their previous, Beaked stage name and always decide upon a new title that sounds more draconic or reflects their depth of experience of maturity. Harsh, reptilian sounds with plenty of consonants and sibilants are common but the Noble may opt for a softer sound if engaging in interaction with non-dragonewt species, or use a human translation for ease of pronunciation.

Ruler dragonewts typically retain their Noble name or opt for something fully draconic, in readiness for their next transformation. Inhuman Kings always select a new, draconic name which they reveal to no one else.

The key with selecting a dragonewt name is to be imaginative and strange: there are no real rules. This book has many examples of bizarre dragonewt and draconic names to act as inspiration.

DRAGONEWT CULTS

Dragonewts do not offer worship in the same way as the other races. They receive no gifts or direct aid from their gods because True Dragons have little or no reason to interact with the mundane plane. Yet dragonewts still worship and venerate the Cosmic Dragon, the Grand Ancestral Dragon and the True Dragons. In doing so they hope to gain insight into Right Action and gain smoother, faster progression to their next stage of existence.

The cults described here are exclusively dragonewt. Humans cannot join and, even if they did, would derive no benefit from doing so, save, perhaps, a closer insight into dragonewt behaviour and motivation. As a rule, dragonewts do not join human cults as that is hurtful to them, although those dragonewt colonies that are outside of the draconic lifecycle can, and sometimes do, choose to worship human gods.

The single exception to joining human cults are Tailed Priests who enable communication with and understand other species. Human draconic cults are favoured but there are instances in Ralios of Tailed Priests joining Malkioni cults simply because it is expedient to do so.

Dragonewts perform ancestor worship. The only beings that correspond to gods are the Cosmic Dragon and the Grand Ancestral Dragon, neither of which are venerated by rank and file dragonewts, being the sole prerogative of the Inhuman Kings. And, even then, it is more a form of direct communication than indirect worship.

For all stages of dragonewt, including Rulers, cults are formed around the True Dragons who still sleep in Glorantha or, like the Golden Sun Dragon of Dara Happa, have reassumed a tangible form. Worship confers little magic, for that is mystically hard-wired into dragonewt development in the form of the various dragonewt effects, as explained in the Dragonewt Magic chapter. A few Common Magic spells are available to Crested dragonewts, who must, as part of Orxilius, learn dominance of the Common Magic and they are born with the knowledge.

Cult membership is mandatory for every dragonewt. Those who refuse it are sundered from the colony and become

barbarians. The same is true for any cult member who does not uphold the beliefs and significance of the cult.

The True Dragon Cults, are far more philosophical in nature than the dragon cults of the EWF. Cult members learn the myths and powers of the True Dragons, the better to equip them for the day when they will be reborn in the same image. Certain cult-specific skills are taught and, in particular, the True Dragon Dances which codify a variety of mystical elements into ritualised movement and rhythm.

Joining EWF Cults

Dragonewts can join any of the draconic cults of the EWF, as described in *Cults of Glorantha* but are forbidden to progress in them. Only sundered dragonewts can join and attain ranking status as Wyrmfriends.

CULT DESCRIPTIONS

Crested and Beaked dragonewts are always considered to be rank and file members of the cult, equivalent to initiates. Noble dragonewts are the cult priests and conduct all the training and worship functions of the cult. Rulers are the equivalent of Rune Lords as they actively engage in draconic HeroQuests and FutureQuests. Inhuman Kings commune directly with the Cosmic Dragon and the True Dragons; they are effectively outside of the cult process.

The cult descriptions are organised as follows:

Name: Each cult is named for the True Dragon venerated.

Description: What the cult believes and signifies.

Members: The stages of dragonewt that can be a member of the cult.

Skills: The cult skills taught to its members. For *RuneQuest* game purposes any Adventurer dragonewt must always spend one of its improvement rolls on a cult skill. Cult members also gain an automatic +10% to the base value of all the cult skills upon joining, as part of the initiation rite.

True Dragon Dance: The dances taught to the dragonewt and the game effects these confer. True Dragon Dances are treated as advanced skills, always with a base value of the dragonewt's DEX+POW.

Common Magic: The spells available to Crested dragonewts only. Crested dragonewts cannot learn spells unsupported by their cult.

ARANGORF TALKER LISTENER

Arangorf was the draconic husband of Drolgard, who was a companion of the storm god Orlanth. Drolgard was the only god to learn the dragon language and she learnt it from Arangorf. The two became lovers but could not beget children, which saddened Drolgard but did not sadden Arangorf because he could make eggs with the Wondrous Mother of Many and did so frequently.

Arangorf and Drolgard undertook the Grand Quest of Talking and Listening where they visited the gods and tried to teach them the dragon language. Yelm listened, the Uz gods listened and some new gods, who do not exist now, listened also. But Orlanth would not listen and stoppered his ears with storm clouds, which saddened Drolgard for she regarded Orlanth as a brother.

When all the gods had listened Arangorf slept, which let Drolgard go and speak to Orlanth when he finally called her to learn the dragon language. He had slain Sh'kaharzeel and Aroka but now knew he had to make peace with the dragons and learn their tongue. Drolgard explained to Orlanth what he had to do when Arangorf was awoken and warned him not to fight, because Arangorf would test him. Orlanth agreed, because he wanted peace and when Arangorf came and destroyed his stead, eating and drinking everything, Orlanth did not become angry and learned the dragon language through listening and dance.

Through this action humans could learn the dragon tongue if they were prepared to split their minds and tongues, which most did not want to do. Obduran the Flyer was the first, taught by Arangorf and Drolgard and then others followed. Thus was draconic enlightenment brought to humans and all because Orlanth chose to listen and dance rather than fight.

The cult of Arangorf thus focuses on communication. Its belief is that Auld Wyrnish awakens the inner dragon in every creature and brings them to the notice of the Cosmic Dragon. Auld Wyrnish has no written form but can be spoken and danced, so that is what the cult of Arangorf teaches: the Three Dances.

Members

Noble dragonewts. As the only stage participating in communication with other species, the cult is closed to Crested and Beaked dragonewts.


Skills

Common Skills

Evaluate, Influence, Lore (Regional)

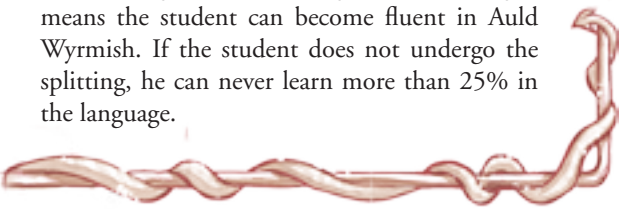
Advanced Skills

Draconic Illumination, Language (Auld Wyrnish), Language (Specific Human Tongue), Lore (Arangorf Theology), Lore (Draconic Theology), Teach Auld Wyrnish



New Advanced Skill: Teach Auld Wyrnish (INT)

The dragonewt can teach Auld Wyrnish to dragonewts and other species. For every 10 points of the dragonewt's Teach Auld Wyrnish skill, the student gains 1D6 points of Language (Auld Wyrnish). The student must study with the dragonewt for 6 weeks for every 1D6 points learned. The student must also be prepared to split both mind and tongue to truly learn the language. This is accomplished by sacrificing 1 point of the POW Characteristic in the form of the Splitting Ritual. Splitting mind and tongue means the student can become fluent in Auld Wyrnish. If the student does not undergo the splitting, he can never learn more than 25% in the language.



True Dragon Dances

The cult teaches three separate dances: The Dance of Learning, the Dance of Listening and the Dance of Talking. Performing a dance correctly takes one minute and confers a bonus to a particular skill. The bonus is +40 for a critical success and +20 for a standard success. Failure results in no bonus and a fumble reduces the skill by -20.

The Dance of Learning: A simple dance involving chants and a zigzag movement of the feet mirrored by identical hand movements. The dance recalls the way Drolgard learned the draconic tongue from Arangorf. A successful dance provides a bonus to any non-combat skill of the dragonewt's choosing. The skill to be augmented must be specified in advance.

The Dance of Listening: A solemn dance that involves pressing the ears to the ground and a series of squat-thrusts that recall how Arangorf had to strain to understand Drolgard's first attempts to speak the draconic language. A successful dance provides a bonus to the Perception skill for the purposes of listening, or a bonus to any non-draconic Language skill for the purposes of understanding it. The skill to be augmented must be specified in advance.

The Dance of Talking: A lively dance of capering, high-kneed movements in an ever tighter spiral. It recalls the way Arangorf had to concentrate on teaching Auld Wyrnish to Orlanth. A successful dance provides a bonus to the Teach Auld Wyrnish skill.

Common Magic

None Taught

AROKA

Also known as the Imperial Fountain of Peace, Aroka is a water dragon who inhabits the seas and rivers of Glorantha, controlling their currents and tides. Aroka was slain by Orlanth when the storm god was on his dragon-killing frenzy and its skeleton placed in the sky where it forms the stars known as Orlanth's ring.

Yet Aroka's spirit was not vanquished and it still controls the waters of the world in defiance of Orlanth's actions. In Kralorela the dragonewts do not believe Aroka was killed at all and that it created a dream dragon, which is what Orlanth slew. There may or may not be truth to this myth but Aroka is venerated across Kralorela and in particular in Fanzai where it is deemed the keeper of the waters of life.

The cult teaches the importance of water, which is a source for all life and was created as the first cut of the Grand Ancestral Dragon's first utuma. Water is thus sacred to the cult and it features in every ritual and dance. It is considered the blood of the Grand Ancestral Dragon and Aroka is its custodian, ensuring that Orxili and the Oozing Chaos cannot pollute the world. The cult of Aroka is thus one of purity in mind, body and spirit, focused on maintaining a draconic path of pure being.

Members

All dragonewt stages.

Skills

Common Skills

Evaluate, Persistence, Stealth

Advanced Skills

Draconic Illumination, Lore (Aroka Theology), Lore (Draconic Theology), Lore (Water)

True Dragon Dances

The cult of Aroka teaches the **Dance of the Eternal Fountain** which recalls the first utuma of the Grand Ancestral Dragon and describes how the waters of Glorantha came into being. The dance is a complex mixture of juggling and deft footwork around four bowls of water that cannot be touched or allowed to spill. When the dance is completed successfully, the dragonewt channels the power of Aroka through its own being and is able to both breathe underwater and swim perfectly, for a number of rounds equal to its POW Characteristic.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spell: Water Breath.

DRANG

Also known as the Diamond Storm dragon, Drang is a guardian of the depths of the world where it keeps the things of Hell from spilling out and the Oozing Chaos at bay. Drang taught Mostal and so the cult teaches the Mostali doctrines of the World Machine but postulates that Drang is the central hub of the Great Wheel, placed there by the Grand Ancestral Dragon to maintain the spin started by the Cosmic Dragon when it span the Cosmic Egg for the first time.

Drang's gift to the world is all stone but in particular obsidian, which Drang creates through his fiery breath in his deep caverns and then scatters to the surface, where it can be found by dragonewts, with swishes of its great tail. Drang is thus worshipped wherever obsidian is mined, especially in High Wyr in Dragon Pass, where obsidian is known as Black Diamond.

Dragonewts believe Drang fuels the volcanoes of Caladriland as a favour to Lodril and as a way of maintaining the spinning of the World Machine. Despite being a creative and guardian dragon, Drang is thought to be amongst the least even tempered and, if ever summoned away from its underground caverns, will react with a fury and viciousness beyond even that of Sh'kaharzeel. Drang dislikes anything that interrupts

the status quo and the balance of the World Machine. The priests of Drang have even begun whispering that the Great Dragon to Be of the EWF poses a threat to the World Machine and would be opposed by Drang directly.

Members

All dragonewt stages.

Skills

Common Skills

Athletics, Evaluate, Lore (Regional)

Advanced Skills

Craft (Obsidian), Craft (Stoneworking), Draconic Illumination, Engineering, Lore (Drang Theology), Lore (Mostali Theology)

True Dragon Dances

The cult of Drang teaches **The Stone Dance**, a slow, very formal, almost ponderous dance with heavy footfalls and scraping motions in the air. It recalls Drang revealing the secrets of the under earth to Mostal and the creation of Drang's great chambers. The dance channels Drang's own knowledge of the World Machine. Successfully performing The Stone Dance allows the dragonewt to determine the precise composition, thickness and nature of the ground underfoot. The dancer can tell if there are caverns beneath, a water table and even burrowing creatures.

Common Magic

The cult of Drang teaches the following spell: Protection

THE EARTH DRAGON WAY

Earth Dragon is brother to Drang but plays no part in the guardianship of the world. His place is to guard the goddess Asrelia, whom he saved from death and now protects deep in the halls of Dame Darkness where Asrelia can distribute her gifts to the surface without fear of harm. As brother to Drang it is believed Earth Dragon shares the same secrets of the underground and would rise-up with his brother if the world was threatened.

The Earth Dragon cult is not widespread amongst dragonewts but where it is present, it seems to appeal mostly to Beaked dragonewts who are drawn to the ideas of draconic protection and see Earth Dragon as a symbol of honour, integrity and debts repaid. Members of the cult quite frequently go out of their way to find someone or something to protect – whether that person or thing requires protection or not. The choice of whom or what to guard is completely arbitrary and based largely on how the dragonewt feels. Once protection is decided

upon, the Earth Dragon cultist is prepared to lay-down its life in pursuit of its protection.

Members

Beaked dragonewts, some Nobles.

Skills

Common Skills

Combat Style (klanth based), Evade, Throwing, Unarmed

Advanced Skills

Draconic Illumination, Lore (Earth Dragon Theology), Survival, Tracking

True Dragon Dances

The Comforting Embrace: This dance requires a partner and it is usually the object of the dragonewt's protection. The partner does not need to move; indeed, it is safer not to. The dragonewt performs a whirling, twisting dance, often with drawn klanth, around the partner, establishing the Circle of Protection that binds the Earth Dragon to Asrelia and is recalled in the dance. Successfully performing the dance establishes a psychic bond between protector and protected; the dragonewt immediately senses any threats about to be made against the object of protection, whether the threats are mere thoughts or actual, physical deeds.

Common Magic

None taught.

EMPIRE OF WISDOM

The cult of the Empire of Wisdom worships the Inner Dragon, sometimes thought to be Arangorf, that all dragonewts must learn to trust and become One with if they are to attain true dragonhood. This is accomplished through mastery of the Six Treasures: mastery of actions; restraint of passion; discontinuance of appointed works; indifference to heat and cold, light and dark, success and failure and all other pairs of opposites; concentration of the mind; and faith in the teachings of the Cosmic Dragon. The Six Treasures are accomplished through dedication to the cult of the Empire of Wisdom, bringing new members to its ranks, personal dedication, along with continual Right Action and the rejection of all interactions with those who do not embrace draconic ideals.

The cult is opposed to all non-draconic materialism, which restrains wisdom, is a product of Time and is a manifestation of Orxili. Only things made by dragonewts – and more importantly, dragonewts within the Empire of Wisdom – can be safely handled and have any true worth. Cult members

are forbidden to accept any gifts or hospitality from non-dragonewts. It is a widespread cult, especially in Ormsland, where traditional dragonewt practices are still very much in evidence despite the presence of the EWF.

The Inner Dragon's identity is a source of constant debate. Some claim it to be Arangorf, as postulated by Obduran the Flyer in his various meditations on the Orlanth Dragonfriend Revelation. Others believe that the Inner Dragon is the spirit of the Grand Ancestral Dragon, which was committed to the Inside of the Cosmic Egg after the first utuma and keeps Orxili and Oozing Chaos at bay through the teachings and revelations of the Empire of Wisdom.

Despite the somewhat xenophobic nature of the cult, the Empire of Wisdom is not opposed to the EWF Great Dragon Project. It is believed that the Great Dragon to Be is entirely possible and is the physical and spiritual manifestation of the Inner Dragon. Thus, in limited ways the Empire of Wisdom supports the work of the EWF and considers it part of the true draconic path.

Members

All dragonewt stages. The cult primarily appeals to Crested and Noble dragonewts.

Skills

Common Skills

Dance, Lore (Regional), Perception, Sing

Advanced Skills

Craft (Dragon bone), Draconic Illumination, Language (Auld Wyrnish), Lore (Draconic Theology)

True Dragon Dances

Each stage learns its own dance. Crested dragonewts learn The Six Enlightened Steps; Beaked dragonewts learn The Six Enlightened Cuts; Noble dragonewts learn The Six Enlightened Words. Each dance is meant to offer insight into the Inner Dragon and take from that insight the wisdom that comes with true dragonhood.

Performing a dance correctly takes one minute and confers a bonus to a particular skill. The bonus is +40 for a critical success and +20 for a standard success. Failure results in no bonus and a fumble reduces the skill by -20.

The Six Enlightened Steps: A slow, revolving dance of six steps in either direction, then repeated in reverse, this recalls the dismemberment of Orxili and the creation of the world. A successful dance augments the Right Action Skill.

The Six Enlightened Cuts: A fast, whirling dance with six precise cuts made in the air with a klanth, this dance channels the energy of the Inner Dragon and boosts the dragonewt's klanth skill percentage.

The Six Enlightened Words: Another slow, revolving dance with complex arm gestures, the dance of Six Enlightened Words, if successful, allows the dragonewt to immediately understand any subtext in something it is being told and to immediately detect any lies, falsehood or illusions (even magical ones). The imperial wisdom of the Inner Dragon is channelled to break down all barriers to reality and dispel deliberate obfuscations. The Perception Skill is augmented.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Countermagic, Countermagic Shield, Detect X, Multimissile, Thunder's Voice

GOLDEN SUN DRAGON

With the reappearance of the Golden Sun Dragon in Dara Happa, there has been a big resurgence in its worship, centred on the city of New Gold Dream but also with sects appearing in Ormsland and Dragon's Eye.

The cult believes that the Golden Sun Dragon represents absolute true, solar enlightenment. It embodies both the wisdom and knowledge of Yelm, whom the Golden Sun Dragon has advised since the God Time and also the very secrets of the sun itself, whispered to it by the Cosmic Dragon as it meditated after defeating Orxili.

The cult also believes that the Golden Sun Dragon signifies a great and wonderful rebirth – of the Great Dragon to Be but also a rebirth of all sundered dragonewts who have, in some way, fallen from the draconic path. Thus, the cult is of particular interest to sundered dragonewts and they are welcomed to its ranks.

The priests of the Golden Sun Dragon cult spend a great deal of time attempting to engage the dragon in direct dialogue, seeking its wisdom and guidance. So far the Golden Sun Dragon has kept its own counsel despite an almost constant stream of prayers and petitions rising-up from New Gold Dream at the rising and setting of every sun.

Naturally enough the cult of the Golden Sun Dragon sees the dragon's presence as the ultimate symbol of draconic dominance in Dara Happa. The priests reason that even Yelm the Sun Emperor must understand that a new draconic age is being born, otherwise the Golden Sun Dragon could not have been allowed to manifest. Just as the Orlanthi have undergone draconic revelation, so too must the Solar worshippers. Thus,



the cult is filled with proselytisers who eagerly await the first words of the Sun Dragon and its commands to build a new draconic empire in the lands of Dara Happa.

Members

All stages of dragonewt, sundered dragonewts, human converts.

Skills

Common Skills

Dance, Evaluate, Influence, Sleight

Advanced Skills

Courtesy, Draconic Illumination, Lore (Golden Sun Dragon Theology), Lore (Yelm Theology), Play Instrument (Harp)

True Dragon Dances

The cult teaches the **Sun Rise and Setting** dance which recalls how the Golden Sun Dragon drew Yelm back into the sky when he was returned from Hell by the Lightbringers. The dance is solemn and consists of slow, ponderous steps whilst carrying a blazing brand. Successfully completing the dance increases the Influence or Courtesy skills by +40 for a critical success and +20 for a standard success. Failure results in no bonus and a fumble reduces the skill by -20. The dragonewt must stipulate which skill is being augmented before commencing the dance.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Firearrow, Fireblade, Ignite, Light

GREEN SCALED FATHER

The Green Dragon did two things. First it flew around the world purging it with cleansing flame to rid it of taint. Next it slept at a place called Hrelar Amali where it knew Flamal Seedfather would take root and reclothe the world.

As Flamal Seedfather grew, the Green Dragon whispered to him the OUROBOROS mantra so that he would understand that all things move in cycles. Next he explained the process of utuma so that Flamal would understand the process of death and rebirth and teach it to the plants that would clothe the world. Finally, the Green Dragon used its coils to create First Garden where Flamal could produce the first shoots and begin the clothing of the world.

As Flamal Seedfather grew he talked to the Green Dragon and learned draconic wisdom. He copied the pattern of the Green Dragon's scales and that is why trees have bark like a dragon's hide and most plants are green like the colours of Green Dragon, because it was pleasing. When Flamal was fully grown the Green Dragon flew to a place a little way from First Garden and settled there to rest; that is how the Halkiv Mountains came into being.

That was the Green Dragon's only mistake. While he slept the Great Darkness crept over the earth and the hungry troll god Zorak Zoran came to First Garden and ate his way into Flamal's roots, leading to his death. The Green Dragon does not know this yet for he sleeps still but when he awakes he will be angry with Zorak Zoran and might eat him in punishment.

The cult of Green Scaled Father venerates the Green Dragon as the one who nurtured nature. It proposes that draconic wisdom is inherent in all plants because they follow a cycle of life, death and rebirth, and, like the dragonewts, have been here since the dawn of the world. However, this is not a cult that creates farmers and growers, for that is not the dragonewt way. The cult's purpose is to awake Green Scaled Father, either as part of the Great Dragon to Be or as a single entity, so that he can remake First Garden and take revenge on those who ate Flamal.

The cult is popular in Contemplative Rest, Teleos and the Kralori colonies. Its members believe in reaching accord with the Aldryami and offering them the same wisdom Green Scaled Father offered to Flamal. Yet the way dragonewts go about such things is not always understandable to the elves and so the message is often lost.

The cult appeals to Crested and Noble dragonewts but not Beaked, who may not join. The wearing of green and brown is mandatory, either in the form of skin dyes or plants woven around the body. It is common to see Crested members of the cult whispering to plants and trees as they try to replicate the actions of the Green Dragon, whilst others, especially Nobles, undertake quests far from their nests to try to awaken Green Scaled Father from his slumber.

The cult does not like trolls, whom they blame for wrecking the Green Age.

Members

Crested and Noble dragonewts.

Skills

Common Skills

Lore (Regional)

Advanced Skills

Draconic Illumination, Lore (Green Dragon Theology)

True Dragon Dances

The cult teaches **Root Dancing**. Its steps mimic the growing of a plant from a seed into a blossoming tree and it takes two minutes to perform. A successful dance temporarily increases the dragonewt's SIZ by two for 10 minutes.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Clear Path, Endurance and Heal.

NIGHT DRAGON

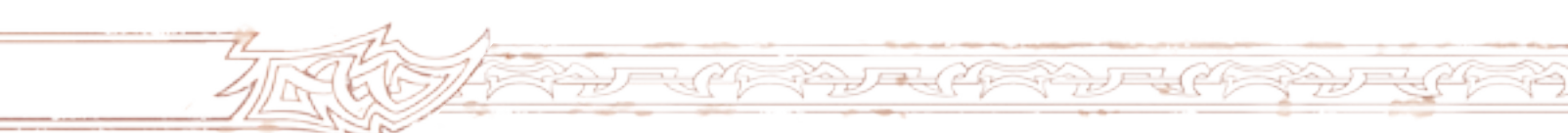
Night Dragon, also known as the Black Dragon, went to Dame Darkness to teach her the wisdom of the Cosmic Dragon and found her a willing student. Together they fought against the Oozing Chaos that still sought to steal the world and showed her that all things can be eaten. Next the Night Dragon taught the children of Darkness certain secrets of darkness that would help them fight Chaos and showed Zorak Zoran where Death was hidden so that he might avoid it.

When the sun died and went to Hell, Night Dragon drew upon the powers of Darkness to rise up and fight the Chaos creatures that sought to steal the world again. The Black Dragon battled with many Chaos gods and destroyed most of them. It fought with Krarsht and banished her to the depths of the earth so deeply that only her children can find their way out. Next, Night Dragon fought with Mallia and stole from her the secrets of infection, thus ensuring that all dragon kin would resist her diseases.

When Night Dragon faced Storm Bull it thought it was another Chaos god and prepared to kill him. When it saw that Storm Bull was not afraid, it realised that he was no creature from the Ooze. So they took to travelling for a while, killing Chaos and making the world shake with their mighty roars.

When the Light Bringers went into Hell to bring back the sun, Night Dragon watched them from afar and kept various monsters at bay. It knew that Orlanth had killed its brothers, Sh'kaharzeel and Aroka, so knew that the secret of Death was no longer hidden. Night Dragon went to Eurmal and punished him with whips from its tail, because Eurmal had followed the Black Dragon when it showed Zorak Zoran how to evade Death and had then stolen Death to give to Orlanth.

When the Light Bringers returned the sun to the sky, Night Dragon knew its time to sleep was at hand and it dozed while the Great Compromise was made. Then as it slept its body



merged with the earth. Night Dragon's dream dragons roam freely in the underworld, hunting Krarshtkids and other Chaos monsters to kill them.

The cult of Night Dragon is the closest that dragonewts come to having an anti-Chaos cult. Only Beaked and Noble dragonewts join the cult, because they are strong enough to fight Chaos and see tricks when they are being played. Its members are friendly with all trolls and Night Dragon Noble priests are the ones selected to speak with the Uz on almost all matters. Cult members are taught Darktongue, which is an easy language for dragonewts to learn because it relies on many non-verbal components, not unlike Auld Wyrnish.

Beaked dragonewts like to hunt and kill Chaos, thus recalling the great crusades of Night Dragon during the Greater Darkness. They are taught to recognise the signs of Chaos, even when hidden and are taught that Storm Bull and Zorak Zoran are friends and allies; it is not uncommon for a Beaked member of the Night Dragon cult to join with either cult when out questing.

The cult welcomes the Great Dragon to Be because it sees this as a way of defeating Chaos once and for all. The world can be remade to exclude it completely and the cult believes that Night Dragon will awaken to form either the claws of the Great Dragon or its breath, ready to cleanse the world of Chaos taint.

Members

Beaked and Noble dragonewts.

Skills

Common Skills

Athletics, Combat Styles (klanth or gami based), Evade

Advanced Skills

Draconic Illumination, Language (Darktongue), Lore (Night Dragon)

True Dragon Dances

The **Black Waltz** is taught by the cult. It is a rapid, linear dance with quick steps and aggressive movements accompanied by a rhythmic chanting in either Auld Wyrnish or Darktongue. A successful dance allows the dragonewt to immediately identify any signs of Chaos or its passing within a 10 metre radius.

Common Magic

None taught.

ONE CLOSED EYE

While the first True Dragons went forth to teach the gods, one dragon with many eyes settled itself in the centre of the world to keep watch for the intrusions of Orxili and Chaos. So that it could sleep as well as keep watch, the dragon only closed one of its eyes and kept all others open in vigilant dedication.

The dragon became known as All Eyes Open But One and as it watched and slept, it learnt many things and saw all that went on in the world. It meditated on everything it saw and asked the Cosmic Dragon many questions. The answers it received allowed it to become the wisest of the True Dragons and it was the case that many gods came to it with problems that needed solving. The Storm God Orlanth sought its help after slaying the sun; and Genert, in need of a councillor who could be truly relied upon, came and befriended All Eyes Open But One and so benefited the most from the dragon's wisdom.

When Time began All Eyes Open But One knew that it had seen all it needed to see and so created FutureQuesting so that it might escape the bindings of the Great Compromise and see what was to come. It allowed the world to shift and grow over its vast bulk and that is how the Nidan mountains were formed and why there are so many lakes and caves within them: each are the eyes of the True Dragon beneath.

All Eyes Open But One is not sleeping but FutureQuesting. It sees all but needs to see beyond Time so that its wisdom is complete.

The cult of One Closed Eye is the preserve of Noble dragonewts. It is a cult of scholars and seekers of knowledge, which they do not write down but commit to memory just as All Eyes Open But One remembers everything it sees and hears. The cult's members act as advisers to Ruler dragonewts and Inhuman Kings and are often called upon by the EWF Guiding Council for advice on matters that may not be even remotely dragonewtish in nature.

Every year the Great Sharing, which recalls All Eyes Open But One and Genert's friendship, takes place at Dragon's Eye where all the priests of the cult gather to share the new knowledge and secrets they have gained. The Great Sharing takes a week and no one from outside the cult is allowed

entry to the Sharing Hall. Guards from the Earth Dragon cult ensure eavesdroppers are ejected and even the Inhuman King remains distant, although a representative of the cult makes a presentation to the Inhuman King at the end of the Great Sharing.

Cult members are thus hugely inquisitive. They scrutinise everything, question everything and, often infuriatingly, offer suggestions as to how something can be improved. They are not usually wrong.

It is the cult of One Closed Eye that has started to have misgivings about the EWF and the Great Dragon Project. The highest priests claim to have defined flaws in the plan but have discussed these flaws only with the Inhuman King.

Members

Noble dragonewts only.

Skills

Common Skills

All skills are taught.

Advanced Skills

Draconic Illumination, all Lores, all Languages.

True Dragon Dances

The cult teaches the **Learning Seeing Dance**. It is a slow march performed in a circle around whatever is being studied, no matter how large. If what is being studied is intangible, the dragonewt rune is drawn on the floor and that represents the object of study. On completing the dance successfully, the dancer has committed every aspect of the object of study to memory and will be able to recall every detail about it, perfectly, in the future without any need for a Skill Test of any kind.

Common Magic

None taught.

SH'KAHARZEEL

First born of the True Dragons, Sh'kaharzeel is considered the most perfect example of True Dragonhood: proud, arrogant,

carefree, hungry and aggressive. When some of the gods refused to listen to the teachings and wisdom of the Cosmic Dragon, Sh'kaharzeel knew then that gods were destined to be tenants of the world and not its perpetual rulers. Their vanity and frailty led to pointless battles that unleashed all manner of avoidable woes.

Sh'kaharzeel did not care for gods and decided they must be challenged. It challenged them in countless ways; through tricks and ruses, through cunning riddles and malicious gossip; and, of course, with open aggression.

When it challenged Orlanth over the way the world looked, the two battled across Dragon Pass until Orlanth drew Death and slew Sh'harkazeel, turning its bones into the Rockwood Mountains and casting its soul into the sky. Being a True Dragon, losing a physical body is of little concern to Sh'kaharzeel. It has retreated to the temple of the Grand Ancestral Dragon and forged a new one that will be reborn from the bones of the old at some appointed time.

Is that time at hand? The cult of Sh'kaharzeel believes so and that the First Dragon will form the spine and skull of the Great Dragon to Be. It is clear that Sh'kaharzeel was right to challenge gods even if it meant being killed by one, because one-by-one, all gods are being proved to have draconic aspects, even Orlanth, who denied it.

Sh'kaharzeel's cult maintains the tradition of challenging gods. Its members seek to awaken the inner dragon of every other religion and faith. This makes them natural counterparts to the zealotry of the EWF and the natural enemies of the Old Ways Traditionalists. The cult merges traditional draconic veneration with the younger, less orthodox philosophies of human draconic veneration. Its members are fervent believers in dragon supremacy and ready to either convert or cleanse (with scouring flame) those too stubborn to heed the message. The cult looks to the west and the Golden Sun Dragon of Dara Happa, as proof positive that the True Dragons are the real builders of empires. Sh'kaharzeel might have been killed but it will arise as an integral part of the New Dragon Empire, which will move Glorantha forward to a new dawn of pure draconic philosophy. The tenancy of gods is nearing its expiry.

The cult of Sh'kaharzeel is open to all stages of dragonewt and is particularly attractive to Beaked dragonewts. Its members

are typically arrogant, ruthless, zealous – even more so than the Empire of Wisdom – and bent on dragons taking over the world. The cult appeals to many sundered dragonewts who seek a return to the draconic path and there are countless small sects of Sh'kaharzeel scattered across the Dragon Pass sundered colonies.

Naturally, Orlanth and the rest of the Storm Tribe is hated. Draconised Orlanthi are treated with sneering contempt because, although they might have seen the true draconic light, they are simply atoning for their god's sins and previous arrogance – and only a cowardly god would make his followers do his own penance. Whenever Orlanthi, draconised or not, point out that Orlanth learned Auld Wyrnish from Arangorf, dragonewts of Sh'kaharzeel's cult are quick to remark that, had Orlanth truly embraced his inner dragon, he would have restored Sh'kaharzeel to life and fought him again but this time without the accursed weapon known as Death. To the cult of Sh'kaharzeel, Orlanth and his kin are little more than cowards. Even the draconised ones.

Members

All dragonewt stages.

Skills

Common Skills

Combat Styles (any draconic weapon), Perception, Resilience, Unarmed

Advanced Skills

Craft (Dragon bone), Draconic Illumination, Lore (Sh'kaharzeel Theology)

True Dragon Dances

The cult teaches **Sh'kaharzeel's Seven Steps**, the dance Sh'kaharzeel performed before entering into battle with Orlanth. It is a whirling aggressive dance with seven precise steps conducted in a fast interplay of feet designed to confuse the enemy. Successfully completing the dance increases either a dragonewt weapon skill, Evade or Resilience by +40 for a critical success and +20 for a standard success. Failure results in no bonus and a fumble reduces the skill by –20. The increase lasts for rounds equal to the dragonewt's critical True Dragon Dance range (*for example, a dragonewt with Sh'kaharzeel's Seven Steps at 48% would receive a skill improvement for 5 Combat Rounds: 48/10 and rounded up*).

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Befuddle, Coordination, Mobility, slow, Speedart and Thunder's Voice.

WONDROUS MOTHER OF MANY

In her haste to mate and lay eggs, the Wondrous Mother forgot to look after and nurture her immature children. Their path to dragonhood was thus stilted and they needed to develop their own path. But the Wondrous Mother, though neglectful, left behind the eggs so that dragonewts might be continually reborn and left guidance in the shape of the Rulers and Dragonets who understand the Outside and what it means to be a dragon.

Wondrous Mother of Many mated far and wide and had no plan to her couplings. First to mate with her was The Earth Dragon, who gave the gift of understanding the world. Next was the The Imperial Fountain of Peace who gave the gift of wisdom and peaceful conduct. Third was The Mover of the Heavens, who gave the gift of fighting. The others followed in no particular order and mated many, many times so that Dragon Pass was awash with eggs. Then Wondrous Mother flew east to the Kralori lands, where she mated thrice with The Sun Dragon before he went to live in the Sun God's court.

None, not even the priests of One Eye Closed, know what happened to the Wondrous Mother of Many after her matings were finished. It is possible that she has found somewhere to sleep after her exertions, in preparation for a great awakening where she will mate with the Great Dragon to Be and thus produce a new and more mature race of dragonewts who will reach True Dragonhood with fewer trials and fewer rebirths. This is the hope of her cult, which believes fervently that she will return and nurture her children to create more that are closer to the draconic ideal.

The cult of the Wondrous Mother is widespread but has fewer members than the other cults. Dragonewts have difficulty understanding the concept of parentage and it is thus easier to cleave to a cult where the guidance and ways of dragonhood are clearly defined. The cult of the Wondrous Mother believes that each nest and city reflects the nature of the True Dragon the Wondrous Mother mated with but also that most nests contain eggs mixed from different matings. It is thus difficult to arrive at a single definition of dragonewt character. When

the Wondrous Mother returns and mates again, most likely with the Great Dragon to Be, all dragonewts will be reborn once more but all as Inhuman Kings, whilst the Inhuman Kings will immediately be transformed into True Dragons. In this way will dragonewts and dragons return to pre-eminence in the world. All subsequent eggs will produce Inhuman Kings and even humans will have the opportunity to be reborn from eggs but will emerge as Crested dragonewts, so they can begin the cycle of draconic maturity from the very same beginnings as all existing dragonewts.

These beliefs are met with excitement and trepidation in equal measure amongst the Wyrmfriends. There is excitement that the Wondrous Mother may return to bring forth a rebirth but the idea of humans being reborn as dragonewts is not universally welcomed. The EWF ideal is that all will form part of the Great Dragon and become dragons themselves, without the need for the tedious cycle of rebirth.

Members

All dragonewt stages.

Skills

Common Skills

Dance, Evaluate, Lore (Regional)

Advanced Skills

Artistic Expression, Courtesy, Draconic Illumination, Lore (Wondrous Mother Theology)

True Dragon Dances

The cult teaches **The Mating Dance**, an unusual dance that recalls the mating rituals of the True Dragons but has no equivalent to any mundane mating practices. It is a howling, shrieking dance that appears to involve a degree of self flagellation or other self harm, followed by complete exhaustion, even though the dance takes no more than a minute to complete. A successful dance results in a magical shell, much like the birth egg, forming around the dragonewt. The egg offers armour protection to all Hit Locations equal to the dragonewt's critical score in the Mating Dance. The egg moves with the dragonewt and is opaque, thus giving the appearance of a self-propelled egg drifting upright. The egg lasts for a number of rounds equal to the dragonewt's POW and, as the effect dissipates, the dragonewt is symbolically reborn, cracking through the shell refreshed and completely healed of any physical damage it may have sustained.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Countermagic Shield, Glamour, Pierce, Second Sight and Spirit Bane.

DRAGONEWT MAGIC

The Empire of Wyrms' Friends would never have reached the heights of magical mastery had it not been for dragonewts. The dragonewts schooled the Original Twelve in the mysteries of draconic magic and continue to educate other Wyrmsfriends, as allies of the empire and in readiness for the Great Dragon to Come.

Dragonewts are innately magical beings. One thing the God Learners have deduced correctly is that dragonewts are born with a natural capacity for magic that is beyond human limitations. Whereas humans must petition gods for magic, dragonewts must simply master its ways. They merely need to learn to control what they already know. Rather than progress through learning more magic, dragonewts must forget some of it to advance to the next stage of their development.

MAGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Crested dragonewts are unprepared for the innate majesty of Dragon Magic and must learn to control their base instincts before being ready for the challenged as Beaked dragonewts. As part of this, the trial of Orxilius, Crested dragonewts may only learn Common Magic and, once they have been reborn as the next stage, they must forget everything they knew about it.

The higher stages know Dragon Magic. They do not learn it; they are reborn to it. A Beaked dragonewt emerges from its egg with an array of known effects with which it becomes more proficient. When it is reborn as a Noble, it is reborn with additional effects and so forth. Dragonewt effects are not spells but are sufficiently like them in effect to warrant the name.

Ruler dragonewts and Dragonets are reborn with far more potent powers. Their very dreams interact with reality and they are capable of fabulous acts of creation and destruction simply by dreaming it. Exercising such power is rare indeed; it saps precious reserves of energy needed to HeroQuest, FutureQuest and attain True Dragonhood. In this chapter these powers are sketched, rather than fully described.

Beaked Dragonewts and higher stages who use their magic risk *Losing their Path*. All dragonewts are born with the Draconic

Illumination skill but using Dragon Magic diminishes it. Any dragonewt that reduces its Draconic Illumination skill to zero loses the draconic path completely and is unable to reincarnate. Dragonewts suffering this fate have clearly lost the true essence of their being and are doomed to mortality, becoming exiles from their nests and cities. Using magic attracts impurity and, because the path to perfection is all-important, magic is used sparingly and usually with great deliberation. A dragonewt would rather risk its skin and be reborn closer to its next stage than rely on magic to secure a victory that would impede its spiritual progress. And, whilst the members of the EWF, the Wyrms' Talon Disciples and Wyrms' Hand Triumphants, might revel in their power, dragonewts are ever cautious of it.

Draconic Illumination (INT+POW)

Draconic Illumination is an Advanced skill that is available to dragonewts of traditional backgrounds. It can be increased using improvement rolls. It represents a growing understanding of the mysteries of Draconic existence and an awareness of the magical potential therein. As such, Draconic Illumination is used to invoke Dragon Magic.

CRESTED DRAGONEWTS – COMMON MAGIC

Every Crested dragonewt is born with the ability to cast Common Magic. The spells it knows are taught by its cult. Crested dragonewts do not seek other new spells to learn because ultimately their Common Magic is to be forgotten. Instead they focus on mastering the skill with the spells they already know. In game terms this means reaching a minimum of 90% in the skill, although it is quite possible for the dragonewt to reincarnate at the next stage before it has achieved such mastery.

New Common Magic Spell – Determine Right Action

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive

The dragonewt gazes deeply into the depths of its soul to discover how to act correctly. It becomes immobile and unresponsive, as though a living statue.

This spell guides a dragonewt to determine whether a course of action is Right Action or Wrong Action. Each level of Magnitude temporarily boosts the dragonewt's Right Action skill by 10%. The casting time depends on the magnitude of the spell. A one point casting takes one Combat Round. A 2 point casting takes one minute. A three point casting takes one hour and a four point casting takes one day. Every point thereafter adds a further day to the meditation.

At the end of the casting period the dragonewt makes a Right Action test using the bonuses accrued. If successful it has determined that the course of action it has meditated upon is correct and can fully justify its outcomes. If the test fails, the dragonewt misinterprets the visions of the meditation and incurs Wrong Action. In this case the Right Action skill is reduced by the spell's Magnitude as the dragonewt Loses the Path.



Ancestor Magic, which is the more potent dream-state magic mentioned earlier.

Unlike Dragonspeaker magic, which is limited by the Dance, Meditation and Insight skills, dragonewts are subject to no such limitations. Dragon Magic is their power and their realm. The effects taught to Dragonspeaker cultists as *spells* have been secretly manipulated to make their power dependent on dragon emulation – something dragonewts do not even need to consider. Dragonewts can invoke effects at any level of Magnitude that they have the Magic Points to power.

Dragonewts that are outside of the draconic cycle still retain the effects they know but, since they no longer reincarnate, new effects are not developed.

Beaked Dragonewts

When newly incarnated as a Beaked stage, the dragonewt has six effects determined randomly from the following table. Each new incarnation at the Beaked stage adds a further 1D6 effects. If an effect is rolled twice, re-roll or choose a new effect.

DRAGON MAGIC

Beaked dragonewts and higher stages are reborn with the innate ability to work draconic effects. As previously noted these are abilities the dragonewt is reborn with, not spells that are learned, although the spells taught to the EWF are derived from these specific dragonewt effects.

When a dragonewt first transforms to the Beaked stage, it is born with a handful of effects already known. With each Beaked reincarnation it attains more. When it is reborn as a Noble, it retains the knowledge of all the effects from its Beaked incarnation, plus a handful of Noble incarnation effects to which more are added with each reincarnation.

Ruler dragonewts are born knowing *all* the effects of both Beaked and Noble stages. In addition they have access to

Beaked Stage Dragon Magic Known

1D20	Effect
1	Become Draconic Wyrms
2	Bone Ridges
3	Bone Singing
4	Combat Meditation
5	Command Reptile
6	Deafening Cry
7	Disease Resistance
8	Dominate the Reptilian Mind
9	Draconic Strength
10	Draconic Vitality
11	Dragon Claws
12	Dragon Growth
13	Dragon Teeth
14	Eye Membranes
15	Fire Claws
16	Lesser Fire Resistance
17	Scaled Skin
18	Sight from the Marked Palms
19	Skeletal Strengthening
20	Summon Flame

Noble Dragonewts

When the Beaked dragonewt reincarnates as a Noble, or Tailed Priest, it retains all previous effects and gains three randomly determined Noble Dragon Magic Effects using the adjacent table. A further 1D4 effects are developed with each subsequent reincarnation to the Noble stage.

Noble Stage Effects Known

1D20	Effect
1	Blood of Lava
2	Cold Blooded
3	Draconic Prescience
4	Draconic Regeneration
5	Dragon Flight
6	Earthquake
7	Flame Sight
8	Flay Soul
9	Incinerating Breath
10	Inspiration
11	Mystic Insight
12	Poison Resistance
13	Royal Grace
14	Sense Surface Thoughts
15	Skeletal Erosion
16	Summon Dragon's Fire
17	Summon Wraithfire
18	True Dragon Scale
19	Universal Deflection
20	Unseen Presence

USING DRACONIC MAGIC

When a dragonewt invokes a draconic effect, it must use the following sequence:

- To invoke the effect, the dragonewt must make a Draconic Illumination Skill Test.
- If the test critically succeeds, the effect takes place but the dragonewt suffers from Losing the Path.
- If the test succeeds, the effect takes place and a number of Magic Points equal to the Magnitude are deducted from the dragonewt's total.
- If the test fails, the effect fails to occur and the dragonewt loses 1 Magic Point.
- If the test fumbles, the effect does not take place and the dragonewt also Loses the Path.

Losing the Path

Dragonewts are often loathe to invoke their draconic effects without good reason, citing that it binds them in the Now and risks pulling them from the path of the Great Dragon To Come. If the Draconic Illumination test is a critical success, the effect is successfully invoked – but the dragonewt also loses a point of Draconic Illumination.

This represents the dragonewt immersing itself and its magical energies in the mortal world rather than saving its powers for the Great Dragon. The dragonewt realises his grip on the grand design is slipping somewhat and his Draconic Illumination correspondingly diminishes.

Likewise a fumbled Draconic Illumination test also costs point of the skill but in this circumstance the amount lost is equal to the Magnitude of the effect the dragonewt was attempting to invoke. If this loss reduces the dragonewt's Draconic Illumination to zero, it is forever sundered from the true path and can no longer reincarnate.

Important Note: When determining the critical score for Dragon Magic invocation, the critical score is always based on the dragonewt's *unmodified* Draconic Illumination skill. This is unlike every other critical score, which is based on an Adventurer's modified skill total.

Backlash

Unlike most EWF mystics, Draconic Magic is inherent and natural to dragonewts. Thus dragonewts never suffer the devastating backlash effects, which often cripple humans who try to use their magic. Instead as described previously, they simply suffer from a more dramatic case of Losing the Path.

Triggered Effects

All dragonewts exist outside of the usual strictures of Time. Crested dragonewts perceive the passage of time as humans do, although they do not understand its importance. Beaked, Noble and Ruler dragonewts are somewhat different and possess an increasing degree of prescience. This enables higher stage dragonewts to prepare their effects far in advance of needing to use them. Upon rising from sleep or meditation, a dragonewt has an understanding of threats it might encounter that require some form of magical intervention. Its effects are prepared so that they are ready to be triggered at the precise moment of need, so a dragonewt can invoke its prepared effects in an instant.

All dragonewt effects possess the Trigger trait by default. A dragonewt goes through all the rituals pertinent to the effect but restrains the final actions, refraining from unleashing the effect. During the preparation time the basic parameters of the effect are decided, such as its Magnitude (if it is a Progressive effect).

The number of pre-prepared effects that a dragonewt can store ready for triggering is not infinite. The total Magnitude of all prepared Dragon Magic effects may not exceed the dragonewt's POW Characteristic.

The Draconic Illumination casting test only occurs at the time the effect is released (and thus any modifiers at that time are applied). Equally, the targets of the effect are determined at the time of its release, along with expenditure of Magic Points. The trigger invoking the effects in this manner is simply the dragonewt's desire. In other words, a single Combat Action. However, any number of prepared effects may be released simultaneously, in the same Combat Action.

This makes dragonewt magic very powerful.

DRAGONEWT EFFECT TRAITS AND DESCRIPTIONS

Dragonewt effects are described here. They are similar to the Dragon Magic spells detailed in *Glorantha the Second Age* but have some important differences unique to dragonewts, which is why they are reproduced here. Even though these are innate effects, rather than spells, they are still defined by the typical traits used in *RuneQuest* magic. A description then follows describing the effect's precise effects.

Area (X): The effect's radius of influence, in metres.

Casting Time (X): The effect takes the indicated number of Combat Actions to cast.

Concentration: As dragonewts possess these effects as a natural part of their being, no concentration is necessary to maintain the effect. Once cast, the dragonewt can freely engaged in other activities whilst the effect is in operation. To banish the effect, the dragonewt simply wills it.

Duration (X): The effect stays in place for the number of minutes indicated. Where Duration is noted as POW, this is the dragonewt's POW Characteristic in minutes.

Instant: The effects take place instantly.

Magnitude (X): The strength and power of the effect. Also the minimum number of Magic Points required to invoke it.

Permanent: The effect remains in place until dispelled or dismissed.

Progressive: This indicates that the effect can be learnt and cast at greater levels of Magnitude than the minimum Magic Point requirement. However, dragonewts rarely overpower effects since this risks progression along the draconic path.

Ranged: Ranged effects may be cast upon targets up to a maximum distance of the dragonewt's POW x 10 in metres.

Resist: The target may make an opposed Evade, Persistence or Resilience test (as specified by the effect) in order to avoid the effect.

Touch: Touch effects require the dragonewt to actually touch his target for the effect to take effect. The dragonewt must remain in physical contact with the target for the effect's Duration.

Become Draconic Wyrn

Adopt the Skin of the Lesser Draconic Being

Casting Time 5, Duration POW, Magnitude 4

The dragonewt's body warps and shifts, swelling with muscle and developing thick scales, altering to become that of a serpentine beast.

The dragonewt wills its physical form into that of a wyrn with Characteristics based on the value of its Draconic Illumination. The STR and SIZ of the wyrn will be 3D6 plus 1D6 for every 10 points of Draconic Illumination, rounded up. Whilst in wyrn form, the dragonewt's skills are subsumed by its new form's skills, although all effects are retained. The dragonewt's INT, POW and CHA are unaffected.

Any use of the Become Wyrn effect automatically results in the dragonewt losing one point of Draconic Illumination, in the same manner – and for the same reasons – as Losing the Way. If the effect casting test also results in the dragonewt Losing the Way, then two points of Draconic Illumination are lost.

Wyrms

Wyrms are serpentine, legless, winged relatives of dragons. Possessed of intelligence akin to that of a human, a wyrm is a patient, dangerous foe but it lacks the superior insight and intelligence of a true dragon.

The Characteristics given here are for a dragonewt with a Draconic Illumination of 62%.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	10D6	35	1–4	Tail	8/10
CON	4D6	14	5–8	Abdomen	8/11
SIZ	10D6	35	9–12	Chest	8/12
DEX	2D6+6	13	13–14	Right Wing	8/9
INT	3D6	11	15–16	Left Wing	8/9
POW	3D6+6	17	17–20	Head	8/10
CHA	3D6	11			

Combat Actions	2
Damage Modifier	+2D6
Magic Points	17
Movement	6m/12m
Strike Rank	+12

Typical Armour: Tough hide (AP 8)

Traits: Dark Sight, Formidable Natural Weapons, Night Sight

Skills: Athletics 80%, Brawn 75%, Evade 65%, Influence 60%, Perception 45%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 75%

Combat Styles

Bite 85%, Tail Bash 60%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	Range
Bite	H	V	L	1D10+2D6	As for Head
Tail	H	V	L	1D6+2D6	As for Tail

Blood of Lava

Concentrate the Lifeblood's Potency

Casting Time 5, Duration POW, Magnitude 4

The dragonewt's skin flushes red with heat and its eyes leak tears of hissing, bubbling blood.

This effect transmutes the dragonewt's blood into burning hot fluid that renders it immune to non-magical heat and fire. The primary bonus of the effect is revealed in combat, when each injury inflicted against its flesh releases a hissing jet of steam and almost white-hot blood. Any successful attack on the dragonewt causes boiling blood to spray across any creature adjacent to the Hit Location struck. Hits to the Right Arm or Leg spray anyone adjacent to the dragonewt to its right, while

hits to the Left Arm or Leg will spray anyone adjacent to its left. Head, Torso and Abdomen hits spray forwards (unless, of course, the dragonewt is struck from behind).

Any creature caught in a blood spray suffers 2D4 magical heat damage to a random Hit Location (though a successful unopposed Evade test halves the damage).

Bone Ridges

Manifest the Sign of Physical Evolution

Casting Time 5, Duration POW, Magnitude 3

The dragonewt's body grows bony protuberances, like knobbly bone spines and spikes extending from its knuckles, elbows, shoulders, kneecaps, chin, cheekbones and forehead.



This spell causes bony spines and ridges to erupt from the caster's body. One Hit Location, determined by the caster, is affected for every 20 points of Draconic Illumination, rounded up. Thus a mystic with Draconic Illumination 45% can affect three locations.

The bony ridges provide an additional 3AP to the affected location. This bonus does not count towards the Armour Penalty for Strike Rank or Movement. Additionally, the caster gains +3 points of damage if he uses the location for an Unarmed attack.

Bone-Singing

Shape the Holy Weapons

Casting Time Special, Instant, Magnitude 4

The ritually-prepared dragon bones twist and extend, shaped by the mantras chanted by the dragonewt.

The dragonewt ritually prepares the relevant quantity of dragon or dinosaur bone, depending on what it wishes to create. A simple blessing is all that is traditionally required to bless dragon bone, though dragonewts always compose poems of thanks to the creature that died to provide this material. Through chants, songs or mantras, the dragonewt 'sings' the bone into a new shape, visualising the end result and willing the bone to alter to meet his desire.

This effect is cast throughout the process of creating the bone-crafted item, though it is normally cast by one dragonewt as another actually creates the item. The magic of Bone-Singing enables the dragon bone to be moulded and yet retain its resilience. It also speeds up the entire crafting process – it only takes half the normal time to create armour and weapons through Bone-Singing.

Actually constructing the bone-crafted item out of the shaped bone is a separate task. Dragon bone armour requires a Craft (Armourer) test, while klanths require a Craft (Weaponsmith) test. The dragonewt can freely use their craftsmanship in concert with maintaining the song. On top of the normal base material costs, klanths also require 200 SP worth of obsidian pieces.

Cold-Blooded

Project the Draconic Nature

Area POW, Casting Time 10, Duration POW, Magnitude 2, Resist (Persistence)

The dragonewt channels the draconic heart of the True Dragons. A cold sense of distance comes over the target and it completely dispenses with any emotion.

With this effect the dragonewt can deaden the emotions, and thus instincts, of those around it just as their own emotions can seem subdued to others. If the targets fail to resist the effect, the strength of their emotions are at the mercy of the dragonewt who can partially drain them or blank them out completely on a whim. Note that the dragonewt cannot add emotions – it can only deaden or remove those already present.

Combat Meditation

Heighten Battle's Devotion

Casting Time 5, Concentration, Duration POW, Magnitude 1

The dragonewt's movement become even more fluid and graceful, representing the harmony of body and mind in its combat arts.

The dragonewt enters a semi-trance during combat and gains an additional Combat Action, which can only be used defensively for each point of Magnitude invested in the effect.



Command Reptile

Command the Lesser Reflections of Divinity

Casting Time 5, Duration POW, Magnitude 1, Ranged, Resist (Persistence)

With a momentary dullness in its slitted eyes, the dinosaur obeys the dragonewt's telepathic orders.

The dragonewts have an affinity with dinosaurs and other reptiles reflecting a common ancestry. Command Reptile

allows the dragonewt to demand that the reptile or dinosaur obeys a single command. The order given must be one that the beast is able to carry out and finish immediately.

Once the command has been obeyed, the reptilian reverts back to its own will. If the creature fails to complete the task, it will only try again if the circumstances force it into acting, such as a failed attack provoking a group of adventurers into retaliation.

This effect only works on reptiles and does not function on dragons or wyrms. Wyverns gain a +50% bonus to their Persistence tests to resist this effect.

Deafening Cry

Shriek of the Earthbound Dragon

Area 10, Casting Time 5, Magnitude 2, Resist (Resilience)

The Dragon Mystic howls a dragon's roar up at the sky, threatening to puncture the eardrums of anyone nearby.

Any opponent within the Area of the effect that fails the Resilience test is stunned and falls prone. He is unable to act offensively for a number of Combat Actions equal to half the dragonewt's POW. Additionally, whether a target passed the Resilience test or not, everyone in the area of effect suffers a -10% penalty on all Acrobatics and Perception tests for one hour, due to the angry ringing in their ears affecting their hearing and balance.

Disease Resistance

Purify the Mortal Shell

Casting Time 5, Duration 20+POW, Magnitude 1, Progressive

The signs of disease on the subject lessen and fade as his body displays a sudden surge of health. The only hint of supernatural energy at work is a fine sheen of heat that radiates from the subject as his body warms up a few degrees.

Dragonewts invoke this effect for themselves when believing themselves exposed to disease. A successful casting adds the effect's Magnitude x 20 to all Resilience tests to resist disease, or Magnitude x 10 if the disease is magical in nature.

Dominate the Reptilian Mind

Dominate the Lesser Reflections of Divinity

Casting Time 5, Magnitude 5, Ranged, Resist (Persistence)

As the dragonewt chants, the reptile ceases all voluntary actions, moving only to the tune of the dragonewt's mantra.

This effect is among the more powerful magical means of commanding the loyalty of dinosaurs and reptiles, binding the creature to the dragonewt's will for as long as the dragonewt wishes it. The dinosaur or reptile under the dragonewt's sway can be commanded to perform any action, even at great risk to its own life. Dinosaurs can be tamed by repeated use of this effect, with dragonewts casting it many times again on the primal minds of the monstrous beasts, until obedience becomes ingrained in the reptilian brain.

This effect only works on reptiles and does not function on dragons or wyrms. Wyverns gain a +30% bonus to their Persistence tests to resist this effect.

Draconic Prescience

Tread the Cosmic Dragon's Scales

Casting Time 10, Magnitude 4, Touch

The dragonewt dreams images of the future, remembering fragments and misty recollections upon awakening.

The nature of this effect falls almost entirely under the influence of the Games Master rather than the fate of a dice roll. When the effect is invoked, the dragonewt has an immediate glimpse of its own future *as it applies to the plans of the Cosmic Dragon*. The images gained through this effect are fragmentary and vague. Only Ruler dragonewts and Inhuman Kings have any clarity of insight. Games Masters can describe flashes of scenes, conversations, events or omens that could apply to the dragonewt almost immediately or many years in the future.

Draconic Regeneration

Quicken the Reptilian Blood

Casting Time 1, Concentration Special, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch

The dragonewt is able to channel its energies into fuelling the body's natural healing process, regenerating minor injuries such as sword wounds, burn scars and broken bones that heal closed, fade into fresh skin and click back into alignment respectively.

This effect must be cast upon a wounded Hit Location. The effect heals one point of damage immediately. As long as the dragonewt maintains its chant, the location will heal an additional amount of damage equal to the effect's Magnitude every minute. The healing will continue for as long as the dragonewt concentrates. This effect only works on reptilian and draconic creatures.

Draconic Strength

Summon Draconic Blood's Thunder

Casting Time 5, Duration POW, Magnitude 1, Progressive

The dragonewt's muscles swell and harden with new strength and the veins under the skin change from blue to a deep, dark red and visibly pulse in time to the dragonewt's heartbeat.

For every point of Magnitude, the dragonewt gains +2 to its STR Characteristic.

Draconic Vitality

Summon Draconic Vitality of Flesh

Casting Time 5, Duration POW, Magnitude 1, Progressive

The dragonewt's body and scales begin to glisten with vibrant health and the veins under the skin change from blue to a deep, emerald green and visibly pulse in time to the dragonewt's heartbeat.

For every point of Magnitude, the dragonewt gains +2 to its CON Characteristic.

Dragon Claws

Manifest the Talons of Sh'kaharzeel

Casting Time 5, Duration POW, Magnitude 3

Recalling Sh'kaharzeel's battle with Orlanth, the dragonewt's hands swell slightly with bunched muscles, scaling at the knuckles and with fingernails resembling the wicked black talons of a dragon.

This effect transforms the dragonewts fingernails into the thick, black, sharp claws of a dragon. These claws are considered Formidable Natural Weapons and thus normally take no damage when used to parry. The claws grant a +30% bonus to the Unarmed skill, inflict 1D6+3 damage, a Reach of Medium and a Size of Medium for the purposes of parrying.

Dragon Flight

Soar Across the Heavens

Casting Time 10, Concentration, Magnitude 6

The dragonewt tenses its body, slowly levitating off the ground and hovering in the air. Hazy, immaterial dragon wings flow from between the dragonewt's shoulder blades, foreshadowing the wings it will one day possess as a Ruler.

This effect gifts the dragonewt with the ability to fly. Dragonewts are hesitant to call on this effect as it invites presumption that the Ruler stage is near.

The dragonewt can levitate itself, its equipment, plus anything it can physically lift, moving at a rate of 20 metres per round in any direction desired.

Dragon Growth

Assume the size of the dragons

Casting Time 5, Duration POW, Magnitude 1, Progressive

The dragonewt's form shifts and shakes, growing larger and more formidable as the effect executes. The transformation is accompanied by the creaking of muscles and bone as the body reshapes.

For every point of Magnitude the dragonewt gains +3 SIZ, with all dependent abilities and skills being modified accordingly. In addition the effect adds a +10% bonus to the Influence skill of the dragonewt for each 10 points of SIZ (rounding up) it ends up with.

Dragon Teeth

Jaws of the Divine Dragon

Casting Time 5, Duration POW, Magnitude 1, Progressive

The dragonewt's teeth and beak swells and lengthens. With an elongated jaw and a mouth full of wickedly sharp fangs, the dragonewt can inflict horrendous damage when biting.

This effect transforms the dragonewt's teeth, mouth and jaw into a dragon's maw. The dragonewt may make a bite using its Unarmed skill. This bite attack inflicts 1D6 damage and increases in Size by one step for every two points of Magnitude but cannot be used for parrying.

Earthquake

Tremble the World-Skin

Area 10+POW (but see description), Casting Time 10, Instant, Magnitude 2, Resist (Resilience)

The ground shakes under the dragonewt's punch, splitting and quaking in a radius out from the dragonewt's clenched fist in the earth.

The dragonewt chants the word 'Orxili' over-and-over as it punches a fist into the ground, causing the earth to shake in response to the channelling of mystical energy. Anyone within the area of effect that fails the opposed Resilience test is immediately knocked prone.

Ruler dragonewts and Inhuman Kings use this effect to level buildings or entire cities. The Area for a Ruler dragonewt is treated as POW *multiplied* by 100 in metres and for Inhuman Kings POW multiplied by 10 in kilometres.

Eye Membranes

Wear the Eyes of the Dragon

Casting Time 5, Duration 20+POW, Magnitude 1, Progressive

The dragonewt's eyes appear to milk over with a film of some cataract-like substance, shielding the eyes with a thin magical membrane.

With this power, the dragonewt receives all the benefits of Night Sight, allowing it to treat partial darkness as illuminated and darkness as partial darkness. In addition, it gains a bonus to Perception tests equal to the effect's Magnitude x 5%.

A dragonewt using this effect becomes immune to any magically-inflicted blindness, as long as the Magnitude of the effect exceeds that of the blinding magic being cast.

Fire Claws

Manifest Divinity's Fiery Claws

Casting Time 5, Duration POW, Magnitude 3

In channelling the will of the Golden Sun Emperor, the dragonewt's clawed hands flicker with white-hot fire.

This effect alters the dragonewt's fingernails as per the Dragon Claws effect but the claws are aflame with small lickings of blue-white fire. They inflict normal damage for the dragonewt's Unarmed strike, plus an extra 1D6 magical fire damage.

Flamesight

Witness the Fire's Visions

Casting Time 5, Duration 20+POW, Magnitude 1, Ranged

The dragonewt's senses warp and alter. Its eyes glitter with the brilliance of Aroka for several minutes, pulsing brighter in time with its heartbeat.

This effect allows the dragonewt to use any nearby fire (from infernos to candle flames) as a conduit for its sight. The dragonewt can 'see' from any fires within the effect's range as if it were present within the flame itself.

Flay Soul

Sever the Bonds of Soul and Flesh

Casting Time 10, Instant, Magnitude 8, Ranged, Resist (Persistence)

The dragonewt channels the Cosmic Dragon's punishment of Orxili into the Inside of the shell.

A scything, invisible claw of mystic energy unerringly rakes the intended target. If the victim fails the opposed Persistence test, he

dies immediately with his soul torn from his body. If the victim succeeds, he still suffers 1D6 damage to every Hit Location.

Any use of the Flay Soul effect automatically results in the dragonewt losing one point of Draconic Illumination, in the same manner and for the same reasons as Losing the Way. Critically invoking, or fumbling, the effect adds to the points lost.

If this effect is worked by a Ruler or Inhuman King, the Resistance Test suffers a penalty equal to the dragonewt's POW Characteristic. Damage from successfully resisting the test is 1D8 and 1D10, respectively.

Incinerating Breath

Channel the Breath of the True Dragons

Casting Time 5, Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Ranged, Resist (Evade)

Breathing the breath of Sh'kaharzeel, the dragonewt channels the flamebreath of a True Dragon.

Calling on the residual energies of the True Dragons, a dragonewt can use this effect to breathe a stream of semi-liquid flame at its enemies. This attack, if it is not evaded, inflicts 1D6 + its Magnitude in points of magical fire damage to a random Hit Location. For Ruler and Inhuman Kings the damage dice is 1D8 and 1D10 respectively.

Inspiration

Reveal the Face of Purity

Area 10+POW, Casting Time 5, Duration POW, Magnitude 1, Progressive

The dragonewt's features seem more pronounced and draconic, reminding lesser dragonewts of the Pure Nature of the draconic race.

All allies of the dragonewt within range of this effect receive a bonus equal to the effect's Magnitude x 10 to any Resist test to defy spells that would affect their emotions (both negative, such as fear, and positive, such as morale). If any target is currently under such a spell, they may immediately make an appropriate Resist test to shake of its effect.

Lesser Fire Resistance

Immunity to the Holy Element

Casting Time 5, Duration POW, Magnitude 2

The dragonewt's hide darkens to resemble onyx, oil or obsidian and reflects the heat of any flame that comes close.

Dragonewts with this effect active reduce the damage taken from any fire (mundane or magical) by half. A greater version

of this effect, Greater Fire Resistance, is available to Rulers and Inhuman Kings (Magnitude 6 and Magnitude 10 respectively), rendering the dragonewt utterly immune to mundane and magical fire.

Mystic Sight

Open the Eyes of the Soul

Casting Time 5, Instant, Magnitude 1, Ranged

The dragonewt's eyes take on a black sheen as it sees the influence of magic in the mundane world.

This effect reveals one true statement about the function or abilities of a single magical item, entity or substance that the caster regards for at least one Combat Round. The effect may be cast multiple times upon the same item but the information gained may repeat and is not always relevant.

Poison Resistance

Purge the Mortal Shell

Casting Time 5, Duration 20+POW, Magnitude 1, Progressive

The subject's body jerks and sweats, as the sickening substance within it is drawn out through its pores.

Dragonewts cast this effect when they believe they may have been poisoned. A successful casting adds the effect's Magnitude x 20 to all Resilience tests to resist poison, or Magnitude x 10 if the poison is magical in nature.

Royal Grace

Manifest the Aura of Destiny

Casting Time 10, Duration 30+POW, Magnitude 2

To the faithful of the Cosmic Dragon, the dragonewt carries itself with the power and authority of the Ancestral Dragons. Its eyes burn with ambition and confidence, its movements are bold and assertive. Blessed with Royal Grace the dragonewt becomes utterly inhuman.

Noble and Ruler dragonewts double their Influence bonus when dealing with lower-ranking dragonewts; for dealing with Wyrmfriender cultists the Influence bonus is trebled.

Scaled Skin

Assume the Armour of the Divine Form

Casting Time 5, Duration POW, Magnitude 1, Progressive

The dragonewt's hide grows an outer layer of thick, dense scales, becoming armoured like a dragon's hide, conforming to whatever colour the dragonewt desires.

The dragonewt gains a number of additional Armour Points to every Hit Location equal to the effect's Magnitude. The scales are not restrictive, as they are in the Wyrmfriender's spell of the same name.

Scaled skin may not be used in conjunction with True Dragon Scale.

Sense Surface Thoughts

Ascertain the Intent of the Flawed Being

Casting Time 5, Instant, Magnitude 1, Ranged, Resist (Persistence)

The dragonewt forms a fragile psychic bridge with the power of its superior intellect, leeching thoughts from the target.

This effect allows the dragonewt to read the surface thoughts of any sentient *mortal* being for the dragonewt's POW in seconds. At its conclusion the target of the effect is struck by a sharp pain behind his eyes, which he may or may not recognise from previous experiences under this spell's effects. The dragonewt cannot sense information that the victim is not thinking about or has forgotten, only what the mortal is thinking during the effect.

Sight from the Marked Palms

Aspect of the Cosmic Dragon's Awareness

Casting Time 5, Concentration, Duration POW, Magnitude 1, Progressive

The scaled palms of the dragonewt form into unblinking draconic eyes, slitted and intense in their gaze.

The eyes detect every movement made by the dragonewt's enemies, allowing the dragonewt to react to attacks even before the attacker has fully committed himself to the blows. This effect grants the dragonewt a +10% bonus per point of Magnitude to evading or parrying, assuming it is not wielding something in its hands.

Skeletal Erosion

Erode the Osseous Foundations

Casting Time 10, Instant, Magnitude 6, Resist (Resilience), Touch

Channelling the primal energies of the Cosmic Dragon, mimicking the way it dealt with Orxili, the dragonewt whispers a curse upon the mortal form and weakens the bones of its enemy, watching as they break down and dissolve within the body.

This effect inflicts horrendous internal damage to a target, causing 1D6 damage to all Hit Locations and the permanent loss of one point of STR and CON as the subject's bones corrode. For Ruler and Inhuman King dragonewts the damage inflicted is 1D8 and 1D10 respectively.

Skeletal Strengthening

Reinforce the Osseous Foundations

Casting Time 10, Duration 10+POW, Magnitude 1, Progressive

The dragonewt chants its devotion to rising above its flawed dragonewt form. Underneath its hide, the bones harden significantly but do not impede movement.

This effect bolsters the dragonewt's toughness to a supernatural degree, adding a number of extra Hit Points, equal to the Magnitude, to every Hit Location.

Speak with Reptiles

Project into the Reptilian Mind

Casting Time 1, Duration 10+POW, Magnitude 1, Ranged

Staring deep into the dinosaur's eyes, the dragonewt communicates in clicks, whistles, snorts and screeches, interrogating the creature in a primal tongue.

This effect permits the dragonewt to converse with any reptile, dinosaur or dragon through partly physical, partly telepathic means. The 'speech' involved is a series of images and sensations that make sense to the creature's inhuman brain, combined with physical noises and imitations. Using this effect does not guarantee the beast will obey the dragonewt and attacking the being while communicating with Speak with Reptilians will shut down the link immediately.

This effect works on all reptiles, including wyverns, dragons and wyrms.

Summon Dragon's Fire

Summon the Purifying Flame

Casting Time 3, Instant, Magnitude 4, Ranged, Resist (Evade)

The dragonewt channels the raw energy of magical dragon flame through its body, releasing it through its fingers to lash out at a target.

The fire that is unleashed is a short stream of super-intense magical flame that inflicts damage (and ignites) as a large fire (2D6 damage). This damage is applied to all locations of the target.

A greater version of this effect, Summon the Grand Ancestral Dragon's Fire, is available to Rulers and Inhuman Kings (Magnitude 8), which inflicts damage as an inferno (3D6 damage).

Summon Flame

Create Natural Flame

Casting Time 5, Instant, Magnitude 1, Ranged

A lesser manifestation of the holy fire appears where the dragonewt desires, quickly setting aflame that which it touches.

As seekers of the draconic ideal, the element of fire is beloved by the dragonewts. Summon Fire channels the universe's energies to generate flame near the dragonewt, setting fire to anything flammable within range. The fire called into being is considered to be a large flame (D4 damage). Skin or flesh cannot be the source of the summoned flame and if the target is attached to a living being (such as hair, fur or clothes) then the effect gains the Resist (Resilience) trait.

Greater versions of this effect, Summon Lesser Fire (which creates a small fire, 1D6 damage, Magnitude 3), Summon Greater Fire (which creates a large fire, 2D6 damage, Magnitude 5) and Summon Inferno (which creates an inferno, 3D6 damage, Magnitude 7), are available to the Noble, Ruler and Inhuman King stages respectively.

Summon Wraithfire

Channel the Ghost-Breath of the Unborn Dragon

Casting Time 10, Duration 20+POW, Magnitude 3

The dragonewt calls upon the Ancestral Dragons to send its incorporeal servants in assistance. The dragonewt is soon surrounded by shimmers in the air, as if radiating incredible heat. Anyone using magical sight can perceive translucent ghost-flames raging around the dragonewt, like a silent storm of roiling liquid fire.

While this effect is active, any effect the dragonewt employs involving heat or fire is transmuted. The flames created are ghostly, translucent and almost invisible to mortal eyes. These effects inflict double damage to spirits, ghosts and any other incorporeal beings. Such effects will still inflict normal damage to corporeal targets.

True Dragon Scale

Mastery over the Divine Form

Casting Time 8, Duration 10+POW, Magnitude 7

The dragonewt gains a taste of its eventual goal as the Ancestral Dragons channel their scales to the dragonewt. Its hide thickens to True Dragon proportions; stone-hard scale that covers the body.

This effect alters the dragonewt's skin, mimicking the feel and toughness of real dragon skin. This halves the damage received from all non-magical sources, after AP has been deducted. The caster also gains complete immunity to magical and non-magical fire and heat for the Duration of the effect. Lastly, the dragonewt's natural attacks gain the Formidable Natural Weapons trait and any natural attacks receive a +2 bonus to damage.

This effect cannot be worked in conjunction with Scaled Skin.

Universal Deflection

Counter the Impure Work

Casting Time 10, Concentration, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Ranged

The dragonewt chants the Ouroboros prayer, twisting its body through its cult dances and trusting to its inner perfection to nullify any impure and harmful magic around it.

The dragonewts use this effect to quench the magic of other magicians, whether it is Divine, Sorcery, Common Magic or another discipline. It may be cast in one of three fashions: to dispel magical effects currently afflicting an object or person; to counter an incoming effect; or to shield a recipient from magical harm. Note that these are not separate effects – a dragonewt that learns Universal Deflection at Magnitude 7 may use it as a dispel, counter or shield version, at his whim.

Dispel: Universal Deflection is normally cast upon an enchanted object or person. It will eliminate a combined Magnitude of spells equal to its own Magnitude, starting with the most powerful affecting the target. If it fails to eliminate any spell (because the spell's Magnitude is too high), then its effects immediately end and no more spells will be eliminated. A spell cannot be partially eliminated, so a target under the effects of a spell whose Magnitude is higher than that of Universal Deflection will not have any spells currently affecting it eliminated.

Counter: This version of Universal Deflection may only be cast if it has been prepared. If the dragonewt notices another spell being cast, Universal Deflection may be released as a Reaction, as long as the other spell is cast within Universal Deflection's Range. A successful Universal Deflection disrupts the other spell and nullifies it. As long as Universal Deflection's

Magnitude equals or exceeds the target spell's Magnitude, the target spell is countered.

Shield: This version of Universal Deflection gains the 'Duration POW' trait. It does not affect enchantments currently placed upon the recipient, instead, it resists any further spells that attempt to affect it. The effect matches its Magnitude against the Magnitude of the incoming spell. If Universal Deflection's Magnitude is greater than the incoming spell's, the incoming spell has no effect. If the incoming spell's Magnitude is equal to or greater than the Magnitude of Universal Deflection, the spell affects the target normally. This version of Universal Deflection remains in place for the entirety of its Duration – spells that successfully breach the effect do not dispel it. However, it does not discriminate between incoming spells – a comrade attempting to magically heal the recipient of Universal Deflection must overcome it in order to successfully use a healing spell.

Unseen Presence

Walk the Tread of Green Scaled Father

Casting Time 5, Duration POW, Magnitude 1, Progressive

The dragonewt calls upon the Ancestral Dragons to shield it with their wings of darkness.

This effect renders the dragonewt virtually invisible and silent in any shadow or darkness. This effect grants a +10% bonus, per point of Magnitude, to the dragonewt's Stealth tests, while imposing a -10% penalty, per point of Magnitude, on any Perception tests made to attempt to locate it. Even if spotted, the dragonewt gains the benefit of being partially obscured (-20% to most attempts to target or strike). Should the dragonewt leave the shadows, the effect immediately expires.

ANCESTOR MAGIC

This is the magic of the Rulers and Inhuman Kings. It is the magic that allows creation and destruction with a simple thought and is, for all practical purposes, the channelling of the powers of the Ancestral Dragons. Ancestor magic is effectively dream magic. The dragonewt either projects its dreams into the mundane world or takes things from the mundane world into its dreams. In this way dragonewts can both create and destroy. It is also physically and psychically taxing for dragonewts to employ; they do not have the maturity yet to manifest their dreams with an enduring physicality in the way True Dragons can manifest Dream Dragons.

Ruler dragonewts and Inhuman Kings have a new advanced skill called Dream Mysticism; see the Box Text nearby. Dream Mysticism allows the dragonewt to:

- Enter the Hero Plane on HeroQuests.
- Project forwards and backwards in Time to undertake FutureQuests.
- Collect things from the mundane world and take them into their own Dream Plane for inspection.
- Send forth things created in their dreams into the mundane world to interact with it, for a limited time.
- Enter the dreams of sentient and sapient creatures.

New Advanced Skill: Dream Mysticism (POW+INT)

With this skill dragonewts and True Dragons cross inhabit the waking and dreaming worlds, exploring the avenues and by-ways of Time and transcending its boundaries. The dream world is a creation of the Cosmic Dragon as part of its contemplations, so dragonewts are effectively treading the Cosmic Dragon's own dreams.

A Skill Test against Dream Mysticism is usually only required when a dragonewt wishes to work a particular effect, otherwise its ability to cross into the dream realm is automatic. In the dream realm dragonewts are largely confined to the role of observers; only True Dragons can fully manipulate the dream state to create lasting effects and their strange, often terrifying, creations wander the dream realm constantly. Yet dragonewts have limited dream manipulation capabilities of their own.

Working Dream Magic

Each of the five abilities of dream magic use the Dream Mysticism skill in a slightly different way and have a differing cost in terms of Magic Points. These are discussed here.

Enter the Hero Plane

A successful Dream Mysticism test moves the dragonewt from the dream realm into the Hero Plane. The dream realm acts as the Hero Gate and this is a dragonewt secret that the God Learners would dearly love to possess. Within the Hero Plane that dragonewt can move through, and interact with, myths in precisely the same ways as any other HeroQuester, although it is rare for dragonewts to act as anything but observers unless required to act as adversaries against other HeroQuesters by the structure and nature of the myth. Some Ruler dragonewts

are engaged on HeroQuests and can be found wandering the Hero Plane on a regular basis, much to the surprise and chagrin of God Learner HeroQuesters.

FutureQuesting

This is *not* HeroQuesting. FutureQuesting is only available to those who exist outside the fabric of the Great Compromise and are thus unbound by the mortal strictures of Time. FutureQuesting involves moving forwards and backwards in time to *observe, but not modify*, the interaction of events in the mundane world. It always requires a successful Dream Mysticism test and the degree of temporal travel is determined by the dragonewt's Magic Points.

It costs 1 Magic Point to move up to one century forward or backwards in time. The dragonewt needs to make a successful Dream Mysticism test to complete the journey or it finds the temporal avenues closed to it. It cannot specify where it goes or what it wants to observe; it is merely cast through time and must accept what it finds. Thus, FutureQuesting lacks the precision of HeroQuesting and it may take many attempts for a dragonewt to reach the place in Time that it wishes.

If moving forward through Time the events that the dragonewt sees are always hazy and indistinct, as though seen through a mist. To gain an inkling or understanding of what it sees the dragonewt must make a successful Perception test, modified by -1% for every 10 years into the future the dragonewt has travelled.

Moving backwards through time, events are always seen with crystal clarity, such is the perfection of hindsight.

Collecting from the Mundane World

By taking something from the mundane world into the dream realm, a dragonewt can understand its essential nature with abundant clarity. The power and significance of objects is revealed and their influence on events within Time can be determined. Usually dragonewts return whatever they take but sometimes they forget and so things from the mundane world might suddenly vanish and never be seen again; or reappear days, months or even years later when the dragonewt remembers to return the item.

Individual dragonewts are limited in what they can take into the dream realm. To determine what can be moved, roll on the *Runes Known* table. A dragonewt can only influence things tied to that rune. Rulers can influence up to 1D6 runes and Inhuman Kings 1D10 runes.

For example, the Ruler dragonewt Faithful Wanderings is able to influence 2 runes: Beast and Plant. It can thus try to take anything associated with these runes into the dream realm for further study.

It costs 1 Magic Point for every point of SIZ of the thing being moved and a successful Dream Mysticism test to move it. In the dream realm the object moved cannot be harmed or damaged but it can be scrutinised, prodded, poked or just

generally contemplated for as long as the dragonewt wishes to keep it. The dragonewt can use its Dream Mysticism skill to try to determine what the object's significance is and how it might influence future events (or what influence it has exerted on the past). If the object is sentient or sapient it is allowed to resist the scrutiny with its Persistence in an opposed test against the dragonewt's Dream Mysticism skill.

For example, Faithful Wanderings is convinced that a duck that has wandered into Contemplative Rest has some bearing on the future of the settlement. It decides to analyse the duck in the dream realm to be sure, which is possible because the duck is tied to the Beast rune. The duck has a SIZ of 7, so this requires 7 Magic Points to accomplish but Faithful Wanderings succeeds in its Dream Mysticism skill and shifts the somewhat bewildered duck into its dreamscape. Trying to determine the duck's precise nature, Faithful Wanderings pits its Dream Mysticism of 45% against the duck's Persistence of 42%. The result of the roll for Faithful Wanderings is 41, whilst the duck rolls a 30. Faithful Wanderings has the higher successful roll and it manages to determine that the duck is pure of nature and destined to be an ally of the settlement. Faithful Wanderings is pleased with its endeavours and returns the (now terrified but unharmed) duck back to the normal world.

Moving a thing into the dream realm requires only that the dragonewt is aware of its presence and that the object is within a number of metres equal to the dragonewt's Dream Mysticism skill x10.

Creating Dreams

In a similar fashion to collecting things tied to a particular rune, dragonewts can create a dream version, which can then be sent into the mundane world. This is a weaker form of the ability used by True Dragons to send forth their Dream Dragons.

The dragonewt needs to make a successful Dream Mysticism test to create something tied to a rune it knows. Faithful Wanderings, for example, could dream into existence a duck or anything else tied to the Beast rune. The dream creation can then be transplanted into the mundane world and remain there for a number of hours equal to the Magic Points the dragonewt wishes to invest in its creation. The dream creation has the semblance of physicality and reacts as such in the mundane world but always has a dream-like quality in its appearance. The dragonewt can use its creation to observe the mundane world and even use it as a channel of communication or action if it wishes but because the creation is a dream, it cannot alter the physical world around it. The dream creation can be of any size; although it is rare for dragonewts to dream something into existence that is outlandishly large.

For example, Faithful Wanderings decides to offer the duck it has just analysed some help and advice about the dragonewts. It therefore creates a dream version of the duck,

which it sends back to the mundane world to act as a guide. Faithful Wanderings invests 6 Magic Points in the creation, meaning it will remain in existence for 6 hours. The real duck, Erryl, is rather shocked to see a pink-feathered, blue-beaked version of itself shimmer into existence as it prepares to go wandering around Contemplative Rest...

Entering Dreams

Dragonewts can enter the dreams of any creature slumbering in an area equal to the dragonewt's Dream Mysticism skill x10 in metres. It requires a Dream Mysticism test, which can be resisted in an opposed test by the sleeping creature's Persistence. The cost in Magic Points to the dragonewt is equal to half the creature's POW and the dragonewt can remain in the dream for a number of hours equal its own remaining Magic Points.

For example, Faithful Wanderings decides to see what Erryl the Duck dreams about. It successfully enters Erryl's dreams and because the duck has POW 12, it costs Faithful Wanderings 6 Magic Points. As the dragonewt has a POW of 16 and thus 16 Magic Points, Faithful Wanderings can remain in Erryl's dreams for up to 10 hours – if Erryl sleeps that long.

Whilst occupying a dream, dragonewts can observe, but not interact with, it. They can use the dream and whatever constructs it has to communicate with the dreamer, either imparting information or entering into a dialogue. Upon waking, the dreamer will remember the dream as being particularly vivid and retains knowledge of whatever the dragonewt communicated.

Rulers and Inhuman Kings use this ability to guide the lesser stages of their settlement. No resistance test is necessary when a Ruler or Inhuman King dreams its way into a lesser dragonewt's dreams.

Runes Known

1D20	Primal Rune Known
1	Air
2	Beast
3	Chaos
4	Darkness
5	Death
6	Disorder
7	Earth
8	Fire
9	Harmony
10	Illusion
11	Infinity
12	Law
13	Magic
14	Mastery
15	Motion
16	Plant
17	Spirit
18	Stasis
19	Truth
20	Water

DRAGONEWT VOICES

Dragonewts from each stage of their lifecycle and different regions of Glorantha describe themselves, their people and their motivations.

The Crested Dragonewt

Who Am I?

I am Insignificant Other, an Orxiliate of Dragon's Eye in the Most Holy Realm of Dragon Pass.

Where do I come from?

Darfostalabos is my nest and city. There can be no other. It shines in a sea of dismay that is an unmade, unfinished world. All other cities are parodies of great Darfostalabos and exist in its golden shadow. I live with my egg-kin in the First Band of the Great Circle, which is the halo of the Cosmic Dragon's eye.

What is my history?

This is my fifth rebirth as a Crested dragonewt and I welcome each new hatching because I am improving and moving forward. In my first birth I was killed when I consumed fire because I wished to know and understand pain but that was Right and I was made stronger by it. In my second birth I was sent to fight against the Old Ways people who threatened our caravans and I took two heads with my sling but was cut down by one of Sh'kaharzeel's enemies. They did not take my skin and I thank the Wondrous Mother for her patience with me. In my third birth I undertook the Long Walk to Ormsland and learned there to understand Courage and Cowardice and mastered them. The Tailed Priests were pleased with me and gave me the right to take utuma, which led to my fourth birth in Darfostalabos. In that birth I served the Beaked warriors of the earthshaker pens and there learned to value Silence and Being. I spent a great deal of that birth in meditation and because of that I was allowed utuma once more which brought to me to this, my fifth birth, which should be the last as Orxiliate.

What is my future?

Only our Rulers can see the future but I know my road ahead is long and straight. I will be reborn in time with stronger

limbs and I shall move to be with the warrior-kin and tend the earthshakers. We will make war on the enemies of the Empire because they close upon it and try to disrupt the shape of the Great Dragon. They do not understand but we shall make them and I will die several times with great gladness.

What do I believe?

I believe that the Wondrous Mother of Many will return to us on the eve of the Great Dragon to Be and prepare for a new mating. She will roost here in Darfostalabos and will mate on the great plains east of the mountains. There will be a quaking of the earth and new eggs will be made. We will be called upon to build a new city around her nest and from the eggs True Dragons shall be born who will serve the Wondrous Mother and the Great Dragon to Be. The lands shall be ours and shared with those who know how to act like us.

Why do I believe it?

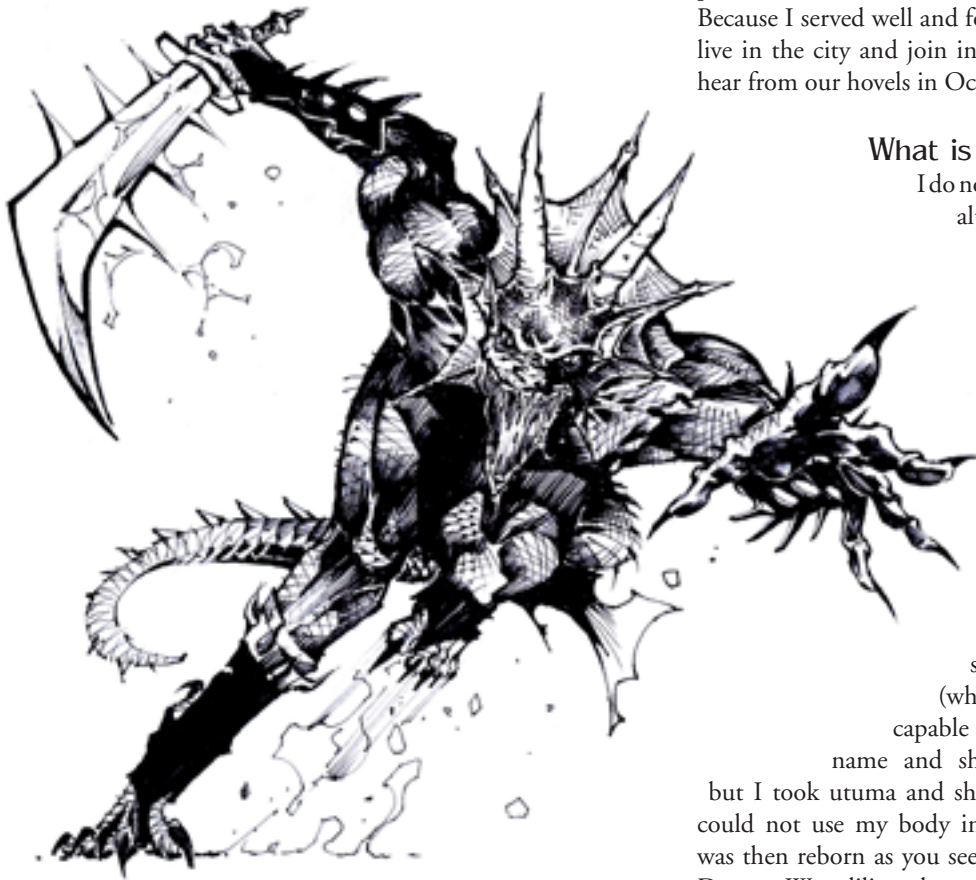
The world is not finished. Orxili's limbs are restless and unmake the world constantly. Only the Great Dragon to Be can lay Orxili to rest and make the world whole. Draconic thought must spread and make the world one. It will subsume our enemies, make us greater and pave the way towards our becoming True Dragons.

What must I do?

I must still master the Rune of Illusion and learn to control my stubbornness. I must learn obedience and acquiescence so that I might end Orxilius and take utuma again to gain my beak, my klanth and my demi-bird. I must grow closer to the Great Dragon to Be. I must continue to honour my masters and my king. I must be a Good dragonewt.

What do I think of the Great Dragon to Be?

Praise the Great Dragon for it comes to redeem us! It will remake the world and all in it. It will bring enlightenment to every soul and will call back the Wondrous Mother to make more eggs. Dragonewts will be whole and at peace. Those with single lives will be reborn as children of the Great Dragon and Orxili will be defeated. A New Age dawns as the dream comes together and I am but one serration on the scale of the Great Dragon.



The Beaked Dragonewt

Who Am I?

I am Argostofilus the Broken Klanth, a Golden Shadow of Ormsland. See my klanth? It is notched from cleaving the head of a broo with a stone skull when I ventured into Dorastor to fetch the Black Skinned Death King from the hidden valley. I fight for my king and never show fear, even when staring into the eyes of the Black Skinned Death King as it slaughtered our Capturing Party. I was not killed that day and though my klanth is broken I learned many things that teach me how to be a dragon.

Where do I come from?

I live in the radiance of Absolute Circuitous Fortuity in the nest of Ock. Our nest has buildings that we make from thatch and bind with Crusher dung, which makes thatch hard when made wet and allowed to dry. As a warrior of my people I have a house and a Crested servant who kills my meals and mixes my heppatti to drink. My Lord is Single Eye Watching of the Tailed Priests of the Earth Dragon Way. It was he who learned

of the Black Skinned Death King in Dorastor and sought the permission of the Inhuman King to bring it back to our pens. Because I served well and fought bravely, I may be allowed to live in the city and join in the cosmic symphony, which we hear from our hovels in Ock.

What is my history?

I do not remember what I did as Orxiliate, although it is said I completed three great quests that led to my rebirth as Argostofilus. And I have been Argostofilus twice. In my first beaked birth I joined the Earth Dragon Way and learned The Comforting Embrace and pledged protection to Ock, Absolute Circuitous Fortuity and Ormsland. I patrolled the Nidan Mountains in search of the hated God Learners and killed some of their Rightness Army (which did not seem to me to be capable of Right Action, despite their name and shining spears). They caught me but I took utuma and shredded my skin so well that they could not use my body in their Orxili-inspired sorceries. I was then reborn as you see now and I have served the Earth Dragon Way diligently and learned to control my curiosity and impulsiveness. Single Eye Watching is pleased with me, especially after cleaving broo and helping to capture the Black Skinned Death King but I have many paths to tread and many people to protect before I shall be reborn again.

What is my future?

My future is service, just as Earth Dragon serves. I use my klanth and my powers to protect all those around me. One day I shall find someone to protect personally but for now I protect the Black Skinned Death King because already the God Learner spies seek ways to free it and use it against us. I seek to become better and improve my protection. One day I hope to go to the city and protect the Inhuman King.

What do I believe?

I believe that when Earth Dragon took Asrelia under his wing he set the expectation for all dragonewts to follow. We are here to protect the world from those who would do it harm. Orxili the Monster and Father of Chaos seeks to undo what has been made and we must protect the world from its limbs. We must protect ourselves from our enemies and we must protect our nests from impurities.

Why do I believe it?

I have been to Dorastor, which was formed from one of Orxili's eyes, and I have seen the foulness that threatens us. If troubled times approach, as my priests say, we will have to go to war but our lands must still be protected even while we fight. I am that protection and the armour of my people.

What must I do?

I must learn the powers that give me strength and toughen my skin. I must learn to make earthquakes with my fist to flatten the advancing armies. I must fight bravely with my broken klanth and, when the time is right, release Black Skinned Death King to bring horror to those who would attack us. I must die several times yet be reborn even stronger than before.

But my klanth will always be broken.

What do I think of the Great Dragon to Be?

We are told it is a Good Thing and the Wyrmfriender Empire must be welcomed but I am not sure I trust them. I think we have all we need in the protection of the Earth Dragon and Night Dragon, who fights Chaos. If a Greater Dragon is to arise it is because the Cosmic Dragon wills it and not because humankind can make it so.

The Noble Dragonewt

Who Am I?

When I am wearing my hood, you may call me Hooded Chant Leader. When I am not, you may call me Llostorilos Human Talker. I am a Noble of the dragonewts of New Gold Dream and designated Human Talker and Speaker to Animals of the Golden Sun Dragon way here in this, the finest city beyond Dragon's Eye. Now, shall we eat?

Where do I come from?

I have travelled far and I do not remember all the steps. Once I was in Dragon Pass and from there I walked to Ormsland and from there I saw the Golden Sun Dragon descend from Heaven and curl itself around Yuthuppa. Thus I knew my calling and so I walked the Dragonewt Roads again and came here, by way of Raibanth and the Silt Valleys. I am much travelled in three birthings of this stage. As a Beaked warrior I served Sh'kaharzeel. Before that I was a simple, mindless fool that did as it was told and served in High Wyrm. Now I am resplendent and wise and here in New Gold Dream. Now, shall we eat?

What is my history?

I have told you some of it but what is history but a sequence of events? Sequences are boring so I will talk of what I have achieved. I speak eight languages as if they were Auld

Wyrmish. Two of those languages I have devised myself and intend to teach them to the Golden Sun Dragon when it decides it will talk with us. I have communed with the Inhuman King of Ormsland but my loyalty lies with the Inhuman King of Dragon Pass for that is where my egg lies, deep in High Wyrm's caverns. I have not yet been to Fanzai to talk to their Inhuman King but I will go there one day. I will not go to Slontos because something Bad is happening and I must remain pure to serve the Golden Sun Dragon. Would you like to hear one of my languages? Shall we eat perhaps?

What is my future?

I will become an emissary of the Golden Sun and spread its light from Dara Happa across the Empire. I will take the rays of the sun and weave them into the Great Dragon to Be so that its scales will crackle with golden fire. The sun will burn here on the ground when the Great Dragon rises and two suns will then blaze in the sky and I shall bask in that radiance and be reborn into a Ruler who serves the Great Dragon in the celestial court. All this talk is making me hungry. Why do we not eat something?

What do I believe?

I believe that the time is at hand for the Empire to initiate its Plan and raise the Great Dragon. The Golden Sun Dragon is here to watch over its birth and the Empire has never been stronger. I do not believe there will be any great disaster and I do not believe the Great Dragon to Be shall fail. I Believe in an Empire of Two Suns and that I shall be reborn into it. Really, I am *very* hungry.

Why do I believe it?

Humankind has learned from dragonewts and we have learned from them. The mutual teachings make us strong and nothing can withstand strength. We occupy an imperfect world and struggle to reform it just as the Cosmic Dragon struggled to remake infinity when it was broken.

What must I do?

I must serve the Golden Sun Dragon. I must take its word to those who still believe Yelm commands the sky and teach them that the New Sun will be in the shape of a dragon.

And I must eat!

What do I think of the Great Dragon to Be?

It is inside all of us. Everyone struggles a dangerous road to realise the Inner Dragon but it is there. For dragonewts the road is straight and clear but for humankind it twists and turns and plunges into ravines. The Great Dragon to Be will awaken the Inner Dragon of all and make your roads as straight as ours. We shall ascend to the Sun and from there to the celestial court, leaving this world to be scoured by the

True Dragons who will offer worship to the Great Dragon of the Golden Sun!

The Ruler Dragonewt

Who Am I?

I am Ghorostonos. You are in my realm but I grant you permission as long as you listen and do not speak.

Where do I come from?

I have always been of Absolute Circuitous Fortuity and always will be. I listen to the Great Symphony and appreciate its resonance. I see each note as motes of dust floating out to the Void and I have quested after them to perceive the music with true clarity.

What is my history?

I have had many lives. I was born in what is called The Dawn Age when my egg was hatched after the Great Darkness. The world was simple then and gods still wandered in confusion. Only we dragonewts had wisdom. As a Beaked warrior I was at the battle of I Fought We Won where Chaos was finally cast from the world. Later I helped build this city and from there I served the Inhuman King until I became what you see before you.

What is my future?

The world flows and I with it. Down the river lies my egg and in it the dragon body I shall inhabit soon enough. Before that I must carry the Great Symphony to the Cosmic Dragon and I must quest into the early ages of the world and into its future. I shall do this through my dreams and I shall see how Absolute Circuitous Fortuity will lead a new ascendance in the worlds to come. For there are many. I have seen them.

What do I believe?

I believe the Wyrmfriends have pure hearts but are mistaken in their actions, just as the Crested dragonewts are often mistaken and confused in theirs and commit Wrong Action through a lack of understanding and experience. I have that understanding. The Wyrmfriends should listen to me but their ears are blocked with schemes of power.

Why do I believe it?

I have quested to a time when a red moon hangs over everything, embracing Orxili. It is not a dragon. It is not their Great Dragon. Either the Great Dragon to Be has flown away or it was not born from the egg the Wyrmfriends try to create. Either way, there is a path of ruin and it leads to the red moon.

What must I do?

I cannot change the path ahead but I can become a True Dragon and I shall be upon my next rebirth. Before then I must play my part in the Great Symphony and ensure that

none of its notes reach the ears of those who would raise a red moon. I must seek to make the Wyrmfriends understand the folly of their path and to be content with what they have and know. They can understand no more of our ways.

What do I think of the Great Dragon to Be?

It is a fine shadow but a shadow nonetheless. Shadows change with the passing of the sun and the sun always sets before it rises again, stronger than before.

The Inhuman King

Who Am I?

I am the Inhuman King of the nests of Fanzai, Fethlon and the Kralori Lands. You may not know my name.

Where do I come from?

I have always been here, since the Days of Strength when we prevented Kajabor from coming east. I held fast whilst Dragon's Eye was weak and nearly destroyed.

What is my history?

My history is written in the jungles that surround Fanzai and in the distance between my people and the mortals of Kralorela. I fought in the Leaf Wars and before that in I Fought We Won. Fanzai was built around me to protect the eggs in the Days of Strength. My history is that of distance and isolation. That is what kept us strong and keeps us so still.

What is my future?

Soon, I shall sleep and be subsumed into the immortal egg. I shall emerge as a dragon and then I shall find a deep place and await the changing of time. I will sleep through the Hero Wars and emerge at the end to rebuild what has been lost. That shall be the time of dragons again.

What do I believe?

Time and History are illusory. Humans are weak and insensate. War to them is a natural state. War is a cancer and we must isolate ourselves from it.

Why do I believe it?

I have seen countless things in my lifetimes. I have seen wars and heroes rise and fall. I have seen the futility of it all and determined that greater barriers are needed to keep us pure from mortal taint. I believe that the world will change two more times and dragons will gain their strength through that changing.

What must I do?

I must wait to become a dragon. Then I shall accomplish much through my dreams.

What do I think of the Great Dragon to Be?

This thing that emerges in the west is not born from a dragon's egg. It was not laid by the Wondrous Mother of Many so it cannot be a dragon in the same way that a wyvern is not a dragon. There are many things in the world that mimic dragons but are found to be illusions. What is born of the mortal mind stays of the moral mind. It is a transient creation destined to fail and consume those who try to build it.

The Barbarian Dragonewt

Who Am I?

I am Thoraston Fourlives. I wander Dragon Pass as a sword for hire. You may call me Thoraston or Greentail.

Where do I come from?

Once I was of Contemplative Rest but when I ate the seedlings from Lord One Ex's gardens, because I was hungry, I was banished and my egg denied to me. Now I wander. I have been to Ghosts Around but did not like it. Now I seek the lands of Ralios where I hear great things are being done and I would take part in them.

What is my history?

As a Crested dragonewt I progressed through Orxilius quickly and mastered all my runes. I was reborn too quickly perhaps, because in this Beaked body, which you see now, I have struggled to master by base desires and have failed on many occasions. I tried to atone by completing the Ten Year Trek Lord One Ex devised but I returned hungry and ate his seedlings. That is why I was banished.

What is my future?

My future is to die, just as you will die. I am wandering a broken path with no way of being reborn and so I must make the most of the time I have. I do not seek to master my

instincts as I once did, although I still seek Right Action in all things because that is the dragonewt way. I will make my way to Ralios because I want to see the world before it changes or before I die. I have my demi-bird and I know the ways of dinosaurs. I have much to offer and my klanth is sharp. I can make my fists into the claws of a dragon and I fight well.

What do I believe?

Once I believed in becoming a dragon but that is no more. Now I have no beliefs other than to live from morning until dusk, to eat only when I am hungry and to avoid Wrong Action whenever it tempts me further. I would find new beliefs and that is why I walk towards Ralios. I have learned that there are people there who can become like gods through learning and discovery. Perhaps I can be like them, or serve them.

Why do I believe it?

The path of the dragon is closed to me but I still need something to believe in. The Big Wheel turns and I am one of its spokes. I will serve because that is what dragonewts of my stage do. I will fight and protect but I seek things to fight for and things that need protection.

What must I do?

I will walk with you on your journey and we shall see great things together. We will fight foes when they appear and I shall learn more of the human ways so that I can be a part of your world since I can no longer be a part of my own. I will become Like You.

What do I think of the Great Dragon to Be?

I do not like the Wyrmfriends. Look at me! If a dragonewt can fail the dragon path, how can humans succeed? I think the Great Dragon will destroy everything and it must be opposed. I hear the God Learners will oppose it and I will go and be like them to play my part.

Ducks

'Ah, and now we turn to the duck. At first glance you might feel the desire to pity the tiny little things. Flightless amongst birds, ignored amongst men and seemingly despised by the powers of Glorantha itself. Should they be any other creature they would deserve your pity.

But they do not.

Cursed by the gods, hated by our world and set upon by beasts and things and men...the ducks have earned their lot and we must abide by it as well. So I say no, do not pity the duck – avoid it. The words they speak are likely lies and their greasy fingers are never far from theft or treachery. They mimic and mock our ways but they are not worthy of them.

If this age does not see the end of them, perhaps the next one will.'

— *Recitain, Tribal teacher of Orlanth*

Whether or not his words are believed by all, Recitain is correct in part when it comes to his summarisation about the worth of the ducks to his people. He speaks of curses, pity and of this age seeing the end of the small, flightless avians. The Orlanthi share many of their settlement watering holes with small duck populations; which skews some of Recitain's views upon them but he is not so biased as to be wrong, either.

The ducks – or **Durulz** – as they call themselves, are truly cursed by the gods of Glorantha and looked upon as secondary creatures nearly everywhere they go. Even some of the common laws of Gloranthan physics do not work the same way for the ducks. It is as if the world and its powers collectively decided to deal the ducks a losing hand. Even so however, the ducks refuse to fold.

The Durulz have had to spread out across the lands of the world to survive, each splintered flock of the Durulz becoming a new plumage or sub-species of the race. They are survivors and pragmatists to the extreme, knowing that if they let their guard down for a second that something in this age would swallow them up – perhaps literally.

Too small and mostly ignored by the dragonewts and Wyrmspeakers, there are almost no ducks within the Empire of Wyrms' Friends. Although they are forced to work hard to get accepted, there are even a few ducks within the God Learners. The vast majority of the Durulz populations of the world are on their own, turning to one another and what few allies they have managed to make over the generations.

Being a Durulz is hard but it makes them harder. If adversity and challenges strengthen those who can overcome them, the ducks are probably the strongest race to be found on Glorantha – even if no one would ever believe it.

THE ESSENCE OF DURULZ

One of the most recognisable and widespread races in Glorantha, the Durulz are one of the building blocks of the events that have shaped the world. Through their often-ignored and commonly downplayed actions, they have been at the foot – or **under** the foot – of the empires, armies and legends of Glorantha. Although no other race in all the world would admit it, not even themselves, the ducks are important.

From the time of the Long Night, when Yelm fell into darkness and the world became the breeding ground for foul things of the Faceless Enemy, the Durulz suffered a powerful curse that took their wings and bound them to the ground like normal creatures. Through a series of decisions (some might call them **bad** decisions); the Durulz fell from the sky forever.

Exactly why the Durulz made these decisions is covered further in the chapter that contains their myths and legends but what they did to the overall mentality and social structure of their people is reflected in several attitudes and activities that seemingly define 'duckhood'. To truly understand what it means to be a member of the Durulz race one must know about several key duck laws.

The Sky is forbidden. No matter what the Durulz do short of making pacts with the Faceless Enemy, they cannot fly in any way. When Yelm cast them down and sundered Ganderland he made sure that no member of his fellow sky gods would **ever** allow ducks into the air again. That means that no duck

would ever even try to fly under the power of his own magics or contraptions – they know it will somehow fail.

Chaos is the Faceless Enemy. Something happened in the Long Night that ingrained a deep hatred for all things Chaos in the Durulz. The Orlanthe have their Hot Storm Wind, and somehow it was instilled in the Durulz's own Storm Bill. Although the fight is led by the Ivory Mallards, no duck can abide the presence of Chaos for long.

Bitterness is armour. All Durulz know that they are considered a joke, the lowest of the low and it has formed a palpable cynicism and bitterness in their hearts concerning many of the Big People. Ducks find it useful to be able to shield oneself from their jibes and condescension by going into every situation with a shade of negativity covering their interactions.

Hatred is a weapon. Generations upon generations of ducks being stepped upon, laughed at and ignored can breed a special type of hatred in the hearts of the Durulz. This hatred can replace any idea of mercy or quarter that might stay a duck's hand. Their ability to redirect the pain and suffering they have endured is their finest weapon.

Trust in the Duckfriends. It takes a special type of Gloranthan to ever do anything for a duck, let alone a large enough group of ducks to earn the title of 'Duckfriend'. If one is named, that person should be considered a Durulz by the vast majority of the species. Duckfriends are far and few between; they should be cherished. Of course, should a Duckfriend betray that trust, there are no words in Beastspeech for how the ducks will make them suffer.

Ignorance is not bliss, it is the norm. Ducks know that from birth they are going to be looked down upon by the Big People of the world – when they are looked upon at all. No one listens to the plans or rants of a duck. It is more common for a duck's plan or scheme to be heard, ignored and then reiterated by a Big Person as their own. For most ducks this is only seen as an annoyance for their first few years. It will take that long for a crafty duck to learn to use it. Being hidden and being ignored is all just a matter of *perspective*.

These universal duck laws are considered a constant for all of the Durulz, even the foreign and effete breeds of keets found throughout the islands of Vithela. Although each sub-race of Durulz may have a different reason for holding these laws as part of their sociality, they are present – just another piece of the greater curse that Glorantha has bound to the fate of all Durulz.

Durulz Terminology

The ducks and keets of Glorantha have many of their own terms and phrases that stretch across their dialects and cultural differences. Although the translation from Beastspeech to other humanoid dialects might alter these words and phrases, they will remain remarkably similar.

'Feathers always grow back' – This is the phrase that basically explains the survival instincts of the Durulz. No matter what they have to leave behind, they will do their best to survive any encounter.

Big People – Slang term for any of the other sentient races of Glorantha that commonly grow taller and more important than ducks do.

Blackfeathered – Derogatory slang term for any Durulz that turns against his own people, particularly if they turn to Chaos.

Duckfriend – Any non-Durulz that has been granted the social status and trust of the Durulz people. They are marked with an ancient tattoo (in a place they can cover up in public) and are considered to be a treasured member of the species for something they selflessly did for a group of Durulz without asking for payment.

Ducktown – Any part of a larger Big People community that has been set aside for the ducks of the area; often a slum of smaller houses, ponds and muddy paths.

Faceless Enemy – Slang term for anything doing with Chaos.

False Life – Slang term for anything involved with undeath or necromantic animation.

Ganderland – The fabled and ancient 'ducktopia' in the sky that was taken from them when they were cursed. Also called Canardela.

Hungry Folk/Hungry People – Slang term for any member of the Uz species (including enlo), on account of how Durulz are frequently hunted for their 'deliciousness'.

Little People – Slang term for any of the sentient races of Glorantha that grow small and short like the Durulz do. Considered a derogatory term by most of these races, as no one likes to be called 'little' by a duck.

Long Night – Reference term for the Great Darkness that happened after Yelm perished into Darkness.

Nest of Eight – The proper term for the Duck pantheon.

‘No blade is sharper than a Durulz’s wit’ – The duck saying that means that even the harshest and most dangerous of physical combatants can be out-thought and hopefully overcome.

Old Shinyhead – A derogatory slang term for Yelm. The term ‘shinyheaded’ refers to anyone that worships Yelm in particular but any sun-god as well.

Sky Gods – Collective term for any Glorathan god or ancestral entity that is involved with the upkeep or activities of the sky; meaning that they are opposed to the Durulz through Yelm’s curse.

Stormbill – A term used to describe brave (or foolish) ducks that swear themselves to the cult of Stormbill (Stormbull).

‘Swim Under the Enemy’ – A duck phrase that is used to describe how clever ducks will use their natural gifts to avoid most obstacles if they can.

True Durulz – The fabled flying Durulz that lived in Ganderland before the race was cast down and cursed by Yelm. There will always be tales of True Durulz roaming the lands, but no duck would dare believe it.

Yelm’s Sentence – The slang term for the mythic curse that cast the Durulz from the sky.

Keet-specific Terminology

The following are a handful of terms and phrases that seem to only appear in the keet dialects of Beastspeech, rather than amongst all of the Durulz.

Ducklands – Keet slang for anywhere outside of the East Isles that is home to ducks.

Isle Kin – Keet slang for the various and diverse breeds of keets that live throughout the Vithelan islands.

Sacrifice – The term used to describe how the keets willingly gave up their flight to protect the East Isles from drifting apart.

Savage – Derogatory term for those members of the keet tribes that have turned their bitterness into bestial rage or predation.

The Savaging – The pact made by the ancient Sorns to betray their kin in order to retain their flight after the Sacrifice.

‘What was given must be earned’ – The keet phrase that explains how they feel that the Vithelan peoples owe their kind everything that they have in this age. It is the root of their bitterness toward their Big People neighbours.

DURULZ DESCRIBED

The following section is devoted to the many differences between the Durulz and their simpler avian cousins. The curse that hurled them from the Sky changed their bodies both inside and out to ensure they would survive to suffer their choices.

Duck Life Cycle

After a successful conception through an ugly and awkward mating process between a single duck drake (male) and a fertile female, the duck gestation period of 34 to 39 weeks begins. During this time the mother duck will see a sizeable swelling to their lower bodies as the egg forms and hardens inside of them. The mother will be overcome with discomfort by the constant weight in her, and the desire to make a nest will become too strong to avoid.

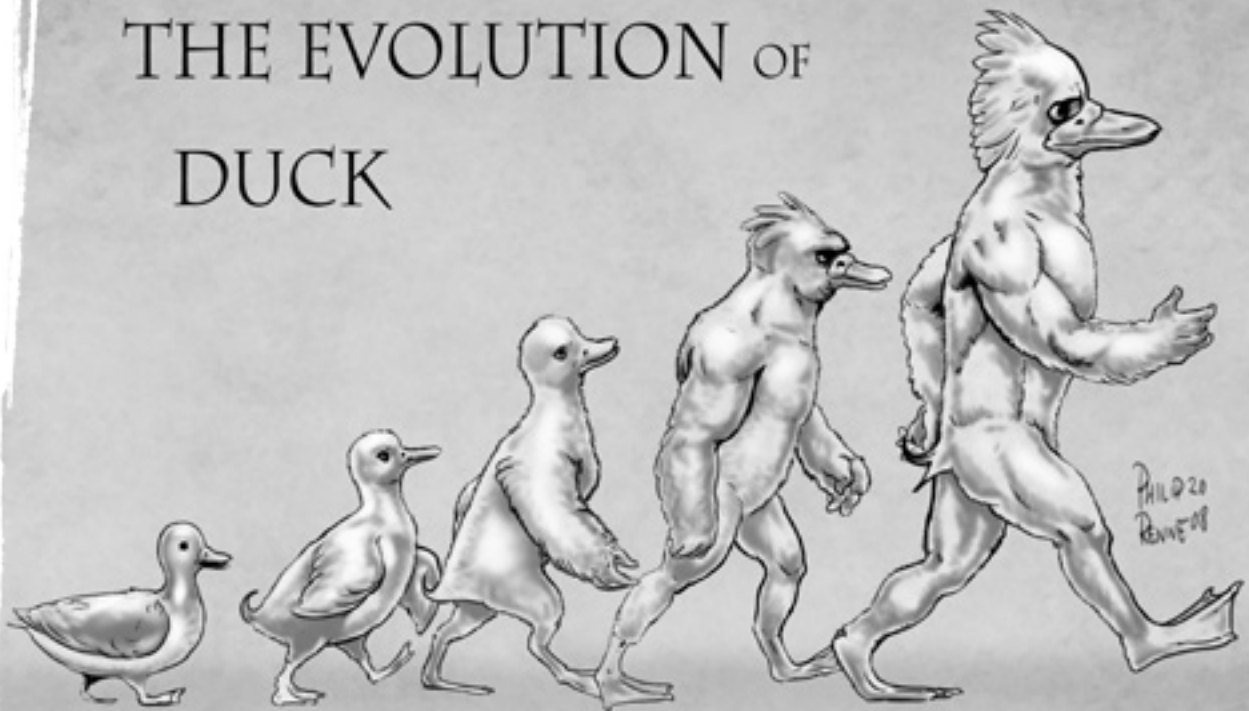
A duck nest is made of soft materials that the mother and drake collect, sometimes with the help of a Canarda cultist. The materials are shredded, torn and otherwise made into particulate pieces to be woven and matted together to form a thick cushion that will help keep the mother warm and comfortable during the final ten or twelve weeks of incubation. The nest will sometimes also serve as a secondary food source in some Durulz cultures but most civilised ducks store enough food to bring the mother what she needs as she requests it.

Part of their cursing forced the Durulz to hatch their eggs internally, much like the embryonic sacs of mammals, only to give birth to the ‘hatchling’ much as a human would. Like any humanoid birth, this process is very painful – made additionally so by the passing of jagged and sharp eggshell fragments along with the afterbirth. Many mother ducks discover a new level of spoken profanity during childbirth, passing out shortly after.

Ducks are born with the ability to eat the same foods they can as adults, crushing plant and grain matter into paste with their bills until their row of tooth-like growths form around age two. Once they have their ‘teeth’, denser foodstuffs are an option for them as well. Most duck parents that can afford to will feed their children high amounts of flowering plants and slightly diluted liquors, pacifying them through their early years and fortifying their tolerance.

Ducklings cannot hold their own weight on their legs until they are six months old but can swim just seconds after birth. Young ducks tend to spend a lot of time in their mother’s arms or in the local watering hole as a result and must be protected especially over the first month or so while their true feathers grow and replace their ‘fuzz’.

THE EVOLUTION OF DUCK



Reaching puberty at an average of 15 years, ducks go through a rite of passage set by their local adults in a similar fashion to the Orlanthi. This rite often includes a trip into the local wilderness or urban sprawl by themselves, with nothing but a weapon in hand and an empty sack in the other. A local animal or object is named and the young duck is sent to go and fetch it, bringing it back to the community. Failure likely means the duck did not survive, but success means becoming an adult. Once named an adult they can vote in local duck councils like their parents and neighbours.

The average duck lifespan is only 35 years due to external circumstances killing them off but most ducks have the capability to reach 70 naturally. Any that manages to survive to fifty years old can be considered to be an 'elder' in the duck community, earning the right to complain incessantly and judge everything he witnesses. The oldest duck in history,

called Tyberius Swanblade, reached one hundred and four before the snows came and swallowed Dragon Pass and him with it.

Dental Assets of the Duck Bill

One of the most familiar and recognisable parts of a duck's anatomy, the bill of a Durulz is built much in the same way as those of common birds. It is a dense growth that is firmly rooted to the jaw connections of the skull that serves as the duck's mouth, lips and tongue-carriage.

Both the upper and lower plate of the bill supports a row of small, somewhat pointed tooth-like protrusions called *tomia*. The rows of *tomia* form a somewhat serrated edge that is good for the duck's ability to tear or saw through wet or reedy plantlife. They are also perfectly suited for the grasping of items in the duck's bill if it needs to do so, which many are

noted as doing so with cigars, pipes or the next quarrel to be fired from their crossbow. A duck can also deliver a painful bite on bare flesh with its bill but not one capable of actually doing more damage than scraping the skin.

It is said that the original Durulz that were cast down from the sky had no teeth but an early legendary hero of the ducks went on a Hero Quest to get them back. He knocked all of the teeth from the beaks of most other birds, gathering them all up and giving them to Grandmother Duck to distribute to her children. Ever since, ducks of all shapes and sizes have had their rows of tomia back.

A Durulz's bill is stiff and mostly inflexible, hinged at its root to be opened and closed but that is about it. When a Durulz speaks, the sound is not adjusted much by the position of the bill. There is frequently a clicking or clacking sound that accompanies a Durulz speaking from the hard plates of the bill popping against themselves.

Duck Speech and Vocalisation

The firm and unyielding material that a duck's bill is made of makes it impossible for them to manufacture certain sounds like most other humanoids can. When speaking in human tongues they tend to favour a slight lateral lisp and frequent whistling or clicking sounds from air passing between their bill plates. They create the vast majority of the sounds they need to deep in their necks, shaping the air passage with their stiff tongue against the rear of their mouth. They can learn to speak nearly any language but with some difficulty. They have an accent even when speaking in their native Beastspeech but it is not thick enough to stop other speakers of that language from understanding them.

Although it is not a true form of vocal language, Durulz of all kinds also have several instinctual noises that they make during times of emotional or physical stimulus. The following is a short list of the most common of these noises and the situation that would cause a duck to emit them.

Anger – a long and loud hissing.

Awe – rapid clacking of bill or clicking of tongue.

Disbelief – a single quack with a drop in pitch toward the end.

Fear – a rapid warbling in back of mouth.

Happiness/Laughter – a loud quacking broken by staccato hisses/clicks.

Jealousy – a low, barely audible hiss.

Love – a frequent, low warbling accompanied by a clacking of bill.

Pain – a sharp, loud quack that fractures at the end.

Panic – a series of loud quacks with high-pitched warbling in between.

Pleasure – a low and steady warbling.

Shock/Surprise – a sharp quack that rises in pitch toward the end.


Sorrow – a rhythmic series of low warbles and muted quacks.

Duck Plumage

The primary facet of a Durulz's body that separates it from others of its species is its feathers. Colouration, consistency, markings and even apparent oddities show one member of the greater Durulz race apart from the next. Such physical differences are often lost on the Big People, who simply view 'a duck as a duck', but have broken the Durulz species into several sub-breeds. Depending solely on their plumage, a duck could be placed in the masses of a ducktown or elevated to warrior-nobility.

Unlike keets, which have varying body and bill/beak shapes as well as different plumage, ducks have basically one body type. They can only really be broken into their sub-species according to their feathers. Most ducks fall into the common 'canard' type ducks, with grey or brown feathering and a slightly lighter head. Other breeds have raised crests or brightly-coloured heads, and some are born with dazzlingly white plumage with starkly ivory bills. The colouration of a duck is often due to the colouration of the parents but the occasional ivory mallard is born as a sign of the impending fight against the Faceless Enemy. The actual colour differences are better described later in this book, in *The Scattered Flocks*.

Colouration and form aside, a duck's feathers are one of its most important physical features. A duck's feathers are thick and durable to hold back the elements, as they were never intended to wear the human trappings of clothing or armour. Although they offer no true protection from wounds or damage but they are the best natural defence to rain, snow and the cold. They allow most duck breeds to survive in temperatures a full 20 degrees lower than that of a human; even though they will complain about it the whole time.



A duck secretes an oily substance through their skin that they ruffle over themselves anywhere they have feathers. It is an annoying habit that requires a free hand and their bill but it is something that they must do routinely. Without the oils coating and permeating their feathers they will soon become dry and flaking, utterly unable to repel water. The oil keeps the duck's plumage supple and waterproof – essentially like the natural oils in a human's skin. These oils collect dirt and filth as a side effect of its usefulness (nothing a duck gets in Glorantha comes without cost), forcing ducks to wash, bathe or swim frequently to keep this collection to a minimum. If this is not done the duck will quickly become dingy, foul and rank. Some ducks will care about this but considering how poorly they are looked upon already – it is not *always* a deciding factor for their hygiene.

The Difference Between Ducks and Keets

Internally, all Durulz are principally the same. Externally and socially the different breeds that make up the race are quite different. The easiest separation to see is that between the ducks and the keets. Just as the keets are drastically culturally different from the canard ducks, they are physically different as well.

Ducks are all basically the same body type with just a few minor appearance-based traits varying from breed to breed. Keets however, vary drastically in plumage, bill (or beak in some cases) and body type from one sub-breed to the next. Raised on islands just a few hundred miles apart from one another, the keets range from the short and sharp-billed auks (puffins) to the tall and brilliantly pink phoenics (flamingos), with several other varieties in between.

Apart from their body shape and plumages, keets differ from ducks in the way their beaks or bills are designed. Where ducks have broad, flat bills made of stiff but still somewhat pliable materials, keets all have extremely hard and solid mouthparts. Most keet bills or beaks are thinner and more bladelike than those of ducks, with some breeds actually even being able to use them as weaponry in tight quarters.

All other differences between ducks and keets fall into the social and cultural arena, which is covered in much more detail later in this book.

DUCK SOCIAL MORES

The following are noteworthy parts of duck societal views that help shape how they look upon Glorantha and how they generally interact with the societies that populate it. Each individual statement is followed by a brief description how it came to be, or how it actually affects the ducks' as a whole.

The Council is Law

Grandmother Duck had four children. She did this not only because she wanted a large family but because she needed a host of different views and opinions to help her steer her choices. Her ideal of the duck people guiding their own kind as a community is seen in the formation of the traditional Council. Every ducktown or other community of Durulz has monthly moots of their adults that form a Council. The Council then votes upon specific matters pertaining to the community; thereby keeping with the traditional mentality of Grandmother Duck that 'all ducks should seek to quack with one voice'.

Every duck community is managed and guided by the local Council, with a grand Duckmoot taking place once every season amongst the available leaders of the cults of the Nest of Eight. The actual meeting place changes from season to season, and little changes at these meetings, but it does allow the greater duck community to know what is happening to them across the world.

To Err is Human, To be Blamed is Duck

Every duck (and most keets) knows that they have been slotted by the greater forces of Glorantha to serve as the scapegoats for most of the mistakes made by the races of the world. Even though the myths and legends of Glorantha do not *always* put a duck to blame for the world's problems, the ducks know that if they dig deep enough and search long enough – they will find one of their brethren somewhere along the way.

They are Not Laughing with You

A duck's body, voice and somewhat feeble physique has been the focus of jokes, ridicule and side-splitting laughter ever since the Great Darkness was lifted. They learn to ignore the laughter and the stares quickly enough, especially if they find strength in the anger it sometimes causes. Some ducks despise being laughed at or made fun of, turning such scenes into violent outbursts of profanity or even physical threats. Others find the comedic value of their appearance as a good way of getting superior opponents, especially Big People, to let down their guard and become vulnerable to the 'funny little duck'.

Ducks Only Protect Ducks

Ever since the Dawning and return of light to Glorantha, the ducks have been an accursed race belittled and looked down upon by all others. There have been many Big People cultures and races that have even gone as far as putting prices on the heads of ducks and the Hungry Folk have hunted them for their flesh. It seems as though that nearly all other things on

Glorantha seek to do harm to the ducks, or will not aid them in the very least. This has meant that the only creatures that ducks can actually count on for aid are other ducks.

The other part of this social norm is the fact that duck communities and families tend to be rather tightly knit and self-reliant. When a ducktown is endangered they know they cannot hope for outside help, so they protect each other as best they can. Although a single duck warrior tends to be a laughable site to most invaders, 25 of them lead by an ivory mallard or two could be something to consider avoiding.

If You Must be Hated, Deserve It

It is common knowledge that the bitterness and callousness of ducks is well earned from centuries of mistreatment. Most ducks use this negativity to fuel their will to survive, adding it to the host of reasons why they lash out against others as criminals and outcasts. For a duck that has been mistreated long enough, they begin to *want* to do things that earn their place at the bottom instead of simply being cursed to live there.

Take What You Can

Glorantha is not going to hand anything to a duck without a cost and most Durulz learn well before they ever reach adulthood that they must claim what they can, when they can – and never question the morality of their actions. It might wear on the good nature of a few ducks to live so tight-knuckled and materialistic but when an entire world seems bent on making sure you get nothing at all *anything* you manage to obtain seems like a treasure. Because of this, most ducks are viewed as thieves and bandits (some are, of course) and nearly all are consummate pack rats. A duck is not likely to lose or misplace anything they have taken possession of; if only because they do not know when they might get the chance to get another!

Realism Over Heroism

Ducks know that they will not likely be recognised for any sort of heroic activity they actually partake in; some Orlanthei or Praxian clansman will be attributed with the stories and legends and soon the duck involved will be overshadowed into obscurity. This realistic viewpoint over how their actions will be perceived tends to put most ducks in the ‘stand by and see how things work out’ category unless they or their friends’ lives are in danger. Some ducks might have a calling to fight evils and selflessly solve others’ problems – but most know that it is better to keep their own skin intact before risking it for someone else’s.

THE GOALS OF DUCKHOOD

Although every duck will have its own individual goals, likely developed according to their local needs and adventures, there are three main things that every duck (and most keets) is

taught as a child. These tenets of duckhood (keethood?) are what lies nestled deep in a duck’s heart. They may not know they seek these things but Canarda whispered her desires into the eggs of her children in the God Age, who scrawled it on the inside of their shells. Her words are forever etched onto the eggs of all Durulz, even if they forget having read them.

Protect your Ducklings

It is every duck’s responsibility to the race and the culture of the Durulz, to the gifts that Canarda gave, for every duck to seek their role in the furthering of the species. Sometime after 20 years of age a duck will look to find a mate and breed. The young are universally cherished by all of Durulz kind and ducks make remarkably good parents and guardians – only leaving their children when they are old enough to provide for themselves or are in the protection of another duck.

Do Not Anger the Gods Further

Ducks know that they are already on bad terms with the Sky Gods and many of their allies in the Gloranthan pantheons but they are warned when they are young not to do anything (or fail to do something) that could anger the gods more. The Nest of Eight is very forgiving of their children but other gods are not. The last thing the Durulz need is another host of gods turning their ire toward duck kind.

Survive to Prove your Worth

Ducks are natural survivors; a trait normally associated with their selfishness and stubborn streaks. This is actually something that goes much deeper into the original ducks and Canarda’s wishes for them. She wanted them to show the gods that they were wrong in cursing them through surviving any hardships that would be hurled upon them. They would endure the bad long enough for the Sky Gods to see how unfair they had been to such a tenacious race, giving the Durulz back their flight and rebuilding Ganderland. This has not happened in countless centuries of weathering hardships, turning the hope of forgiveness into the shadow of selfish pragmatism.

‘Laugh at us, ignore us, heed not our warnings of what we saw and felt in the Great Darkness. When this is all over...we will still be there to say ‘I told you so’...

...but even then you will not likely listen.’

— Archibald Three-Quacks, Mothersnest Historian

Duck MYTHS

The following is a recounting of the myths of the ducks, of all the Durulz. No one outside of the duck peoples has heard these words and believed them but they remain strongly remembered amongst the Durulz. Glorantha cares little to nothing for the origin, cursing and survival of the Durulz through the ages – but they do.

These are the creation myths as remembered by the ducks and keets; a compilation of the stories and tales that have been told from one generation to the next. This tells the stories of how the ducks came to be and how they have managed to shape their tiny corner of Glorantha.

THE CELESTIAL COURT AND THE FIRST EGG

When the Celestial Court began to look upon the world and design the plans to shape Glorantha, they all had ideas and places they wanted to focus upon. One amongst the Celestials, the highest flyer of all the beings, called Vrimak; he asked his fellows to give him the eternal Sky. He flew and flew, and enjoyed the emptiness of the clouds and the winds under him but soon it was not enough.

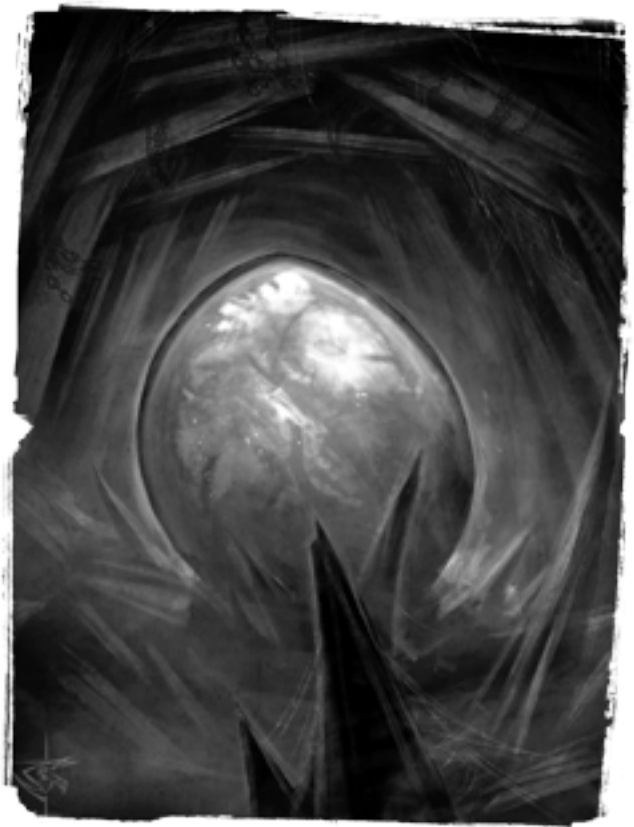
Vrimak looked down where the Court was meeting, saw that they were playing around with bits of primordial stuff and got interested. He swooped down to investigate and found that they were all toying with the Form runes; they were creating all sorts of unique things with their runes. First the Court created the elements and magics that would help them mould reality into easier shapes, and soon the Man Rune was formed. When combined with the base elemental runes that were first to fall from their fingertips, the Man Rune begat the coming of mankind. From the Earth Rune came the people of the mud and soil. From the Fire Rune came the firewalker people. From the Water Rune came the people of the seas. It was not until the Air Rune spawned the Sky People did Vrimak knew what he must do.

Creatures of logic and sentience walked the ground, swam the seas and soared the skies. These early folk, the true folk of Glorantha, were beyond the understanding of the Celestial Court and like grains of sand compared to the mountain. The Court created gods and goddesses to serve as their go-

between; the only way to ensure that their creations would not falter and decay without their direct guidance.

Vrimak saw that the Sky People had a single goddess, a winged wonder named Duck that was wise, powerful and beautiful to behold. Vrimak took Duck and embraced her, giving her a splinter of his Celestial essence. She could not hold so much power and her body gave birth instantly to the birds of the world, which flew from her and populated all of Glorantha.

Pleased to have so many things to share his joy of the Sky with, Vrimak congratulated Duck – now called Mother Duck for all of her children – and held her warmly in his arms. In his happiness he squeezed Mother Duck just slightly too hard and something fell from her womb onto the ground. It was the first egg ever laid and it was the colour of fallen snow and as hard as stone.



Curious, Mother Duck tapped her bill against the egg. There was a tap in return from the inside and instantly Mother Duck grew worried that one of her children was forever trapped in the shell. She pounded and pounded upon it but could not break it. She pleaded with Vrimak to help their child, so the High Flyer grabbed the Man Rune and gave the egg three sharp taps. Upon the third tap the shell cracked and fell away, revealing Canarda the Egg Goddess.

Wanting so badly to get back to his Sky, Vrimak gave the Man Rune to Mother Duck and Canarda to occupy themselves while he would be away. They began to toy with the rune and soon Mother Duck felt the beginnings of another birth within her – a larger birth. Before she could say a word about it, Canarda spoke of her own swelling belly.

Soon both goddesses gave birth to six eggs – three from each of them. The six eggs, along with their mothers, would become the Nest of Eight.

THE NEST OF EIGHT

Mother Duck and Canarda looked upon their six eggs. Mother Duck held her three for the other to see – a speckled one with a tall shell, a dark grey or nearly black one and smallish fat one. Canarda held hers as well – a steel grey egg, a plain white round one and one of the most perfect ivory colour that would not stop shaking. The two mothers sat their eggs in one nest, wrapped their arms around one another and shared the space with the six eggs. They had become the Nest of Eight.

When the eggs began to hatch the gods of the ducks joined their mother and grandmother. Canarda wept tears of joy when she saw her children as they emerged and *Grandmother* Duck grinned solemnly at her daughter's happiness.

The first egg to hatch was Grandmother Duck's dark grey egg; the duckling that emerged was of darker plumage. She opened her eyes and looked upon the world with two eyes of different colours, one milky white and one a jet black. The young duck goddess backed away immediately, hiding in her mother's shadow. Named Swimmer in the Shadows, this hatchling instantly knew the ways of the spirits and how to walk between worlds; she was the first duck shamanness and the source of all of the Durulz's protection against spirits.

The next egg to move was Canarda's steel grey egg. As if with great strength from within, the slate-coloured hatchling emerged; standing inside the remnants of the shattered and splintered eggshell. His plumage was speckled and grey, its feathers streaked with a shimmer of silver that shines like metal. The duckling who would later be known as Deathdrake

looked over to its fellow egg-brother and let out a heavy sigh. Reaching down, the young duck instinctively shaped a stone into a blade and drove it into his brother's shell.

With a sharp quack and a laugh, Deathdrake used the first duck-crafted weapon to split the shell of his little brother – a small but crafty duckling that would serve as the bridge to the human people named Duru. Duru thanked his brother with a hearty embrace.


The next hatching was a simultaneous one – the tallest of Grandmother Duck's egg leaping into the air and landing on the shortest. With a crash and the eruption of laughter, the taller sister who will be known as The Hurler landed upon the shorter and fatter Eggbeater. The hatchlings; one tall sister that was long of wing and the other short brother that was loud-mouthed, rolled around in the slime of their hatching. Grandmother Duck swept her two ducklings under her wing, placing them next to their dark sister and watched the last of the eggs to hatch.

The last of Canarda's eggs, still dancing and twitching from within, rolled out of the nest and into the bare open of the ground. Its mother looked concerned and at first moved to bring it back but was stilled by Grandmother's wing.

Grandmother Duck slowly shook her head and looked to the sky with a knowing grin. The clouds had gathered in the Sky, a rumbling storm building above. The seven gods and goddesses looked on as the Sky opened up and tore the air asunder with a streak of white-hot lightning. Thunder exploded and the bolt struck the egg, sending soil-turned-glass and smoking fragments of shell in all directions.

When the smoke cleared there was a crater where the egg once stood and in the crater stood a white-feathered duck untouched by the soot and smoke and unburned by the lightning. The young duck laughed loudly and walked over to his brother, snatching the stone weapon from Deathdrake's hand with a sweep of his wing. After looking over the crude weapon, the duck that would become known as Stormbill looked to the clouds and nodded happily – as if someone was in the Sky watching over the ivory hatchling's birth into the world.

With the final egg hatched, the Nest of Eight was complete and Vrimak looked on from his place in the Celestial Court. He was pleased with what he had created to aid the Sky People and the world was populated with birds of all kinds. Vrimak knew that his creations would be busy with their children, the True Durulz, so he went back to his Celestial fellows to join them in the end of the Age.



The gods and goddesses of the Durulz were whole and they would enjoy greatness for a long time before they would suffer their fall. Their prosperity would only make the darkness to come that much more tragic.

THE TRUE DURULZ OF GANDERLAND

The race of Durulz multiplied over the generations, migrating toward the nest of Grandmother Duck. This place, which was south of the Spike of Law, became known as the Empire of Durulz, Canardela, or otherwise the ducktopia of Ganderland.

Ganderland was the perfect place for the Durulz; it had everything they needed to enjoy their lives. They had a huge tract of Sky to fly in, ponds and rivers in which to swim and fish, and more friends from the corners of bird-kind than any of them had the power to keep track of. Fields of long and flourishing reeds would grow alongside stretches of fragrant flowers, tended by the magics and skills of the finest Durulz gardeners the Empire had to offer. The crops seemed to grow faster than the Durulz could eat them and there was never a shortage of food.

The Durulz spent their free time playing games, enjoying aerial sports and inventing new ways of wielding the magics of Glorantha. They had more time to enjoy themselves and experience things in a light that some races did not. The True Durulz of Ganderland lived the best possible conditions they could and life for them was good.

The gods and goddesses of the Durulz lived amongst their people; walking, flying and swimming with their fellows – not as equals necessarily but definitely as friends and family. Grandmother Duck spent all of her daytime hours amongst the young ones, teaching them everything they would need to know later. Canarda enjoyed long hours with the eggs and nesting mothers, but occasionally took the time to see her sons and siblings.

The Hurler rarely touched ground, always flying, seeing the tops of the Sky and mapping the lands around the Spike. She would come and go, enjoying the rush of being the best flyer in all of Ganderland but she would also fill her nephew's head with stories about the lands beyond the great moat surrounding the Empire.

Eggbeater would sing his songs and drink his drinks, rousing his people to amazing choirs of sound and power. It was through his songs that true Beastspeech was created, contrary to the belief that it came from other races. He made sure that the Durulz knew how to speak to his

godly family properly and some of the first priests were Eggbeater's best and closest friends.

While her siblings were playing in the public eye, Swimmer in the Shadows made sure to hold her own special teaching classes inside private spaces. She called powerful spirits into the darkness and helped her fellow Durulz converse with them, control them, bind them and otherwise interact. She has always been the most secretive of her brethren but her powers were keys to the growth of all Durulz magic.

Deathdrake and Stormbill would enjoy each others' company, clashing weapon against weapon in public view for all to learn from their styles. Deathdrake had the skill and the ingenuity with his newest weapon designs to get the upper hand over his brother but Stormbill's ferocity and single-minded forcefulness always seemed to win out in the end. Deathdrake was a true warrior, but Stormbill had a drive that even he did not understand.

During all of his brethren's games and trainings, one of the Durulz gods seemed focussed on something far away. Duru took the Hurler's stories and began to draw together an idea of what lied beyond the edge of Ganderland. He plotted, he planned and he *invented*. He came up with the best way to see the world and learn more about the people of Glorantha.

When Duru had finished his plans he brought it to his grandmother. He had created a huge boat of reeds and magic; he told Grandmother Duck about how he wanted to see the world from *under* the clouds. With one brief description of what he planned to do the True Durulz and their gods and goddesses began to look outward, away from Ganderland, to the great expanse of the world around them.

THE FIRST JOURNEY

Duru, Grandmother Duck and a few select friends from Ganderland entered the reed boat and began to paddle their way out into the rest of Glorantha. They ventured north and found the legendary water roads with which they needed Duru's magic reed boat to travel upon. They sailed into the lands of the other People, those on the other side of the Spike, following the tale-maps drawn from the Hurler's stories.

Soon they came upon a great and far-reaching marshland called Delicate Swamp. Grandmother Duck was pleased to see new and strange birds that settled the area. Some of the creatures that flew out from her in Vrimak's original embrace must have carried some of his power as well, because some of them grew into gods of the Marsh People.

They met with the regal and powerful Grandfather Flamingo and heard his claims against the Herons and the civil war that had erupted throughout Delicate Swamp. So much infighting had been going on there that the good plants for food had been overtaken by vines and weeds, forcing many of the birds to leave the Marsh and go looking for food elsewhere. Their battles caused a landslide from the rocky hilltops into the Delicate Swamp, filling the water table and turning the whole area into a muddy gravel pit.

Compared to the bliss and splendour that was Canardela, Delicate Swamp was wrought with pain and angst. Grandmother Duck was saddened by the tales of Flamingo and soon she wanted to go from that place and get back to her own happy children. She did not want Flamingo or Heron to try and recruit her family for their battles and she knew it was beyond her to help them.

When it came time to leave, Duru handed the oar and paddle to Grandmother Duck and tearfully said goodbye. When asked why he was staying behind, he merely opened one of his many belt pouches and spilled a fistful of black, healthy soil from Ganderland's fields onto the muddy ground. The soil spread along the wet gravel and made a small area of the swamp fertile again. Grandmother Duck cried one tear as she paddled away from her grandson but she knew he had to stay and try to heal the lands outside of Canardela. She paddled away, leaving her most inventive and pragmatic grandson behind to try and solve the problems of their long lost cousins.

THE KEETS – THE LOST DURULZ

When Vrimak's embrace created the birds of the world from Grandmother Duck, some of the breeds of avian saw members of their species elevated to become the gods of their peoples. Among the bird folk that did not find Ganderland, collectively known later as the keets, there were five main families that grew to have gods of their own – the flamingos, herons, gulls, auks and pelicans.

Grandfather Flamingo is said to be first, whose feathers took on the colour of the first sunrise over the Delicate Swamp that he called home. His harem's eggs created a flock of pink-feathered children, each bearing the same brilliant colours as the Grandfather. He called them Phoenics and he was full of pride for his beautiful family. They played and lived happily in their marsh, eating shellfish and picking flowers from the water's edge. Delicate Swamp was Grandfather Flamingo's version of Ganderland.

When one of Flamingo's children's eggs hatched a stark white, long-legged bird with a long, sharp bill, Grandfather Flamingo was horrified by the 'abomination'. He turned his back upon the creature so fast that one of his tail feathers freed itself and drifted to the ground. The tiny hatchling saw this and reached out quickly to snatch it up. With that simple act Prince Heron was raised to godhood, his children forever marked as deft opportunists and paragons of agility and wisdom.

When Grandfather Flamingo learned of how his feather was used to turn his pale offspring into a god and herald the coming of an entire race of blandly-coloured avians with common straight bills, he flew into a rage. He turned to the other birds of the marsh and coastlands, asking them to help him in dealing with the plain-looking newcomers.

The seaside brothers – Albatros, Sunbill the Puffin and High Crowned Pelican – conferred to one another to see what they should do. High Crowned Pelican, the glutton of the brothers, had just eaten his fill and did not want to be bothered with fighting or leading his people to war. Sunbill was trying to keep his own tribes of auks from fighting one another over the best colouration they could muster for themselves. Albatros, the most powerful seer of the Durulz, had already seen the outcome of not only Grandfather Flamingo's war but of *all* wars to come and the plight of the Durulz. He sent his gulls to the ends of the world to try and avoid what he knew was inevitable; his feathers turned dingy and grey from depression and he too knew shied away from Grandfather Flamingo's request for aid.

With his fellow gods ignoring his call, Grandfather Flamingo and his Phoenics began a war against Prince Heron and his brethren. The fighting was vicious and both sides did what they could to inflict hurt upon the other. The Phoenics began to stand upon one leg to mock the natural stances of the herons. Prince Heron painted his children in every drab shade of white, grey, black or brown he knew to stoke the choler of Grandfather Flamingo. The battles grew fiercer and all of Delicate Swamp was soon swept up into the two species' destructive games.

The war between Flamingo and Heron turned their Swamp into a wasteland of watery gravel pits and muddy basins in which no one could grow food or fish properly. Things had gotten very bad and when it was at its worst there came a spark of hope from an unlikely source.

The coming of Grandmother Duck and her reed boat gave Grandfather Flamingo the idea to recruit her and her kind to his war. She did not agree however and all she did was tell

him how they were obviously family. She left before he could acquire her help but her grandson Duru stayed behind to show the Phoenixes how to fix Delicate Swamp.

Prince Heron saw Grandmother Duck leave on her reed boat headed back to Canardela, choosing to follow her to paradise. When Grandfather Flamingo saw teams of herons flying away toward the Spike, he believed that the ducks had betrayed his kind by backing the herons. He turned on Duru and made accusations toward him; claiming that he was a spy for the herons.

Grandfather Flamingo persuaded the seaside brothers to see the ducks as a threat to them as well and although they were not about to go to war for him – they would defend their lands and watch the seas and coasts for signs of trouble. They would not be his soldiers but they would help him know when problems were brewing.

Prince Heron was turned away from Ganderland when he arrived. Grandmother Duck chastised him for following her uninvited and he grew angry and reared his sword-pointed bill to lash at her. In an instant both Deathdrake and Stormbill were there, weapons in hand to defend her. Prince Heron thought twice about pressing the offence and backed away, telling his family to do the same but the damage was done – the two main sides of the Durulz would never have the chance to become a whole species; forever sundered and forever at odds.

THE DURULZ BATTLES

With the ducks, flamingos and herons at odds with one another and the seabirds caught somewhere in the middle, the Durulz collectively were fighting amongst themselves. Grandfather Flamingo arranged for raids upon Ganderland to try and take food and resources from the ducks, the ducks would send raiding forces into Prince Heron's lands to get revenge for him raising his bill to Grandmother Duck and the seabirds would occasionally find themselves protecting their lands from one side or the other.

It was a dangerous time for all Durulz, even those protected and happy within the confines of Ganderland. Although the ducks still knew pleasure and free time the number of soldiers being trained by Deathdrake had increased and Swimmer in Shadows summoned and bound many protective spirits around the Empire. Ganderland was the same ducktopia for Grandmother Duck and her children but there was a definite different *feel* to the land as a whole.

The Godtime was rife with tensions and battle for the Durulz but it was not until the return of Grandmother Duck's wayward grandson did things truly become difficult for the Durulz of Ganderland.

DURU-ORLANTH THE EXPLORER RETURNS

One windy autumn day a familiar reed boat appeared on the horizon, slowly being paddled toward Canardela. The Hurlter and her sons and daughters flew out to make sure it was not a Phoenixic trick or heron trap but they returned quickly with fantastic news – Duru had returned! Grandmother Duck and many of her children went to the docks to welcome him home, waiting with food and gifts abundant.

When the boat reached the docks, the ducks of Ganderland stood in shock as a changed Duru stepped out. He was taller of stature, stronger of body and somehow wiser in his eyes. He wore strange jewellery and clothing and his bill was marked with inking that swirled into patterns. With him he brought a number of strange, featherless beings that wore similar things upon them. These beings, who Duru called the *Orlanthi*, were new to the Durulz.

Duru had taught the Orlanthy how to communicate with him and he with them. They called him Duru-Orlanth, a title that befitted his place as their go-between. He explained to his grandmother that the Orlanthy were *humans* from the land of rocks and dirt. They had come to see the fabled Empire of Ducks and make allies with them. There was a healing priestess and warrior woman, a plough-tilling farmer and a master of beasts. One by one the Orlanthy disembarked the reed boat and went amongst the True Durulz.

The last to step off the boat was a hulking brute of an Orlanthy wearing a woven hair loincloth, a horned helmet and a bronze ring in his nose. His head was almost bullish, thick-necked and very strong. His skin was struck with many tattoos and scars; his hair was a shock of white braided down his back. In his hands he held an iron sword as long as two ducks. The massive man lumbered directly up to Stormbill, causing tension to freeze the breaths of all in Ganderland. When the brute reached him, Stormbill looked up at the barbarian and cocked his head with a smirk on his bill. The two exchanged nods. The Orlanthy handed his massive sword down to Stormbill, who in return handed his sturdy axe up in exchange. After this brief connection, as if they already knew one another somehow, they walked off into the wilderness to discuss private matters. Forever later in duck myths and stories Stormbill would wield his friend's sword and Urox would always have the axe in hand.

Grandmother Duck opened the whole of Canardela to the Orlanthy, allowing them to filter through the society of her people. They taught their ways to the young, helped adults understand what lies beyond the edge of Ganderland, and

even made many friends. Some ducks began to take on many of the qualities of the Orlanthe tribes and a crossing of cultures was quickly evident.

Frequent trips between Ganderland and the Orlanthe tribal lands across the legendary rivers began to take place. Ducks and Orlanthe lived intermingled and happy. Duru-Orlanthe had brought the first outsiders to be welcomed in the Empire and things did not look as though they could get any better.

In reality, things had been set in motion that would never be undone...

THE COMING OF YELM'S LEGION

With the relationship between the ducks and the Orlanthe tightening, and the travels between Canardela and Orlanthe's dirt becoming more frequent, it was only a matter of time before the other gods of Glorantha would take notice and wonder what was going on. Chief among them was Yelm, the Sun, who was no friend to Orlanthe or his people.

The Durulz had flown in Yelm's golden light many times, nicknaming it 'the Yolk of the Sky' but they never dared get near enough to be noticed by such a huge and powerful god. He quite literally ruled the Sky from far, far above them all.

Once Yelm discovered the Orlanthe's new friends, he wanted to see them with his own eyes. He wanted to know if he had to worry about his old foe's allies. Yelm gathered his warriors, picked up his spear and headed to Ganderland to investigate.

Humakt, Orlanthe's warmaster and the wielder of a sword called Death, arrived ahead of Yelm's legion and brought warning to his brothers and the ducks. Humakt knew the signs of a warband and he saw preparation for violence in the sun god. Orlanthe and his fellows made ready for a battle, heading to the Field of Hoonra to hold back what he felt was an invasion. Hoonra was on the edge of Ganderland's farming crops but they were sure it would be an ideal place on which to fight.

The Solar King and his soldiers were coming to Ganderland and Grandmother Duck was worried. She and Canarda pulled all of the young and the mothers into the nesting place, calling Swimmer in the Shadows to protect it with her spirit-magic. Eggbeater came too but only to sing soothing songs and tell pleasant stories to keep the huddled masses calm. Deathdrake, Duru-Orlanthe and Stormbill stood defiantly with their loyal followers next to the Orlanthe at Hoonra. They had amassed a large defence force but they could already tell that Yelm's force was much larger.

Seeing her grandsons so outnumbered, Grandmother Duck sent the Hurler to the leaders of the other Durulz. She sent her with a message that would forge an alliance between all Durulz. If they would come and help her children defend Ganderland, she would open its gates to *all* Durulz. Paradise would be available to them if they helped, even if it meant bringing their arrogance and pride to Canardela.

Grandfather Flamingo and all the keet gods, save for Albatros (who already knew how the battle would end), returned with the Hurler to the battlefield to add their forces to the combined armies that were there. Yelm's armies had almost reached the edge of Ganderland by the time these reinforcements arrived. For the first time in all history the Durulz stood as a unified front against a potential enemy. It would mark the first and last moment of solidarity the True Durulz in the Godtime.

THE BATTLE OF HOONRA FIELD

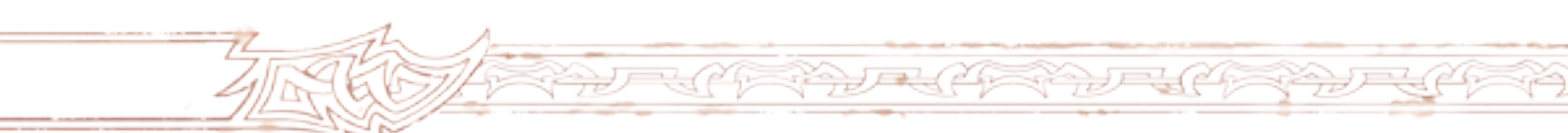
Whether Yelm was coming to Ganderland looking for a fight or not, he would find one. Seeing the assembled armies of the Durulz and the presence of Orlanthe, Yelm tried to intimidate his opponents at first. He poured on his brilliance and his shining radiance and bellowed out that Orlanthe leave this place and make way for his arrival to this new land. Orlanthe, too proud to stand aside or give ground, roared back his refusal and waved his spear in the air.

The Durulz were not sure what to do as of yet but as Yelm's legion grew closer to them his heat began to singe their feathers and dazzle their eyes. They grew hot and agitated; soon sweat was dripping from their feathers and many were panting. When the heat became unbearable for them, it was Duru-Orlanthe that first stepped out of formation – toward Yelm's approach. He shouted to the sun god to turn away, that he was not welcome and that he could not come any closer.

Yelm was not so easily dissuaded. He responded to the duck's ultimatum with a triumphant laugh – and the order to charge. With that, the battle was upon them.

The battle itself was a terrible one. Yelm was an unstoppable force, his Sun Spear lancing through the Durulz as if they were fog to be parted by the wind. His legion took no prisoners and both sides knew Death many times over. Humakt watched as his sword's power was unleashed by so many, and although he was strengthened by such carnage – it did not bring him joy.

Nothing seemed to stem the destruction caused by Yelm's forces and soon his legion was setting up a war camp deep inside Ganderland. The Sun would not be denied his



chance to claim this utopian land as his own, even if he only wanted it to spite Orlanth. All this destruction for little more than pride.

GANDERLAND BURNS – THE EXODUS

Wherever the battle was raged, paradise was turned to ash and desert. Ganderland was slowly being burned to cinders by Yelm's heat and his legion's fiery magics. Swimmer in Shadows tried her best to use her spirits to keep the destruction at bay but it was not enough. Soon, most of Ganderland was a blasted desert of molten glass and burning vegetation.

Yelm's presence was just too much for the Empire of Durulz – and Canardela was suddenly no more.

The retreat was called and the Durulz forces withdrew to the centre of the city, where Grandmother Duck, Canarda and Swimmer in Shadows were protecting the population. Yelm had yet to push that far but there was no question that he would be coming soon; with him would come the eradication of the Durulz.

The Orlanthi saw what the war was doing to the land and knew that the battle was over. They did what they could to buy the Durulz time to escape. Many Orlanthi willingly ran to their deaths upon the blades and spears of the Yelmite legion while the rest withdrew back to their own dirt lands to draw away some of the forces.

The first to leave the battlefield was Grandfather Flamingo and the non-duck keets. He and his brethren felt as if the ducks drew them into a trap and that they knew that their promised paradise would be ruined. He and his allies openly swore to Yelm that they would not offer Orlanth any further aid; an agreement that they kept throughout time. The keet tribes were just as angry with Grandfather Flamingo over the ordeal and they became distrusting and bitter toward one another. Forever they would stay separate from each other's tribes, choosing different islands to live upon to make sure that they would never be forced to count upon each other again.

Although it took Deathdrake, the Hurler and Duru-Orlanth to drag Stormbill from the battle, all of the ducks gathered around Grandmother Duck in the nesting bastion. She decided that paradise was lost to them and they had no choice but to leave what remained of Ganderland. They would scatter to the world below the Spike, protect each other and create a new way of life on the dirt lands of the Orlanthi and their neighbours.

Duru-Orlanth led the Durulz down the Spike into the lands of humans and common beasts, using the same legendary roads and rivers he had taken many times before. Everyone escaped along with Grandmother Duck – everyone except Canarda.

Canarda remained behind, defiantly waiting for Yelm. She had lost so many children, so many eggs were shattered, so much of her and her mother's hard work put to waste by the senseless violence of the Sun. She grew angrier and angrier the longer she waited and by the time Yelm arrived to where she was waiting she was incensed with fury.

Yelm cocked his head at the duck goddess, confused as to why she would wait. Canarda ignored the smouldering of her feathers and the blinding of her eyes as she walked up to the mighty god. She told him that he would regret one day making enemies of the Durulz and she slapped him across the face. The touch of his flesh seared her wing's feathers but it was the look in her smoking eyes that gave Yelm pause.

Lesser indignities had earned his righteous wrath in the past but seeing a mother's love and sorrow in her face, he allowed her to leave. He claimed victory over the Desert of Death that Ganderland had become and watched as she limped away toward the rest of her race. Yelm would never forget the tenacity and strength he saw in Canarda that day; ultimately it would be the reason the Durulz would be set upon the path they walk to this day.

THE COMING OF DARKNESS

It was not long after the Durulz had all gone to the world of rocks and soil to create a new civilisation for themselves that Emperor Yelm was beset upon by the vengeful Orlanth. The attack would come swift and powerful, sending the Sun to Hell and starting the Long Night. As Yelm would succumb to Death, he would remember the tenacity in Canarda's eyes that day on the burning remains of Ganderland. He would call out to the Durulz to save him; to have the unyielding strength that he saw in their Egg Mother on his side before the evils of Darkness could take over. He said that all would be forgiven and his praise would be unlike any ever known before if they came to his aid. All they would have to do is fly down into the closing gates of Hell and grab him before it would be too late.

They refused him.

Again he sank further into Hell and the world grew darker still and again he asked them for aid. He told them about how treacherous their ally Orlanth really was and that it would be a dishonour to them to back his usurpation. That they would be heroes to the Sky and fly on golden wings forever.

Again, they refused him.

As the Night was closing upon the world and even the gods began to wonder what would happen to Glorantha under an eternal darkness, Yelm angrily demanded that the Durulz help him. He bellowed and cried out at them, trying to intimidate them into descending into Hell.

Lastly, without a single modicum of remorse, they refused him once more.

After his final refusal Yelm was silent. Hell had closed its maw and swallowed him up, leaving the world in the darkness of the Long Night. The Durulz had their vengeance against the Sun that burned their paradise but in doing so they condemned all of Creation to darkness and suffering.

THE HUNGRY FOLK AND THE FACELESS ENEMY

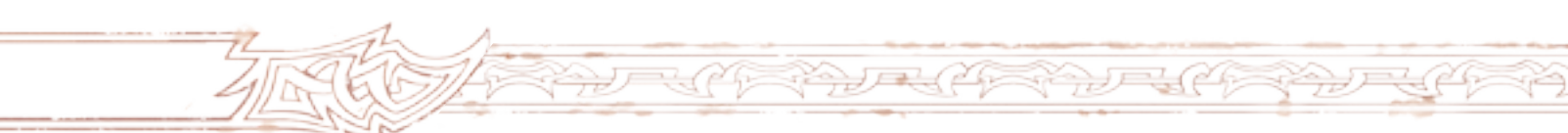
While the Long Night fuddled all of Glorantha and most races clung to what little light they could muster, there were two families of beings that actually thrived in the darkness that covered the world. Where it was a time of fear and pain for everyone, these two groups would be the greatest enemies of the Durulz in particular.

The Hungry Folk – trolls and their like – were beings of Darkness incarnate, followers of the night itself. The Uz and their kin could see perfectly well with Yelm's blaze gone to Hell and they sated their appetites upon anything and everything they could. It is said that they particularly enjoyed Durulz-flesh, hunting them wherever they could be found, plucking their feathers and making meals of them. Although there was no malice in their hunting, the Durulz took their hunts rather personally and have forever called Uz enemies because of their predation during the Long Night.

Also within the Darkness was a different foe; a foe that Stormbill knew was coming from his conversations with the Orlanthe called Urox. It is said that while Yelm was falling into Hell the gate-like maw of the underworld was held open for too long while he tried to get the Durulz to save him. It was open long enough for something to escape; long enough for *lots* of somethings to escape, actually. While Hell was left wide open, the Faceless Enemy that are the Chaos Gods emerged into the world.

Stormbill told his family that he and his children would make it their mission to fight the coming of Chaos. To give Durulz soldiers something to follow, a beacon of sorts, he would put a spark of the lightning that hatched him in a handful of his





children. This spark would mark them as warrior-nobles, fighters against the Faceless Enemy that glow from within with the purity of their mission. They would be born with white feathers and ivory bills; better to see and follow them in the Long Night.

Something Stormbill was told by Urox placed the Faceless Enemy at the front of the threats they would have to face. Although small in number and mostly unknown to the world, Chaos would have to be dealt with before a new age could safely rise. If asked as to why the Faceless Enemy must be stopped, Stormbill would simply smile and claim that every age that passes with Chaos unfettered will appear the next age even stronger. If it is not stopped, eventually Glorantha will reach what could only be described as *Chaos Time*.

In the darkness there were other horrible things, things of False Life that walked beyond the grave. A friend of the Durulz, Humakt showed the ducks how to recognise creatures with False Life and eliminate them properly. As a god of Death itself, Humakt despised the creatures that found loopholes around his area of influence. His Death Rune would not be denied, even if some fool managed to create the Undead Rune. Humakt taught the Durulz how to fight the False Dead as a favour to them but not without any benefit to his own goals as well.

With most of the duck gods protecting and hiding their children and friends from the rampaging Uz, False Life Ones and the Faceless Enemy, it was everything they could do to survive. Deathdrake forged weapons with his bare hands all day long, equipping those ducks brave enough to follow Stormbill into battle. The ivory Foehunter had found many new allies in the Great Darkness – others who stood against Chaos as he did – and they battled throughout all the waking hours against it. Even the otherwise savage Zorak Zoran of the Hungry People called Stormbill his ally in this war against the Faceless Enemy. It was the only time in history that trolls fought beside ducks in large numbers, setting aside their normal roles of predator and prey in the name of the crusade against a strengthening Enemy. During this time Urox and Stormbill would kill enough of the Enemy to fill one of the pits of Hell but it would not be enough.

The Great Darkness was a dangerous time for the Durulz. It was filled with fighting, surviving and learning about the savage realities of the Inner World and the Chaos Gods that now called it home. Throughout all of the pain and suffering of the Great Darkness however, it would pale in comparison to what was to come. When the Lightbringer Quest would bring the Sun back to the Sky, the ducks would have wished the Darkness to truthfully last forever.

It would have been terrible but at least they would have company in their suffering.

THE SACRIFICE OF THE KEETS

As Darkness enveloped the world and the minions of Chaos began to surface under cover of the eternal night, the continent of Vithela that Grandfather Flamingo and his keets settled became a source of great tragedy and self-sacrifice. They had created several shoreline communities, each one enforcing their segregation against other breeds of keet. Although they were not violent towards one another, they were certainly not friendly.

An incarnation of the demon Zmalak came upon the continent, seeing the bickering tribes of keets that lived there and sent evil emissaries to them. In the darkness and confusion, the Andin demon-men of Zmalak's mother Vith took the shape of keets and walked among them. They drove long spikes of Zmalak's black magic into the stones and sand with mallets of bone, weaving a spell larger than Vithela had ever known before. Where the spikes were driven, black blood of the continent seeped onto the ground. This black water poured mystically from one spike to the next, eventually running together into a single pooling point at the centre of the continent.

The Andin had marked a web of pain and torment throughout Vithela, especially in the keetslands of Haragala. When they were done with their vile machinations, a map of fractures like a broken mirror could be drawn between the spikes. Zmalak's minions were successful in preparing the continent for a terrible cataclysm and when the demon itself arrived to enact it nothing could hope to stop it.

Zmalak walked to the centre of the web of driven spikes, wading into the black pool of the gathered blood of Vithela. Chastising the keets for allowing his minions to work their evils unmolested, Zmalak brought his powerful fists down repeatedly into the pool. His fists shook the ground, knocking both keet and man from their feet throughout the continent. On his 1,013th strike, thick sweat pooling from his brow, the black blood of the continent exploded outwards from him. Like a plough through a soft fallow field, Zmalak's spell shot out across the land along the black lines drawn by the web of driven spikes.

At first the people of Vithela believes the spell to have done nothing, but soon the black blood began to dissolve down into the ground. Where a black line one lay, seawater began to rise to take its place as the pieces of Vithela began to drift apart. Where the black blood touched the sea it became a thick mist, hiding everything from view. Zmalak – now called the Beater of Islands – leapt into the sky triumphant, leaving the pieces of the continent to drift forever into obscurity.

With Zmalak gone, the keets looked to Grandfather Flamingo to save them once again. He knew that it would come at a terrible cost but he went to Prince Heron with a plan to save Vithela. All of keet-kind would grasp one another's wings, creating a net of flesh and feather that would hold the rapidly drifting islands together until the spell had run its course. Seeing it as an opportunity to earn the respect of the Vithelan people, each island of keets joined in the gathering.

They gripped one another tightly, drawing the floating pieces of Vithela back together once more. The plan was working. Although their wings were already growing tired and some of the bird relatives of the keets had already flown away in fear that their grips would not hold, the continent was slowly gathering again.

It was upon one island, the piece of Vithela inhabited by the pterodactyl-keet Sorns, which one of the Andin spoke to the leader of the Sorns. As the leathery wings of the Sorns were creaking and tearing from the stress of being part of the net, the demon-man whispered that his dark mother could save them from their plight – all they had to do was *let go*. Caught in a moment of weakness, the Sorns released their grip and the net faltered. As the keets collectively fell to the ground from the sudden release, the Sorns winged their way toward Vith, Wakboth and the gods of Chaos to find their new and accursed lives.

Although the net of keet wings had not brought Vithela completely together, it had kept them close enough to one another to become a large group of islands. Grandfather Flamingo, exhausted and sorrowed from the betrayal of the Sorns, leapt into the air to see the results from above. So stretched and pained were his wings however, that he could fly no longer. The same, it seemed, went for all keets. They had made a terrible Sacrifice to Vithela in order to keep it from shattering into nothingness.

They had given their flight to hold together their piece of the world.

THE LAST FLIGHT

During the Long Night, the Hurler spent most of her time in the high Sky trying to look out for dangers to her people. It was on one of her longer flights to the ends of Orlanthi lands that she looked down and saw her nephew Duru-Orlanth arguing with Orlanth himself. She flew lower so she could hear them but by the time she had arrived Duru-Orlanth had stormed off and Orlanth was alone.

Hurler settled down to Orlanth's side and asked him what was the matter. The human god responded with a sad shake of his head and could only say that he knew when to admit his mistakes – and that he wished that others could too.

The Hurler agreed, not knowing exactly what she was agreeing to and Orlanth gave her a firm embrace of friendship. She would not know exactly why that embrace seemed so sad and final to her at the time until later. Orlanth released her, picked up the glowing sun spear he claimed from Yelm as spoils and walked slowly away toward the rest of his destiny.

She flew back to her family to tell them what she saw but by the time she reached them – it was already too late.

THE COMING OF DAWN

Orlanth's Lightbringer Quest found Yelm in the lowest parts of Hell, where they said their peace and made their truce. Orlanth handed the spear back to Yelm and helped him back to the surface of the world. The sun returned the world and banished the Long Night, bringing the first dawn to Glorantha in what felt like an eternity to the beings that suffered through it.

Once firmly back amongst the gods and goddesses of the world, nearly all of them paying proper homage to the king of the Sky, Yelm turned his attentions to the Durulz. He had not forgotten that they left him to perish when they could have saved him.

YELM'S DELIBERATION AND THE ACCURSED SENTENCE

Yelm's rage at first consumed him, causing him to bellow and cry out for vengeance and he raised his Sun Spear to smite the Durulz utterly and completely. He wanted them to burn in heat and the light of his fires, to suffer and die as he suffered and died.

His judgment found the Durulz selfish and unworthy of mercy but his fellow Sky Gods – Orlanth and Humakt chief among them – spoke of their valiant battles against Chaos, the Hungry People and the False Living ones during the Long Night. They called in favours with their allies and made their case to Yelm that although the Durulz must be punished, perhaps death was too great.

Yelm did not agree at first; he still wanted their lives. A new approach was needed or the Durulz would surely be destroyed. It was Issaries the Talker that came forward with a new idea. He began to speak about how death was too quick and too good for the 'treacherous ducks' and that it would be far better to crush them under Yelm's heel than to wipe them out. Make them suffer, he said. Others quickly joined in Issaries' ruse and the Sky was a cacophony of false claims against the Durulz.

It worked.



Instead of demanding their lives, Yelm was satisfied with ruining them for all time. He began by making sure that he and they would never again cross paths; he was not sure if he could bite back his fury if that were to happen. Yelm knew that he could not come to the ground, for his heat would sear it to glass; he therefore chose to take from the Durulz the one thing that could bring them into his presence – their wings. He summoned Grandmother Duck to his court and stripped her of her wings, telling her to do the same to her children and their children. The entire Durulz line would forever be earthbound; all of Glorantha being told that they were too cowardly to fly to Yelm’s aid so therefore they would never fly again.

As the broken and punished Grandmother Duck began to leave the court to take the judgment to her people, Yelm called out to the other Sky Gods to begin the Durulz’s promised suffering. While Orlanth the Leader, Humakt and Urox stood by quiet and sorrowful, the rest of the Sky Gods began to berate and lash out at the retreating goddess. Although they may or may not have meant what they said, their words were heard and marked by the gods’ heralds – laying their meaning in Time itself.

Grandmother Duck returned to her people in tears, the world having turned its back upon them and took from her family the ability to fly. She sadly knew that Yelm was wrong in his judgment, but who were the Durulz to stand against the assembled Sky Gods? What could they do?

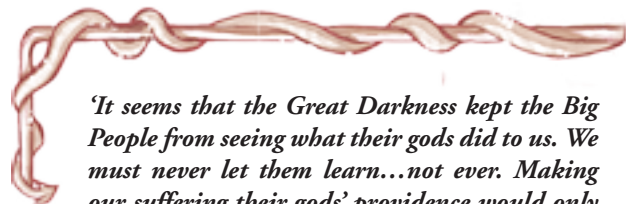
Such was the tragic end of the time of the True Durulz and the Sky. Never again would they fly like the other birds of Glorantha, even those that were born from Grandmother’s wings. This was Yelm’s Sentence and it would be for all Time.

AN AGE OF HISTORY OF BITTERNESS

From the loss of their utopian world, the enmity of the Sun, and the rise of the Faceless Enemy to the terrible judgment that would take the Sky from them; the Durulz suffered throughout the Godtime. They went from high flying golden beings that knew only joy and pleasure to soil-plodding jokes that were to be universally disliked by the rest of the world.

They grew dark and bitter inside, many of their gods and goddesses withdrawing from the public in order to sulk or plot against their enemies. The ducks of the world followed suit and by the beginning of the Age of History, they *knew* that life would always be an uphill climb on short, wobbly legs. They had no choice but to climb it; if Grandmother Duck taught her children one thing, it was to survive.

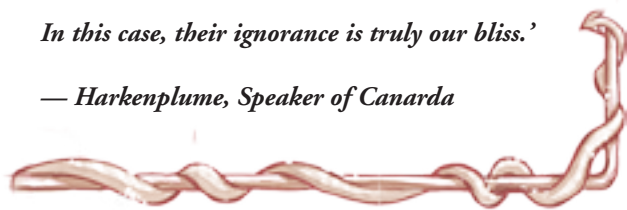
Life would be hard from that point forward, but it would still be *life*.



‘It seems that the Great Darkness kept the Big People from seeing what their gods did to us. We must never let them learn...not ever. Making our suffering their gods’ providence would only make things worse for us.

In this case, their ignorance is truly our bliss.’

— Harkenplume, Speaker of Canarda



VRIMAK THE HIGH FLYER

GRANDMOTHER DUCK

CANARDA
THE
EGG
MOTHER

SWIMMER
IN
THE
SHADOWS

THE
HURTLER

EGGBEATER
THE
SINGER
OF
SONGS

GRANDFATHER
FLAMINGO

ALBATROS
THE
SEER

SUNBILL
THE
PUFFIN

HIGH
CROWNED
PELICAN

THE
DEATH
DRAKE

DURU-
ORLANTH

STORMBILL
THE
CHAOS
KILLER

PRINCE
HERON

FLAMINGO
AND
PEACOCK
KEETS

AUK, PENGUIN
AND
PUFFIN KEETS

HERON
KINGFISHER,
AND STORK
KEETS

ALBATROSS
AND
SEAGULL KEETS

BOOBY,
CORMORANT
AND
PELICAN KEETS

DUCKS



DUCK CIVILISATIONS

'Once, when we were the masters of the Sky, we flew to the ends of this world and saw all there was to see. We landed and tasted of the flowers and reeds of a hundred nations, swam in a thousand ponds and napped under the shade of countless trees. We were the golden Sky People...

...then we lost our wings. Old Shinyhead and his cronies levelled their judgment against us and we literally dropped from the Sky forever. Now stranded in the dirt and rocks like everyone else, we have taken root wherever we can.

We have no choice to live but where we landed.'

– Rugre Wintersegg, Runedrake of the Hurler

This chapter is an in-depth look at ducks and keets in the lands of Glorantha and then in the area surrounding Dragon Pass and the EWF territories found there, Ralios, the Eastern Isles and some scattered locations throughout the world. As former flyers, the Durulz managed to settle a vast and varied amount of the world before the end of the Long Night and Yelm's Sentence. This has allowed for numerous communities of different Durulz to grow in a kaleidoscopic list of locales. Ducktowns and Keetslands exist on nearly every piece of the planet; where they have not been hunted to extinction, of course.

DUCKTOWNS

Wherever ducks congregate for longer than a few days' time, a ducktown is sure to form. Ducktowns are small (most of the time) communities of ducks that live in roundhouses, cabins and other small habitats around a central water source. Whether it is a riverbed, canal, or series of ponds and wells; there will *always* be water in and around a ducktown. Depending on the amount and current to the water it could be clean, oily or even brackish. The condition of the water makes no difference, just that there is some to be found.

Built much like an Orlanthi tula, the roundhouses and steads form the bulk of the community with a few larger buildings and structures used by the whole town. They will

sometimes organise small shopping stalls and trading tents but considering that most ducks trade frequently amongst themselves and are highly unlikely to have outsiders willing to trade with them – these are not as common. The ducktown is the only real sense of community a duck has outside of any cult they have chosen to follow.

The families of ducks live in tight quarters and are often forced to farm small fields or paddies, share supplies and protect one another – because no one else would ever dream to do it. It is where ducks know they have a place to live and survive amongst the only others to ever understand their plight; their own kind.

The following pieces of insight into a ducktown help explain some of what it means to be a duck.



Duckhomes

The 'houses' of duck families are small and squat buildings of a sort that are communal living spaces for normally two to three generations of duck. Ducklings live amongst older siblings, parents and grandparents all under one roof, normally sharing nesting space throughout several common rooms. If food and resources are actually plentiful, such accommodations are not *too* unpleasant. If times are thin however, thefts and bullying amongst family members can be expected in such suddenly constricting quarters.

The most influential duck families in a ducktown will have larger and more impressive duckhomes than their fellows but never overly so. They might have an attached storehouse or arms closet, or perhaps – if the ducktown is lucky – a smoking room for tobacco and duck weed.

The largest duckhome in any give ducktown will almost assuredly belong to any Ivory Mallards living in the area. Inside of this building will be comfortable living spaces, sizable weapon caches and a small library of scrolls and carvings that will help depict how they can fight the Faceless Enemy. Any Ivory Mallards that come to or through the ducktown will be allowed to live in this duckhome without need for rent as payment for their lifelong war against Chaos.

Watering Hole

Ducks may have lost their ability to fly but they certainly did not lose their affinity for water. The need to bathe and swim almost on a daily basis remains part of most ducks' lives. They have a thick oily coating on their feathers to keep them warm and dry, even after a long swim but this makes them easy to become dirty and foul-smelling. Unless they keep a sufficient amount of water or mud around to help keep this coating down and preen their feathers habitually (much to the chagrin of travelling companions).

Not only does the watering hole of any ducktown serve as the public bath and source for natural drink but it also is the common gathering place for most ducks throughout the town. Those that are not working in the farms, trading, or at the local tavern will likely be found wading or swimming around in the watering hole.

Many ducktowns with higher populations will also create a smaller watering hole that is not to be used by adults. Instead it is used to help young ducklings to hone their instinctual swimming skills. Sometimes called a 'nestpond', this area of water is universally protected by the community and is known to warrant having a roofed shelter above it in areas thick with aerial predators.

Called a watering hole as a very generic term, a ducktown's water source can be a singular place or a series

of individual locations of water or thin mud. Some small ducktowns will have a single pool or creek, where larger communities, like those found along the southwestern edges of the Praxian plains, might keep entire street-like canals. Most ducktowns are formed near larger bodies of water for this purpose but watering holes can be dug when towns are formed in dryer climates.

Worshipping Shrine-poles

Many ducks have taken to the worship of the Orlanthi pantheon, altering it just enough for their own deities to take root and form the myths of their people. Unlike the numerous and powerful Orlanthi, who build large shrines and altars to their gods, the ducks are fewer and less influential – making their shrines significantly less to behold.

A ducktown will likely have at most three separate worshipping shrines built in small clearings. Large (two metres at the highest) totemic poles of carved wood or sculpted clay are rooted to the ground by heavy stones or stakes driven into the mud and then painted. Each shrine will be dedicated to a handful of Durulz gods, each one receiving a different symbol, glyph or face upon the pole. This saves space and puts all the gods' attentions to one place in a ducktown – something that ducks prefer when thinking about what the gods have done to them in the past.

The shrine-poles are often surrounded by small piles of tithes and offerings to the gods that are represented upon them. These piles are universally safe from pilfering; any duck found to be risking the anger of what few gods that allow ducks to worship them can be expected to pay a dire and final price. Duck cultists that worship the deities of the Durulz-Orlanth pantheon (called the Nest of Eight) can come to these poles to perform their rites and prayers in peace.

The Nesting Place

A ducktown will assuredly have a single communal building that is constructed much like an inn or hostel; several individual rooms adjoined to a large central room. Although ducks were cursed with internal hatchings, they still have a very strong nesting instinct that causes the pregnant females to gather up feathers, plants, cloth and all manner of materials to form up into a nest for comfort. This building is the nesting place, where many expecting duck mothers come to get away from the cramped quarters of their duckhomes to build their birthing nests.

Behind the heavy doors of the nesting place they can get all the rest they need while being administered to by their parenting drakes and the followers of Canarda the Egg Mother. Each nesting room within the building is only a few dozen feet from the central hall – which is almost guaranteed to have a



Shrine-pole Symbols

The following are good examples of what the shrine-pole symbols for each of the Nest of Eight deities.

Grandmother Duck – The face/head of a duck with closed eyes and a gentle smile.

Canarda the Egg Mother – An egg with two wings folded around it protectively.

The Hurler – A blank section marked with a deep duck footprint surrounded by a pair of wings.

Swimmer in the Shadows – A wide-open eye bordered by a frame of feathers.

Eggbeater the Singer of Songs – A face/head of a duck with an open bill.

The Deathdrake – The skull of a duck, sometimes shown with one eye in its socket.

Duru-Orlanth – A spear and paddle crossed behind a duck's face.

Stormbill the Chaos Killer – A face/head of a duck wearing a horned helmet.



small shrine to Canarda built in it. The shrine is likely to be carved from local woods or sculpted from sun-dried clay; a totemic idol dedicated to the Egg Mother. Although simple and unadorned as a rule, the shrines are well protected by the local cult members. The main hall forms the place where the cultists rest and store supplies needed by the expecting mothers. It is also where the main doors to the nesting place exist; allowing them to protect the building at the bottleneck if need be.

Each nesting room is rarely bigger than three square metres, bare and empty when unoccupied except for a small table used to hold food, water and other perceived essentials. The floor of the room is where the mother duck will gather her materials and shape her nest, which will be cleaned out after the duckling is born. The parent drake will come and go bringing what the mother requests in the latter days of the incubation

but the mother can come and go as she pleases – normally to get *exactly* what she is craving for her nest at that moment.

Even though some duck mothers will sometimes choose to hatch their children at home, the nesting place is a very important piece of the community in any ducktown. Not only due to the importance of the new generations of ducks that are born there but also as a spiritual centre for two of the most powerful cults of the Durulz.

Farming Fields and/or Paddies

Depending on the local precipitation and the skill of the local ducks, nearly every ducktown will have a sizeable amount of agriculture. Reeds, algae, cattails and thick redgrass are prolific and commonplace in most ducktowns because of the muddy paths and pools. Rice, flax and duckweed are more concentrated in specific areas, being seasonal crops to be tended by the ducks of the community.

Dryer vegetable gardens and herb racks are sometimes located next to individual duckhomes, tended by the family and friends that live there. Because of the higher moisture levels in a ducktown and the prolific levels of natural fertiliser in the mud and soil, tubers and root-plants are not easily grown but leafy greens and hanging fruits can thrive. Cabbage, lettuce, tomatillos and spinach are all good garden crops for ducks.

Unless a duck is currently on assignment as a patrolling watch or other devoted role they likely spend a few hours each day tending to the community's harvest. Ducks are not especially talented farmers or anything of the sort but they do realise that they cannot rely on the surplus of other races' to feed them unless they actively go out and steal it. A ducktown should want to be as self-sufficient as it can be without having to look toward outsiders for help.

Flowers

Ducks often supplement their diets in their travels by dining on the occasional flowering plant – a habit that they retained from their days as True Durulz. In their ducktowns however, they will spread flowering seeds liberally in communal areas to make for year-round additives to their meals. Like a condiment or flavourful midday snacking, flowers are not meals in and of themselves but are pleasant to partake in.

Marigolds, carnations and lilacs are particularly favourable to the duck palate but are also easy to grow and are plentiful. They are not against the growth and consumption of any edible flower, with three exceptions – sunflowers, morning glories and moon lilies. Sunflowers are poisonous to Durulz, oddly enough; part of their curse from Yelm expressing itself in yet another way. Morning glories cannot be eaten in respect to Grandmother Duck, who was said to weave the trumpet-

like blossoms into a shawl that kept her warm in the top of her flights. Moon lilies are not strictly *forbidden* to be eaten, but are rumoured to be tainted with the essence of the Faceless Enemy – and are potentially the echoes of Chaos itself.

DUCKS IN GLORANTHA

Unlike many of the other races of the world, the ducks have no real 'homeland' that they can point to on a map. They once had their fabled Ganderland but it was burnt to a crisp in the Godtime and taken from them. Ducks once flew across the world, scattering them amidst the continents and island chains. Grandmother Duck told her children to survive no matter the costs and they did so wherever they could manage it. The area of Genertela called Dragon Pass would become a haven to ducks from all around by the end of the Imperial Age, but currently it is home to too many hungry dragonewts and Wyrmspeakers for it to be a safe community for them.

Ducktowns have sprung up throughout most of Glorantha, the individual nationalities or breeds of duck creating the image of a varied species. There is a huge concentration of ducks in the area known as Maniria, south of Ralios and the Dragon Pass, serving as the closest thing to a 'home' as the duck species can ask for in this age of war and strife.

With the EWF growing power all around them, their old begrudging Orlanthi allies falling to the draconic lure, the ducks of Genertela have more to worry about than just where to build their ducktowns. Although some ducks have sworn allegiance to the Inhuman King, most are too far beneath the notice of such powerful beings.

Yelm's kingdom of Carmania has been a home for secretive and hermitic duck families for generations, only recently being able to raise their bills a bit higher as the Dara Happans begin to fight against the Golden Dragon Emperor sitting on their throne. With other enemies to fill the Yelmites' heads with vengeance, ducks have been able to move back into the area in higher numbers.

Not attracting too much attention from the God Learners due to the commonly believed idea that ducks have no real gods, allowing for several ducktowns to spring up on both their home island of Jrustela and along the Solkathi coast. There is a small contingent of ducks camped along with the others outside the Clanking City but no one knows what they are actually there for.

Where there are humans or beastmen, there are likely ducks somewhere nearby. Especially amongst the Orlanthi. Orlanthi tulas are a good source of trade and shelter for a duck on the

move, which is why so many ducktowns spring up within a short walk or swim from an established tula. The Orlanthi might not be true allies to the ducks any longer but they tend to tolerate them more than most.

The ducks know that they are only surviving in this world by the sheer willpower to do so. Hungry People and Big People abound throughout the world and none of them are looking to make it easy upon the diminutive ducks. They live wherever they can manage to do so, hopefully comfortably, but rarely so.

Keets in Glorantha

Unlike the ducks, keets were ingrained with the idea of community and tribe since before the Age of History began. Their tribal societies stem from the original deals and treaties made by Grandfather Flamingo in the Godtime and they mostly came to rest after the Battle of Hoonra Field on the continent of Vithela.

Once it was shattered in the Long Night by Zmalak the Beater of Islands, the keets were spread amongst the islands of Vithela forever. There has been some travel by the species here and there but the largest populations of keet species are on the islands surrounding Haragala, where it is said that Grandfather Flamingo rests. The Keetslands (what the Haragalan islands are collectively known as) are where ninety percent of the keet population thrive.

There are a small number of keet families that migrated to Kralorela, mostly moving from the coast to the bamboo forests of the Shan Shan Mountains. It is one of the only places where ducks and keets can be found in the same area without there being violence between them; survival against the Kralori and the hsunchen tribes means more than old scores to settle.

DUCKS AND ALDRYAMI

'I suspect the tree-folk do not like us any more than anyone else in this world. What could we hope to expect from an entire culture that worships a song we cannot hear and that gets most of its food from the Sun that cursed us? They are a dangerous curiosity.'

'Avoid them if you can...it simply is not worth the trouble to get too close.'

– Porter Quaksson of Northern Ralios

The ducks of Glorantha have only a slightly better relationship with the elves than they have with most humans – a cold and untrustworthy one. The elfen gods did not have anything to do with the ducks' curse, keeping them from being targeted by the bitterness of the ducks. The elves are generally standoffish and threatening to outsiders regardless of species; it just makes it that much more natural when dealing with ducks.

As a generality, elf communities are far too insular and private to allow a ducktown to grow nearby. Besides the risk of having sneaky, stereotypically thieving opportunists living too close to them, elves are quite aware of the relationship between Uz and duck. Where ducks gather in the wilderness Uz are sure to follow in search of a delectable meal or 12.

There are some communities of ducks that see the usefulness in placating the natures of the elves. Throughout the eastern edge of the Tarinwood there are small duck outposts – not full ducktowns – that were built as trading posts between the ducks of Maniria and the elves of the forest. For those ducks that plan to travel to Seshnela from the east, these posts are the only place they *might* be able to find the gear and information needed to survive a trip through elf lands.

As one of the elder races of Glorantha, the elves watched passively as the ducks were hurled to the ground and their wings taken from them. The ducks hold a little animosity toward the elves because of how they did nothing but do not blame them for not getting involved directly. The ducks would like to think that the elves would have had at least the morality to shelter them but word spread quickly that they were cursed by the gods – and no one would dare help them then. Although much of that bitterness and spite turned into a chilly distrust over the generations they are not considered enemies of the duck people, merely another obstacle in life.

DUCKS AND DRAGONEWTS

Being used to viewing the world from below, from the outside, the ducks are well aware that there are two main bodies of dragonewts in this world. They see those who strut around amongst the Wyrmspeakers of the EWF but they also see the secretive bloodlines of dragonewt traditionalists that live on their own paths that do not include the teaching of others the draconic ways. The ducks see these two groups and know that they should dare not deal with either for too long.

The dragonewts that do not follow the EWF and its crusade to draconise everything are a different type of dangerous to ducks. At least those dedicated to the Wyrms' Friends will often try to recruit even ducks to the cause; traditionally-minded dragonewts are far more likely to see a duck and consider it an easy meal. Depending on the life-stage of the



dragonewt in question, it might be in the duck's best interest to make himself disappear before it does.

Sundered dragonewts often live in secrecy, up in wilderness heights or twisting caverns to avoid having to deal with the impending clash between their brethren and the God Learners. This will sometimes put their 'lairs' in places that look like safe shelters for a group of ducks to use in their travels. This can put caravans of ducks at odds with small settlements of dragonewts – a situation that should nearly always result in the ducks fleeing rapidly.

In the Stormwalk Mountains, amidst the herding grounds of the minotaurs, there is a beaked dragonewt named Quavvass'ihir that is well-known to the ducks of the area. From his crest of head-spikes he wears several white duck feathers to signify his relationship to the locals. He once came to the aid of a nesting place that was being beset by draconised Carmanians, putting himself in harm's way for several expecting duck mothers. For such an act of heroism and perfectly-timed bravery the local ducktown named him a Duckfriend. Whether or not the title means anything to Quavvass'ihir or not is unknown.

DUCKS AND UZ

It should come as no shock that trolls of all kinds are not well-liked by ducks of all breeds. The ducks remember running through the darkness from the Hungry People all too vividly from their legends; all the more refreshed by the trolls' continual hunting after Yelm returned to the world. To the ducks, the Uz are the Hungry People, the creatures put on this world to devour and destroy. Every duck hopes and prays to his gods that he never faces them.

Ducks do well to make sure that they have well-lit communities and easily-secured doors and gates wherever they can build them. They must do anything to keep the trolls and trollkin at bay while the ducks make good their escape to hide behind traps, ambushes and other useful tools for battling a superior opponent. Fighting against the Hungry People in a direct confrontation is almost always considered suicide – making it a general anathema to most ducks.

There have been events that have placed Stormbill followers on the same side as Chaos-killers from the Uz cults of Black Sun or Kygor Litor but these are rare enough to be considered legends to most duck ears. The stormbills believe an old tale of Zorak Zoran fighting alongside their ancestor-god but no other duck wants to think that they could have any sort of relationship with any sort of troll. It is just easier to live by the rule that all trolls want to eat them, so they ignore tales of ivory mallards crossing blades on behalf of a troll.

Ducktowns will commonly have at street side 'Uz-bells' hanging from tree branches, awnings, streetposts – anything they can hang them from. Uz-bells are tiny ceramic chimes that are tied to thin pieces of braided flax or silken string hung at roughly seven feet off the ground at important points throughout the ducktown. The bells are far too high for any duck to ever trip them but should one of the Hungry People come to town at night they will surely strike at least one string of the bells – alerting the neighbourhood to their presence and allowing for a defence or evacuation to be sounded.

No duck council would ever name an Uz or Enlo as a Duckfriend – *ever*. No matter what the circumstances might be, there would always be that unspoken danger of the troll deciding to devour its new allies. It is not that the ducks do not think that the Hungry People can be trusted; the ducks *know* they can be trusted...to appreciate a good duck-flesh meal whenever possible!

DUCKS AND THE EMPIRE OF WYRM'S FRIENDS

'Anyone who wants to awaken a Great Dragon has got to be crazy, right?'

'Well, we are talking about an entire empire of people that want to become part of that dragon, wake it up fully and devour the world to remake it in its image.'

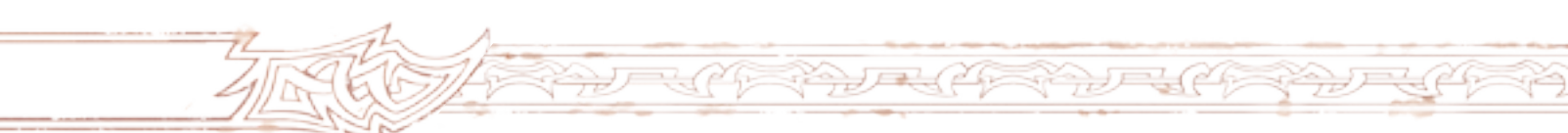
'And the world looks at us like we are the crazy ones!'

– Lyra Silverplume, Stormdrake Hero of Prax

The growing power of the EWF makes it a constant presence over much of Genertela, placing its growth at odds with established ducktowns and farming fields. Their draconising armies and Thunderer cavalry units do not even pause when a duck community is in its way; truthfully they might not even notice the quacking and hissing inhabitants scrambling to avoid being crushed. This sort of happenstance encounter is a good parallel to the social views of the EWF toward the ducks – they are mostly insignificant annoyances that will be devoured when the Great Dragon awakens.

The ducks themselves view the EWF in a much different light, however. Such a massive empire of huge wealth, power and size is a perfect target for minor raids and banditry. What a few highwayducks can manage to take from a Wyrmspeaker caravan or outpost will hardly be missed by the overall war effort and how could the Wyrmfriends possibly expend resources to go after a few lowly *ducks*? This dangerous game is a favourite of Genertelan ducks, especially those who have any reason at all to dislike the EWF's evangelising. Not only do these raids offer strange and wonderful assets to the duck community but other than the raid itself, they tend to be relatively safe endeavours.

The closer a duck community is to EWF lands however, the more likely they are to simply be conquered out of hand



by the expansion of the Empire. Either through the direct confrontation by draconised troops sent to clear out potential problems or by the subtle temptations that the Wyrmspeakers bring to anyone that will listen to their recruitment speeches, small duck communities cannot withstand the growth of the EWF into their area for long.

Ducks are unfortunately rather curious creatures in most cases and the sorts of secrets and hidden agendas that make up the inner workings of the EWF are exactly what they yearn to discover. Most ducks are sneaky enough to get past brute guards and common patrols but the draconic magics of the Empire are mightier than anything a common duck can hope to ever learn in his life. Many inquisitive ducks have disappeared mysteriously when investigating an EWF encampment, likely used as food meat for the dinosaur pens or as disposable test subjects for mystical rituals.

There have been a small number of ducks who have been fully seduced by the speeches of the Wyrmspeakers, joining the Wyrms' Friends willingly. Although it requires the duck to actually get the attention of recruiters or missionaries without getting themselves killed outright as nuisances to the Empire, these ducks become **Wyrmbills**. Wyrmbills are draconised ducks that are allowed to learn the beginning tenets of Auld Wyrnish. Their stiff bills and squawky voices make this a very difficult process, limiting their ability to wield the power of the ancient tongue. Wyrmbills rarely take on much of a draconic presence beyond reptilian eyes, claws and a moulting mixture of scales and feathers. They are hideous to behold by both duck and dragonewt, a mockery of both races smashed together into one awkward body.

The last Grand Duck Moot to take place on Genertela discussed the potential problems that the southern expansion of the EWF poses to the numerous ducktowns in Maniria and western Prax. Dragon Pass is slowly emptying into the rest of the continent, and the ducks are worried that they may be forced out of their homes and nesting places. The elders decided that the EWF was not yet an enemy (as much as any non-duck is 'not an enemy'), but that they should be closely watched in case the situation escalates.

Dragon Pass

The most important part of Glorantha to the EWF in the Second Age, home to the greatest concentration of dragonewts and Wyrmspeakers anywhere, will eventually become one of the most important places for all ducks. Although they do not dare venture deeply into the Pass at the height of the Empire, there are many families of ducks that hide amongst the hillside caverns and darker marshes.

When the EWF spreads from the boundaries of Dragon Pass, the ducks will slip by and hide from the two clashing empires by settling in the place that no one would ever look – the heart of the EWF. They will form several small communities hidden away in the foothills and the marshes, some say with the help of an ancient magician living in the marsh. The protection that these ancient places of the Pass will offer the ducks will be the only reason they survive the turning of the ages, and the next era of Glorantha will see the Dragon Pass littered with ducktowns because of it.

Contemplative Nest

Within the dragonewt city of Contemplative Rest, at the foothills of the Indigo Mountains, there is a strange form of ducktown that has sprung up inside of the city's understood limits. Two dozen or more Wyrmbills have created a community for themselves to better serve the EWF without losing the basic tenets of being in a ducktown.

The local lords of the Empire have allowed the Wyrmbills to swim and bathe in the Solfont River but they are not allowed to use the water of the Imperial Fountain Peace for anything but blessings and wishes. The presence of duck feather-oils in the fountain would surely cause the dragonewts to turn on the Wyrmbills in a moment, eliminating their presence in a bloody display of retribution.

Nicknamed 'Contemplative Nest', this tiny ducktown is currently waiting for the first generation of Wyrmbill eggs to hatch. Whether the ducklings will be born with a touch of the draconic in them from their parents might point to the Wyrmspeakers that there is something more to the draconic ducks than just a source of servile labour.

Delecti the Inquirer

An enigma within the Wyrmsfriends, the sorcerer Delecti has a strange attraction and curiosity toward the duck race. He seems far too concerned with their allied connections to the Big People around Dragon Pass and especially of anything concerning their gods and cults. As a former Malkioni some of his curiosity can be explained as sheer will to learn but there is something much deeper in the mind of Delecti that has drawn him to write tomes of biological, social and cultural background on the Durulz.

There is some worry that the sorcerer has dark plans for the ducks in the future and most who know his name also know to avoid him. The ducks are always waiting for the other foot to drop in life and when a powerful sorcerer on the Dragon Guiding Council takes undue notice of an otherwise unnoticed race, there is cause to worry.

The ducks of Glorantha have not yet heard the last of Delecti...

Ducks and the God Learners

The ducks view the God Learners as they do nearly any other organisation of Big People; they only deal with them as far as the ducks will profit in some way, otherwise they are avoided. The fact is that the God Learners wield sorcery that the ducks have no real access to and have turned western Genertela into a potentially hazardous war zone that many ducktowns are in the path of. They do not want to get caught between the EWF and the God Learners and are willing to raid and sabotage both sides to try and ensure their survival.

Although the God Learners are somewhat easier to deal with than the alien dragonewts of the EWF, they are still a different breed of zealots that cannot be trusted. Ducks are used to being the universal scapegoats for what happens around them, making the most out of bad situations but the sorts of things that happen around the God Learners are just too weird even for them. This 'invisible god' of the Malkioni works in mysterious ways – ways that could always backfire on any duck nearby!

It is best to avoid the God Learners when they can as a rule, but the kinds of powerful magic artefacts and devices that they always seem to have collected is very tempting to any duck. Such magical devices are difficult for the unloved ducks to come by but the God Learners and their sorcerers almost assuredly have some at all times. A crafty duck that can get close enough to one might just be able to snatch something useful away before being discovered.

Conversely to the ducks' avoidance of God Learners, the Empire is interested in the inner workings of how the gods work through their creatures and their myths, placing the God Learners in a very strange conundrum concerning the ducks. Cursed by a divine decision, ducks are a perfect testing ground for the power of HeroQuesting and the God Learners' wishes to alter the world's core myths.

If the Questors could manage to change the way that the ducks' curse affected them, or remove it altogether, they would further prove their power over Glorantha's existing mythologies. The problem therein lies with that few Questors are willing to ever stoop so low as to portray a duck in the Hero Plane, making it quite difficult to alter their myths. It seems as if the ducks' curse is managing to keep the one force that might be able to change it from doing so!

Jrustela

The homeland of the God Learners, the island of Jrustela is home to a few breeds of ducks that managed to avoid being swept into the Middle Sea Empire as experiments or slaves. Although small duck communities exist throughout the lowlands of the island, the two largest ducktowns are found attached to Piskosol and Orphalsketkal.

The timinits of Piskosol ignore the presence of the larger of the two main ducktowns, a place called Rook. It is a ducktown of over 100 individual ducks from 12 family lines. The ducks of Rook are used to be made into the paid tools of Duke Paptalor and his timinit constituents. As that they are biologically better equipped for going into the shallow tidal pools to search for pearls and other resources, the ducks are almost all employed as fisherducks or shoresducks.


The second largest of Jrustelan ducktowns is secret place called Feathercove. It is where roughly 50 ducks live and thrive by raiding the ship crews that come into Orphalsketkal, using their assets to help ducks that want off the island to stowaway in new ships headed to Genertela. There is a waertagi corsair that lives amongst the ducks of Feathercove, teaching them how to survive at sea without supplies and how to best steal from the Middle Sea Empire. He is named Finregaugr and is an ally to local ducks but he has yet to do anything to deserve the title of Duckfriend.

The Clanking City

Within the mysterious city of the Zistorites, a small number of brave ducks have been dispatched on an important mission. A tiny tented boat of ducks has sat anchored and unmolested just outside the huge walls of the city for nearly a year, too small and insignificant for the Zistorites to care or notice them. Under the cover of these tents however, the ducks have been accomplishing what no other outside race has been able to – get access into the city.

For a year there have been specialty trained ducks with the proper runes and equipment to *tunnel* into the Clanking City. It took them nearly ten months to accomplish such a feat and now have free access to and from the city despite the invisible shield and the constant threat of being discovered by patrols. Their tunnel leads into the Undercity, from which they can go wherever else they need to – hopefully without being captured or killed.

Why have the ducks struggled against such dire odds to gain entry into Zistorwal? The answer is simple; to locate and steal



the secret of flight from the Zistorites, about whose city great flapping metal birds have been seen. The God Learners have defied the gods and myths before, perhaps ducks are destined to have wings of brass and iron in this age?

Seshnela

The heart of the Middle Sea Empire, this area of Genertela is considered mostly a safe place by most ducks. The God Learners have far too much to worry about in the form of the growing and encroaching EWF to even give a passing glance to a ducktown being built or a group of duck bandits raiding their caravans. In fact, many God Learner and Malkioni missionaries have fallen prey to duck banditry along the roads of Seshela but not with enough frequency or repetition to warrant additional investigation. Even so, there are three main places of note in the lands of Seshnela concerning ducks.

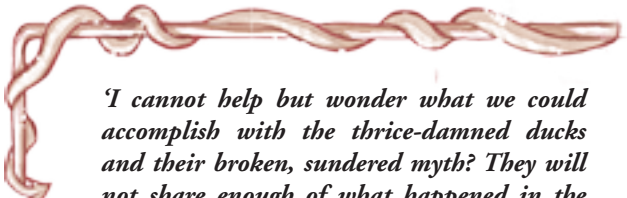
The first is the black citadel of Arkwal, the city of warriors. Ducks are taught to do anything they can to avoid getting within a day's walk from the black city, as there are always teams of bloodthirsty warriors looking for targets of their martial practices.

The second is a recent place of interest for ducks travelling through the area. The sorcerous experiments of Estan have not only caused recent strange effects to the local weather (raining squid, black snow and so on) but also have infused the river reeds and shore plants with unique and wonderful flavours. Ducks come to the shores near Estan to harvest lilies that taste of peppermint, dewfronds of fine wine and a common algae that smokes stronger and sweeter than duckweed.

The last and most important place controlled by Emperor Iltos is that of Arolanit. With bountiful fields and caravans of grain and vegetables in a constant flow on the rolling roads and paths, ducks can easily make a decent living legally or illegally. Food is plentiful and the local populations are taught that meanness is a sin, making a duck's life simple – it is better to ignore them than risk damnation through treating them poorly. Although highwayducks will still have to deal with God Learner patrolmen, many ducktowns have grown up in the area off of the Arolaniti peoples.

DUCKS AND YELMHOLME

The lands of Dara Happa, Carmania, Rinliddi and the surrounding territories are collectively called 'Yelmholme' to the ducks, who look upon the area as the home of their ancient enemy. The Yelmites of the area are far too strong to try and get vengeance upon, especially with so many of them pledging their allegiances to the Golden Dragon Emperor on the Sun Throne. Striking back in their own way, the ducks of Yelmholme fight a constant guerrilla war against the cults of Yelm's pantheon. Ducks are not numbered very high in



'I cannot help but wonder what we could accomplish with the thrice-damned ducks and their broken, sundered myth? They will not share enough of what happened in the Great Darkness to help us draw a map to where they went so wrong, and we cannot be bothered in our current state of war to research it ourselves.'

'Some say that they hate the ducks for what they are. I do not. I hate them for what they could become but never will be.'

— Professor Mildreke of Estan



the area, making their spiteful actions small and ignorable compared to the greater happenings taking place in the area.

The largest ducktown in Yelmholme is found in Rinliddi territories, sprouting out and up from the banks of the Arcos River, just 100 kilometres downstream from Diavizzi. The ducks call it Canarddi, a play on the local lands and the lost ducktopia of legend. Consisting of both standing structures on the land and floating or pole-supported ones in the river, Canarddi is home to close to 350 ducks of various breeds and professions. Their overall goal is to hopefully convince the Rinliddi bird-riders *against* the connection between their augner bird eggs and the eggs of the Great Dragon. By using the fact that no Rinliddi would ever want to be connected in such a fashion with a lowly duck, the ducks can keep the EWF from gaining more power in the area. The ducks of Canardii throw enormous 'egg festivals' and 'hatch celebrations' frequently to remind the Rinliddi that if what the Wyrmspeakers say is true, then not only are their birds related to dragons – but also to ducks!

Dorastor

The root of the Faceless Enemy in Yelmholme, ducks do not settle anywhere near the area permanently. Ivory Mallards, Stormbills and Deathdrake disciples make pilgrimages to the area to hunt down Chaos beasts and minions wherever they can be found.

Being so close to EWF lands and so deep in Yelmholme territory, these are dangerous journeys that claim many duck lives each year. The goal is clear however, to find the place where Gbaji fell and discover a way to undo the opening of the hellspring. Huge tribes of broo, lurking nests of waknath

snakes and a nomadic village of werewolf Telmori stalk the area constantly; it is dangerous for the most seasoned of warriors – let alone a handful of prideful and well-trained ducks!

DUCKS AND MANIRIA

Considered the landing point for Grandmother Duck when she was hurled from Yelm's Court, the territories of Maniria are generally called the Ducklands by ducks everywhere. It has a large duck population scattered amongst dozens of ducktowns and individual familial homesteads that nears 10,000 the largest collection of ducks anywhere in the world.

Ducktowns appear in various sizes and shapes all over the Manirian coasts and riverbanks, many of which as large as the largest ducktowns found in other kingdoms or continents. Most have populations of a few hundred at most but some are veritable ducktropolises of a few thousand. There are several organised forms of duck militia and unions of duck workers that help keep the Ducklands safe and habitable for more of their kind.

The highest ranking Runelords of the duck cults live in the largest and most influential ducktown, named Mothersnest for the belief that Canarda nested here in the Godtime. It is a tightly packed city of sorts that is built around several magically-cut canals out of the river, looking out over the river's mouth to look upon the human seaport of Bemelor. Within Mothersnest there are temples and shrines to all of the duck gods, many of their Orlanthi allies and even a few local deities that the ducks have taken to nodding to from time to time. Four powerful Runedrakes live in Mothersnest; Yuri All-Cares-Taken of Canarda's Motherwatch, Drakeblade Woefather of the Deathdrake Disciples, Lyra Silverplume of the Stormbills and the mysterious Whisperquack of the Shadowswimmers. They form the eldest and most powerful of duck cultists in the area and their voices are what drive most duck moots.

Mothersnest is also a point of trade and commerce for those outsiders willing to come to a ducktown in search of goods. Tradesducks and other 'acquirers' set up booths and sales tents on floating rafts in the river, creating a form of floating bazaar. Traditional shops slanted toward goods usable by ducks line many of the canals or footpaths, and prices are competitive with other settlements in the area.

The most common reason for any foreign duck to travel to Mothersnest is to try and compete in the annual contest put on by the ranking members of the cult of Duru-Orlanth the Adventurer. Only 100 ducks may scribe their name on the slate each year on Ducksday, the supposed anniversary of the First Hatching that happens at the beginning of each Sacred Time. The contest requires that each competing duck gather

a stone, a feather and a flower from one of a hundred random locations across Genertela. These places range from 'The Coast of the Neliomi Sea' to 'The Streets of Frowal'. Any surviving ducks that return with these three items on the next year's first day of Sacred Time will be considered victorious and will be lauded upon by thousands of fellow ducks. Those who succeed are named as legends in the halls of Duru-Orlanth, told the true story of Yelm's Sentence and given the power of an elder from that point forward. In the Sacred Time of 907, the first Duckfriend – a female zebraur named Baudica – galloped forward to put her name on the list and the elders knew they could not stop her. What will happen when or if she returns has yet to be seen.

The ducks that live in Maniria exist in a constant state of concern, even more so than their cousins across the continent. They are caught in a fertile area with excellent river and ocean access between two massive empires at war. The elders know that any given morning could bring God Learner ships to their shore or EWF dinosaur cavalry from the north. Even with this constant threat looming over their collective heads, Maniria is still one of the best places for a duck to live.

Resources are plentiful from ducktown crops and storage halls, neighbouring human communities are prolific and easy to trade with or steal from and the river brings fresh water and steady supplies of fish from the north. Other than the constant reminder that they are almost universally mocked or ignored, the ducks of Maniria live a rather pleasant Gloranthan life.

DUCKS, PENT AND THE PRAXIAN WASTELANDS

The huge area of Genertela that is roamed and claimed by the nomadic tribes of Waha is not a good place for ducks to try and settle or inhabit for too long. The tribal raiders from the Wastelands would not hesitate to attack a growing ducktown, as it would be seen as a weak and easy target. Between the inherent dangers of living in a predator-filled savannah ruled by a violent culture of raiders and the low number of natural water sources, the Wastelands do not receive many duck settlers.

The northern area of Pent is far more naturally habitable but the Pentan horselords make it less so. In the Wastelands and Prax a duck could at least trust the beast-rider nomads to take what they need and leave the ducks with much of everything else. The horse nomads of Pent do not leave what they view as trespassers as future threats, burning their villages and killing their breeding-age men.

Ducks that find themselves in Pent should beware. The Pentan sun god Kargzant is one of the Sky Gods that helped

Yelm curse the ducks, and his followers are not to be trusted or suffered for long. Any duck loyal to his people will go to great lengths to do harm to a Kargzant faithful. Because of this, Pent is one of the only places where the ducks willingly find themselves allied with the attacking War Dragons of the EWF – even if the Wyrmfriends are not aware of this aid.

DUCKS, KEETS AND KRALORELA

'The birdfolk of the Durulz are welcomed to the lands of Enlightenment. They are no less a part of the Cosmic Dragon as my dewclaw is no less a part of my body. In the celestial cycle of all things, they fill a much needed part that no other beings seem to be able – the roll of fool and jester.'

It is said that laughter is the music of the cosmos; then look upon the cruel joke that is the Durulz and believe that they are the root chord of our greater symphony.'

— Sheing Vyr, Hsunchen philosopher of the Hsa tradition

The only place in Glorantha that large numbers of both keets and ducks co-exist, the greater kingdom of Kralorela is a divider between the ducklands of Genertela and the Vithelan keet islands. There has always been some tension between the two halves of the Durulz people and that feeling is palpable wherever they cross paths.

Ducks that have come to Kralorela tend to have been travellers from the west that ventured across the Shan Shan Mountains, likely at great risk and loss to their caravan. The Hsunchen tribes of the Shan Shans are numerous and powerful, making easy prey of the slow-moving and awkward ducks as they wind their way through the thick bamboo forests and jungles of the mountain range. Those who do make it to the eastern kingdom find that it too treats them as little more than nothing. In a bitter sort of irony however, *all* peasants are treated poorly – so the ducks have much company in their misery.

There are only a few minor ducktowns along the western boundaries of Green Contemplation, Hopeful Centrality and throughout Respectful Welcome. They are small affairs that have taken on a Kralori feel to their architecture, dress and weaponry. Rice paddies and reed farms are commonplace; and heavily-practiced martial arts techniques are passed amongst the warrior drakes of the communities. They are not large in size, population or influence amongst the locals but they are well-known to all Durulz in the kingdom as places of safety from outsiders.

Keets in the area are far more prolific and widespread. Where there are only two main breeds of keet in the kingdom, they appear in small communities throughout the entire Kralori coastline. Coming up from Vithela generations ago, the Kralori keets have fully taken on the mentality of the local peoples. Kralori keets are accepted by the locals not as duck-equivalents but instead as a lesser tradition of the Hsunchen people that have somehow lost their shapeshifting capabilities. Many of the older keet communities do not dissuade this avenue of thinking, as it gives them an older and firmer position to take in the kingdom. They are merely tolerant of their duck cousins, viewing them as the least social caste of the beast-folk but whose existence reminds them that they cannot choose to ignore their Durulz nature simply because it would be more honourable to be Hsunchen.

The state of affairs in Kralorela between the growing God Learner movement and the existing Draconic Mysticism means very little to the Durulz. They have their own gods and myths to look after while trying not be meals for Kralori ogres or the spiritual predators that roam the Kingdom of Ignorance. It is more important to them to survive on a basic level before worrying about what Shang Hsa and his Imperial Court are up to in their golden palaces.

Chang Tsai, the Nest of Chaos

The so-called Cannibal City within the Continual Ascendance is a travesty to those who would stand against the Faceless Enemy. Eastern ducks and keets do not have nearly as strong a tie to the fight against Chaos as the Stormbills and ivory mallards of the west, but many see the horrors caused by the Ogre King and his Legion of Red Bones and feel a stirring in them to fight against it.

There is no ducktown or community within the area of the horrible city but many western ducks aligned against Chaos journey to the area to try and do battle with Red Bones leaders. Some try and sabotage the city's resources, others go for a more direct confrontation. Whatever the tactics or methods, Chang Tsai is universally avoided and hated by all Durulz.

Yumo De-Dao, Nesting Dream

Just south of the fabled City of Dreams, along the coastline, there is a keet village devoted to the greater purification of the mind. Using a similar technique as the people of Yumo Dao, the numerous peacock keets that call the area home place a blown-out and empty eggshell under the bed of troubled keets that come to the village, drug them with natural hallucinogens and leave them to their sleep. The nightmares and visions they have during their forced slumber are said to flow down into the egg and leave them worriless and happy by morning.

What happens to the evil and hurtful energies that are stored in these eggshells is unknown but such small and fragile things filled with such concentrated suffering could have a host of dark and sinister purposes.



THE KEETSLANDS OF VITHELA

Called the Keetslands, dozens of the islands surrounding the main isle of Haragala are the homelands of the varied tribes of keets. Other than the few small communities still found hiding in the shadow of the Haragalan beacon and mercenary

‘The Big People around us cannot fathom what we gave to save them from the hunger of Magasta’s Pool. They are fools and ingrates all, and perhaps we were fortunate not to have sealed all the waterways between these islands.

I would hate to share our home with anyone so ignorant and blind.’

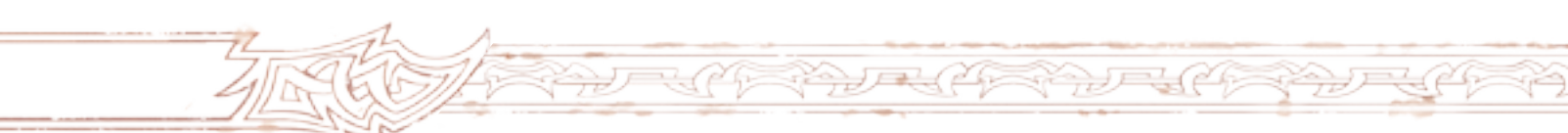
— Ryderro Risingbeam, Phoenic noble

camp, each island is home to a single breed of keet. One island’s rocky cliffs will be home to the savage warrior auks; the next might be a cove for a pelican keet diving reef. They mingle amongst themselves socially but they *never* live with one another as a rule set down in the Godtime by Prince Heron and the Brothers Seabird.

The keets, led nominally by the Phoenics on Haragala, collectively believe that the whole island mass of Vithela belongs to them. Their myths and their faith tells them that they gave their wings as the Sacrifice to save the continent and they firmly believe that the people living on those islands are little more than squatters on their territory. This sort of condescending attitude is why most Vithelans view the keets as beasts to be avoided at best, at worst *slain*.

Some keet islands are utterly off limits to outsiders, like those belonging to the auks or the swordbills, who have taken their ‘ownership’ of the islands to a height that has turned them into militant tribals the other keets call Savages. They attack anything that steps foot onto their islands that did not bring a proper gift of friendship and they are most likely to be overcome with wanderlust – taking them away from their islands as adventurers and shoreline pirates.

Other keet islands, particularly those inhabited by the herons, storks and pelicans, are more welcoming to outsiders. They support trading posts and port villages that allow them to interact with the islanders and any travellers from elsewhere that might happen by. It is not possible for an outsider to recognise one keet island from another at first glance; they should all hope to land on one of these more



'friendly' keetsland rocks and not one of the Savaged ones. It is the difference of receiving a cold shoulder from the keets or the ends of their spears!

Chartam's Shadow

Located in the wooded hills around the glowing city of Chartam on the huge island of Haragala, there is a grouping of buildings stacked onto one another tightly around a pool of sparkling fresh water. This pool is where Grandfather Flamingo and Prince Heron first met after fleeing from Ganderland's fields of battle and it is the point where all keet tribes migrated from once they decided to leave each others' company.

The keets call it 'the Shadow' because of how it sits in the shade of the cathedral dome of the neighbouring city, darkened by comparison to the glowing stones of that wondrous place. It is the primary colony of the descendants of Prince Heron and it is home to over a thousand adult keet warrior-nobles, their harems and their flock.

Those who come to Chartam's Shadow see it as a beautiful village built from enamelled white wood and intricately carved stone. The herons that live there are prideful and cocky, believing themselves to be of a 'ruling class' of keet. Their ideas of self-grandeur aside, the heron keets are still Durulz and are looked down upon as local threats to travel and expansion.

Flaminganni

The marshland island of Flaminganni is where the flamingo Phoenics made their home after the Sacrifice. Grandfather Flamingo laid down to sleep at the island's centre right before the Age of History began, his wings aching and he stretched his feathers out to cover the whole island – which is why Flaminganni is a large swamp filled with pinkish algae that is sweet-smelling and attracts many small fish and shrimp. The food pools of Flaminganni keep the Phoenics fed with enough surplus to occasionally trade with 'lesser' breeds of keet.

The Phoenics of Flaminganni are rude and callous to a fault but they tolerate the presence of outsiders on their islands – just not other keets. Any non-flamingo keet, especially anyone from the heron families, that comes to the shores of Flaminganni can expect to be met by hostile Phoenic hoplites and runecasters.

Gull Bay

The northern edge of Haragala is grooved and jagged with several rocky bays and lagoons, the collective grouping of which is called Gull Bay. Home to several hundred gull keets of many plumage colours, the whole area is a chain of villages

and ports that house the shipbuilding efforts of the gulls. They are the most well-travelled of the keets, perhaps of all the Durulz and it is mostly due to their constant plying of the seas. The Middle Sea Empire has a standing bounty on gullship pirates as a result.

One cove within Gull Bay is a bleak and desolate place of grey stone and bland architecture; home of the albatross keets. From within their dark caverns and shallow homes they spend most of their days drunk and depressed, fighting off the dismal visions that their breed inherited from their progenitor. Other gulls come to Albatross Cove to have their fortunes read and futures foretold. What the albatrosses have to say is rarely positive but they will not lie no matter what their answers might mean.

Swordbill Springs

A small island of streams and reed-ringed lakes on the southwestern edge of the Vithelan chain is where the savage swordbill keets and their common kingfisher cousins choose to live and hunt. They are fierce tribal warriors that have turned their wetland plains into a series of large, linked hunting grounds. The abundant fruit trees and game animals on the island attracts Vithelan and outsider travellers to come hunt or harvest for their own islands' supplies and food stores but the outsiders are turned into the prey as soon as they step onto swordbill territory. Tribes like the swordbills that have become 'Savaged' are not friendly to outsiders but are the source for the occasional brave soul looking to prove himself to his tribe by leaving the island and seeing the world.

The Sorn Rookeries

After they betrayed their kin during the Sacrifice, the pterodactyl keets followed the whispers of the Faceless Enemy to several small islands throughout the Eastern Isles. Invigorated by the pact with Chaos, the Sorns were allowed to keep their wings and their power to fly in exchange for their servitude in the ages to come. Despised by their cousins for their betrayal, made primal by the Savaging and mutated by the Faceless Enemy, the Sorns are forced to move from one island home to the next in order to avoid being caught and stamped out by other keets or Chaos-killers.

There are several rocky islands that are nomadic homes to the Sorns, the groups of the lizard-like keets moving around in small flocks of 10–20. The rookeries are the dens of these flocks, secretly situated on many different islands of Vithela and off the Genertelan coasts. Each rookery is part labyrinth, nest and altar to the Black Sun; it is no wonder why the Sorns are the most prolific of Chaos minions on the Vithelan islands.

Duck Adventurers

'Made from the Man Rune...such a jest should be a flogging offence! If you want me to believe if even for a moment that those awkward little beasts are relatives of mine, I will meet you on the duelling grounds at sunset. They represent everything we are trying to wash away with the coming of the Great Dragon.'

— *Talon Scalofiste, Draconised Orlanthe*

This chapter is focussed on the creation and preparation of duck and keet Adventurers, adding specific breeds, backgrounds, more professions, a new skill and other special interests. Although the information found in this chapter is more angled toward the basic template of the common duck, there are several sections that are designed for use solely by keet Adventurers as well.

THE SCATTERED FLOCKS

Just as there are dozens of different subspecies of ducks in the animal kingdoms, there are several different sub-breeds of duck and keet in Glorantha. Nearly all of the sub-breeds of duck and keet are physically the same on a basic level but might have minor differences here and there that they have evolved over the course of generations to better suit them in their normal habitats. These differences may not mean much to an outsider but to a duck; they could be the only thing that stands between survival and a horrible, horrible death.

This chapter begins with a presentation of the various sub-breeds of the Durulz species, their physical appearance, where they tend to appear and any other particular differences they might possess.

Duck Breeds

The following are the known sub-breeds of duck, starting with the common 'canard'. All other entries are alternate varieties that could be chosen by players and Games Masters for their own duck Adventurers.

Canard

The most numerous of the duck sub-breeds, the canard is what the world thinks of when someone mentions a duck.

They typically have brown plumage with white or grey flecks, occasionally darkening all the way to black or lightening nearly to a yellow-tan. Both males and females have this colouration, with some males manifesting a green-grey bill instead of the normal yellow/orange one. Their feet tend to be the common orange with darker webbing between the toes.

Canard ducks make up roughly half to two-thirds of the total duck population of Glorantha, showing their lineage connection to Canarda the Egg Mother through their reproductive proficiency. It is said that both Grandmother Duck *and* Canarda were traditional canards and are frequently drawn or depicted that way in holy works.

Commonly Found: Throughout Genertela and Jrustela.

Emerald-Crown

An offshoot from the common canard, the emerald-crown duck is a beautiful example of what colours duck feathers can be. Females have mottled brown plumage all over their bodies except for a white-ringed black area around the eyes and a band of sapphire blue around their forearms. Males however, are dazzling to behold. Smooth tan and grey of body, emerald-crown drakes have the same blue bands on their forearms as their mates but have a shining green head of short, metallic feathers. A ring of stark white separates the crown from the rest of the body, giving a sharp contrast between the sections. Bills and feet of both sexes range from golden yellow to dull ochre.

Most emerald-crown ducks are destined for politics due to their remarkable attractiveness and personal charm. They tend to have large families and settle in the best homesteads of their ducktown. Those that get into adventuring are almost always doing so in search of fortune and fame.

Commonly Found: Seshnela, Ralios, Slontos and Kethaela

Ivory Mallard

Considered holy descendants of Stormbill the Chaos Killer himself, the ivory mallards are born to every type of duck at random. No matter the parentage behind the hatchling, a pale white child, an ivory bill and storm-blue eyes may spring



from the mother. This colouration is the mark of that duck's 'destiny', a position in their society that is supposed to lead them to battles against the Faceless Enemy. As they grow older, drake or female, ivory mallards do not lose any of the purity to the shine of their white feathers but they do see a slight greying to their heads.

Ivory mallards are said to be hatched with more frequency whenever Chaos grows stronger, arming the Durulz with better warriors to battle it. They are given the best resources and training that their local duck community can arrange and are never turned away by the cults of Deathdrake or Stormbill.

Commonly Found: Anywhere ducks are found

Mandari

Smaller of body than most ducks, the mandari duck is agile and striking to behold. Drakes are white chested, golden backed and grey limbed, male mandarin ducks have a 'beard' of rust-coloured feathers under their red bill. The sides of their

heads and necks are white, with a black face and shoulders, and metallic golden eyes. The feathers on the sides of their head grow backwards into two long groupings that sweep back like tail feathers. Females are comparatively unimpressive. They have drab and mottled brown feathers with black heads and eyes ringed in white.

Mandari ducks are the common breed of duck naturally found in the far east, making them often fill the role of ducktown peasant. They are learned ducks for the most part, trying to stay within the concepts of enlightenment as the Kralori teach. Their traditional methods of focussing mind and body make them stalwart and steadfast in most situations.

Commonly Found: Southern Wastelands, Teshnos and Kralorela

Muscovi

Broad-chested and tall (for a duck), muscovi ducks are dark green to the point of being nearly black all over their bodies,

drake and female alike. White feathers cap their upper limbs and their bills and feet are dusky grey. Already rather unattractive to look upon, muscovi ducks also have red, thick, almost wart-like growths around the base of their bills that cause them no discomfort but tend to move distractingly when they talk.

Muscovi ducks are even looked down upon by other ducks due to their physical ugliness and oddly superior physical characteristics. They are deserved of their reputations as thugs and barbarians, as they cannot help but try to overcome their social deficits with their violent natures.

Commonly Found: Northern Pamaltela, Fronela and Carmania

Red-Crest

Thick black plumage covers most of the red-crest duck's body with their arm feathers taking on a tan or mottled brown colour separated by bands of white. This brown pattern covers all of the female red-crest ducks, including their feet and bills. The strangest feature of the drakes is that they have a striking rust-red head of thick plumage that rises reflexively into a tall crest of bright red when agitated or excited.

Red-crest ducks are fantastic public speakers and have excellent vocal control most of the time. They are taught to revere Eggbeater the Singer of Songs from an early age, as they have descended from his children. Born musicians and entertainers, red-crest ducks also succumb easily to wanderlust because of their strong curious streaks.

Commonly Found: Ralios, Peloria and Slontos

Teal

Named after the nervous sound they make and *not* the colour, teal ducks are one of the rare sub-breeds that do not have colouration differences between the sexes. Both drakes and females have white to grey chests, speckled brown feathers tipped in white flecks everywhere else and a red-orange bill often striped in black or silver. They have wide orange feet that seem somewhat longer than those of a normal duck and extremely oily feathers.

Teal ducks are excellent swimmers, even better than normal ducks, due to their longer legs and wider feet. It makes them seem a little more awkward on land but they spend so much of their lives in rivers, ponds and shallow bays that it is rarely a problem. Their stiff bill is better designed for eating shellfish and tough water-weeds as well, something evolved from their somewhat eclectic dietary habits.

Commonly Found: Northern Jrustela, Seshnelan Coast and Slontos

Widgeon

Energetic and athletically built, widgeon ducks are rather primitive when compared to their Genertelan cousins. They have black feathers streaked in white on their backs and chests, light brown or tan speckled sides and limbs and a blackish head of feathers that shine iridescently in the proper light. Their eyes are black and without pupils and their bills and feet are a strange shock of light blue. Drakes have white patches over their bills, females a light and subtle grey. Their plumage is strange and stands out against the muted landscape of Pamaltela but camouflage is rarely their course of action when massed violence is available.

Widgeon ducks are far more tribal and shamanic than their northern kin, turning away from most of the duck gods in favour of ancestor worship and spirit practices. They do not leave Pamaltela very often on their own will but every widgeon duck is required to journey to somewhere their elders have not seen before they can be considered an adult.

Commonly Found: Northern Pamaltela

Woods

Similar to the emerald-crown in physical appearance, woods ducks are smaller of body but stronger of limb. Their feathers are tan and brown to grey along their bodies and limbs, with a green-crowned head that is ringed in white with longer feathers at the back of their heads that sweep down onto the backs of their necks. Females are far more muted in browns and tans only but they still bear the tell-tale sweeping head feathering. Their darker orange feet end in hooked claws designed for gripping wood and their white-streaked red bills are typically harder than those of other ducks.

Woods ducks are very prolific wherever ducks live in close proximity to forests or wooded plains. They live in arboreal ducktowns and farm fruit or nut-bearing trees to supplement their food stores. Most woods duck communities are small and hidden away from public view, as they tend to be more private than other duck breeds.

Commonly Found: Central Genertela

Keet Breeds

The following are the known breeds of keet, starting with the common 'auk'. All other entries are alternate varieties that could be chosen by players and Games Masters for their own keet Adventurers. Even though there are more individual types of keet than there are varieties of duck, keets only count for 35% of the total Durulz population of Glorantha.

It should be noted that most keets do not share a common body type with one another, unlike ducks. These differences

are better explained in game terms in the next chapter of this book.

Albatross

Tall, thickly muscled and long-limbed, albatross keets are some of the largest of the keet breeds. They are large and ungainly with dingy grey feathers that occasionally lighten to white around the chest and head. They have a sharp yellow beak and dull black eyes ringed in white or light brown. Males and females look nearly identical, both sexes having a somewhat androgynous look to them.

The direct lineage from Albatros the Seer gives most albatross keets the power of seeing glimpses of the future. There has never been a seer as powerful as the god himself but many exhibit at least minor instincts toward precognitive ability. Because of their power however, albatross keets tend to be depressed and apathetic most of the time – how can they

become excited about the world when they already know several of the outcomes ahead of time?

Commonly Found: Northern Haragala, southern Genertelan coasts

Auk

Short but thickly muscled, auk keets are the most common kind of keet found in the Keetslands. They range physically from all-black to black with white panels on chest or arms, with some having flecks of grey or blue-silver on their backs and faces. Their beaks are very hard and sharp for ripping open fish and cracking crustacean shells, as that they are primarily carnivorous and range from dark black to striped with brilliant colours.

It is said that the auk keets' patron god, Sunbill the Puffin, had a beak of solid gold that lit up the dark journey to the Inner



World. This belief that gold is sacred makes most auk keets greedy and easily distracted by precious metals. They also have the most variance in their many individual tribes. The largest portion of the keets, the collective breed has become dozens of slightly different families that live on many separate islands.

Commonly Found: Throughout Vithela

Cormorant

Smaller and faster cousins of the pelicans, cormorant keets are long-necked divers and strong swimmers with a leaning toward being Savage. They have black sides and backs flecked or streaked with white, dark faces with reddish beaks stabbing out from white chins that bleed into white chests. Males also tend to have ruddier feet that can brown or even black in colour, with two small bony spurs growing from the ankles. Most cormorant keets cap these natural spurs with bronze blades but not unless they are expecting conflict.

Cormorant keets are the polar opposite of their socialite pelican cousins, serving as the 'royal guard' of the court of High Crowned Pelican, their progenitor god. They respond to most outsiders with reservation and paranoia, only accepting guests to their small islands if led by a pelican keet.

Commonly Found: Throughout Vithela

Heron

Tall and regal-looking, the heron keets have a wide variety of plumage colours that all fall under their sub-breed. Heron keets range in colour drastically; white, grey, black, brown, blue-silver and even red can cover their thick feathers. They have long necks and angular heads that end in a straight, stiff bill that is normally yellow in hue. Many heron keets have tall head-crests that they groom regularly, fluffing them up when riled or upset.

Inheriting their colour-prejudices from Grandfather Flamingo, heron keets separate their society into castes based on the colouration of the heron's plumage. White herons are politicians and leaders, grey herons are bureaucrats and traders, black herons are spies and assassins and brown herons are commoners or tradeskeets. Blue-silver heron keets are those expected to leave the community as adventurers and red-feathered herons are always the priests of Prince Heron.

It is also common, no matter the role they fill, for herons in Kralorela to be called 'cranes', after the long-lost line of Hsunchen devoted to that animal.

Commonly Found: Throughout Vithela, Kralorela and southeastern Genertela

Pelican

Heavy-bodied keets with thick feathers and stubby limbs, pelican keets come in two colouration varieties – white and brown. Supposedly there were once black pelican keets but they have long since disappeared. Pelican keets are thick and portly but this is offset by their massively distended bill. The mouth of a pelican keet can open nearly as wide as they are and it is the symbol of their gluttonous appetites. Their oily feathers help to keep them warm in the oceanfront spray but it also makes pelican keets typically look unwashed or dirty.

Pelican keets are greedy, materialistic and rarely amenable to negotiation. They are the merchants and traders of the keetslands, happy to store treasures and riches in their bayside communities along Haragala's western coast. They are somewhat cowardly, preferring to hide behind their violent cormorant kin when words fail them. Considering that the enormous sac that forms the lower half of their bill gives them a speech impediment that could be considered a separate dialect of beastspeech, this happens more often than they would like to admit.

Commonly Found: Throughout Vithela

Penguin

Short and powerful, these Savage keets are raiders and pirates each and all. They are heavily muscled from long days of swimming in cold waters, their feathers so small and oily that they look as though they have slicked fur rather than plumage. Penguin keets come in various combinations of black and white, with a few rare bloodlines growing yellow, red or orange 'tribal' markings on their necks, chests and heads. They have very hard beaks and thick spurs on their ankles and their white-ringed black eyes hide the ferocity found in their souls.

Sunbill the Puffin is said to have created the penguin keets to be his shock troops; ground forces that were never meant for flight at all. This is why they are so thick-limbed and such powerful fighters. Penguin keets have spread on their longboats to the farthest and coldest regions of the Inner World, leaving only a few islands of their kind in Vithela at all.

Commonly Found: Roaming on the open seas, Vithela, northern Fronela, Outer Pent

Phoenic (Flamingo)

The direct ancestors to Grandfather Flamingo himself, the elegant and beautiful flamingo Phoenics (their own name for their breed of keet) are understandably vain. Their appearance is what set them apart from their brethren, their pink to scarlet feathers perfectly tucked to their slender bodies all the way from their thin, stable legs to their curving neck. Their bills

have a base of white that ends in black, curved forever into the grimace of disdain they have for all other breeds of Durulz.

Phoenics of all varieties are excellent and practiced spellcasters, with the flamingos focussing mostly on the divine worship of their god-ancestor. They enjoy a haughty view of the world, especially when dealing with Vithelan natives – to whom they have no trouble explaining how they saved their islands from oblivion. Flamingo phoenics do not commonly leave their communities but have been known to travel to the mainland of Genertela when the situation calls for it.

Commonly Found: Haragala, Kralorela

Phoenic (Peacock)

Much shorter than their flamingo brothers, peacock phoenics are also dramatically fewer in number. Their metallic blue or green bodies are arguably even more attractive than that of a flamingo, especially when looking at the polite black-and-white mask of feathers that all peacocks grow upon their faces. The males of the sub-breed also grow a veritable trailer of exquisitely coloured tail feathers, which they try to keep gathered behind them most of the time. When they are aroused or simply showing off however, the tail is spread wide to become a huge fan of brilliance.

They are short-beaked but loud-voiced, learning and practicing their common magic as often as their free time will allow them. They were created to be the warlocks of Grandfather Flamingo and they do so continually in the Age of History to serve the dream their Grandfather had – phoenic superiority of the Durulz.

Commonly Found: Haragala, Kralorela, eastern Genertela

Seagull

The keets to have on your sailing ship, seagull keets are consummate sailors and ocean-goers. They have grey to white plumage all over their bodies, bright yellow beaks and clawed feet for gripping the deck of their ship in a storm. They are able-bodied and surprisingly agile on land or in the water due to their athletic builds and overly-oily feathers.

Having turned to shipbuilding, sailing and occasional piracy, seagull keets are the most likely to be seen outside of the Keetslands. They are the keet version of human sea dogs, complete with the penchant for profanity and rum. They have become a general thorn in the side of the God Learners due to an old debt the seagull keets feel they owe to the waertagi – who helped pull the first seagull keets from the water after they lost their wings.

Commonly Found: Northern Haragala, scattered in Vithela, on the open sea

Stork

The somewhat slow-moving but determined cousin of the herons, stork keets are the messengers of the keet families. Their tall and long bodies are covered in thin white or grey feathers, their strong legs are slender and orange. They have strong yellow bills that they somehow can ‘lock’ closed onto an object they wish to carry for long periods of time, audibly talking strictly through their long and slender throats.

Prince Heron told to the stork keets to never question their brethren, to always serve as the communication avenue between them. They do this happily because with this duty comes a solemn vow from all of the non-Savage keet breeds to do no harm to the messengers. Stork keets will sometimes be given a message to take to the mainland, or even for non-keets but they are always nervous to do so – non-keets do not know of Prince Heron’s decree!

Commonly Found: Throughout Vithela and Kralorela

Swordbill

Small, fierce and utterly Savage, the swordbill keets are a dangerous curiosity to outsiders. Their bright blue bodies and orange chest plumage is dazzlingly attractive while their sometimes eclectic crest-feather styling seems neurotic and random. Marked individually with tribal feathers to show what bloodline of the original kingfisher avians they stem from, each swordbill clan is slightly different in individual colourations. The only thing that is universal between all swordbill keets is their long and iron-hard beak – so sharp and powerful that most armoured beings are not safe from its shearing plunge.

Swordbill keets live almost exclusively on the meat of fish and the harvesting of freshwater insects and crustaceans but they are more than capable of eating *any* animal food source. They have shown this time and time again through their Savage ways, even stooping to cannibalism after tribal conflicts between bloodline tribes. When a swordbill keet’s choler is up, nothing is safe.

Commonly Found: Throughout Vithela

DURULZ LIMITATIONS

Guidelines for generating duck (or keet) Adventurers follow. Use the normal rules for calculating attributes, previous experience and the like.

It should be noted that playing a Durulz comes with a definite risk involved. In comparison with humans their physical Characteristics are considerably below-average, meaning that their derived Attributes will likely also be somewhat out of their league when compared to say, a mighty Uz warrior.

This is just one of several reasons why playing a duck is a *challenge*.

CREATING AN DURULZ ADVENTURER

The checklist for creating a duck Adventurer is as follows:

- If the Games Master allows, select the type of duck or keet you wish to play.
- Determine Cultural Background, according to the Cultural Background Table later on. This determines professions and skills available to Durulz Adventurers.
- Determine the Durulz's current profession.
- Select a cult for the Durulz to belong to, referring to the Duck Cults chapter beginning on page 147.

- Determine the magic or knacks known by the Durulz, referring if necessary, to the Duck Magic chapter beginning on page 161.
- Allocate the Free Skill Points to remaining skills and to buy new advanced skills.

DURULZ CHARACTERISTICS

Throughout this section many of the characteristics, traits, quirks and even equipment are subdivided into Duck and Keet sections. An annoyance which is indicative of the entire Durulz race.

Duck Breed Characteristics

While most duck Adventurers will all roll the same types of dice to determine their Characteristics, there are some individual breeds that are smaller, stronger, faster and so on, than the common duck. These are noted under the entries for the sub-breed categories. These sub-breeds are physically described earlier in the chapter. These characteristics supersede those mentioned in *Monster Coliseum*, which are examples of a sub species bred for duck gigantism and gladiatorial combat.

Duck Breed Characteristics

Sub-Breed of Duck	STR	CON	SIZ	DEX	INT	POW	CHA
Smaller	1D6+2	2D6+6	1D6+2	2D6+9	2D6+6	3D6	2D6
Common	1D6+4	2D6+6	1D6+4	2D6+6	2D6+6	3D6	2D6
Taller	1D6+6	2D6+6	1D6+6	2D6+3	2D6+6	3D6	2D6

Keet Breed Characteristics

Sub-Breed of Keet	STR	CON	SIZ	DEX	INT	POW	CHA
Albatross	2D6+4	2D6+6	1D6+8	2D6+2	2D6+6	2D6+5	2D6+1
Auk	2D6+3	2D6+6	1D6+3	2D6+4	2D6+6	2D6+3	2D6+3
Cormorant	2D6+3	2D6+6	1D6+3	2D6+4	2D6+6	2D6+3	2D6+3
Heron	2D6+3	2D6+4	1D6+7	2D6+6	2D6+6	2D6+3	2D6+3
Pelican	2D6+1	2D6+6	1D6+5	2D6+4	2D6+6	2D6+3	2D6+3
Penguin	2D6+5	2D6+6	1D6+2	2D6+1	2D6+6	2D6+3	2D6-1
Phoenic (Flamingo)	2D6+1	2D6+4	1D6+7	2D6+4	2D6+6	2D6+3	2D6+5
Phoenic (Peacock)	2D6-1	2D6+6	1D6+3	2D6+4	2D6+6	2D6+7	2D6+5
Seagull	2D6+4	2D6+6	1D6+5	2D6+4	2D6+6	2D6+3	2D6+1
Stork	2D6+6	2D6+6	1D6+3	2D6+2	2D6+6	2D6+3	2D6+3
Swordbill	2D6+4	2D6+7	1D6+1	2D6+5	2D6+6	2D6+3	2D6

The categories of ducks are:

- Smaller: *Mandari* and *Woods*
- Common: *Canard*, *Emerald-Crown*, *Ivory Mallard*, *Red-Crest*, and *Teal*.
- Taller: *Muscovi* and *Widgeon*

Keet Breed Characteristics

Unlike ducks, keet sub-breeds have dramatically different body types from one another. Some are tall and lanky; others are short and thickly muscled. This makes generating keet Adventurers somewhat different from that of a normal species. These sub-breeds are physically described earlier in this chapter.

SPECIAL RULES

In addition to their characteristic and varied statistical differences, all Durulz have a few special rules that they *all* must follow. These are in addition to any Quirks, Traits or other abilities they might gain during the course of their lives. The three traits that all Durulz have are *Excellent Swimmer*, *Flightless* and *Social Misfit*.

Movement

Durulz Adventurers have awkward legs that end in flat webbed feet, making their land locomotion slightly more taxing than that of a normal humanoid. This gives them a comical gait that has been the source of much ridicule, pranks and even a popular mocking dance performed at many Carmanian children's parties.

All Durulz Adventurers (unless altered later) have a base Movement of six metres. This is the normal distance a Durulz Adventurer can move in one Combat Round.

Flightless

Yelm's Sentence was far more than just a mythic punishment that took the physical wings from the ducks – it took all forms of *flight* from them. From that point forward, no duck would ever be able to fly again. This is not just a figurative statement; it is *all inclusive*.

No form of flight can ever be successfully used upon a duck. Magical spells that would cause levitation or flight as a mode of locomotion will automatically fail or fizzle when cast upon them, contraptions designed to defeat the pull of the ground and create flight will likely break down catastrophically if they try to ferry a duck and even gliding will abruptly lose its ability and cause the incorrigible duck to plummet to the ground again. The Sky Gods will enforce Yelm's will to keep ducks flightless in all ways; there is no sane way around it.

Chaos Flight

The only way that a duck could ever actually achieve flight is through the worship of Chaos gods who bless the poor creature with a Chaos feature that could provide flight. The Chaos gods do not care about Yelm's punishment, nor of his anger when they disobey it. They can give ducks flight if they want to.

This of course mutates and warps the duck into something more akin to a beast or monster – meaning that Yelm's Sentence still stands, in a certain way of looking at it. No *duck* has found flight...just some Chaos creature that was once a duck!

Social Misfit

The Durulz, whether they want to admit it or not, are not accepted in most social circles as anything but an annoyance. They are ignored as much as they can be, mocked whenever possible and the target of every disapproving glance in the room. This can make any Durulz want to tear their feathers out in frustration sometimes but it also has its own special brand of benefit.

In any social situation with races that are not ducks or keets, every Durulz Adventurer can expect to be ignored and misheard. In these situations the Adventurer receives a –20% penalty to their Influence skill when dealing with any non-Durulz. Repeating themselves, growing louder and more profane with each repetition, can help mitigate this penalty. As long as the Adventurer continues to try to Influence the same target(s) with the aforementioned exponential profanity and volume, each Skill Test will see –5% less of a penalty to his skill (–15% on the second, –10% on the third and so on) – but the Durulz must find a way to top himself each time to lessen the penalty properly.

Additionally, Durulz tend to be small and easily lost in crowds – especially crowds that do not want to deal with them anyway. The Adventurer can use the overall dismissing of his race to effectively move about unnoticed in any group of Big People that numbers at least three times his SIZ Characteristic, gaining a +20% to his Stealth skill while doing so. Obviously this only works until the crowd is made aware of the Adventurer, at which point the bonus vanishes altogether; the people are watching the Adventurer as if he might steal from or otherwise touch them!

QUIRKS AND TRAITS

'The curse struck deep on all of us...but some it seems are more cursed than others. I count myself amongst the lucky ones.'

— Billblade 'the Butcher'

The Durulz are an interesting and unique race that, unlike so many others native to Glorantha, are vastly different from one specimen to the next. This can be seen in the physical differences between their two halves – ducks and keets – but also in the individual sub-breeds found in those halves. While the physical differences are remarkable, there are also several other differences on a *mythic* level that appear in individual ducks and keets.

Ducks from all over the world exhibit strange and interesting nuances to their existence; echoes of the Sky Gods' torments, making their lives sometimes more difficult and other times simply more *unique*. These are called Duck Quirks.

Keets have drastic physical and mental differences that have evolved in their sub-breeds over the generations, many of which are useful to their survival in the harsh waters and islands of Vithela. These are called Keet Traits.

The following section contains the rules and descriptions for Duck Quirks and Keet Traits, how to add them properly to a Durulz Adventurer and what they mean in game terms to Games Masters and players alike.

Duck Quirks

The ducks are an odd race that makes its way in Glorantha, often falling on hard times and being forced to go to great lengths to survive. They are both magically and socially cursed but they do not let this become the focus of their gripes and curmudgeon's views – they can find a host of other reasons to be unhappy and angst-ridden in this world.

One thing that never seems to pass them by is Glorantha's way of making things just a little bit *harder* for them. This manifests in a variety of ways that surface over the course of a duck's life. These small ways are collectively known as Duck Quirks.

Duck Quirks are minor alterations to a duck Adventurer that hail from a host of mythic and magical changes that

have taken place over the ages. Some are utterly harmless, others detrimental to a certain degree and a rare few are oddly beneficial.

Whatever the case may be, all duck Adventurers generate one Duck Quirk on the following table and apply it to their character. Some players may wish to add additional rolls by spending Free Skill Points as well.

Duck Quirks

1D20 Result	Duck Quirk
1	Yelm's Spite
2	Bad Luck Charm
3	Trouble Magnet
4	Sweetmeat
5	Addiction
6	Shadowless
7	No Echo
8	Greasy Oils
9	Clacking Stutter
10	Rainbringer
11	Slurring Warble
12	Bright Eyes
13	Off-Toned
14	Compulsion
15	Foul Taste
16	Bitter Rage
17	Flocking Movement
18	Wide Webbing
19	Thick Plumage
20	Wanderlust

Yelm's Spite: The Adventurer is particularly sensitive to the glaring stare of Yelm's light. At any point when the Adventurer is caught in direct sunlight and is not actively shielding his eyes with a free hand (or other method) he suffers a –5% penalty on all Skill Tests that require vision.

Bad Luck Charm: The world seems to be aligned against the Adventurer and no matter what he does he brings horrible misfortune to those around him. Whenever the Adventurer rolls a 'double number' on a skill roll (pass or fail), the next skill roll made by an ally within 10 metres of the duck will be an automatic failure.

Trouble Magnet: Problems and complications follow the Adventurer wherever he goes, making for an adventurous but dangerous life. Every day the Games Master should roll a test against a percentage chance equal to the POW of the Adventurer. If this roll succeeds (the result was equal to or less

than the duck's POW), something dangerous or threatening will cross paths with the Adventurer sometime that day between sunup and sunset.

Games Masters are encouraged to come up with their own troubling situation but the following table could be used if something more random was desired.

1D4 Result	Type of Trouble
1	Weather or Terrain-based Danger
2	Morally Challenging Threat
3	Predatory Monster Encounter
4	Chaos-related Encounter

Sweetmeat: The Adventurer has the horrible affliction of actually being quite *tasty*. In addition to constantly having to swat away biting gnats, flies or other blood-sucking vermin, predatory creatures will be able to smell the savoury flesh of the Adventurer – always choosing to attack him over other equal targets in a combat situation.

Addiction: Having to grow up in a world that is generally aligned against him has been stressful and the Adventurer has only found solace while embracing a somewhat minor vice. Over the years however, this embrace has turned into a powerful addiction. The Adventurer must pass a Persistence Skill Test every day if he wishes to avoid partaking in his addiction. If he fails this test he will suffer –10% on all skill rolls until he indulges himself.

The following table can be used to randomly determine what the duck is addicted to. Alternatively, the Games Master can simply choose something instead.

2D6 Result	Addictive Substance
2	Pain (must suffer 1 HP or more of damage)
3–4	Sugary Foods
5–6	Common Tobacco
7–9	Alcohol
10–11	Duckweed
12	A Particular Flower

Shadowless: Yelm and his daylight somehow refuses to shine upon the Adventurer, bending around him and avoiding his body. This does not have any actual negative effects upon him other than being a few degrees cooler from always being 'in shade'. The most unsettling and recognisable part of this avoidance is the fact that the duck cannot cast a shadow in natural light sources. Magical light will still throw a shadow off of him but torches, campfires and even sunlight will eerily not.

No Echo: It seems that Glorantha itself does not want to hear what the Adventurer has to say more than once. No matter how loud he yells, talks or quacks his voice will not ever repeated as an echo. His footfalls and other noises will echo just fine, just not any form of sound that comes out of his bill.

Greasy Oils: The oily secretion that all ducks create to keep their feathers from becoming waterlogged is particularly thick and greasy on this Adventurer. This has no truly detrimental effect upon him but does require him to bathe and groom twice as often, otherwise his feathers will take on a waxy look and begin to smell rather badly.

Clacking Stutter: The Adventurer has a nervous habit of popping his bill shut repeatedly when he speaks, creating a sort of stutter. This does not get in the way of his speech or make him incomprehensible – merely annoying to hold a length conversation with.

Rainbringer: The Sky Gods are never letting the Adventurer forget his place in the world through an annoying habit of dropping light rains upon him anywhere he goes for a prolonged amount of time. Not much more than a mist, the rain is not going to make a huge difference on crops but it makes everything quite *damp* and uncomfortable. If the Adventurer stays in a specific location for longer than a week, there is a cumulative 5% per day chance that it will begin to rain – and keep raining until he moves along again.

Slurring Warble: The Adventurer has a somewhat distinctive speech pattern that comes from his learning how to speak beastspeech using his tongue and bill's edge more than his throat. Basically an exaggerated lateral lisp, the Adventurer has a very hard time not slurring his 'Rs' and 'Ls' while overly warbling on his 'S' and 'Th' sounds. This makes him even more comical than others of his race and the target for much mockery.

Bright Eyes: Something about the Adventurer's hatching gave him the brightest colour of eyes. Whether it is a brilliant green, sapphire blue, golden yellow, or even eggshell white – his eyes are piercing and attractive (for a duck!)

Off-Toned: The Adventurer's plumage always seemed a little strange but has grown into a completely different colour or hue than that of his parentage. Emerald-crown ducks might have bright red heads, wood ducks might have cobalt blue specks and a basic canard might turn out to be flamingo pink! It is an oddity but has no otherwise effect upon him other than the constant social responsibility to complain about being so different!

As an important note, Ivory Mallards **cannot** have this Duck Quirk. They must re-roll it immediately if it ever occurs in their Adventurer generation.

Compulsion: The Adventurer deals with the stress of being a duck by subconsciously focussing their attentions toward some specific task or action, making it into a compulsion that will soon annoy those around him that notice. Although a harmless habit, this compulsion could be problematic in very rare circumstances (arranging chairs in a trapped room, for instance).

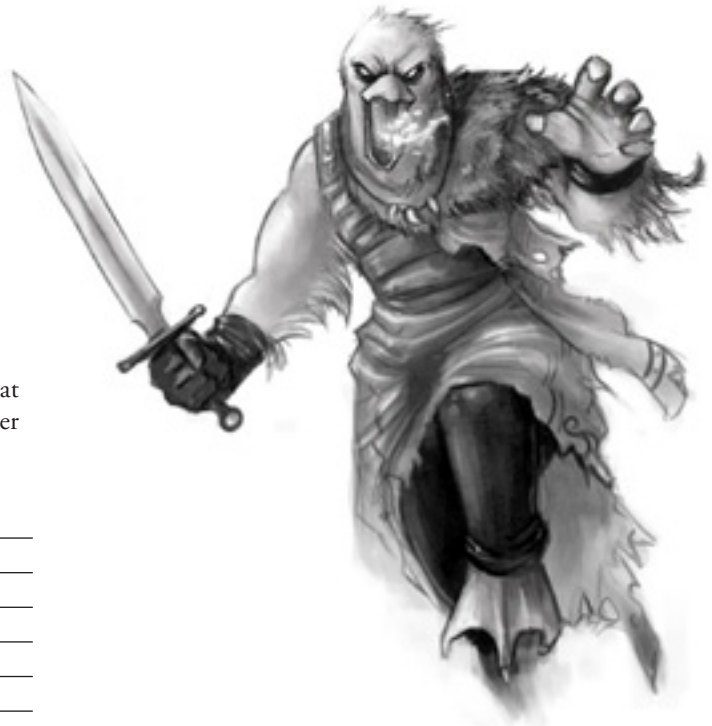
The following table can be used to randomly determine what the duck is compelled to do. Alternatively, the Games Master can simply choose something instead.

2D6 Result	Compulsion
2-3	Ruffling Feathers
4-5	Arranging Objects
6-7	Whistling or Humming
8-9	Polishing or Cleaning Possessions
10-11	Fiddling with Small Object
12	Hygienic Cleanliness

Foul Taste: The Adventurer is *blessed* with bitter or sour-tasting flesh that might discourage predators from taking more than a single bite from them; if they survive the first one, that is. Anything that successfully inflicts damage upon the Adventurer with any form of attack that would put his flesh or blood in the attacker's mouth (or equivalent) will have to pass a Persistence Skill Test in order to attack the duck again *using his mouth*. Strangely and sadly enough, this Quirk has no effect on the Hungry People – who seem not to care at all about the foul flavour.

Bitter Rage: Generations of the Adventurer's family line have been mistreated and looked down upon and this duck simply cannot take it anymore! He has figuratively swallowed too much bile and vinegar in his daily life, and it causes him to explode into a frenzy of adrenaline and profanity toward the target of his stored hatred. This of course is not always a good thing, depending on what he is rushing headlong towards to attack...

If the Adventurer is injured in combat, it will go berserk until all of his foes are defeated. While in this state, the Adventurer will automatically succeed any Resilience test he is forced to take. He may not parry, dodge or use any form of magic. This rage lasts until the duck's foes are incapacitated, the duck is knocked unconscious, or if the Adventurer can critically succeed in a Persistence Skill Test. The duck's fatigue level is immediately dropped to Debilitated at the end of the rage.



Flocking Movement: The instinctual flight patterns of the Adventurer's ancestors – the flying 'V' – still shows up in his everyday movements. He always prefers to be to the rear flank of an ally, moving in his 'wake' so to speak. Strangely enough however, when he is doing so, his Movement increases by two!

Wide Webbing: The Adventurer has strong toes and feet that splay wide and has thick webbing between them to better propel him through the water. When swimming the Adventurer has a base Movement score of eight metres instead of the normal six.

Thick Plumage: The Adventurer's pinfeathers (the tiny ones under the main plumage) are especially dense and thick, making him look a little pudgier than a normal duck, especially in the chest and stomach areas. This additional layer of cushioning feathers is just thick enough to protect the Adventurer slightly from physical damage, acting as natural armour. The Adventurer has a natural AP of 1 on his Chest and Abdomen Hit Locations (no skill penalties).

Wanderlust: The urge to see the world through adventure and excitement has always been evident in the Adventurer, potentially an inheritance from Duru-Orlanth. He is always looking for new ways to prove himself more than 'just a duck' and typically thinks of himself as a hero of his people – even if they do not share his views. The Adventurer gains

an automatic extra Hero Point above and beyond the normal starting allowance, and every time Hero Points are awarded by the Games Master.

Keet Traits

The more segmented side of the Durulz, the keets are broken into several small sub-breeds and tribes that have extremely different body types and features that make them each quite unique. Unlike their duck cousins, who were actually *cursed* to have their problems, the keets believe that they gave up their flight in order to save Vithela and grew into their callous and bitter natures over the generations of not being thanked for it.

This lack of mythic cursing is why keets do not roll upon the Duck Quirk table but instead automatically gain abilities and physical features based upon their individual breed. These are collectively called Keet Traits and they are pre-determined, unalterable and ultimately defining of the sub-breeds of keet.

The following list describes which keet breeds possess which Keet Traits, followed by the descriptions of the Traits and what they do in game terms.

Albatross: Seer, Sharp Beak (1D3)

Auk¹: Sharp Beak (1D3+1), Sparkles

Cormorant¹: Sharp Beak (1D2+1), Spurs

Heron: Regal, Sharp Beak (1D4+1)

Pelican: Pouch-Gullet, Sparkles

Penguin: Expert Swimmer, Savage, Sharp Beak (1D3), Spurs

Phoenic (Flamingo): Magical Fluency, Regal

Phoenic (Peacock): Magical Fluency, Mystic, Regal

Seagull¹: Expert Swimmer, Sharp Beak (1D3)

Stork: Sharp Beak (1D4), Tireless

Swordbill: Primal Rage, Savage, Sharp Beak (1D6), Spurs

¹ Any of these sub-breeds may choose to also add the *Savage* Keet Trait to their lists at Adventurer generation due to their individual tribe's background.

Expert Swimmer

Keets with this trait are born with longer legs, wider webbed feet or thicker feathers that help them swim remarkably well and fast. They are able to dive deeply and glide through rivers, seas and oceans like their ancestors once flew through the air. Keet Adventurers with this trait gain a permanent +40% bonus to its Swim skill. In addition, the Adventurer adds two metres to its normal Movement score when swimming.

Magical Fluency

Keets that possess this trait have an innate connection with the magical forces that permeate Glorantha due to their direct lineage to Grandfather Flamingo. Spells and spellcasting come

naturally to the keet, increasing their overall magical potential. Keet Adventurers with this trait may choose a total Magnitude of Common Magic spells equal to their CHA Characteristic.

Mystic

Possessed only by peacock Phoenics, this trait shows the strange and deep understanding that the peacock keets have to their magical abilities. They are attuned to how their own magics function to the point where they can augment the spells they unleash with greater potency. Peacock keet Adventurers with this trait can add 1 to the Magnitude of any spell they cast with the Progressive trait without spending an additional Magic Point. This increase can boost the spell beyond the maximum Magnitude they know the spell at.

Pouch-Gullet

The most prominent physical feature of the pelican keets, this trait describes the distended and sack-like lower portion of the pelican's bill. Made of a tough but flexible substance similar to leather, a pelican's lower bill is a sort of 'pouch' that they can comfortably store things within. Due to their already warbling speech patterns, storing objects inside the pouch-gullet does not hinder them from talking, breathing, drinking or even eating – it adjusts for the items inside. A pelican keet can hold up to three ENC 1 items or many '–' ENC items (within reason) at once, which they can reach in and grab at any time.

Primal Rage

Swordbill keets have a deep tribal rage inside of them; a leftover from the battles that they had to fight against the Sorns to claim their island territories. It is a useful asset in battle but can easily cost the keet his life if he cannot regain control. If the Adventurer is injured in combat, he will go 'Primal' until all his foes are *slain*. While in this state, the Adventurer will automatically succeed any Resilience test that he is forced to take. The Adventurer's Close Combat skills are increased by 20% as long as he is Primal. However, he may not parry, dodge or use any form of magic. The Adventurer may attempt to end the Primal state early via a critical success on a Persistence roll. No matter how it happens, the swordbill's fatigue level is immediately dropped to Debilitated at the end of the Primal state.

Regal

Keets with this trait are physically attractive, elegant to behold or otherwise a picture of keet royalty. They are *almost* regarded by outsiders as normal Gloranthan species, making them much better at dealing with outsiders. Keet Adventurers with this trait do not have the *Social Misfit* racial trait like other Durulz.

Savage

Keets with this trait hail from a tribe that have fully embraced the predatory nature of their avian ancestors, hunting and fishing and living off the flesh of their kills. They have,

through generations of predation, untapped their wild potential. Savage keets have an additional Combat Reaction and increase their Damage Modifier by one step. Due to their primitive backgrounds however, they *always* are considered to fail Improvement Rolls (only gaining the 1%) on all Advanced Skills save for Survival and Tracking.

Seer

Possessed only by the children of Albatros, keet seers can tap into their god-ancestor's ability to look upon events that have yet to happen in order to avoid dangerous outcomes. The only issue is that they cannot see events in their *own* lives, only others. By looking into the eyes of a sentient being the keet can see flashes of that being's future. Of course, they may or may not believe a 'lowly' keet about their unfolding life, which is the great tragedy of the albatross keets' special ability.

In game terms, an albatross keet can spend one minute looking into the eyes (or equivalents) of any sentient being before spending any number of Magic Points; one for every hour forward the keet wishes to see. Once he has decided how far he wishes to 'see', he gets flashes of the target's future. The keet Adventurer then rolls his Perception skill. If successful, the keet can decipher the flashes well enough to explain what the target might want to avoid if possible in the near future. Failure means that the keet sees only confusing images that mean nothing to him.

If the keet can understand the images, he can try to get the target to avoid potential dangers or seek rewards that he saw. This requires the keet to succeed in an opposed Influence Skill Test versus the target's Persistence (everyone requires a little convincing that a keet can see the future). If the target manages to believe the seer, the target will be able to re-roll one failed skill roll every hour that the keet saw in his visions.

Sharp Beak

Most keets have pointed beaks rather than the dull, rounded bills of the duck breeds. These beaks are very useful as tools and, for some breeds of keets, a good weapon. Any keet Adventurer with this trait has an alternate unarmed weapon that they can wield with their Unarmed skill. The amount of damage that it inflicts is listed in parenthesis next to the trait.

Sparkles

The glitter of silver, gold and gemstones is very attractive to some keets, making it rather difficult for them to pass up the opportunity to obtain them. Whether it is some kind of instinctual wish to 'brighten the nest' or just plain old greed, these keets cannot stop themselves from snatching up sparkly things. Whenever the keet with this trait is presented with the

chance to lay hands on precious metals or gems they must pass a Persistence test *not* to do so.

Spurs

Some keet breeds have natural weaponry that grows in the form of hard, bony spurs just above the rear of their ankles. With a quick jump or raking kick, a spurred keet can easily open unarmoured flesh. Keet Adventurers with this trait can add 1D2 damage to attacks made with their Unarmed skill.

Tireless

The symbol of the stork keets' tenacity, this trait is what makes the storks the chosen messengers of the keet tribes. The keet Adventurer can function under physically stressing situations for prolonged amounts of time without fearing the effects of fatigue or tiredness. The keet with this trait can roll a Resilience Skill Test twice and select the best result, anytime he gains a level of Fatigue for reasons related to exhaustion, activity or other mundane physical efforts.

DURULZ BACKGROUNDS

The following sections cover the backgrounds and professions available to duck and keet Adventurers. These backgrounds and professions are in addition to the common ones found in the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook*. They are designed solely for the use of Durulz Adventurers and cannot be chosen by other races (not that they would want to!).

Durulz Combat Styles

Ducks and keets are limited in their choice of weaponry, primarily due to their small stature. In general, Durulz can use any close combat weapon of size Medium or less, if they have the required STR and DEX to wield it. This usually limits them to weapons such as shortswords, spears and bucklers. They can also take Unarmed as a Combat Style.

There are no limits to ranged weapon use, save for the minimum STR and DEX requirements but in general Durulz prefer crossbows as they are not unduly affected by possessing a negative Damage Bonus.

This book assumes a default of one two-handed or two single-handed weapons per style but Games Masters may freely include as many as is fitting for his campaign.

Durulz Backgrounds

Background	Common Skill Bonuses	Combat Styles	Advanced Skill Bonuses	Professions	Starting Money
Barbarian	Athletics +10%, Culture (Own) +30%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Stealth +10%, Swim +10%	Choose three Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	Boating, Language (Native) +50%, Survival Select One Craft (Any), Healing, Lore (Any), Play Instrument, Tracking	Duck Chaos Hunter, Ducktown Guard, Vagabond Keet Bloodbeak, Keetslander, Warbird	4D6x10 Silver
Civilised	Culture (Own) +30%, Evaluate +10%, Influence +10%, Insight +10%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Swim +10%	Choose one Combat Style and gain a +10% bonus to it	Boating, Language (Native) +50% Select Three Art(any), Craft (any), Gambling, Language (any), Lore (any), Mechanisms, Play Instrument, Streetwise	Duck Chaos Hunter, Ducktown Guard, Enlightened Duck, Townsduck, Wyrmbill Keet Ship's Keet, Warbird	4D6x50 Silver
Migrant	Athletics +10%, Culture (Own) +30%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Resilience +10%, Stealth +10%, Swim +10%	Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	Boating, Language (Native) +50% Select Two Craft (Any), Culture (Other), Healing, Language (Any), Lore (Any), Play Instrument, Survival, Tracking	Duck Chaos Hunter, Enlightened Duck, Vagabond Keet Bloodbeak, Ship's Keet	4D6x10 Silver
Savage	Culture (Own) +30%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Perception +10%, Resilience +10%, Stealth +10%, Swim +10%	Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	Boating, Language (Native) +50%, Survival, Tracking	Duck Chaos Hunter, Vagabond Keet Bloodbeak, Keetslander, Warbird	4D6x5 Silver

Chaos Hunter: The Adventurer has joined the unofficial ranks of the ducks dedicated to the hunting down and killing of the Chaos forces that took advantage of his people's curse ages ago. He is focussed on discovering exactly what took place between Stormbill and the Faceless Enemy that warned the god about the strengthening of Chaos over the ages. The Adventurer knows his life will be one filled with travel and deadly combat with creatures that will defy logic, pushing his resolve to the utmost edge.

Ducktown Guard: The Adventurer has lived his life walking or swimming the perimeter of his ducktown, watching out for

Hungry People and other dangers to the community. He has been trained how to use a variety of weapons to better protect the skins of his people, especially considering his own feathers are included!

Enlightened Duck: The Adventurer is one of the foreign ducks that grew up, at least for a while, in the Kingdom of Enlightenment – Kralorela. Some of their teachings and customs rubbed off on the Adventurer and now he looks upon the world in a different way. He still holds dear the teachings of the duck pantheon but the Cosmic Dragon of the East also shines brightly in his heart.

DUCK PROFESSIONS

Players are free to choose any of the following professions for their duck Adventurers.

Duck Professions

Profession	Common Skill Bonuses	Advanced Skills
Chaos Hunter	Evade +5%, Persistence +5%	Lore (Chaos), Tracking
	Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	
Ducktown Guard	Evade +10% , Perception +10%	Streetwise
	Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	
Enlightened Duck	Lore (Regional) +10%, Perception +10%, Persistence +10%	Culture (Kralori), Language (Kralori)
Townsduck	Evaluate +5%, Influence +5%, Sleight +10%, Stealth +10%	Craft (Any), Streetwise
Vagabond	Influence +5%, Lore (Regional) +10%, Perception +5%, Stealth +10%	Survival
	Choose a Combat Style and gain a +10% bonus to it	
Wyrmbill	Evaluate +10%, Influence +10%, Persistence +10%	Choose Two Dance, Draconic Illumination ¹ , Language (Auld Wyrnish)

¹The Draconic Illumination skill is described in the Dragonewts section on p76

Townsduck: The Adventurer is a stable member of a duck community, frequently travelling in and out of other races' settlements for what little trade and commerce he can. He knows that many will ignore him or treat him harshly when in the lands of the Big People and that he will not be taken seriously. Especially in the lands of the Yelmites, worshippers of the Sky Gods that cursed the ducks, the Adventurer must find other ways to get by and make allies.

Vagabond: The Adventurer, for whatever reason, has left the safety of his ducktown in order to see the world. Rarely letting his feathers fall upon the same area of ground twice, the Adventurer enjoys being on the move as often as possible. He makes for the perfect adventurer or sell-sword, as he has no loyalties to anywhere specific. Instead, he enjoys the freedom of not being bound to anything...or anyone, for that matter. Only his survival matters; to him, anyway.

Wyrmbill: The Adventurer is one of the rare ducks to have listened to the evangelising of the Empire of Wyrms' Friends, earned an audience with the Wyrms' Face Believers and managed to join their cause. He has learned enough of the draconic mysteries to have begun shaping himself into a 'greater' being, and his attachment to the world of common ducks has long since faded under the shadow of the Great Dragon.

Bloodbeak: The Adventurer is one of the keets that train extensively in the use of their beak, body and spurs (if any) to serve them as a weapon. The Adventurer may very well be a devout follower of the keet gods, thanking them for their blessings through pure and natural combat. The actual styles of fighting may vary from keet-to-keet. One tribe's bloodbeaks fighting might be in quick, precise strokes; another might teach a frenzy of haphazard gauges and rakes – it all matters on the mindset of the tribe.

Keetslander: The Adventurer was raised on the Vithelan islands collectively known as the Keetslands. The Adventurer has had to learn an assortment of skills to better survive in the island-rich archipelago and combat with other tribes or trespassers has forced them to become tough and wary. Keetslanders tend to eventually become swayed by their wanderlust, getting in a boat and heading toward the mainland and adventure.

Ship's Keet: This Adventurer has spent much of their life on a penguin longboat or a gull caravel. The Adventurer is a skilled shiphand and ocean going traveller, living on what the seas offer up. Where some ship's keets make a living working as a crewkeet on a legitimate vessel, most are pirates or raiders that take what they want from all they cross paths with.

KEET PROFESSIONS

Players are free to choose any of the following professions for their keet Adventurers.

Keet Professions

Profession	Common Skill Bonuses	Advanced Skills
Bloodbeak	Athletics + 10%, Evade +10%, Perception +10%, Resilience +10%, Unarmed +10%	
Keetslander	Resilience +10%, Swim +10%	Boating, Survival
Ship's Keet	Choose one Combat Style and gain a +10% bonus to it Athletics + 10%, Lore (Regional) +10%,	Boating, Shiphandling
Warbird	Choose one Combat Style and gain a +10% bonus to it Athletics +10%, Evade +10%, Resilience +10% Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	

Warbird: This Adventurer has been trained in a traditional manner to become a dedicated soldier to the tribe. Setting aside their wild natures, a warbird fights with skill and training over passion or instincts. They are the garrison soldiers that protect a tribe's lands, and what the noblekeets call upon to defend the villages and homes when trespassers abound.

DURULZ EQUIPMENT

Durulz Adventurers need to have some essential equipment to survive in the harsh world. Depending on where a duck is born and raised, what sort of social environment his family was in and even the local resources available to him; there is a multitude of material assets that exist in Glorantha for them. There are also however, several items that only appear in the crafthouses of local ducktowns or in the tribal villages of the Keetslands.

The following section contains the rules and descriptions for specialised equipment built and designed for use by ducks and keets.

New Duck Equipment

The following are all items made for and by ducks and can be found in most ducktowns. Either at local crafthouses or bazaars, they can likely be tracked down in some way wherever ducks gather and live.

Duckblade: This weapon is a small and easily hidden dagger with a recessed blade that is used for an upward stabbing motion. The 'duckblade' is actually just a modified stiletto to be tucked into the folds of its wielder's clothing or ruffled feathers, gaining a +20% bonus to Sleight Skill Tests made to hide or palm the weapon.

Duckweeds: This collective type of plant grows along the edges of most ponds and streams and is traditionally chewed or smoked to release its powerful and refreshing juices. Although it tends to be quite tasty and aromatic for other species, only Durulz can gain its full benefit. When smoked or chewed, the duckweed has some interesting effect upon the imbiber depending on the 'colour' of duckweed. Each type of duckweed can only be used once a week or the Durulz will become immune to its effects.

Oilcomb: Ducks are frequently grooming themselves in order to keep the amount of their natural oils from becoming too thick or thin on their bodies. Most ducks use their hands and bills to ruffle their feathers and spread their natural oils around as they groom. This stiff brush made from thin but stiff pieces of leather is used instead, and is designed to do a much better job. This is far more efficient, keeping the duck from having to groom nearly as often and allowing him to go nearly a week between full groomings. Cost 10 SP.

Reed Armour: Huge patches of papyrus and other reed-grasses grow wherever ducks tend to live and are harvested frequently for their use in many resources as well as clearing the waterways for better access. Some of the larger and tougher reeds are occasionally woven into one another like wicker and dried, creating a single mass that is lightweight and remarkably tough for untreated plantlife. If given to a duck armourer, these thick reeds can be woven and wetted before being placed on a shaping mannequin, drying into form-fitted pieces of reed armour.

Reed armour does not offer particularly dense protection and it softens in water but it is very inexpensive and plentiful in ducktowns across Genertela. It takes two to four weeks for a duck armourer to make a fitted suit of reed armour but fitted reed armour offers only *half* (round up) the normal penalties for wearing it.

Weapon	Handedness	Damage Dice	STR/DEX	Size	Reach	Combat Manoeuvres	ENC	AP/HP	Cost
Duckblade	Single	1D3+1	-/-	S	S	Impale	1	6/6	25 SP

Duckweed Colour Variations

Colour of Duckweed	Effects	Side-Effects (if any)	Cost Per Use
Green	Removes 1D3-1 levels of Fatigue	—	25 SP
Red	Keeps user awake for 12+1D6 hours without fail	User gains 1 level of Fatigue	20 SP
Brown	Calms user into peaceful, dreamless sleep	—	15 SP
White	Sharpens senses (gain +20% Perception for 1d6 hours)	User suffers -5% penalty to all non-combat skills from distraction while duckweed is in effect.	35 SP
Violet	Causes minor but enjoyable hallucinations		20 SP

Armour	AP ¹	ENC ¹	Location	Cost
Reed Helmet	2/1	1/2	Head	50 SP
Reed Armlet	2/1	1/2	Arm	65 SP
Reed Skirt	2/1	2/3	Legs	75 SP
Reed Shirt	2/1	2/4	Abdomen, Chest	125 SP

¹ The number after the parenthesis is used if the armour is thoroughly wet.

Weapon	Handedness	Damage Dice	STR/DEX	Size	Reach	Combat Manoeuvres	ENC	AP/HP	Cost
Spurs	—	1D4	-/11	S	T	Impale	1	6/6	150 SP

Weapon	Handedness	Damage Dice	STR/DEX	Size	Reach	Combat Manoeuvres	ENC	AP/HP	Cost
Keetspear	Single	1D8+1	5/9	M	L	Impale	2	4/5	35 SP

Weapon	Damage	Damage Modifier	Range	Load	STR/DEX	Size	Combat Manoeuvres	ENC	AP/HP	Cost
Sorn Bolo	1D4+1	Y	25m	—	8/10	—	Entangle	1	2/5	100 SP

Spurs (Keet Spurs): These items are leather bands with short dagger-like blades that are worn in the same place that keets grow natural spurs, just above the ankle. Their use is looked down upon by the keets (who feel the ducks are stealing the idea) but are often a lethal surprise for anyone who faces a duck in close combat. Many foolish foes have fallen to a poisoned spur when trying to take an otherwise disarmed duck into custody. This weapon cannot be used to Parry.

Uzbane: Made from a foul concoction of animal musks and duck urine, this noxious yellowish oil is designed to foil the senses of the Hungry People. Having been hunted by the greater Uz family since the Great Darkness, most often by the scent of their preyed-upon flesh, they devised this fluid to throw off hunting trolls and trollkin. By liberally splashing the ground with the substance behind them, they reduce the skill of anything using scent to track by 40%. Only a critical success on a Tracking roll can defeat the powerful odour of uzbane. Of course, if the stuff gets spilled *on* the duck he would then count the penalty as being a bonus to the Track skill instead! Cost 100 SP per six-use bladder.

Waterproof Pomade: Mixed from collected oils from pressed duck feathers and harvested beeswax, this thick and gooey substance is used to make sure that the equipment of a duck is just as waterproof as his feathers are. When rubbed lightly onto objects and equipment (especially leather) it gives the item(s) a subtle shine but also keeps it from being adversely damaged by natural water or wet weather for a full week. Cost 50 SP for a three-month clay jar.

New Keet Equipment

The following are all items made by keets, normally for their own use within the keet tribes and can be found throughout the Keetslands and parts of Kralorela.

Featherblend: Keets that do not fish in the sea will often hunt for their prey in the sometimes thick foliage of the Vithelan islands. With the bright colours and patterns of the different breeds clashing with the dark undergrowth, some tribes devised this dull-brown or grey sticky mud substance that acts as perfect camouflage for the surrounding area. Although it halves the benefits of the *Expert Swimmer* trait while applied, featherblend grants the wearer a +20% bonus to Stealth in a natural environment for 2d6 hours before it dries and flakes off. Cost 25 SP per use.

Keetspear: This is the traditional weapon used by most keet tribes throughout the Keetslands. It is essentially a shortspear with a forward-protruding 'spur' on the base of its head. This distinctive prong is what makes a keetspear special; as it not only inflicts additional lacerations when thrust but it also

keeps the spear from being lodged in a wound if the wielder turns the weapon a certain way when striking. Keetspears are considered weapons that can Impale a target but not on any attack where the attacker wishes not to.

Sorn Bolo: After the Sorns betrayed their keet kin at the Sacrifice, they became the single most hated entity for all keet tribes, no matter how far spread or varied in thinking. Where Sorns were spotted still flying on their leathery wings, keets would soon be around to hunt them. The herons designed this ingenious weapon, unsurprisingly called the 'Sorn bolo' to help bring the flying Chaos minions down to the ground where the keetslanders could then tear them apart.

A Sorn bolo is two lengths of oil-treated vine or rope tied at the middle to form an 'X' with heavy weights at all four ends. Along the ropes are inserted thin metal barbs and hooks that are not individually anything but painful but collectively they are lethally inhibiting. When thrown correctly, the bolo wraps around the limbs (or wings!) of a target and slices them up terribly whenever they move, making flight impossible.

Using the entangled location whilst still entwined in a Sorn bolo inflicts its base damage (no Damage Modifier) to the target. Cost 100 SP.

Spurcaps: The natural spurs of some keet breeds are sharp and hard but can quickly dull and splinter when fighting armoured or parrying opponents. To help keep this form of erosion from happening, most spurred keets tip their growths with caps of hammered bronze which must be replaced every season. Wearing these caps keep the keet from suffering damage when his spur-augmented attacks are parried and also adds +1 to the damage they inflict. Cost 50 SP a pair.

ROLEPLAYING THE DURULZ

Choosing to play a duck or keet in a *RuneQuest* game set in Glorantha's Second Age is not a decision that should be taken lightly. They are not as physically or magically powerful as many of the other races of the world, not even the 'basic' humans that form the average Gloranthan inhabitants. They are not going to be recognised for their deeds very often, if at all and they are not the type of Adventurers to run out and be the big hero that some role-players are looking for. Spoken simply, ducks are not the heroic type.

All that being said...they are some of the most enjoyable creatures to portray if you like sourness, bitter spite and darkly comical ineffectiveness.

This section is devoted to those players who want to be fully prepared to role-play as a member of the Durulz race. Be it

duck or keet, there are several aspects of the species that should be understood before donning the feathers and preparing to take the chance. Being a duck is not easy.

Consider yourself warned.

Acting the Part

Some gaming groups pride themselves on their voice acting, mannerisms and other character-building facets of their roleplaying skills. Although not all players will do so, a duck Adventurer is a great way to have a good time acting out their part in the story.

It might be a challenge for a player to immerse themselves in the world of the Durulz but we have drawn up the following helpful hints and acting suggestions to perhaps aid them.

- Sit on the floor, or try to stay lower than the other players.
- Be a true cynic. Nothing is as good as it seems, and bad times are always right around the corner. Always remember that things are likely worse around the next corner.
- Try to avoid thoroughly theological discussions in public, as it might attract attention to your people's curse through your semantic meanderings. Or worse, it might fully reveal your gods to the God Learners.
- Bring some crackers, torn up pieces of bread (for ducks) or beef jerky (for keets) to the game session and do your best to talk with your mouth full as often as possible. Ducks and keets are not known for their manners. The more that your fellow players find themselves ignoring you, the more 'in character' you will be!
- Never be too proud to run away from a combat. You will likely be blamed for anything bad that happens during a combat anyway, so you might as well shoulder the berating unharmed.
- You are *not* a leader. Even the dumbest idea delivered by the local trollkin is likely to be better received than anything that comes out of your bill – so do not even try unless asked to. Then complain a lot about it.
- Angst and bitterness are your two best friends. When a smile comes to your bill it should be due to some Big People's misfortune or discomfort. It is darkly pleasing whenever someone else in the world can suffer like your people have.
- True friends are a myth – a fable told to ducklings to keep them from committing suicide before their feathers come in. The people you are travelling and adventuring with are *allies of the moment*, nothing more. They will one day turn on you and blame you for something, so make sure you always recognise them for what they are. Duckfriends are the exception, but they are too few and far between to count for much anyway.

Motivations

There are many reasons why a common Durulz would leave the 'safety' of his home and journey across a world that is seemingly out to make them miserable. Whether it is for coin, quest or necessity, the desire to leave the community in search of *more* is very strong for most Durulz.

The following sections describe several good reasons why a duck or keet Adventurer might decide to pack up their things and begin their journeys across Glorantha.

Wanderlust

Durulz are naturally interested in seeing other places due to their ancient ties to the Sky and flight. Before they were cursed they could soar on the winds and see as much of the world as they wanted from the safety of the clouds. Even though they have lost their wings, their desire to see more than what they can did not vanish with their flight. They collectively call it wanderlust and it is the primary reason why any Durulz leaves home and seldom looks back.

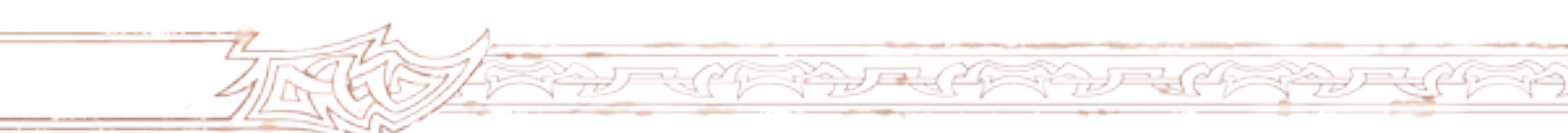
Although it appears to have a stronger pull on the somewhat migratory keets than it does over the more 'domesticated' ducks, wanderlust begins to set in just after adulthood. When the Durulz reaches biological adulthood, just after their youthful 'fuzz' gives way to true feathers, making them venture further and further away from their homes until they are called upon for their rite of passage. When it comes time for their test of adulthood, they will be happy to go freely into the unknown world.

As a Durulz gets older they learn how to set aside their wanderlust for stability and community for the most part, realising that they have to settle down and work on making sure the next generation can be brought into the world safely. This does not mean that all Durulz give up adventuring or such when they reach a certain age; it just means that around the age of 40 years they stop feeling like they *have* to go and seek the unknown.

Safety

There are countless dangers to duck and keet settlements in the world. When the larger and deadlier of these dangers threatens the community, the community is often forced to flee. Surviving the threat is more important than permanence and this puts many adult ducks and keets on their feet and into the world to look for a new place to live.

Ducktowns and keet villages cannot simply be placed wherever the survivors happen to end up; they require certain resources and amounts of space – not to mention a safe buffer



from other dangers. This is why many Durulz risk everything and become an adventurer. They are on a search for a good place to settle in and hopefully return to tell the other refugees where it is.

Additionally, even if they are Big People, there is safety in numbers. A duck or keet travelling alone will likely become the meal of some hungry predator. If they manage to tagalong with a group of other adventurer types they are surely to have much better chances at survival – if they do not get killed by their new ‘friends’, that is!

Religion

The teachings of the Durulz pantheon are rather widespread amongst their descendants and the various duck cults ask their members to view the world in many different lights. Some Durulz become world travellers because of the needs of their ancestor-gods, turning a normal quest or journey into a holy prerogative driven by the runedrakes of their faiths.

The specific faiths that tend to push their members to adventure do so by asking acolytes to walk in the footprints of their ancestors, doing much of the same that they did when they came to the Inner World. Followers of Deathdrake and Stormbill wander the world in search of enemies to battle and vanquish, the Hurler asks her children to see as much of the world as possible and the Seaside Brothers want their descendants to find their betrayers.

The followers of Duru-Orlanth the Adventurer are not simply encouraged to go into the wilds and seek excitement – they are instructed to. The actions of Duru-Orlanth the Explorer in the Godtime were some of the most brave and courageous to ever happen in duck history and his cult idolises these actions and seeks to add some of its own to the folklore of the Durulz.

Ducks and keets that risk their lives in the world around them on behalf of their ancestor-gods’ myths and teachings must never forget that they are still the scapegoats of the Sky Gods. Adventurers that feel they are protected by their faiths only have to think back to how the Durulz pantheon was treated by the other gods of Glorantha...they will remember their place quickly enough.

Treasure

A Durulz’s life in Glorantha is a pretty hard one, so why not try to immerse it fortune and luxury? One of the biggest reasons why any duck or keet chooses to risk life and limb is the simplest – coin. Gold and jewels, magical artefacts and just luxurious things can be enough to drag a duck out of his home and into his armour.

Chief amongst all rumours of treasure that will bring the ducks out in numbers is whenever an ancient Ganderland artefact is said to have been found. When the Durulz escaped Canardela they brought with them many of their perfect tools, art and writings. Once a season or so something that supposedly was created by the True Durulz surfaces in an unlikely place and word spreads like wildfire to every ducktown for hundreds of miles. Duck adventurers go scouring for the object, normally less enthused when they actually discover that the rumour was drummed up or the artefact has been taken by Big People looters. These Ganderland objects are rarely anything but perfectly-crafted mundane devices made of a dense ivory-like substance that was prevalent in the ancient land.

Revenge

The biggest and most powerful cause that any Durulz uses to fuel his need for adventure is a burning revenge upon those that have kept them down and harmed them over the generations. They know that it is not the Big People’s *fault* that they have been taught to do their part in Yelm’s Sentence but the ducks have to turn their blame on someone. By hating the instruments of their angst they might actually be able to inflict some hurt back upon them; as they know they cannot hurt the Sky Gods themselves.

Ducks focus their bitter machinations on the Big People, especially those devoted to Yelm and his Sky God cronies. They find ways of making their lives harder; hindering them in any way they can without risking full scale retribution. Banditry, raiding and underhanded sabotage of their communities is commonplace, but some more experienced ducks might look to helping the EWF and the Golden Dragon Emperor keep the Yelmites in check. The ducks might not be able to create an empire or army to rival the Big People’s cities and legions but no one fights an underdog guerrilla war better than the lowly duck.

Duck Cults

'Our gods are the ancestors that laid the eggs from which we all were hatched. Some have forgotten how much they cared for us in the nests of our history, going to the teachings of mystic dragons and Orlanthi winds, but not we faithful...'

...how can we forget the mothers and fathers of our people?'

— Malissa of the Eight Nests

Few Gloranthans even recognise that there are such things as 'duck gods'. Durulz keep their own pantheon mostly to themselves in fear of getting their gods into more trouble. Most outsiders would disbelieve the existence of divine ducks or keets anyway but the Durulz feel it is best not to leave that to chance.

There are two parts of the Durulz pantheon; the Nest of Eight and Flamingo's Court. Even though they are all related through Grandmother Duck and Vrimak the High Flyer, they are distinctly separate.

The Nest of Eight consists of the eight ancestor-gods of the ducks. Beginning with Grandmother Duck, these are the traditional cults of the vast majority of the Durulz. Duckfriends could technically join a Nest of Eight cult but would not likely to ever rise in rank beyond Initiate.

In a similar vein, Flamingo's Court is made up of the ancestor-gods of the keet tribes. Unlike the ducks, who might allow a duckfriend to join their cults, there is no such thing as a 'keetfriend' and therefore no such thing as an outsider member of a keet cult.

Durulz can theoretically join human cults if they are exposed to it enough but it would require the cult to pay enough attention to the duck or keet to actually allow them to become a lay member in the first place. No Durulz can attain the rank of Rune priest or higher in a non-Durulz cult, but they can join them normally. Ducks tend to occasionally foray into Orlanthi cults, keets are sometimes drawn to the Vithelan teachings and both are curious about Kralori beliefs from time to time.

CANARDA THE EGG MOTHER

Goddess of the Nest, Goddess of all Hatchings, Mother of Tenacity.

Runes

Fertility

Mythos and History

Canarda, daughter of Grandmother Duck, is the first amongst the ancestor-gods that was given the blessing of godhood when her shell was tapped open using the Man Rune. She was given power through the rune by playing with her mother, swapping the Man Rune as the only prize for their games and contests. She was given the blessing of motherhood, laying the eggs of the Durulz and the strength to outlast the pain of births. After Grandmother Duck had long stopped laying new eggs in fear of making too many gods, it became Canarda's role to populate the Mighty Duck Empire.

Easing of the Egg (Resonance 60%)

Nature

Her cult, called the *Motherwatch*, is a matriarchal monastic order that is easily the largest and most influential of all the duck cults. Acolytes and Speakers appear throughout Genertela and Jrustela; rising wherever ducks create communities. Her cult helps the duck species reproduce safely from one generation to the next, not only serving as midwives but also martially protecting the mothers in their months of discomfort and vulnerability. She is worshipped by mothers and daughters and especially by those duck hens that have realised that they cannot have children. She stood defiantly in the face of Yelm and her cult stands just as steadfast in the path of adversities that threaten duck mothers.

Her Worshipper's Duties are to oversee and aid in the hatching of new ducks, help and protect expecting mothers, defend and help nurture infant ducklings. Try to have as many children as possible.

Organisation

Canarda is almost always depicted as a pregnant duck hen with a shield in one hand and an unhatched egg in the other. The nesting places of the ducks are all considered shrines to Canarda no matter how big or small but only permanent buildings devoted to her cult can be considered true temples. Any duck hen or duckling is welcome in a temple to Canarda but adult drakes can only come inside if they have a pregnant hen they are caring for.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members: All female ducks of laying age are automatically lay members of the cult.

Initiates: Must have *tried* to reproduce at least once (successfully or not).

Acolytes: The would-be Speaker of Canarda must have helped with the successful hatchings of eight ducklings under the roof of a Canarda shrine.

Rune Priests: The would-be Rune Priest of Canarda must have helped with the successful hatchings of 100 ducklings under the roof of a Canarda shrine or temple. They are responsible for the choosing and training of the Acolytes, meaning that they must always stay within a few days' walk (or swim) from the nearest actual ducktown temple to Canarda.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Befuddle, Becalm, Cauterise, Detect Disease/Poison, Heal, Protection, Push/Pull

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following:

Aphrodisiac, Ease Birth

Gifts and Compulsions

Upon rising to the rank of initiate the worshipper gains the following gift and compulsion:

Gift:

Endure Birth: The adherent does not gain levels of Fatigue for staying awake with a labouring mother.

Compulsion:

Mothering Nature: The adherent must always protect an expectant duck hen or a young duckling, even at the expense of their own lives.

Cult Skills

First Aid, Healing, Influence, Insight, Lore (Canarda), Meditation, Persistence

Allied Cults

The cult of Chalana Arroy provides Heal Wound as an Acolyte spell.

The cult of Grandmother Duck provides Bless Home as an Acolyte spell.

DEATHDRAKE

God of the Blade, The Deathsmith

Runes

Death, Mastery

Mythos and History

The Deathdrake, is the first of Canarda's children and first drake of all duck-kind. He invented the first duckblade when he was still wet from his own yolk and was the source for the fighting abilities of the duck species. It was the Deathdrake that created the weapons and shields that the True Durulz used to defend Canardela from the invading keets and Yelm's Legions and his fighting prowess was second only to his younger brother Stormbill's.

Ending the Existence of False Life Things (Resonance 70%)

Nature

Learning the secrets of Death from Humakt himself, the Deathdrake was careful only to show the controllable parts of the power to his children. Exchanging a promise to the Orlanthi god of Death that Deathdrake's students would forever bring Death to the False Life Ones, his cult is dedicated to the eradication of undead and those who would create it. The Deathdrake Disciples are primarily warriors but they know their way around a forge and anvil as well.

Deathdrake is always shown in writings and carvings as a silver-plumed drake with a sword or dagger in one hand and a shield in the other. He sometimes is given a black cowl or iron mask but most often he is shown with an almost saddened look on his face.

Organisation

His cult operates most of the forges and weapon crafthouses in ducktowns, creating the weapons and armour used by

townsduck militia and ducktown guards, who are foremost amongst his faithful.

Worshipper's Duties are to forge metal weapons and armour for duck communities, fight against the enemies of the community, answering the call to arms when fellow ducks are attacked.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members: Any male duck who wishes to join the militia automatically becomes a lay member of Deathdrake. In return they promise to help repulse danger from the settlement.

Initiates: Must have participated in a battle (successfully or not).

Acolytes: Acolytes of Deathdrake must have forged their own sword by this time and can only wield weaponry forged by their cult members.

Rune Lords: Deathdrake Disciples that want to attain the rank of Rune Lord must prove their worth to the cult by finding and destroying a sentient False Life being. Most undead other than skeletons and zombies count for this purpose

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Armoursmith's Boon, Bladesharp, Detect Undead, Endurance, Mobility, Protection, Spirit Bane

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following:

Heat Metal, Turn Undead, Living Blade

Gifts and Compulsions

None

Cult Skills

Athletics, Combat Style (Any Sword based Style), Craft (Smith), Evade, Lore (Deathdrake), Perception, Resilience

Allied Cults

The cult of Duru-Orlanth the Adventurer provides Pathfinder as an Acolyte spell.

The cult of Humakt provides True (Sword) as an Acolyte spell.



DURU-ORLANTH THE ADVENTURER

Duru-Orlanth the Explorer, Follower of the Road, Dusty Path Wind

Runes

Motion, Luck

Mythos and History

Brother to the best warriors of duck-kind, son of Canarda and friend to Orlanth Adventurous, this heralded ancestor-god is where duck wanderlust comes from. It was he who travelled to the other parts of existence outside of Ganderland and it was he who found the Orlanthi beyond the rivers of legend. He brought the wind gods of the humans to Ganderland and introduced them to his family. He was the first to make allies of outsiders and he would create bonds with Orlanth that later meant the difference between destruction and punishment at Yelm's hand. Duru-Orlanth is the heart and soul of the travelling duck; the urge to move forward into unknown adventures.

Discover the Unknown (Resonance 60%)

Nature

His cult is the largest of all the duck cults, forming tens of thousands of members across Glorantha. Ducks who are living on the road, surviving by their wits and their skills, are the perfect members of the cult. The cult teaches that anything can be overcome with the right tool for the job, even if you must steal that tool. Members of the cult are devoted to seeking challenges and quests to prove to the world that the ducks are not worthless or merely comic relief on a cosmic scale. Like a species-wide adventuring guild, his cult's worshippers collect countless rumours and possible quest targets to give out to its members. Completing a task means that they will be headed in a different and more challenging direction soon enough.

Duru-Orlanth is depicted as a lean drake wearing the traditional garb of the Orlanthe, often clasped with an iron feather. In one hand he carries a paddle to a boat, oftentimes pictured as being used as a walking stick. His other hand is always open, reaching out as if to grab something that no one else can see. He is the image of adventure and most young ducks want to walk in his footprints because of it.

Organisation

None. Rune Priests and Rune Lords travel the world as much as the rest of the cult members. Any location where a great deed has been performed by a duck is considered a shrine or temple for the purposes of regaining Divine Magic. Worshippers are duck adventurers, travellers and explorers.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members: Any duck who leaves his native ducktown and begins wandering the world is automatically accepted as a lay member.

Initiates: If a duck can find a Rune Priest or Rune Lord of the cult, then he has proven himself worthy of being raised to initiate.

Acolytes: Cult members that want to achieve this rank must have visited one holy site of the cult with a group of non-ducks and returned home safely.

Rune Priests: Cult members trying to become Rune Priests must have spent at least one year adventuring abroad with a group of non-ducks and know the location of all the holy places within a season's travel of his ducktown.

Rune Lords: Only those ducks that have completed the annual Ducksday Gala competition successfully can hope to

become Runedrakes, requiring that they have spent a full year travelling the world to complete their Ducksday quest.

Common Magic

Bandit's Cloak, Clear Path, Detect Enemy, Luck, Mobility, Understanding, Warmth

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following:

Channel Strength, Pathfinder, Speed Chariot

Gifts and Compulsions

Upon rising to the rank of Rune Priest/Lord, the worshipper gains the following gift and compulsion:

Gift:

Respected: The adherent need never pay for room and board again when staying with fellow ducks but is given hospitality wherever he travels in exchange for the stories and tales of his journeys.

Compulsion:

Wanderlust: The adherent may never again settle in one place for more than a week.

Cult Skills

Athletics, Boating, Combat Style (Any), Drive, Lore (Duru-Orlanth), Stealth, Survival

Allied Cults

The cult of the Seaside Brothers provides Speed Ship as a Rune Priest/Lord spell.

The cult of Orlanthe Adventurous provides Dark Walk (see Troll Magic) as a Rune Priest/Lord spell.

EGGBEATER THE SINGER OF SONGS

Creator of the First Quack, The Voice of the Ducks

Runes

Communication, Truth

Mythos and History

Amongst the children of Grandmother Duck, Eggbeater is unique in many ways. His quacking laugh that brought tears to his mother's eyes caused her to give its sound to all of

duck-kind, his singing call became the whistle of the wind through the reeds and his stories were the inspirations for a lifetime of poems and plays. His voice and the voice of his worshippers are the communications between the many facets of duck society.

Beating the Great Demon Fear by Cracking Yokes (Resonance 50%)

Nature

The cult is responsible for keeping track of all of duck history through folklore stories, fables and songs. Eggbeater teaches his worshippers how to be convincing and believable through the most troubled or fantastic of tales and how to spread information in pleasing ways across the world. His cult is welcome in any duck community, because current events and entertaining stories are soon to follow.

Eggbeater is described in the old stories and pictographs as a short, fat and jovial duck with a wide bill and always with a cup of wine or ale in his hands. He is sometimes shown holding a peacock-feather quill, a reference to the supposed riddle contest that he won over Grandfather Flamingo's finest army of sages but this only appears in depictions that surface on the eastern side of Genertela and Kralorela.

Organisation

The cult spreads information and communications between ducktowns and other communities, whilst in addition remembering duck history through stories and songs. Each ducktown maintains their own Rune Priest of Eggbeater to recount duck history through stories and songs, whilst the lower ranks act as runners or swimmers between settlements. Rune Lords follow up on missing cult members. The cult Worshippers are Duck sages, bards, entertainers and storytellers.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members: Anyone who wishes to learn how to perform as entertainers may join the cult. In return they must carry at least one message to another settlement per season.

Initiates: Promotion to initiate requires the cult member make their first public performance and not be pelted off the stage.

Acolytes: Must become full time entertainers and travel regularly between communities.

Rune Priest (Troubaduck): Must compile the full history of the settlement and recite it in a single day without error. After which they remain in the settlement and continue to record local history in song or humorous story form.

Rune Lord (Maestro): Ensures the event being recorded are truthful, investigates the disappearances of cult members and spies on the neighbouring regions.

Common Magic

Babel, Entertainer's Smile, Glamour, Lucky, Mindspeech, Push/Pull, Thunder's Voice

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following spells:

Battle Song, Entertain Audience, Laughter

Gifts and Compulsions

Upon rising to the rank of Rune Lord/Priest the worshipper gains the following gift and compulsion:

Gift:

Memory of Muses: The adherent is allowed to re-roll any Sing skill check made they feel is insufficient for any reason but must accept the second result regardless which is better.

Compulsion:

Inquisitiveness: The adherent is constantly sticking his beak into other folks business, possibly getting them into serious trouble.



Cult Skills

Culture (Own), Influence, Lore (Eggbeater), Lore (History), Perception, Play Instrument, Sing

Allied Cults

The cult of Grandmother Duck provides Summon Moot as a Rune Priest/Lord spell.

The cult of Lhankor Mhy provides Knowledge as a Rune Priest/Lord spell.

GRANDFATHER FLAMINGO

King God of the Keets, The Handsome King, Father of the Phoenixes

Runes

Law, Mastery

Mythos and History

Risen from one of the first birds to fly out from under Grandmother Duck's wings, Grandfather Flamingo is the first of the godly keets. The embrace of Vimak gave birth to the sunrise bird but it was the mass jealousy and adoration of Grandfather Flamingo's sunrise plumage that he was elevated to godhood. He took control of the birds that joined him in the Delicate Swamp, the birds of the sea and those who were forgotten by the rest of the Durulz. He made his own empire, a kingdom of keets.

Grandfather Flamingo was a stern ruler of his people, settling for nothing but the most beautiful birds to join him in his court and never settling for less than the best from them. When his tragically *plain* child, Prince Heron, rebelled against his rule and created the first splinter tribe of keets, he became displeased and was never again seen without his beak turned downwards in a deep frown. When he was betrayed by the Sorns during the Long Night, he chose to never again trust anyone but his own children. It was a Sacrifice of more than just his wings; he gave up on his fellow keets.

Rule with Stern Authority (Resonance 70%)

Nature

His cult embodies his distrust and his superiority over the world around him. Grandfather Flamingo teaches his worshippers that they are the most important beings in the Inner World and that no one should dare stand in the way of their wishes. Although the reality of this can be troublesome, the cult always blames others for shortcomings and mishaps.

Grandfather Flamingo is depicted as a tall and regal keet with dazzling pink and red feathers. His downward curved bill is black and he wields *Sunder*, his silver spear of rulership. Idols of the Grandfather are always carved from rose quartz and onyx and can be found in each of his temples.

Organisation

Grandfather Flamingo's cult is not strictly based on narcissism and blind egotism, however. It is rooted in the divine right to rule that the ancestor-god had given to the Phoenixes. Even though Glorantha as a rule pays no attention to the needs or desires of lowly keets, this cult strives to rise above the Sacrifice and become powerful despite the odds against them. They are natural leaders and powerful followers of a god that claims kingship over all of keet-kind. His worshippers are Phoenic noblekeets, tribal leaders and zealous warbirds. Their duties to strengthen the commanding ties between the noble class and tribeskeets, uncover divine secrets that may lead to undoing the Sacrifice and eliminate Savage keet tribes.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members: Only those of keet royal blood can join the cult.

Initiates: To become an initiate the keet must win the right to rule his own community.

Acolytes: Reaching acolyte necessitates ceremonially exiling one of his kin.

Rune Priests (Chancellor): Only flamingo or peacock Phoenic keets can achieve this rank.

Rune Lords (Keetlord): Only achievable by flamingo Phoenic keets. They must personally lead a purge of a Savage keet tribe.

Common Magic

Babel, Demoralise, Entertainer's Smile, Fanaticism, Glamour, Lucky, Thunder's Voice

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following:

Absorption, Amplify, Command (keet)

Gifts and Compulsions

Upon rising to the rank of Rune Lord/Priest the worshipper gains the following gift and compulsion:

Gift:

Pompous Denial: The adherent can use their heightened self-assuredness and superiority to steel themselves against the magics of 'lesser beings', receiving a +20% bonus to resist spells cast by any being not of Phoenic lineage.

Compulsion:

Egotistic: The adherent starts to believe that he is the mortal incarnation of Grandfather Flamingo. The keet always seeks to exceed the achievements of others in his court, whether by deed or by word and considers himself their superior.

Cult Skills

Boating, Combat Style (Any), Dance, Influence, Lore (Grandfather Flamingo), Play Instrument, Sing

Allied Cults

The cult of Grandmother Duck provides Summon Moot as a Rune Priest/Lord spell.

The Seaside Brothers provides Speed Ship as a Rune Priest/Lord spell.

GRANDMOTHER DUCK

Mother of all Ducks, Goddess of the Durulz

Runes

Harmony, Truth

Mythos and History

The first of Vrimak's loves and the source for all waterfowl, Grandmother Duck is a quiet but remarkable being that embodies patience and selfless love for one's children. She gave birth to all of the Durulz gods and the mundane waterfowl families that now inhabit the Inner World. The love of the Celestial Vrimak turned her into a goddess but it was her care and love for her children that made her the matriarch of the Durulz.

The Wooing of Vrimak (Resonance 90%)

Lay the First Durulz (Resonance 70%)

Nature

The cult looks after the young and adolescent ducks in a community, teaching them their basic skills and helping them

to become the best member of the ducktown they can be. It is through the instruction and training by Grandmother Duck's worshippers that the physically lacking ducks have survived so well over the ages. She teaches her cultists that the best way to defeat one's enemies is to simply outlive them – survival over all else.

Grandmother Duck is always pictured as a grey-feathered hen with wide eyes and open arms, oftentimes cradling eggs or young ducklings. She has also been pictured wearing a shield on her back in some more militant ducktown shrines but this is likely their own addition to the idea of the 'great protecting Grandmother'.

Organisation

Her cult, surprisingly, is not as large as those of her children. Shrines and temples to the Grandmother are often small affairs tucked away in nesting houses and ducktown gathering places. Her cult does what it can to help all of the other duck cults in their duties, always looking after the worshippers of her children as much as Grandmother herself looked after the Nest of Eight. Her worshippers are duck teachers, mentors and protectors of the young. Their duties are the training and teaching of young ducks, protecting the weak or defenceless and helping other duck cults with their duties.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members: All are children of Grandmother Duck, so all are lay members of her cult.

Initiates: Cult members that want to rise to the rank of Initiate must first spend at least one week every season for an entire year helping other duck cultists in their own duties.

Acolytes: The cult member must spend at least one season in a ducktown teaching ducklings their basic survival and life skills.

Rune Priests: Cult member must take over a shrine and help to strengthen the community through acts of selflessness.

Rune Lords: Would-be Rune Lords must have built at least one temple or shrine to Grandmother Duck in a ducktown that did not previously have one.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Bearing Witness, Becalm, Befuddle, Cauterise, Glamour, Heal, Protection

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following spells:

Bless Home, Eloquence, Summon Moot, Truespeak

Gifts and Compulsions

Upon rising to the rank of initiate the worshipper gains the following gift and compulsion:

Gift:

Saintly Aura: Any duck deciding to attack the adherent must first win an opposed test of their Persistence skill versus the Influence skill of the worshipper of Grandmother Duck.

Compulsion:

Abjure Harm: The adherent may never attack or cause harm to a fellow duck.

Cult Skills

Culture (Own), Influence, Insight, Lore (Grandmother Duck), Lore (Regional), Persistence, Survival

Allied Cults

The cult of Grandmother Duck does not wish to take from her children, merely to give to them.

THE HURLTLER

The Fastest Sister, Duck of the Road, Goddess of Lost Flight

Runes

Motion, Harmony

Mythos and History

Always caught as the middle child, the Hurltler was not as wise as her older sister Swimmer in the Shadows; nor was she as talented as her younger brother Eggbeater. She was a lanky and ungainly thing, long of limb and long of wing. Her eyes were sharp but her blade typically was not. The only thing she seemed to actually excel at was *flying* – which was taken away from her by Yelm's Sentence. Earthbound and depressed, she began walking the world in hopes of finding something to fill the void in her heart. She went to the top of the highest mountain and the cold wind made her miss soaring. She swam to the bottom of the ocean and cried salty tears when she saw the merfolk zooming past on winds of water and wings that were fins. Finally she went to Grandmother Duck and explained where she had been and how much it hurt. When Grandmother cheered for her, telling her how lucky she was to have been so far and seen so much in such a short amount of

her life – the Hurltler smiled for the first time after losing her wings. She could not fly, to be sure but she *could* still see all that this world had to offer.

Move without Flight (Resonance 60%)

Nature

Her cult is much the same. Travellers, scouts and wanderers, they are taught that the only enemy they truly have is stagnation and complacency. They exist to map out the world in terms that their duck brethren can understand, hoping to create a good system of safe routes between ducktowns. They make sure that all of the children of Grandmother Duck can move around across Glorantha without fear of the Big or Hungry People.

The Hurltler is described in all texts and drawings as being tall and lanky with shimmering feathers the colour of the sky. She is always pictured with a bow under her arm and three arrows; one for the past, present and future.

Organisation

The Worshipers of Hurltler are duck scouts, pathfinders and wanderers, who map the routes between ducktowns and scout the wilderness, always looking for threats. They do not maintain a rigid cult hierarchy or defined places of worship. Instead they report to the Rune Priests of Eggbeater in each ducktown and use their temples to set up shrines to Hurltler.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members: Those who wish to join the cult of Hurltler have to volunteer to accompany a scouting mission. If they show reasonable competence and did not complain, then they are allowed to join.

Initiates: Initiates must perform a trek one week each season.

Acolytes: The cult member must have solo trekked and mapped all of the routes connecting his settlement in order to achieve this rank.

Rune Lords: The cult member must have learnt and walked *all* the routes connecting every Durulz community within a two week walk of his home ducktown, in order to achieve this rank.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Bandit's Cloak, Clear Path, Coordination, Detect Enemy, Endurance, Lucky, Mobility

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following spells:

Disarm, Guided Teleportation (between Hurler shrines only), Mindlink

Gifts and Compulsions

Upon rising to the rank of acolyte the worshipper gains the following gift and compulsion:

Gift:

Tireless: The adherent are considered to have the Keet Trait of Tireless.

Compulsion:

Never Rest: The adherent must always keep moving, whether pacing up and down, or go everywhere at a gentle run. Only when sleeping do they stop perambulating, but still twitch constantly in their sleep.

Cult Skills

Athletics, Combat Style (Any), Craft (cartographer), Evade, Lore (Hurler), Perception, Tracking

Allied Cults

The cult of Duru-Orlanth provides Pathfinder as an acolyte spell.

The cults of Eggbeater and Hurler are allied but share no Divine Magic.

PRINCE HERON

Prince of all Keets, Heron the Rebel, God of Freedom

Runes

Disorder, Truth

Mythos and History

Looked upon with disdain by his father, the great Grandfather Flamingo, Prince Heron is the voice of practicality and pride within the keet pantheon. He is a proud and strong warrior-noble, standing tallest amongst waterfowl. His stone-shattering whooping call is a powerful reminder of what just retribution lies in the heart of the oppressed, and his lance-like beak is able to break any bond or chain. Prince Heron does not want his father's throne; he simply does not want anyone to tell him he cannot have it if he did.

Rebel Against Injustice (Resonance 70%)

Nature

His cult is dominated by proud warrior-nobles and fierce individualists bent on making sure that the keets' tribal way of life remains free from tyrannical rule under Grandfather Flamingo. They are the voices that speak against the consolidation of tribes and they happily lead raids and skirmishes between the keetsland islands to ensure that the boundaries remain bold and plain. The cult of Prince Heron is not simply a collection of troublemakers; they firmly believe that only through the division of the tribes can they remain free to do what their ancestor-gods need them to do.

Prince Heron is depicted as a stark white keet that is tall and wiry, his beak long and straight like a sword. He is always pictured with a short spear in one hand and a bunch of pink feathers in the other – the fistful he tore from his father when they first fought.

Organisation

The cult of Prince Heron is by its very nature disorganised. Shrines and the odd temple are scattered haphazardly across the islands of Keetsland. Most stand empty until an army of Grandfather Flamingo worshippers turn up to re-establish order and conformity, then the local Rune Priest comes out of temporary retirement and everyone starts to fight.

Most worshippers are Heron and Stork warbirds, nobleskeets devoted to their tribe's independence, enemies of the Grandfather Flamingo cult and most fierce of all, Swordbill keets. All of whom seek to free the enslaved and weaken the cult of Grandfather Flamingo.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members: merely have to swear to resist Grandfather Flamingo.

Initiates: Must have participated in a fight against Grandfather Flamingo's cult worshippers.

Acolytes: Need to have led a raid upon a shrine of Grandfather Flamingo.

Rune Priests: Must maintain the secret shrines of Prince Heron and give sanctuary to any who are persecuted by Grandfather Flamingo.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Bladesharp, Boon of Lasting Night, Demoralise, Detect Enemy, Glamour, Protection, Thunder's Voice

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following spells:

Gleam, Great Shriek, Sureshot

Gifts and Compulsions

None

Cult Skills

Athletics, Combat Style (Any), Influence, Insight, Lore (Prince Heron), Persistence, Resilience

Allied Cults

The cult of Grandmother Duck provides Eloquence as a Rune Priest/Lord spell.

The cult of Seaside Brothers provides Speed Ship as a Rune Priest/Lord spell.

THE SEASIDE BROTHERS

The Three Gull Gods, Keepers of the Coasts, The Court Triad

Runes

Communication, Mastery

Mythos and History

The combined worship of the three keet gods – Albatros the Seer, Sunbill the Puffin and High Crowned Pelican – has been the norm for most keet tribes for the entirety of the Second Age. Just as their children did when all keets were young, the Seaside Brothers stuck together for safety and camaraderie. Albatros would mope around because of his uncanny ability to know the future; Sunbill would pick fights with the strongest of the world's creatures; Pelican would gather the riches of the world in his bottomless gullet. They individually each brought a different vice to the hearts of their children but when they were together they were strong and watched out for one another. So has their cults formed together into one force.

Bond of Brothers (Resonance 70%)

Nature

There are many different faces to the cult of the Seaside Brothers. Each individual shrine or temple in a village is likely to be more devoted to one aspect of the Brothers than the others, predominantly due to the breed of keet that built it. Shrines with Albatros dominant will be dreary places devoted to reflection and prophecy. Sunbill's shrines are places for

martial pride and warrior training. Pelican-focussed shrines are depositories of wealth that second as trading posts. Essentially the Seaside Brothers will not turn away a keet who finds something of themselves under the roof of this trio of ancestor-gods.

Organisation

The idols of the Seaside Brothers are always the same; a ring of three keet faces around a central tribal knot. One is a drooping gull's face, another the glare of a puffin and the last a grinning pelican. The focus of a shrine's devoted ancestor-god all depends on which of the faces is put forward and kept looking toward the entrance – a sign that the god welcomes its children. The most common worshippers are normally ship's keets. Most worshippers have duties of protecting the shrine and the local tribe, undertaking quests befitting the dominant Brother in the shrine and eliminating tribal weaknesses by spreading knowledge and skills.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members: Merely have to hang about the shrine and clean up droppings.

Initiates: To become an initiate involves taking a cruise aboard ship.

Acolytes: To qualify for acolyte the cult member must learn a new skill, defeat an opponent in a real unarmed combat, and earned a thousand silver by trading, which is then deposited into the temple coffers.

Rune Priests: Gaining Rune Priest rank requires holding seasonal services at a shrine devoted to the Seaside Brother of his preference to achieve this rank.

Rune Lords: Cult member must have helped build a new shrine or temple to the Seaside Brothers in a foreign land (requiring the member to travel).

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Bladesharp, Fanaticism, Fate, Glamour, Golden Tongue, Strength, Water Breath

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following spells:

Reflection, Speed Ship, True (Unarmed)

Gifts and Compulsions

Every member of the cult of the Seaside Brothers must pick a devotee ancestor-god they wish to be their specific patron, which is most often the same as that of their first shrine. Upon rising to the rank of acolyte the worshipper gains one of the following gifts and compulsions:

Gifts:

Forewarned: Cult members who are devoted to Albatros the Seer add a permanent +5 bonus to their Strike Rank for the glimpses of the future.

Bronzebeak: Cult members who are devoted to Sunbill the Puffin may increase their Damage Bonus by one step for the strength of their god filling them.

Affluence: Cult members who are devoted to High Crowned Pelican may roll twice when trading or negotiating and keep the better roll because of their uncanny knack for making a profit.

Compulsion:

Sea Dog: The adherent must voyage out to sea at least once per season.

Cult Skills

Athletics, Boating, Combat Style (Any), Evaluate, Lore (The Seaside Brothers), Shiphandling, Swim

Allied Cults

The cult of Grandfather Flamingo provides Absorption as a Rune Priest/Lord spell.

The cult of Prince Heron provides Sureshot as a Rune Priest/Lord spell.

STORMBILL THE CHAOS KILLER

Ivory Drake of the Storm, Foehunter

Runes

Beast, Death

Mythos and History

During the Great Darkness, when Chaos emerged at waxing strength and the world feared all, Stormbill took up his blade and stalked these greatest of foes. During the hunt Stormbill crossed paths with the terrible troll Zorak Zoran, who was also hunting in the darkness. The troll licked its muzzle once toward Stormbill, telling him to move along or become a meal

but the Ivory God stood firm and said that he did not want to kill the troll – as it would tire him too badly for the fight against Chaos. Zorak Zoran laughed at this, but admired the duck's bravery and swore that he would not eat his people then, 'until Chaos is defeated'. Thus, the Stormbills earned a respite from the Hungry People.

Stand Firm Against Uz (Resonance 70%)

Stormbill was there, forgotten by most other storytellers, at Urox's side during the Gbaji Wars. The Orlanthi's axe and the duck's sword cut down many foes before the fighting was over but the cults do not forget. Even today it is not uncommon to find at least one ivory mallard drinking and celebrating with the Uroxi jarls, waiting for the blowing of the hot storm wind that will call them all to arms.

Brother of the Bull (Resonance 90%)

Nature

Strangely enigmatic and oddly intuitive, the youngest of the duck gods is the mightily determined Stormbill. Hatched of the storm's fire and tempered by an instinctual desire to seek and slay the minions of the Faceless Enemy, Stormbill is the only duck god that seems to have a constant connection with gods of other pantheons due to their solidified front against Chaos. He holds his rage for Yelm and the gods who cursed his people hot in his heart but he knows that through the ducks' suffering they will find strength – strength to keep Chaos from growing too powerful through the Imperial Age. He has a kinship in particular with Urox and their mission to eradicate the Faceless Enemy comes before any supposed misgivings.

Stormbill is always shown as a muscled ivory mallard with a steel-grey bill and fierce blue eyes. In his hands he carries the oversized sword of Orlanthi forging and he often wears a horned helmet with a metal faceplate that covers his eyes and upper bill. He is sometimes drawn having bull's horns and a tail himself but the Stormdrakes are close-beaked about the matter.

Organisation

The cult is a very simple collection of fierce duck warriors, Chaos hunters and ivory mallards seeking to devote their lives to battling the Faceless Enemy. They know that they might be slain and eaten by the Foe, but as long as they think they can choke the beast on their way down to Hell – they gladly go to their deaths. They live their lives to the fullest, nomadically travelling from shrine to shrine enjoying strong drink and duckweed whenever they can but always darkly aware that their next battle might be their last.

Cult Worshipers are Chaos hunters, duck barbarians and the ivory mallards. Their duties involve living a good life, hunting and killing Chaos and to die a glorious death. Worshipers live relatively simple lives in the terms of material possessions outside their arms and armour. They habitually spend the bounties and rewards they earn on frivolous items and expenses in order to live life 'to the fullest'. Since the cult has no official structure or property to maintain, this squandering of wealth is considered their religious donations, no matter it is spent on drinks, food, entertainment and the like anytime they enter a populated area in which they have the capability.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members: To join as a lay member the candidate must not have any Chaos taint.

*'All I can pray for is an enemy on my blade,
a drake to give me strong ducklings, a pipe
of the strongest growth the river can produce,
and a flagon of our town's best and finest.*

If I had to pick just one?

*The enemy on my blade...I can always
celebrate with Stormbill in heaven.'*

— Lyra Silverplume, Stormdrake of the Mothersnest



Initiates: Before ascending to this rank, the duck must accompany a raid on a Chaos nest. After seeing the true horror of Chaos and its toll, they may refuse initiation and leave the cult.

Acolytes: The cult member must have slain at a Chaos creature single handed and brought back a trophy to the shrine as proof.

Rune Lords (Stormdrakes): To qualify as a Stormdrake, the acolyte must have personally led a raid on a major Chaos nest or destroyed a shrine devoted to a Chaos God.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Bladesharp, Demoralise, Endurance, Fanaticism, Fireblade, Heal, Protection

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following spells:

Beast Form (Bull or Minotaur), Berserk, Shield

Gifts and Compulsions

Upon rising to the rank of initiate the worshipper gains the following gift and compulsion:

Gift:

Sense Chaos: The adherent can detect the presence of Chaos with a successful Perception skill roll. If hidden or magically disguised the adherent must make an opposed test of his Perception against the Chaotic's Sleight or relevant magical skill.

Compulsion:

Destroy Chaos: The adherent is compelled to destroy Chaos, although he is allowed to use his wits rather than throwing away his life uselessly.

Cult Skills

Athletics, Combat Style (Any Axe or Sword based Style), Evade, Influence, Lore (Stormbill), Resilience, Stealth.

Allied Cults

The cult of Duru-Orlanth provides Channel Strength as an acolyte spell.

The cult of Urox provides Face Chaos as an acolyte spell.

Although not strictly allies, Zorak Zoran cult members will grant a follower of Stormbill respect and humorous hospitality if he can succeed in an Influence Skill Test, re-enacting their two gods mythic meeting.

SWIMMER IN THE SHADOWS

The First Shamaness, Goddess of Mysteries, The Black Spirit Hen

Runes

Darkness, Spirit

Mythos and History

Grandmother Duck's second daughter, Swimmer in the Shadows, hatched into the universe with one eye turned toward the Spirit World. She quested long in the depths of the Underworld, forging new alliances with the mighty spirits who resided there. When Yelm was slain and descended into Hell, Swimmer in the Shadows was caught in his burning light and her good eye was burned from her skull. With one eye of pitch and the other empty bone she looks upon the Inner World and judges it accordingly. She is the most bitter of all ducks, the source of cynicism and contrariness for many of her children. Her dark and drab feathers are mixed with the magic of spirits and before she took her first flight she already could speak with the spirits of the world. What secrets they told her and what tricks they taught her are hers and hers alone to know and tell – which she rarely ever does.

An Eye for an Eye (Resonance 70%)

Nature

Her cult, nicknamed the Shadowswimmers, is actually a shamanic tradition and gains no Divine Magic. She teaches her followers the ways of dealing with spirits and the secret names of powerful allies found in the darkness. She is said to grant her worshippers the same mysteries that she uncovered in her studies throughout the Great Darkness.

The primary goal of the Shadowswimmers is to seek a 'cure' for the damning effects of Yelm's curse. Since it was a Sun god that cursed them, the cult believes that perhaps the answer can be found in Darkness. They go into all of the places that other ducks shun in order to hopefully find the text or spirit that will hold the key to putting the ducks back in the Sky.

Swimmer in the Shadows is always drawn as a dark-feathered duck hen with one pitch black eye and one empty, bone-white eye socket.

Organisation

Her cult is shut off from most other cults, although she keeps relations with her sisters and mother. Followers are asked to keep to themselves and their own members, only emerging from under their veil of secrecy when duck-kind needs their enigmatic wisdom. Thus most of her shaman are scattered away from the ducktowns, relying on their spirits to keep them safe.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Followers: Followers are promised protection from the wild spirits in exchange for a weekly donation of food.

Spirit Worshipers: Becoming a spirit worshipper requires a ceremony where darkness spirits are summoned to test their resolve. If they do not flee in terror they are granted a protective spell or a spirit bound to their home in exchange for regular attendance.

Shaman: Achieving shaman rank requires the completion of the Eye for an Eye HeroQuest. Success grants the shaman his fetch. In return the shaman must protect the ducktowns from foul denizens of the spirit world.

High Shaman: To become a high shaman means performing a heroic deed of note but this does not necessarily need to be

linked to the spirit world. Once promoted, the high shaman is responsible for maintaining good relationships between the spirits and the oblivious ducks.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Bandit's Cloak, Countermagic, Darkwall, Demoralise, Extinguish, Second Sight, Spirit Bane

Higher Magic

The cult provides a range of useful spirits, most of which are darkness orientated. These include Shades, Guardian Spirits, Nature Spirits and Curse Spirits.

Gifts and Compulsions

None

Cult Skills

Influence, Insight, Lore (Swimmer in the Shadows), Perception, Spirit Binding, Spirit Walking, Stealth

Allied Cults

Swimmer in the Shadows retains cordial relationships with Canarda the Egg Mother, Grandmother Duck and The Hurler. Cult shamans can call upon these cults for aid at any time but gain no Divine Magic.

Duck MAGIC

This chapter contains not only the unique spells used in Durulz cults but also a section on Duck Knacks, a new form of skill enhancement, which the ducks find is sorely needed since Duck magic is rather paltry in comparison with the other races and cults of Glorantha.

STANDARD DIVINE MAGIC

Certain Divine spells are common to all divine cults, reflecting common rites, magical approaches and so on. Rather than repeat all these common spells on a cult by cult basis, they are listed here.

Behold
Blessing
Consecrate
Dismiss Magic
Excommunicate
Extension
Soul Sight

NEW DIVINE MAGIC

Any new Divine Magic spells referenced in the duck cults chapter are listed here. They possess the normal traits and restrictions as described in the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook*. However, due to the minimal levels of Durulz population in their remote, hidden settlements, most of their cults lack major temples. Assume that there is always at least one special holy place where Durulz Rune Priests and Lords can learn their rank restricted spells, even if the cult has no temples at all.

Some cults offer Divine Magic spells to allied or associated cults. In these cases the minimum cult rank for learning the spell is increased by one level for the allies, to represent the difficulty of using magic not normally available to that god. Spells which are by default Rune Priest/Lord level in their native cult cannot be shared.

Battle Song

Concentration, Rank Rune Lord/Priest, Ranged

This spell is used in conjunction with a skill such as Play Instrument or Sing. If the skill roll succeeds, all friendly listeners within range gain a bonus on their attack and defence

rolls so long as the caster continues to play. The size of the bonus is +5% for every two points of the spell's magnitude, or part thereof. The spell only works if the song or music can be heard, thus casters tend to use very loud instruments such as drums or encourage formations to sing along to the choruses.

Bless Home

Area Special, Duration Special, Rank Initiate

This spell is cast over a home and affects both it and the family which lives there. It creates a sphere with a diameter in metres of up to, or equal to, the spell's Magnitude. The spell must be able to encompass the entire home, otherwise it fails.

Whenever a family member is within the walls of the blessed home, they (and the building) receive a +5% bonus per two points of Magnitude (or part thereof) on all tests. The effect ends if the family hearth is shattered or the family moves to a new home.

Bless Home requires one hour per point of Magnitude to cast. This spell cannot be recovered or released, for as long as the spell is maintained. It is usually the duty of the mother or matriarch of the family to become an initiate of the cult, in order to learn and maintain this blessing on her own home.

Ease Birth

Duration Special, Rank Acolyte, Touch

This spell is cast when a pregnant female enters labour. While labour progresses, the body is anaesthetised while letting the mother retain consciousness. Should the baby be breeched, the spell ensures they are born properly. This spell is to ensure healthy births but can do nothing about stillborn or magically damaged babies. The spell remains in effect for a number of hours equal to the Magnitude of the spell.

Eloquence

Duration 15, Rank Acolyte, Touch

Councillors, chieftains and kings all require the gift of eloquence. For each point of Magnitude in this spell, the recipient gains a +5% to their Courtesy, Influence, Insight and Oratory skills.

Entertain Audience

Duration 15, Rank Acolyte, Touch

This spell is used to improve an artistic performance, thus enrapturing an audience. For each point of Magnitude in this spell, the recipient gains a +5% to their Dance, Play Instrument, Sing and even Seduction skills. This is usually used to persuade the onlookers to pay for the performance, or gain a temporary boost in reputation.

Face Chaos

Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Resist (Persistence)

When cast the spell affects an area centred on the caster with a radius in metres equal to its Magnitude. All non-Chaotic allies will stand their ground and fight any Chaotic foe they face, even if they would have run away ordinarily. In general, this spell is used upon non-cult members, since most Chaos fighters such as Uroxi or Zorak Zorani stand against Chaos regardless of fear. The spell may be resisted if a recipient wishes.

Great Shriek

Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Rune Lord/Priest, Resist (Persistence)

This spell lets the caster give forth a great, terrifying screech. Anyone within a radius of the spell's Magnitude in metres, will suffer the effects of a Demoralise spell. This normally results in enemies running away for the duration that they are affected.

Guided Teleportation

Instant, Rank Acolyte, Touch

This spell returns the caster and any additional passengers to the nearest place consecrated to the caster's cult, which is normally a shrine or temple. The spell will carry one extra creature per point of Magnitude. The SIZ of any teleported individual cannot exceed twice the caster's POW.

Heat Metal

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

This spell causes 1 ENC of metal to heat up. The metal heats rapidly, as if it was in a forge, reaching maximum temperature within a couple of minutes of the spell being cast. After the spell expires, the metal cools normally which may take some time. Each point of Magnitude increases the amount heated by 1 ENC. The spell is normally used to help smiths forge items but can be very versatile in application. If used to heat an article of worn armour, an unhindered wearer can shuck his way clear of it before it inflicts damage.

In applicable situations, anything in contact with the metal receives damage as indicated in the Fire and Heat table in the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook*.

Knowledge

Duration 15, Rank Acolyte, Touch

Allows the caster to read the past history and purposes of an item, potentially revealing useful information. The Magnitude of the spell indicates the number of years of past history the caster can absorb before the spell expires. The caster may decide in advance what period of its history to begin surveying, an Old item of significant age may take many applications of this spell to completely cover its entire time span.

Living Blade

Duration 15, Rank Rune Lord/Priest, Touch

When the target is under the influence of this spell he moves with lightning speed. In addition to receiving one extra Combat Action per round, he also gains a bonus to his Strike Rank equal to the Magnitude of the spell.

Pathfinder initiate

Range Special, Duration 15, Rank Initiate

This spell is normally used when exploring new or dangerous territory. While in effect, spell alerts the caster to the location and number of all enemies and traps within a range of 10 metres per point of Magnitude. If the dangers are shielded by magic with a higher Magnitude than the Pathfinder spell, then they remain undetected.

Speed Chariot

Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Initiate

This spell must be cast upon an animal drawn wheeled vehicle, such as a wagon, cart or chariot. The spell increases the haste and endurance of the animals. Whilst the spell is in effect it increases the speed of the vehicle by the value of the spell's Magnitude. The spell does not protect the vehicle from mishaps caused by travelling on narrow roads, around narrow bends or from other traffic.

Speed Ship

Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Acolyte

This spell must be cast upon a ship. The largest vessel the spell can affect can have a length of twice the Magnitude of the spell in metres. For example casting Speed Ship with a Magnitude of 10 could affect a Bireme (length 20 metres).

Whilst the spell is in effect it increases the swiftness of the vessel by the value of the spell's Magnitude.

Summon Moot

Area Special, Duration Special, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Persistence)

This spell is used to gather the clan or tribe. After an hour long ritual, all members of the caster's tribe or clan within a radius equal to the spell's Magnitude in kilometres, finish their business, gather their equipment and report to the summoning chief or king. The summons continues for as long as the caster remains on the same spot. The spell cannot be recovered or released, for as long as the spell is maintained. Although the spell can be resisted, most clan members voluntarily succumb unless they have very good reason not to obey.

Truespeak

Duration 15, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Persistence), Touch

This compels the targets to speak only the truth for the Duration of the spell and to answer all questions in a literal manner. A target can refuse to speak at all but if he does speak he must tell the truth. It is commonly used at law cases or clan elder moots to ensure everyone present is forthright. The spell affects a number of targets equal to its Magnitude.

Turn Undead

Duration 15, Ranged, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Persistence or Resilience)

This spell affects one undead creature per point of Magnitude. Undead creatures include, but are not limited to, skeletons, zombies, ghosts, mummies and vampires. The undead must resist using the highest value of either their Persistence or Resilience. The result of the roll determines what happens to the undead.

Undead wins the opposed test – No effect!

Undead loses the opposed test – Undead takes the Magnitude of the spell as damage directly to each location. If it survives, it is driven back out of range for the Duration of the spell.

DUCK KNACKS

'What those wretched things lose in size, strength, skill and social graces they make up for in sheer frustrating ingenuity.'

— Duenge Erro, Openhandist Mostali

Trolls are powerful and can eat anything. Dragonewts have their own breed of magic and the ability to reincarnate. Elfs could not be closer to the spirits of the forest. The Mostali have not found a challenge they could not invent themselves past. Even the humans have their cults and mental tenacity to overcome. Ducks have...ducks have...?

Feathers? A bill? Annoying voices littered with profanity and small bodies that are easy to ignore?

It is plain and simply put that duck Adventurers are at a slight disadvantage when it comes to their physical survivability. To help survive against such dismal odds opposing them they do their best to make sure their people are skilled and ready for what is surely going to try to *kill* them. Where the keet tribes have their own natural abilities to set them apart from their cousins, ducks have nothing built into their breeds to help them – save for one thing.

Their bitter strive to survive, what sets them apart from anything else in Glorantha, forces each and every duck to look at everything they have learned and figure out better ways to use it. In a world that has cursed them to failure, it takes a great deal of creativity and out-of-the-box thinking concerning everyday things to make up for their other and numerous shortcomings.

This occurs in the form of Duck Knacks. Knacks are additional powers that duck Adventurers only (not even the keets can draw upon them) can purchase in the same fashion as all Adventurers can purchase Heroic Abilities. Knacks are drastically less powerful in comparison to Heroic Abilities, meaning they are also far less expensive in terms of Adventurer resources and prerequisites. Unlike Heroic Abilities, which might require multiple skills or Characteristics, each skill has its own Knack that ducks can 'come up with'.

Learning Duck Knacks

To learn a Knack, a duck Adventurer must perform the following steps:

- The skill's rating must be 60% or over.
- Spend an Improvement Roll to learn the knack

It should be noted that the Adventurer does not need a mentor or teacher for these Knacks. It is assumed that the natural adaptability and pluckiness of the duck has shined through that particular skill, coming up with the Knack 'on his own'.

The following are the Knacks available to duck Adventurers, their descriptions and how they function in game terms. They are listed in order of the skill name they are based upon.

Expert Faller

Skill: Acrobatics

You learned the best way to fall down without hurting yourself. Your quacking and flailing might not look pretty to outsiders but it hurts a great deal less than landing like they would!

You reduce the damage suffered from falls by tumbling and fluffing out your plumage to its maximum effect. This shifts your apparent SIZ down by one step. For instance a duck of SIZ 8 or 9 normally treats falls as 1 metre less, but using this knack allows him to be viewed as a duck of SIZ 6 to 7 instead, treating the fall as 3 metres less instead!

Leg Paddler

Skill: Boating

You can make any boat go faster by using your own natural paddles to propel and steer it.

By leaning out of a small boat and using your webbed feet to paddle or steer, you can add any racial bonus you have to the Swim skill to your Boating Skill Test.

Improvise

Skill: Craft

When having to put things together on short notice, you will sometimes use materials or ingredients that were not meant for your project.

By exacting your craft using substandard and potentially unheard of ingredients, materials or supplies, you can perform your craft cheaply. You may voluntarily choose to take a penalty to your Craft skill (symbolising the improvised materials), reducing the cost of the crafting project by an equal percentage. Thus, if a blacksmith duck wants to use salt instead of buffing sand or a rounded rock instead of an anvil, he could reduce his Craft (blacksmith) Skill Test by one fifth, in order to reduce the costs for the project by the same -20%.

Distracting Movement

Skill: Dance

You know how to gyrate and cavort in a comical dance pattern that will often draw the attentions – and attacks – of your enemies, maybe giving your allies a chance to strike true.

By spending a Combat Action to dance distractingly during a battle, all enemy combatants that can see you (and would be distracted in such a manner) must pass an opposed test of

their Persistence versus your Dance skill or be forced to attack you on their next turn. Those already engaged in close combat cannot be affected.

Camouflage

Skill: Disguise

A duck is never going to be mistaken for anyone that is not a duck, so you instead know how to make yourself up to look like a fern, a rock or some such.

You can use your Disguise skill to appear as an object instead of a person, if you have the proper materials on hand to do so.



Foot Steerage

Skill: Driving

You know how to hold the reins to your vehicle with your webbed feet, leaving your hands open to do other things.

You may choose to use the Driving skill with your feet, allowing you to use both hands for other purposes, but a critical failure on a test in this manner will surely pull you from the vehicle by your ankles.

See it from Below

Skill: Engineering or Mechanisms

Your size and oily plumage allow you to get into and under projects that Big People cannot.

When dealing with the contraptions and devices you may add a bonus +5% to your Engineering or Mechanisms skill roll for each point your SIZ is lower than 10, as you are able to more easily reach inside or delicately manipulate components.

Ducking Dodge

Skill: Evade

You use your small size and expendable feathers to save your skin.

When you Evade a close combat attack successfully, you are small enough to simply duck under the blow. Since you do not need to give ground you may, if desired, use the Combat Action on your next turn to attack.

Judgmental

Skill: Evaluate

You have honed your snap-judgments and bitter appraisals to a remarkable clarity, often getting a good idea of what something is worth in an instant.

If you choose to 'snap judge' an item, trade or proposition, you may roll an Evaluate Skill Test with a +10% bonus. If you do so however, you cannot alter the result of that roll in **any** way (not even with Hero Points), as that your mind is made up.

Quick Patch

Skill: First Aid

A little mud and a few feathers can make a quick bandage in combat but one that will need to be replaced later for fear of a worse infection.

You can use the First Aid skill in a single Combat Round with a -20% penalty, stopping bleeding and such. A normal First Aid Skill Test (1D3 minutes) must be applied to the same wound within 24 hours or the wounded Hit Location will take another HP of damage and the wound will either re-open or become infected.

Grandmother's Remedies

Skill: Healing

You remember several of the duckling stories you were told growing up of what strange herbs and practices cured ailments.

When using your Healing skill for anything other than Surgery, you can pass a Culture (duck) or Lore (Regional) Skill Test to

add +20% to your Healing skill. If you pass the Culture or Lore test but still fail the Healing test, your 'ancient remedy' is actually going to worsen the situation somehow, likely causing a persistent wound or worsening the effects of the sickness or poison.

Mockery

Skill: Influence

By mimicking an opponent's actions and words with comical versions of your own, you can force them to make mistakes in frustration.

By copying a target's actions over the course of a Combat Round (or one minute, if outside of combat), you may attempt an opposed test of your Influence skill versus the target's Persistence. If you succeed the target will fail in his next 1D3 skill rolls taken in your presence out of sheer frustration. This trick only works once per situation.

Mastery of Profanity

Skill: Language

Your command of the most socially unacceptable insults, obscenities and expletives can make a sailor blush, a debutante faint, or cause a warrior to recoil in disbelief.

Speaking in a language known by the target, by spending a Combat Action you can make an opposed test of your Language skill versus the Persistence of the target. If successful, the target loses one Combat Action from the sheer shock of hearing the foul profanity you concocted.

Paranoia

Skill: Perception

Although it might seem like you are constantly looking over your shoulder and checking to make sure doors and windows are latched, you are remarkably perceptive.

You are allowed to roll your Perception Skill Test twice and take the best result, in order to avoid any sort of ambush, trap or notice someone following you. Of course, the Games Master should have you make these frequently to represent your growing paranoia.

Stubborn

Skill: Persistence

Canarda's tenacity bred strongly down into your line, and you can hold your position firmly against most arguments and debates.

Whenever you have the opportunity to make your mind up against a topic, course of action or decision, you cannot be

shaken from that stance. If you have verbally announced your position you will not shift, unless you are beaten by at least one level of success, even if by magical coercion.

Off-Note

Skill: Play Instrument

By hitting a discordant note or rhythm that you have found your instrument capable of, you can cause others to lose their focus or prowess.

As a Combat Action you can make a Play Instrument Skill Test, forcing all who hear it within 10 metres to make an opposed test of their Resilience against your Play Instrument skill. If they fail, they lose their next Combat Action.

Never Give Up

Skill: Resilience

There is something that you hold dear, something out there that you believe is worth living for and you will never fold your hand so long as it still exists.

You must pick a specific item, place or person that is dear to you. So long as you are aware (or believe) that your actions are helping to protect or defend it, you receive a +20% bonus to all Resilience rolls.

Sheltered Riding

Skill: Ride

Whatever you are riding is probably a great deal tougher, physically speaking, than you are. You have mastered a technique that puts your mount in the way of most attacks aimed at you. It might not be brave or courageous but it will save your skin!

Whenever you are attacked while mounted upon a creature that uses the Riding skill to control properly, you may choose to make a Riding Skill test instead an Evade or Parry. If successful, the mount suffers the attack instead of you.

Migratory Instinct

Skill: Shiphandling

Although you cannot hope to ever fly, your natural instincts toward wind direction and long-distance migration make you useful in the crow's nest of any sailing ship.

For the purposes of getting direction and keeping a steady wind in your ship's sails, you are allowed to make a Shiphandling

Skill Test at a bonus equal to one-half (round up) of your Survival skill.

Quack-along

Skill: Sing

Reciting one of your catchiest old sing-songs from your duckling days over and over again, you can get the annoying tune stuck in others' heads – much to their chagrin!

By spending 1D4+1 minutes constantly singing the same song while performing your other actions, you can make a Sing test. If successful, all those that can hear the repetitive and annoying duck-tune must make an opposed test of their Persistence against the Sing roll. If they fail, they will be unable to get the tune out of their heads, making it impossible for them to do anything that requires concentration (including some spells) for 1D6 hours.

Switcheroo

Skill: Sleight

So long as you are placing something of a similar size and weight in something's place, you can generally lift about anything off of anyone.

When you are making Sleight Skill Tests to pick pockets or fool mechanisms, you may add a +20% bonus if you already have something in your hands of roughly the same size and weight to put in its place.

Opportunistic Vanish

Skill: Stealth

You know how to use someone else's actions and distractions to make your exit into hiding; perhaps leaving them to the enemy but definitely getting yourself a good safe place to lay low.

You may spend a Combat Action at the same time that someone else is doing something that would attract attention (casting a spell, attacking and so on) in order to make a Stealth Skill Test. Success allows you to briefly slip out of sight. Attempting this in combat requires you to completely disengage and move away from your opponent, otherwise it fails automatically.

Safety First

Skill: Streetwise

You have been around the towns and cities of the Big People enough that you have a bill for sniffing out safe places to stay.

With a normal Streetwise Skill Test any Adventurer can find lodging in a city but whenever you do so it always

seems that you find the most duck-friendly place in town to lay your head. Games Masters can choose to make your 'safe place' little more than a hovel in a dark alleyway but it will make for a safe night's sleep nonetheless.

Prey Instincts

Skill: Survival

When you are in the wild places of this world you are well aware of the sharp teeth and hungry appetites looking to get a piece of you. Thinking like the prey they will treat you as, may help you live a little longer.

As long as you travel at half normal speed and stay wary of dangers around you, you can add +20% to any Survival Skill Tests made to avoid natural predators and potential ambush points.

Stamina

Skill: Swim

You have discovered the finer art of reserving your energy over long periods of time, making you more likely to succeed in otherwise exhausting swimming situations.

By reducing your swimming speed, you can add +20% to the skill for purposes of endurance or holding your breath.

False Tracks

Skill: Tracking

By knowing what good tracks look like, you are an expert at leaving meandering and false tracks to mislead others trying to find your trail.

So long as you are the last person in a travelling line, you can choose to pass a Tracking Skill Test each day to make sure you are adequately covering your tracks. It requires a critical success on a Tracking roll to defeat this Knack unless any the tracks your group are leaving are being made by wheeled vehicles or large animals – at which point it is useless.



Suckerpunch

Skill: Unarmed

No one ever expects a duck to deliver the first punch in a fist fight – especially not one that hurts so bad as this one.

So long as you instigate the combat with an Unarmed attack you may hit an unwary target automatically and roll twice for the hit location (choosing whichever suits you at the moment!).

NEW DURULZ HEROIC ABILITIES

Bitter Enmity

Requirements: POW 15 or higher, Persistence skill at 90% or higher. Ducks Only.

Hero Points: 8

Duration: A number of melee rounds equal to CON.

The Adventurer has been stepped on, pushed aside, hated and ignored for his whole life – but he has learned how to use that to his supreme advantage. By brooding over how much the world around the Adventurer dislikes his species as a whole, the Adventurer augments his own lethality toward them. So long as the Adventurer is fighting non-duck enemies, he receives the following bonuses.

- +10% to all close Combat Style rolls
- +10% to all Evade rolls
- Increases his Damage Modifier by one step

Piercing Call

Requirements: CON 15 or higher, Sing skill at 90% or higher. Keets Only.

Hero Points: 12

Duration: Special.

The Adventurer has tapped into the ancient primal vocal techniques that Prince Heron is mythically known for. Prince

Heron was said to be able to strip flesh from bone with his call, even giving the mighty Stormbill pause when the Durulz were battling over Ganderland. The Adventurer does not have nearly this power but when he puts his soul behind his sharpest calls he can shake his foes to the bone.

By calling upon this ability and spending a number of Magic Points, the Adventurer can emit a powerful vocal call in a cone that extends a number of metres outward equal to his POW. Every living thing with a physical body and a sense of hearing in the affected area must pass an immediately Resilience test or lose a number of Combat Actions equal to the number of Magic Points the Adventurer has spent. After a Piercing Call is made, the Adventurer always receives a level of Fatigue.

Underbelly Strike

Requirements: INT 14 or higher, Weapon skill at 70% or higher.

Hero Points: 10

Duration: One melee attack.

The Adventurer knows that the best way to get through an enemy's defences is to bring his blade up and under the armoured areas of a target – something that is easy to do when you are a diminutive, flightless avian. Any Durulz Adventurer that has learned this heroic ability can learn to ignore half or all of the Armour Protection of his enemies. For that single attack, the Adventurer can ignore all AP received from mundane armour or half that provided by natural sources.

Duck VOICES

In which Durulz of various species and different regions of Glorantha describe themselves, their people and their motivations.

Duckland Townsduck

Who am I?

Who am I? What a seriously ignorant question to ask a duck. Well...my name is Waldrow Nestingforge. I'm the chief craftsduck in my ducktown.

Where do I come from?

I hatched in a tiny ducktown called Whiteshores in Maniria but after I proved I could walk on my own two feet I headed northwest into Ralios. I heard it was a better place to ply my family trade, smithing. Now I have my own little corner of the duck blocks of Drom. It is not much to speak of, but I have an anvil and a roof over my head.

What have I done?

To deserve this life? I ask myself that every day, friend. Seriously though, I have lived most of my life doing what my fellow ducktown relatives have needed me to do. Crossbow bolt heads? I pour them. Dagger blades? Yeah, those too. I have made more than a few breastplates in my time and one halberd head for that ivory that came through last year. I have gone on a few adventures with a few of the ducklings I swam around with when I was young but now I think I serve the community better by arming those better suited to do the questing.

What is my future?

If I were a betting duck, I would say either 'lunch for an Uz' or 'trampled under the God Learner war machine'. If I am lucky enough not to get squashed, eaten, skewered or blasted by some dragon's spell, I'll probably find a good hen down in Maniria that will give me a few ducklings. I need to make sure that the Nestingforge family business does not fade away. Who knows, maybe I will try my hand at the whole adventure thing again someday...but I have never been very skilled with a sword; just a hammer and tongs.

What do I believe?

There is no easy answer to that. I believe that the Big People will never give us a break and that Grandmother Duck should have never said no to old Shinyhead. We were dealt a pretty bad hand and we have had to deal with it as best we could. I hope that there is some light at the end of our tunnel, for us ducks, but I am pretty sure that things are going to get a lot worse long before they ever get better.

Why do I adventure?

Well...I...do not often adventure at all; I am just not suited for it. When I have picked up the old sword and shield it is normally because one of my ducktown friends has asked me to join him for a jaunt, or because business has been too bad to say no to a quick loot run into the Big People blocks. Perhaps the Hurler's pull on my feet? I am not all that sure why I have adventured when I have but I know I do not do it often.

What secret can I share?

The world surrounding us is filled with abundant enemies and precious few friends, most of which are only really just allies of convenience for them anyway. If you make a true friend in this short and difficult life we lead, stick by them through it all. Suffering through all the times that they do not want you around for the few precious ones that they do is worth every painful moment.

Trust me.

Praxian Stormbill

Who am I?

I am Tanner Foecleft, ivory mallard and stormbill warrior. Serving the great Chaos Killer as one of his descendants and worshippers, I am the embodiment of our battle against the Faceless Enemy.

Where do I come from?

I do not know exactly where I was hatched, born to a mother who knew her duty to give me to the cult when my feathers came in. She saw my white plumes and grey crown and knew

that I belonged to the struggle, not the family. I remember training in the Stormwalks, serving much of my life under the Thunderbills from Four Peaks. I am from wherever the battle has ended to wherever the next is to begin.

What have I done?

I have taken up arms against the Faceless Enemy, crossing blades with all of Chaos' vileness that I have found lurking in the grasslands of Prax. It is my duty and charge to seek it out and send it back to Hell and that is what I have devoted my entire life to. I have walked with Uroxi, Humakti and even a follower of the Hungry warrior Zorak Zoran. Together we have fought many battles and ended many foes and I would dare say that they did no better than I.

What is my future?

I will surely die someday, hopefully with my blade buried in my enemy's gullet or it having bitten off enough of me for it to choke. I seek the glory of battle and the honour of making the world safer for our children in the ages to come. My sword will taste more blood before my life is out; that I can promise you.

What do I believe?

We may not be the awakeners of a Great Dragon or the rulers of a sea empire but we have a role in this world. We are the downtrodden and the whipped, the forgotten and the stricken; and we were placed here for a reason. The bottom is where the evil dwells and lives, where it can hide. The Big People look down from on high and miss the dark places at the bottom where evil truly lurks. We were put here so we could hunt the Faceless Enemy in its home and fight it wherever we find it. We ducks were cursed from the Sky but it was not without its purpose.

Why do I adventure?

Adventure? I do not call what I do adventure; I call it duty. Urox and Humakt taught Stormbill about the growing threat of the Faceless Enemy and he in turn taught us. We go into the world to fight our people's enemies and we protect our communities from their threat. We try to find likeminded folk for our battles, Big People or not, and we go to the places where the Enemy dwells and we destroy it. There is no other reason for adventure; not for us.

What secret can I share?

Dragons and God Learners can tear the world apart for all it will matter if the Faceless Enemy is not fought. We may only be ducks but at least we are doing our part in stopping Chaos from growing too strong. Everyone else is too occupied in the war between the empires, so it is up to us to try and save the next generation from a stronger foe than what anyone has faced. Chaos is the real enemy, not ambitious Big People.



Initiate Wyrmbill

Who am I?

I am nothing in the shadow of the greatness that is the coming Dragon. You may choose to call me Derridae Choice-Unto-Forever. I am a Believer.

Where do I come from?

Originally I am from the ducktowns of Peloria, moving with my mother from place-to-place through her calling but now I live in Contemplative Nest with my brothers and sisters. On a more cosmic scale I come from the Dragon, live within its graces and will one day go back to it.

What have I done?

In my first life, the one before I learned my true calling, I was nothing more than a labouring duck in a world of Big People that hated him. Once I heard the calling of the Wyrmspeakers I became a talon on the outstretched claw of the Great Dragon, doing whatever is needed of me. Where I was once nothing, I am now an *integral* part of everything. I have been asked to deliver goods and escort messages from Wyrmspeakers to the Orlanthi and sometimes even to the dragonewts. Joining the

EWF was the best thing to ever happen to me and every duck should be so lucky.

What is my future?

If I am lucky I will survive to understand more of the Draconic Illumination and I will become more than I am already. I will serve my fellow Wyrmspeakers to the best that my duck body can allow and eventually I will be chosen to become part of the Great Dragon. Now that I am on the path to my destiny, the future is certain for me. I only weep for the rest of my kind; they are too stubborn to recognise the Hell they are resigned to if they do not choose the right path?

What do I believe?

I am part of a much larger plan. I may have hatched inside of a duck mother, raised in the ducktowns of my people but I know that I have always been special. I believe that the world is destined to be the feeding grounds for Dragons and that I and all Wyrmbills have always been part of that plan. Grandmother Duck might not have ever planned on her children becoming dragons but I think she would be proud of us becoming so much more than she ever imagined.

Why do I adventure?

I go where my superiors require me to go. If that means I must don my armour and travel with the Thunderers as their scout or seek out the ducktowns and garner support amongst my former people, then I will do so. If it means I must tolerate ridicule and ire at the hands of the Big People in order to make sure that the EWF succeeds, so be it.

What secret can I share?

Being a duck is a miserable and horrid existence for us; do not let the dry laughs and dark humour fool you. It is lonely at the bottom and misery does not always love company. Joining the Wyrmspeakers is the only way to leave it behind and become something...something *more*.

Ralios Highwayduck

Who am I?

That, my friend, is a dangerous question for you to ask of me. If it were not for this mask, the dimmed lanterns and the 20 paces between us, I would not be here at all. So, if you must ask, I will tell you only this. I am Shadow. I am Moonlight. I am your empty purse and your cold body bleeding out in the ditch. Is that a good enough answer for you, big man?

Where do I come from?

Again with the hard questions. Ducks like me pop up from place to place wherever ducktowns suffer under the exploits of Big People. I come from the depths of sadness and the heart of

tyranny, from a ducktown a few hours away from a large human city. When we had suffered and lost enough, the *real* me appeared and began to empty their pockets...and their veins.

What have I done?

Done? Done? I have done nothing that has not been done to my kind by yours for hundreds of years. I practiced in a Ralios slaughterhouse, knee deep in pig filth and entrails for over a year, learning how to wield a sharp knife. I have tried to make it painless for those I take from, even urging them not to struggle when my mates and I are fleecing them. Sometimes they listen. To answer your question, I have stolen and extorted thousands of clacks and bolgs from the people of Ralios over my seven year career, giving most of it to the ducktowns of the area and keeping enough to bribe who I need to and pay for what I cannot steal. *That* is what I have done.

What is my future?

I hope to live a long and happy life in a homestead somewhere, living off the coin and goods that I have squirreled away far from where the Big People can reach me – if that is even possible in this forsaken life. I suppose I will just keep on stealing, looting and ambushing my enemies until I get too hurt one of these nights to go on...or worse.

What do I believe?

I believe that Canarda should have begged Yelm for a little mercy, because this life is not much to speak of because of her tenacity and stubbornness. She just could not leave well enough alone and not only did we lose our wings but the world hates us. Because the Egg Mother just had to get tough with the Sky Gods, we get dealt a life of misery and torment.

I believe we got the raw end of the deal.

Why do I adventure?

Some might call it adventure but I call it living. Face it. Being a duck means that the world is out to get you from the time you hatch in your mother's womb. If it is not the Hungry Folk, it is the Big People. If it is not the Big People, it is the Faceless Enemy...if the 'bills can be believed, anyway. We are forced to do whatever we can to survive in a world bigger and tougher than the best of us. If we have to push ourselves past the boundaries of law and order to make sure we are not swallowed up or bled out, then we do it.

What secret can I share?

Just because we are small and our walk a bit clumsy, never discount what we can do with a sharp blade or a well-made crossbow. I mean it. I relish the look on Big People faces when they are bleeding out from my knife. Okay, that is my secret; you all make the stupidest faces when you die on a duck's blade.

Jrustelan Seeker

Who am I?

Please, call me Nygella Longswimmer. Although I am not Malkioni, nor am I God Learner, I understand the trappings of both and wish them the best of luck.

Where do I come from?

I live in the Rook for most of the year, just outside Piskosol. I live in the ducktown but I actually only stay there for the Earth, Dark and Storm seasons each year. The rest of the time I wander Jrustela in the cities and compounds of the God Learners. So I suppose you could say that I come from the Middle Sea Empire, even if most of them never even notice that I am around.

What have I done?

As a duck, I know all too well the trappings of myth and the desire to make more of what we have been dealt. It is really all the God Learners want to do, take a look at the myths of the world and see how they can make the best of them, right? I have helped them where I could, told them what they need to hear. I have never told them anything that might bring the Yelmites down on top of us but when they wanted to know the differences between the Deathdrake and Stormbill, I happily explained it to them. After all, we *are* seeking a betterment to our people, are we not?

What is my future?

This I cannot say. A great deal of what happens to me will depend on what happens to the Middle Sea Empire. If the EWF wins and heads toward Jrustela in force, be sure our ducktowns will be served up as kindling for their fires. I cannot say that it would be much better for my cousins on the mainland if the God Learners push that way either, but I know that I would much rather be ruled by logically-thinking problem-solvers than a bunch of zealous dragon-fanatics.

What do I believe?

Grandmother Duck said it best when she told us, 'Survive. Above all else, survive.' I believe that we must try to find every tool we can in this difficult and dark place we have been hatched into that might help us fix what was broken. All of our past generations have claimed that nothing can change our curse but I think that has everything to do with the right tools not being available...yet. The God Learners are our best chance, I wager, to repair the rift between us and Shinyhead. They have only recently come to their height of power; I think that is why we have not found our way back to the Sky. We *needed* them to help us.

Why do I adventure?

I travel and work within the territories of the Middle Sea Empire in order to hopefully find a way to undo our curse. I have to find something or someone that knows more about this than we do. Even if I cannot find the way for myself, perhaps the next generation will be hatched into a better world? The generation after that? My journeys and my questing might not amount to anything but I have to try. If I did not even do that much, I would cry myself to sleep every night.

There has to be a way to make things better; this world cannot hate us forever...can it?

What secret can I share?

I think that the God Learners know more than they are letting on about their war. I have heard things here and there when they are not aware of me listening in and I think that they are capable of things we have never even dreamt of. If we try to help them though, will they reject us or accept our aid?

Regal Noblekeet

Who am I?

Orgenick of Rockcliff Sands, herald to the chieftain and father to half the warbirds on our isle. I am a red-tailed heron, a keet of honourable and dignified birth destined to one day lead this tribe.

Where do I come from?

My tribe of herons live on Rockcliff Sands island, one of the larger keet islands outside of Haragala itself. It is a paradise of freshwater pools and cool, spring-fed streams that all lead out to the sea. We share the island with a small tribe of Vithelan warrior-women but they do not hunt in our grounds just as we do not hunt in theirs. For 100 years we have had this arrangement and I hope to carry it forward for all of mine.

What have I done?

I grew up from a keetling knowing that I would one day rule this tribe; that I would grace the chieftain's nest and be responsible for everyone in my tribe. I learned how to fight for my position against other nesting lines and how to use my spear to keep my chicks and hens safe. My magic is strong, although admittedly not as strong as the redfeathers. I have been called to court on three occasions to speak against my fellow keet, those who have transgressed against the tribe, and I cannot count the number of times that I have crossed blades or beaks with the Savages from Blackshore island. They have always been our greatest rivals and they will not stop until either they are extinct or they take our beautiful little island from us.

What is my future?

I *will* one day rule this tribe. I hope to be the chieftain that finally eliminates the Blackshore auks, or perhaps I will manage to get those Vithelan jungle queens to swear allegiance to us. I would like to give eggs to all my hens at least once more before I have to wear the mantle of quills. I should practice my Heronic spells more, my connection to the great Prince but my duties rarely give me time to do so. When the tribe is mine, I will not lose my mantle because Prince Heron deems me unworthy.

What do I believe?

Grandfather Flamingo is a fool and Prince Heron should have killed him and his Phoenixes off long before the old man could have made us Sacrifice our wings. Our dumb cousins, without voice or reason, flying through the air in unknowing mockery, are a reminder that the Sacrifice was Flamingo's idea. When he came to Prince Heron with his foolish idea to save a people that have never once thanked us for it, Heron should have driven his bill into the Grandfather's heart. Because he did not, because he chose to help the Vithelans, we are now grounded. May every Phoenix suffer and die for what Flamingo did to us. That is what I believe.

I have met the diminutive little curs that share our lineage, or so the seers say, these 'ducks' from the mainland. If we have a common ancestor, I am glad that it must be Grandfather Flamingo...as it must kill him daily to know his line is shared by such pathetic little beasts.

Why do I adventure?

I do not exactly 'adventure', as you say. I conquer when I can, move when the tribe needs me to and sink my spear into my people's enemies. I travel to the other islands, often as a friend to an allied tribe or the Vithelan jungle-queens but never simply because I seek excitement or treasure. Gold and silver is far less important in the wild keetslands, so we fight for survival and our right to our territory.

What secret can I share?

Every keet tribe is held together through a bond of a common nest at the centre of our tribal territory, the place where the chieftain holds his court and communes with the ancestors. Any keet found shedding blood near the common nest will soon know the chieftain's wrath. It is our one rule that crosses all tribal boundaries, even the Savages.

Savage Tribeskeet**Who am I?**

Takkikko Hundred-Kills, formerly Takkikko Fifty-Kills. I am the oldest Bloodbeak of the Rivercrest swordbills and I hope to one day be known as Takkikko Thousand-Kills.

Where do I come from?

Rivercrest is a small tribesland on the southern edge of the Big People's island, a place where most keets wear lead and bronze as armour instead of wood and bone. They share their hunting grounds with other tribes, making deals and promises that they can only keep if they forget their instincts. I have not. I remember. I live where the tribe lives and any keet that crosses our line of skulls and feathers will know my beak's sharp point.

What have I done?

I am Bloodbeak. I hunt. I protect. I kill. More than all else, I kill. My beak is strong and sharp, long and deadly and it has tasted more flesh than the claws of the jungle cat. I wrap my body in bones and leather and I rub featherblend into my orange places to cover my hunts. I fear nothing on this island or any other; not keet, nor man, nor dragon.

What is my future?

I live to protect the tribe and bring back meat for our nests. I will do so until some beast or keet finally overcomes me, or until age takes my sharpness away from me. Ours is a pure and simple life.

What do I believe?

I do not believe. I know what I have been taught and what the shamans share with us at the banquets. Heron gave us birth, gave us our beaks and Sunbill fought for our right to wield them. Flamingo's laws would have us serve and be bound...so I hate him and his children. He has already cost us our wings, may we never let them forget.

Why do I adventure?

What a strange word for survival you have...*adventure*. Glory, flesh and more skulls for my trophy field. That is why. The taste of hot blood in my beak and the rush of the spirits in my heart when I have added another flayed one to the border totems. That is why. I know nothing else. I am swordbill; I am adventure.

What secret can I share?

I bear no secrets. Lies are the province of Phoenixes and men. I will tell you what I feel to and nothing more or less. This is the way of true keets, those who have not forgotten what we are and have donned the Vithelan masks and armour. Let *them* tell you their secrets and while they pluck their feathers and wash their skin to look pink and soft like men...it will make them that much easier to roast over our nesting fires.

TROLLS

Trolls are a much-maligned and often misunderstood race in Glorantha's complicated history. They are seen as monstrous aggressors from the underworld, violent invaders that kill others in wars of conquest and brutal primitives devoid of any higher culture.

The truth is not a million miles away from this. At least, these perspectives are partially true. For every troll berserker, there is a troll martyr who fights not for love of bloodshed but to avenge great wrongs done to his people.

No other race has suffered so grievously in the face of Chaos. No other race has had to bear such vile curses upon their bodies, rotting their wombs and ensuring the future of the race is nothing but stunted, sickly, stupid wretches. No other race has quite the bitterness or the melancholy of the Uz. Yet they are defiant, even now, as the glorious Imperial Age of Glorantha sees them slipping further and further into a decline they will never recover from.

Trolls are a people with their glory days long in the past, faced with a future of twisted descendants and empires that will rise and fall with barely a glance from other races. No matter how hard the Uz fight – and they fight *hard* – their fate is sealed. Even now the numbers of trollkin vastly outnumber the true trolls. Even now the Uz are driven from Dragon Pass and are forced to fight the imperial soldiers of the Dragonlords in order to retake their homeland. Even now, the great goddess Kyger Litor lurks in the deepest, darkest bowels of the Castle of Lead, saying nothing to her people and turning away from her worshippers.

It is a dark time for the Uz, made worse by the empires of prospering humans. Yet they fight as they always have, using the secrets of a culture much deeper and more detailed than most humans would ever believe. Though time may see the trolls crushed and mostly ignored in the coming ages, the Uz are not out of the fight just yet. They still have stories to tell and enemies to kill.

INTRODUCTION

'We are the Folk. We came first of all the mortal races, whether they celebrate in darkness or look up to a bright sky. We were the first. Curses thin out our blood and seed,

ancient hexes that sour our bloodlines and breed whelps of unnatural creatures. Yet we persevere. Our days of dominance are behind us. Yet we persevere. The world around us is the plaything of empires we do not understand. Yet we persevere. We are Uz: the Folk, the People. Neither Fate nor the malice of unholy gods has crushed our race. What hopes do bickering empires of men have?

I say none.'

— Bakrom the Disemboweller, Uzko mercenary

This is a perfect example of trollish defiance and the resolve of the Uz race. At least, it is in instances where the creatures have intelligence enough to formulate such thoughts. This treatise on the species looks to present the facts of the Uz without bias or rancour, instead focusing on the known truths and quantifiable elements of their existence.

I am called Shanrigo Seven-Blades. In quoting this text, you will make attributions to Lord Seven-Blades of Orin Jistil, Wyrms' Talon Disciple of the Siblings of Immaculate Flesh and Soul. I commit these words to paper under the wise order and watchful eyes of my hierarch superiors. As they demand, so shall it be.

For certain sections, I have attached the notes of my companion, Jandred the Flayer, Wyrms' Talon Disciple of the Osseous Circle. His knowledge was used to supplement my own in areas where his skills were necessary in the study.

This treatise is designed for inexperienced diplomats and soldiers of our glorious empire to use in dealing with the Uz. The knowledge on these pages is to be used to glorify our work and honour the Great Dragon To Come. Whether one finds himself under imperial mandate to negotiate with the Uz or kill them where they put up pockets of resistance to the new ways, this document will be invaluable in understanding the trolls.

THE ESSENCE OF UZ

The Uz are a race with no shortage of unique aspects. Spiritually chief among these is that they believe themselves to be the somehow incarnated mortal part of a goddess, their

deity Kyger Litor, the Mother of All Trolls, who is referred to as the 'troll queen' in many of the imperial texts that deal with the matter of mythology. As I understand it, she is referred to as the 'mother of monsters' by many God Learners. So say the HeroQuesting tomes we have plundered from Jrustelan temples and stripped from corpses, anyway. To some of the Uz, she is simply Uzbirther. How crudely apt.

'Uz' means 'the folk' in their own tongue, though the meaning has connotations beyond this. As the mortal part of the goddess that bore them, the trolls see the very concept of 'Uz' as the centre of all their existence. Individual trolls will take names and be born of different breeds but Uz as a concept encompasses all of the myriad variations. This is a bond that can often transcend boundaries of cult allegiance and geographical import. This does not occur always but it certainly occurs often enough to matter. Few other races, especially not we humans, can lay claim to such a concept of unification.

The principal need of any troll is sustenance, which conjures all kinds of additional notes right from the outset given the legendary Uz appetite. Trolls have well-developed taste buds and are all, to some degree, sensationalists. The Uz seem to crave the taste of almost any food or edible material, though they are able to joylessly subsist on rock, metal and bones if they have no other choice. Trolls do not entirely lack the taste receptors that allow the brain to register something as tasting foul, though it seems that these receptors were intentionally created dull by Kyger Litor, at least when compared to other races. Very little tastes *bad* to the Uz; at worst, things are bland and flavourless. Chaos creatures – on the rare instances a troll would consume such – are probably the only exception to this rule. The trolls I have met acted as if such consumption would be foul-tasting beyond anything imaginable.

Like any mortal beings, the second consideration in the Uz mindset is the need to procreate. This element to the troll lifestyle and psyche has a much darker and more severe aspect to it than among many other sentient beings, given the crippling curses the trolls have suffered over the centuries. Breeding is a physical and cultural necessity tainted by the banes of Uz existence.

As such, many trolls do not look forward to starting families for fear that they will bear trollkin litters. However, pressure from the matriarchal society and the queens that oversee each tribe mean that frequent breeding does occur. If it did not, the troll population would dwindle even faster, with fewer dark trolls born to populate the true society and fewer trollkin born to support it by slavery. For a female, nothing is more important than bearing healthy children and keeping her bloodline free of trollkin births. For a male, nothing is more

important than acquiring a fertile and healthy female and breeding Uzko children with her.

These are the two innate desires of all mortal beings. The last great urge of the Uz is a more personal and violent desire. Unlike many of the more enlightened cultures that relegate Chaos to the annals of the past, the Uz loath Chaos with a primal and intense passion. They desire little more than to kill Chaos creatures, one by one, by the hundreds, by the *legion*. There is no shortage of troll tales and legends that deal with the salvation of their race lying in the eventual destruction of Chaos. It is a recurring theme in the culture, to say the least.

'If we kill enough of them – broo, demons, whatever else dares walk our world – the prophecy will be realised. We will be healed. We will be whole. That is why I kill Chaos. I seek it out and extinguish its unholy unlight wherever I find its cancer-touch. You cannot understand. You are not Uz. But we will be whole again and all it will take is the blood of the Devil's minions. If I have to kill 1,000 before my own death, so be it.'

— Durgur Mexil, Uz Runelord of Boztakang

'Where did you learn of this prophecy, lizard-kisser? Silence. Speak no more. These things are not for your ears or your split-tongued brain. Go back to your dragon riddles and your belief that Chaos is gone forever. Know that I am Uz and Chaos is my enemy. Know that and only that, and leave me be.'

— Fynral the Bitter-Blooded, warrior of the City of Lead

'I will tell you. The truth is not so difficult to imagine, Dragon-talker. There is a story, once a tale, then a hope and now a belief. It tells us that if the numbers of Uz in the world are larger than the numbers of Chaos creatures, then the wombs of our females will be healed. You see? The end of the trollkin. It is a prophecy that promises the end of so much suffering. This is why we Uz fight Chaos even now that Chaos is silent. Partly in revenge for the wrongs that were done to us. Mostly because we hope that victory will bring joy.'

— Harthak Bones-of-Stone, troll shaman and healer

The Uz have a history entwined with the depredations of Chaos; that much is obvious to any outsider. When one peels back the layers of the surface stories, however, the results are most illuminating. Other legends exist, citing fanciful tales of recovering ancient artefacts that will heal the wounds of their race through other means. All have at least a root in the Darkness, of course, or the era of Nysalor.

The most important of these ‘artefacts’ is a verse of the primal Uz race birth song that Kyger Litor sang when she bore the first trolls from her body into the world. Many Uz believe that by discovering this lost verse and singing it during pregnancy, the babes born afterwards will always be Mistress Race trolls. This holiest of holy songs is believed to have been stolen from Kyger Litor by a god from another race – perhaps even a Chaos god – which is why so many Uz pay a surprising amount of attention to the music of other cultures. They are among the faithful that believe their forgotten song can be found somewhere within the songs of others.

A curious belief, certainly.

The second of the lost artefacts is actually something of a blasphemous item that the Uz desire only to destroy: the paired metal claws of Gbaji the Deceiver, which the false god used to rend apart the womb of Korasting and sicken the Uz with the Trollkin Curse. The Uz believe that if these items are discovered and destroyed by the Uz in offering to Kyger Litor and the memory of Korasting, the Womb-Biter Curse will lift immediately. Others believe that recovery of the items is enough and that merely possessing the weapons will allow the troll pantheon to heal the wounds the claws once inflicted.

In a race so grievously wounded by the influence of Chaos upon Glorantha, it is perhaps easy to see why the Uz are still so obsessed.

UZ DESCRIBED

The Uz are divided (or rather cursed) into several subspecies. These have resulted from centuries of magical evolution, divine hexes and other curious interferences with their natural procreation. The list of variants is as follows, with attached diagrams.

Uzuz: The Ancients

‘The Uzuz are the ‘the folk of the folk.’ Your loremasters know them by other names on the few instances when you are even aware of them. To you they are Mistress Trolls, Matriarchs and most commonly – Ancients. To the Uz, they are simply the Uzuz. We Uzko are born wrong. The Uzuz are Kyger Litor’s love for the Uz made manifest and untainted. Our race used to be perfect. The Uzuz still are.

You pink-skins cannot understand what this means to us. Our seers tell us of the death you will bring to the world with your magic in a Time To Come. You bear the blame for your own curses. Those curses are deserved. Ours were given by malicious gods. Ours are not deserved. Do you see?’

— Harthak Bones-of-Stone, troll shaman and healer

A fallacy surrounds these ‘first trolls.’ Some of the names the other races have applied to them infer a uniform female gender, though these names are perhaps better interpreted as ‘life-giver’ rather than ‘mother’ in the sense that these creatures were the progenitors of the troll race. It is from these original beings that all the subsequent curse-affected spawning has taken place.

Mistress Trolls are exceedingly rare in our age. They are mostly a remnant of more prosperous times for the Uz, when the species bred true and untainted in times of antiquity. In the mists of history, these creatures once constituted the entire troll race. Due to a supernatural (and utterly divine-based) event that wracked the troll goddess Kyger Litor, the Mistress Race began to breed what we commonly know as Dark Trolls instead of their own pure-blooded Ancients. This first warping of the troll life cycle is perhaps the most damning, for it precipitated the long and bitter decline of the Uz.

Matriarch trolls are unlike the common Uz we see across Glorantha today. What few encounters our scholars (and admittedly, our soldiers and draconic mystics) have had with the Ancients lead us to believe that these creatures are more intelligent than their common cousins and have significantly divergent physiologies.

The Ancients commonly – as much as that term may be used – reach eight feet in height and usually have well-developed musculature despite little physical activity. Like all trolls, the Uzuz are hunched creatures, appearing more comfortable bending over than standing straight. Indeed, from the war wounds I have inflicted myself and the dissections of my more scholarly brethren, it seems the troll skeleton and supporting musculature is actually designed to be at its most efficient when the creature is slightly bent over in a ‘natural’ (for trolls at least) hunch. For most mortal creatures, this reduces the flow of energies throughout the body and restricts breathing to some degree, detrimentally bunching up the internal organs and other innards. For the Uz, the slouched posture is natural and comfortable, born of a curved spine and muscles that support such a skeletal anomaly. It can make facing the Uz on the field of battle a challenging prospect, since gauging their height and body development is not always easy given their inclination to hunch up and mask their ‘true’ physique.

The minds of these Matriarch trolls, however, tend to be more suited to complex thought. Most possess no shortage of intelligence, though such mental faculties are often applied to base survival rather than philosophy or complex matters of spirituality. The lightless lives of the Ancients do not make for wise creatures – even their faiths are relatively simple by the standards of today – despite how naturally intelligent the Matriarchs might be. A lack of broad knowledge in a world where they are almost extinct ensures a limited range of understanding.

Matriarch trolls possess underdeveloped eyes which are black-orbed and able to sense little more than light and darkness with almost no capacity to determine details. These trolls rely on other senses to interact with the world around them, most notably their sonar. In the lightless depths where the Matriarchs dwell, it must be noted that keen eyesight would be useless. Mistress Race Uz are much less suited to living on the surface than their flawed progeny, the Uzko.

The Ancients possess the strongest affinity for what is commonly referred to as 'Darksense.' All trolls possess Darksense to some degree, including the repulsive trollkin who have it so weakly it is almost overlooked by the creatures themselves except on an instinctive level. Darksense allows all trolls to make out the world around them when their other weaker senses fail. It is a sense based on the concepts of echolocation, allowing the Uzuz especially to discern their surroundings in eerie, blind clarity. The source of this sense, as in all trolls, is the elongated snout, which is described as 'dog-like,' 'wolf-like' or 'alligator-like' by various sources.

Curiously, this snout does not appear to heighten a troll's sense of smell. It is primarily the source and receptor for Darksense. The snout produces near-undetectable sounds with each breath a troll takes, which then reflect off the troll's surroundings and relay the information to its brain via the creature's receptive ears. It is for this reason that the Uz speak not in terms of leagues or miles but in 'beats of the heart.' They measure distance by how many heartbeats it takes for their sensory information to register their surroundings, be it almost no time at all in a closed room to as much as 30 heartbeats for a distant tower on the horizon. Information that takes one heartbeat to return seems to connote a distance of 600 or so feet; two heartbeats relay a distance of over 1,000 feet and so on. It is difficult to tell for certain, since a troll with its blood up is likely to have a thundering heartbeat which makes reliable information harder to attain. However, trolls' large hearts and sluggish blood-flow keep their pulse relatively regular compared with humans in stressful circumstances.

Darksense is a supreme advantage for trolls. I have seen it firsthand and can testify to the utter failure of blinding magic to stop a troll or even slow it down. It took my slaves three days of work to get the scores out of my armour from that fight.

Due to the extremely developed Darksense among Ancients, their snouts are longer than seen among common Uz. Their Darksense is their primary sense, many times more keen than human eyesight. It seems that the Uzuz can focus Darksense even over large distances, perhaps up to a few miles if the troll lore I have studied is true. As would be expected with superior Darksense, the hearing of the Uzuz is near-legendary.

I am sure many scholars with an eye for the Uz have heard myth-like tales of explorers' breath being heard half a mile away from the lair of an Ancient. These are unlikely to be just stories, it seems.

The Ancients are the faded shadows of Glorantha's past. This cannot be denied. They are so rare these days that sighting one is likely to be a momentous event for any community – and a potentially lethal one given the bodyguards these creatures often have. Understandably, the Uzuz are defended by other trolls who think nothing of giving their lives for their race's pure-blooded progenitors, especially given the fact that Mistress Trolls are the one breed of the species that are immune to the so-called Trollkin Curse. The Ancients breed truer (though not fully true) and produce dark trolls – the Uzko. They never give birth to trollkin – at least, no Uz has ever admitted to such an occurrence.

The cynic in me wonders at whether this is an attempt to hide even further shame from the world, though one must admit that the Uz have always bore the brunt of their misfortune with stoicism in the past. It seems an unlikely thing to lie about.

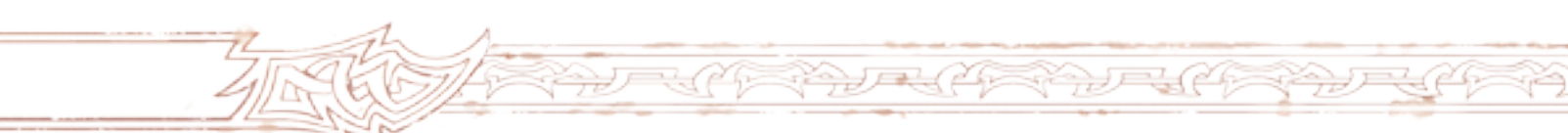
Uzko: The Second Race

'There was a time before now, a time of the Seven Sacred Ancestors and the era of Wonderhome. I am not sure I can put this into your words so that you may perceive it as I do but I shall try my best. Wonderhome was in the blackness of the underworld, where no light shone and the passages of the earth were freshened by the cool breath of Glorantha herself.'

The Seven Sacred Ancestors were the first of the Uz, deified by their very nature. The tale told to me is simple. The Seven Sacred Ancestors were the first Uzuz, born of our goddess, Kyger Litor, who mixed her life force with the Man rune. It was no more than that, until the time of the first great change within our blood and our bones. The change brought the Uzko – the trolls of Now – who the soft-skins call the Dark Trolls.

When the Armies of the God-Emperor of the Sun came to Wonderhome, Korasting of the Seven Sacred Ancestors, the Goddess of Fertility and Mother of All Pure Births, was killed by Lord Yelm. Kyger Litor, in the divine passion of a goddess, harmed us all with her sorrow at losing her first daughter. From that day the Uzuz have bred sour. From that day, the Uzko – the pained folk – are the trolls of this world.'

— Harthak Bones-of-Stone, troll shaman and healer



The Uzko are the dark trolls; the creatures we know today as Uz. Among Uz culture they refer to themselves as the truebloods. They are the result of their race's first great disaster, when one of their ancestor-goddesses was butchered in Yelm's fall into the underworld, which heralded what the Orlanthe refer to as the Storm Age. It seems the trolls' 'Wonderhome' was a realm of pure blackness near the land of the dead, and as the slain Yelm travelled to his resting place, his armies of light and fire laid waste to the armies of trolls that rose up to defend their sacred lands from the burning light of the sun. A misunderstanding? Perhaps. A tragedy for the trolls? Undoubtedly.

From that day in the shadows of the past, the Uz have never bred an Ancient again. All the litter of the increasingly rare Uzuz are Uzko. This is the result of their goddesses' sorrow. Allow me a moment to point out the futility in the worship of such a flawed divine being, given what her rewards for her loyal followers have been. The trolls argue that their Mother did not mean to curse them as she did and that with her blessing they still seek a way to repair the supernatural damage she unwittingly inflicted upon her children. It should be noted that if the Uz ever turn from their blind faith and adopt a more pragmatic stance, their fervour could be a powerful aid in bringing about the Great Dragon To Come. But I digress.

Not all opinions appear to be equally received among the dark trolls. Here are the words of a wanderer whom I encountered on the edge of the Shadow Plateau's borders.

'But these are lies.

You reptile-kissers have been told wrong. Our mother created the Uzko. We were not born of a mistake or a curse upon Uz. When the Sun God brought light and fire to the Wonderhome of the Ancients, our Mistress race died in their legions. Their blood was turned to red steam. Their eyes turned into liquid-like tears, leaving empty sockets in their skulls. Their bones turned red-hot and their flesh caught fire. All muscle ran from their bones like boiling juice falling to the ground.

The under-kingdom was thick with black smoke as the Uzuz burned. It was as if even in death, the bodies of the Ancients wanted to blot out the sun, choking it with dark mist.

Many escaped. They fled into tunnels and secret passages to the surface. Here in the Hurtplace, under the great sky that no troll had seen before, the Mother reshaped many of her surviving children into the Uzko. We dark trolls were ready to live on the surface. We were not so blind or as fearful of the sky as the Ancients were.

'We are not the Mother's accident, nor her curse. We are her plan.'

— Fynral the Bitter-Blooded, warrior of the City of Lead

Dark trolls commonly reach between six and eight feet in height, generally taller than most humans. They also sport more natural musculature than humans, along with the curved spine and slouch that characterises their race. Unlike the velvet-smooth and night-black skin of the Ancients (which rarely sees any sunlight) the Uzko are better adapted to the surface world and their skins are various shades of grey often with a mottling in a slightly different colour. Dark trolls are thick-boned – making amputation in battle something of a chore – and this is a skeletal feature shared by most of the Uz.

Dark trolls possess poorer Darksense, which suffers greatly over distances more a few heartbeats away, than their true-blood ancestors. However, to compensate for this and as a result of their adaptations to life on the surface, dark trolls' eyes are significantly more developed than those of the Ancients and a powerful sense of smell that dwarfs practically all other sentient mortals in the world. Uzko are essentially colour blind, seeing in shades of grey with only faint hints of colour but beyond this their sight almost approximates that of a human. It is more common for a troll to recognise people by scent than sight, however, at least for the first few seconds in their presence. It is simply how their brains work.

Like their Ancient cousins, the Uzko sport vicious rows of shark-like teeth and their mouths are dominated by four lengthened incisors. The incisors in the top row are chunky, long fangs, while those in the lower jaw are more accurately described as small tusks which can sometimes grow to reach just under the troll's eyes. In some cases, Uzko have a considerable underbite, though they still maintain the capacity for speech without interference. At the back of an Uzko's mouth, densely-packed molars are used for grinding tough food to be swallowed. In the front of the mouth, the two rows of teeth are like pointed animal fangs and though they are not as long as the incisors, they are used mainly for scissoring meat from the bone and mutilating enemies in extremely painful ways. I can attest to this also – I lost a hand to the bite of the last troll I fought, and he crunched it down with no more effort than a man swallowing a grape from the stem.

Dark trolls make up the majority of what is now commonly accepted as the 'pure-blooded' troll population, though the numbers of tainted trollkin are growing day-by-day. In this aspect, the Uzko (and by extension, the Uz) are a race in decline. While the empires of our age rise, these children of the darkness gods dwindle and succumb to their succession of curses.

The spawn of dark trolls are either more dark trolls or, increasingly as the years pass, creatures known as trollkin. When a female Uzko is pregnant, there is an even chance that her child will be born premature and be considered trollkin. Females who have never birthed tainted children are accorded great respect by other trolls. Females who have mothered a litter of trollkin are considered unclean in the eyes of their fellow Uzko and in some regions must take an oath not to reproduce again for at least another year in order to 'cleanse' themselves of their impurity.

The source of this defect in the bloodlines of Uzko is the second supernatural disaster to befall the race, when Gbaji the Deceiver cursed the trolls in the horrendous wars that raged across the world's surface in the First Age. Such was the might of the created god that his hex upon the Uz ravaged their bloodlines even further, souring children in mothers' bellies and ensuring that half of all trolls born from that moment on would be stunted and half-formed. These are the trollkin.

Enlo: The Cursed Kin

'Does your kind have a harsher word than 'curse,' Dragon-talker? Is there a word for the foulest, sickest crime ever committed against a people? The term we use would be, in your language, the Trollkin Curse, though this is so simple that it shares none of our great agony over what has become of Uz.

We wanted no part in the raising of a false-born god but the younger races would not listen. We warned of the dangers within your 'great plans' but such prophecies are like the wind against a mountain – no sound penetrates the rock, just as no wisdom penetrated the minds of men when they brought about Gbaji the Chaos Child. We all paid for the mistakes of that era, though the Uz suffered greatest of all. We rose to battle the madness caused by the younger races. We stood by the dragonewts and wielded clubs and blades alongside them in an army that defied Chaos Itself. We saw through the lies of this Nysalor as he besieged us. We summoned our most secret ally, the vengeful and dark spirit Black Eater, whose wrath was so potent that he rendered the sun blind and still. In a day more frightening than nightfall in the underworld, we showed our rage at Chaos again trying to take the world.

We lost.

In our tongue, we call them the Enlo – the 'little twisted ones.' They are the curse for our failure, born of Gbaji's bile and reminding us all of our defeat that day. For losing, we gained a new bane. A bane that might be the death of the Uz.

When the soft-skins call us monsters and ask us why there is no nobility in our souls, I tell them this story. Some of them – not all – begin to see the answer to their question after I have spoken.'

— Harthak Bones-of-Stone, troll shaman and healer

This rather dispiriting piece of lore brings us to the trollkin – an aberration of trollish nature that I am sure any of my contemporaries or their adventurous agents reading this have encountered at one point or another. Stunted and stupid, the Enlo are not true trolls at all. They are the half-shaped children that lacked the grace to die in the womb and who were born premature and malformed. The truth behind Gbaji's curse is not that it causes trolls to breed a new race of weaker cousins but that half of all trolls sired today are born when they are only half-formed and stunted.

Before the onset of the curse multiple birth trolls were considered to be special and a blessing. The great troll heroes Gore and Gash, for example, were twins. Since the curse was inflicted, however, all multiple troll births have been considered Enlo despite any evidence to contradict this. Over the years a sizable number of Uzko have been so classified, despite their size and intelligence marking them out from their stunted cousins, many never fulfil their potential, being prevented from doing so by their own society. A few individuals have managed to rise above this disadvantage but they are few and far between.

Enlo are essentially dark trolls that never had the chance to grow as nature (and the mother's body) intended. It would be as if all mothers in Imperial lands suddenly gave birth to their children after only four months in the womb. Such infants could survive, though the odds would be firmly against the possibility. The trollkin are likewise often stillborn or too unformed to live past a few days, though Gbaji's curse interferes further, allowing a great number of them to survive into adulthood and grow into new, unnatural forms.

Something happened to this 'Black Eater' of the trolls, and the stories conflict. It is said by many that the Black Eater – also called the Dark Eater – was Kyger Litor made manifest and the Trollkin Curse arose from her own defeat under the hands of Gbaji. Other tales attribute a direct responsibility after the actions of Gbaji: Nysalor the White Light, before revealed as Gbaji the Deceiver, somehow infused this dark god-spirit with his own essence. It turned upon the trolls and spiritually tore out Kyger Litor's womb either in maddened fervour or as directed by Nysalor. Finally, it is said by some among the Uz that the Black Eater would not fight for the trolls without payment and sacrifice, and the ability to breed

true is what the Uzko sacrificed for their ultimately wasted chance at victory. No matter which of a dozen variations on the theme one believes, the fact remains that the trolls paid for their boldness that day.

After giving birth to a litter of trollkin, a troll mother traditionally abstains from sex for a year and a day in order to spiritually purify herself in the eyes of Kyger Litor. I have no evidence to say whether this abstinence is anything but a worthless ritual, though I suspect there is some power in the Uzko mothers' sacrifice and that any subsequent birth is likelier a dark troll.

Trollkin are the wretched lowest caste of Uz society. They are without rank, considered property and slaves for their entire lives, though because they are significantly weaker than true trolls they are therefore pathetic even when set to manual labour. The Enlo's general uselessness means that they occasionally serve as food for the true-blooded trolls when supplies are low and the hunting is poor. This bone-crunching, flesh-chewing cannibalism of still-living trollkin is not considered a sin. In fact, among trolls, it is not even considered cannibalism. These accursed creatures exist only to

serve their true-blood masters, even if such service is little more than a quick trip down a gaping mouth, to die suffocating and crushed in the hot, pliant walls of a troll's belly...while being dissolved by white-hot stomach acid.

Trollkin are usually between three and five feet in height and possess musculature approximate to that of a young human of adolescent age. They are rarely as strong as an adult human, let alone ever rivalling the might of a dark troll. Though their appearances vary greatly, most take the form of embryonic-seeming dark trolls, since this is essentially what they are. Their senses are generally poorer than dark trolls and they lack the famed trollish constitution for digesting practically any material as food. Their skin is thinner, akin to a human's, though Enlo do possess the same variety of skin hues as their pure parents. Their Darksense is so weak as to almost not exist. Their senses are often less keen than a human's, especially when the Enlo are above ground, since their underdeveloped eyes react badly to sunlight.

The onset of Gbaji's curse coincided with the crushing defeat of the Uz and heralded the beginnings of their retreat under the earth. The Uz of the era became increasingly desperate about



the future of their race when the Deceiver's hex upon them flowered fully and began to lay waste to the next generation. Initially, the Trollkin Curse led to the births of single Enlo to each dark troll mother that failed to carry a pure troll to term. Several hundred years ago in 612, an Ancient known as Naxili Garang – also called the Mother of Kin in dubious honour of her pale achievement – was one of the many trolls that took it upon themselves to fight against this latest taint in the blood of their race. Through near-endless HeroQuesting, she fought the battle against the Chaos hordes of the Deceiver again and again and again, seeking each time to kill Gbaji, turn the tide of the battle and ultimately break the curse before it could ever fall upon her people. Through her mystical preparations that coupled ancient fertility rites with traditional defensive magic, she sought to repel Gbaji and restore true breeding to her people by teaching ways of resisting the curse.

As with the later attempts to circumvent the banes placed upon the Uz, she was only partially successful and claimed naught but the bitterest victory. Through her rituals, she allowed her people to birth litters of trollkin rather than single children. With the increased numbers of slaves being born, the Uz entered our modern age with the illusion of growth among their people. The rot is evident to anyone who knows the truth, of course. The Uz shore up their dwindling numbers with cursed, unnatural children, hiding their true decline from the world.

The second attempt to break the curse came over 100 years later, well into what our scholars are already terming the glorious Imperial Age. This resulted in the birth of the Uzdo.

Uzdo: The Great Mutation

'And now we come to the age of birth for the Second Slaves. They are the Great Ones, the Uzdo – 'big folk,' though they are not great in all ways. Towering like the Uzuz, mighty in flesh and bone and sinew but weak in spirit, flawed of heart and possessed of childish minds, the Uzdo mutation was a failure. The Uzdo were raised as useful slaves, not true members of the Uz.'

Many of the Uz see the work of Cragspider as a good thing. I do not. We are cursed with another bastard tribe of the People, akin to a mule and often just as unable to breed. I curse her for birthing more impurity among the Folk. By sewing the souls of trolls to black-limbed, dark-thinking Debori spirits, the Mother of the Great Mutation created only more impure slaves and more sorrow for true-blooded parents.'

She lives now in the region of Cliffhome. One day I hope I will meet her. On the night of that day she will rest easy in hell.'

— Harthak Bones-of-Stone, troll shaman and healer

723 was the year of the dark troll Cragspider's shamanistic experiment. From what I have gathered, a powerful cultist was responsible for merging some kind of darkness spirits with strong-bodied trolls who were to serve as parents. In blending these Debori spirits with the purest dark trolls, Cragspider hoped to banish the 'Womb-Biter Curse' and breed a new generation not only free of trollkin but also with the births of Uzuz brought back to the troll race.

This latest attempt by the Uz to break the hexes that violate the wombs of their females resulted in the relatively successful creation of the Uzdo – the great trolls. These colossal brutes share many physical similarities with the Ancients, towering over the dark trolls and reaching between eight and eleven feet in height.

Perhaps most notable about this subspecies, all great trolls are male. Fully half of these appear to be sterile and those that are able to sire children produce single dark trolls or litters of trollkin. Actual great troll children are exceedingly rare.

The main weakness in the Uzdo breed is that they are almost uniformly moronic. The cleverest among them are rarely more intelligent than a human child or a stupid dark troll adult. The overwhelming majority of Uzdo can be taught simple tricks – usually involving violence and bodyguard duties – but are good for nothing outside combat and intimidation. For these matters, they are favoured as 'pets' and slaves by dark troll leaders or as guardians of Uz settlements. Beyond such brutal and simple application, they are essentially useless. It is not difficult to see why Harthak speaks so derisively of them, even if those of my brethren that have faced Uzdo in battle speak of them with fear in their otherwise serene voices.

It must be noted that Harthak's viewpoint appears to be unusual among his people. The great trolls are clearly not the success they were designed to be but they are popular among many communities as powerful and useful slaves.

'Harthak is a fool. He speaks of What Should Be and not What Is Now. Too much human reason has sickened his honest thinking. Uz are ever in the Now, not the Maybe. Maybe is stupid. Maybe goes nowhere. Maybe is for the younger races who ask dangerous questions and do foolish things.'

The big folk are a step toward pure blood. They are broken and stupid, stupider even than many true Uz and even some Enlo. But they are still a step on the path to purity. They have their uses like all good slaves. Their lives strengthen Uz. Uz is stronger with the Uzdo. It is simple, yes? Listen not to Harthak's bile. He talks in lies to tell a story of tragedy. Uz are stronger than that.'

— Fynral the Bitter-Blooded, warrior of the City of Lead

Romal: The Chaos-Touched

In the wars against Chaos, the harm of the womb-hex was not the only curse laid upon the Folk. Armies of our warriors were rendered foul and corrupt by the spells of the Mutator, Pocharngo, who wove void-born magic over the souls and bodies of Ancients that survived the burning invasion of Wonderhome. The cosmic cancer touched many of the trolls that reached the surface world, tainting them with his breath. These wretches are the romal – the nose lopers – whom you soft-skins call the mountain trolls or the cave trolls.

These creatures earn our pity, not our rage. Though we have always and forever loathed Chaos, these primitives are victims of a curse, not willing subjects of evil. Still, they are apart from us. Apart from Uz.'

— Harthak Bones-of-Stone, troll shaman and healer

'The Chaos-touched are not of Uz as we are. Even Enlo are more Uz than romal. Even kin can learn things. Romal are stupid, stupid, stupid. They think evil thoughts. They think of cannibalism instead of community. They war because they are too feral to know when peace is wise.

I spit on them. They would eat their own mothers if the chance arose – not out of hate or anger – but because they are too twisted to know it would be wrong.'

— Fynral the Bitter-Blooded, warrior of the Castle of Lead

Lastly in the initial section of this treatise, we reach the cave trolls. The divisions within the Uz are intriguing. This variation is perhaps most interesting of all.

I was surprised to learn that the Uz I met with did not consider these beasts to be trolls at all, ranked even below the hated Enlo though they share the physical bulk and height of great trolls. Whether drawn from the ranks of the Uzuz, the Uzko or even both breeds, the romal were touched by the Chaos entity Pocharngo the Mutator in antiquity and have faced discomfort (often being forced into exile from troll-held lands) since that fateful era. It seems likely that cave trolls are mutated from dark trolls, as they also suffer the Trollkin Curse while no Uzuz in living memory has ever felt this particular bane.

Physically, cave trolls exhibit monstrous aspects beyond the standards of dark trolls. Elongated snouts have inefficient sonar but are crammed with rows of spiky – and often uneven – teeth that tend to be more jagged than standard Uz fangs and

are prone to breakage, albeit with subsequent regeneration. Fingernail-claws are blackened and bone-hard as on all trolls, though they can grow erratically and curve like sickle blades. Greyish and greenish skins are often covered in patches of bristly black fur which is like rough animal hair to the touch. Cave trolls' eyes are swollen and overdeveloped, much like many embryonic-looking trollkin, leaving the Romal pained by bright light. Most also exhibit some kind of greasy sweat which is part of a natural perspiration for any Uz but gives off a rancid odour of spoiled meat when leaking across a romal's skin. My companion Jandred the Flayer informs me that this sweat is from impurities and unnatural inconsistencies within the glands of these warped Uz.

These beasts are rarely found within troll communities. When they are, their primitive, feral intelligence reduces them to the status of pets or slaves, accorded far less respect than the Uzdo but at least pitied more than the Enlo. Some are taught simple tasks; others are herded into packs like wild animals and form an unintelligent reinforcement for the community's warriors and hunters. These trolls are generally violent as well as stupid, which is a relative statement when discussing the Uz; however, both violence and stupidity are more focused and prevalent among these trolls.

Part of their curse has 'blessed' them with the natural ability to regenerate damage to their bodies. Whether it is flesh or bone that has sustained damage, the Romal's body is capable of healing over time in ways few other mortal beings are able to mimic without the application of magic. Flesh literally seals closed and reforms whole. Bruises fade. Bones knit together and regrow missing chunks. Combined with their intimidating size and prodigious strength, this innate ability makes cave trolls among the most fearsome Uz to face in battle. However, their attacks are primitive and untrained, often lacking in weapons. The species lacks the intelligence to forge metal into blades or create anything beyond a rudimentary spear and club arsenal. It seems they are unable to think past the most basic levels of sentience, though whether this is due to the Mutator's influence or the original race is unknown.

UZ DIET

'I hear talk of this when I travel through the lands of the soft-skins. Always there are questions and fear and whispered wondering. 'Will he eat us?' 'Will he eat our homes?' 'Will he eat the rocks upon which our homes are built?' It is strange the fascination you humans have with our eating habits. I care nothing for what you put in your mouth.'

— Harthak Bones-of-Stone, troll shaman and healer

'Uz eat. It is what Uz do. Some mortals take joy in power or sex or seeing new things. Uz take joy in these, but take greatest joy in tasting things. Our Mother gave us bodies that can make food of anything. It is blasphemy to ignore that.'

— Fynral the Bitter-Blooded, warrior of the City of Lead

Even above their fearsome prowess in battle, the troll propensity to eat practically anything is what most people know the race best for. The troll diet is legendary, with endless rumination on just what (and often, just *who*) an Uz is capable or inclined to swallow.

I turn here to the attached notes of the estimable Jandred Skell, called the Flayer, a bone-singer and healer of the Osseous Circle Dragonspeaker cult. His notes dwell a great deal on in-depth anatomical specifics such as the colour and position of the duodenum, the lumen and other digesting pouches. The abridged generalities to enlighten laymen and imperial soldiers.

UZ CULTURE

My experience among the Uz in peacetime is greatly limited, though I have collected notes from hired explorers and have consulted several of the Uz on this matter. Like most races, the trolls vary culturally by region. However, generalities remain in the species that cross border lines and local allegiances. Uz history is little more than a succession of battles and emigrations, the latter of which always seem to be a direct result of losing the former.

It is worth noting also that the troll tribes who once dwelt in imperial lands were offered the chance to join our empire at the EWF's foundation. They refused en masse and were either expelled by force or left willingly, as if afraid of us or bitter at the proto-empire's citizens throwing off the shackles of the rule of the troll lord, Ezkankekko, Overlord of Lead. This creature still lives today, ruling from the Shadow Plateau and revered by the Uz of the modern age as the Only Old One. This honorific arises from his status as perhaps the only Mistress Race troll alive today who met the Seven Sacred Ancestors. Either way, he is seen as something of a demi-god.

Chaos: The Principal Misconception

'The light ones fear us. Black skin, pink skin, wood skin or soft stone skin, it is all the same. We are feared for our heritage. Darkness is but one step from Chaos, they say. They are wrong, though. Nothingness, the void, is not dark. It is nothing. Darkness is the absence of light. Chaos is the absence of everything.'

— Harthak Bones-of-Stone, troll shaman and healer

'I am strong, like all Uz. Yet I am wounded by claims of Uz standing with Chaos, born of evil like the braying beast-people or the sickening gods that harm and harm and harm because they can do nothing else. We lost more blood and souls against Chaos than any other race in the Hurtplace. We took terrible wounds from the anger of Chaos again and again and again, in war and in the wombs of our mothers. Those who call me Devil-born will die for their ignorance. This I promise.'

— Durgur Mexil, Uz Runelord of Boztakang

In many of our legends pertaining to the Godswar and the rise of Wakboth, the Uz are considered enemies of the world and grouped with the hordes of Chaos. This both is and is not a fallacy. The trolls are born of darkness, not Chaos, though this certainly did make war upon the race of light when the opportunities arose in prehistory.

The Uz are not Chaos creatures by any definition. In fact, their culture opposes Chaos more vehemently than many other mortal societies and the trolls have a long and grim history of suffering under the influence of Chaos whenever it has entered their lives. Though it can be a difficult differentiation for humans of the Imperial Age to make in regards to these ancient mythologies, there is a gulf of difference between creatures of darkness and creatures of Chaos. The former, such as the Uz, reject the sunlit world and often exist in primitive, brutish societies that are founded on worship of black-hearted, violent and hostile gods. The Uz are the societal and genetic opposite of the creatures born to light gods, such as the Aldryami, for example. Darkness is the opposite of light – both sides of the moral and supernatural coin are part of our world.

Chaos creatures are born of gods that command powers which threaten Life itself. The Devil and his god-minions swarmed from the void, bringing powers antithetical to the world's natural function. The gods of the Uz, such as Zorak Zoran and Kyger Litor, are associated with many of the Chaos deities in history because of their actions in the Godswar and the misunderstandings of men. We have tales which state that even when the world fell to Chaos and Glorantha plunged into the Great Darkness, gods like Zorak Zoran still opposed his light deity counterparts. Based on these tales, these gods are often grouped with the Chaos deities due to their harmful behaviour.

The God Learners hear these tales. We know they do. They plunder the hero realms of every lore and story they can acquire and it grieves the Uz that the Jrustelans steal power from their god-myths. Whether the gods of the Uz are painted and noble darkness warriors opposing Chaos or pawns in



*The Abridged Notes of Jandred the Flayer,
Concerning the Many Irregularities in the Digestive Tract of the Uz*

... understandably cautious, even when we are dealing with lifeless trolls. Their stomach acid remains corrosive until the corpse is thoroughly desiccated. I suspect this is something of a shock for carrion birds that peck through the stomach lining of the Uz corpses they chance across.

This particular subject was evidently slain by a blade which pierced through the open jaws and punched through the roof of the mouth and into the brain. Death was assuredly instantaneous. Evidence of scoring – including flakes of chipped obsidian no doubt from Shanriqo's klanth blade – still shows signs of wet blood behind the shark-like top two rows of teeth. It seems Lord Seven-Blades' sword dragged against the bone and reinforced cartilage of the skull on the way out. This confirms my fellow Dragonspeaker's summation as accurate – the subject is no more than two hours dead.

The first incision requires severe application of force to pierce the layers of hardened grey skin, though it finally ruptures when I call upon my runes for strength. The resulting cut allows wedges of insulating red-orange fat to be heaved from the body. The subject had the traditional 'troll belly' that results from such a complicated digestive system, excessive eating and a habitual hunch. Beyond this, the subject is powerfully muscled, with even his torso and stomach protected by bunched muscle structure under the fat. A second incision splits these muscles, again with a strength given me through runic manipulation.

The second incision completed and both fat and protective abdominal muscles removed, the vapour from the cavity is foulness unrivalled, punctuated by the quiet hiss of stomach acid still performing its digestive function after the host's death.

Anatomically-speaking, what I am looking at is a marvel of nature. The warrior in me notes the places to strike – here the gall bladder and its several additional pouches for secretion, which would cause intense pain if damaged and here the largest join of the intestinal loop to the stomach proper, though so many lesser joins exist that one wonders just how much effect a strike would have.

The digestive system appears relatively similar to the human structure, though with marked differences that mainly involve additional support glands, ducts and pouches. It is also of a much larger size, of course. The process for actual digestion clearly varies on the nature of the food swallowed, as linking passages of flesh appear to be suited to breaking down different types of edible (and apparently inedible) matter.

The previous meals of the subject are still in evidence, most notably what appear to be a Mostali skull in one of the stomach cavities along with several small pebbles that look as if they were much larger rocks before the stomach acid ate at them, plant matter (apparently various greens and apportion of wood) well-progressed through the digestive system and currently stored in the caecum section attached to the intestines and lastly some bile-like mostly-digested meat reduced to chyme mush and ready for passage to the intestines. This latter meal is Black Virlish, Wyrn's Face Believer of the Siblings of Immaculate Flesh and Soul, lost in battle last night to this very subject that managed to escape our retribution until earlier this afternoon. The sections of wood and bone elsewhere in the troll's digestive tract are likely other parts of our erstwhile companion, his armour and his klanth.

Meat is digested very quickly, it seems, and in a way similar to the digestive process within humans. It does appear that a magical element innate to the trollish form speeds up digestion, given the nature of our companion's remains. Plant matter travels through the passages of the stomach and attached organs and is churned into a thick fluid in the duodenum before passing into the intestines. It is kept in the system longer, perhaps because extracting nutrients from such matter is a more difficult process. Stone and earth (and other undigestibles, such as bone) appear to travel down through a sphincter-sealed secondary stomach system – a 'rock gizzard' of sorts. The separation occurs at the base of the main stomach. Here the undigestibles are dissolved in stomach acids even more corrosive than in the standard troll constitution and ground together to form a mushy paste, which travels on through a secondary intestine. The osseous remnants of our companion – and an unknown Mostali by the looks of it – are testament to the efficiency of this slow-working but eminently successful process.

With this digestive system, it is easy to see why trolls are capable of eating anything, especially given the innate magical element in the innards of the Uz. I might also conjecture that the unique digestion of trolls explains why the foul little Enlo creatures have been known to subsist on the consumption of Uz excrement. The resulting waste from this system, with all its variety, is bound to contain many nutrients left unabsorbed by the troll and 'manufactured' as it were, into a substance edible by the weak-stomached trollkin who possess much more primitive (and almost close to human) digestive systems.

the armies of Wakboth, the God Learners find merit in the rewards of the tale, not the moral accuracy. Yet the point must be made. The Uz are born of the darkness and man runes, not the Chaos one.

Chaos in Our Glorious Imperial Age

Chaos is an evil mostly consigned to mythology and the mists of history. We still feel its presence, of course. The aftershocks of the Darkness and the manifestation of Gbaji the Deceiver will likely ripple through time forever, perhaps collating into a greater threat in the future. Barring the misconceptions of darkness gods aligning with Chaos gods, the true energy of the void and the Devil are largely banished to the past where they belong. In this age of empires, the world is shaped not by the echoes of demonic invasion but by our empire and the misguided Jrustelans and their God Learner Alliance.

The trolls do not see things as we do. Their Rune priests and Runelords have told the Dragonspeaker hierarchs many times that they foresee a terrible destruction in the empire's future. They regard our ascendance as largely ignorable outside of the disputed territories. The lion's share of their hatred is not directed at warring empires but at their memories of Chaos and the potential future threat it presents.

It is for this reason that Chaos-bane gods, such as Boztakang the trollish equivalent to Storm Bull, see an unusually high rate of worship among the Uz of the modern age. Urox especially has had his cult degenerate into Orlanthi bullies and bravos with little of the ancient nobility present in their ranks. While once Runelords of the cult sought to emulate the god that threw a mountain at the Devil himself, now lesser men holding the same ranks as the heroes of the past piss in prison chamber-pots and wipe the sweat of bar brawls from their foreheads.

As ironic as it might sound, the Uz represent a very real link to the glories of such cults' pasts. The trolls are like sentries in this regard, fighting Chaos wherever it is found, hunting its influence, destroying all evidence of its touch and looking to an uncertain future with the grim gazes of suspicious guardians.

Troll Names

Trolls, like most Imperial subjects, possess a first name and a surname. The first name identifies the individual; the surname refers to the creature's bloodline. However, it is increasingly common for Uz to adopt a 'deed name' based on their previous notable actions or particularly memorable aspects of their character.

Deed names are part nickname and part title, and are either bestowed by others in the troll community or adopted out of choice. Harthak Bones-of-Stone, one of the creatures I consulted many times in the creation of this treatise, took his name from his incredible resistance to harm in battle. In contrast, Fynral the Bitter-Blooded was given his name because of his melancholic temperament and his long-winded denouncing of the imperial forces that now hold Dragon Pass. He was given this title (he admits this without rancour) by his own family, who grew tired of his endless sour threats.

Many of the greatest trolls seem to leave their bloodline name behind and either adopt their first name as their only name or use their deed title as their one and only form of address. Examples of this in our own Imperial Age would be the demi-god Ezkankekko, who is also known to outsiders as the Overlord of Lead and the troll Cragspider who sought to undo the Womb-Biter Curse several hundred years ago. One of the many difficulties for non-trolls is determining what names are actually deed titles and which are simply first names.

Speaking Uz names is not always easy. The names of many dark trolls and Ancients rely heavily on the guttural and grunting sounds of a deep trollish oesophagus and even the thicker saliva of a troll's mouth can alter sounds to produce names correctly. Humans and other races are unlikely to ever pronounce a troll's name exactly right, though few take offence at this. It is simply not something they ever expect 'soft-skins' to be able to manage.

Great trolls are given names that are easy enough for their primitive minds to remember and their tusked mouths to pronounce. These are often monosyllabic utterances that resemble grunts and other simple sounds. A few – those with the intelligence to understand the honour done to them – are either given deed names (or demand that others recognise them) based on their battle prowess or some other trait.

Enlo are generally nameless in any real sense that is supposed to convey identity. They are referred to by physical characteristics (Ugly, One Eye, Runt, Long Nails...) or by a much more commonly growled 'You.' The trollkin do appear to name themselves, however it is unlikely any Uz would acknowledge what his property is calling itself, especially given the short life spans of the sickly and twisted little creatures. To do so would make for a great many names to remember over the course of a lifetime. A lot of trolls lack the patience to remember all these monikers. Others lack the inclination. The rest lack the intelligence.

SLAVERY AMONG THE UZ

'They are born wrong. They are not Uz. When they cry and shriek and call for mercy, they are not seeing the truth. The truth is that Enlo are cursed. If Uz were truly cruel, we would destroy them at birth. Then they would never live at all. We let them live because we give them mercy. Their lives are bad? Who cares? They are lucky to even have life.'

— Urgurra Broken-Tusk, troll clan matriarch

'Why do humans keep slaves? Because they need slaves. Cultures need slaves for the dirty work, for the bad things strong people do not wish to do. Oh, humans – especially you Dragon-talkers – do not always say the word 'slave.' Sometimes it is 'conquered people' or 'worshipper' or 'subjugate.' But they are still akin to slaves, feeding a culture they hate but without the strength to stop. I see the storm people – the Orlanthe, you call them – chanting to gods that are now dragons instead of men. All because you have demanded it be so. Slaves, all. You need their faith.'

'Same with Uz. We keep slaves because we need them. Sometimes they see this truth and they rise up against us. Most times the Enlo are grateful for what little they get. We could just kill them all. We used to, right at the start when the females first bore the sour children. But they are useful for doing bad work. We need them now more than ever with the numbers of Uz falling each year.'

— Harthak Bones-of-Stone, troll shaman and healer

The Uz have slavery etched into the very bones of their culture. It must be this way for the race to continue, given the gods-poisoned wombs of the troll females. With each year, more and more Enlo are born in place of true Uz. With each mystical manipulation, a dark troll is replaced by a sterile and idiotic great troll. These beings are born into slavery to serve a culture that their own presence is slowly strangling.

On one level, it is tragic. Many of my companions and brethren within the Dragonspeaker cults speak of finding a way to help the trolls – or at least they would if the lessons of Vistikos Left-Eye did not speak so firmly against using our powers outside of bringing about the Great Dragon To Come.

On another level, a race should know when it is defeated. If the best efforts of troll heroes in the past have only created failures and bare semi-successes in removing their race's great hex, perhaps the Uz should face up to the fact they are a flawed and doomed people. In an age where we are shaping faith into the greatest dragon ever envisioned and while the God Learners plunder the myths of a hundred cultures, the Uz cannot even breed properly.

I believe that says something. Draw from it what you will.

Since the trollkin now make up a sizeable percentage of the troll population, destroying all the stunted creatures would decimate the Uz race beyond recovery. While it could be argued convincingly that the species is already on a slow decline into oblivion because of the Enlo, the trollkin stem the decline significantly. At least live slaves, no matter how weak and stupid those slaves might be, have their uses.

Trollkin are considered property from the moment they are born in a rush of cursed, black and bloody womb fluid. In the case of litters, which commonly range between two and seven, half of the Enlo are considered the property of the mother while the other half are given to the tribe. These latter trollkin are considered the property of the clan matriarch, though they will take orders from any Uz that demands something of them. They are effectively a shared pool of slaves for the community.

Enlo slaves are fed leftovers and, somewhat disgustingly, the solid waste of true Uz, even from birth. They grow to maturity slightly faster than humans, reaching adolescence after a decade and reaching their dubious physical primes in their early 20s.

True Uz have an average lifespan of almost a century, much like humans. Enlo tend to die after 30 or so years, usually ground down into death from a life of overwork. While troll funeral rites can be complicated depending on the cult membership of the deceased, dead trollkin are usually eaten within hours of their demise. In some cases, if the slave is particularly unappealing for some reason or if his fellow slaves do not wish to see their cohort consumed, they drag his body away from the tunnels of the Uz community and leave it to rot out of sight. More likely, though, some underground beast or wilderness scavenger will make a meal out of the little creature's corpse.

Enlo slaves are traditionally grouped into four categories, decided in the creature's infancy and depending on what the community requires or the mother desires. From what I understand of this artificial caste system, failure to live up to the responsibilities of any of the three toiling castes (enlokiz, Enlokurgi and Enloruk) ensures a quick banishment to the fourth and most lethal caste, the Enlorez.

Enlokiz – 'Blade Slaves'

'Is the kin stupid? Does he obey all orders? Is he stronger than other, lesser Enlo? If yes, then he becomes Enlokiz. He feeds the community with his blood.'

— Urgurra Broken-Tusk, troll clan matriarch

These are the trollkin trained for battle by the true Uz of the community. They are instructed in the use of basic weapons and Common Magic and serve as an unwilling militia of sorts, grouped in either skirmishing hordes on the battlefield or smaller groups of warriors sent to patrol through the underground tunnels. Enlokiz are usually referred to as blade slaves or, more simply, 'fighters.'

This faction of slaves tends to be the most numerous in most troll communities, especially in regions where the Uz are involved in regular conflict. The death rate among Enlokiz trollkin is staggering by the standards of a just society, with these troops often used as sacrificial pawns in pitched battles and as food if they fail to obey orders or show no skill with their weapons.

In some regions, the Enlokiz are grouped together in a sword-carrying ragtag collection of arrow fodder that can only be called 'warriors' in the loosest sense. In others, the trollkin regiments are more akin to organised soldiers, who although they do not fight for pay are still trained to surprisingly high standards. In some communities, these highly trained Enlokiz are frequently sold to the highest bidder in temporary (and occasionally permanent) mercenary bands, often led by an Enlokurgi advisor who serves as the aide of the winning buyer.

Note that from a tactician's standpoint it is not the aim of the Uz to create ineffective warriors. Enlokiz trollkin must be loyal and unquestioning, first and foremost, though being handy with a lead-tipped spear and a short sword of beaten bronze is a close second in terms of importance.

Particularly rabid or skilled blade slaves stand out amongst other trollkin as heroes. In the past, many of the major and lesser trollkin uprisings have been led by Enlokiz. As long as the 'hero' does not have any leanings toward rebellion, the Uz welcome such effective warriors among the ranks of their slave fighters. If the kin lets his new status get to his head, he is promptly killed and eaten for his presumption, unless he manages to flee into exile and work on his insurgency outside of the community.

Trollkin that show cunning and intelligence above their fellows – whether they have any real skill in battle or not – may be drawn from the Enlokiz into the loose ranks of the Enlokurgi.

Enlokurgi – 'Valuable Slaves'

Valuable slaves (often just 'values') are groomed for a grander existence, by trollkin standards, than their warrior or worker brethren. These Enlo display cunning, reason and in some cases even *wisdom* and are moved into a special caste of kin

where they serve their masters on more social and intellectual matters than simple spear-toting slaves.

Values serve the community as liaisons to the tribe's trollkin hordes, as ranking cult members that serve as examples to their lesser, stupider brethren and occasionally as shamans or magicians that contribute a great deal to Uz society. I have heard it said that several communities were blessed with values so intelligent that a few of the trollkin could even serve as advisors to the Uz family matriarchs, though this has never been confirmed by sight and practically every troll I have discussed it with denied it flatly and with much laughter.

Since Enlokurgi are more valuable than most other trollkin, they tend to be fed better and treated – if not well, then at least *less badly* – than their cousins. Given the nature of Uz society and the beatings all trollkin receive, this is a relative statement.

Enloruk – 'Work Slaves'

In most communities, even those that beat their warrior slaves black and blue to toughen them up, it is the Enloruk – the workers – who are treated the worst. These are the trollkin that display no notable talent with a weapon and lack the intelligence or the intuition to serve as values. A great many female trollkin end up in this caste, counterpoint to the number of males that become warriors.

The jobs of the workers are as menial and labour-intensive as would be expected. They essentially do all the work that the true Uz have no wish to do personally. Therefore, worker teams dig endlessly to extend underground troll communities, haul supplies, carry the kills of Uz hunters back to settlements, mend clothing, gather edible mushrooms and insects, build new homes for the Uz and do everything else that can be done with no skill.

In times when a community is in need of few workers, the Enloruk are the first to make the short change to food slaves. Even in prosperous troll settlements, Enloruk must tread carefully lest they be noticed and eaten by a hungry troll, since the Enloruk are generally considered expendable. A few of this caste will manage to become Enlokurgiz. Most will die of their toils or be consumed. The justification for eating the worker caste so often is that it is easy enough to bring some warriors back into the Enloruk if a shortage appears.

Enlorenz – 'Food Slaves'

'We eat them because we can. We eat them because they taste good. We eat them because it is the way of things.'

— Urgurra Broken-Tusk, troll clan matriarch

This is grotesquely self-explanatory. Although any of the Enlo can become food in a moment of anger, hunger or simple boredom, there are always born those who are immediately marked as food slaves. They are herded like animals, given troll waste to feed and grow on and given no chance to ever better their lot.

In some cases a band of Enlorenz will be temporarily assigned work detail to attend to, or thrown against the blades and spells of an invading enemy if there is no other resort. Usually, their days and nights are spent eating filth, living in their own waste and being watched over by one of the community's true Uz, who acts as some kind of cannibalistic shepherd.

Marking Chattel

Traditionally, trollkin are marked by their assigned caste and with an indication of the tribe that owns them. The most common method for doing this seems to have arisen from Dragon Pass when it was held by the Uz. It is a technique that has spread across Glorantha in our age: marking the faces of trollkin with various notches, decorations and brands indicative of caste, bloodline and clan. Some mothers never wish to mark their trollkin children with any acknowledging symbol, so these Enlo are marked with a sign of the tribe they belong to and given over to the tribe's queen. Most kin are marked with their caste, the family that owns them and the tribe to which that family belongs. Generally the marks are made on noses and ears.

The marking of trollkin ears ensures a permanent sign than few Enlo can ever be rid of and allows instant perception of what talents (if any) the creature has and who claims ownership of him. Most trollkin would never wish to remove their own ears to hide their slave marks, especially given that a one-eared trollkin is the clearest sign of an escaped slave and likely to be eaten by the first Uz he comes across. Some few Enlo are desperate enough to do it anyway. Others are simply stupid enough.

A tribe's marking patterns are very distinctive and many clans seek outlandish tokens to adorn their slaves' ears and noses so as not to resemble any other local tribal markings. Nose rings and earrings are the most common tokens, often made of copper to save any valuable metals for more important purposes. Rarely, particularly worthwhile values will be given earrings of bronze or some other substance slightly more valuable than the basic rings.

From these rings, a selection of additional tokens dangle, usually tied by hair from human victims or fine gut thread. Feathers of various birds, shells of dead insects, the bones of tiny animals like rats or lizards, small wooden carvings and even runic markings on metal or wooden slivers – all are

commonplace. Among the largest troll communities, some of the Uz slavemasters take more care in the artistic decoration of their chattel than they do in keeping their slaves alive.

Notching ears with knives is also a well-used method of marking ownership, with various slices or patterns marking the trollkin under a particular caste or owner. Branding with heated blades or irons – often on the cheek – is also common.

LANGUAGE OF THE UZ

'We speak without speaking in many ways. A threat need not be spoken but still scares a rival. Sounds can tell others what we intend without words. It is complicated. Humans do this instinctively, as we do, though our silences and sounds say more than yours. In the dark all life is blind and it 'sees' by hearing what is around instead. We are the people of darkness. This is why our language is so complex and can sometimes sound like a primal music to human ears. There is more to see in our sounds.'

— Harthak Bones-of-Stone, troll shaman and healer

'The Ancients speak simple. They were born in a simpler time and they need fewer words for ideas and things that we of the Uzko deal with. When trolls talk, you say it sounds like growling and hawking and spitting and barking. But the talk of the Mistress Race sounds like singing, even to humans. Not many humans get the chance to hear the song, though. Even fewer get to tell others afterwards. Manflesh is tasty, especially to the bitter Ancients who still blame Mangods for the destruction of Wonderhome.'

— Urgurra Broken-Tusk, troll clan matriarch

The Uz communicate in ways other than speech, like any sentient being. However, their body language and non-worded sounds are as much a part of their acknowledged language as their vocabulary. This is a key factor to remember when dealing with trolls, especially in delicate negotiation. If one pays attention only to what they say, he will be missing much of what is being communicated.

I turn here to the observations of Klemal the Confronter, Wyrms' Talon Disciple of the Adepts of Inhuman Mastery, who attached the following notes to my project. His experience in interacting with the Uz in both diplomatic and combat situations is invaluable.

Body Language

First and foremost when dealing with trolls is to note their body language. As hunched-over creatures by nature, the Uz can seem more brutish and animalistic than they truly are.

Shamigo,

My brother, the battles in Dragon Pass are endless murder. I lost my helm nine nights ago to the ugliest and loudest troll you have ever seen. I killed him of course but it took me weeks to sing that bone into shape. Imagine my fury. The rebellion will be put down before long. The Uz have taken to attacking our patrols in order to secure food rather than beat us back. It disgusts me. We were here killing the accursed God Learners only half a century ago. I am sick of insurgency and ignorance fouling the empire.

Last week a group of trolls managed to drag down and kill one of our tyrannosaurs. It saddens me that such a beast will feed the creatures for so long but the blame lies with its rider. You remember Musari? He went with his steed and we recovered his armour two nights later. I imagine being eaten and shit out by a troll would have taught him a valuable lesson in never shirking weapons practice. Idiot.

Here are my observations as requested. I hope they are of some use. I have been slaughtering these monsters for so long that I am no longer sure I can remember how to speak with them. My days as a diplomat are far behind me, brother.

For the Empire. For the Dragon. For the Perfection To Come.

X.

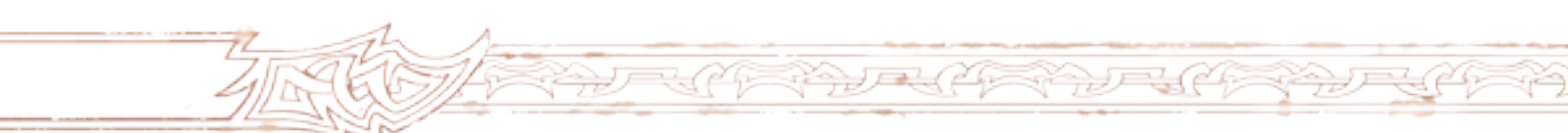
However, their hunch is also indicative of their mistrust of other races. The reason imperial soldiers encounter trolls hunched over is because the Uz are betraying their intentions and readiness for battle through their body language.

Trolls generally stand upright, though with a natural curve to their spine that ensures a slight hunch. This is the posture trolls adopt when they are completely at ease, which is why so few humans ever see the Uz standing tall – trolls are simply on guard at almost all times around members of other races. When ill at ease, trolls hunch further and bunch their powerful leg muscles like an animal ready to spring. This is their general battle stance, which is intimidating enough even when the hulking creature is otherwise silent. Trolls need no barbaric cries of rage to unnerve enemies – their battle stance even **looks** dangerous, like the creature is readying for a fight. Battle stance, or a cautious hunch close to it, is what trolls tend to adopt when in the presence on non-Uz.

This caution around other races is an ingrained, perhaps genetic, mistrust. It does not indicate any fear of the non-trolls present, except in the case of trollkin (who fear practically everything). These wretches are more likely to adopt more cowering, deeper bows or show their throats like submissive predator animals in the wild.

In social situations, the Uz unconsciously adjust their posture depending on their perceived position within the group. Among tribe meetings, the dominant warriors and the more influential females will stand taller than their peers, while the less worthy members of the gathering will stand closer to a deferent hunch. In the case of toweringly tall Uz, especially great trolls, it is common for these giants to turn their heads to the side as well as hunch, showing deference and respect despite their greater height. A troll with its eyes closed can appear submissive or thoughtful, though the opposite is true. Whether facing Uz or members of another race, trolls close their eyes as a calm and utterly sincere threat. Some scholars have pinpointed this behaviour back to the times of Wonderhome, when the near-blind Mistress Race would fight one another and would close their useless eyes before a battle to avoid damage to the soft tissue.

In my observations, eye closing is purely a dark and great troll phenomenon. The Uzko and Uzdo close their eyes to signify they are angry, relying on their innate Darksense for two reasons: they no longer wish to look at the other creature any longer and they are falling back on their most primal, instinctive sense to react to a potential threat. Whatever the cause of this behaviour, it is immensely intimidating to see a brutish creature as large as a troll grind its teeth together and



slowly close its eyes, yet still turn its head to face you without error. This is a powerful sign to change conversational tack, run for safety or re-evaluate the situation before striking. I have to wonder how many imperial diplomats and soldiers have died because they misinterpreted this behaviour and chose that moment to press their terms or their attacks.

In mixed company, such as a wandering band of mercenaries or adventurers, intelligent trolls tend to adjust their stance depending more on mood than perceived social hierarchy. This is a curious case of the Uz becoming more 'human-like' when in contact with humanity for extended periods of time. In these cases, the Uz will stand taller when making a firm point or disagreeing with a companion and may bow his head low or turn his face to the side to indicate compliance with a human's wisdom. Their hunched posture grows increasingly distant from having anything to do with how the trolls see themselves socially among these 'equals.' They recognise that non-Uz will miss the subtleties of body language, so adapt their postures slightly to suit the senses of the others around them.

Trollish intimidation is easy enough to determine. You can tell when a troll is openly, truly enraged or readying for battle by the way he cracks his knuckles (sounding like a small avalanche) or parts his jaws slightly, enough that his breath starts to whistle ominously through the gaps in his tusks and fangs. A troll that closes his eyes is warning you that he is ready to kill you for what you are saying and that you should stop immediately. A troll that cracks his knuckles or parts his jaws is letting you know that you have crossed the line already. At this point negotiations are likely impossible. This is the moment to run, expend energy in immediate spellcasting or give ground so that you may ready weapons before the troll attacks.

Vocalisation

The greatest difference between troll communication and human tongues is the sheer degree of non-worded vocalisation that occurs among the Uz. Grunts, whines, clicks, growls, howls and even different exhalations all mean different things based on the situation and the tone of the sound.

The apex of vocalised communication without actually resorting to use of traditional vocabulary is the 'hunting tongue' of the Uz. This language is instinctive to the race, much in the same way dogs or wolves can communicate through howls and barks without ever 'learning' to do so. This hunting tongue is a dizzying array of monosyllabic grunts, breaths, whines and clicks of the epiglottis in the back of the throat – many of which are so soft as to be inaudible to human ears or pitched out of the human hearing range. The hunting tongue can convey practically any information required on

a hunt, from the direction, type and number of prey to the distance of reinforcements, the need for additional weaponry and anything else the troll might need to communicate without ever speaking a word.

Most troll vocalisation is less sophisticated. When in good spirits, a troll's laughter will howl out like a wounded bear's roar. When nervous, an eerie series of throaty clicks accompanied by a rumbling chuckle is referred to as the 'liar's laugh' – recognisable among Uz but generally seen as genuine chuckles by humans and other outsiders. Uz, when they do lie to members of the other races, use the liar's laugh because it is less intimidating than their belly laughs and can only be seen through by experts on troll culture. Strangely, the same sound (or some so similar that humans will never know the difference) is often unconsciously vocalised when a troll stands over a vanquished enemy or is otherwise cruelly amused and pleased with itself.

Anger is commonly shown in body language but imperial soldiers have long referred to the 'Uz whine' with a healthy dose of trepidation in their hearts. This oft-displayed battle howl actually begins before the fight is joined, with an inaudible growl deep in the throat that rises to the tongue and is vocalised in a rumbling roar that finally (with a great release of rage) erupts into a howling roar that sounds something like a bear facing a lion. Without protective magics in place, the sound can be extremely unnerving, especially when sounded from the throats of dozens, hundreds or thousands of trolls. An imperial proverb applies to the Uz whine: *'The first weapon to hit your ranks will be their roars.'* This references the very real wall of pure, raw sound that assaults the senses and sets ears ringing as the trolls charge. The sound reaches its highest intensity just before each troll strikes with its weapon, so the individual facing the creature is confronted by a towering monster that is roaring so loud he is almost deafened as he tries to fend off its attacks.

These beings might be simple and primitive but they show a distinct grasp of psychology in warfare. This is the instinctive and brutish wisdom of trolls at work.

Speech

Trolls speak a close variant of the language we call Darktongue. Many of the words are abbreviated or altered but it remains a complex language with a vocabulary almost as large as most human tongues. It does not suffer any drawbacks of terminology or conceptualisation – I speak it fluently and can express myself in Uz as well I can in any other language excepting our holy Auld Wyrnish.

While trollish Darktongue can seem simpler than other languages on the surface, or at least no more difficult, it has

tonal aspects that complicate matters phenomenally, with the same terms meaning different things depending on the volume, pitch and tone of the speaker's words. This additional dimension makes the Uz language significantly harder to learn than most natural human tongues. The human ear is not always well tuned to discerning the differences in troll words, either. One mess of *krrh*, *gbk* and *jhv* sounds much the same as another to the untrained ear, no matter what tone it is spoken in and many troll words are similarly constructed. It has been observed by others in my regiment that the trolls we encounter sound like they are gargling gravel when they speak amongst themselves. This description is not overly far from the truth, at least for the ears of men unskilled in interpreting the subtleties of Uz language.

Trolls understand the difficulties others have with their challenging tongue. They tend to look favourably upon those who make the effort to speak Darktongue and in my experience are patient in repeating themselves to be understood or supplying words for the speaker. This is a remarkably generous and conscientious behaviour from such a brutish race.

I have never heard an Ancient speak. This grieves me from a completion and curiosity standpoint, as I gather that their vocabulary is much more limited than the dark trolls and the tonal aspects of their language are much more pronounced. The Uzko I have dealt with explain that Mistress Race trolls sound almost like they are singing and that the sound is pleasant to human ears.

Intelligent trolls have little trouble learning human tongues, since all trolls – even the wretched little Enlo – have well-developed lips, vocal chords and a similar vocal physiology to humans. Trueblood dark trolls tend to speak human languages best, with great trolls and trollkin usually being too stupid or possessing maws full of fangs that inhibit all speech anyway.

BATTLE

'Honour is in victory. If you walk away and your enemy does not, you are the honourable one. Men call us brutes and primitives, monsters who rely on raw strength and ambushes to achieve our ends rather than any sense of skill. All I know is that I am alive because of the way I fight and all of my enemies are dead. I care nothing for the opinions of either the defeated slain or the cowardly living. Honour is in surviving.'

— Fynral the Bitter-Blooded, warrior of the City of Lead

The troll attitude to conflict is very simple. They care for nothing except winning. No trick is too dirty, no tactic is barred and no style is forbidden. In fact, these matters do not

even rate as considerations. The only consideration in a fight is to survive it by any means possible and stand over the body of the foe at the end.

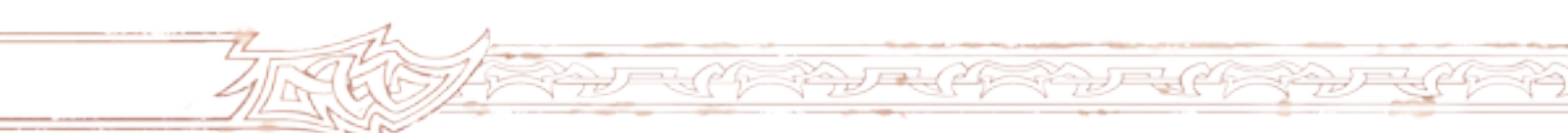
The Uz are exceptionally fond of ambushes. If there is a way to render a fight unfair or tip the odds in favour of the trolls, they will take it. It is hard to argue with this logic, though it derives from cowardice as often as sound tactical leadership. Nevertheless, the Uz are often superb guerrilla fighters. It is one of the main reasons imperial forces loathe clashing with the creatures.

Despite their bulk and generally brutish natures, trolls fighters are often very skilled at moving silently through the wilderness, either underground or on the surface world, in order to arrange lethal ambushes or avoid fights that they consider beyond their abilities to win.

When an ambush is sprung, the trolls are fast and merciless in the execution of their assault. A favourite tactic is to creep alongside enemy forces and wait until the foes make camp. As the cook-fires burn, armour removed and the men ready for sleep, the trolls make their move. When the attack is unleashed, it is delivered with a blend of magical spells and mundane weaponry – trolls rarely hesitate to expend their Common Magic in a fight. The assault is fast and brutal, with the aim of inflicting as much damage on the disorganised forces as possible before making a quick retreat. If the trolls cannot strike their foes at such a time, the Uz will choose similarly disorganised moments, such as when convoys enter a narrow pass. Trolls prefer to make an immediate strike before an enemy even has his blade drawn. The Uz are noted for their ability to win fights and not all of this talent lies in their great strength.

Many Uz prefer to fight after nightfall, though this is commonly misbelieved to be because sunlight hurts the eyes of dark trolls. The truebloods are as uninhibited by Yelm's brightness as any human, since their Darksense works equally well no matter the illumination of their surroundings. There is the matter of troll eyes being less efficient than human eyes in daylight but not to a large enough degree that many trolls would shirk from a fight if the sun was in the sky.

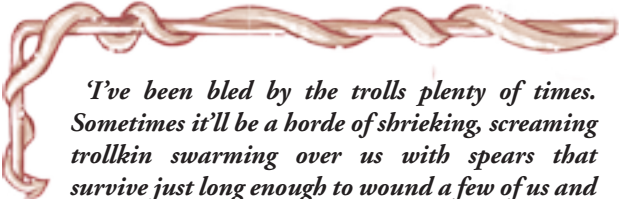
There are other factors involved in the Uz preference to shed blood when the world is dark. These aspects of trollish warfare revolve around the weaknesses of the tainted races – the Enlo and the Uzdo. Both species have overdeveloped eyes that mean the creatures can suffer in bright sunlight. For the great trolls this is no more than a minor annoyance. For the Enlo, it is another matter entirely, an altogether more serious and disabling one. Most Enlo are irritable, distracted and even frightened in the sunlight. With bands of already



unreliable trollkin, the Uz take whatever measures they can to ensure that their slaves are as trustworthy as possible before and during a battle. If that means waiting until after sunset to strike, so be it.

'Bleed them. Kill them. Eat them.'

This is a famous troll expression, summing up their attitude to a fight very clearly. It highlights the threefold nature of any successful Uz battle. It also states the fate of any imperial troops that are on the losing side against the Uz, so take note: if one still lives after a skirmish with the trolls it is unlikely his bones will be buried in the lands of the empire – if they are ever reclaimed at all.



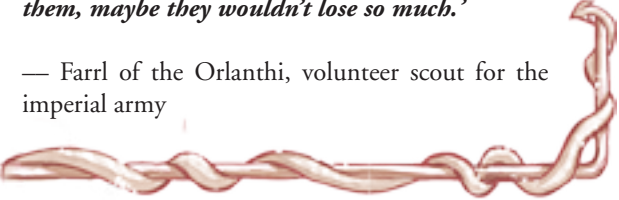
I've been bled by the trolls plenty of times. Sometimes it'll be a horde of shrieking, screaming trollkin swarming over us with spears that survive just long enough to wound a few of us and weaken us for the onslaught of the true Uz. Once it was an hour of slinging; stones the size of my fist came down regular as a heartbeat, cracking into heads and knees with savage accuracy. We tried to fire back but we couldn't see them in the shadows of the trees. A day later they struck us from the backs of giant wasp-creatures, dropping stones and casting spells while their insect steeds dodged most of our arrow fire.

In my second month of this latest rebellion against the reptile lovers I work for, the Uz priests summoned strange, black-skinned spirits that howled all night before a battle so that none of us caught a wink of sleep. Aye, that was a hell of a night.

On another occasion we 'enjoyed' a rainstorm of boulders hurled down from the canyon walls above us only moments before a second force engaged our column's rearguard. After the fight – which we eventually won – the Dragonspeaker leading us had to turn into a dragon to dig the survivors out from under the rubble.

Say what you will about those bastard Uz; they sure know how to fight. If there were more of them, maybe they wouldn't lose so much.'

— Farrl of the Orlanthi, volunteer scout for the imperial army



The first phase of any battle where the Uz have the advantage of forethought, planning or even just enough time to gather their wits, is called the **bleeding** by imperial troops that have come up against it. At the onset of most battles, the Uz will do their level best to disable or disadvantage their foe before the killing really starts. This is simple logic – panic and weakness make the butchery easier.

The aim of a bleeding is to have the defenders expend their magical strength and suffer wounds that will soften the force up before the true attack to come. In the disorganisation that follows, the Uz roar as one, charging in right behind the rolling wall of sound from their throats. This is enough to break even veteran units of men – injured from the bleeding and now confronted with monstrous foes whose very roars deafen them. This can make retreat seem a very palatable option, especially if the troops are undisciplined, drawn from the ranks of mercenary fighters or not reinforced by skilled leaders and powerful magicians. Imperial soldiers are renowned for holding ranks in such situations, of course.

As the mass roar reaches its apex and the trolls reach the enemy lines, the **killing** begins. Here is where the defenders face the true battle, pitting their own skill and spells against the battle magic of the Uz and their overpowering strength. Uz tend to loathe protracted engagements and if a quick victory becomes unlikely, they will retreat to prepare another plan for a successive attack. Although trolls' strength allows them to fight for longer than most humans, the Uz lack the numbers to endure long battles where the weight of the foe's numbers will tell against the trolls. In most regions, the Uz also lack the population to sustain horrendous casualties in any conflict and absorb such losses easily. Communities will fall if enough warriors and hunters die, so they seek to retreat before too many grave injuries are suffered.

If they are forced into a situation where they must make a last stand, they sell their lives dearly. Little I have encountered is more frightening than a cornered troll that knew there was no escape. It sent men flying with each swing of its two-handed bronze sword. Most were dead before they hit the ground.

The **gorging** is a result of an Uz victory and its details are obvious. The fate of too many imperial soldiers over the decades has been to meet a final end as meals for trolls.

It is worth noting that due to cultural dominance and military style, any EWF force is likely to outnumber the trolls they are fighting and that individually, while they may never match an Uz in raw strength, our troops have training and skill that has allowed them to conquer half of the known world. Take pride in that accomplishment. Do not fear the Uz – their packets of resistance are mere footnotes in our ascendance.

Stone, Lead and Bronze

'Stone is simply there. It is here. There. Everywhere. We use it for weapons, chip it into shape for axe heads or hammers, simply because it is so easy and common. It is also effective. It is also arrowheads and sling missiles. Bronze is strong and satisfying to use, carried by the skilled, the wealthy and the powerful. But it is just another metal, like many metals. Lead alone is holy. Lead is the metal of darkness. It is a rune metal and darkness runes are often formed from chunks of holy lead.'

'You are scared of metal. You cry at the touch of the cold fruits of the earth and shriek that they are the bones of dead gods. To Uz, lead is sacred like dragonbone is to you. Your laughter at our heavy armours and our metal money is like a ghost pissing air into my ears. It means nothing. You speak lots but know little, I think.'

— Bakrom the Disemboweller, Uzko mercenary

Imperial soldiers facing well-prepared Uz warriors often remark on the nature of their arms and armour. Stone clubs are viciously intimidating, hefted in mighty troll arms and brought with the force of a thunderclap. Hammer-beaten bronze weaponry has a tendency to bend in protracted battle but remains notably sharp for extended periods of time and is immune to rust; with a troll's strength a cutting blow can easily sever a limb or chop an armoured soldier in two.

It is lead that draws most of our fascination, however. It is one of the heaviest metals in the world, apparently sacred to the Uz, yet used for an endless array of both holy and seemingly trivial uses. It is heavily mined by the Uz of most regions, especially the Shadow Plateau trolls, which goes some way to explaining why it sees so much use in their culture, even as a form of currency they call the bolg. The lead bolg was supposedly invented by the darkness deity Argan Argar, though I have found no mythological confirmation of this beyond the stories of Bakrom, Harthak and several other trolls.

Either way, it seems a profane use of a sacred material. Lead is used for holy icons as one would expect, be they life-size statues or personal tokens like figurines or jewellery with religious significance. In contrast to this, exemplifying their lack of taboo in using their holiest metal, the Uz also use lead for mundane items such as their vicious-looking carving knives for food and drinking tankards large enough to fit a human head inside.

One trollkin I encountered who was unreasonably belligerent as well as surprisingly intelligent, informed me that on some occasions it had seen true Uz even eat lead. It was unclear as to whether this repast occurred because of a holy rite or because

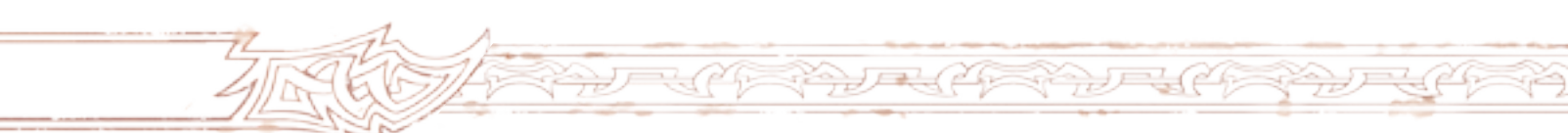
of hunger. Unlike many of his kind, this Enlo did not respond favourably to threats and turned out to be skilled enough at arms that he managed to escape me before I could deliver a telling blow. How galling.

In trading with humans, the Uz are rarely stupid enough to believe lead holds any real value to we 'soft-skins.' While a lead bolg appears to have an equal value to a silver piece among the trolls, Uz traders tend to be aware that humans will often try to swindle trolls by offering worthless lead in exchange for valuable items. Uz are never lacking in lead, despite its value. They are almost never desperate enough for the metal to trade it with humans, since they realise the humans benefit from the bargain a great deal. Offering lead to a troll in exchange for craftwork or services – even though it is the culture's holiest material – is the fastest way to genuinely annoy an Uz. The truebloods take especial offence at this kind of bartering, with trollish sensibilities requiring both parties in a trade to benefit and sacrifice equally, lest the trade be considered deceitful. It is a curious honour these beings have, with odd notions of fairness.

The most remarked-upon application of lead in Uz culture is the reason this discussion of materials is included in the battle section of this treatise. To wit, as witnessed by countless imperial troops over the centuries, the Uz use their holy metal to create armour, of all things. On one level I can appreciate the sentiment – we of the Dragonspeaker hierarchies use dragonbone and even wyvern'scale in some instances, do we not? On a more pragmatic level, however, this is *lead* we are dealing with. Bearing weapons and armour made from this heaviest of metals can exhaust even the strongest and mightiest of troll warriors.

The advantages are obvious. The morale boost of going to war bearing a spiritualistic icon cannot be ignored. Secondly, the durability of lead armour – which the trolls frequently enchant upon creation – makes it excellent quality protection. In addition, it is generally cheap to produce in lead-rich regions, which is understandably where such displays are most common.

The only drawback is equally obvious, of course. Lead is heavy. Trolls are not creatures with any real love for drawn-out engagements, and a warrior clad in lead armour is slowed a great deal by his load, hindering his guerrilla abilities, as well as tiring him out much faster. I have seen lead-armoured warriors doing battle. Thick, greasy sweat spatters onto their enemies with each labouring breath and every rise and fall of a primitive weapon. Perhaps this disgusting side effect is part of the appeal; I certainly would not put it past the Uz to think of such a tactic.



Critics of our glorious empire might find it amusing that I can say this yet march into battle wearing magically-shaped armour made from the bones of dragons. I say such criticism misses the point. I am not a hypocrite. There is a world of difference between wearing our sacred armour and the practice of skinning other mortals for interesting garments. Bakrom could not see it when I explained this to him, though with his dim trollish intellect, that is hardly surprising.

Trophies & Headhunting

'This is the skull of a chief of the storm people. This one is the head of a swordsman of the sun people. Good story, this. He was a great and holy sun priest who shouted many prayers to Yelm before I killed him. Ha! Makes me smile just thinking about it now. The bones of my enemies are memories I can hold in my hands. I will tell you of them all, little soft-skin.'

— Bakrom the Disemboweller, Uzko mercenary

The most common display of victory in battle is to erect a monument in the days afterwards so that future travellers will see evidence of the might of the Uz. These pillars are usually made of stone or wood, though a few rare (and longstanding) edifices are constructed of lead.

Pillar markers are generally decorated how the conquering horde sees fit. Skulls of enemies might hang from rough-edged sides, the names of the battle's heroes are etched into the column and any of the dead that are uneaten are buried under the earth around the pillar in a mass grave.

A particularly grisly habit of many troll warriors is the practice of taking trophies from the bodies of the fallen. Some Uz warriors take great delight in eating the bodies of their slain foes, as would be expected from the trolls. Others, however, take parts of a foe's body as a keepsake. A troll I met by the name of Bakrom exemplified this tradition by displaying his foes' remains as part of his couture. I was presented with his necklace, made of rope and bearing seven human skulls, each with a brutally short story of how the previous owner became troll jewellery.

It seems an odd thing to note here but the Uz are not human. This behaviour highlights that perfectly, for not only do they carry their enemies' remains without a qualm, nothing in their mindset ever allows them to understand what could possibly be considered immoral or dirty about such a practice. Worse yet, they actually find the results attractive. Bakrom was well-



'I Fought We Won'

'The Great Battle. It makes me laugh to hear the tales told by other races. At the edge of Everything and Nothing, the Last Troll – Uzkrul – stood against the forces of Chaos and fought for the world he loved. When his weapons broke, he used his claws. When his nails broke, he used his fangs. When his fangs broke, he used his fists. Chaos died that day, though it did not die forever.'

— Urganra Broken-Tusk, troll clan matriarch

'I have walked the realms of the hero plane and seen the truth. We have a word to explain what I saw but the closest you would understand is 'metaphor.' Do not be surprised I know this word; I told you I have spent the best part of 80 summers walking amongst the peoples of this world.'

'The Last Person is a metaphor for the greatest battle of all. We were all there – all the races, every soul that could summon courage, swallow fear and lift a weapon. All. The legend of the Uzkrul is true. But so are the legends of the Last Aldryami, the Last Human and the Last Mostali. All true. This is just the way of things.'

— Harthak Bones-of-Stone, troll shaman and healer

'I Fought We Won means more to Uz than it ever means to you, lizard-lover. Much more. Humans chopped swords at Chaos and cried to their gods in hope they might survive. For Uz, it was personal. For Uz, it was another chance to rend and tear and crush and crunch the flesh and bones of Chaos things. My heart hurts to think of it, so truly do I wish I had been there.'

— Durgur Mexil, Uz Runelord of Boztakang



pleased with his skull necklace, certainly, but he was prouder by far of the pinkish leather vambraces he wore, which he laughingly admitted to taking after skinning a God Learner who came asking about his legends.

It grieves me that I found some sympathy for one of my most hated enemies in that moment. No one deserves to finish his life as a troll's sleeves.

Family & Community

As noted previously, Uz society is matriarchal in nature. This tradition stretches across regional boundaries and has its roots in the first troll communities. Males are rarely treated any worse than females but in a race where the creator gods were notably female and the future of the race rests on cursed breeding, it is perhaps no shock to learn that healthy, fertile troll women are prized and treated with great reverence.

Though few male Uz (at least among the Uzko) are stupid or lacking in willpower, it seems there is an instinctive need to obey the wishes of a female and defer to her in social situations. Much in the way wolves will naturally defer to their alpha, so too do trolls defer to their females. It is never a mindless obeying, of course. Uz are still reasoning beings with their own personalities; it just seems as if something in their minds encourages them with an instinctive urge to respect the words of females. It is clear from even my meagre observations of Uz culture that high-ranking members of the traditional cults are free to act with whatever authority they desire and answer to no females other than their tribal queen.

Within the community, almost all matters of import are overseen by the females. Much of this responsibility and authority comes from the cult of Kyger Litor, which shapes troll culture from root to tip. The females' duties include many holy rituals, trading with outsider visitors and all aspects of judgement and justice – these latter instances usually revolve around notions of the punishment fitting the crime. Death brings death, theft demands that the victim receives reparations and so forth. Troll justice is brutal and simple, perhaps one of the reasons so few trolls sin against their own people. That and the fact that so few Uz within their underground warrens own anything that their brethren would wish to steal.

The ruler of a troll settlement is almost always female, except in exceptional circumstances such as a community locked in an endless war or instances of a male receiving divine favour, such as in the case of Ezkankekko. Female leaders are referred to as queens or matriarchs, though many settlements institute a ruling council of females, sometimes with male advisors, which often traditionally operates as a gerontocracy (rule by a council of elders).

In many communities, trolls are not bound by the human preference for monogamy. Usually it is a ranking female (or an otherwise unusually fertile one) that can claim several husbands, though there are instances where males have claimed several women as wives – especially in regions where the male population has suffered a decline from recent war. With many females having to abstain from sex and pregnancy because of their year-long purification after birthing trollkin, males spreading their seed among several women ensures that breeding within a community is continually taking place.

If females are the heart and soul of the community, males are the fists. They shoulder the majority of the physical workload in regards to hunting and warfare, and while most female Uz are more than capable of defending themselves, with the women running the day-to-day business of the settlement it becomes the duty of the males to venture out into the world in search of food and to fight the local enemies.

When at home, males generally perform whatever tasks their wives set for them. This is rarely menial labour (trollkin carry that burden) but might involve seeing to the more boring tasks of a household, such as overseeing the Enlo as they go about their duties. Male trolls are often bored by this inaction and most prefer to be out in the world breaking weapons over their enemies' heads or finding something delicious to eat. As ever, these latter two pastimes are often one and the same.

There is always work to be done within a community. Meat and food must be gathered. Weapons must be beaten into shape. Slaves must be commanded and supervised. Younger Uz and trollkin must be trained in the use of arms. Cult responsibilities must always be met. Liquor must be brewed. Whether in the lightless depths of underground caverns or in a night-time forest on the surface, troll communities are as alive with activity and industry as any human settlement. For all their primitive natures and slovenly appearance, the Uz are not a lazy people. Even with many of the trolls out hunting or doing battle, the settlement will still have its share of miners, weapon instructors, craftsmen working with bronze and lead and or healers, rangers and scouts.

Given the Uz loathing of fire – many troll metalworkers have learned to shape lead and bronze without flame, light or heat. Spells exist for just that purpose, usually taken from the cult of the enslaved Lodril and other Uz simply resort to their raw strength in order to beat the metal into blades and armour. If a smith works well away from the settlement, he might create a small forge in the way surface-dwellers would understand it, though the practice is apparently very rare.

Clothing

'Only the Romal and some Enlo are naked. This is not because they are stupid but because they are too poor to have clothes. Even so, most will still wear furs or scraps of clothes from the animals and humans they kill. They do not like light, you see. It makes their skin ache.'

Uzko are not pained like this. We wear clothes for the same reasons you wear clothes. Sometimes for important moments like rituals but mostly just to cover up. If a troll wishes to prove he is holier than holy, he will wear clothes even in the darkness of underground where there is no light at all. This is a tradition going back to the death of the God-Emperor of the Sun. The clothes of these holy souls represent the pious caution of ever having light touch their skin again. For my part, I think the tradition is stupid but I am not what one would really consider pious among Uz.'

— Bakrom the Disemboweller, Uzko mercenary

Since sight is not the primary sense of the Uz race as a whole, it might be easy to assume that clothes are less important to trolls than it is to us. This is – and is not – true. Deep in the stony bowels of the world, couture is meaningless. However, clothes are important to most of the surface-dwelling Uz, from reasons of modesty, protection and even a crude sense of fashion in some cases.

Most troll attire is basic, to say the least. I have seen many instances of clothes made of rags, animal fur and stitched-together human garments clearly looted from the dead and in several encounters I saw Uz warriors wearing creamy-peach leather that bore all the hallmarks of human skin. Some of this is notable because trolls are fully capable of eating humans and animals without ever skinning the victim, so to see Uz so attired indicates a very clear forethought and a *desire* to dress as they do. Admittedly, it can be intimidating to be confronted with a nine-foot monster wearing skin he peeled from the flesh of people just like you, before he ate their remains.

Holy robes are common among religious leaders and ranking cultists, though they are unpopular among the general troll populations of most regions. Simple trousers and shirts of various cloth are preferred, offering ease of movement – an essential aspect in troll clothing. Colours rarely matter since the Uz are truly colour-blind, in the sense that they have no capacity to distinguish all hues and instead see in shades of grey. No matter what a troll is wearing, it will often be hacked up in various places either because of the local heat or to make movement easier. Armour, clothing – all fall victim to this trollish amendment.

Though the Uzko are not racially sensitive to the sunlight, many breeds of Uz are. Even a dark troll that emerges from his subterranean lair after a long time under the earth will be pained by the light of day. This makes hooded cloaks, helmets and hats of various styles extremely popular among the Uz. Since underground-dwelling trolls that venture to the surface are also greatly uncomfortable in surface weather like rain, snow and wind, many of these hats are wide-brimmed to protect the face, of full-faced like a helm. Troll helms are always long-snouted to make room for a troll's jaws and though some Uz report feeling slightly uncomfortable when using their Darksense while their heads are encased in metal, it does not seem to hinder them in any significant way.

Funeral Rites

'Rocks are not Uz. Enlo are not Uz. Dead Uz are not Uz. Simple to understand, yet you do not see it. Don't screw up your face like your food is still wriggling inside you. I speak the truth. It is not my fault if you are too blind to understand.'

— Durgur Mexil, Uz Runelord of Boztakang

Another great and confusing hypocrisy is found in the Uz traditions of mourning and burial. As with eating the Enlo, trolls do not regard eating the flesh of the dead to be cannibalism. Once a troll dies, he is no longer considered part of the Uz race. It is because of this belief that the practice of eating the remains of loved ones, friends and battle-brothers has arisen over the centuries.

Ostensibly it is a mark of respect and reverence to the departed, despite acknowledging that the deceased no longer has anything to do with the dead flesh that remains. While this is simple enough logic to trolls and their central 'Uz' belief of a united pure-blooded gestalt to their race, it translates badly to human ways of seeing things.

At its core, the trolls believe that by consuming the flesh of their dead kin and speaking a simple prayer to their principal deities, the still-living Uz release the deceased's shade from all responsibilities to life and bless it for passage into the afterlife of the new Wonderhome. This consumption is also for the benefit of the living; in hungry communities the flesh of the dead can be a welcome feast if the residents are subsisting on dirt and rocks and in kinder terms it allows the relatives and friends of the departed to enjoy spending time with the deceased one last time. The rituals of the local cults and the rites of the deceased's own cult play a part in the ceremony's exact details, with variations seen across Glorantha.

TROLL MYTHS

‘Three gods from True Darkness are all that matter to Uz. Darkness Woman created these three gods from not-light. They are Kyger Litor, Mother of Uz, Mother of All; Mee Vorala of the darkness plants; and Sokazub of the deep and dark animals.

The truest, highest gods played games with the primal runes. They made all that would follow. When a fire god had a rune, he would make a fire thing. When an earth god had a rune, she would make an earth thing. When a darkness god had a rune, she would make a darkness thing. The first darkness thing, born from Darkness Woman herself, was Kyger Litor, Uzbirther. Uzbirther was perfect and whole, shaped by darkness and the rune of man. Darkness Lady was proud.’

— Jivalaag of the Eternal Hunger, Ancient-breed troll

Genesis and Wonderhome

These words come to me not from personal experience but from the journals of my predecessor, Garas Dalewon, Wyrms’ Talon Disciple of the Scions of the Sacred Flame. Unlike him, I have never managed to confront a Mistress Race troll. These extracts are taken from several of his final journal entries, recovered from his remains at great loss of life by the imperial XXI legion from a cavern network within Dragon Pass. The commentary and explanations are in my own hand, however. It seems the concepts that this Ancient, Jivalaag, was trying to get across are difficult in places to understand fully.

Here she speaks of the creation of the world, specifically relating to the Celestial Court’s manipulation of the Form Runes to create everything on Glorantha. It seems ‘Darkness Woman’ – a troll simplification of the primal darkness-concept we refer to as Dame Darkness, created Kyger Litor as something of a masterpiece from the Man Rune.

‘Uzbirther’ is a savagely abrupt description of the troll creator goddess, though this may be due to poor translation on the part of the late Garas. The notes under the heading ‘The Circle of Eight’ continues next, referring it seems to Kyger Litor and the Seven Sacred Ancestors.

‘Darkness Lady played more. Then came Korasting, Mother of Many, companion to Uzbirther, Mother of All. Darkness Lady gave the man rune to our Mothers to play with as they saw fit. And play they did.

Karrg Master of Weapons and the Valiant Heart was the first male born to the two Mothers in their games. Their daughter was Vanekara the Hurler, named for her strength in throwing anything across infinite vistas. Soon it was time for Korasting to create children alone.

Then came Jeset of the Black Water – who learned to guide souls after death. After Jeset Blackwater was Hombobobom Hands-of-Thunder who taught all others to sing and dance and drum and speak. After Hands-of-Thunder came Boztakang Chaos-Killer, who was destined to battle the most evil forces of the void. These were the first blood-children of Korasting.

Then came others. Then came Uz. Uz lived in Wonderhome, in blackness with no light. It was this way for generations. The uzuz were the only Folk. All was pure.

In time more darkness spirits came and dwelt with Uz in Wonderhome. The most Uz-like of these was called Zorak Zoran, who sprang from Nakala the Utter Blackness full-formed; curious, cunning, strong and always angry.’

— Jivalaag of the Eternal Hunger, Ancient-breed troll

The rise of the Uz from their creator goddess is clearly detailed here. What is interesting is the mention of ‘Nakala’ the Primal Darkness of which Dame Darkness was a manifestation. In referring to Zorak Zoran’s parentage as the Primal Darkness rather than a manifestation of it, it seems Jivalaag is implying a more direct bloodline to perfect, utter darkness than even their Uzbirther or the Mother of Many possessed.

The stories of Zorak Zoran are well-documented in imperial records already. It is known that the darkness-spirit, soon to become the Uz God of War, spent a great deal of his time stalking other creatures in the blackness of Wonderhome. There are tales of Zorak Zoran being different, even aloof,

from the other spirits of the era, since he had felt the burning touch of light against his eyes and flesh somewhere before. Details on this myth are sketchy to say the least – ‘light’ being unborn in the underworld yet still scarring a darkness-spirit is a difficult concept for some mythologies to come to terms with or explain.

It is also known that Zorak Zoran met with Eurmál and Humakt in the underworld and witnessed the discovery of the sword called Death. He saw the trickster god deceive in the ruse Humakt, which would eventually result in the death of Yelm at the hands of Orlanth.

In the Lesser Darkness that followed, Zorak Zoran hungered for the sword Death as he observed it doing its mysterious work through the hands of various gods. He finally had the chance to wield it himself, stealing it and using the blade to murder Flamal, a plant god, creating a great starvation in the wake of his slaying. Zorak Zoran was delighted by this new power.

The true changes came to Wonderhome with the death of Yelm, though. Slain by Orlanth, the God-Emperor of the Sun’s own soul streaked through Wonderhome toward its resting place as the cold-light ruler of the underworld. Even though Yelm’s living heat and brightness were much drained, it was still a fire god – *the* fire god – that burned through the underworld on that day.

The Age of Sun-Death

‘We tell tales of a day like no other day. A time when the Emperor of the Universe, the Light of the Hurtplace, screamed through Wonderhome in a tidal wave of shrieking, boiling liquid fire. The white fire was the skin of Yelm. There was redness in the white flames and this was Yelm’s blood, for he was still bleeding from Orlanth’s blow.

Even blind and burning, our armies rose against this intruder. In his hissing, flaming wake came other light and fire gods and spirits. It was these beings that we battled, yet because of the light and heat we died by the legion. We call this the Battle of Hanroo Field, where the rock of the ground and the walls were burned into black dust from Yelm’s trail.



Thousands fled upward to the Hurtplace, where Yelm’s murder now made the sky darker than the underworld. Thousands and thousands and thousands died, catching fire, eyes melting, exploding into dust when the water-blood of their bodies dried in a heartbeat. Finally the fire god settled, still bleeding, still shrieking in agony, still giving off waves of light and fire. He was close enough that Uz could hear him crying to the universe and see his light all around.

To Komor – the Hurtplace – we travelled, looking to one another and reforming our tribes. Many escaped the wrath of pitiful, murdered Yelm. But not all. Not Korasting, Mother of Many. She burned as legions of the uzuz burned and our wombs were poisoned ever after. Uzbirther was wracked with sorrow at her sister-daughter’s death. Kyger

Litor's sorrow was our sorrow and that sorrow turned our children into uzko.'

— Jivalaag of the Eternal Hunger, Ancient-breed troll

Called variously the Lesser Darkness, the Storm Age and the Age of Sun-Death, here we see how Yelm's death affected the troll race. In short, it decimated them. Many of them died either in battle against the fallen fire spirits or before they could flee to the surface world. Korasting, the Uz fertility goddess, was slain in Yelm's arrival within the underworld.

Whether Kyger Litor purposely altered the uzuz so that they bred uzko or whether the death of Korasting meant that no Ancients would ever be born again, the truth of the matter is that dark trolls were the future of the race from that moment on.

This was the birth of the Uz as we know them today. Often surface-dwellers, more frequently found within caves or subterranean tunnels, the dark trolls became the more populous breed over the following centuries. Their alliances with the other races and their wars against them are the stuff of legends. Treachery, heroism, betrayal and blood-brotherhood: it is almost enough to stir the long-dormant poet in me.

The trolls ventured upward, leaving Wonderhome behind. At the time, the Uz were led by Kyger Litor herself and two great Mistress Race warrior-heroines, Helagarl Goretooth and Ulaago Gashing Blade – affectionately known as Gore and Gash by their people. Under such guidance, the Uz came to the surface as many darkness spirits had come earlier. Spirits and gods the trolls were familiar with had already carved out their own places on the surface of Glorantha: Zorak Zoran was there, fighting beings of light and enjoying himself thoroughly and Xentha was no longer a darkness spirit but hailed as the goddess of the night.

'The paths to Komor were broken into the three ways. The first way – the way of Uzbirther, was a path through the rocky bowels of the Spike mountain, where we laid for a time in the under-earth halls of Darkness Woman. Most Uz walked this path.

The second way – the way of Gore and Gash, was a path through good-hunting tunnels led by our two greatest warriors. During this journey, Gore and Gash saved the life of Asrelia, from Lodril Fire-Spitter, the Volcano God and in return she became our Goddess of Darkness within the Earth.

The last and least followed of the paths was the way of Kogag, son of Jeset, who had his followers sail the black

water of the River Styx. They vanish from our tales for a time.'

— Jivalaag of the Eternal Hunger, Ancient-breed troll

It is not that simple. There were further divisions between the troll bands. Once Gore and Gash had reached the surface world, they found themselves in Genertela, where the group split into another three bands of survivors. One of these bands came across the miserable and pitiful land they attempted to call Dozaki's Newhome, though we knew it then and still know it now as the Kingdom of Ignorance, where the trolls still rule.

The northbound group encountered long-lost cousins in the tundra and ice plateaus, joining these snow trolls and bolstering their community. These arctic souls were led by none other than Boztakang who would come to be known to the Uz as the Chaos-Killer.

The final group, led by Gore and Gash, appeared to have limited success at first. They clashed with the elves who drove the Uz from the field with colossal magical power. As entire mountains began to fall upon the trolls, they cut their (significant) losses and fled the battleground. Deep in Dara Happa, the Uz were routed by the forces of Yelmlio himself, who was leading an army of Aldryami and sun-worshipping humans. Loss after loss forced the Uz north and sent them fleeing to the edge of the Dara Happan lands. Here the group was split again due to infighting.

Half of the trolls vanish into history at this point, legendarily consumed by a sea creature as they trekked further north. The tale tells of a gigantic sea beast deceiving the trolls into walking directly into its mouth, with only an intellectual soul by name of Eristi the Doubter surviving the incident.

I do not believe a word of this. Even the thrice-damned Uz are not this stupid. Some of the enlo might fall for such stupidity and perhaps the uzdo. To believe that an entire colony of Mistress Race trolls would suffer such fragile deception is simply inconceivable. *Something* happened to them, though I have no idea what. I wonder if the truth is a secret shame to the trolls; it would explain why they never speak of it and instead cling to a foolish story of sea monster duplicity.

The other half of the trolls, still guided by Gore and Gash, eventually encountered Zorak Zoran in the Dara Happan borderlands. Joining with the warlike darkness-spirit, the Uz army attacked Yelmlio's forces at the Battle of the Hill of Gold and the son of the sun-god was grievously injured. It was for acts such as these that Zorak Zoran was exalted as the troll God of War.

After a further journey southward, the Castle of Lead was eventually established. The legend I have heard from several trolls tells the same story: a troll master craftsman by the name of Gadblag was held aloft by Gore and Gash for many days while he commanded a horde of demons and spirits through an ancient summoning magic. These beings constructed the Castle of Lead, where it still stands today. From there the trolls spread across the surrounding lands, enjoying the dim skies of the Lesser Darkness and prospering in their new Hurtplace home.

The True Darkness

'Then the Chaos Wars come. We hurt in that age, pain after pain after pain, even when we win against Chaos. Some of the Younger Races – the plant people, the rock people, the soft-skins like you – the Younger Races believe we fight for Chaos. This is a lie. Sometimes we killed the Younger Races for the lands or their magic. Sometimes we killed them because they tried to kill us or our gods. Mostly, we tried to kill Chaos. No other race kills the Devil's creatures with the passion of Uz.'

Among the Folk this was the Age of Blood and Bitterness. Even our victories were tainted by loss. Every Chaos army beaten into a rout inflicted great pains upon Uz before they ran from our warriors. Pocharngo, called the Mutator, was defeated by Boztakang Chaos-Killer and his bloody remains thrown across the Chaos hordes. Even this victory came at the cost of losing many, many souls who became Romal – the cave trolls.

The Age of Blood and Bitterness leached Uz of strength but not heart. Ulaago Gashing Blade died gasping, strangled by the tentacles of a Chaos creature, yet his fellow warriors tore his body from the beast's arms for the death rites and Uzbirther stole Gash's soul from the lips of the Devil.

Then came the Wound Fight; the Night of the Bloody Blades; the Great Victory; the Battle of the Black Sun; the Siege of the Spike and a hundred more until I Fought We Won. Four thousand generations passed between I Fought We Won and the final end of the Age of Blood and Bitterness. Uz were never the same after this era, though all races can say this as well without ever lying.'

— Jivalaag of the Eternal Hunger, Ancient-breed troll

It might be argued that the trolls were among the most successful races during the True Darkness, though this is a relative statement given the curses they suffered with their breeding. While all other races strove to recover from the Chaos Wars, the Uz had little hope of doing so. The Mistress Race was declining into a slow extinction and only dark trolls

were born. That situation would only worsen in time, when Nysalor was born and inflicted further hurt against the Uz.

The most devastating defeat the Uz suffered at the claws of Chaos was assuredly the Siege of the Spike. The troll defenders of their race's mightiest kingdom stood in their scattered legions, slaughtering tens of thousands of Chaos ooze creatures that swarmed up the gigantic mountain. Once the first army of evil was repelled, a second was faced and similarly beaten back, though at great loss to the defenders. The Devil himself came with the third wave, and it ended in a near-stalemate with both sides bloodied, battered and close to collapse. Chaos's secret army, laying in wait until that moment, chose to attack while the trolls licked their wounds from the Devil's assault.

The trolls retreated into the mountain before the Devil could launch another wave but the bulk of the hidden Chaos army had already flooded the inner caves. Inside their own tunnels, the Uz were butchered in droves. The Spike fell to Wakboth and ultimately the entire region was destroyed in the Chaos Wars. Even today, trolls mark it as one of the greatest defeats their race has ever sustained – and the Uz have plenty of defeats to choose from.

The Siege of the City of Lead is another tale that rings through the centuries in troll-song and night camp tale-telling. Bakrom the Disemboweller described his own HeroQuest to the battle: *'Uz were outnumbered like always, fighting long and hard to stay alive and not even sure if winning was possible. I do not count so well but I tell you that I killed many Chaos beasts in the Hero Plane that day. Krarsht was there. You know the Chaos squid goddess? She shovelled hundreds into her maw, dragging warriors from their feet with her tentacles and eating them, shitting out a bloody trail in her wake. Foul beast, she was. I swear we got close to her right at the end but she used her magic to escape.'*

In the simply-named Wound Fight, a horde of Uz warriors were attacked while already retreating from a confrontation with sun-worshipping humans in Dara Happa. The battle earned its name because not a single troll escaped unhurt. This beleaguered army still nursed fire-magic wounds as they were ambushed by ooze-like spirits and demons that fell from the treetops to envelop trolls whole. Zorak Zoran was present at the battle, and his claws dealt terrible damage to the Chaos creatures, finally forcing them to retreat back into the trees, where the blood-maddened trolls actually pursued them to finish the battle once and for all. It is believed that it was another of the battles where the Chaos God of Treason, Krjalk, managed to flee death before his eventual destruction by Zorak Zoran. This final matter was related to me as well, by another HeroQuester:

'At the Great Victory, our War Lord tore Krjalk the Treasonous into a hundred pieces. The air was black with the Chaos God's blood falling down like rain all around us. The Devil and his general Kajaboor were fools. There was so little left to conquer that they fought among each other. Krjalk was there, also, watching his betters fight as the Chaos armies ground against one another in fury. We struck in a rage, cutting into the wounded Chaos armies, routing them both. In the midst of the goriest, bloodiest battle I have ever fought, Zorak Zoran chopped Krjalk's head clean off his spine and pulled the remains to pieces. His laughter was the greatest sound I ever heard. Even the Devil ran from us that night. I do not blame him.'

— Fynral the Bitter-Blooded, warrior of the City of Lead

Into the First Age

'We were bloodied and mauled by the coming of the Dawning and what humans now call the Great Compromise. Yet Uz were still stronger than many of the Younger Races. Uz had a realm of our own. Uz had living gods that did not ever die in the Chaos Wars. Uz was strong.'

We sing a song now about the Compromise, called The Spider's Promise. It tells how the Universe Spider crawled into Kyger Litor's mind and spoke a secret the Mother of All wanted to hear. Our song is a long one, then telling how Uz will one day find peace in Wonderhome if Uz obey Uzbirther in life. It also tells of how Zorak Zoran hated the choice and said no to the other gods and how Uzbirther magicked him into agreement.

Then the light comes again. The uzuz that remain go under the earth with many of the uzko. Some uzko stay in the Hurtplace. And then Time is born. Nothing happens until the foolish Younger Races create the Second Devil.'

— Jivalaag of the Eternal Hunger, Ancient-breed troll

Again, this is an oversimplification. A great deal occurred in the centuries after the resurrection of Yelm and before the rise of Gbaji. The opening decades of the Dawn Age saw the naming of many regions of Glorantha as 'Troll Lands,' where the Uz held dominance and ruled over strongholds that had survived the Great Darkness intact. Ancient bloodlines oversaw these communities, ruling in the traditional trollish manner and only occasionally ordering the invasion of other lands, which shows great restraint for the Uz. The main strongholds were located in the Shadow Plateau, Dagori Inkarth and the eastern Kingdom of Ignorance. The main advantage the trolls had over the other races during this era was the fact that the Uz had so many smaller settlements spread across the world, which had

survived the Chaos Wars by hiding or clinging to life through successful guerrilla fighting. Due to these territorial claims, the so-called 'Troll Lands' took up a sizeable portion of land and many border skirmishes broke out between the Uz and other races.

Councils of the various races rose and fell one by one. Each attempt at a world-spanning peace was shattered by increasingly violent war. The trolls were disillusioned with such unity from the beginning anyway and their bitterness only grew as the Mistress Race began to die out. The uzko were now the overwhelming majority of trolls in the population. Hundreds of dirges and mournful funeral songs have come to use from this era, some of which are actually pleasant to human senses and are recognised as masterpieces even today in the imperial court. Others sound like a herd of our Death Kings fighting over food – if you have ever heard the tyrannosaurs doing battle, you will know of what I speak. It tends to anger trolls when they learn that we have been known to perform their funeral songs as courtly art, however.

The Coming of the Deceiver

'We left the Second Council, as did the dragon-men. The dragonewts were offended by the ideas of the soft-skins and were just as blind as the rest of you. We were not blind. We had prophecies that told us of the great doom the new ideas would bring. No one listened before we left and no one cared after.'

But we were right. Your Perfect One was the Deceiver. A Chaos child in the skin of a light god. Ugh. Could there be anything fouler than our two banes aligned? We summoned the Black Eater. Our secret spirit, our hidden weapon, unsummoned even in the bleakest hours of the Age of Blood and Bitterness. We called to it now.

And it died. It died under the White Light of the Deceiver and for our wisdom and foresight, we earned another terrible curse upon the wombs of the women.'

— Jivalaag of the Eternal Hunger, Ancient-breed troll

The martyrdom of the Uz was almost complete, for here in the Gbaji Wars the trolls suffered the Womb-Biter Curse, also called the Trollkin Curse, and their breeding was poisoned once again.

The impact of the curse cannot be overstated or exaggerated. It very nearly wiped the trolls into extinction, for at first the Uz slaughtered their premature, twisted little offspring and population numbers plunged sharply. The generation following the Womb-Biter Curse was literally less than half of

that which came before. Eventually it was decreed that trollkin should be allowed to live and bolster the troll population, though they would be regarded as slaves and treated as such.

It made little difference at first, of course. The population decline took centuries of breeding to counteract and Gbaji's second assault against the trolls came after only 100 years of living with the curse. Only the City of Lead and a few other settlements remained on the surface – the majority of the devastated troll population fled underground. There was little succour there, as the Uz soon warred with the Mostali under the earth where none of the other races even knew.

What should have been cooperation for mutual survival soon erupted into full-scale war between two races fighting over the same tunnels and underground settlements. The trolls, in typical Uz fashion, sought to slay the residents of each under-village they came across and live within the ruins until the food was gone, then move on to the next. The Mostali fought back viciously and the two races battled many leagues beneath the feet of surface-dwellers.

The magical assaults of Naxili Garang in HeroQuests and the resulting birth of enlo litters have already been discussed. The resurrected Korasting was once again wounded by enemy gods and the Uz once again suffered for it. I will spend no more ink on it here; suffice to say that the latest strike by Chaos, through Gbaji, coupled with this First Age warring in subterranean realms finally ushered in the long decline to potential extinction. The population of uzuz declines yearly, the uzko maintain an uneasy balance, yet all breeds are dwarfed by the swelling numbers of trollkin. Scholars are already speculating that in several hundred generations, the humans of Glorantha will know only the enlo as 'trolls' in the traditional sense, with dark trolls and Ancients long swept clean from the world.

The Uz featured significantly in the end of the First Age. The human Arkat made war against the Deceiver and did so with great success. Among his legions – indeed, it is said by many troll tale-tellers that *first* among his legions – were the Uz and the host of night-spirits and shadow-spirits that flocked to their cultists' banners. The Uz exalted in their roles, whether directed against Chaos or humans who were in the thrall of the Deceiver. The wars raged through Dragon Pass and Peloria, with many among the Uz certain that this campaign would be the last flare of glory for their race. In truth, this is exactly right, though the trolls did not die as they feared they might but merely fell into a long decline afterwards.

At a moment when all seemed darkest for Arkat's forces, Kwaratach Kang, a Zorak Zoran Runelord and Arkat's shield-bearer, used his powers to transmute Arkat's form from human to troll. There are always tales of Arkat's transformations

with each race claiming him as 'their' hero, though given the fervency and skill in the Uz armies against Chaos it seems likely that for the final battle Arkat would assume this race's identity if he decided to change.

With the Deceiver rent apart and the First Age coming to a dramatic close, Arkat rewarded his loyal Uz warriors by appointing them rulers of their hereditary lands in the Shadow Plateau, the City of Lead and elsewhere across the world. In time the Uz would lose many of these lands and be driven underground once more, though none could know this at the time. The Uz never regained all of their lands, for Arkat's own imperial ambitions housed many of his Uz warriors in his new kingdom and the troops of Gbaji, still unbroken in many parts of the world, resisted immediate surrender.

Our Glorious Imperial Age

'Sometimes you come and demand tribute. Sometimes you come and offer gold for little enlo warriors, who you throw into battle as slaves in the same way we do. When we overthrow you, you bring tyrant-reptiles and dragons and dragon-men and soldiers to enforce order. The God Learners take our secrets. The Wrymfriends take our lands.'

'Our numbers grow. Slowly, slowly, but they grow. In the shadows. Under the world's skin. In the heart-tunnels of the underworld. We seek Wonderhome and we seek healing from the grief of past ages.'

'Your grief is yet to come, dragon-kisser. You will die in the fire you love so much and Uz will be there to laugh at the shock on your soft pink faces. You write of how you can never trust Uz because Uz are inhuman. Look to your dragon-men friends, empire child. Look to the dragonewts.'

— Jivalaag of the Eternal Hunger, Ancient-breed troll

I will keep myself to the details which I perceive as necessary here. No time or effort need be spent on explaining the geographical losses suffered by the Uz in the early Imperial Age, nor does the rise and fall of Arkat's pathetic 'Dark Empire' need any more commentary than one might find in most history books. The trolls entered the Imperial Age much as they had entered the First Age – strong if not dominant. That did not last. With the Trollkin Curse now overwhelming the uzko population, it *could not* last.

The trolls supported Arkat and were supported in turn. Meanwhile they fought sun-worshipping Pelorians, elves and practically everyone else they felt they could beat or who felt they had been wronged in the past by the Uz. Even the Orlanthe of Dragon Pass rose against the troll overlords there, in battles over *taxes* of all things. The strength of the early

age was leached through war and the Uz dwindled to the position they hold today: a minor threat, feared individually but lacking power as a unified force.

The trolls drew back into their ruined strongholds or founded new underground kingdoms away from the light and the victorious surface races. In the shadows they sought to breed back to strength, which was partially successful even if it meant training and equipping huge bands of trollkin slave-warriors. It was during this time, only 200 years ago, that Cragspider performed her magical ritual and created the great trolls.

It was also during this time that the trolls fell under the idiotic leadership of a giant, who directed his trollish hordes against the fledgling city of Pavis. Given the seers' belief that Pavis is a city with a great destiny, it surprises no one today that the Uz were drawn to such a place. I like to believe it is the unconscious desire of the Uz race to leave some great imprint on the world before they are eventually forgotten in Glorantha forever. On their second siege, they took the city and constructed mighty walls that stand today. It is quite a sight, I assure you of that.

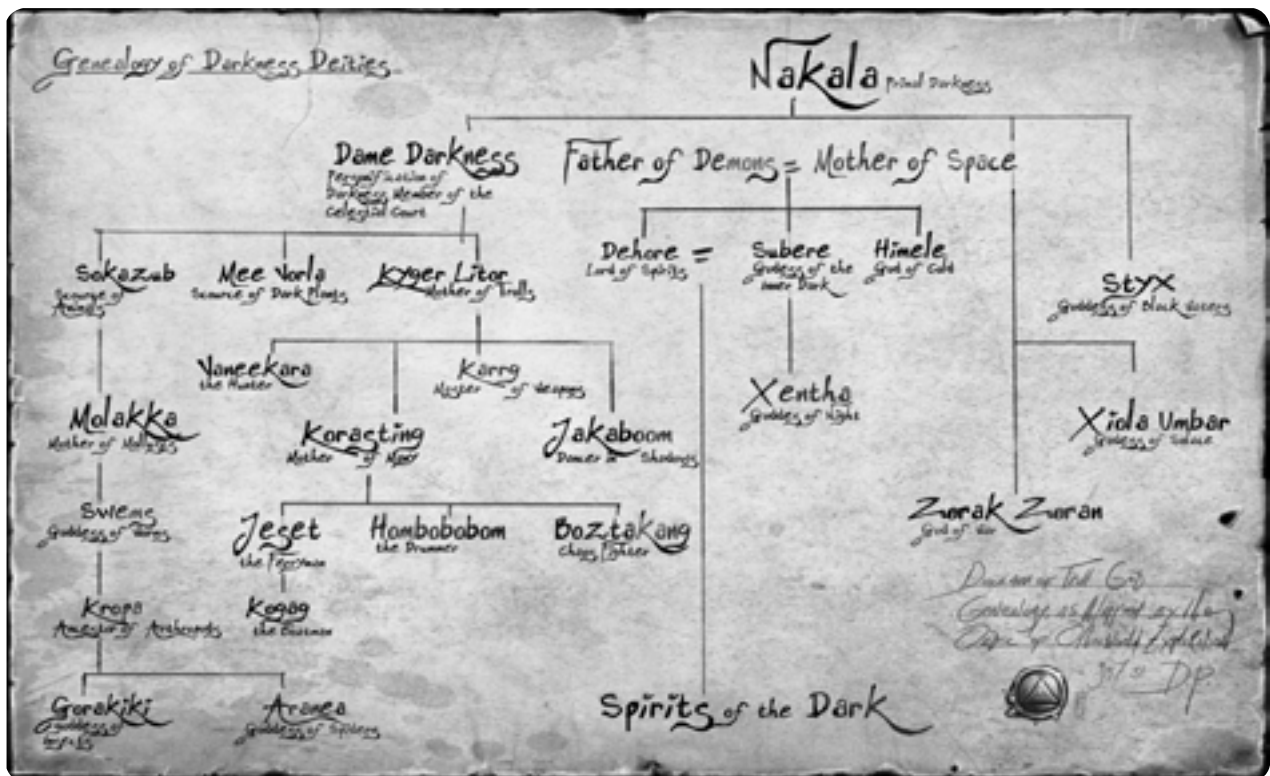
However, even alliances between Uz and Mostali – the last true allies of the Uz in battles against humans and elves – crumbled due to treachery. Such betrayals were over territory rights and hot-tempered arguments, and usually arose from the Uz side of the army, which again will surprise no one.

Within the last few centuries, new orders rose from the rubble of Glorantha. The trolls feared these new ways right from their founding, which was the reaction of many. The first of these movements was far from the trolls but they felt the rise sure enough. This was the God Learner Alliance. The second of the movements was much closer to troll-held lands and accords were struck once the Uz saw the strength of the new kingdom. This was our own glorious Empire of Wyrms' Friends. The trolls would not join us though they vowed cautious friendship. It would be some years before the endless petty rebellions began, of course.

It is no secret that resistance to the spread of the imperial way is growing in some areas. The Uz, the Orlanthei and the Pelorians are among the most vocal rebels within their lands, though many of these folk still bend to the yoke we have placed upon them. Depending on your political point of view, they are still either contributing to the good of the empire or powerless to resist the boots resting upon their throats.

In some cases you will be ordered to fight alongside the Uz, be it in the form of the near-worthless trollkin bands we hire as arrow fodder against the Dara Happans or alongside true Uz if you are sent to the Machine City siege. It is my ardent hope that this treatise serves you well in imperial service.

Yours in the growing light of the Great Dragon To Come.



TROLL CIVILISATION

'You ask why Uz hate so much? I tell you, soft-skin. I tell all. Uz fights and fights and fights. Uz loses and loses and loses. Uz fights the Burning Dead God and Uz must run to the Hurtplace. Uz fights the Devil and he butchers Uz even when Uz win. Uz fight Nysalor and he curses Uz wombs. Uz fight in Dragon Pass and Uz have to run and hide. Uz fights and fights and steps back with every time blood is spilled. How can this be? Why is it so? It is like Glorantha itself hates Uz. That is why Uz hates you, dragon-kisser. Uz hates everything.'

— Uruuga White-Eyes, Uzuz Rune priest of Kyger Litor

Trolls are just like humans in that their region and culture has a great impact on how they live their lives. A troll community in the Shadow Plateau is not going to be the same as one in Dagori Inkarth or Halikiv. In most instances, local culture is most heavily influenced by the members of the Uz pantheon that receive the greatest portion of the local trolls' worship. More than many other races, the pious Uz are shaped by their faith. This is only to be expected, when it is believed their divine mother actually resides in the mortal world and the son of another Uz god rules from the Obsidian Tower. In many respects, troll communities look to their deities as a means of resisting the ever-spreading empires of the God Learner Alliance and the EWF.

In instances where the Games Master wishes to plan out a troll community (which are spread across the length and breadth of Glorantha), the most important factor to consider is which gods and goddesses receive the lion's share of the local worship. This choice is likely to affect family structure, local diet and even who the Uz are willing to go to war against. The Uz dwell in large numbers in Guhan, Halikiv, the Blue Moon Plateau, Koromondal and the Elder Wilds, though not in numbers significant enough to impact the rest of the world in any grand manner. They are generally considered 'troll lands' by virtue of the Uz having a denser degree of settlements in the regions, rather than by any valid national claim.

The most important trollish strongholds in the Imperial Age are the realms of Dagori Inkarth and the Shadow Plateau. The former is the mortal residence of the immortal goddess Kyger Litor and the location of both the Castle of Lead and the sprawling Redstone Caverns, which are home to dozens of

Uz tribes – the largest gathering in the world. The latter, the Shadow Plateau, is the location of the Obsidian Tower, where the son of the god Argan Argar rules over his people by divine mandate.

UZ IN GLORANTHA

The old Gloranthan proverb states: 'Trolls divide the world into two categories – that which can be eaten and that which cannot. And there is precious little that falls into the second category.'

Uz reactions to this proverb will vary depending on the troll who hears it. Nodded agreement and predatory, animalistic stares are likely, as are amused, rumbling chuckles or derisive laughter. It is not unknown for trolls to take great offence at their culture being ground down into these vague, churlish terms. Bloodshed frequently follows its utterance, which some might say lends a certain air of credence to accusations of uncivilised reasoning or behaviour.

As a general attitude, the trolls tend to consider the other races of Glorantha to be inferior to their own kind. In defence of this vainglorious belief, the disregard is not without cause – at least according to the Uz themselves. The trick to relating to this mindset when playing an Uz Adventurer is to ask the following questions, since these are the facts and beliefs that every troll in Glorantha has grown up with:

- What other race can boast such victories against Chaos?
- What other race has suffered martyrdom so thoroughly against Chaos?
- What other race is biologically strong enough to draw sustenance from practically everything in the world?
- What other race is as strong and physically gifted (with senses like Darksense) as the Uz?
- Which other race deserves respect for foreseeing the corruption within the Great Deceiver?
- What other race can survive equally well in the lightless depths of the earth and the surface world?

Individual Uz will probably find reasons to add to this list of questions. A follower of Zorak Zoran will look with scorn upon the Dara Happan people, not only for allowing themselves to be conquered by the lizard-kissers but also because of his god's

humiliating defeat of Yelmalio in the Godswar, no matter how minor a deity Yelmalio is for most Dara Happans.

Troll society rewards purity over deceit or corruption and they are proud of it. Faithful priests and priestesses are community leaders, females who have pure births without trollkin litters are respected above others and rarely does a troll rise to command respect or gain leadership through deception or manipulation of a community. As a general rule, Uz are proud of their honesty in these regards.

On the other side of the coin, Uz see corruption throughout the hierarchies of other cultures, especially the humans with their empires of staggering size and near-infinite ambition. This propensity to slide into corruption is yet more evidence for the trolls to put their way of life above that of the other races.

While the Uz are not openly hostile because of these opinions, those that cling to them are likely to feel at least a little superior to the other races. Chaos-born and Chaos-touched races such as broo and cave trolls are the exception to this mild superiority. While some trolls pity these races, most hate them for their very natures.

UZ AND ALDRYAMI

The Uz and the elves have often clashed throughout their respective histories, due to one motivating force. Hunger.

Most regions where trolls live is generally hilly and rocky, with what vegetation that prospers in such terrain closely cropped by the Uz. Driven by their need for something tastier than raw rock, trolls frequently send hunting patrols into neighbouring lands.

The Uz view the plethora of succulent vegetation in elf inhabited woodlands as a delicacy and conflict occurs almost without fail when Uz raiders begin ripping up juicy plants and the gardeners arrive to drive the foragers off. Since elves have the advantage in their own lands, the Uz generally get the worst of the exchange. Conversely, if an elf party trespasses into troll territory, they usually end up served at the table of the local mistress race troll.

In regions where bountiful vegetation is commonplace, trolls view greenery as tedious fodder and specifically start hunting the inevitable elf guardians instead.

Other than these raids, there is normally little or no contact between the races.

UZ AND DRAGONEWTS

One of the few races not eaten on principle, Trolls treat Dragonewts with a great deal of respect, since they are tough, fearless and downright weird. They believe from their myths that the dragons shared power and wisdom with Dame Darkness in the God Time, and grant the Dragonewts a degree of courtesy, recognising them as an elder race and fellow Chaos fighters.

Uz rarely show their esteem directly as they find it difficult to understand the caprice of the Dragonewts. Yet if a Dragonewt demonstrates enough consistency of purpose, trolls are willing to fight with them at his side, even if he has to keep one eye firmly fixed on the enemy and one on his ally.

For centuries emissaries have travelled between the Only Old One on Shadow Plateau, and the Inhuman King at Dragon's Eye. Few know of what they discuss but rumours abound of exchanges of magical secrets and the forming of a treaty.

UZ AND DURULZ

Uz like ducks. They taste nice!

UZ AND MOSTALI

Uz are the second ancient enemy. The Uz and the Mostali compete for living space. Both like mountains, caves and other deep dark places underground. Both compete for minerals, the Mostali mining them for manufacturing and the Uz eating them for a change from bland tasting stone. However the biggest friction comes from the fact that to an Uz, dwarfs are excellent source of food, whether it be their stockpiled canned food (consumed tin and all) or the Mostali themselves, since when eaten they induce a state of mild euphoria!

In return the dwarfs frequently capture trolls and use them as live subjects for weapon testing and Iron Mostali combat training. Worse still the Uz are kept shackled in these tests. Being slain in combat is an acceptable ending for a troll but simply being experimented on and constantly revived instead of dying, is an unforgivable dishonour. Worse still, as part of these barbarities, the Mostali have constructed new weapons to be used against the Uz, including Jolanti Armour. Perhaps the most insulting weapon is the legendary battleaxe, Zoranbane, specifically forged to kill Zorak Zoran Deathlords and Mistress Race trolls, an unforgivable act.

Thus most Uz view the dwarfs with suspicion and outright hostility. In return the Mostali go to great lengths to live in different regions of Glorantha and ensure their tunnels take a

wide berth around any known troll enclave. Therefore the two races normally have minimal contact, save at a few markets or trading locations where both sides are subject to pacifying magics. Being pragmatists, the Mostali will trade base metals and food to trolls but never armour or weapons.

THE KINGDOMS OF UZ

The following sections describe the remnants of the mighty Uz empires which spread across Glorantha in the Dawn Age.

DAGORI INKARTH

North of Prax is the troll kingdom of Dagori Inkarth – a region that has ever and always been in the grip of the Uz since they rose from their Wonderhome at the death of Yelm, the Bright Enemy. It was here that Gore and Gash, the famed troll ancestors found the hidden ways to the surface world and made their great kingdom for their Uz kin, enslaving the weak humans that clung on for existence after the loss of their gods. It is here that Cragspider the Firewitch bore the first Great Trolls to break the trollkin curse. It is here that the Shadow's Dance in defiance of the sun and the great Tower of Lead was forged that Kyger Litor could manifest to her mighty daughters.

Dagori Inkarth is an ancient troll homeland, its surface rocky and barren, except for where great swathes of fungal forest called the Sporewood bloom and sprout upon the decaying remains of ancient forests. It is a strange place, where dark shadows, the remains of the Great Darkness, lumber across the landscape shielding sensitive troll eyes from the scorching light of the Bright Enemy Yelm. To the far west of the land stands the Vale of Flowers, where lush vegetation of gargantuan proportion are home to insects of equally huge proportions. Around the ancestral troll caverns and mountains the land is bereft of vegetation, devoured by the thousands of trollkin that swarm from their dark homes.

Cliff Home – This is the lair of Cragspider the Fire-Witch, an ancient powerful HeroQuesting Dark Troll, who has performed many acts to empower her people. She is the high priestess of Orani Mor the Spider Goddess, and is said to possess the body of a great spider, many scholars believe that Cragspider may also be a living avatar of Arachne Solara the World Weaver. Cragspider is well known for having overcome the innate troll fear of fire and possess great magic which can boil whole armies in a column of scorching flame. She has also used her great powers to enslave the mighty Black Dragon, after which the mountains of her homeland are named. This control of draconic powers is enough to ensure that the EWF does not challenge her strength. Cragspider's greatest act has been her attempt to reverse the Trollkin Curse inflicted upon the Uz by the evil false god D'Wargon, known as Nysalor the

Illuminated or Gbaji the Deceiver amongst men. Cragspider discovered the Karrg Ritual which leads to troll mothers birthing the huge and powerful Great Trolls, who are stronger than any dark troll, but suffer from slow wits.

Cliff Home is described by those ambassadors visiting it as an inhuman combination of webs and palaces, that cling to the mountain side in an impossible manner, one part of the palace is invisible and inhabited by powerful ancestors and spirits. The vast standing forces of loyal Great Trolls, Giant Spiders, potent sorcery and a True Dragon allows the Fire-Witch to conduct her mystic experiments in peace.

Gors and Gashland – These two regions are named after the troll twin heroes who carved the lands of Dagori Inkarth and lead the way up from the burning horrors of the Bright Enemy invaded Wonderhome to the surface world. Gors Land to the west is a jumbled land, cut by ridges and littered with dark pools and lakes. The Vale of Flowers on the lands western most reaches is covered in gigantic plants and flowers of many kinds, upon which many giant insects feed. Many of the Gors Trolls are adept at hunting and herding great insect swarms and have dedicated themselves to Gorakiki. They have also become skilled at avoiding the patrols of the Empire of the Wyrms' Friends War Dragons. Gashland to the east borders the arid lands of Prax, it is dry and rocky country and the trolls of the region have centred their culture around Natch Lake, where they fish, or near to the skull of Gash their ancestor.

The Indigo Mountains – These brutal mountains slice through the centre of the region like a rocky backbone. It is within these great mountains that the sprawling Redstone Caverns lay, home to a large population of Uz. The Caverns are akin to a subterranean city, with ancient temples, barracks, underground lakes and fungal forests, it is a complete ecosystem, the pinnacle of troll life. The Redstone Caverns are ruled by the Indigo Mountain Tribe, made up of many clans, under the leadership of the ruling Indigo Clan. The Indigo Clan is vast outnumbering the other clans of the caves 20 to 1, though details never reach the outside world with any reliability, if at all. The Indigo clan keep order with their brutal warriors, dedicated to Zorak Zoran and mighty Karrg, but their numbers are finite and trolls are notorious for fighting amongst themselves. Civil war between the clans is not unheard of, by any means. Rarely does it spill into the complete destruction of one tribe by another but instances do occur. In some conflicts the defeated trolls are inducted into the winning tribe and their trollkin taken as slaves. In other cases, when the fires of hatred have burned intensely between the warring clans, the defeated trolls are crushed and utterly wiped out.

Generally, the Indigo Clan are strong enough that their presence assures an effective peace. It is only in the darkest reaches of the Redstone Caverns that the other clans war with one another, where the disapproving ruling tribe cannot see

what goes on. Many of the pressures upon the smaller clans, such as the Morsglod, Kogad, Blackbiters and Gudgrubs have come about due to an influx of refugees from the Kingdom of Night, space is at a premium and ancient clan territories are threatened by the newcomers.

The power of the Indigo Mountain Tribe extends beyond the Redstone Caverns to encompass other clans inhabiting more distant caves, the Stillwater Clan are noted for their flood caves and devotion to Jeset and Kogag the Boat-Uz. Such satellite clans rule themselves but pay fealty and black taxes to the Redstone Trolls.

Spore Wood – A dark and rancid place, where the pale fruiting bodies of giant fungi erupt to devour and decay the world around them. The air of the forest is often thick with deadly spores that bloom in moments, infecting wounds, rotting armour and clothes, and blinding the unwary. Beneath the moist undergrowth, great crawling, scurrying things, the children of Swems the Worm God and Gorakiki, Mother of Insects scabble. This is the home of the Voralans, the Dark Elves, strange bulbous headed creatures, kin of the Fungi and beloved of Mee Voral the Goddess of Fungi. Trolls are found here, devouring the fungi, cutting the great mushroom stems like logs and hunting for juicy insects to devour. The trolls come here to trade with the Dark Elves, who do not possess the ancient hostility of the descendants of Aldrya.

Skyfall Lake – During the God Time, Sky River Titan invaded the Heavens an act for which many trolls loved him. Later during Chaos era he was wounded fighting a chaos entity, from the wound poured a vast torrent of water which drowned the monster, his followers and their evil city. The lake is known as Skyfall Lake. The waters of the lake carry with them monsters, strange items from the gods realm and watery spirits for which the trolls have braved the waters to catch. Many of the region's trolls worship Sky River Titan and are famed for their magical nets and fishing prowess.

The Tower of Lead – This great bastion of rock and metal cast a black shadow over the lands around it. The air is infected by darkness, the stench of the Underworld lingers and only pallid fungi grow near its dark impenetrable walls. Within the bowels of the tower dwell many Mistress Race trolls, immortal and empowered with inhuman magics, they rose to the surface world when the Underworld was invaded by the Bright Enemy, Yelm. The Council of Elders of the Tower of Lead rule Dagori Inkarth through fear and brutality, all tribes indirectly defer to the power of these high priestesses. The Council are served by many dark trolls, who in themselves are would be heroes, and by the Dehori, the great spirits of darkness. Kyger Litor herself, Greatest Mother, Goddess of Trolls can manifest within these dim walls, for to be within the Tower of Lead is to be within Hell itself.

Kyger Litor, Uzbirther has no direct contact with the rest of her race with the exception of the Eldest Kin, also known as the Eldest Queens, who serve her as a ruling council for the realm and – if the rumours are true – act as her confidants down there in the black depths of the Castle of Lead. None of the Eldest Queens, who are all Uzuz trolls, have ever felt the touch of the Hurtplace's air on their skin or seen the light of the resurrected Yelm in the Gloranthan sky.

For all their distance from modern Glorantha, the Eldest Kin are not blind to the workings of the world. This council of elderly Ancients devise grand schemes and movements in the name of their Uzbirther goddess, usually involving the manipulation of the region's tribal matriarchs. The machinations of these Mistress Race trolls are inhuman and nigh-incomprehensible. Each one has risen to the highest ranks of Kyger Litor's cult; each have their tendrils of authority which spread incredibly far across the world, with agents hidden in the most surprising places carrying out orders or waiting for commands.

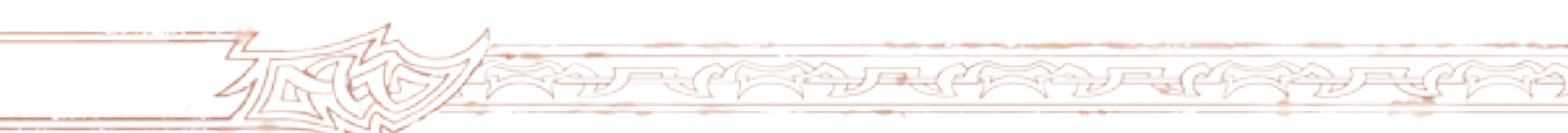
Other cavern networks exist beneath the surface of Dagori Inkarth, most of which are populated by lesser clans who do not come close to the thousands of trolls that dwell within the Redstone Caverns. An average tribe will number between a few hundred trolls and a couple of thousand trollkin.

The Tribes of Dagori Inkarth

The tribes of Dagori Inkarth answer primarily to their own matriarchs and queens, although every troll (and wretched trollkin) observes the overall rule of Kyger Litor. Each tribe functions in many ways like the nations of humans; they bind together many clans under one rule. Each tribe has its own cultural quirks derived from which of the Seven Ancestors or Spirits and Gods of the Darkness Pantheon that they follow. There are ten great tribes in Dagori Inkarth at this time.

The **First Tribe** is the largest and most prestigious tribe, its quarters are almost entirely beneath the ground, primarily beneath the Castle of Lead, although the lands above are also theirs to claim. The cult of Subere and other cults of mystical darkness are particularly strong amongst the First Tribe. The First Tribe are inclined to have access to more magic than other trolls of the region, clans tend to have more potent artefacts brought to the surface from the Underworld. First Tribe Uz are most sophisticated (by troll standards) and stepped in tradition than the other Tribes, they are inclined to be haughty, self opinionated and superior, even their trollkin. They dislike dealing with foreigners and outsiders, even other trolls from different lands.

The **Gors Tribe** the most western tribe of trolls occupies most of Gors Land, are direct descendants of the great hero Gore. Unlike many trolls they are relatively gregarious and



have made several pacts with the EWF to maintain peace. The Gors Tribe is beginning to dwindle in size this has been due to poor hunting, disease and several incursions of Chaos from the Snakepipe Hollow into their lands. The trolls of the other tribes blame these follies on the Gors relationship with Dragons. The Gors Tribe lands are under threat from the ascendant Ongafi Tribe, who have learned to dwell above ground, for the Gors cavern homes are few and often collapse or flood. A troll from the Gors Tribe may occasionally worship foreign deities; they are occasionally encountered within the Dragon Lands and are often shunned by the other Tribes.

The **Ongafi Tribe** have created for themselves a city above the ground, their 18 Queens are all worshippers of the Termite Daughter of Gorakiki and their clans dwell within the great termite nests that make the city of Laca. The land is wracked with earthquakes and so many trolls placate Zugorteg the Dark Earth. Above the city hovers a weak Shadow, which was lured to the city from the Shadow's Dance and shield the citizens of the region from the glare of Yelm. The city is in its infancy, but the cult of Argan Argar has seen great opportunities here and the Ongafi are beginning to oust the Gors Tribe in the region with their wealth, adaptability and numbers.

The **Bee Tribe** is a small tribe, centred on the Vale of Flowers. The cult of Gorakiki Bee is central to them and their Queen dwells within a great hive. The Bee tribe are a restless folk compared to most Uz and are always busy. They are highly skilled at the harvesting of pollen and honey and herd giant aphids. They are strangely tolerant of the small groups of Aldryami in the region, seeing them as a necessary evil. The trollkin of the tribe are often trained to ride Giant Bees into combat.

The **Black Dragon Mountain Tribe**, or Cragspider's Kin as they prefer to be called, are a magically potent people, deriving great power from Orani Mor the Spider Goddess and Karrg the Warrior. This tribe is insular and somewhat xenophobic, being devoted to their queen in extraordinary ways. The Tribe boasts a huge force of Great Trolls, which are also bigger than those found in any other clan, the Tribe only ever trades its runts or difficult to manage offspring. Many come to Craspider to seek her secrets, she rarely gives audiences, unless she is hungry. The Black Dragon Mountain tribe also dominate the fishing villages that surround the Skyfall Lake and tolerate the worship of the Sky River Tyrant.

The **Indigo Mountain Tribe** are covered in some detail above, they are great hunters and roam far from their lands, often travelling into Prax and as far as the Marginal Woods. They have a reputation for being maneaters and prey upon human settlements. Many of the stories told to children and

around campfires are based upon the horrors of hungry Indigo Mountain Trolls.

The **Gash Tribe**, like the Gors Tribe, claims an ancient lineage and grasp on to their claims to this broken, barren and wild land. Most of the Trolls centred on the Natch Lake are skilled fishers and worship the great spirit of the Lake. They are skilled hunters and followers of Zong. Most of the tribe's trollkin roam in vast hordes across the wilderness eating anything in their path, or gathering in squalid camps around some food source. The Gash Tribe claim that their land will one day become fertile again.

The **Boulder Tribe** from the East of Dagori Inkarth are another ancient group; they are militant and warlike, always feuding with the Gash Tribe for the ownership of the Nolli Lake. They are on good terms with the Giants and many of their number marched against Pavis under Thog and have no love of that city.

The **Black Banner Tribe**, live exclusively on the surface. The Black Banner Tribe have a foul habit of skinning their human prey and dyeing the flayed flesh black to use as leathery war banners. They are followers of Zorak Zoran and are almost always hostile to humans that trespass in their lands in the south of Dagori Inkarth, near the loose border with Prax. Like the Boulder Tribe many of their number marched south with Thog and died, the tribe suffered greatly and is now dwindling. Despite its warlike prowess its days are numbered as it suffers continual raids from Pavisites, Praxians and other trolls.

The **People of the Sundered Eye** dwell within the redwood forests in the east of the realm and are generally open to trade since so many of their ranking males are within the Argan Argar cult. Their symbol is a white eye split down the middle by a red sword, referring to their founding matriarch, Grival Slice-eye who was blinded by Pocharngo the Mutator in the Chaos Wars.

PAVIS

In 870 a blustering giant from the Rockwood Mountains north of Dagori Inkarth took it upon himself to lead a large war party of trolls and giants in a raid upon the fledgling city. Despite Thog being a powerful magician and huge in stature, he was driven off. Five years later with an army of young and eager trolls and Jolanti stone men he attacked the city again, this time smashing the walls and destroying almost all the city apart from the Temple of Pavis. The king of Pavis, Joraz Kyrem fled to the Empire. The occupying force of trolls and giants built the huge walls that surround Pavis today but when King Joraz returned he brought with him fierce Sun Dome

Templars. Thog, his trolls and even the Jolanti were toppled by the returning king and Pavis was free again. The Trolls of Dagori Inkarth plot to once again conquest that which they lost. Unknown to the citizens of Pavis, there are dark tunnels being chewed in the nearby hills by a small number of saboteur trolls but their presence is like a grub in a good apple.

THE SHADOW PLATEAU

Within the Genertelan land called Kethaela is the strongest bastion of Uz territory remaining on Glorantha. This is the Shadow Plateau – a region where the bulk of the world’s Uz gather and seek to recover their ever-diminishing strength in the sight of their demigod, Ezkankekko Only-Old-One, the son of the troll god Argan Argar. As they watch the great Kingdom of Night, their once great empire decays before them. In the darkness the Only Old One had brought unity to those who rightly fought against chaos, in the Dawn Age he spoke upon the First Council and he was there when Arkat was apotheosized and the world changed.

Ezkankekko has been playing a complex political game with the God Learners and Empire of the Wyrms Friends, his nation sits as a fragile buffer between the two Empires. It had been through his own folly that the Jrsuteli had been allowed to settle in Nochet in 507ST, a minor act that has set into motion events that may eventually undermine his thousand year old empire.

Ezkankekko is a cunning ruler. Some say that his humbling in the presence of the Dragonspeakers has crushed the fight from him but those with the sight to see the truth witness the demigod’s machinations within the façade of subservience. Firstly, the tribute demanded by the Empire of Wyrms Friends is never met, with a volley of thin excuses and lying promises deflecting retribution just as solidly as the Obsidian Tower’s sizeable Uzko, Uzdo and Enlo army. Secondly, the Only Old One is working to pit the EWF against the God Learners without suffering losses among his own warriors.

This manipulation takes form in any battles between the two, where Ezkankekko has his dark trolls aid the EWF only when they absolutely must, preferring to rely instead on regiments of trained trollkin to reinforce the Dragonspeakers (and die horribly in many cases). Thirdly as part of his initial treaty with the EWF the Only Old One convinced them to relinquish the shattered shard of the Pseudocosmic Egg from which D’Wargon had been born, an artefact that could potentially lead to a cure for the Trollkin Curse and would also halt the birth of the EWF new dragon god. The potential of this action has to date never been realised by the foolish EWF, who gave the broken shards so freely. This potent magical item lays hidden deep within the Obsidian Tower’s basements, guarded by stygian terrors.

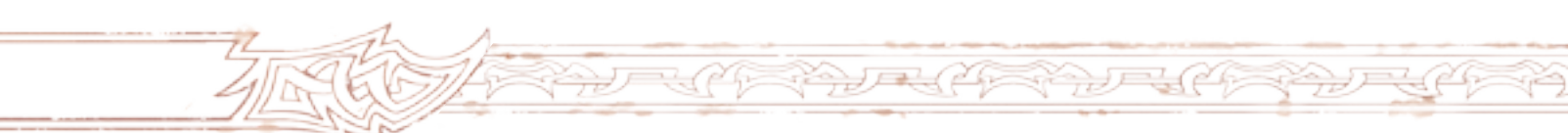
All is not defiance and strength, however. Historically, all of Kethaela and more of Genertela beside were considered the domain of Ezkankekko, the Shadowlands as they were known, encompassing Esrolia, Hendrikiland, the Left and Righarm Island and even fiery Caladraland. All paid tribute to him. The black galleys of the Uzdo travelled Choralinthor Bay and brought tyranny to the peoples of the land. Now the demigod’s territory stretches to the lands around the Obsidian Tower, the Shadowlands and little else. Like much of troll glory, the Shadow Plateau is a dark echo of former greatness.

The main bulk of the Shadow Plateau is taken up by the expansive plains which are home to the Enlo hordes that make up a significant majority of the region’s population. They are organised into their own clans, though many are subservient to their parents’ bloodlines and obey the overall rule of Ezkankekko Only-Old-One. The Uzko dwell in and under the Obsidian Tower, or Akez Loradak in the trollish tongue, is a great structure of sorcery and black glass. The Palace of Black Glass was forged during the Gods Age by the fire of the enslaved volcano god, Caladril (now known as Lodril) to aid his master Argan Argar in the wooing of bountiful Esrola. The Darkness god and Earth goddess were wed and Ezkankekko was their progeny.

The tower is impossible, rising so high that it almost touches the Skydome, whilst its cellars are in the bowels of the Underworld. It has remained a bastion of the Uz since the Great Darkness, when they ascended to the Hurt Place and befriended Argan Argar. The great tower is surrounded by 100 lesser towers that cut the air like black knives, each is the home to a potent troll lineage, daughters of the Only Old One himself. A huge wall defends the tower from the attacks of surface dwellers but it is the market, as would befit a god of trade such as Argan Argar, that used to attract most people to the holy city. Once many Orlanthi Friendship ceremonies were sworn between Esrolian, Hendriki and Trolls at this market but now only a few itinerant Uz traders and stubborn Storm worshipping traditionalist maintain the ceremonies.

The plateau itself is a raised platform of land many dozens of miles in each direction from the great spire. Curiously, the soil of much of the Shadow Plateau is actually charcoal-black and lukewarm to the touch, like the ashes of a fire that has been dead for a few minutes. Investigation as to whether this is a natural occurrence or an after-effect of the Chaos Wars have turned up many stories that each offer a conflicting tale – usually involving the baleful influence of some Chaos deity or the death of a troll hero colouring the land forever after as if Glorantha Herself seethed with pain at the loss.

The Enlo have the run of the surface, though many tunnel mouths and cave openings exist in the landscape. The dark



trolls occasionally emerge from these openings to scavenge from the trees and plants that grow in the eerily fertile soil or to make war upon nearby humans. The hunting on the Shadow Plateau is particularly good, with many beasts like bears, vultures and wolves claiming the surface. Troll meat-hunters with bow or sling skills drag a massive amount of dead fauna back underground with them each time they come up for food.

Shadow Plateau Culture

By their dominance and interaction with human cultures the Uz of the Shadow Plateau hold many strange customs, which are very untrollish, much of this came from inherited power given to them by Arkat the Liberator and for many years the servant of Eskankekkko collected Arkat's Tax. The local trolls' mercantile attitude and devotion to both Argan Argar and his demi-god sun Ezkankekko have lead them to become wealthy and often obsessed with exotic commodities from across the lands. Many of these items are of course exotic foodstuffs to satiate the ever present trollish hunger but the trolls of the region often dress in exotic fabrics, wield strange weapons and adorn themselves with a wealth of jewellery.

The rule of the Only Old One is key to all their actions; they perform his will without question, deferring to him even above their own mothers. Historically the Uz have often bound their own traditions and rituals with those of the Humans of the land, such as when they showed the Esrolians the secrets of the darkness within the earth. Shadow Plateau trolls are typically proud and tyrannical but also strangely sociable with trusted humans and many Shadow Plateau trolls are canny merchants. The trolls have even accepted the construction and presence of Axe Hall, a Barbestor Gor refuge, which was established when the Esrolians sent the Axe Sisters to defend their overlord. The occasional troll has even dedicated themselves to the bloody earth goddess.

On the surface of the Plateau, most communities are Enlo villages ruled by rare trollkin elders or Uz overseers from the tunnels underneath the plateau's dark soil skin. None of the trollkin are truly *free* in the sense understood by non-troll races or in the sense the Enlo believe themselves to be free. For example, they never leave the boundaries set upon them by their Uz masters, even though the dark trolls dwell leagues underground. Individual rebels and troublemakers crop up as regularly as in any Enlo gatherings but overall, the surface communities are stable.

This is because the trollkin of the surface are considered by the subterranean Uzko to be the 'excess' and do not want them clogging up the tunnels. There are already enough slaves under the earth with the Uzko and the surface Enlo are largely ignored – which leads them to believe they are

actually being treated well. These surface trollkin are trained into loose regiments for sale as mercenaries or left alone until they are 'needed,' at which point their dirty little villages are raided and the residents are either bundled into food sacks and bashed against the rocks or handed spears and told which direction to walk and what enemy to hurl themselves at.

Slavemasters lurking on the surface ensure that no communities ever get too out of line. Infiltrators – trained 'value' slaves from the Uzko tunnels – also work within these surface tribes in order to stem any tides of revolt. The stories of what happened to the 'last tribe that tried to beat their oppressors' always makes for scary retelling and is often no word of a lie. The Uz have been known to scatter the bones of an entire village worth of trollkin outside the doors of other Enlo hamlets that are rumoured to be considering an uprising.

YOLP

In the southwest of Peloria, near the haunted lands of Dorastor, lie the great mountains of Yolp. This ancient Uz stronghold has remained since the Great Darkness, it was a resting point for trolls of the Unity Council in the Dawn Age and even survived when Nysalor's Bright Empire sort to destroy all darkness in the lands from Ralios to Eol. This stronghold is not of bricks or stones, it is of the living mountain and all men who have come to smash it have been shattered themselves.

There are six great peaks in the Yolp Mountains, Akensa, Mistak, Xen, Dakgar, Gorjoon and Xarxarsh. Upon each mountain once lived a tribe of trolls named after their mountain. The name of the tribes is in honour of an ancestor, descended from the mighty Jamuz, who each in turn slew the Giant that created the mountains. Only the Mistak tribe were destroyed by demons and broo, the Dakgar tribe were slain by the Broken Council.

Xarxarsh is the great capitol of the region founded when the Unity Council moved to Dorastor but ancient Akzena Za is the most famous tunnel complex where the Yolp Uz survived the Chaos Era. Akzena Za is a carved fortress on the surface, akin to those of men, but beneath the perpetually hungry Uz have chewed tunnels deep enough to hold a million trolls, or so they claim.

The trolls of Yolp wage a determined war against the Mostali of the Brass Mountains, which has cost both sides dearly, the Mistak Clan claims to have reduced the population of the Brass Mountain Mostali to a seventh of their former strength, although they themselves have suffered greatly from dwarven assaults and the Trollkin Curse.

The Yolp Mountains are the homeland of the Uz hero Hachrat Blowhard, who in 633ST befriended the Brolians,

who taught him of their Storm Gods to him. Hachrat learned the secrets of the Lower Wind and took it to his people, gaining many adherents. In 640ST Hachrat was seduced into learning the secrets of the EWF and travelled to the University of Molorios, where he learned to be left handed and about dragons but was shown nothing of the winds, which angered him. In 644ST the enraged troll returned with an army and sacked the University, the first of many. Hachrat waged a 30 year guerrilla war against the Empire, the first to do so and long before it was acceptable. In 666ST Hachrat travelled deep into EWF territory seeking to slay a Black Dragon, fearing that its dark powers would be ensnared by the Empire, however his mission failed when he was killed by Cragspider the Firewitch, the Black Dragon and her troll hoards. Hachrat is still worshipped by trolls of the Yolp Mountains and some Orlanthi in Brolia, as both a source of the Dark Wind and an enemy of the EWF.

The Yolp Mountains do not possess a Castle of Lead like many other trollish homelands, instead the dread Tower of Bones which looms above Xarxarsh is where Kyger Litor can manifest to her followers. The clattering and gibbering tower is formed from the dead of thousands of fallen foes and the bones of the blessed. The priestesses and queens of the temple exert their rule throughout the region amongst the great tribes' priesthoods and all Yolp Trolls come here for their initiation.

The Yolp Mountains are also sacred to the Darjenite Manimati but the Uz of the mountains do their utmost to prevent pilgrims from this Solar people from invading their homeland.

Yolp Culture

The trolls of Yolp are hardy, tough and warlike. They are barbaric, even for trolls, and many favour the primitive cults of Zong the Hunter and Zorak Zoran the Berserker. The Yolp Trolls proximity to the blighted lands of Dorastor has lead to their fame for defeating the great enemy of Chaos. What sets the Yolp Trolls apart from all others is their worship of Hachrat Blowhard and the access to storm powers the cult has given. This has also made the Yolp Trolls enamoured of the Brolian storm barbarians who seek to trade with the Dark Men.

GUHAN

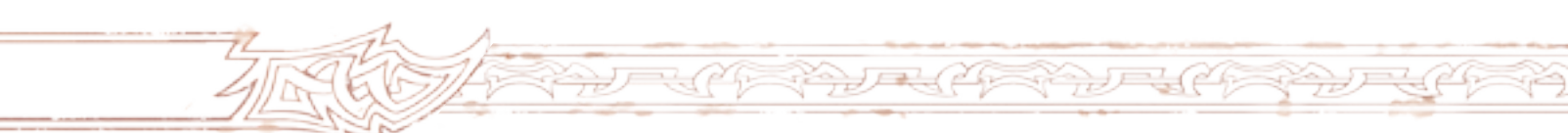
The territory of Guhan in western Ralios centres on the Uzgor Hills. It consists of a bare and rocky terrain, surmounted by two small mountain ranges. Guhan is not a natural home to the Uz but one granted to them at the end of the First Age. It has taken them a long time to bind ancestral spirits to its jagged cliffs and inedible rocks. The spirits native to Guhan were hostile to the Uz for many years but finally came around after decades of drum-banging entreaties. The insect herds were slow in developing, too: it

took much breeding to create the hardy giant bugs capable of surviving on its meagre vegetation. Now the Uz call it home and would never give it up.

The lands of Guhan were given to them by Arkat for their part in the wars against D'Wargon. Most of the trolls have either come from the Shadowlands to the far east or were amongst those Uz that ignored the the commands of the Three Queens of Halikiv and went to war. They settled the windy Uzgor hills, maintaining their unity and proving their alliance to the Styian Empire rather than going home. The Uz of Guhan made many changes to their lifestyle, they remained isolated in their homeland, only travelling in the Empire when commanded to do so. They stopped eating the elfs of Ballid and they used sorcery. When the apotheosis of Arkat occurred in 500ST the trolls of Guhan paid little attention to his successors, for they were only human, Arkat had made himself a troll, an act that the new rulers of the Sygian Empire would not do. The trolls still relished their roles as the Empires enforcers and the Stygian kings paid for powerful magicians to try and lift the Trollkin Curse but as time went on the Kin's demands of the trolls far outweighed their gifts and the Curse was never lifted. The auguries of the cult of Subere told the trolls that a bright, burning and bad future lay ahead of them and that they must prepare.

The conquest of Ralios by the God Learners in 740 ST brought great dangers to the Uzgor Hills. The trolls knew that the trouble they faced would bring lean times and that they would be blighted by great hunger, a thing trolls fear more than death. The trolls rejected their alliance with Ballid and began again to eat Aldryami but they had forgotten that plant men were not a weak foe. The Trolls also raided the Storm Folk, eating their cattle, sheep and children. The God Learners made promises of friendship but instead tried to dabble with Uz religion. This was unacceptable to the trolls and they retreated to their borders and bolstered their defences. They still raided the barbarians and were forced to track Mostali in the mountains, both meats fought bitterly, but the troll losses were far less than those inflicted by God Learners.

The trolls of Guhan are in perpetual disagreement with those of Halikiv, the Guhan trolls broke with tradition and established a male dominated society and the trolls of Halikiv are nothing but traditional. Arkat rewarded those warriors that fought bravely, ignoring the value of the matriarchs with his gifts. The male trolls formed themselves into arrogant and brutal Guhan Guard, a military caste responsible for maintaining unity within Guhan and enforcing Arkat's law within the Stygian Empire. The leadership of the guard are called the Bruznu. However the Guhan Guard suffered many losses at the hands of the God Learners and their now diminished numbers retreated to their caverns. In this power



void the matriarchy reclaimed its power. Then the God Learners entered Guhan claiming that the trolls were their subjects and demanding magical access to the Uz myths by right of conquest, the matriarchs were weak and were about to submit when the remnants of the Guhan Guard fought back. The trolls who struck fear into the hearts of the God Learner's Ralian Guards used stealth and nocturnal raids to strike at the God Learner's expeditions, driving off the foe and regaining their power from the foolish matriarchs. Now, while each clan is typically ruled by a matriarch, all the matriarchs must defer to the leaders of the Guhan Guard.

The Clans of Guhan

The trolls of Guhan divide themselves into clans but never form into tribes of unified clans. Beneath the veneer of military rule one finds a typical Uz clan structure. Each of its six extended clans is headed by a matriarch. Male members of the clan answer to her in domestic matters and to their Guard superiors in affairs of raiding, defence and external politics. When in conflict between these two masters, the male Uz obeys his guard superiors. Women answer only to the matriarchs.

The **Ondorp** occupy the eastern bank of the Nidan River, they are strange in that they love cooked food and employ human slaves to prepare it for them. Their matriarch is Anja Birnor, who has magic to cause any human in her presence to faint. She is a strong ruler, dedicated to the worship of Kyger Litor and has little to do with Arkati sorcery. She is a decisive leader, who never changes her mind and never regrets the actions she takes. Trolls of this clan are gourmets by troll standards and their Kin Pie is legendary.

The **Rastalux** dwell closest to Safestler and have had to bolster their defences the most against human incursions. The presence of Lodal Fanos, the imposing fortress of the Guhan Guard, watches over their territory. The matriarch Chos Varal is the mate of Bruznu Makt Vatharg and a staunch supporter of the Guard's plans and motivations. Many members of the Guard are selected from the battle pits of the Rastalux.

The **Fungora** clan lives on the border of the Ballid forest, where its leafy trees give way to a twilight world of giant mushrooms, morels and other fungal growths. They ferment an intoxicating beverage from its noxious toadstools. The Fungora struggle to maintain a peaceful coexistence with the elves, who also revere the fungal forest. Their matriarch is Aran Orlar, whose head resembles a misshapen, gigantic squash. The cult of Mee Voralan is key to the Clan economy and Fighting. Gungus and Voralan's often aid in the defence of the Fungora territories. The Trolls of Fungora regularly trade with Guhan.

The **Mong** occupy Guhan's western reaches, on the far side of the Nidan River. They know where the tributaries of that

river go beneath the Nidan Mountains, allowing them to raid up into the Mostali strongholds. They have become hardened troll fighters and have discovered ways to ease the burn of iron. The matriarch of the clan, Karo Kalis entertains EWF Hunting and Waltzing Bands, allowing them to demonstrate their magic, to which she claps and laughs but never quite accepts their doctrine.

The Zarn clan lands encompass central Guhan. The matriarch of this, the largest clan, is Gor Kangor. Of all the matriarchs, the Zarn leader is the least tolerant of the Guhan Guard and its delusions of male supremacy. She is also the sole Mistress Race troll among the matriarchs, or all of Guhan for that matter. Gor Kangor hails originally from Halikiv, where people still blame her for leaving. She never deigns to disguise her contempt for Chos Varal. Her status as a Mistress Race Uz from before the Dawn protects her from open reprisal by the so-called Queen of Rastalux or other local rivals. As a survivor from pre-Time, she arouses considerable interest from God Learners, many of whom would die for a meeting with her. And many of them do.

The Trolls of Guhan still possess legacies of the Stygian Empire in their architecture, hierarchy and customs. There are many Arkati built ruins and fortresses across their lands, including the imposing basalt walls of Lodal Fanos. Most clans have at least one old building dedicated to the Arkat the Saviour, often constructed over an entrance to their caverns, these are used as lookout post and trollkin pens in the main but give the illusion that Guhan trolls are more civilised by human standards. The Zarn clan favours old Nidan Dwarf outposts and mines for their homes. The Fungoran Temple to Black Arkat is a mouldering, broken cathedral in which the best Blood Bolettes grow. Many trolls still worship Arkat and use Stygian sorcery and every clan has a cabal of dark magic users to protect their kin. The trolls also insist in using the torturously long introductory speeches which were so favoured amongst the Stygians. The typical Guhan troll is much better equipped than the trolls of Halikiv, they often bear ornate headed maces of lead and bronze armour inherited from their forebears. The wearing of deep hooded cloaks is a Guhan peculiarity, these are often decorated with textures that please the darksense and function as portable shelters from the sun or handy snacks in times of need.

HALIKIV

The lands of Halikiv sit between the Mislari Mountains and the Western Rockwood range. It is an ancient troll stronghold, which dominates the Eastern Wilds of Ralios. The land is jagged, torn and barren as befits a trollish wasteland, the deep dark caverns and warrens of the Halikiv Uz cut deep into the mountain sides. The surrounding lands are home to great swarms of ravaging insects, giant locusts, colossal praying

mantis which stalk the plains like insectoid dragons and packs of ever hungry trollkin. Like Dagori Inkarth, Halikiv boasts a Tower of Lead, a great Kygerlith where the Troll Mother can manifest. The Tower is surrounded in coruscating clouds of darkness that choke any who would defile this troll bastion, in tentacles of darkness. Halikiv is also noted for its great slave pens in which doped humans are kept, herded and forced to work by the trollish overlords, they are the only humans that dwell in these lands. Halikiv is not easily accessible as it has no roads and it is cut by steep valleys, often filled with teeming insects or impenetrable shadows.

Halikiv was settled during the early part of the exodus from Wonderhome but was feared lost during the Chaos Age. It was rediscovered by the Only Old One who had sent his servant Charmilla to seek the lost colony. The land was blasted and most of the Uz destroyed but with aid from the Shadowlands the trolls of Halikiv returned to strength. In the Dawn Ages the Halikiv Trolls were strong supporters of the First Council and their input was welcomed during the early stages of the God Project. However the Halikiv trolls left the project when the council made alliances with the Sun Worshipper of Dara Happa. They retreated to their own lands and participated in a ritual to summon an entity called the Black Eater and were one of the causes of the Sun Stop, blackening out the sun in the sky in an attempt to prevent the birth of D'Wargon. The forces of Halikiv mustered with many other trolls and dragonewt allies against the Deceiver and his allies but were crushed in the field.

Ralios became the main theatre for Arkat's fight against D'Wargon or Gbaji, as he was known to the humans. Halikiv reluctantly aided his causes by sending some of their forces but they were still suffering from the losses they had incurred during their earlier conflicts. Those that aided Arkat were granted the lands of Guhan as part of his Stygian Empire and from that day forward always ate better than their eastern kin, which caused great resentment. There has always been an intense rivalry between Halikiv and Guhan, with the former blaming the latter for turning humans against the trolls of Halikiv.

During the second age the conservative trolls of Halikiv have sought to remain aloof of the actions of the God Learners and EWF. Despite their reluctant participation within the Stygian Empire they have suffered since its demise and lost parts of their traditional hunting grounds to humans. The region of Coroland is now home to the anti-Uz Enlightenment Alliance, which employs Dara Happan and Solar magic to fight the trolls. The caravans of Halikiv still cross the lands to Guhan but there are far fewer these days.

Halikiv is traditionally controlled by a trinity of queens, all of whom were born during the early decades of the First Age. Each dwells within the Tower of Lead but through

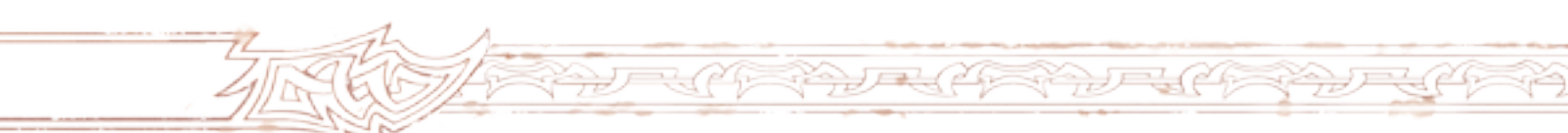
their daughters they rule the three great tribes of the region. Queen Sorentelli controls the **Soren Marg** Tribe who breed the best wolf locusts and dwell in the Gray Desert at the foothills of the Rockwoods. This tribe has a particular hatred for solar cultists often, joining the fray against the inhabitants of Coroland. The **Blessed Tribe** are so called because their Queen Toolani has less trollkin litters than any other troll in the lands and has birthed many heroes. Dachargo is the Queen of the **Tonduz Tribe**, known as the Lovers for their ruler's strange passions and many mates. Whilst the three Queens are often encountered together, they do not often agree with one another and many inter tribal conflicts are to resolve their own petty conflicts.

The proud trolls of Halikiv had little truck with Arkat and his Dark Empire; they maintain a strong belief in Uz purity and are perhaps the most conservative of all trolls, obsessed with tradition, lineage and the power of Kyger Litor. Due to their former relationship with the Only Old One and Charmilla, both Argan Argar and Xentha, Goddess of Night are also beloved of the tribes. Many of the clans that form the tribes are warlike and Zorak Zoran sees many bloody sacrificial feasts in his name. The rivalry between Halikiv and Guhan often results in conflict between the nations, and many Halikiv trolls feel that the Guhan Trolls are perverse, especially for following the rule of male trolls, which goes against troll matrilineal culture.

The trolls of Halikiv are often malnourished by comparison to other Uz, a fact that they often conceal under moulded armour and layers of clothing. They are always hungry and are prone to eating any suitable foodstuffs, which being trolls can mean anything that does not fight back too hard. This often makes them dangerous and unpredictable company.

THE BLUE MOON PLATEAU

The Blue Moon Plateau is situated in far north of central Genertela, it is known as Tagor Mahaquata to the Dara Happans who associated it with the bat goddess who helped slay Murharzarm. To the trolls call the place Quatanara Lykor. The plateau is a mystic place formed from the remnants of Blue Mood Goddess who fell to the surface during the Darkness. There are many stories as to the nature of that goddess but the trolls know is Quatanara the bat winged monster that rose from the ruins of Mernita when Boztakang was besieged by the chaos army of Urkatol and summoned unto himself the feeble life of a dying goddess to bring him aid. The goddess came to life and rescued him and the two mated in secret but then she fell to earth where the trolls found her and nurtured her remains. The Uz of the Plateau were their descendants and their goddess has aided them ever since, when others did not come. In truth the goddess beneath the Blue Moon Plateau is both and neither, thus is the nature of Lunar magic.



The region is inhospitable to humans but a bountiful land to the secretive and mystical trolls that made this their home. The top of the plateau is covered in choking blue dust that is thrown into the eyes by unseen winds. Strange glowing blue stone formations litter the alien landscape, sometimes moaning and singing of their own accord. The night air is filled with the strange dancing lights of millions of moths or the flitting black forms of the great swarms of moths that dwell in the sink holes and caverns that pock mark the surface. There is little evidence of troll inhabitation, the trolls rarely leave their caverns and build nothing above ground.

The trolls of the region are especially secretive; they rarely interact with the world beyond their plateau and are more interested in their secret rituals, the arcane whispering of their alien goddess and the raising of bats and moths. The Trolls are notorious for their skills of stealth and subterfuge, an art for which many call upon them, even non trolls and those that dwell far from their isolated homeland. No human who has ventured on the Plateau has returned to reveal its secrets. The only factions that are known of are the House of the Silent and the Blue Shifters, both of which are mystical societies as opposed to clans, each following a different interpretation of their goddess.

The House of the Silent was founded by Eriayalaia of the Veil, a powerful Uzuz who fought against the fallen sun and survived. She was last seen during the First Council's God Project where she acted as an advisor, when the trolls left the project she swore to never reveal troll secrets or allow them to be abused again. The Blue Shifters are also known as the Passers Through and seem to have magic that enables them to bypass any security magical or otherwise. They use their powers to acquire secrets for their employers and matriarchs.

The trolls of the Blue Moon Plateau are naturally secretive, they only travel abroad when bid to do so by their leaders and then never travelling en masse. The famed Blue Moon Assassins never favour armour, or even weapons in many cases, but are skilled in silent kills and deadly poisons. The cult of Belorkal the Bat God and Gorakiki the Moth are commonly worshipped amongst the trolls, both for the silent companions and food that they provide.

THE ELDER WILDS

The Elder Wilds, north east of the Votanki Lands in central Genertela, are home to many thousands of trolls who dwell mainly in the forbidding Troll Hills. These steep and craggy hills are dotted with tumbled rocks, often carved with dark images of the Uz. The Uz of the Elder Wilds despise the Aldryami more than most and have warred with them incessantly. The Aldryami during the First Age betrayed the

Council of All Races and began a program of genocide against the trolls who were forced to flee into Dagori Inkarth to survive, only when D'Wargon's evil empire fell could the trolls safely return to wreak their revenge.

The Troll Hills are bereft of trees but are covered by Ironbriars and Stingwood sent against the Uz by the elves. The Elder Wilds trolls are gifted hunters and will even take down the great Thunder Lizards that dwell on the plains. The Elder Wilds trolls are always in fierce competition with Votanki hunter-gatherers, preying on the same animals for sustenance. There are five notable clans in the region.

The **Bone-Gnashers** are descendant from the first age hero Herka Bone-Gnasher who travelled to every troll land during the First Age, he died aiding the flight of his kin during the Elf genocide.

The far roaming **Trag** clan are lead by the Uzuz, Gork Trag, a child of Zorak Zoran, who has used her magic to enslave a dream dragon from the EWF, which she rides into conflict with any Draconic worshippers she encounters, much to their annoyance. The followers of the Golden Dragon Emperor in Dara Happa have sworn to bury her with the treacherous Dream Dragon if it is the last thing they do.

The **Naxar** Clan live in the centre of the Troll Hills and revere their ancestor Dog Eater for driving out the Votanki and their dogs from the Troll Hills.

The **Guttuz** Clan dwell amongst the pre-dawn ruins that litter the Mavern Hills in the midst of the Bear Woods, they have a hereditary love of Arkat and are potent sorcerers.

Amongst the Gork Hills to the north of the region the Argan Argar worshipping **Huttog** clan have maintained an annual tradition of travelling through a secret pass, known as Gonn Orta's Pass, to the lands of Dagori Inkarth. They have recently suffered from the depredations of a vampire in their homelands who is gaining power. The Huttog have few chaos fighters in their numbers and are seeking allies from other clans or even abroad.

Most trolls in the Elder Wilds are relatively primitive; they rely on simple, portable tools and shelters. They are generally semi-nomadic, following the herds across their territories. Only the tombs of the trolls reveal their greater skills, with their well crafted walls, devious traps and terrifying guardians. The trolls do not favour great temples but large open air monuments around which a clan can quickly gather and then leave. The dinosaur fighting skill of the Elder Wilds trolls is legendary and enemies of the EWF have begun to realise this and call on the Uz with gifts of food to seek their aid.

CHERN DUREL AND KOROMONDAL

Chern Durel, known as The Kingdom of Ignorance, and Koromondal are found in the most north-eastern corner of Genertela to the north of Kralorela. Since before the dawn the Chern Durel was a troll bastion. When the trolls fled Wonderhome they divided into three main groups, one of these following the great hero Dozaki were driven by a prophecy, which was fulfilled when they stumbled upon the newly-raised god called Basko the Black Sun. Basko had once contended for the rule of the Universe against the Sun Emperor, for which he had been scorched and turned into a seed, that was planted in the Fields of Doubt. He remained dormant throughout the Golden Age, only awakening when the trolls came, appearing to them as a great shadow. The trolls called their promised land Dozaki's Newhome but all others continued to call it the Chern Durel. The land was as if it had been prepared for their arrival, the humans embraced them with open arms and quickly took the trolls as their rulers and priests.

Before the trolls came the Chern Durel was a strange land, the culture of the region had changed completely many times, as did the gods of the land. Strange prophets predicted visions of woe and saw that their sun god would manifest in four forms, the Early Light, the Rising Orb, the Victorious Zenith and the Solar Storm and great temples, adorned with sculptures and picture writing sprung up all over the land to these aspects. The last aspect was the king of the land during the reign of the legendary Kralorelan ruler, Shavaya the Emperor of Splendor, the Solar Storm tried to bring war to Kralorla but was enlightened and found inner peace. The Solar Storm's armies were left bewildered and as they travelled home they encountered a being called the Shadow of the Storm, another prophet and manifestation of their enlightened leader who had left their side.

Shadow of the Storm's revelations resulted in a spiritual malaise that turned the kingdom in upon itself. The humans chose ignorance instead of splendour, darkness over light. This was the time that the land truly became the Kingdom of Ignorance. The humans began to practice human sacrifice (which was acceptable as Death did not exist), they lost all their knowledge (of which they had little), mated with anything they could (which created many of the local Hsunchen tribes) and wallowed in the mud (of which there was plenty). In many respects the Kingdom of Ignorance existed as a parody of the perfection found in Kralorela. It became a place where everything that Kralorela was not could be found, the Shadow of that great nation.

When the trolls arrived in the land in the company of Basko, they humans hailed him as their prophesised deliverer and the

trolls as his earthly representatives. The trolls were elevated to the priesthood and lordship of the land and gladly occupied the great temples. They Uz were eager to participate in the human sacrifices, satiating their hunger and blood urges with orgiastic pleasure. The trolls prospered and flourished. Twice the armies of the kingdom marched forth to defeat chaos, during the Glory of the Black Sun they destroyed the Chaos Headhunter, Tien and then joined forces with the Blue Moon and Snow Trolls to aid Valind atop his glacier.

The gladiatorial games, bloodletting, sacrifice and strange cult practices of the Kingdom of Ignorance prospered under the trolls. The Uz were content with their lot and devoted themselves to the teachings of the Black Sun, which they used to control the human population. To the Kralori the troll rule was simply another stage in the spiritual devolution of their neighbours. Conflict between Kralori and Trolls was rare but the spiritual pollution was always driven back by the perfectionist armies of the Dragon Emperors.

During the early part of the second age warriors and Exarchs from the Dragon Empire sort to purge the Kingdom of Ignorance at the whim of the Dragon Emperor. The drove out most of the trolls, who were gluttonous, drunk and too stupid to resist. They mistakenly took Mostali as allies in the fight and then were surprised when their ancestral enemy betrayed them at the Warring Ford. The trolls were driven north along the coast. Later when the God Learners invaded Kralorela the great armies of refugees forced the trolls out of their temples, leaving them fleeing to the north and the lands of Koromondal. The Exarchs now ruled Chern Durel, but quickly found that the trollkin that had been left behind were of more worth than the lazy, indolent humans and so the cult of the Black Sun continued to exist.

The Uz that fled to the coast of Koromondal have been forced to revert to their ancestral hunting and gathering practices. They dare not venture far from the coast for fear of Pentan horsemen. Many have taken to the waters and ice flows and hunt for whales, zabdamar mermen and killer whales. Several other groups have enslaved the local humans and forced them to provide harvests of prawns and watercress. In a mockery of their old lifestyle the Uz have constructed many crude temples to the Black Sun, formed from great stones chewed into shape with roofs of whalebone. The whalers of Kralorela do not enter this region for fear of being hunted themselves.

Bliss in Ignorance – A bitter and wasted land, shrouded in twisted woods, greasy, mists and treacherous briars that surround the hundreds of tumbling temples. The locals are little more than beasts, ruled over by foreign nobles who have been exiled from Kralorela. No industry exists within the land, apart from that practiced by the trollkin slaves and foreigners.

Grombul – The flatlands of the Kingdom of Ignorance are icy in the winter but wreathed in myrtle flowers throughout the summer. Many strange tales are told of this land, and its plains are haunted by the ghost of the ever hungry Jobboo Sarn.

Jankley Bore – A range of rocky hills, which are haunted by the ghost of the defunct god Sunstorm. They mark the boundary between Pent and the Kingdom of Ignorance.

Koromondal – The windblown coastal region, which extends north from the Kingdom of Ignorance. The trolls here are now few, they live by whaling, hunting and bullying the local humans for food. Many strange creatures dwell here including the Dong, a predator that attracts its prey with a luminous nasal lure, and the Blow Pumpkins, a slithering relative of the chaotic Jack O'bears.

The trolls of Koromondal are secretive creatures, they travel in small family groups only coming together to partake of their rites in their mock temples to the Black Sun. Many still carry with them the religious trappings of their former glory, now broken and decayed. Trollkin are almost exclusively consumed by the ever hungry trolls. Those trollkin that still dwell in the Kingdom of Ignorance have a superior attitude to the locals, treating them as little better than dogs. Some of the wiser trollkin have shown particular prowess in the dark magic of the Black Sun and summon demons to do their bidding, much to the chagrin of their Kralori masters. The trollkin almost universally dress in black robes and wide straw hats. They have a natural talent for prostrating themselves before the Kralori.

SLONTOS

In the north of the Duchy of Slontos lie the Haunted Fields, a darkness shrouded troll wilderness which surrounds the foothills of the Troll and Ice Mountains. Both of the mountains of this region resemble volcanoes, but neither was created by Caladril the Volcano God, but were forced up by ancestors of the local trolls burrowing up from the Underworld. The Haunted Fields are typically gray and grim, covered in shattered stones and bleached bones and inhabited by hungry trollkin and the ravenous Lead Pill Bugs for which the local Gorakiki are famed. These giant woodlice have hardened shells of metal and can be trained to roll into balls and be launched downhill against the enemies of the trolls.

Uzfas, or the Troll Mountain, is of blackened stone and is riddled with veins of lead, the metal is mined by thousands of trollkin under the guidance of their Uzko masters and traded as far west as Ralios and also east to Esrolia and the Shadow Plateau. The region is magically hostile to humans, who are plagued by nightmares, strange maladies and fatigue, the God Learner speculate that this is from exposure to the lead but

is in reality caused by the presence of the Hell Wind which blows up through the caves of the mountain and unleashes strange spirits from Underworld. Uzfas is so riddled with mines and tunnels that it is now largely hollow but there is still plenty of lead to mine.

The **Granga** Clan that dominates the mountain is extremely wealthy. Its leader Gastor Grimna has committed terrible sins by allowing the God Learners to travel with her into Wonderhome myths and much of the trollish knowledge of the God Learners is from the foolish troll. There are many cave trolls in Uzfas, far more than in any other troll region; this is due to the spiritual pollution caused by the God Learners, who have dabbled into the powers of the trollish trickster spirit, Rokotor the Great Imp.

Hiskfas, or the Ice Mountain, is a strange phenomenon. It is an 'Anti-Volcano' that spews not lava but glaciers, hoarfrosts and hailstones. It is often seen as diseased by the local volcano worshippers. The mountain is always shrouded in snow and freezing clouds of ice crystals. Hollri and other ice demons are encountered on the mountainsides, and Vakkakran, a monstrous snow giant and demi-god son of the mountain holds court over the trolls in the region.

The **Jedaka** Clan dwell on the foothills of the mountain and venture to its heights to retrieve unmelting ice and pure frozen crystals to empower their magic rituals. The Jedaka include the worship of Knolrag, an icy deity unknown elsewhere but associated by the God Learners with Inora the Mountain Goddess. The Jedaka have a fierce rivalry with the Granga, they hate all humans and despise their neighbours for giving up their trollish secrets. The Duke of Slontos has raided the Jedaka on several occasions but his Sorcerers and Knights are ill equipped to fight in the freezing conditions and have little power against a fast moving glacier. When they do reach the ice caves of the Jedaka the trolls have normally fled into the higher reaches of the Ice Mountain.

The trolls of Slontos are few in number in comparison to the great Uz nation in the rest of the world, however there are many stories about them amongst the annals of the Slontans and even within their children's tales. The Granga have profited well from the God Learners and their lead monopoly, they live comparatively decadent lifestyles, enjoying many exotic foods. Some of the Granga leaders even dress in troll sized versions of Slontan clothing and have taken to bearing swords in favour of maces. This of course is a sure sign of their spiritual decay point out the Jedaka. However the many Cave Trolls of the Granga also adds to the stories of brutal, stupid and man eating trolls, many of the clan's Romal escape and haunt the Slontan countryside, preying on sheep, farmers and travellers. The Jedaka are in some ways as equally impure as the Granga, their devotion to their mountain god, their leadership by a

non-Uz and their strange traditions would be unrecognisable to most foreign trolls. In many ways the Jedaka resemble the Snow Uz, but lack their physical adaptations and some say, sophistication.

SNOW TROLLS AND JUNGLE TROLLS

Of lesser import but equal interest are the creatures that call themselves snow trolls and jungle trolls, which dwell spread across the frozen northlands by the White Sea and the lush jungles of Pamaltela, respectively. Though neither nation is a 'power' in the greater scheme of things, each has a small population of Uz that do not fall clearly into the divisions of the traditional breeds. More than this, they are largely undiscovered by the God Learners and Dragonspeakers who each have little business in the realms these beings call home.

THE FROZEN NORTH OF GENERTELA

The Uz of the northlands are generally found around the region close to the White Sea and the Western Ice Shelf, known to most as Valind's Glacier at the very northernmost tips of the Genertela continent. Technically there is little physical difference between snow trolls (called Uzhim) and dark trolls – merely cultural differences that arose from the climate and the snow trolls' distance from traditional troll communities.

Only a few thousand trolls exist this far north, perhaps 10,000 to 15,000 at most. They are the descendants of the Uz that ventured north to fight Chaos or emerged from the subterranean tunnels and wandered into the northern blizzards to avoid the other races after the Womb-Biter Curse began to cripple troll society and strip it of its dominance.

The north has no delicacies: food is caught to be eaten to stave off death. Starvation is an ever-present fear for many northern communities and males and females alike use skill and magic to bring home gulls, seals, walruses and whales to feed themselves and their clans. One of the reasons the trolls go hungrier compared to their southern cousins is that unlike the other Uz, the snow trolls do not eat their Enlo. In fact, trollkin are considered family here and are trained to contribute to the clan just like any other troll. However, lacking the insulating layers of fat and muscle, many Enlo die of exposure in the north and do not survive like their bulkier, healthier Uzko brethren. Since so few humans ever meet snow trolls, even fewer humans chance across snow trollkin. This leads the few God Learner and EWF scholars aware of the

'ice Uz' to wonder if these creatures have even suffered the Trollkin Curse.

It can be a surprising sight to see a snow troll encampment. Snow trolls are nomadic creatures, setting up their modest tent-villages on the tundra and the ice fields as they move across the north, settling only to endure another winter season of bitter snowstorms. Sealskin tents are oiled and treated against the cold, or frozen solid so as to prevent collapse under the pressure of mounting snow.

The Uzhim use tools made of bone or rare metal, make leather out of the skins of their own dead or the animals they prey upon and are almost always clad in thick animal furs to help against the cold. Lead tools or weapons are considered the prized weapons of ancient bloodlines of tribal chieftains rather than the possessions of frontline warriors. A tradition has grown that each warrior among the ice Uz carries a single lead-headed arrow or small lead pellet for a sling, which he may only use to save the life of a clan-mate. It is an odd custom but one the inhuman Uz observe religiously. Any troll found to have used this missile for another purpose is likely to suffer exile from his clan and faces a slow, painful death freezing solid on the arctic tundra. This is a perfect example of how precious and holy lead is to these northern trolls.

The favoured weapon of the snow trolls is the spear – a weapon that normally sees little use outside of Argan Argar cultists and trained trollkin. This is because the spear is both a conventional hunting weapon and a fishing tool; fish make up a large percentage of the ice Uz diet, after all. Spears are also lightweight, which is a significant factor for the nomadic snow trolls who are already clad in layers of treated furs and hides and carry their yurt tents on their backs as they move across the tundra. Most Uzhim carry their own yurts or bedrolls, though the strongest males within a clan might be lumbered with the materials for a larger communal tent if the tribe creates such a structure. Most, however, do not.

The cult of Kyger Litor is almost wholly superseded by the worship of Himile, the Cold God and Valind the Winter Lord. Trolls of the region often fight side by side with the Hollri Ice Demons and Hrimthur Winter Giants when they invade the lowlands during the deep winters.

PAMALTELA

The jungle trolls of the southern Pamaltela continent are unique among the Uz and not simply because of their distance from their Genertelan cousins. The 'Muri' trolls' origins are found in the incredible legend of the Uzuz warrior Moorgarki Hunter-of-the-Sun. This Mistress Race troll raided the surface jungles of Pamaltela in the era of Wonderhome. She was a

strange-hearted Uz, apparently fascinated with the elements of the surface and dedicated to killing the sun itself just to see how cold it would make the world.

Moorgarki bested many of the Pamaltelan gods and became a feared foe of the indigenous peoples and in some Pamaltelan myths Moorgarki is credited with the vanishing of the Sun from the sky. However Moorgarki was a great and fierce fighter and when the monsters mustered at the Field of Jaranpoor she was there to fight. The Pamaltelan entity called 'Son of Earth' by the southerners was the spirit that finally defeated Moorgarki and her raiders from the Underworld. Pamalt the Son of Earth took his friend Lodril's spear and punched it clean through Moorgarki's heart.

The blow did not kill Moorgarki but instead healed an unhealable wound and made his heart and nature change. Moorgarki no longer suffered from the cloying heat of the jungle and plains but neither could she feel the joy of cold once again. She became able to survive in Pamaltela but could never return to Wonderhome. The children of Moorgarki became the Muri, or Hot Trolls. They quickly adapted to dwelling in the Jungles and hunting man across the veldt. Moorgarki made a pact with the Spirit of the Jungle to fight together against the hated god Pamalt and his children. This truce allowed the trolls a strong ally against their enemy but also had no prohibitions against them consuming the jungle and the creatures within it.

Somehow, though concerns of physical distance are surely irrelevant, the trolls that followed Moorgarki were unaffected by the Trollkin Curse when Nysalor ravaged the trolls' fertility. This is likely because the jungle trolls (who it must be said had next to nothing to do with the Gbaji Wars) are all Muri, not technically Uzko. These trolls are not true Uzuz but neither are they exactly the same Uzko as their Genertelan cousins. The specifics of the matter are mystical and are likely to remain a mystery for all time. The likeliest explanation, sung down the years through various Pamaltelan legends, is that Lodril's spear – wielded with Pamalt's power – warped Moorgarki's descendants into a variant of the Uzuz rather than another breed of Uzko. This has a touch of truth to it, at least on the surface, since the senses of the jungle trolls resemble the senses of the Uzuz to some degree.

The Muri have evolved to suit their environment. Over the centuries they have changed to adapt to the jungle and the searing heat of their new homeland, shedding layers of fat to appear much slimmer and muscularly defined than Genertelan Uzko. Rather than bear heavy weapons of war, jungle trolls tend to favour light spears, poison darts and blowpipes. Similarly, the Muri wear little to no armour, instead relying on the natural grey-green of their skin to provide camouflage.

TARMO MOUNTAINS

The Uz of the Tarmo Mountains in the Pamalten lands of Tarien are not Muri but are Uzdo. The mountains are high and snow covered, well suited for the cold loving dark trolls. The trolls of this region were not followers of Moorgarki, arriving on the surface in a separate exodus from Wonderhome, however many still worship him for his powers to fight against the Pamaltelans. Kyger Litor is most beloved of the Tarmo Tribes but her worship is done in a manner unrecognisable to the trolls of Genertela. The Tarmo Trolls delight in raiding and devouring the oasis of Tarien. Other monsters also dwell in the region such as the monstrous Grey Giants and flying Hoon, which the Trolls have learned to drive into battle against their foes. By great irony the Tarmo Trolls are as equally affected by the Trollkin curse as the Genertelan Trolls, however the trolls rarely entertain their runt offspring and cast them out into the wilderness. Hordes of hungry trollkin sometimes ravage as far as southern Umathela.

THE SEAS

There are two groups of trolls which can live off the sea. The first are the strangely froglike Sea Trolls or Uzela, these dim witted creatures can be found in many coastal waters preying upon the local Sea Elves, wreaking havoc with fisherman's nets and lurking in harbours where they feed upon the flotsam and jetsam. With the increase in sea traffic by the God Learners and the huge number of ports that the Justeli are building the number of Sea Trolls has sharply increased and many harbour masters pay a sizeable bounty to have them hunted down.

Sea Trolls will on occasions clamber aboard moored ships and steal sailors from their beds and devour whole cargos. In Choralinthor Bay the Sea Trolls have become a true nuisance but the clever will note that they never prey on those loyal to the Only Old One.

The second group of trolls that have made their life at sea are the remnants of the Kingdom of Nights' Black Navy. These trolls are dedicated to Jeset and Kogag. They once served as Ezkankkeko's personal fleet but fled Choralinthor Bay and made for the open seas at the command of their lord when the God Learner presence became too much. They are hunted by the God Learners but have become skilled at finding harbour and shelters that the humans could not access and their ability to sail at night has made them effective pirates. It is believed that at least one of the Black Fleet has sailed East to Koromondal to seek aid and the famed troll captain Barabuz Blacktusk is documented to have sailed down Magasta's Pool in search of ancient allies, so far he has not returned.

The Boat Uz of Kogag are a great source of dark enemies for the God Learners, or even a sea based troll campaign. Their ships are great black hulks, formed from Giantboot

or Leadwood, with sails of spun spider silk and ranks of Great Troll or Trollkin rowers. There are many hidden coves throughout the seas where black hearted troll pirates drink Powzie, eat treasure and sing dark songs of victory in the name of Ezkankkeko.

THE OPAL SEER CAVERNS

'Outsiders may enter, yes. You bring trade? Weapons or food? Information, maybe? Good. You go on in. If you cause trouble, you die. Just a warning, human. Hey, human, before you go, I tell you this for free: Watch out for Ravager, hey? Ravager is hungry. Had no flesh in three days now. Go careful.'

— Voday the Black Spear, Uzko guard of the Severed Claw clan

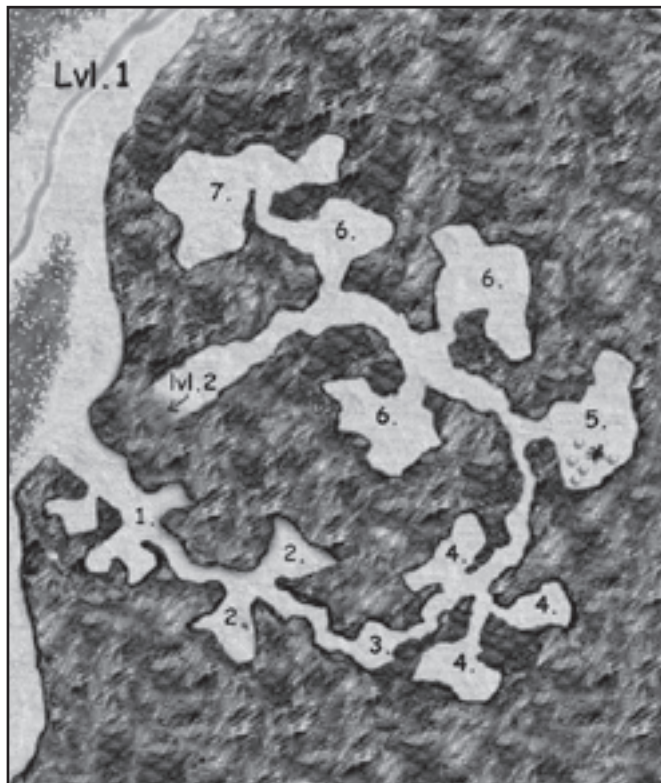
The Opal Seer Caverns are set in the foothills of the western hills not far from Skyfall Lake. This location is detailed below for Games Masters and players to explore, learn more of the local culture and perhaps even set stories in the hopes of quelling or fuelling the flames of war.

The general geography of the caverns follows a downward spiral that is popular among the Uz of the Dagori Inkarth region. Where natural caverns may once have existed in a random pattern, due to the efforts of trollkin and great troll slaves and the guidance of tribal leaders, the rough layout of the Opal Seer Caverns has become a spiral that bores deeper into the earth, with many clans taking a level to themselves and featuring their own tunnels up to the surface. Most of the Uz keep their own passages to the Hurtplace a secret from the other tribes, or post dutiful guards at the openings if their passageways are known to the other clans. In times of war, when one level battles against another, the personal tunnels can become vicious battlegrounds where enemy warriors seek to enter their foes' passageways and invade through devious flank attacks.

The first thing to note about the spiral design is that even though it is only a vague layout, it is supremely unpractical from a human standpoint. The clans on the top must walk through the territories of the tribes on lower levels to reach the communal areas such as the marketplace or the largest caverns where much of the community's food is stored. This is intentional, though arranged for reasons few human minds will appreciate without delving into troll lore and social customs.

The higher a tribe is placed in the Opal Seer Caverns, the less power it holds both socially and militarily. This is why the Severed Claw tribe are found on the first level and the

Opal Seer clan on the lowest habited tier, deep under the ground, furthest from the sun and closest to all the caverns of fungal food.



The First Level

1. The First Caves: This tunnel is the main entrance that leads from the Hurtplace down into the first level of caverns. It is a wide tunnel that extends into the earth from a large cave opening. Troll warriors from various tribes usually guard the tunnel or lurk outside in the wilderness, setting sentries to watch the opening.

2. Sentry Caves: At the beginning of the spiral, the first caverns leading away from the main path are reserved for warriors on sentry duty. Male Uz from each clan spend several days a month here, forming part of a randomly-assigned force of mixed-tribe guardians. The rooms are sparsely furnished, since much of the time the warriors only gather here to play dice games or have contests of strength to pass the time. They still tend to sleep in their own caverns below.

3. Ravager's Cell: Here the great troll known as Ravager is kept chained by enchanted lead bindings. The creature is as stupid as most Uzdo but is also crazed beyond reason. In three instances within the past decade, he has also shown himself to be cannibalistic by eating three Uzko he murdered. He belongs to the Open Eyes tribe further down the spiral, though he is

always kept here, chained to the wall of a small cavern, in case the Opal Seer Caverns are ever invaded by other races.

Ravager is fed on leftover fungus and, more frequently, any unfortunate trollkin that have disobeyed orders one time too many. The howling and feral grunting of the great troll reaches down the first three levels of the spiral and the sounds are a constant fearful reminder of potential fate for the Enlo who steps out of line.

4. Severed Claw Trollkin Area: The pathway begins to dip down here, leading down into the first caverns of the Severed Claw tribe. These initial cavern rooms are for the tribe's trollkin slaves to gather and sleep. They are uniformly filthy and never cleaned-out, with waste all over the stone floor and little furniture to speak of. The dirtiness is actually necessary, since the Severed Claw matriarch never feeds her slaves. The rats and insects drawn to this area by all the waste serve as the only meals the tribe's trollkin ever eat, unless they are desperate enough to eat each other.

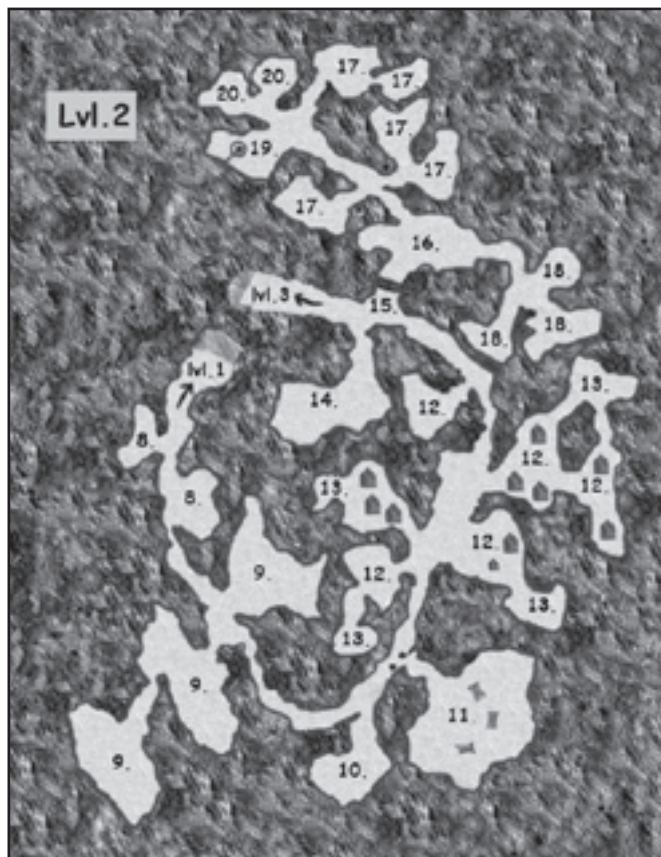
Several times in the past, Severed Claw trollkin have attempted to flee their hideous living conditions, either to the surface world or deeper within the Opal Seer Caverns. Those who take flight to the Hurtplace are generally killed by Uzko slingers on guard duty. The Enlo that flee deeper into the cave system are often either eaten by other tribes or ransomed back to the Severed Claw.

5. Gorakiki Ritual Chamber: This cavern is guarded at all times by members of the Gorakiki cult, drawn from all tribes. It is one of the largest chambers within the first level, providing a place of worship for the cult of Gorakiki among the tribes of the first few tiers in the spiral. Since the cavern is in Severed Claw territory, the tribe's matriarch is offered a tribute of insect food for her clan, taken from the insects, grubs, eggs and spawn that breed and grow in the huge chamber, once a month.

6. Severed Claw Dwelling Areas: These three chambers are the communal caves of the three dozen or so Severed Claw Uz. The central chamber is used for meat storage and is where the fruits of the hunters' toils are kept. Any troll can eat from here provided it does not unreasonably deplete the clan stores. The matriarch has been known to send the troll who takes too much out on a meat-quest for a week and a day, allowing the glutton no respite or shelter within the clan holdings until he has replaced many times over what he took.

7. Matriarch's Chamber: This is the chamber of the Severed Claw matriarch, the Uzko Yaragah Slave-Killer, who has a reputation for cruelty in all matters and earned her name through obvious brutalities against her clan's Enlo. Yaragah's chambers are spartan as befits the leader of the poorest and humblest clan in the Opal Seer Caverns. A battle banner, once

used by an ancestral warrior in the Gbaji Wars, is now a food-stained, bloodstained rug for her stone and wood throne. These chambers are also used as a place for her tribe's rituals, as she is a high-ranking member of the Kyger Litor cult.



The Second Level

Down the spiral onto the second level, a traveller comes into the caverns of the Bloodied Spear tribe – a small but militant group that are best known for their warriors' rigid training. The Bloodied Spear are led by an Uzko matriarch known by her deed name of Kraal Maiden-of-War. She is often found in the lower levels interacting with the matriarchs of more powerful clans who hire Bloodied Spear hunters as mercenaries for scouting or additional food gathering.

The Bloodied Spear tribe are low on the social hierarchy (or high, if going on matters of geography) but are rich in lead coins and trollkin slaves, both of which they take as payment for the loan of their warriors. The fact that they are mercenaries fighting for other clans rather than their families means the warriors of the tribe are feared but actually end up giving their own tribe a bad name as wretched money-grubbers.

Trollish elitism means the Bloodied Spear clan will stay high up in the spiral unless they can buy their way to prestige with

their stockpiles of wealth. Currently, the matriarch is content to use her warriors as freelance blades in the growing tensions, knowing that if the food in the Opal Seer Caverns begins to run out, she will have the resources to purchase what little remains – or enough slaves to eat to survive the hardest times.

8. Guard Chambers: In these first two chambers, Bloodied Spear guards watch the highest tunnels for any sign of Severed Claw treachery. On several occasions, Severed Claw trolls have sought to steal Bloodied Spear trollkin. Any such attempts result in pitched battles where the fearsome Bloodied Spear warriors always emerge triumphant.

Rather ingeniously (for trolls) the standard ‘warning bellow’ in case of a raid has been replaced by a heavy bronze bell, which is rung in cases of emergency and guaranteed to wake every living being on the first five levels. This bell was a gift from the Dragonspeaker ally Delecti the Inquirer, who travelled for several years across Glorantha with the matriarch’s son, Gravlak Dragonfriend. When offered payment, the keen-minded Gravlak asked for a great bell of bronze to rouse all within his clan territory when under attack.

9. The Slave Chambers: The slave area belonging to the Bloodied Spear tribe is extensive, with modest bedrolls and a washing pool available for the trollkin kept here. Trolls are not human, so from a human perception it is difficult to see how these creatures could possibly consider anything here to be being ‘well-treated’ – especially given that their main source of food is the dung of the clan’s Uzko – but the Bloodied Spear Enlo are generally happier than many other clans’ slaves. Due to the amount of space they have and their sheer numbers they have formed their own community in imitation of the clan they serve.

Like their masters, they consider warrior prowess of absolute importance and a matter of true honour. The Bloodied Spear’s slaves use the largest of their five chambers for weapons practice, since they are also among the best-trained trollkin in the Opal Seer Caverns.

10. Forge of Langred Roaring-Hammer: Perhaps the most unique aspect of the Bloodied Spear territory is the presence of an experienced metalworker, the Uzko Langred, called Roaring Hammer for the sounds of his forge echoing down the caverns. Langred generally works with lead, making armour and weapons for the warriors of his clan and religious icons for the matriarchs of other clans in and outside the Opal Seer Caverns. These latter items are goodwill gifts from the Bloodied Spear matriarch seeking to buy favour or gifts made for friends. Some of the matriarchs that are more aware of the potential for manipulation believe these offerings are a subtle way for the Bloodied Spear matriarch to show off her wealth.

Langred works for food, lead bolgs, outsider coins – practically anything. He even has a small fire forge set up in the darkness of his chambers and rolls a boulder over the front entrance to his antechamber when it is in use. This forge has a chimney that reaches the surface, though to climb it would be impossible for anything larger than a small cat, since it is extremely narrow.

11. Ritual Chamber: This is the chamber in which Bloodied Spear holy services are conducted. The entrance is flanked by two troll-size lead statues of Kyger Litor. Lain across the floor of the chamber are thick rugs of cured bear and tiger fur. These are kept for comfort, not appearance, since little light penetrates this far into the spiral.

12. Bloodied Spear Dwelling Area: These six communal chambers house the stone shelters used by the Bloodied Spear Uzko and their most important value slaves. One of the stone houses – by far the smallest – is the home of the trollkin value slave Jezmek the Thinker. This Enlo is considered the most intelligent trollkin any of the clan has ever seen and the little creature is called in for counsel on many matters. He is considered the tribe’s property, not his mother’s.

The largest of these chambers is the area set aside for weapons practice. It has a passage to the Hurtplace and is where the hunters of the clan enter and exit the spiral most of the time. It is guarded at all times by a handful of Uz warriors and trollkin arrow fodder.

13. Storage Chambers: These chambers, connected to the dwelling areas rather than the main concourse, are where the tribe’s meat and scavenged resources from the surface world are kept. Food occasionally goes missing from the stores here, though to date no magic or sentry has got to the bottom of the mystery.

14. The Stupid Traders’ Chamber: This interestingly named cavern is the traditional place for outsider (non-troll) traders to bring their wares. The name stuck when the traders were offering their best wares to the trolls of the highest tiers – those with the least social standing – rather than to the powerful, influential and truly wealthy clans in the depths.

The Opal Seer Caverns still sees some trade, usually from unaligned Genertelan merchants seeking a side-profit or weapon-runners and ore-traders seeking to offload their goods on the trolls who are desperate for such things. However, after a trader’s first visit to the Opal Seer Caverns, he usually discovers he has sold his entire stock to the least wealthy members of the settlement and the ones least likely to be able to buy from him again when he makes a return trip. Most traders venture down into the depths of the spiral and trade with the important clans after their initial mistake.

The Stupid Traders' Chamber is set directly between Bloodied Spear tunnels and the territory of the next tribe on the same level – the Baleful Howl clan.

15. Gate of the Baleful Howl: Unlike the other clans in the spiral, the territories of the Baleful Howl are not set along either side of a concourse that spirals down but are a series of smaller chambers that are only accessible by one route. The gate is the wooden construction named after the tribe that erected it.

The gate is ugly by any species' reckoning – a towering set of double doors inscribed with the names and crude etchings of each matriarch to live within the past several hundred years. The gates are guarded at all times by several Baleful Howl warriors, most of whom have battle experience. The clan matriarch is careful about appointing inexperienced fighters to such important posts.

16. The Welcome Chamber: This open chamber is a place for formal tribe gatherings, rituals, weapons training and welcoming representatives from other clans (or from the surface) on important matters. Torches are left unlit in wall sconces, to be lit only if a respected visitor lacks Darksense.

This chamber sees a lot of use because of its communal nature. Yet it is largely silent, for the male dark trolls (and all trollkin) are forbidden to speak in the area upon pain of death. The matriarch is an obsessive devotee to Kyger Litor and believes that males should never speak in clan business at all. Hence, in the cavern where the majority of the tribe's important business is discussed and dealings with outsiders are held, no male of the clan may utter a word.

17. The Communal Dwelling Area: These caverns mirror the living quarters of other clans' holdings. Obviously, males are allowed to speak here. The smallest cavern is the armoury, which also features a winding and twisting route up to the surface world.

18. Trollkin Chambers: The trollkin of the Baleful Howl tribe are kept in forced silence for most of their lives. Most are kept as food slaves, work slaves or values serving males of the clan, with few trained for war. No Enlo is ever allowed to speak to a female Uzko, lest he be consumed immediately.

In these chambers, the trollkin are allowed to whisper amongst themselves in the dark. Theirs is a grim and joyless existence even by the standards of Enlo slaves.

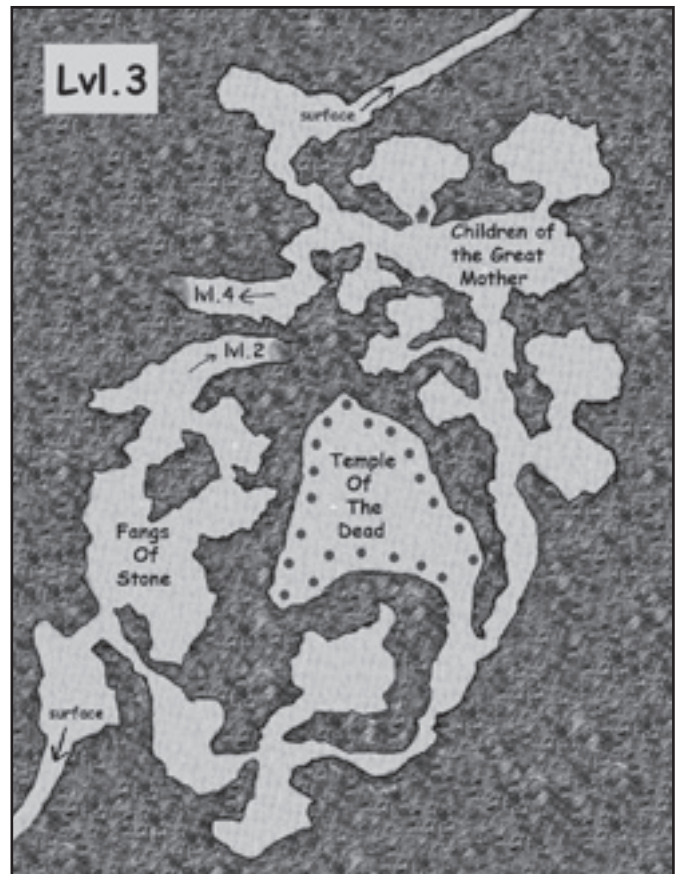
19. The Shrine to Uzbirther: This relatively small chamber is largely taken up by the 20-foot tall stone statue of Kyger Litor and is where the clan females come to pray. Males are

expected to worship in their own ways and are barred from worshipping here.

The statue itself depicts Uzbirther as an almost demonic figure: a towering, hateful trollish entity that rages down at her children for all their failings. Here the sound of scourging comes during the meditations of clan priestesses, as they whip themselves in punishment for the weaknesses of their wombs.

During these religious penance rites, the wails of the priestesses sound throughout the tunnels. This dark adherence to their perverted faith is the reason the clan gained their name in centuries past. The advantage to such twisted piety is that many Baleful Howl warriors and priestesses become experienced HeroQuesters in the hopes of finding a cure for the Curse of Kin.

20. Storage Chambers: The meat of the hunters' efforts is brought here to be kept on hooks and stone slabs.



The Third level

Down on the third level, the clans are larger and more prosperous than their first- and second-level cousins. The spiral widens to allow for greater traffic and larger communal

areas on the main spiralling concourse. The Fangs of Stone tribe and the Children of the Great Mother are found here.

The former are named for their founding matriarch, the great UzUz Chaos Wars hero –Jaagh Mountain-Eater. It is said that the Chaos gods feared her so much that they imprisoned her inside the bowels of a mountain and she had to eat her way through miles of solid rock in order to escape.

The latter tribe is named for the views of its successive queens. Each ruler of the Children of the Great Mother insists that her tribe members are related by blood to both Kyger Litor and Zorak Zoran, with tribal legends claiming Uzbirther mated with the troll God of War and the offspring was a spirit in UzUz form called Rigaash Pureblood. This UzUz, apparently born after the troll race could no longer produce Ancient Uz, founded her clan and spread her divine lineage through her faithful converts.

The spread of these clan territories is vast indeed, with both taking up the majority of the spiral's third tier, which in turn is significantly greater in span than those above, twice again the total area of the second tier. Much of the clan holdings here mirror those of the tribes above. The most notable cavern found on the third tier is the mystical chamber of the Temple of the Dead.

21. The Temple of the Dead: In a huge chamber that itself actually reaches further into the depths of the earth, the Uz have a communal ritual hall filled with statues, minor magical items used for summoning and binding ghosts and spirits, possessions of honoured ancestors and family heirlooms. This is the Temple of the Dead, where most of the Opal Seer Caverns' ancestor worship occurs. It is situated between the territories of the Children of the Great Mother and the Fangs of Stone clan. The spiralling concourse tunnel outside is wide enough that travellers can safely bypass both territories without offending either tribe's guards on patrol.

The chamber's entrance is distinctive. Across the floor are hundreds of minor keepsakes and heirlooms – nothing of any value except sentimental, cast here by relatives of the fallen as a way of asking the dead for good luck. Theft of any of the items found here is punishable by the offender having his hands removed and being cast out to die in the Hurtplace. In reality, opportunistic thieves can attempt to bribe the guards here, who are drawn randomly from several tribes at once but bribes cost more than most of the trinkets are worth and few guards are willing to risk the certain death that awaits them should they be caught taking bribes.

Inside the grand arch of a doorway, the traveller enters one of the largest halls in the Opal Seer Caverns. Statues of trolls,

crudely carved from stone (or in some rare cases, lead) line the walls and fill the floor space like some kind of grim, silent army. The army of statues reaches back into the pitch darkness seemingly without end and there always seems room for another several dozen.

When any Uzko or UzUz member of the Opal Seer clans dies, his tribe-mates construct an effigy in his honour, which will vary in quality depending on the crafters' skills, the material used and the expense of the piece. Generally, the most loved or respected members of a tribe have death-statues of a higher craftsmanship made in their memories. These statues are then placed at the rear of this great chamber, with the dead of all the clans (even those long-dead or destroyed by other tribes) standing in a silent and near-endless army.

Shamans come here to perform their spirit worship and other Uz come simply to pray. It is a cold, discomforting room – especially for non-trolls. At some point every year, Uz shamans – and any other shamans for that matter – within the Opal Seer Caverns will begin to have hideous nightmares of all the evil, sinful things they have done in their lives. These nightmares last exactly three nights and every single shaman has them. Word spreads through the tribes with great speed at this annual occurrence. On the third night of these crippling nightmares, the Temple of the Dead is sealed with great boulders that are rolled into place by the gathered shamans, who then disperse to the Hurtplace until dawn. No Uz has ever violated the boulder-seal of the temple during this evening – called Thirdnight by the Opal Seer clans. However, all Uz on the second, third and fourth tiers can hear great laughter and hellish shrieks from within the chamber, echoing eerily through the dense rocks.

The Fourth Level

After the mystical eeriness of the third level, the fourth tier returns to more traditional clan holdings, unbroken by great temple-caves. The spiral is now so wide that the five clans here share the tier with an extensive cave network that reaches away from the tribal territories and is guarded at all times by warrior-priests of Gorakiki.

Three of the four tribes that dwell here make up the Council of the Deep, the ruling body of the Opal Seer Caverns. Each of these tribes can muster close to 4,000 warriors, though three-quarters of these will be Enlo. Each also claims dozens of high-ranking cult members among their number and personal shrines within their clan grounds. Temples to Kyger Litor are among the shrines kept private from other clans.

22. Clan Grounds of the Storm-Roarer Tribe: These follow the conventional spread of caverns, though on an increasingly grander scale. The Storm Roarers are led by a male Uzko, not



a female matriarch, who is known only by his deed name – Vomiter-of-Storms, which derives from an apparent use of his Urox-born divine magic to physically vomit a thunderstorm into the skies above a battle in the Gbaji Wars, hindering the armies of Chaos by scything rain and lightning bolts. Vomiter-of-Storms believes his advanced age (yet youthful vigour) is the result of near-immortality gained from drinking the blood of Pocharngo the Mutator when the Chaos god exploded into divine mush. He also claims to enjoy favour from the Storm Bull and is a Runelord in the Urox cult. He is barred from the Council of the Deep because of his gender.

Warriors of the Storm-Roarer tribe each wear vambraces of lead with the lightning bolt symbol of their chieftain. They are among the most proud and demanding warriors in the Opal Seer Caverns and many leave the caves in order to spread their tribe's renown across Glorantha. Many mighty warriors of this tribe serve notable Dragonspeaker cultists as bodyguards and enforcers.

23. Clan Grounds of the Opal Seer Tribe: The tribe that founded the caverns are here on the fourth tier and are among the most powerful of the native clans. Their first Uzko

matriarch, Harak Juugruth, still lives and rules over the tribe, though she is rumoured to be too ancient to move at all. It is for her that the clan (and the settlement) were named, for she possesses magical orbs made from opals set into her eye sockets, replacing the eyes she lost to the Aldryami in the Godswar. Consequently, her tribe loathe most elves and have a habit of slaying them on sight.

The tribe's sub-leader, the Uzko Kalav Juugruth – the Opal Seer's daughter – rules in her mother's stead on the Council of the Deep.

24. Clan Grounds of the Banesky Tribe: The Baneskies are devoted Gorakiki worshippers, many of whom make daily pilgrimages to the insect chambers on the first tier for their rituals, while others spend their time in the legion of 'bug pits' in the Banesky tribal territories. In these bug pits, Uzko warriors and Enlo slaves alike rear and train giant insect steeds for riding on the surface world. In the centre of the clan holdings, a great chimney opens up thousands of feet above into the Hurtplace and it is through this wide, earth chute that the insect-riders take to the sky. The Baneskies are, for all intents and purposes, the air power of the Opal Seer Caverns' army. The cavernous entrance to their holdings from the surface is guarded by a host of Enlo insect-riders that patrol the region at all times of day and night.

This effective air force also means the hunters of the Banesky tribe bring back exceptional catches, often flown back from regions of Dagori Inkarth too distant for warriors and hunters from other tribes to reach on foot. The Baneskies are not generous with their hunting bounties – they charge extortionate rates of lead and slaves for bringing back exotic meats and plants, which they sell to the other clans at the Great Market.

The last matriarch of the Banesky clan was slain in battle with a surface tribe of trolls seven years ago. The tribe is currently leaderless, unrepresented on the Council of the Deep and is in danger of being moved to the fourth tier to be replaced by the Fangs of Stone clan. Several Uzko female priests of Gorakiki are feuding over the throne of the tribe, with the entire clan is divided along lines of loyalty to each of the five candidates.

25. Clan Grounds of the Lead Lords Tribe: The clan calling itself the Lead Lords have been misnamed for centuries. Where once their warriors were clad in great suits of lead armour and fought immense battles in the Chaos Wars, now the clan's wealth and power lies in the vast fungal chambers within their territories. The fungus and underworld fruits grown in these vast subterranean vaults are plentiful enough to feed the huge tribe with overstock that can be sold on to the other clans in the Great Market.

The matriarch of the Lead Lords is a young dark troll called Valla Blacktusk, named for her rotting tusks which no magic is able to heal. She is in constant pain from the decay and this leads her to be waspish and bitter, though she always manages to keep her clan's interests in mind during negotiations or Council of the Deep matters.

26. The Great Market: This is the vast trading chamber used by the Uz and the outsiders that bring their wares to the Opal Seer Caverns. Its depth within the earth unnerves most non-troll traders, which is exactly the effect the Uz like to have on their merchant guests, enjoying the fact the outsiders seek to make a profit quickly and return to the surface as soon as possible. It means these traders are less inclined to spend hours haggling over transactions.

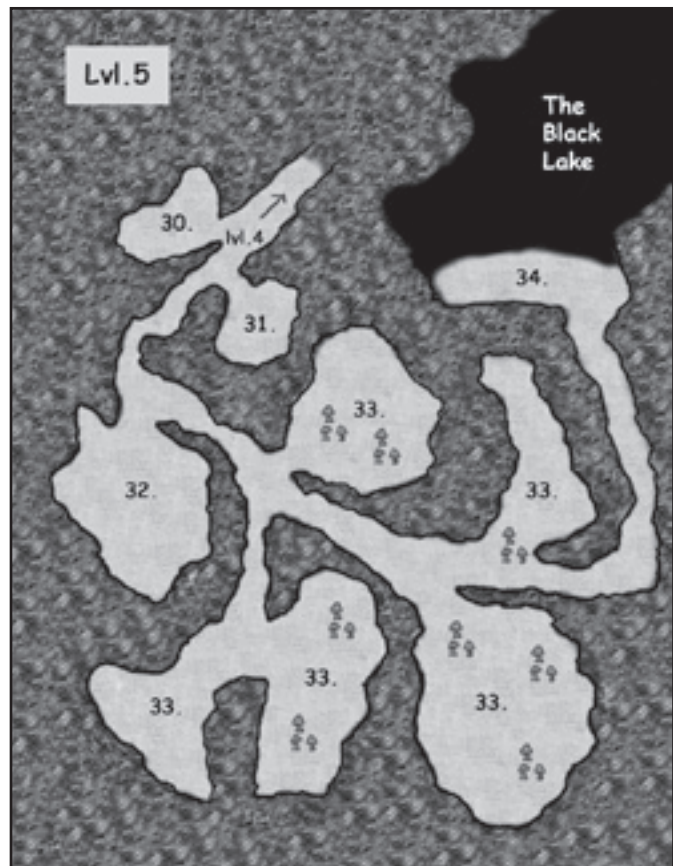
On any given day, the Great Market is bustling with hundreds of trolls and several outsider traders. Enlo slaves race here and there to gather purchases for their masters, warriors come looking for armour and weapons to trade for and trolls seek fungus, insect flesh and surface animal meat for food. It is much like a marketplace in any community, though with the dim light of muted torches burning in wall sconces.

27. Temple of Zorak Zoran: This huge chamber dedicated to the warrior-god Zorak Zoran is part-temple, part-training ground. Hordes of Uzko fight here, ostensibly in mock combat for training but with very real and savage injuries inflicted as a matter of course, especially since the warriors of rival tribes often use their training fights to wound one another as seriously they can.

Statues of Zorak Zoran, some made from stone and others from lead, stare down into the pitch-dark chamber. Most are between 20 and 50 feet tall and depict the War God in various battle poses with a feral, vicious expression on his features. The ringing clash of weapons and the howls of rage and pain that echo through the fourth circle originate from here.

This is also the place where the priests of Zorak Zoran perform their rituals, which have often in the past taken the form of bloodsports between Uz warriors or sacrificial Enlo slaves.

28. Shrine of Xiola Umbar: Xiola Umbar is not a popular god in the Opal Seer Caverns, though her faith does see occasional resurgences depending on the shifting faiths of members of the more powerful clans. Worship of her is usually undertaken by lesser clan members, served by their trollkin slaves. Her shrine is modest, with the sizeable chamber often being left bare and the ramshackle 'clergy' assembling their cult's trappings and furniture each time they arrive for their sporadic rituals.



The Fifth Level

The very deepest pits of the Opal Seer Caverns are barred to the Enlo. The concourse down to this lowest tier is guarded by the elite warriors of the four fourth-tier clans. However, the Storm-Roarer tribe offers no warriors to stand sentry here, since the Vomiter-of-Storms is denied a place on the Council of the Deep.

30. Pit-Temple of Subere: This chamber is – obviously – kept absolutely dark, hence its location in the bowels of the cave network. There are seventeen statues of Subere spread across the chamber, each revealed to be a masterwork but only detectable by touch. It is here that the priestesses of Subere gather to work their rituals.

31. Chamber of the Deep Council: This chamber, connected through lightless secret passages to the matriarch chambers of the fourth-level clans, is the meeting place of the Council of the Deep. Here the most important matriarchs of the tribes gather to discuss matters of security and religious observance for the trolls of the Opal Seer Caverns.

32. The Heartbeat Room: In the deepest recesses of the Opal Seer Caverns, a great chamber is filled with drums of all

shapes and sizes. Chimneys and air-tunnels weave throughout the cave system from this 'heart' of the cavern network, for it is here that the trolls gather for their greatest rituals and celebrations, deep in the darkness, and beat their drums to a primitive, inhuman rhythm. The thrumming of the drums resonates throughout the entire settlement like the powerful heartbeat of an earth-god.

On several occasions in the past, when a mass of allied surface clans sought to steal the desirable Opal Seer Caverns for themselves, the elderly and youngest Uz are sent down into the Heartbeat Room. While they are protected from the battles that rage through the tunnels above they pound on the drums and fill the defenders with confidence at the heartbeat of their home, while at the same time intimidating the attackers.

33. The Fungus Caverns: Here are more caverns for the growing and harvesting of fungus. These vast caverns are worked by Uzko who either have free time or no other work to attend to.

34. The Black Lake: This colossal underground lake whirls and sloshes with eerie tides, as if the water is being churned by huge beasts below the impenetrable black waters. Darksense reveals naught but vast living 'shapes' roiling around in the depths here, though no Uz has yet discovered what these beings are, nor have any swimmers or boaters returned from setting out into the water. It is unknown where the Black Lake terminates, or where its source is, if it has one.

The water of the Black Lake is always hot to the touch, so hot that it nears boiling at times. Those who have tasted it say it tastes salty, though with the salt-taste of sweat, not seawater.



TROLL ADVENTURERS

The rules for creating Uz Adventurers, for Enlo, Uzko, Uzdo, Uzuz, Mura and Uzhim are described here. Unintelligent cave trolls, because of their Chaos natures and their place outside of traditional society, are not considered Uz for the purposes of this chapter. In addition to being generally too stupid and malicious to work as rewarding Adventurers, they are also hunted mercilessly by humans and pure-blooded trolls alike in many regions.

UZ LIMITATIONS

The following mechanics are to represent Uz Adventurers in your Gloranthan campaigns. The natural advantages of true Uz might create issues of 'balance' between Adventurers, since a troll Adventurer will likely be stronger than other Adventurers in a group and will possess traits that members of other races may lack, such as Darksense. Of course, a troll Adventurer will suffer prejudice and troubles in many regions, even if he accompanies a group of non-Uz on their travels. Some might consider that the social difficulty of being a troll outside of Uz lands is enough of a balance given their improved Characteristics.

Trollkin suffer the flip side of this coin, however. They have the social difficulties to overcome in *addition* to being generally weaker and stupider than humans and other races. Having a trollkin Adventurer is a challenge akin to playing a duck.

CREATING AN UZ ADVENTURER

The checklist for creating a troll Adventurer is as follows:

- If the Games Master allows, select the type of troll you wish to play. Great trolls and mistress race trolls are probably unwise choices, the first due to its lack of intelligence, which could reduce it to an unspeaking beast, the second due to the rarity and preciousness of the last remaining members of the species.
- Determine Cultural Background, according to the Cultural Background Table later on. This determines professions and skills available to troll Adventurers.
- Determine the troll's current profession.
- Select a cult for the troll to belong to, referring to the Troll Cults chapter beginning on page 241.
- Determine the magic known by the troll, referring if necessary, to the Troll Magic chapter beginning on page 267.
- Allocate the Free Skill Points to remaining skills and to buy new advanced skills.

UZ CHARACTERISTICS

Trollkin (Enlo)

The hated little bastard children of Uz society, Enlo are smaller than their dark troll parents, the result of a curse that produces these inferior, stunted, troll-like creatures. Trollkin typically endure short subjugated lives but some escape to a wider world. Those who remain serve as slave labour, sword fodder and even food during lean times.

A few lucky trollkin might be taught a handful of useful Common Magic spells by the dark trolls but it is rare for trollkin to be entrusted with anything that might give them any kind of power, or a means of escape.

Dark Trolls (Uzko)

Uzko are the most common of the pure-strain trolls. They are big, heavy boned, have the typical large incisors and a mottled grey skin. They fulfil the majority of important roles, especially in the surface world. Dark trolls are intelligent, versatile and cunning.

When creating jungle trolls (Mura) or snow trolls (Uzhim), use the same dark troll Characteristics.

Great Trolls (Uzdo)

Although born with large, powerful bodies equal in size and strength to the mistress race, Uzdo are accursed with a frustrating lack of intelligence. Unable to match wits with

most other races, their usefulness is limited to heavy manual labour and guard duty. As such their place in Uz society is below that of dark trolls but above trollkin. Any great troll with an INT of 7 or less is not sapient, but merely has an animal level of comprehension and cunning, unable to learn magic or anything much beyond skills based on violence.

Mistress Race Trolls (Uzuz)

The long lived, possibly immortal, daughters of Primal Darkness, Uzuz are the progenitors of the entire Uz race. The mistress trolls lead the fight against Chaos during the Great Darkness, in which many died. The remaining mistress race trolls have grown old and wise; no longer risking themselves unless absolutely necessary. Instead they remain cloistered, loyally guarded by their offspring. The Uzuz are powerful in the arts of magic, commanding both the Divine miracles of their gods and the mighty spirits of Uz ancestors.

Few mistress race trolls ever leave their conclaves to adventure, risking themselves only on the greatest of HeroQuests.

SPECIAL RULES

In addition to their variant Characteristics, troll Adventurers possess additional abilities lacked by humans and other races.

Darksense

This innate ability possessed by all trolls allows them to use echolocation to visually perceive exactly as humans perceive with sight, save that it degrades over long range. A troll can just resolve a human up to a kilometre away. Any Adventurer that possesses Darksense is completely unaffected by the rules for blindness or visibility in dark and lightless conditions. All Uz possess this ability but the Darksense of mistress race trolls is far superior to that of their different offspring, being capable of reaching much greater ranges and resolving in finer detail.

Trollkin and great trolls, however, have very poor Darksense compared to their purer cousins; their perception being more biased towards vision. Accordingly, to represent the inferior Darksense of these impure creatures, all Enlo and Uzdo Adventurers instead possess Night Sight, Dark Sight and Earth Sense as detailed in the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook*.

Darksense has the advantage of being able to define surface textures, precisely judge distances and 'see' inside objects. It is often used to judge whether someone has an empty

stomach (and is therefore potentially hungry and hostile) or if they are pregnant.

Light Blindness

Whilst the acute light sensitivity of Enlo and Uzdo eyes allows them to see in their gloomy underground homes, it becomes a liability if exposed to bright daylight on the surface. Unless the weather is heavily overcast, trollkin and great trolls outside during the day reduce all their skills to the value of their Perception skill. The same effect occurs if either species of Uz is exposed to bright lights from any source, even if underground.

Sun Cursed

As creatures of darkness Uz suffer in the full radiance of Yelm, the Great Enemy. His light blisters their skin and causes heat rash, forcing most trolls to remain underground during the day. Although the blistering does not cause any measurable damage, the pain is significant. This combined with the terrible presence of he who destroyed Wonderhome, causes all trolls to be Demoralised in direct sunlight, as per the Common Magic spell. It is because of this mythic weakness that trolls are usually only active on the surface at night.

Thick Skinned

The thick skin of trolls inflicts no penalties to movement or strike rank. Uz can wear armour which stacks with the protective value of their skin.

Tusks

The lower canine teeth of Uz (not Enlo) grow with age into tusks, some of which can reach up to a foot in length among the eldest dark and great trolls. In some communities, these tusks are decorated by lead or bronze caps, or even carved with cult runes.

All trolls may use their Unarmed skill to make a close combat biting attack which inflicts a base 1D4+2 damage to a target. Damage Bonus, if any, is halved for the purpose of an Uz bite. Gaining a Combat Manoeuvre allows the tusks to Impale. This does not occur without risk, since an Uz with his tusks impaled in a target's body suffers a -10% penalty to his defence because of his awkward positioning. Assuming the bite penetrated armour, he may on his following turns, automatically inflict additional bite damage to the same Hit Location without needing to reroll his attack, as it represents the troll grinding his jaws together and further goring his foe with his tusks.

Trollkin (Enlo)

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	2D6	7	1-3	Right Leg	1/5
CON	3D6	11	4-6	Left Leg	1/5
SIZ	1D6+6	10	7-9	Abdomen	1/6
DEX	3D6+3	14	10-12	Chest	1/7
INT	1D6+6	10	13-15	Right Arm	1/4
POW	3D6	11	16-18	Left Arm	1/4
CHA	2D6	7	19-20	Head	1/5

Combat Actions	2
Damage Modifier	-1D2
Magic Points	11
Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+12

Typical Armour: Thick skin (AP 1)

Traits: Dark Sight, Night Sight, Earth Sense, Light Blindness, Sun Cursed

Dark Trolls (Uzko)

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6+6	17	1-3	Right Leg	2/7
CON	3D6	11	4-6	Left Leg	2/7
SIZ	3D6+10	21	7-9	Abdomen	2/8
DEX	3D6	11	10-12	Chest	2/9
INT	2D6+6	13	13-15	Right Arm	2/6
POW	3D6	11	16-18	Left Arm	2/6
CHA	3D6	11	19-20	Head	2/7

Combat Actions	2
Damage Modifier	+1D6
Magic Points	11
Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+12

Typical Armour: Thick skin (AP 2)

Traits: Darksense, Sun Cursed

Great Trolls (Uzdo)

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	4D6+12	26	1–3	Right Leg	3/9
CON	2D6+12	19	4–6	Left Leg	3/9
SIZ	4D6+12	26	7–9	Abdomen	3/10
DEX	3D6	11	10–12	Chest	3/11
INT	2D6+2	9	13–15	Right Arm	3/8
POW	3D6	11	16–18	Left Arm	3/8
CHA	2D6	7	19–20	Head	3/9

Combat Actions	2
Damage Modifier	+1D12
Magic Points	11
Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+10

Typical Armour: Thick skin (AP 3)

Traits: Dark Sight, Night Sight, Earth Sense, Light Blindness, Sun Cursed

Mistress Race Trolls (Uzuz)

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	4D6+6	20	1–3	Right Leg	2/8
CON	2D6+6	13	4–6	Left Leg	2/8
SIZ	3D6+15	26	7–9	Abdomen	2/9
DEX	2D6+6	13	10–12	Chest	2/10
INT	2D6+12	19	13–15	Right Arm	2/7
POW	3D6+6	17	16–18	Left Arm	2/7
CHA	2D6+6	13	19–20	Head	2/8

Combat Actions	3
Damage Modifier	+1D10
Magic Points	17
Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+16

Typical Armour: Thick skin (AP 2)

Traits: Darksense, Sun Cursed

UZ BACKGROUNDS

The racial background of an Uz Adventurer is a vital determining factor in how the Adventurer's statistics will eventually appear. Players are free to choose (within the established parameters of their campaign) between the following Uz Backgrounds to represent their Adventurers' troll breed.

Uz Backgrounds

Background	Common Skill Bonuses	Combat Styles	Advanced Skill Bonuses	Professions	Starting Money
Trollkin	Athletics +10%, Culture (Own) +30%, Evade +10%, First Aid +10%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Stealth +10%	Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	Craft (Any), Language (Native) +50%, Survival Select One Craft (Any), Healing, Lore (Any), Play Instrument, Tracking	Food Trollkin Valued Trollkin Warrior Trollkin Worker Trollkin	4D6x5 silver
Dark Troll	Culture (Own) +30%, Influence +10%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Perception +10%, Resilience +10%, Stealth +10% Select One Athletics +10%, Dance +10%, Ride +10%, Sing +10%	Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	Language (Native) +50%, Survival Select One Art (Any), Craft (Any), Lore (Any), Play Instrument, Streetwise, Tracking	Craftsman Fisherman Healer Herder Hunter Merchant Noble Priest Shaman Warrior	4D6x50 silver
Great Troll	Brawn +20%, Culture (Own) +30%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Resilience +30%, Stealth +10%	Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	Language (Native) +50%, Survival	Great Troll Labourer Great Troll Warrior	2D6x10 silver
Mistress Race Troll	Culture (Own) +30%, Influence +10%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Perception +10%, Persistence +10%, Stealth +10%	Choose one Combat Style and gain a +10% bonus to it	Language (Native) +50%, Survival Select Either Lore (Cult) and Pact (Cult) OR Spirit Binding and Spirit Walking Select One Lore (Any), Healing, Meditation, Oratory	Priest(ess) Shaman	4D8x150 silver



Background	Common Skill Bonuses	Combat Styles	Advanced Skill Bonuses	Professions	Starting Money
Jungle Troll	Culture (Own) +30%, Evade +10%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Perception +10%, Resilience +10%, Stealth +10% Select One Athletics +10%, Dance +10%, First Aid +10%, Ride +10%, Sing +10%	Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	Language (Native) +50%, Survival Select One Craft (Any), Healing, Lore (Any), Play Instrument, Tracking	Craftsman Fisherman Healer Herder Hunter Merchant Priest Shaman Warrior	3D6x10 silver
Snow Troll	Athletics +10%, Culture (Own) +30%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Resilience +10%, Stealth +10% Select One Dance +10%, Perception +10%, Ride +10%, Sing +10%	Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	Language (Native) +50%, Survival, Tracking Select One Craft (Any), Lore (Any), Play Instrument	Craftsman Fisherman Hunter Priest Shaman Warrior	3D6x10 silver

UZ PROFESSIONS

Trolls use the following professions depending on their species. Certain backgrounds will be not available to some types of troll. Most restricted are the great trolls due to their lack of intellect and trollkin since they are bound in slavery.

Troll Professions

Profession	Common Skill Bonuses	Advanced Skills
Craftsman	Evaluate +10%, Influence +10%, Persistence +10%	Art (Any), Craft (Any)
Fisherman	Athletics +5%, Lore (Regional) +5%, Resilience +10%, Swim +20%	Select One Boating, Craft (Any), Shiphandling
Healer	Insight +10%, Influence +10%, First Aid +20%	Healing
Herder	Influence +10%, Lore (Regional) +10%, Resilience +10% Ride (Insect) +10%	Lore (Insects)
Hunter	Lore (Regional) +10%, Resilience +10%, Stealth +10%	Track
Merchant	Choose one ranged Combat Style and gain a +10% bonus to it Drive +5%, Evaluate +15%, Influence +5%, Lore (Regional) +5%	Select Two Commerce, Culture (Any), Language (Any)
Noble	Influence +10%, Persistence +5%, Ride (Insect) +5% Choose one Combat Style and gain a +10% bonus to it	Select Two Courtesy, Culture (Any), Language (Any), Lore (Any), Oratory
Priest(ess)	Influence +20, Persistence +10%	Lore (Cult), Pact (Cult)
Shaman	Influence +20, Persistence +10%	Spirit Binding, Spirit Walking
Warrior	Athletics +10%, Resilience +10%	Lore (Tactics)

Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each



Great Troll Professions

Profession	Common Skill Bonuses	Advanced Skills
Great Troll Labourer	Brawn +20%, Resilience +20%	
	Choose one Combat Style and gain a +10% bonus to it	
Great Troll Warrior	Athletics +10%, Resilience +20%	
	Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	

Trollkin Professions

Profession	Common Skill Bonuses	Advanced Skills
Food Trollkin	Athletics +10%, Evade +10%, Insight +10%, Stealth +10%	Streetwise
Valued Trollkin	Influence +10%, Insight +10%	Select Two Courtesy, Culture (Any), Healing +10%, Language (Any), Lore (Any), Oratory
	Select One Dance +10%, First Aid +10%, Perception +10%, Sing +10%	
Warrior Trollkin	Athletics +5%, Evade +10%, Resilience +5%, Stealth +10%	
	Choose two Combat Styles and gain a +10% bonus to each	
Worker Trollkin	Brawn+10%, Sleight +10%, Stealth +10%	Craft (Any), Streetwise

Uz Combat Styles

The preferred weapons of trolls are things which smash and bash. A few cults have strange weapons, reflecting items or powers mythically torn from other defeated gods.

Use the following weapons, either singularly or in combination, as part of Uz Combat Styles. This book assumes a default of one two-handed or two single-handed weapons per style but Games Masters may freely include as many as is fitting for his campaign.

Close Combat: Club, Mace, Maul, Shield, Spear, Unarmed
Ranged Combat: Javelin, Sling, Thrown Stone

UZ EQUIPMENT

Trolls use much the same weaponry and armour as the other Gloranthan races. Several specific examples of unique troll weapons and armour are described here.

Troll Maul

A massive two handed mace or club which is deadly in the hands of a troll, the head of the weapon is a solid lump of bronze or lead, mounted on a 2.5 metre hardwood shaft. To wield a Troll Maul requires a SIZ of 20 in addition to the STR and DEX minimums.

Blowgun

This weapon is favoured by the Pamaltelan trolls and is used primarily as a means of hunting for prey in the lush tropical jungles of their homeland. Unsurprisingly, it serves as a decent weapon of war against the enemies of the Mura.

The real damage done by the blowpipe is in the poison coating the darts rather than in the darts themselves. For the dart to

Troll Maul

Weapon	Handedness	Damage Dice	STR/DEX	Size	Reach	Combat Manoeuvres	ENC	AP/HP	Cost
Troll Maul	Double	2D8	17/9	H	L	Stun Location, Sunder	3	4/10	150 SP

Blowgun

Weapon	Handedness	Damage	Damage Modifier	Range	Load	STR/DEX	SIZ	Combat Manoeuvres	ENC	AP/HP	Cost
Blowgun	Double	—	N	15m	1	-/9	S	—	1	1/4	30 SP

transfer its poison it must strike an unarmoured location, usually via the Choose Location combat manoeuvre. Darts can penetrate skin of up to 1 AP thickness.

Baneleaf

The most common poison used by the jungle trolls is called baneleaf – a mixture of several leaves and tree barks found in the tropical rainforests of the southern continent and ground down into a black paste that is then mixed with troll blood. Baneleaf is harmless to trolls but works as a paralysing agent to any creature not of troll blood. It can be gathered and mixed by succeeding in hard Lore (Pamaltela) roll in the verdant jungles.

Application: Ingested or Smear

Onset time: Paralysis after 1D3 minutes

Duration: 30 minutes

Resistance Time: The victim must make a resistance roll at the Onset Time. Failure indicates that Condition has taken effect.

Potency: 70

Resistance: Resilience

Conditions: Paralysis. The venom initially causes the victim to start feeling numbness in his limbs. The victim suffers complete paralysis if the second Resistance roll is failed.

Antidote/Cure: Pamaltelan elves grow an antidote herb which has a potency of 30. The anti-venom must be introduced with a successful First Aid or Healing roll and adds its Potency as a bonus to the victim's Resilience roll to resist the venom or grant a new resistance roll.

Lead Plate Armour

The trolls consider lead a holy metal, the only race to see it that way. Lead armour is something only a troll would be pious (read: crazy) enough to wear on the field of war. Its weight marks it out as the heaviest and most difficult metal to wear; yet in return it grants the wearer the ability to use the armour with no detractions to his Stealth skill. Normally lead is relatively cheap, since it has few other uses to other races.

Armour	AP	ENC	Locations	Cost
Lead Plate Helm	6	5	Head	300 SP
Lead Plate Vambrace	6	4	Arm	200 SP
Lead Plate Greave	6	4	Leg	250 SP
Lead Plate Breastplate	6	8	Chest and Abdomen	400 SP

In areas where it is scarce, such as the great Glacier Valind or the jungles of Pamaltela, its cost will be significantly inflated.

In regions where it is available, most troll warriors will seek to wear at least some lead armour. For example, the trolls of the Castle of Lead attach a great traditional significance to breastplates of lead, with cult runes and tallies of kills stamped into their soft surfaces.

Lead Weapons

Crushing weapons such as maces and mauls which are made from lead gain a +2 bonus to damage. The cost of the lead doubles the base price of the weapon.

ROLEPLAYING THE UZ

'There was a troll that walked across half the world with us, day in, day out, for the best part of three years. We thought we were friends, or at least close enough to know each other well. For three years we walked and fought together, depending on his strength and saving his life just as he saved all of ours on more than one occasion. He was one of us, you know? It's a hard life when you're just treading across the face of the world, looking for one job after another or chasing after every rumour of treasure. Three years of it and Kargos fitting with the rest us fine, even though we're all human and Kex was a Mostali. Then one day, he up and leaves. We ask where he's going and after a few more seconds, we ask where in the name of Orlanth little Kex has got to.'

'Me eat dwarf,' says Kargos. 'He defiled a child of Gorakiki when I say not to.'

We never saw him again after that. To be honest, we didn't want to – not after he ate Kex because the dwarf killed a wasp that was buzzing around him. And that's what I mean

when I say the Uz aren't like us. Not just because their tusks make 'em talk funny, or because they stink like something the Devil shit out in the Chaos Wars. No, the real reason is that you never, ever know what they're thinking.

That means you never, ever know when you're offending them.'

— Harl, Orlanthi Adventurer

The Uz are not human.

This is an obvious statement but an important one. They do not think like humans and they do not always act like humans. In a world as alien and magical as Glorantha the trolls are not the only inhuman creatures with their own religious, ethical and social codes of behaviour, though they are still quite unlike anything else in the setting.

Acting the Part

Gaming groups have varying degrees of how much 'acting' actually goes on at the table. Some Games Masters will think nothing of putting on voices, talking in character for a whole night or acting out facial expressions for each and every Non-Player Character the Adventurers come across. Other Games Masters rely on their descriptions to convey the game world to the players without resorting to acting much out. Many groups lie somewhere in-between these extremes.

Acting out an Adventurer can serve immersion in the game session, or it can come across as hilarious and make everyone enjoy the session all the more. Depending on the group in question, one of these reactions might be what the Games Master and the players desire. Others will worry about the game-breaking potential of funny acting derailing the session completely.

Acting like a troll obviously need not be something that tests the patience of the others around the table. A player can convey the brutish nature of his Adventurer without standing on his chair (to represent height) and dropping a pile of books onto the tabletop (to represent the fall of a club swing). Subtlety can go a long way.

Trolls do not speak the languages of other races well. They need not be unintelligent – in fact, they might have a total grasp of the language they are speaking – but Uz are rarely eloquent when talking the tongues of other regions and races. The shape of their skull and palette, along with the great tusks that interfere with speech, have an effect on any such communication.

When speaking as a troll Adventurer, a player should consider projecting his lower jaw a little, giving himself a hint of an underbite. This does wonders for reducing the ease of

speech and the accurate pronunciation of words and is as close to copying the tusk-filled mouth of trolls as humans can get without going all out and using prostheses. It is also conveniently reversible in a split second, of course. A mouth full of pencils as tusks is less simple.

Lowering one's voice is another way of conveying troll-speech. Players may not wish to try accents, seeing as no obvious comparisons exist between human accents and the speech of the Uz. Simply lowering one's voice is likely enough to get the point across.

Gritting one's teeth as one speaks is another good way of presenting a primitive and violent attitude. It also serves to represent the intensity of talking to a troll. Uz are creatures that are almost constantly ready for battle – a suspicion revealed in their posture, which is so often hunched over and physically close to their battle crouch. In short, trolls are eternally suspicious of the threats others might become and of a fight breaking out around them. Clenched teeth are a subtle and effective way of pointing out the suspicious, on-the-edge awareness of a troll dealing with other races.

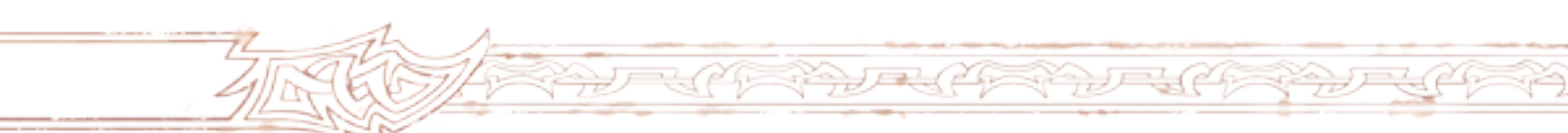
In regards to lexicon, trolls have a vocabulary as large as any speaker of the language they are using. The difference is that many trolls prefer the simplest words one can use for any explanation or concept. That makes them sound primitive and unintelligent when speaking other languages but the truth of the matter is that trolls are talking with inhuman-shaped mouths and around two mighty tusks, as well as rows of jagged teeth.

Couple this with the troll ability to read body language instinctively well through Darksense and it is easy to see why trolls prefer not to wax lyrical or jaw-jack for long periods of time. Some are faking it, of course, actively attempting to seem foolish or inept to lead others to underestimate them. Others are indeed simply unintelligent. Many among the Ancients dislike 'lowering' themselves to using the tongues of other races, though such prejudices are dying out as the Mistress Race falls into sharp decline.

Motivations

Many trolls are easily angered, giving an element of truth to the stereotype of the primitive brute that typifies the Uz race. Troll culture is based on the notion of sustenance before all else. Trolls want to eat in order to survive and they want to eat a great deal, during many of their waking hours. Troll culture is based on principles of wanting something and doing all one can to secure it, and if possible doing so through the efforts of slaves. This is decadence at its truest.

It is also why trolls are often short-tempered and easily aggravated when they are away from their own people. Simply



taking what a troll wants, or killing anyone who offends him, is likely to arouse the ire of the local law enforcement or break local customs in some way. For a troll to enter another community, he has to speak another language that is hard to frame with his mouth, put all the benefits of an obedient slave herd out of his mind to do his own toil and delay any wrath against those who besmirch his honour. This is not even taking into account the fact he may not simply eat what he takes with his own strength. In a world where almost everything is food, it can be a trial for a troll to sit hungry in a tavern, sweating and uncomfortable in lead armour, struggling to keep track of the languages his 'allies' are speaking, when all he wants is to taste the elf's delicious flesh. It is a lesser creature, after all. Who will care if it dies?

Trolls usually understand and obey local and cultural laws of social conduct but they rarely like them. It is never easy to comply with the confusing laws of lesser beings, especially in situations when a troll has the strength to break the rules and fight his way out of punishment. As it happens, that is a great many situations.

The typical Uz is not an adventurer-born. He may be born of a powerful species and raised with a superb set of skills that would allow him to excel as an adventurer but general troll culture creates fewer wanderlust-stricken individuals than most human cultures. Perhaps because of the grievous magical curses the Uz have suffered, family is practically *everything* to the trolls. This can make a life away from relatives and away from the community the troll was born to serve seem like a selfish indulgence rather than a glorious adventure.

So why do it?

Reasons do exist, else it would never happen. Sure as Yelm rises above the world, troll adventurers do exist, with perhaps as many reasons for their wandering ways as there are trolls themselves. What follows is a selection of different possibilities that can be applied to your own Adventurers, be they Adventurers or Non-Player Characters.

If a troll does leave his home and kin behind, there is likely more than a simple, single reason. Games Masters and players should feel free to chop, change, mix and match all the details here and any more besides into a final equation that suits the Adventurers they are creating.

Faith

A compelling reason to tread across Glorantha's face is cult faith. Followers of any deity can find a reason to take to the

open road, whether to advance within their cult's ranks or to advance the cause of their chosen god or goddess. Followers of Zorak Zoran or Boztakang will always have reasons to make war and commitments to destroy certain enemies. Followers of Kyger Litor or Xiola Umbar might embark on great and epic quests in order to bring the troll race back to pre-eminence, travelling through Uz communities the world over spreading word of holding strong against the rising empires and assuring the defeated, bedraggled trolls that there is hope at the end of this difficult age.

Uz on these faith-based adventures are akin to crusaders or mendicant preachers, taking their faith, their teachings and their magical powers to further the causes of their gods in realms and ways that might otherwise see little of the deity's influence.

There is also the possibility of divine inspiration, of course – quests or journeys that are undertaken at the behest of a divine being or one of its servants. Perhaps the Uz gods (who are always active compared to many other deities) have a specific destiny in mind for a certain troll, whether it is Zorak Zoran charging a troll to bring death to a certain foe that the god is prevented from harming directly, or Gorakiki demanding of her cult that they send assistance to a venerable, ancient giant insect queen who is sickened with plague.

Holy tasks may be exceedingly rare in Glorantha but they can make for some fantastic plot and roleplaying opportunities, as well as having the potential to tie into HeroQuesting for deeper insight. A troll who must perform a mighty deed for his faith – but first needs the experience of HeroQuesting in his god's footsteps – is in for an epic adventure that Uz tale-tellers will speak of for generations.

Coin

Trolls, like all sentient mortal beings, have a sense of value and the concept of ownership, which means that the Uz use money like most other intelligent Gloranthan races. Wealth is a powerful lure, whether it is acquired for the pursuit of selfish ideals or to benefit the clan who remain back in the community.

It is the Imperial Age and mercenary warriors march in the name of decadent empires; these warriors earn coin by shedding the blood of those who dare to believe different from their wealthy employers. In the EWF especially, troll warriors are often welcomed (though rarely trusted) and paid handsomely for their toils in the imperial army. While the conquering of Dragon Pass has enraged many trolls and

reduced the majority to bitter despondency, a great number of Uz recognise that the conquerors pay very well indeed. So they serve. Not gracefully or passionately, but certainly willingly, for the great rewards in coin.

Redemption

Exiles from Uz society are those that have wronged their families or communities so grievously that they are cast out into the world and their names cursed forever after. For some crimes, including rape, betrayal that leads to the destruction of a community, the murder of a pregnant female, heresy against Kyger Litor – the criminal is offered execution or exile. Most take exile, for in being cast out there is always the chance of redemption.

Some of the troll heroes now spoken of in reverent whispers to young Uz were sinners and exiles that earned back their right to walk among their people, after years of selfless deeds and aiding the plight of trolls elsewhere in Glorantha. One Uz hunter was welcomed back to his community after completing a full year of HeroQuesting the deeds of Kyger Litor and receiving a magical idol of lead that allowed any Uzko touching it to conceive a dark troll rather than a trollkin.

These quests can leave great legacies. Several clans warred over one relic of the hunter's efforts, *The Mother's Touch*, in the early decades of the Second Age, though it is now the property of a clan within the Castle of Lead. It is believed the artefact has only nine uses before it expires forever and it has already been used seven times. Currently, the Mother's Touch is among the most sought-after objects in Glorantha, with troll clan mistresses wanting it of themselves and mercenaries from the other races hoping to steal it in order to barter it back to the trolls for colossal sums of wealth.

Each and every human would-be thief murdered, each clan that makes war on another simply to possess the artefact, each troll that HeroQuests through the hellish days and nights of Kyger Litor's suffering in the Godswar in the hopes of receiving a similar reward arose from one exile's desperate hopes of redemption.

Such things are what legends are made of.

Salvation

In the Second Age, with the magical ravaging of their wombs still relatively recent, the Uz are still in a sharp decline because of the curses that run in their blood. It is surely the ardent hope of every member of the race that their divine hexes will be lifted some way, somehow, before their race can fall into further depths of corruption.

This is the era to try. Great magics sweep the world, commanded by the most powerful mortals who will ever live. If ever there was a time to seek to heal the wounded bloodlines of the Uz, it is now. Trolls take to the adventuring life in droves, seeking answers to the simple question: 'How can things be made right?'

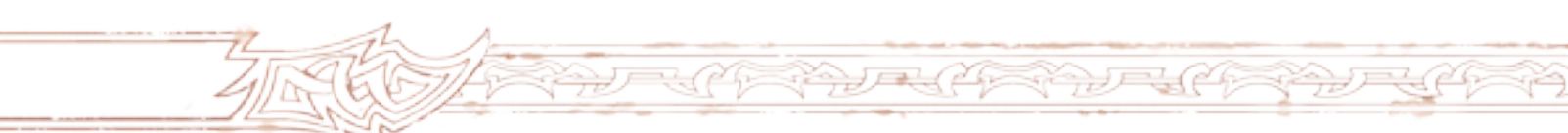
Uz leave their communities to seek the answer and look in a great many places. Perhaps the God Learners know the answer. They have the magic powerful enough to alter the gods, as well as magic powerful enough to drain hundreds of thousands of legends day after day after day through repeated HeroQuesting. Does logic suggest that the Jrustelans can also use their sorcerous arts to heal the wounds suffered by a goddess? No troll knows for sure, though it is likely many are trying to find out. Of course, to consider giving aid, individual God Learners would no doubt ask for great sacrifices in return for sharing even scraps of their lore, but what price would a troll pay to be the one who finds the answer to the bane of his people?

It is likely that much of the God Learner knowledge regarding troll myths came from those tempted or hopeful enough to believe that the Alliance sorcerers would help heal their race in return for speaking of the secret myths of the Uz gods. Some would decry such Uz as traitors. Others, knowing that it is perhaps the best chance the trolls have in this age, would commend such visionaries for their sacrifices in the name of their own kind, even if they are ultimately doomed to failure.

Others seek the salvation of their race elsewhere, hoping for healing through the world of myth. These are the Uz HeroQuesters who live through the old myths over and over again, seeking answers in the events of the past and in the actions of the gods and demons that originally played in these mythological performances. The power to HeroQuest is relatively rare outside the echelons of the God Learner Alliance.

Yet think on this: not every Jrustelan sorcerer needs to be a hateful soul determined to rape a species of its legends and stories. For every God Learner poisoned by his own ambition, there are nine who just want to make their way in the world, learn all they can or improve the life of their own people. Some of these will travel with trolls in bands of adventurers, forging close ties of companionship over time. It is perfectly valid for these magicians to see the trauma that is slowly strangling the troll race and feel moved by the Uz plight.

A surprising number of adventuring groups venture into the ancient troll myths because of a God Learner's magic, not to plunder it but to seek an answer to the banes placed upon



the Uz race. There will always be the possibility that such altruism is another form of deception; perhaps the sorcerer sought outside aid in accessing the myths, or an otherwise loyal friend could not resist the potential for magical rewards in such a quest. By and large, however, friends are friends, no matter what they believe in, and friends help one another however they can. A God Learner has many ways he can aid an Uz ally, and vice versa.

Beyond HeroQuesting and sorcery's potential, other magicians may offer answers for the Uz. Remember that while canonically there is never a 'cure' for the womb-curses, there is the old player trope to fall back on: ***It is your game.*** Even if this leaves a foul taste in a group's collective mouths, individual cures – even temporary ones – are worth their weight in diamonds to the Uz. An artefact that protects against trollkin births would be worth fighting wars over. What of other legendary healings? These are sought with endless fervency, such as a powerful one-use spell that taps the loosed energies of Korasting that still echo around the cosmos, allowing an Uzuz to be born to a single parent...but only once in every generation. The Uz are desperate enough to die in the pursuit of such legendary cures, even knowing they are temporary at best and false at worst.

Some compelling tales can be told around the stories of Uz seeking the salvation of their race. The tragedy can only be increased when considering that destiny will thwart the major attempts time and again. However, those that struggle on should be considered defiant, not naïve, and their actions noble, not futile. There are times when it does not matter whether evil can be beaten, only that it is opposed.

For many Uz, that time is now.

Blood

Of course, nobility is not found everywhere and in all things.

Trolls are a primitive race by human standards. While not at the level of beasts, in some regions they are not considered too far distant from animals, usually because of raiding and the wanton slaughter that Uz warriors are capable of. At the very least, even among enlightened and learned folk of civilised lands, trolls are considered less intelligent than the average Gloranthan sentient, which is often true. Among those Uz that wander from traditional troll lands are those that leave not to seek salvation or to find a benefit for their people but who walk in foreign lands to shed blood. These are the truly brutal Uz that many Gloranthans know by rumour or eyewitness – stories of these degenerates tend to spread like wildfire make it easy to see why the people misconstrue the entire race as savage brutes.

With a strength rarely matched among mortal Gloranthan races, the violent and the sadistic among the Uz tend to stand out from the crowd. The warrior who laughs as he slaughters his foes, actively killing his way to the heart of the battlefield; the hunter with a collection of skulls hanging from his belt, taking pride in his prowess at butchering 'lesser' beings; the berserker who applies war paint made from the blood of his enemies and eats his foes in the heat of a battle: these are the troll warriors that men see and fear. Such images imprint in their minds and can rarely be forgotten.

The exultation of triumph through bloodshed is a powerful sensation. Many trolls feel great pleasure in knowing there are none stronger than they, knowing that all who dare stand against them are weaker and doomed to die. It is for this exultation and for the satisfaction of testing oneself against others that so many trolls acquire reputations as murderous marauders when they enter foreign lands.

In a race so cursed compared to the other species of Glorantha, a pervasive sense of hatred saturates the hearts and minds of no few Uz. These are the trolls that shed blood not for the pleasure of testing skill or revelling in strength but because from the blades in their hands to the depths of their cores, they loathe the other races. They loathe the way the lesser beings escaped the darkest eras of time unscathed, they loathe the increasing dominance of the human empires and they loathe anyone and anything that stands in the way of the Uz way of life. It is common for these trolls to be found lurking in ruins of destroyed Uz surface villages, slaying all those who come near or attempt to establish settlements nearby.

To survive on hatred alone is a hard life. Local communities will hire mercenaries or rely on their own law enforcement to slay any malicious troll raider that preys upon their trade routes and their homes, and if the Uz is powerful enough – be he a warrior, shaman, priest or magician – the local bastions of the God Learners or Imperial Dragonspeaker cults might take an interest in hunting the creature down for good.

Glory

The nobler side of the same coin as seeking bloodshed is the notion of leaving a community to seek glory, hunting out wealth, victories and ultimately fame through one's deeds. Individual Uz can be just as desirous of respect and renown as any human. Moreso in some cases; trolls are so shunned by most of Glorantha and it can be a powerful urge to earn the admiration of those who seem to disregard them. Yet this is not about self-esteem issues or a weakling's cry for attention. This is about personal glory and earning it through great deeds, great battles and great accomplishments. Trolls that

want the rest of Glorantha to see the truth of their race (or at least see that they as individuals should be respected) are likely to show a nobler aspect than many other wandering Uz.

Self-sacrifice, enduring hardship, fighting at the chaotic nexus of a battle – these are the acts of courage and strength that exist in hundreds of troll mythological tales. In living up to them now, especially in the apex of the bright and hopeful Second Age, the Uz are defiantly demonstrating that their race is not dead yet. Decline is not extinction and there is a lot of honour and bravery left in these creatures. The trolls that manage to prove this point to those around them are remembered for years afterwards and rightly so.

Due to their history and the legends of the trolls there are some who are more specialised when seeking glory. They see the destruction of chaos especially glorious and many hunt down these dangerous foes almost to the exclusion of all other opponents. In addition to the glory achieved through these victories this is also often seen as fulfilling religious duties as well.

Secrets

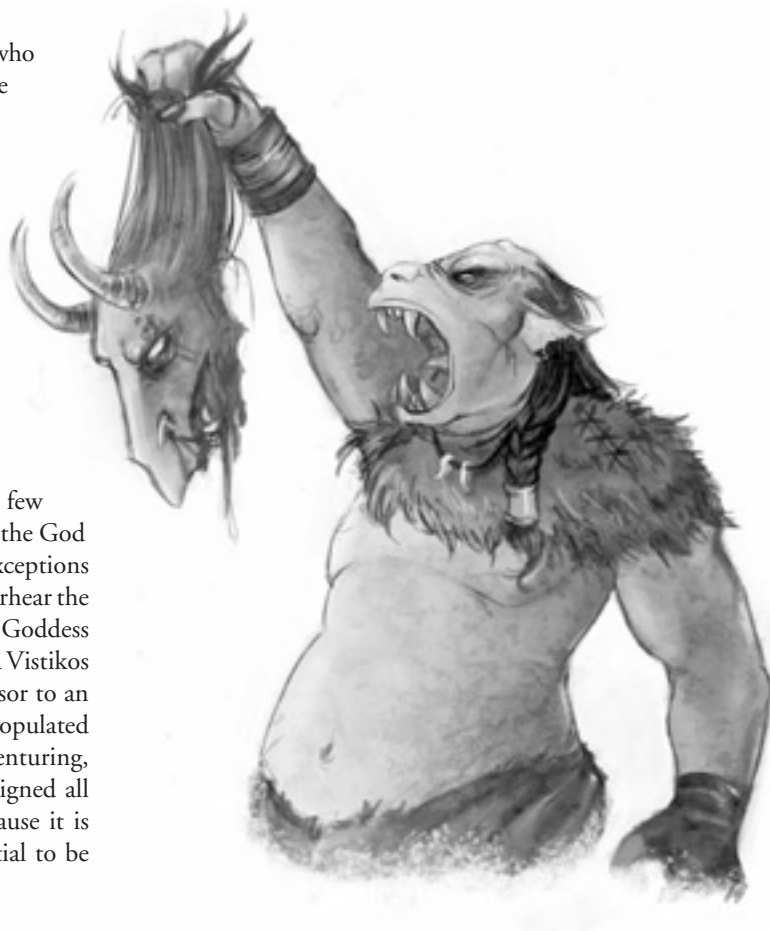
It is an age of war. No one can deny this. Those who intend to survive at the top of the pile are those who are willing to take chances and learn all they can of their enemies. It is an unappealing prospect for many Uz to venture into the great wide world on a mission of espionage but a few brave souls will still make the attempt. These are the trolls that will take any work that allows them to infiltrate even the lowest tiers of either imperial society, slaving away on battlefields as mercenary warriors or scouts for the Dragonlords, or as bodyguards for God Learner magicians who travel a great deal and are otherwise unaccompanied by their sorcerous brethren.

As a general rule, trolls make unsubtle spies and few reach the exalted halls of highest power within either the God Learner Alliance or the Empire of Wyrms' Friends. Exceptions exist in all things, though. An Adventurer may not overhear the whispered words of Lurghalos regarding the failing Goddess Switch, or the magical ramblings of the near-deranged Vistikos Left-Eye, but he could be placed as the cultural advisor to an EWF force commander in a certain region heavily populated with trolls, or as the shamanic companion of an adventuring HeroQuesting God Learner. A troll need not be assigned all grunt duties, though this is a classic stereotype because it is reasonably effective, realistic and has a lot of potential to be fun in a game session.

Leaving a community to spy on the dealings of the God Learners, the Dragonfriends or any other local enemy usually works most effectively if a troll has a tale of exile for past wrongs or a hatred for some aspect of Uz society that convinces humans he was right to leave and is now a firm supporter of any who oppose his former people. For example, troll culture can sound shockingly oppressive if the matriarchal facts are highlighted (and the personal freedoms of the males not mentioned) to some human males. Even in these enlightened times, sexism exists in certain regions and in the hearts of certain men and women. Troll Adventurers, with the fact of their matriarchal society one of the few outsiders know about the race, are in an advantageous position to exploit the prejudices of others to their own advantage.

Knowledge

The quest for knowledge does not always lead into spying or stealing secrets to win a war. Sometimes the pursuit of knowledge leads to its own adventures, undertaken for that wisest of courses: simply to learn more.





While it is fair to say that most trolls are not scholars of any given subject, loremasters charged with remembering the accumulated wisdom, stories and deeds of the community's heroes since time began exist within most communities. This can be a role as sedate and emotional as it sounds or as violent as any mercenary or warrior career, since many of these loremasters will carry their clan, family or community's battle standard into battle, showing their pride – as well as using it to bludgeon enemies should the need arise.

Adventurous trolls with a mind to learn all they can of Glorantha are not as rare as one might believe. Some cults promote the notion of experiencing the world outside troll society, though most often this choice comes down to a personal curiosity and a desire to be enlightened through witnessing things firsthand. While it can seem a less dramatic and noble aim than, say, travelling to crush the influence of Chaos that remains after the Godswar, the accumulation of wisdom, education and experience is just as appealing to some trolls as it is to beings of any other sentient race. Trolls with these aims are often welcomed into human society much more readily than others, provided their aims are not achieved in overly violent ways (such as killing educated people and stealing their records and tomes, which has been known to happen).

Freedom

For some trolls the responsibilities of their bloodline, clan or community weigh too heavily to bear. Some – those stricken with wanderlust or inconsistent and impatient natures – leave their homeland behind because they felt like they never really belonged there anyway. Perhaps they plan to return one night. Perhaps they plan to live their entire lives seeing what the world will offer. Perhaps their minds are unmade on the matter.

Others will feel stifled. Male trolls might resent the matriarchal nature of troll society, though this is a trope of sorts and is not always fun to run with if a player has no interest in conforming to the stereotype in this case. In some communities, the females may actually lord it over the men like tyrants, making such defection much more likely. In other regions, especially in areas where clans are struggling to survive, male warriors and hunters can feel oppressed or put-upon by the sheer weight of their duties at times. They fight the enemy, scout the territory, hunt for food...their work is dangerous, draining and extremely difficult. No wonder then that some trolls turn their backs on their kin and venture to seek a life elsewhere.

There is great appeal in only working to feed and protect oneself, though of all reasons to leave a community, this is likeliest to be viewed as an honourless betrayal.

Female Uz seek freedom from the constraints of clan loyalty as well. Such treachery (or independence, depending on how one views the self-exile) is not only undertaken by the traditional warriors and hunters of the communities. A high priestess, slave mistress, matriarch, village elder or any other female Uz in a position of responsibility has enormous amounts of pressure on her to ensure the prosperity of those beneath her. Consider the family matriarch who struggles to feed her kin when her warriors are slaughtered by the EWF or her hunters find too little game in the wilds. The wellbeing of all under her authority is her responsibility. Few males suffer under such burdens – although male Uz lack authority in many regions, they also lack the heaviest duties to clan and community.



TROLL CULTS

This chapter reveals many of the intricacies in troll religion and provides knowledge for players and Games Masters to take their players on HeroQuests through troll mythology. It also provides troll Adventurers with an in-depth background for the religions and gods of their race, so they may join the

cults they wish to join and follow their chosen deity. Games Masters will find a wealth of story hooks within these pages to assist them in HeroQuesting through the legends of the Uz and generate interesting encounters with members of less popular Uz cults.

The Uz are among the most reluctant of races when it comes to sharing their secrets. They have lied to us, misinforming us on many occasions which has led to the pursuit of false legends and attempts to HeroQuest into deeds that were never done. Most cultures and races resist sharing their secrets to some degree but the Uz hold a special place in my attentions as the most guileful offenders.

Yet that is all in the past. Now we have the lore required to engage fully in the project and we uncover fresh secrets with each passing night.

In almost all of my series of lectures here the Eradinthanos University which involve discussion and instruction in the area of Uz mythology, students hold a fascination for what deeds the troll gods performed and what rewards one might expect from successful HeroQuests. More so than any lectures I give on the Aldryami, Orlanthi or the Pelorians, it seems that the Uz capture the imaginations of our younger sorcerers.

I speculate that this is because of the troll's inhumanity, which is reflected in their monstrous pantheon, as well as the fact that unlike other races, the Uz have a sense of primal instinct about themselves. Their ostensibly simple nature and primitive cultures appeal to the scholarly senses of educated souls such as we Jrustelans. In the elves, the dwarfs and the dragonmen, we see similar cultures reflected back at us with their own complications and depths. Exploring those depths is fascinating, certainly, but also reveals the similarities between our societies. In the Uz, few such similarities exist. It is a matter of observing an inhuman society that is also primitive and brutal in thought, deed and mythology.

I have prepared this primer for students with an eye to learn more of the Uz. I am of the mind that one cannot over-prepare for the journeys ahead in the Hero Plane, especially if one wishes to provide a significant benefit to the Great Project. What follows are the compiled extracts of my notes detailing the various important Uz deities, along with their attributed deeds and aspects of their associated cults. In some cases, such as in the mortal offspring of certain gods, such information is extremely relevant to the face and shape of Glorantha today.

— Lograch the Chronicler, Wizard of Seshnela

ARGAN ARGAR

*'In fire. In light.
In air that burned.
He rose as he had sworn.
Behind him trailed legions of the shapeless.
Legions of the lightless.
Legions of the sunless.
His blood and divinity mixed.
His role as champion fixed.
And the Prince of the Night ascended to rule.'*

— Extract from a troll ritual chant devoted to Argan Argar

Argan Argar is the God of Surface Darkness and the Troll God of Trade. He is also known as the God of Uz Above.

He is the son of the goddess Xentha, born to her (or rather, divided from her essence) after she ascended to the surface following the fiery fall of Yelm. With Orlanth's foolish deed done and Yelm reigning in Wonderhome, Xentha bore the first god of darkness to taste life upon the surface world. This being was Argan Argar, appointed from the moment of his birth to the position as Son of Night.

Even now, Argan Argar is notable among darkness gods and the pantheon he stands amongst as the only deity of night and darkness that is considered friendly to all life on Glorantha. He is commonly depicted by trolls as a muscled, dark-skinned Uzko with white eyes that see all in the blackness of night. In his left hand is a spear, which often serves as the symbol for his cult. His right hand is empty, usually held outward in a welcoming gesture. Humans have been known to depict Argan Argar as a handsome male in middle-age, wearing dark armour but carrying no weapons.

Runes

Darkness, Communication, Harmony

Mythos and History

Argan Argar's deeds during the Storm Age were ones of compassion and succor, working tirelessly to assist those who called upon him no matter what the species of the mortals in need, be they elf, man, baboon or beastman; but his favoured race were the Uz, for they were beings of the darkness just as he was. With their support Argan Argar gained the strength to stand against the fire gods and more importantly, battle with the forces of Chaos.

The most famous deed in Argan Argar's mythology was the meeting and defeat of Lodril, the Pelorian volcano god. Lodril as fiery-tempered and volatile as the element he influenced, insulted the Son of Night who demanded an apology. The



fire god refused and in the resulting fight Argan Argar manipulated the shadows and enveloped Lodril in tendrils of icy darkness through which no heat or light could escape. Leeching of strength, Lodril was forced to yield.

As penance Argan Argar demanded that the God of Volcanoes use his powers to create several fortresses of black glass as homes for the troll clans. From this, the Obsidian Tower on the Shadow Plateau was built. It is said in related legends that Argan Argar ordered the creation of this 'palace of black glass' so that he had a palace within which to woo the heart of the earth goddess Esrolia. Whatever the truth of the matter, a son was born to Argan Argar, Ezkankekko the Only Old One, a troll demigod who still rules from the Obsidian Tower to this day.

Argan Argar performed other deeds of note. He infiltrated a Chaos army to rescue the Uzuz Jargorisha Scarweaver from being fed to a devil-beast of some kind. The Son of Night strived to protect the mortal races of Glorantha, often hiding their armies under his shadowy cloak in readiness for an ambush or shielding defenceless communities from the Devil's

forces by bathing them in shadow so that Wakboth passed them by completely.

Though Argan Argar sought to aid understanding and cooperation, in preference to battle, he also faced his share of Chaos during the Godswar, destroying the demon Braznofstel on the field of battle. His humiliating defeat of Lodril caused some friction with other fire gods. In an incident that nearly led to his death, the Yelm-son Golden Bow attempted to slay the darkness god with a volley of flaming arrows, which Argan Argar only escaped by hiding himself within a summoned sea of magical shadows.

Aiding the Helpless (Resonance 50%)

The Taming of Lodril (Resonance 70%)

Slaying of Braznofstel (Resonance 90%)

Nature

At its core, the cult is based around principles of communication and peace. In his role as a powerful god within the Uz pantheon, Argan Argar took it upon himself to encourage his mortal children to relate to the other races in peace and to seek prosperity through trade, travel and diplomacy. Thus Xentha's son is considered not only the god of Surface Darkness but the troll god of Trade and Communication. His followers excel in helping relations between the Uz and the other races, brokering trade agreements and peace treaties in what many cynical observers have described as 'stunningly un-troll-like behaviour.'

Argan Argar also created the bolg, trollish lead currency, in mimicry of coinage used by humans in various regions. Thus his cult controls the minting of coins.

Like all troll deities, Argan Argar hates Chaos. Although not devoted warriors like the followers of Zorak Zoran, his worshipers always willingly supply their aid to drive off chaotic incursions into troll territory. Due to the insults given by the fire gods, cult members also express a dislike of worshipers of the Sky Tribe and any other fire gods.

Argan Argar promises his followers that they will join Xentha's serene train of immortal darkness. Those who act with great honour are assured rebirth to a better position in their next life.

Organisation

Under the Stygian Autarchy, which was also known as Arkat's Dark Empire, the cult was strongly supported. Yet with the decline and fall of this kingdom, worship for the darkness god has dwindled in the heart of the region but a bastion remains

in the far western troll kingdom of Guhan. With his mortal son sitting on the Obsidian Throne in the Shadow Plateau, ruling over the area known as the Shadowlands, the cult has a leading position in the Kingdom of Night, which and spreads across Kethaela from the kingdom of Halikiv in Ralios to the southern coast.

Aided by the mortal presence of his son, the Only Old One, the cult of Argan Argar is guaranteed a secure place as one of the most popular in the Uz pantheon. Its purpose to foster relationships and trade between Uz and the other races, had made it accepted with non-Uz too.

The cult centre is ostensibly the Obsidian Tower and the Only Old One himself but temples exist in every the town and city of Kethaela and Halikiv. Likewise, every settlement in and bordering Dagori Inkarth has at least a shrine in his honour.

There are no strict cult hierarchies, the high priests of the cult commandeering any lower ranked members unless they have demanded a Right to Freedom.

Argan Argar and Trollkin

When Argan Argar defeated Lodril, he took with him the defeated god's spear. Although extinguished by the shadows the Son of Night had summoned, he saw the weapon's potential. Whilst the Uz generally prefer bludgeoning tools, Argan Argar understood its use as a weapon for the trollkin, compensating for their lack of strength and reach.

Since many of Argan Argar's worshipers are trollkin, the cult amasses large numbers of effective militia, which are often loaned out as mercenaries. While these enlo are only skilled with the sling and the spear, their numbers, constant training and vicious fervency make up for their lack of fine weaponry. The EWF are inordinately fond of recruiting trollkin bands of mercenaries to hurl against their own insurrectionists as well as any God Learner forces. Additionally, in a delightful piece of trollish irony, the cult minted lead bolg that forms their currency are also usable as deadly sling stones. There is nothing funny about the sky going dark as a thousand nuggets of heavy lead thunder onto one's head and helmet...

The cult's most holy site is Morbode, the place where Argan Argar destroyed the Chaos demon Braznofstel. Many HeroQuests start from that location.

The cult's High Holy Days are Waterday and Clayday of Harmony Week, Dark Season. Lesser Holy Days are Freezeday, Harmony Week, Sea Season; Windsday, Harmony Week, Fire Season; Fireday, Harmony Week, Earth Season; and Freezeday, Harmony Week, Storm Season. Each of these are linked to a mythic deed performed by the Son of Night.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members: Merely have to listen to the recounting of Argan Argar's deeds and pay a small contribution to the acolyte or priest. The membership fee is set to the circumstance of the petitioner. A trollkin might merely need to have over a few clacks, whereas a wealthy troll might be asked for a hundred. The priest bases his judgement on Evaluate and Insight rolls. Continued membership requires further monthly donations and attendance at the seasonal Holy Day and High Holy Day sacrifices.

Initiates: To become an initiate, the Lay member must undertake a ritual where they perform the first myth of Argan Argar. The ceremony is held above ground at night and is further darkened with the use of magic. There is no danger or risk during the ritual as all parts are played by other members of the cult. On completion the new initiate is promised protection and sanctuary by the officiating priest. In return they must forswear the use of light based magic and agree to be part of the cult's militia. Once a year the initiate may be called upon to escort a trade caravan, for which they are paid a small fraction of the caravan's profit, or be hired out as part of a mercenary unit for a similar remuneration. Few trollkin ever progress past the rank of initiate.

Acolytes: Those seeking acolyte status must have proved their adherence to the way of Argan Argar by performing an important act of negotiation or settlement. If the petitioner has yet to accomplish one, the temple will wait for a suitable opportunity then select them as a spokesperson for the cult. The testing ceremony for advancement is the enactment of Argan Argar's second myth. This time however, the challenges and opponents are real – either paid volunteers from enemy cults or captured opponents forced to perform their part in return for freedom. Although fatalities are rare, failing the final conflict or killing any opponent prevents advancement. Acolytes are expected to accompany one trade caravan a year as a leader of the initiate militia. They are also required to help perform the Holy Day and High Holy Day ceremonies at the temple.

Rune Priests (Dark Talkers): To be raised to the rank of Dark Talker requires completion of a Minor HeroQuest re-enactment of Argan Argar's third myth outside the boundaries of the temple. Thus they must locate a source of Chaos and slay the leader of the nest, cult or gang. They may gather aid however, by hiring or convincing allies as part of the quest, mythically reinforcing Argan Argar's Communication aspect. Succeeding the HeroQuest forges a deeper link with their god raising them to Rune Priest rank. Priests of Argan Argar are the spiritual representatives of the god. They maintain and protect the temples, teach cult members any cult skills or spells they require and control the minting of Bolgs. It is rare for a priest to leave his temple save to establish a new place of worship or bless local shrines.

Rune Lords (Dark Stalkers): To achieve the rank of Dark Stalker the candidate must perform the same HeroQuest as for Rune Priests. As a Rune Lord of the cult, the worshiper is expected to oversee and guide trollish trade caravans. He is also expected to forge trade routes, seek out profitable new goods and offer his services as a negotiator to any non Chaos or Solar cult that requests his aid. In times of war, it is the Dark Stalkers who command the cult militia during raids, leaving the Priests to protect the temples.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Abacus, Bearing Witness, Boon of Lasting Night, Darkwall, Detect Thief, Glamour, Golden Tongue

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following unique spells which are detailed in the following chapter:

Dark Walk, Elemental Summoning (Shade), Gather Shadows, Safe, Suppress Aether

Gifts and Compulsions

Upon rising to the rank of initiate the worshiper gains the following gift and compulsion:

Gift:

Endure Light: The adherent can endure the light of Yelm without becoming blinded or suffering the pain of burning skin. For game effect purposes they lose the traits of **Light Blindness** and **Sun Cursed**.

Compulsion:

Abjure Light: The adherent may never again use a spell which calls forth illumination, nor light lanterns, candles or fires.

Cult Skills

Combat Style (Any Spear Style), Culture (Any), Evaluate, Influence, Language (Any), Lore (Argan Argar), Stealth

Allied Cults

The cult of Gorakiki provides Speak with Insects as a Rune Priest/Lord spell.

The cult of Xentha provides Affix Darkness as an Acolyte spell.

An alliance exists between the traders loyal to Issaries and the traders loyal to Argan Argar. When one is taking trade goods to the territory of the other, such as a troll hoping to deal his wares in an Orlanthi settlement, the loyal believer will seek out his opposite compatriot for talk and business. Many of the humans who come to Uz communities enjoy immunity from being killed and eaten because they are Issaries worshipers and the two gods are considered close friends.

GORAKIKI

'The Queen of Many Faces is among our holiest goddesses. In the days before Sunfall she fed Uz in Wonderhome. In the Chaos Wars she grew strong and battled the Devil as friend and patron of Uz. Uz owe her much, I think. That is why Uz respect the beetles and moths and the wasps of the Hurtplace.'

— Ragzen, Uzuz prophetess

Gorakiki is the Goddess of Insects, revered by the Uz because of her great services to the trolls. She is a powerful figure within the Uz pantheon, as she allows the Uz to both eat her children and domesticate them as pets and steeds. Those who have faced the Uz in battle can attest to the deadly nature of the trolls' insect-riding 'knights.' Few can stand fast when faced by dark trolls mounted on colossal wasps or hear the thunderous rattling of thousands of insectoid legs as a horde of guard beetles charge across the battlefield.

Runes

Darkness, Beast

Mythos and History

Before the coming of the Storm Age, Gorakiki was born to Kropa, goddess of arthropods. Loyal servant to the first mother, Gorakiki raised her own children, the insects, allowing them to spread to every corner of the world. She remained in the cool dark, befriended and supported by the trolls of Wonderhome.

Then Yelm was killed and descended to the Underworld. Wonderhome was consumed by his fiery radiance and those trolls who remained died in the flames. Gorakiki was one of the many who fled to the surface. Once in the Hurtplace she declared that she was free of her indentured servitude, making a proud claim that insects would thrive and multiply on the surface world.

The Hurtplace however was not safe either. Chaos demons stalked the lands and hunting and killing all who crossed their path. Before long Gorakiki found herself pursued or thwarted by many different gods and summoned her children in their various forms to help her overcome the terrible challenges. Each of the many sub-cults has its own specific myths concerning these encounters, each a cautionary tale.

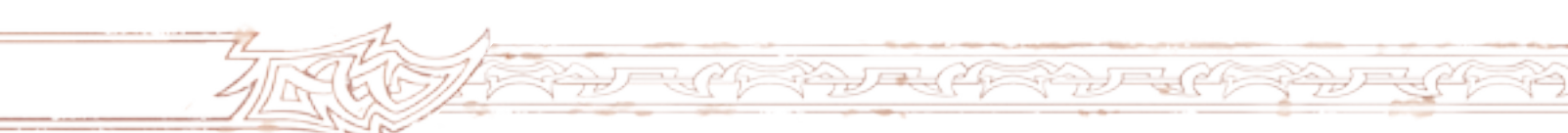
The first myth concerns the mighty Lord of Scorpions who rose up to defend Gorakiki from Bagog and defeated her in battle, then consumed the fallen goddess as was its right. Yet the terrible corruption of Chaos caused Bagog to be reborn within it and ever since, Bagog has worn the shell of Lord Scorpion as a coat. Likewise the Queen of Mantises fought with Tien and severed his head with her forearms but after eating the body, the God of Headhunters ripped his way free from her belly, cursing her to an eternal hunger; or when King of Beetles wrestled with Krarst, burrowing into the goddess' body but was absorbed for his efforts; and so on.

Eat Not What Is Not Of Glorantha (Resonance 50%)

The second myth tells the story of when Gorakiki was searching for food to nourish her Uz worshipers. She found the last outpost of the solar gods, hiding behind their tall walls, within which were ever-ripe fields of crops. There was enough to feed all of the remaining survivors against famine, so Gorakiki politely asked for a donation to feed the wandering trolls. Spat upon and insulted by the blindingly arrogant deities, she was turned away from their gates. Thus to teach them a lesson, Gorakiki summoned her children to fly over and burrow under the steadfast walls and devour all that lay behind them. Soon no crops remained, only fat insects, who then willingly gave up their lives to feed the loyal supporters of their mother.

We Came, We Ate (Resonance 60%)

The third great myth of Gorakiki describes her flight from Wakboth the Devil, the one Chaos God who was stronger than all of her children combined. Pursued from place-to-place, the Goddess of Insects changed her shape to leap into the sky, burrow under roots, fly through the air and swim under lakes. Each transformation however was observed by Wakboth who



desired mightily to rip her shape shifting powers from her. Eventually, cornered in the Dead Place with nowhere left to hide, Gorakiki performed her most potent magic, a dance which shook herself into thousands of pieces, each the shape of her favoured offspring. Wakboth tried to capture the swarm but no matter how he grasped or swung, the swarm that was she evaded could not be contained.

Become One That Is Many (Resonance 70%)

Nature

The cult of Gorakiki holds the secrets of raising, breeding and controlling insects. From its knowledge many new species of insects have been created, mostly for food, labour or war. Temples of Gorakiki are important sources of food and fierce insect mounted troops, both extremely useful in troll society. Due to this invaluable contribution, the cult stands very high amongst the troll tribes.

Most high ranking Gorakiki cult members gain considerable wealth from the production and sale of their insects. Some are also respected as dangerous warriors in their own right, leading or at least supporting elite Uz battle units mounted on more exotic insects.

As with most troll cults, the followers of Gorakiki will actively participate in destroying Chaos wherever it is found, using their insect wards as an active weapon where suitable.

Among other things, the cult promises worshipers that they will have insect food after death. Trolls view the afterlife as a mindless and memory-less existence in a gray empty plain, so this promise can be quite tempting, especially considering some insects are considered very tasty by troll gourmands.

Organisation

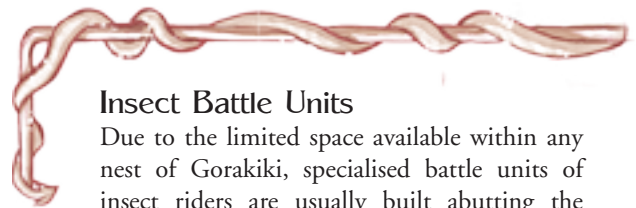
Most temples, or *neests*, to Gorakiki are dedicated to a specific sub-cult, each one specialising in a single insect species. This can result in some larger troll tribes having several Gorakiki temples, between which a friendly rivalry normally ensues. As there is no overarching cult structure, each sub-cult normally provides mutual support to the others, although raids on competing nests sometimes occur, usually to steal a new type of insect.

Rune Priests of Gorakiki protect the nest and lead investigations into breeding new subspecies. Every nest must have at least one priest. Rune Lords of the cult lead and protect insect herds when they are taken from the nest to neighbouring tribes for sale. They are also commanders of special units of

insect mounted trolls or trollkin, depending on the size of the insect. Most nests have a Rune Lord to fulfil this role.

The cult temples are made of mud, rock and even the harvested chitin of dead giant anthropoids like cockroaches or centipedes the size of several men. These shrines are devoid of any metal in their construction, which Gorakiki regards as an insult to her worship since all that is good in the world comes from insects. The holiest sanctum of each nest is the egg/breeding chamber. Other chambers are used for each stage of insect growth, food storage, communal living accommodation for the acolytes and priests, and stables for full grown insects ready to be sold or trained.

The four largest sub-cults found in the Shadowlands and Dagori Inkarth are the wasp, beetle, moth and locust cults.



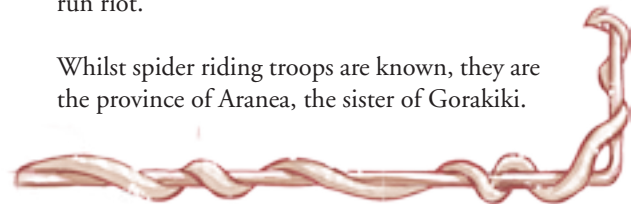
Insect Battle Units

Due to the limited space available within any nest of Gorakiki, specialised battle units of insect riders are usually built abutting the temple, or at least within shouting distance. Most tribes maintain at least a handful of insects trained for warfare and tend to mount their best warriors on them.

There are many different forms of Uz 'Cavalry', the most common being giant beetle riders. Giant mantises are another fearsome steed but their huge size and carnivorous natures make them difficult and expensive to keep in any great numbers. Giant wasps are another feared unit, the poison stingers and aerial manoeuvrability making them deadly foes. However, the limited carrying capacity of the wasps means that their riders are limited to highly trained trollkin.

Insects such as giant centipedes or scorpions do not tend to be used as mounts due to physiological constraints or temperament. However, they do make excellent war insects if let loose towards an enemy unit and allowed to run riot.

Whilst spider riding troops are known, they are the province of Aranea, the sister of Gorakiki.



The cult's Holy Days are Freezeday, Fertility Week of each season. The High Holy Day, is the holy day of Dark season.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members (Eggs): All lay members are considered 'eggs' in relation to their place in the advancement of their religion. To join and remain in the cult, an Adventurer must provide a single lead bolg worth of food to the closest Nest each week. Failure to do so results in expulsion for disrespect. All unintelligent insects are considered lay members in the cult.

Initiates (Larvae): To become an initiate, the Lay member must have shown their dedication to the cult by voluntarily helping with the care of the insects. The initiate ceremony involves a ritual cleansing, followed by the capture and mounting of the sub-cult's insect. Little danger is involved in this rite, since the insect is in direct communication with the priest at all times. As part of their duties, initiates are required to work two weeks every season, either toiling in the breeding pens and hives, or guarding the temple from attack. Once a year the initiate may be called upon to escort a delivery of insects to a nearby tribe, which is less an onerous duty and more an exciting holiday depending on the danger of the local region.

Acolytes (Pupae): Those seeking acolyte rank should have demonstrated their devotion to the way of Gorakiki, by working above and beyond their normal initiate requirements or by manifesting a genuine gift with insects. The ceremony for advancement takes the form of re-enacting one of the sub-cults myths. As with acolyte tests in other cults, the challenges and opponents are real. Adversaries are played by non-Uz, either happenstance wanderers paid to partake in the ritual or captured foes forced to participate in exchange for release. A death during the ceremony curses the proceedings, requiring the ritual to be held again on the following Holy Day. Successful candidates must choose whether to serve as guardians or workers. Guardians spend four weeks of every season training in the insect riding militia and defending the nest from attack. Workers spend their time overseeing the cleaning and feeding of the insects and learning the deeper secrets of breeding and training them. Once a year, the acolyte can request to accompany an insect delivery expedition.

Rune Priests (Insect Priests): Qualification for the rank of Insect Priest requires completion of a Minor HeroQuest re-enactment of Gorakiki sub-cult myth outside the boundaries of the temple. The quest tests the priest's ability to care for and call upon his chosen insect during adverse challenges. Succeeding the HeroQuest forges a deeper link with Gorakiki raising them to Rune Priest rank. Insect Priests oversee

the temples, breed new and healthy insects, and teach cult members any cult skills or spells they require. It is rare for a priest to leave their nest except to establish a new place of worship or travel to other tribal temples in order to trade for breeding stock.

Rune Lords (Insect Lords): Promotion to Insect Lord necessitates the candidate performing the same HeroQuest as for Rune Priests. Rune Lords of Gorakiki are expected to protect grazing insect herds, escort herds to neighbouring tribes and supervise the training of insect mounted militia. In times of war, the Insect Lords command the insect cavalry units.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Bludgeon, Boon of Lasting Night, Demoralise, Detect Rustler, Insect Call (As per Beast Call but for insects), Heal, Mobility

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following unique spells which are detailed in the following chapter:

Become Swarm, Speak with Insects, Summon Swarm, Transform Body, Transform Head, Transform Limbs

Gifts and Compulsions

Upon rising to the rank of initiate the worshiper gains the following gift and compulsion:

Gift:

Beloved of Gorakiki: The adherent is recognised by all insects as blessed by their mother. No insect will willingly attack or harm the initiate directly, although they may express disfavour in other ways.

Compulsion:

Insect Compassion: The adherent may never allow an insect to suffer, or permit their unnecessary slaying. As part of this bond, once per week the adherent must provide a small dish of their blood on which flies, mosquitoes and other tiny insects may feast.

Cult Skills

Combat Style (Any), First Aid, Healing, Influence, Lore (Gorakiki), Ride (Insect), Stealth

Allied Cults

The cult of Argan Argar provides Safe as a Rune Priest/Lord spell.

GIANT INSECTS

Statistics for many giant insects can be found in *RuneQuest II Monster Coliseum*. The following are additional examples that trolls of acolyte rank or higher in the sub-cults of Gorakiki can own as steeds and pets.

Giant Wasp

These creatures are battle steeds within Gorakiki's wasp sub-cult. Due to their size, they are normally unable to carry anything larger than a trollkin as they fly. Wasps are unfailingly loyal to their hive queen back at the nest-temple, though they also obey the orders of the trollkin they serve as mounts. They are intelligent enough to understand single-word commands as long as they are trained to do so, though most Uz use a Speak with Insects spell to get their points across. Carrying a rider counts as Medium Activity for giant wasps.

A giant wasp will live for over a decade, perhaps up to 15 years if the creature is exceptionally well cared for. The wasps used as steeds by the Uz are generally larger and more intelligent than their wild cousins, since generations of skilled and divinely-blessed breeding has evolved them into stronger, tougher and smarter beasts.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6+6	17	1	Right Rear Leg	2/8
CON	2D6+6	13	2	Left Rear Leg	2/8
SIZ	3D6+12	23	3	Right Middle Leg	2/8
DEX	2D6+12	19	4	Left Middle Leg	2/8
INT	4	4	5-7	Abdomen	2/9
POW	2D6+3	10	8-9	Thorax	2/10
			10-12	Right Wing	-/4
			13-15	Left Wing	-/4
			16	Right Front Leg	2/8
			17	Left Front Leg	2/8
			18-20	Head	2/8

Combat Actions	3	Typical Armour: Exoskeleton, no penalty
Damage Modifier	+1D6	
Magic Points	10	Traits: Flying, Wall Walking, Sting
Movement	12m	
Strike Rank	+14	Skills: Athletics 70%, Evade 70%, Perception 50%, Persistence 55%, Resilience 60%, Track 50%

Combat Styles

Sting 70%

Type	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	Range
Sting	S	T	1D4+1	+1D6	As for Abdomen

Combat Notes

Wasp venom has the following characteristics:

Application: Injection

Onset time: 1 Combat Round

Duration: 6D10 minutes

Resistance Time: The victim must make a resistance roll at the Onset. Failure indicates that Condition has taken effect.

Potency: CON x5.

Resistance: Resilience.

Conditions: Agony. The venom initially causes the victim pain if the first Resistance roll is failed.

Companion Moth

These moths are the product of the Gorakiki moth-cult's breeding ingenuity. They are as large as a raven and accompany trolls as winged messengers or lookouts. As insectoid creatures go, these companion moths are relatively intelligent, capable of communicating what their heightened senses perceive in the surrounding area. Generations of selective breeding have imbued these beings with a rudimentary ability to sense life in their vicinity, making companion moths invaluable scouts. They do not fight and will flee if attacked.

Most of these creatures appear to have skin of dark, furry chitin, though it is light and fragile enough to offer only minimal protection and never hinders flight. The moths range in colour from black and brown to grey and white. A rare few sport what seem to be simple images in the patterning of their backs or wings, resembling things like weapons, skulls or even clan symbols. Breeding such images into the flesh of the companion moths is considered high art among Gorakiki cultists.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	1D3	2	1–5	Body	1 / 4
CON	2D3	4	6–11	Right Wing	–/2
SIZ	1D2	2	12–17	Left Wing	–/2
DEX	3D6+12	23	18–20	Head	1/3
INT	5	5			
POW	1D6+3	7			

Combat Actions	3	Typical Armour: Exoskeleton, no penalty
Damage Modifier	–1D8	
Magic Points	7	Traits: Flying, Life Sense, Wall Walking
Movement	12m	
Strike Rank	+17	Skills: Evade 70%, Perception 80%, Persistence 35%, Resilience 20%, Stealth 90%

HIMILE

'In the north we most often answer to Himile, not Valind. Valind is lord only over a single season, while this far from the hot lands, it is Himile's touch that is on everything around. The trees are naked and the water is ice, all because of Himile's breath. To not respect such power is the way of fools. When I die, I will become part of Himile's breath, for I serve him faithful and true in life. The way back to Wonderhome was forgotten by my people thousands of years ago.'

— Iruark Jendak, snow troll hunter

Himile, the God of Cold and Ice, is to the Uzhim the one true power in the frozen north of Genertela where the so-called snow trolls dwell in nomadic hunter clans. Himile appeals to these trolls because of his strength and dominance over the region but his worship is also propitiation to protect themselves from his savage touch.

Runes

Cold, Darkness

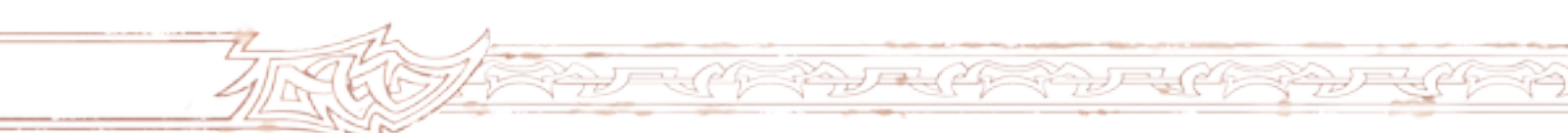
Mythos and History

Himile once lived in the Underworld, content to spread his cold fingers through the caverns of Wonderhome and bring refreshing coolness to the Uz who lived there. But when dying Yelm came down to host his court in the land of the dead, Himile fled to the surface and found Valind who allied with him. Between them freezing storms spread across the world and the ice demons danced everywhere.

Soon the Chaos gods came to seek out this new power of destruction. Uninhibited by the cold Krjalk brought vast armies of his accursed spawn who polluted the crisp purity of the ice and snow. Himile summoned his legions of trolls and ice demons, and at their head, he scythed down the interlopers with Hoarfrost his enervating spear, driving them to the feet of Valind's glaciers. He called to his ally and the God of Winter sung the ice to life, his glaciers crushing the Chaos horde of Krjalk, who himself fled in terror.

Freeze the Legions of Chaos (Resonance 50%)

When Yelm returned from death, the strength of Himile was lessened and he retired to his ice fortress in the far north. Yet



every year Himile ventures forth from his freezing stronghold and travels the northern wastes searching for heroes to test their prowess and strength. Often he appears disguised as a troll or man, to challenge lonely warriors to great feats and if they succeed, he rewards their determination and wards them from the attentions of the Hollri.

Wrestle with the Winter Cold (Resonance 70%)

Nature

A cold, heartless cult for a cold and heartless deity, Himile is worshipped in order to ward off his cruel touch. The cult initiation rights are themselves callous tests of survival and few snow trolls ever seek higher status save to seek the power to ward off the Himile's own, ever marauding ice demons or keep the god himself at bay.

The priests of Himile among the Uzhim are noted for their independence and loose mandate from their distant god. Himile seems to be content with his followers opposing Chaos and keeping his cult dominant among the snow trolls, even above that of Kyger Litor or Zorak Zoran.

The snow trolls who join his cult believe that they will become ice demons after their demise, bonding themselves with the icy wastelands and becoming one with the cold, rather than continue to suffer it. These ice demons are known as the 'Hollri.' They are terrible, wrathful creatures formed of black or blue ice that are essentially mindless – slaved to the whims and desires of Himile or his more powerful Uz cultists.

Organisation

The cult of Himile has no defined structure. Strong priests dominate weaker ones and no authority extends beyond the crossing of the horizon. There are few temples save for the far north, where they are chewed out of the living glaciers of Valind. They are gnawed deep into the ice, full of storerooms holding generations worth of bone, ice and stone offerings, their walls glowing with an aquamarine to deep indigo blue from the sunlight which penetrates the ice.

Shrines abound across the wastes and the central Rockwood Mountains, towards which the priests of Himile gravitate in winter, extending the cold and ice down into the more fertile valleys so that the trolls can descend in search of food.

The cult's Holy Days are the Freezedays of Truth Week of Sea Season; Disorder Week of Fire Season; Death Week of Earth Season; and Stasis Week of Storm Season. The High Holy Day, is Wildday of Fertility Week in Dark Season.



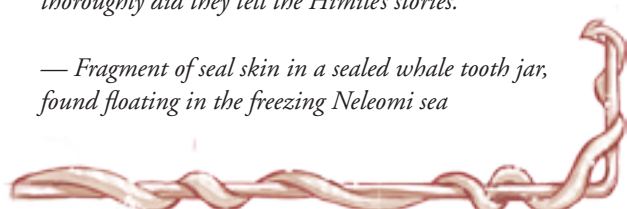
Temples of Clawed Ice

I have seen much of the Uzhim's worship of Himile firsthand, for which I must say I am honoured and privileged. They were not secretive with their religion, even though I was candid about my intentions. Perhaps the snow trolls I encountered – those that call themselves the Frostheart Clan – were not typical of the northern Uz. Suffice to say they insisted that my 'games' in the hero plane would have no effect on the power of Himile in the north, nor would my work ever interfere with what they termed their 'fleshless rebirths,' a reference to their promised resurrection as Hollri demons.

I witnessed the etchings of Himile, cut, hammered, clawed or even bitten into walls of solid ice. These modest works marked locations of shrines or indicated nearby temples to the god, though these frigid halls of worship are infinitely more humble than even the primitive Uz shrines of lands in warmer Genertelan climes. Some were darkened caves filled with trinkets, carvings of rock or ice and scrim-shawed skulls of fabulous beasts dedicated to Himile. Only a few that I saw were made of stone and these were simple affairs, appearing to be little different to the caves in terms of what was contained therein.

I tell you this in all honesty: my breath caught in my throat when I saw the images carved into the immense walls of moving ice far to the north. Crude of style but complex in design, stunning in their vast scope and size, to make a man even such as I, feel insignificant. The memory of them has stayed with me these many months. Beyond the mythic song-tellings so popular in Uz culture, this is the way the Uzhim record their god's deeds without written language. I stared at cyclopean images of scenes almost complicated and precise enough to be called hieroglyphs, which took me days to walk along, so thoroughly did they tell the Himile's stories.

— Fragment of seal skin in a sealed whale tooth jar, found floating in the freezing Neleomi sea



Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members: All snow trolls are automatically lay members of Himile.

Initiates: To become an initiate, the lay member must undertake a potentially fatal test. They are taken to an outcropping of rock or ice and bound in place one week before a cult Holy Day. Each day they must succeed in an unopposed Resilience test or lose 1D6 points of CON. If they are still alive during the Holy Day ceremony, they are recognised as initiates and released. There are no requirements as an initiate save to do what a priest tells you.

Acolytes: An initiate who wishes to progress to acolyte must prove their toughness by hunting down a Hollri and single handed, bring back its head. Acolytes are required to hunt enough food to maintain the clan priest. He is also expected to take the front line in defending his clan against Hollri attacks.

Rune Priests (Ice Priests): Promotion to the rank of Ice Priest requires completion of a Minor HeroQuest re-enactment of Himile's battles against Chaos. The worshiper must undertake his quest alone (although he is permitted to receive hospitality if he stumbles across other snow trolls during the hunt). The HeroQuest will take him to the edge of Valind's glacier, whether that be north, south, east or west, in order to find a suitable source of Chaos. Once found the nest of evil must be destroyed completely and an item – a bone or weapon of the enemy – brought back to one of the temples for incarceration in the ice. Priests have no objectives imposed upon them by Himile. They may wander the wastes or protect one of the nomadic clans as they will.

Rune Lords: There are no Rune Lords of Himile.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Bandit's Cloak, Befuddle, Boon of Lasting Night, Detect Food, Endurance, Frostbite, Pierce

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following unique spells which are detailed in the following chapter:

Command Ice Demon, Decrease Temperature, Freeze, Frost Breath, Ignore Cold

Gifts and Compulsions

At each rank above lay member an adherent must accept one Gift and one Compulsion, chosen from the following list:

Gifts:

Endure Cold: The adherent can survive any cold which is natural to the region and climate. It does not however, make it any more pleasant to suffer.

Know Ice: The adherent can judge precisely the thickness and strength of any ice or snow, so that he can traverse frozen lakes, cross snow bridges, climb glaciers and negotiate avalanche zones without danger.

Sense Ice Demon: The adherent can sense the location of a Hollri when it approaches within 100 metres per point of the worshiper's POW.

Summon Ice Demon: The adherent can draw a Hollri to himself. The ice demon takes 1D10 hours to arrive and has no obligation to be friendly to its summoner on arrival.

Compulsions:

Abjure Fire: The adherent can never light a fire or cast any magic connected with the Fire Rune.

Hate Fire: The adherent is compelled to extinguish all fires he can detect. He must also attack anyone who casts a spell connected with the Fire Rune within his presence.

Challenge Strangers: Any stranger the adherent meets upon the icy wastes must be challenged to a competition, which the stranger may choose. The contest must be something achievable with the equipment present or a location within one days travel. If the adherent loses, he must award one of his personal belongings to the winner and grant him protection.

Brothers of Ice: The adherent is forbidden to harm any Hollri, either by attacking it directly himself or luring it into ambush.

Cult Skills

Athletics, Combat Style (Any Spear Style), Lore (Himili), Resilience, Stealth, Survival, Tracking

Allied Cults

None save for Valind and his sister Subere are allied to Himile.

The cult of Subere provides Elemental Summoning (Shade) as an Acolyte spell.

The cult of Valind provides Snow as a Rune Priest/Lord spell.

The Hollri

The Hollri are ice demons. Vaguely humanoid in shape, though covered with protruding spikes, they are made of solid glittering ice with ripples and layers within them where further ice has accumulated over time. Many Hollri sport antler-like horns of ice, or other noticeably inhuman aspects such as forked tongues, taloned feet and long claws.

These demons are born in Valind's Palace upon his Glacier, heartless minions of the winter gods. They eventually meander off into the icy wastes, mindlessly wandering till commanded by some priest or god. They are attracted to warmth, being able to detect a living creature by its body heat from many kilometres away.

Like their lord, Hollri wield spears of ice and can throw icicles which they pluck from their own bodies. Being made of ice themselves, a Hollri who suffers a Serious Wound must make a resilience roll versus the attack, or have the damaged location shatter. Major Wounds automatically shatter the location. They can only be destroyed by shattering the chest. In a cold environment damaged locations begin to regenerate damage at 1 Hit Point per round.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	4D6+6	20	1–3	Right Leg	6/8
CON	2D6+6	13	4–6	Left Leg	6/8
SIZ	4D6+9	23	7–9	Abdomen	6/9
DEX	3D6	11	10–12	Chest	6/10
INT	7	7	13–15	Right Arm	6/7
POW	2D6+12	19	16–18	Left Arm	6/7
			19–20	Head	6/8

Combat Actions	3	Typical Armour: Ice Flesh (AP 6)
Damage Modifier	+1D8	
Magic Points	19	Traits: Flying, Freezing Breath, Regeneration
Movement	12m	
Strike Rank	+13	Skills: Athletics 80%, Evade 70%, Perception 50%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 75%, Track 50%

Combat Styles

Spear 80%, Unarmed 75%, Thrown Icicle 70%

<i>Type</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Reach</i>	<i>Damage</i>	<i>AP/HP</i>	<i>Range</i>
Spear	L	VL	1D10+1+1D8	6/10	
Unarmed	M	T	1D6+1D8	As for Arms	
Thrown Icicle	S	—	1D4+1D8	6/1	20m

KYGER LITOR

*'Friend, don't be slow,
To find the home all life must know;
The goddess will help you go.*

*From the lands that see,
I am bound and you are free;
No longer bound must you be.*

*Of Darkness you learned,
For Darkness you yearned,
To Darkness you are returned.'*

— Extract from the Kyger Litor funeral rites

Kyger Litor is the ancestress mother of all trolls. She is a primitive and pragmatic goddess, ruled by necessity. Worship of Kyger Litor is often simple and grim but none question her wishes. She still sits in her Castle of Lead watching over all of her children.

Runes

Darkness, Man

Mythos and History

Kyger Litor was the darkness goddess who, at the behest of her cousin Subere, mated with the Man Rune and from this consummation sprang forth the race of trolls.

Kyger Litor's rise to the surface world was not a quick one. With Yelm's fall into the Underworld, the Mother of Trolls was one of the darkness deities that resisted the slain Sun God and sought to destroy him before he could become God of the Dead. Ultimately, she was defeated and led many of her mortal children to the Hurtplace where they had to fight for their own place in the world above.

Fighting the Lord of Sky (Resonance 50%)

She waged war against the surface peoples in the Storm Age, causing great animosity. Under the eyes of their goddess, the trolls forged a kingdom for themselves by force and magic.

Conquering the Elder Peoples (Resonance 70%)

When the Great Darkness came, Kyger Litor and her people ruled much of the world. Thus they bore the brunt of fighting when Chaos entered the land. The Mother of Trolls rallied what remained of the free races under troll command, striving against the Chaos gods, during

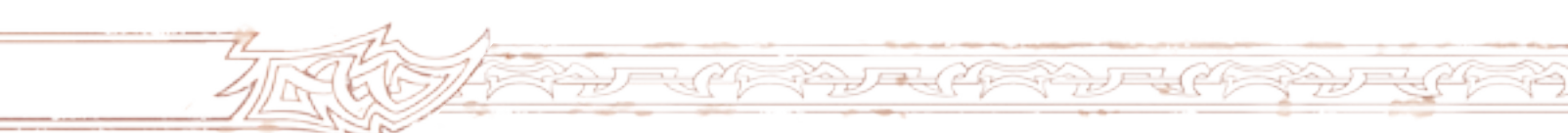
which time she skinned Thed, saved Waha and was herself healed by Arroin. The greatest trollish bastions against the advance of Chaos were the Castles of Lead. These fortresses drew the greatest foes of Chaos to stand and defend them, but of all that were built by the goddess only the castle in Dagori Inkarth survived.

The Skinning of Chaos (Resonance 90%)

At the Dawning, Kyger Litor still stood strong and was consulted by Arachne Solera before the compromise could be forged.

During the Dawn Age, the Mother of Trolls rebelled against the Second Council when they tried to create a new god and convinced the Dragonewts to join her. This infuriated the broken council and castigated the Uz with the Curse of Kin. The stunting of their newborn combined with the return of the sun undermined the power of Kyger Litor and her trolls, fate twisting against them. In a series of battles with the dwarfs and elves, all three races annihilated themselves, leaving the world open to humankind.





From once ruling over most of Glorantha, Kyger Litor now rests in the bowels of the Castle of Lead seeking a way to break the Great Woe which blights her children. When he cunning finds a way to reverse the damage, then the world shall see the Uz rise again to their rightful place.

Nature

The cult of Kyger Litor remains the most popular and respected amongst all Uz. She remains a paramount foe of Chaos, which was why Arkat joined her worship once he discovered his true troll nature.

The cult is the foundation of Uz society, teaching the tenets of good behaviour. The priestesses of a tribe or clan are its leaders, with the high priestess implicitly ruling it in the position of matriarch. Kyger Litor is also the goddess who binds the other darkness deities together in the troll pantheon. Her cult remains neutral, making alliances and settlements amongst the other faiths.

Like most darkness gods, her cult does not relate well with the worshipers of solar deities, remembering the death and destruction Yelm wreaked upon Wonderhome. Neither does Kyger Litor have any love for the Lightbringer cults, viewing Orlanth as the source of all troubles and a coward to boot, when he fled the final battle against the devil to perform his quest. The Mother of Trolls also loathes Mostal and Aldrya whose children have been a thorn in her side and caused the fall of her children. For the invention of Iron, Kyger Litor will never cease the butchery of dwarfs.

Kyger Litor holds the end of existence for the Uz, most of whom believe that their eternal destiny lies in her afterlife: an endless grey expanse of near-darkness populated by edible insects and pools of fine-tasting water. Some say that drinking from certain pools decides what fate the troll will have in reincarnation, though others insist that their deeds in trying to serve Kyger Litor and reverse the womb-curses are the ways to earning a desirable reincarnation.

Organisation

The structure of cult authority firmly depends on who is the strongest, whether that be politically, magically or physically. Whichever clan or tribal matriarch has the greatest might, gets to impose her will. Due to this simple pecking order, the hierarchy and fortunes of clans can rise or fall with their most powerful priestess of Kyger Litor.

Likewise each clan has its own priestly hierarchy based again on personal power and loyalty of her supporters. Only the High Priestess may have Rune Lords of Kyger Litor in her entourage. Kyger Litor's followers are accorded respect for their positions in the cult of the troll race progenitor.

In many regions, where the rule of strength is considered more important than piety, the strongest and most skilled warriors are also accorded the highest respect alongside the tribal matriarchs.

Ostensively, the cult centre of power resides at the Castle of Lead. Within the fortress live the greatest mistress race priestesses and shaman, along with the ancestral spirits of departed troll heroes. It is here that the commands of Kyger Litor are passed down. No priestess ever refuses a summons to the Castle of Lead, even if ordered to sever themselves from their clan and take up permanent residence, joining their forbearers in the gathering of strength and wisdom.

Dark Season, with its long nights, is the holy season for the Uz. Many of their rites to honour Kyger Litor take place during these weeks and in large communities with powerful priests and shamans, these rituals commonly take the form of HeroQuests, usually to the greatest moments and battles of her struggles against Chaos and the other elder races. In smaller communities, re-enactments are not magical and instead focus on plays, impressions and telling tales or singing monstrous, growling dirges in the goddess's honour. Her skinning of Thed, Goat-matriarch, Mother of the Broos, is reflected in a ritual where broos are hunted, skinned and their flayed flesh used as skins on ritual drums, which beat themselves during the ceremony.

The cult's Holy Days are Freezeday, Harmony Week of each season. The High Holy period in Dark Season starts on Godsdays, Disorder Week and ends on Freezeday, Harmony Week.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members: All trolls and trollkin are considered lay members of the Kyger Litor cult if they survive childhood.

Initiates: Becoming an initiate is freely given to those who accept the accompanying responsibilities. The initiation ceremony involves paying obeisance to the High Priestess of the clan and swearing an oath to serve Kyger Litor's teachings. For trollkin the requirements are a little different, since they must succeed in either a Lore (Kyger Litor) or Courtesy test. Failure means their presumption has incurred the wrath of the priestesses who will then kill the trollkin and feast upon him. Initiates spend one week every season serving in the militia.

Acolytes: Achieving the rank of acolyte requires a noted demonstrated their devotion to the way of Kyger Litor, by performing an important task for the cult or by slaying a Chaotic creature. Trollkin can never achieve this rank or higher.

The Troll Within

Intriguingly, the Kyger Litor cult also holds the secrets for humans and members of other races to actually *become* Uz. One assumes it was by these methods that the great Arkat debased himself so thoroughly in adopting trollhood towards the end of his life.

The ritual takes place in a temple to Kyger Litor and may only be performed in the pitch darkness. The trolls find their way around using their Darksense as normal but the human participant is left blinded in the dark. From all around, questions come at him out of the blackness: questions about his commitment to the troll way of life, his faith in their gods, his knowledge of their pantheon and the deeds of Godtime myths. He must sing the praises of Kyger Litor and espouse on her role in the cosmos as well as her role in fighting Chaos. This can go on for some time. If the questioners are unsatisfied with even a single answer, the supplicant is killed and eaten. If the questioners are satisfied with what they hear in the supplicant's voice, then the human is still killed and eaten, though in a different and infinitely more painful way.

The trolls take the accepted victim to an altar. His final words must be a prayer to Subere for the trolls to initiate him quickly and mercifully, rather than let him suffer. Once on the altar, he is mutilated according to tradition and the removed parts of his body eaten by the trolls in attendance. The ears and nose of the supplicant, including the internal cartilage, are torn from his body. Cartilage and bone from the noses and ears of dead trolls are brutally wedged inside the wounds. All incisors are pulled from their sockets and oversized troll tusks are pushed into the gums.

It is at this point that the subject usually dies from head trauma, blood loss or both. Those who continue to survive are admired by the trolls for their fortitude.

The supplicant's organs are removed, practically ensuring death without the involvement of powerful magic, as is the stomach and digestive tract, which are all replaced with corresponding organs from dead trolls. In the limbs, ritually-enchanted sticks and rocks are used to replace major bones.

Once this is completed, the corpse of the supplicant is positioned into a foetal posture and wrapped in magical materials woven into silk wrappings from the Gorakiki cults or a blanket blessed by a priestess of Kyger Litor. The magical components in the material are blessed items – one from each troll in attendance, usually a simple keepsake or good luck charm. These show the goddess that many of her children support the supplicant's attempt to join the higher race. Occasionally, in the cases of extremely favoured supplicants, the corpse is wrapped holding magical Uz weaponry or draped in amulets and fine furs, often enchanted to either help the transformation or serve the supplicant when he awakens.

Many never rise again. These corpses rot away to nothing inside their wrappings and mouldering bones are all that is revealed when the unveiling hour arrives. All supplicants are left for up to five years, 'slumbering' in the dark bowels of a Kyger Litor temple while the trolls occasionally check in to see if there has been any change. Those that rot away, never to live again, are considered to have been unworthy and rejected by the Mother of Trolls.

Perhaps most interesting is the use of this rite to circumvent another of the troll race's potent curses. Trollkin, those stunted little slave-caste creatures, can actually be transmuted into Uzko trolls by use of this rite, though the success rate is similarly dire as when used on humans.

in the cult. The advancement ceremony is a re-enactment of one of the Mother of Trolls myths on a cult Holy Day. The challenges and opponents are real, with foes being played by non-Uz in the normal manner of hiring or use of captives. A death during the ceremony is considered the will of Kyger Litor and if it was the candidate who was slain, the foes are set free. Surviving the ceremony raises the cult member to acolyte status. This raises their duties to serving two weeks every season in the militia or as an aide to a Karrg's Son or Matriarch. Once a year, the acolyte is expected to join a broo hunt to gather worthy sacrifices for the High Holy Day rituals.

Rune Priestesses (Matriarchs): Qualification for the rank of Matriarch requires completion of a Minor HeroQuest re-enactment of Kyger Litor's skinning of Thed outside the boundaries of the temple. The quest tests the priest's ability to battle Chaos and defeat any lesser races which get in her way. Succeeding the HeroQuest forges a deeper link with Kyger Litor raising them to Rune Priest rank. Matriarchs take their place in the ruling theocratic hierarchy, guiding and commanding their clan, and gathering a loyal body of supporters. They also gain the right to represent their clan in higher councils. Duties include performing diplomatic missions, maintaining social cohesion and deciding when the clan goes to war.

Rune Lords (Karrg's Sons): Achieving the rank of Karrg's Son requires the candidate performing the same HeroQuest as for Rune Priests but taking the fight against an elf or dwarf settlement. The acolyte may gather a body of loyal initiates and lay members to help him in his quest. Success grants the promotion. Karrg's Sons command troops and lead raids in times of war. They also serve as bodyguards to the High Priestess of the clan; and may select a personal guard of their own from any acolytes loyal to them.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Bludgeon, Boon of Lasting Night, Demoralise, Glamour, Heal, Mindspeech, Protection

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following unique spells which are detailed in the following chapter:

Blinding, Darksee, Counter Chaos, Elemental Summoning (Shade)

In addition, Matriarchs of the cult use their Lore (Kygor Litor) and Pact (Kygor Litor) as substitutes for Spirit Walking and Spirit Binding, but only for the summoning of Uz ancestors.

Gifts and Compulsions

At each rank above lay member an adherent must accept one Gift and one Compulsion, chosen from the following list:

Gifts:

Command Obedience: The adherent is automatically succeeds in any Influence roll against any troll, save cult members of Kyger Litor with equal or greater rank, or troll members of other cults with superior rank.

Fearless: The adherent has seen the inner darkness of Subere and has kept their mind. No magical fear or any normal psychological pressure can force them to flee against their will.

Sense Chaos: The adherent can smell the presence of Chaos with a range of 10 metres per point of the worshiper's POW.

Gain Insect Ally: The adherent can choose a trained insect which acts as his ally.

Breed True: The adherent never ever gives birth to trollkin, although she still has the same reduced chance of producing Uzko as any other.

Become Immortal (Uzuz only): The adherent ceases to age.

Compulsions:

Eat Vegetation: The adherent must consume vegetable matter at least once per week. Elfs count as vegetables.

Feed Priestesses: The adherent must hunt a meat animal once per week and present it to their priestess or the High Priestess if already one.

Eat Relative: The adherent is compelled to eat a relative on the Holy Day of each season. This can be a trollkin.

Polygamy: The adherent wishes to marry they must have more than one spouse, none of whom may be a Rune Lord or Rune Priestess of Kyger Litor.

Music Lover: The adherent must allow a musician to finish a song or tune before criticising, leaving the musician's presence, or eating him.

Abjure Trollkin: The adherent is forbidden to speak to any trollkin or interact with one without an intermediary.

Cult Skills

Combat Style (Any), Influence, Lore (Any), Lore (Kygor Litor), Meditation, Oratory, Play Instrument

Allied Cults

The cult of Argan Argar provides Safe as a Rune Priest/Lord spell.

SUBERE

*'In blackness is haven found,
In lightless depths,
In darkest reaches,
Protection, sanctuary, solace.'*

— The simple benediction of protection from the sun's light, as spoken by the first trolls to see Yelm and traditionally by every troll in Subere's cult harmed by fire or light ever since.

Subere is the possessor of the darkness rune. From her essence was all troll life created, though because of her grand, inconceivable nature and unknowable personality, Subere is second to Kyger Litor in the creator-goddess tales and only rarely worshipped directly.

Runes

Darkness, Magic

Mythos and History

Subere hid many secrets, terrible and unimaginable, within her cavernous darkness. Many gods came seeking the devastations she jealously guarded but only one succeeded. In the stygian dark, Eurmál the Trickster gropingly discovered one of the secrets and stole it, returning to the surface world. From this act came the Storm Age and all the woes which now affect the mortal races.

When Yelm, slain by stolen death, came to the Underworld, the darkness deities of Wonderhome and the other areas of the Underworld fled the painful light of the wounded Emperor. Only Subere remained. As the primal darkness, the darkness from which all other blackness was born, she remained unaltered and untainted by the sun's white-hot light. In the depths of the Underworld where Yelm's light did not reach, Subere sheltered a great horde of darkness demons, spirits and creatures.

Deny the Emperor of the Sky (Resonance 70%)

A second secret was wrestled from Subere by Kygor Litor, who dragged forth the Black Eater to consume the Chaos armies of D'Wargon. When it flowed across the land, the sun itself stopped in the sky, overcome with horror. It was the light of D'Wargon which burned and drove back Black Eater, who was snatched back to the Underworld by Subere, before its

terrifying, uncontrollable power – like death before it – could destroy the world afresh.

Take Back Secrets (Resonance 90%)

Since that time, no other has dared to steal again from the Goddess of Inner Darkness. Those that have tried are long since vanished from existence.

Nature

As the goddess of the darkness never pierced by light, Subere is a frightening and mysterious cult. Her faith exists only as the source of shades which the Uz use but she is also propitiated to avert her appalling presence. She cares little for Glorantha and the surface realm, only caring about those siblings who draw on her Rune and her guardianship of the terrible secrets which will destroy the Great Compromise, overturning the world. She is primal darkness, from her sprang everything and to her will return everything.

The afterlife promised by Subere's cult is as cold and lifeless as the deity herself. Her priests speak of an existence without event, without awareness, without personality; mere eternal existence in the primal darkness. Most trolls therefore turn to Kyger Litor and other deities within their pantheon for promises of more desirable rewards after death.

Organisation

The cult of Subere is small and scattered. She has few temples and those are deep secrets, their location kept hidden by the cult priests. Shrines to her exist in the temples of allied cults, with whom she shares her darkness elementals. Since her faithful are small in number, the few cult priests spend their time on pilgrimages from shrine to shrine, renewing their blessings.

When two or more priests meet they consider themselves equal in authority and stature. They are never commanded by the cult of Kygor Litor, who betrayed Subere's trust when she tried to summon the Black Eater but was forgiven for the necessity of the almost fatal deed. All other trolls give followers of Subere great respect, as she is the protector of all the nightmares and demons who fled to her side when Wonderhome was burned.

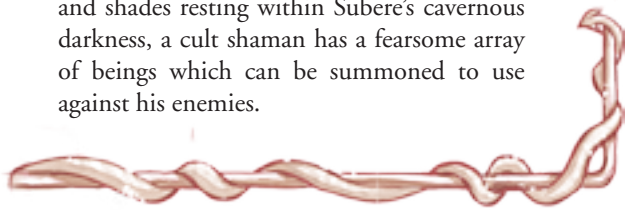
Cult members publically use the holy days of the god in which Subere's shrine resides. The priests secretly celebrate Subere's true Holy Days which are Freezeday, Stasis Week of each season. The Holy Day in Dark Season is the cult's High Holy Day.



The Secrets of Subere

Although the public face of Subere's faith acts as a normal divine cult, it is actually a spirit cult which propitiates the Great Shadow, the source of all shades. The cult hides this truth, as it does all others within its knowledge, behind many layers of secrets.

Much of Subere's strength comes from the illusion that the effects of fetches and bound spirits are disguised as contemporary Divine Magic, encouraging the victims of these 'spells' to invoke the wrong defence. With the innumerable horde of demons, spirits, ghosts and shades resting within Subere's cavernous darkness, a cult shaman has a fearsome array of beings which can be summoned to use against his enemies.



Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members: Any creature descended from the darkness Rune can become a lay member of the cult. They merely need to attend Holy Day ceremonies which are held in pitch darkness.

Initiates: Becoming an initiate requires a subtle test by the priests. The member will be given a casket to guard, which he is forbidden to open, but is told, holds something of great power. A little while later a different cult member will approach the candidate and reveal a dreadful secret which pertains to the safety of his loved ones or family. If the lay member acts to save those involved, he will merely be expelled from the cult. If he dares to open the casket however, he will find it contains a huge Shade which will more than likely kill him. Keeping the secret and refusing to open the casket allows promotion to initiate rank. Initiates are required to eavesdrop on conversations and report their discoveries once a week to the local acolyte, or once per season to the visiting priest.

Acolytes (Shaman): Reaching the rank of Shaman requires the re-enactment of Subere's Deny the Emperor of the Sky myth on a cult Holy Day. The ceremonial opponents are always captive sky worshippers forced to take part on threat

of being eaten. The challenges are to the death and if the candidate dies the foes are slain anyway to ensure nothing about the cult is revealed. Surviving the ceremony earns the new shaman his fetch, which feasts on the soul of the slain Yelm impersonator. Shamans serve the cult by supervising the cult shrine for two weeks every season. He must also offer his services (and any secrets discovered) to any High Shaman who arrives at the shrine, whether to group summon great spirits or merely offer hospitality. Once per year, the shaman may be required to journey on a quest to locate or recover a particular spirit, object or secret.

Rune Priest (High Shaman): To become a High Shaman the cult member must complete a Minor HeroQuest re-enacting the myth of Take Back Secrets. As part of this quest, the shaman will travel down to the Underworld with an offering of an enchanted item or forgotten scroll, to pay their respects to Subere directly. Surviving the quest raises the cult member in the eyes of the great darkness spirit, who then grants him additional shamanic power. High Shaman must either retire to one of the hidden temples to relieve his predecessor of the administrative duties, or begin wandering from shrine to shrine, bringing succour to spirits of darkness who still reside in the surface world and terror to those who are disrespectful to primal darkness.

Rune Lords: The cult of Subere has no Rune Lords.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Bandit's Cloak, Darkwall, Demoralise, Dullblade, Extinguish, Fate, Protection

Higher Magic

Shamans of Subere receive no Divine Magic. Instead they use their Lore (Subere) and Pact (Subere) as substitutes for Spirit Walking and Spirit Binding. The maximum number of spirits which can be held however, is equal to the amount of POW invested in the pact. Their fetch is always a Shade of suitable power.

Shaman and High Shaman may only call upon and bind any shade or being of darkness in Subere's entourage, granting them a range of Bane, Guardian, Nature and Curse spirits. They can also summon corporeal demons from Subere's realm. These cannot be bound into a fetish, but can remain present physically, tying up the magic points used to summon them until released by the shaman or expelled by magic.

Gifts and Compulsions

When achieving the following ranks the adherent must accept the following Gift and Compulsion:

Initiate Gift:

Sense Thief: The adherent can sense the presence anyone within a range of 10 metres per point of the worshiper's POW, who would steal from him; whether it would be an item or his darkest secrets.

Initiate Compulsion:

Curiosity: The adherent is forever seeking hidden knowledge or uncovering secrets.

Shaman Gift:

Conceal Spirit: Any use of Spirit Magic by the adherent is obfuscated by Subere herself so that it appears to be Divine Magic instead.

Shaman Compulsion:

Reticence: The adherent can never begin a conversation and his replies are terse.

High Shaman Gift:

Fearless: The adherent has experienced the inner darkness of Subere and remained sane. They will never succumb to terror again.

High Shaman Compulsion:

Hoard Power: The adherent is obliged to gather all things of power they discover and deposit them in a temple to Subere.

Cult Skills

Combat Style (Any), Influence, Lore (Subere), Meditation, Perception, Persistence, Stealth

Allied Cults

The cults of Himile and Kygor Litor are allied with the cult of Subere but provide no Divine Magic.

XIOLA UMBAR

'In this age of blood, there must be a way for the peaceful among Uz to survive. It must not all be war and death and pain. If Uz are to survive into the new age that will come after this bitter era, then Uz must find the ways of healing and protection as well the ways of swords and axes. I gain no glory by following Xiola Umbar but I gain much respect in the quiet hours when the sword arms rest and the cries of the wounded reach to the skies.'

— Attributed to Mekgil Coppertongue, Uzuz Rune priest of Xiola Umbar, slain in the Godswar

The deity known as Xiola Umbar is a curious presence within the troll pantheon. The legends name her as the sister of Zorak Zoran, though her exact parentage is unknown and she shares

none of Zorak Zoran's warlike tendencies. In fact, her role is that of protector and healer, which puts her at odds with many of the barbaric troll deities. It does not mean she has no worship at all, however. Quite the opposite is true. What it does mean is that those trolls who follow Xiola Umbar's cult are seen as weak and ineffective in regions where the warrior cults hold greatest sway. Yet there is always a need for the healing priests and priestesses, despite how often they are viewed with distaste.

Runes

Darkness, Fertility, Harmony

Mythos and History

Sister to Zorak Zoran, merciful Xiola Umbar was born in the Underworld, long before death entered the world. She healed many of the darkness gods and aided the birthing of the Styx and Zaramaka rivers, taking upon herself the aspect of midwife.

Easing of the Birth Waters (Resonance 50%)

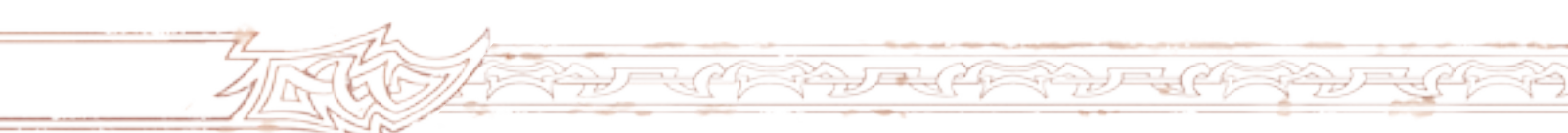
With the death of Yelm, Xiola Umbar was one of the many darkness beings that fled to the surface in order to escape his burning presence. When the Godswar raged across Glorantha and the forces of light and darkness alike battled Chaos, Xiola Umbar followed her brother, undoing some of the strife he caused in his violent rages. When Chaos came however, she stood by his side, shielding him and healing his dreadful wounds, though it cost her dearly. He in turn guarded her and together they survived the Greater Darkness.

Become a Living Shield (Resonance 70%)

After the Great Compromise, Xiola Umbar was popular amongst all races but most loved amongst the trolls. When the First Council became corrupted by power, it was her brother who fought and she remained behind tending her people who were struck with the Curse of Kin. As midwife of the gods, she aided Kygor Litor in saving the few pure trolls who came to term but also extended her protection to the trollkin preserving them as a source of servants and worshipers. This act alone helped save the trolls from extinction and ensures that her cult will never fade.

Nature

Xiola Umbar is the protector of the Uz. She wards harm from both mighty warriors and persecuted trollkin. Her steadfast self sacrifice turns the maul of oppression. Since her cult is master of the skills of healing and childbirth, it is irreplaceable. Thus the words of her priests and priestesses are heard, even by the Matriarchs of Kygor Litor and the ferocious berserks of Zorak Zoran.



The majority of her support comes from the trollkin who love her, for the cult of Xiola Umbar is the only one which shows true compassion for them. Thus they reward her with undying loyalty. Without the trollkin to support society, trolls would be hard pressed to survive. So the cult is protected by those it protects.

As all troll gods, Xiola Umbar hates Chaos and dislikes the solar divinities, save for Yelm who she understands was an unwilling victim in the destruction of Wonderhome.

The afterlife promised by Xiola Umbar is not truly an afterlife at all. The priests are taught by the cult that upon death, a painless resurrection is the reward for a life lived according to the tenets of the goddess.

Organisation

Like most of the troll cults, the faith of Xiola Umbar has no rigid hierarchy. In temples where several priestesses share the administration of the cult, each acts in loose harmony with the others but have their own guards and collections of wards to look after. Where a temple needs to come to a unanimous decision, each priestess tests the strength of their magic against the others. The one with the highest Pact skill is determined to have the blessing of the goddess and assumes control for that situation.

The cult is found anywhere the Uz have settled. Most tribes have at least shrines and nomadic trolls either migrate between shrines or carry a portable one with them. Most are built in caves with small springs to reflect the cult's high holy place, a fountain in the Underworld called Mirrordark, where Xiola Umbar first meditated and discovered her healing powers.

The cult's Holy Days are Waterday, Harmony Week of Sea Season; Fireday, Harmony Week of Fire Season; Clayday, Harmony Week of Earth Season; Freezeday, Harmony Week of Dark Season and Windsday, Harmony Week of Storm Season. The cult High Holy celebration is the entire Fertility Week of Dark Season.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard. Xiola Umbar does not forbid the rising of trollkin to Rune level.

Lay Members: All trolls and trollkin can become lay members if they desire the protection of the cult. In return, they must be willing to serve the priestesses of the cult and sacrifice some time when called upon to help out.

Initiates: Rising to the rank of initiate involves an ceremony where the cult member must recite the rules of the faith, swear loyalty to Xiola Umbar and demonstrate what little healing

they know, be it knowledge of herbs, performing first aid or casting a healing spell, during a ritual re-enactment of the goddess tending her brothers and sisters before the fall of Wonderhome. It is almost impossible to fail this ceremony unless some dramatic omen occurs. Initiates are assigned a group of lay members to protect, tend and lead. In return the priestess accepting the initiate swears to protect, tend and command them.

Acolytes: Becoming an acolyte requires demonstrating their devotion to Xiola Umbar. This can take many forms, such as protecting an oppressed cult member in the face of superior odds, or the initiate risking their life to tend someone suffering from a fatal contagious disease. The ceremonial test is a re-enactment of when Xiola Umbar offered succour to Yelm as he entered the Underworld. The position of the Emperor is taken by solar cult member paid to join the ritual, or a Zorak Zoran Death Lord. The crux of the ritual requires the initiate to heal Yelm whilst he is warded by a summoned Salamander. The ritual tests the initiates courage whilst educating them in pain and suffering. If they succeed, they are healed by the officiating priestess and raised to acolyte rank. They are assigned the responsibility for a group of initiates and must serve two weeks every season at the temple. Once a year, the acolyte is may be called upon to accompany a raiding party or be temporarily assigned to a troll mercenary force.

Rune Priestesses: Qualification for the rank of Rune Priestess requires completion of a Minor HeroQuest re-enactment of Xiola Umbar's 'Become a Living Shield' myth. To all intents and purposes they join a Zorak Zoran Chaos raiding quest. Simply surviving is enough to establish a deeper bond with the goddess, raising them to Rune Priest rank. Priestesses are expected to protect all their wards, whether politically against other trolls or by use of her healing. In return they are granted the love and respect of their congregation. They usually remain at their shrine or temple maintaining its sanctity and remaining available to help with difficult births.

Rune Lords: Achieving the rank of Rune Lord requires the candidate to perform the identical HeroQuest as for Rune Priests. Survival grants the promotion. Whereas priestesses remain with their congregations, Rune Lords of Xiola Umbar accompany war parties against enemies of the Uz, be they elf, dwarf or Chaos. Unlike the pacifistic healers of Chalana Arroy, Rune Lords of Xiola Umbar are fully expected to utilise violence in order to protect the weak and helpless and lead armies of oppressed trollkin into battle.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Befuddle, Bludgeon, Boon of Lasting Night, Detect Disease/Poison, Heal, Protection, Solace

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following unique spells which are detailed in the following chapter:

Attract Attention, Comfort Song, Couvade, Healing Trance, Shield of Darkness, Turn Blow

Gifts and Compulsions

None

Cult Skills

Combat Style (Any), First Aid, Healing, Influence, Insight, Lore (Xiola Umbar), Meditation

Allied Cults

The cult of Kygor Litor provides Dark See as an Acolyte spell.

The cult of Zorak Zoran provides Fear as an Acolyte spell.

ZORAK ZORAN

'Uz want to win wars, no matter what. Battles are hard, even for Uz. Other races have more warriors than Uz, except when use the useless trollkin. But war is not just about battles. Battles just the last and biggest part. Before the battle, a true warrior want his enemy scared, fearful of the coming fight, maybe losing commanders to poison or foul magic and losing best troops in ambushes and betrayals before the battle begins. Then when the battle comes, Uz ready for the kill.'

'I am Zorak Zorani warrior. I fight everywhere: sometimes on the battlefield, sometimes in the invisible battlefields before a true battle. As long as I win, I don't care what anyone says of my honour. My honour is in killing my enemies and drinking their blood.'

— Vaggal of the Unseemly Nose, Uzko Runelord of Zorak Zoran

Lord God of the Legions of Death, Zorak Zoran is the god of hate and vengeance, a mindless explosion of fear and frenzy against both order and Chaos which finds its only justification and satisfaction in unlimited violence. He is the permanent troll god of war. A raging berserker who attains many of his victories through ambushes, uneven odds and assaulting foes who are already wounded. But to fight with cunning has always been the way of Uz.

Runes

Darkness, Death

Mythos and History

When Death was discovered and stolen from beneath the robes of Subere, Zorak Zoran saw the theft and followed the trickster to the surface world. When it eventually came into his hands, Zorak Zoran took Death and slew Flamal, beloved father of seeds, causing the Great Hunger. With the start of the Storm Age soon after, when the Sun came to the Underworld, Zorak Zoran fled to the Surface along with the other Darkness entities.

During the Gods War, he defeated Yelmlio and stole his fire powers. He feuded with others, such as Orlanth and Humakt. He led the struggle against Chaos and became the favoured troll wargod. He slew a now nameless Chaos God, stripping him of his magic to use the slain a second time, earning him the title 'Lord Demon of the Legions of Death'. He participated in the Great Compromise and helped ensure that the world remains in Darkness for half the time.

Fight Chaos (Resonance 50%)

Steal Fire (Resonance 70%)

Use the Dead (Resonance 90%)



Nature

Zorak Zoran was widely worshipped at the Dawn, both by trolls and by numerous remnant survivors. During the First Age, the cult grew even more powerful as the World Council of Friends became the warlike Second Council. However, the cult nearly exterminated itself at the end of the Age, fighting against D'Wargon. Currently, the cult holds much power in the EWF, where they virtually control Dagori Inkarth. In any area where the trolls dominate, he is an important god. Many generals and other leaders belong to this cult. Even in non-troll areas this cult often has adherents – his savage power is greatly appreciated by some cultures. His temples are often also the headquarters of military organisations

The cult of Zorak Zoran works alongside most darkness deities. It dislikes the cult of Humakt with which it feuds constantly. The solar cults have a hatred for Zorak Zoran for the ambush and mutilation of Yelmalió and for the continued defeat of their heroes at the Hill of Gold.

Zorak Zoran cult members continue to hold a grudge against Orlanth for bringing back the hurtful Sun. The cult also maintains its persecution of elves and dwarfs, both of which are eternal foes. Chaos however, will always remain the greatest enemy of Zorak Zoran.

With such a list it is easy to see why the cult revels in its constant fights and troubles. Their attitude makes the Zorak Zorani among the most vicious and skilled fighters the troll race has ever produced. In a species built for battle, these are the warrior elite – proven through generations of guerrilla ambushes and berserker battlefield butchery. This makes them incredibly useful allies, *if* they can find someone they like enough to fight beside.

Organisation

Oddly enough the Zorak Zorani have the most formalised organisation of any troll cult. Each of their temples hosts a single regiment. The regiment is further broken down into companies, led by either a Death Priest or Death Lord to whom his troops swear personal loyalty. The combined regiment is under command of a Death Captain. The size of the temple depends on the number and size of the companies.

The cult High Holy Day is Freezeday, Death Week of Dark Season. It is a day for challenging Humakt to single combats then cheating, by luring him into an ambush. Other Holy Days are the Freezedays of Deathweek during the remaining seasons.

Membership

All membership requirements and benefits are standard.

Lay Members: Normally trollkin are forbidden from joining the cult, unless they perform some truly outstanding deed, such as defeat a Zorak Zorani in single combat. Other than this, admittance is automatic if the candidate owns his own mace, maul and sling. In exchange the lay member must join the fighting company of a particular lord or priest and be ready to march to battle at any time. If desired, the lay member and his dependants (even if trollkin), may move into a fortified enclave within the temple, which is guarded day and night. As well as receiving combat training, the lay member is also taught an associated craft skill which helps support his regiment.

Initiates: Rising to the rank of initiate merely involves slaying an enemy in open combat. Initiation ceremonies are normally held on Holy Days and comprise of riotous debauchery and congratulations on living so long. Initiates are assigned several lay members to command and are expected to oversee their training, supply and fitness for combat. They must also spend one week every season protecting the local community with guard duty. Once a year the initiate may be ordered to participate in a special mission, usually acting as a backup or skirmisher.

Acolytes: Rising to the rank of acolyte requires a ceremonial test to prove his worth to Zorak Zoran. He ritually re-enacts his god facing Chaos and defeating it. The candidate, or candidates if more than one is seeking promotion, are blessed then enter a natural amphitheatre into which are released real Chaos monsters. How the candidates fight is up to them, whether they team up and battle cooperatively or not. The only thing which matters is slaying the monsters and surviving. Dead candidates are considered weaklings in Zorak Zoran's eyes and any dependants are cast out of the enclave. Survival brings promotion and the reassignment to supervising a group of initiates. An acolyte must serve two weeks every season at teaching at the temple or going on patrol. Once a year, the acolyte is requested to personally lead a raiding or scouting mission.

Rune Priestesses (Death Priests): To qualify as a Rune Priest requires completion of a Minor HeroQuest re-enactment of either the Steal Fire or Use the Dead myths. Using the men under their command they must find a solar worshiper at the Hill of Gold then defeat and strip him of his fire powers; or they can try to locate a Chaos infested nest of undead and slay whatever creature is animating them. Success establishes a deeper bond with Zorak Zoran, raising them to Rune Priest rank. Priests are expected to command their own company, find it employment and lead it to victory.

Rune Lords (Death Lords): The same as Death Priests.

Common Magic

The cult teaches the following spells: Bludgeon, Boon of Lasting Night, Fanaticism, Protection, Spirit Bane, Strength, Vigour

Higher Magic

The cult provides all common Divine Magic spells. The cult also teaches the following spells some of which are detailed in the following chapter:

Berserk, Create Skeleton, Create Zombie, Crush, Fear, Seal Wound

Gifts and Compulsions

At each rank above lay member an adherent must accept one Gift and one Compulsion, chosen from the following list:

Gifts:

Fire Affinity: The adherent may learn and cast any fire based Common Magic spell.

Fearless: The adherent has seen the worst horrors of Chaos and kept their mind. Unless magically subverted, no psychological pressure can force them to flee Chaos against their will.

Sense Chaos: The adherent can smell the presence of Chaos with a range of 10 metres per point of the worshiper's POW.

Tough as Old Boots: The adherent may add +20% to his Resilience.

Tireless: The adherent never ever suffers from fatigue lost by normal exercise. Fatigue gained from wounds or magic still applies.

Aura of Death: The adherent projects a fearsome aura which intimidates all nearby. Resisting the effect requires an opposed roll of Persistence against the troll's Influence.

Compulsions:

Abjure all but Lead: The adherent is forbidden to use any other metal save for lead.

Never Retreat: The adherent must never withdraw from battle unless specifically ordered to do so by a superior.

Eat all Captives: The adherent is compelled to eat anyone they capture or who mistakenly surrenders to them.

Necrophilia: The adherent prefers the company of the dead. Say no more!

Abjure Enemy: The adherent may never willingly cooperate with a chosen cult enemy. Select from elves, dwarfs, Orlanthei, Humakti or Yelmalian. This compulsion may only be taken once.

Destroy Chaos: The adherent must attack Chaotic creatures the moment he perceives them.

Cult Skills

Athletics, Combat Style (Any), Influence, Lore (Zorak Zoran), Oratory, Resilience, Stealth

Allied Cults

The cult of Kygor Litor provides Dark See as an Acolyte spell.

The cult of Storm Bull provides Face Chaos as an Acolyte spell.

The cult of Xiola Umbar provides Shield of Darkness as a Rune Priest/Lord spell.

OTHER TROLL GODS

There are numerous other troll gods that appear in the myths of the Uz and are worshipped by many of their race. However the importance and influence of these cults is generally not as significant as those already dealt with. The following are sub-cults which provide some benefits to those who perform their HeroQuest or summon them as ancestor spirits.

HERO CULTS

Great heroes often leave behind them some new skill or magic they discovered on their path to immortality. Some offer knowledge of a new spell, others heroic abilities, but never more than one unique gift.

Most hero cults are sub-cults of the god they worshipped in life. There is no need to dedicate POW to them specifically, as long as their worshiper is a member of the overarching cult. To master the power offered by the hero cult, a worshiper must perform the same HeroQuest the hero left behind them.

The following three are the most important hero cults of the Uz in the Second Age.

Gore and Gash

The twin mistress race trolls who led one of the many troll migrations to the surface world, bringing many sacred items with them. As mighty warriors they aided Zorak Zoran at the Hill of Gold and later Karrg when he snuffed out some stars. They eventually reached in Dagori Inkarth and aided

Gadblad to sing a great song, which summoned demons, shadows and things from the darkness, to build the Castle of Lead. Eventually Gash died when the twins defeated the Chaos army of Krarsht.

Their myth is the **Dance of Shadows (Resonance 70%)** which two trolls must attempt together. This HeroQuest involves fighting Chaos, climbing to a high place, discovering a great darkness spirit and perform a sacred dance to ally it. Successful completion of the quest grants the Heroic Ability of Shadows Dance.

Shadows Dance

Requirements: CHA 15 or higher, Dance 90% or higher

Hero Points: 10

Duration: One spirit binding/allying attempt

Dancing as part of spirit combat, whether to bind or ally an incorporeal being of darkness, doubles the amount of spirit damage inflicted by the troll.

Stone Biter

Stone Biter was a troll from the Great Darkness who quested long to find a way of harming the seemingly invulnerable Mostali. His myth is the **Quest of Grinding Rock (Resonance 50%)** on which he met a series of boasting monsters from each of the different Storm, Fire and Chaos tribes that claimed to be able to eat rock but failed to survive being hit in the mouth by Stone Biter's obsidian maul. The troll hero eventually encountered a huge giant with crystal teeth, eating mountains, which Stone Biter tricked into teaching him his secret. A troll who successfully completes the quest, gains the Heroic Ability of Stone Biting.

Stone Biting

Requirements: STR 15 or higher, Resilience 70% or higher

Hero Points: 10

Duration: One battle or one hour of gnawing solid stone

The troll may bite into and gnaw solid stone or metal as if it was a piece of fruit. The material being chewed gains no protection from its natural Armour Points. If biting an armoured opponent such as a Mostali, treat the bite as automatically bypassing both the worn armour and any natural protection the victim has. The troll's tusks and teeth take no damage from biting. This ability is more often used to dig new tunnels than in actual combat.

Tree Chopper

Another mighty troll hero, Tree Chopper spent his life fighting against the hated elves. His myth is the **Scything of Aldrya (Resonance 70%)**.

During the Great Darkness the hero encountered High King Elf in a tree upon which Tree Chopper had relieved himself. Insulted, High King Elf shot many arrows against the troll who was forced to flee. Swearing revenge Tree Chopper sought a weapon he could use to scythe down the forest and discovered Babeester Gor, sleeping in a clearing with her axe beside her. He knew of the goddess's ravaging madness so dared not fight her for the axe and that she was a light sleeper so he dared not steal it from her. So he tricked her instead.

Using the powers of the mother to blind Babeester, he sang a rude song provoking her rage and she chased the mocking voice scything her axe this way and that, till they reached the tree of High King Elf and Babeester chopped it down with a single mighty blow, crushing the king under its branches. Suffering guilt for her deed, Babeester forswore ever after using her axe on trees and the mighty weapon sundered into two. The goddess left with the death which thirsted for vengeance, leaving the death of trees behind. Tree Chopper seized the remnant and used it to persecute the elves ever after.

Successfully fulfilling the quest grants the Heroic Ability of Tree Chopping.

Tree Chopping

Requirements: POW 15 or higher, Sing 70% or higher

Hero Points: 10

Duration: Until singing stops

Whilst singing the Tree Chopping song, the troll and any allies within hearing may wield an axe using the skill of their highest value bashing weapon combat style. In addition, the natural Armour Points of wooden objects and creatures are bypassed.

SEVEN SACRED ANCESTORS

The seven sacred ancestors are the original children of the troll deities. They each performed notable deeds and achieved great powers. The ancestors are like any other ancestor spirit, in that they can be reached by a descendant who has shamanic powers. Their spirits are so huge and powerful however, that to be summoned requires large ceremonies of many shamans working in concert.

Normally these ancestor demigods are propitiated by the combined Matriarchs of Kygor Litor. In return they manifest within one or more of the worshipers, granting them a particular power they were famed for. The maximum intensity of any effects is limited by the value of the worshiper's Lore (Kygor Litor) skill, or if not a cult member, their Spirit Binding skill instead.

The downside to such power is that the possessed worshiper may be driven by the passions of the ancestor, rather than



his or her own. Summoning any of the seven sacred ancestors requires great preparation and may draw the attention of opposing cosmic forces – thus they are never summoned for petty reasons, only to face dangers which threaten the entire clan or race!

Boztakang – Chaos Fighter

The greatest troll killer of Chaos, he helped plug the hole in creation to prevent any more Chaos entering the Cosmos. He ripped the secrets of slaying Chaos from the god Arrquong, removing him from existence. Before trolls march out to fight Chaos they summon him, hoping to bind his power within themselves. In return he drives them onwards mercilessly until all his summoners are slain or the foe is utterly destroyed.

Boztakang wards his descendants from the effects of Chaos. Each time the possessed worshiper successfully strikes a Chaos creature they match, in an opposed test, their Lore (Kygor Litor) skill against the Persistence or Resilience of the creature. If the worshiper wins the test, one chaotic feature of the foe is negated for the remainder of the battle.

Hombobobom – The Great Drummer

The creator of rhythm and music, Hombobobom plays her drum which is the Cosmos itself. Her beating drives the rhythms of the seasons and the dances of the gods. She is summoned by the pounding of great drums, usually to stir up her children before battle but only remains whilst the drums continue to beat. Her music is primal and barbaric, driving the trolls she possesses to savage acts, free from feelings of compassion, guilt or honour.

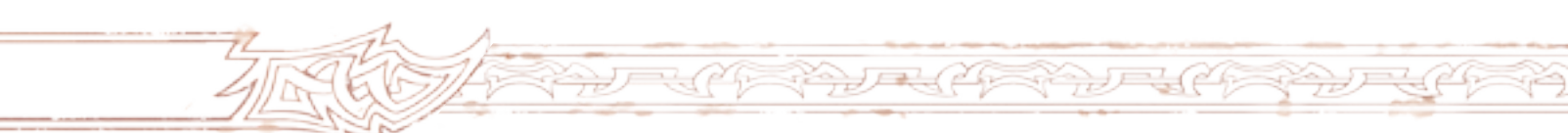
Hombobobom increases the Movement Rate and Strike Rank Attributes of the possessed listener by one tenth of their Lore (Kygor Litor) skill. In addition, any spell attempting to mentally or emotionally influence the possessed troll must first beat the Lore (Kygor Litor) skill in an opposed test. If the

spell succeeds in overcoming the spirit of Hombobobom, the troll still gains their own chance to resist.

Jakaboom – Dancer in Shadows

The first troll shaman, Jakaboom taught herself how to separate her soul from her body. On her travels she met with Dehore the Father of Spirits and from him learned how to negotiate for their power. Her greatest discovery was the creation of fetishes, in which to carry her spirits until time came to use them. It is to Jakaboom that troll shaman quest to gain their fetch.

Jakaboom is normally summoned to aid in a particularly difficult binding, one normally beyond the bounds of mortal



shaman. Whilst possessed the shaman may bind a spirit of up to double the POW he is normally capable of. If the spirit is later set free and the shaman is no longer possessed by Jakaboom, he may no longer be able to command its obedience.

Jeset – The Ferryman

Inventor of the first boat, Jeset used his vessel to scull up and down the River Styx. In the Underworld he ferries the dead across the river for the fee of a copper clack or lead bolg. Those unable to pay are doomed to remain on the banks of the Styx. Those who travel the hero plane can use his services to cross the river of the dead.

Jeset is usually summoned to ensure the soul of a mighty troll hero reaches his proper afterlife, escorted in person by the ferryman all the way. He is also summoned to prevent the soul of an enemy escaping death by later being resurrected or reincarnating. In this case when the possessed worshiper kills his foe, he may attempt an opposed test of his Lore (Kygor Litor) skill versus the Persistence or Spirit Walking skill of the just slain enemy. Success means that Jeset has grabbed the soul and will drag it to the halls of Ty Kora Tek from whence it may never return.

Karrg – Master of Weapons

The master of tactics, war and weapons, Karrg was the foremost of troll warriors, the equal of Zorak Zoran in terms of his peerless skill over the savagery and magic of the death god. He commanded many of the greatest battles during the Great Darkness. Most war leaders worship him.

Karrg is summoned to battle against non-Chaotic foes. He provides a bonus to all combat styles, equal to the possessed worshiper's Lore (Kygor Litor) skill. On the downside, the spirit of Karrg is always seeking to challenge his skills and will take every chance he can to exercise his prowess, with little thought for the troll he possesses.

Korasting – Mother of Many

The troll goddess of fertility, she was the first born of Kygor Litor. When her mother was cursed by D'Wargon, it was Korasting who was bitten by his dire power. Since that time the trolls have suffered a lack of fertility but the Mother of Many and her faithful continue to strive against the blight.

Korasting is summoned to purify the wombs of those trolls in the clan, who have given birth to a litter of trollkin. Without this ritual all future births will result in trollkin.

Vaneekara – The Hurler

The daughter of Kygor Litor began practicing her unique skill in Wonderhome by hurling large rocks at the dwarf Castle of Delicacy, eventually smashing it with a landslide. Her delight such destruction grew in the Great Darkness Vaneekara took the enemies of her mother, Kygor Litor and threw them across the world. Her mightiest throw was when she threw an entire army of Chaos, transformed into a lump of clay, clear out of the world.

Vaneekara is summoned to perform heroic feats of throwing, usually to attack a fortification or flinging some great evil from their lands. With a successful Athletics roll, a troll possessed by Vaneekara can lob an object of a SIZ up to the value of their Lore (Kygor Litor) skill, a distance in metres of ten times the same value! Accuracy is generally poor, so the power is more commonly used to attack very large targets, such as towns, castles or battlefield formations.

Since Vaneekara is only interested in throwing big things, a troll under her possession can do nothing else save chuck objects. Attempting to perform any other action causes her to depart.

TROLL MAGIC

Troll magic is a collection of odd and fantastic spells, perfectly suited to their environment or intended purpose of their cult. Not all the spells included here may have immediate or apparent use from the perspective of adventuring but they have a great importance to the Uz culturally.

All the spells referred in previous chapters are listed here.

NEW COMMON MAGIC

The following Common Magic spell uses the same traits are described in the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook*.

Solace

Duration 5, Magnitude 2, Touch, Resist (Persistence)

This spell is used to briefly relieve someone from mental anguish, whether they are suffering grief, fear or anxiety. The effect instantaneously drives all worry from the sufferer's mind, allowing them to continue their life (or impending death) without concern. Its use is very versatile, preparing someone to face their death with dignity or perhaps help them speak a eulogy without breaking down. This spell is usually welcomed by the recipient but it can be resisted if cast upon an unwilling target.

STANDARD DIVINE MAGIC

As previously mentioned in the Ducks section, certain Divine spells are common to all divine cults, reflecting common rites, magical approaches and so on. These are:

Behold

Blessing

Consecrate

Dismiss Magic

Excommunicate

Extension

Soul Sight

NEW DIVINE MAGIC

The Divine Magic spells referenced in the troll cults chapter are listed here. They possess the normal traits and restrictions

as described in the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook*, save for the fact that some Uz cults lack the temple infrastructure of other more wealthy or populated divine cults. Assume that there is always at least one special holy place where Rune Priests and Lords can learn their rank restricted spells, even if the cult has no major temples.

Some cults offer Divine Magic spells to allied or associated cults. In these cases the minimum cult rank for learning the spell is increased by one level for the allies, to represent the difficulty of using magic not normally available to that god. Spells which are by default Rune Priest/Lord level in their native cult cannot be shared.

Acolytes of Gorakiki may learn the spell Speak with Insects. Since the cults of Gorakiki and Argan Argar are allied with one another, Gorakiki willingly loans her Speak with Insects spell to the troll God of Trade. However, because the spell is not normally available to Argan Argar, it can only be used by Rune Priest and Rune Lords of his cult. Gorakiki could not share her Become Swarm spell at all, since it is a Rune Priest/Lord magic in her own cult.

Affix Darkness

Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Initiate

This spell must be cast at night, or during a time of darkness. It fixes the dark within its area of effect in place. Any light source brought into the darkness works it as it would normally but does not dispel it. If combined with the Extension spell, it lasts as long as both spells are maintained. The area of darkness fixed in place has a diameter equal to 10 metres multiplied by the Magnitude of the spell.

Attract Attention

Area Special, Instant, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Persistence)

For a single Combat Round everyone who fails to resist the spell, save for initiates and higher of Xiola Umbar, must concentrate their attention on the caster. If they are enemies in the midst of combat or offensive spell casting, then they must direct those efforts towards the caster. If out of range or not enemies, then they cannot do anything for the rest of



the round save defend themselves. The spell affects an area centred on the caster with a diameter in metres equal to its Magnitude.

Become Swarm

Duration 15, Rank Rune Lord/Priest, Resist (Resilience), Touch

The caster or recipient physically dissipates into a swarm of insects. The equipment carried and clothing worn is not affected by the magic. The spell is normally used to scout a wide area, by briefly dispersing the swarm, which must gather

again before the spell expires. It is also used as a means of escape when faced with dire odds. If used for combat, the swarm formed has the same capability as one evoked by the Summon Swarm spell. The recipient is immune to most physical forms of attack but something like a sylph or a lightning bolt could potentially still inflict damage. Using this spell offensively allows the target to resist the transformation.

Blinding

Duration 15, Ranged, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Persistence)

If not resisted, this spell removes the *primary* sense of the target. For humans this would be eyesight, for trolls it is Dark Sight. All the normal problems of being blind are imposed. Combat skills are reduced to 5% and no spells which require targeting can be cast.

Comfort Song

Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Initiate

The caster sings a song of power which prevents those within range from feeling pain. The spell affects an area about the caster with a diameter in metres equal to its Magnitude. It is normally used during childbirth and after battles or disasters.

Command Ice Demon

Duration 15, Ranged, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Persistence)

Allows the caster to command an Ice Demon, if it fails to resist the spell. This is normally used to send the demon safely far away but occasionally the caster may find another use for it, to aid in a hunt for example. If two casters desire to control the same demon, the one with the highest Magnitude wins. If both are tied, then the spell ceases to work, leaving the Ice Demon free to follow its own instincts...

Counter Chaos

Duration 15, Rank Rune Lord/Priest, Touch

The user is shielded against the Chaotic features or special effects of Chaos foes. It also acts as a Countermagic Shield of equal Magnitude but only against spells of Chaos, or magic cast by someone linked to the Rune.

Couvade

Duration Special, Rank Acolyte, Touch

Used to aid in childbirth, the spell transfers the pains and irritations of pregnancy to the father of the child, shielding the mother and baby from harm. During the birth, the father is generally prostrate in agony. Both the mother and father must consent to the spell, which lasts until the birth is complete. The spell cannot be recovered or released, until its conclusion. Although normally used to help births, it can also be used to transfer the suffering from one person to another, such as the sickness of a troll dying from a wasting disease to her sympathetic sister, or the wound pains of a Zorak Zorani Death Lord to one of his trollkin slaves.

Create Skeleton

Concentration, Duration 15, Ranged, Rank Initiate

Using the bones of one or more victims, the spell can raise osseous remains as animated skeletons. The caster can create a number of ambulatory skeletons equal to the Magnitude of the spell. Since no minds remain, the caster is forced to concentrate on the skeletons to enable them to move and fight. If his concentration drops, the skeletons stand quiescent until concentration returns or the spell ceases. Each skeleton fights with the Combat Style of the caster but the skill value cannot exceed the value of his Lore (Zorak Zoran) skill. Combining this spell with Extension allows the magic animating the skeletons to persist longer.

Create Zombie

Concentration, Duration 15, Ranged, Rank Acolyte

This spell turns freshly dead bodies into shambling zombies. The caster can create a number of zombies equal to the Magnitude of the spell. As the bodies retain a semblance of a mind, they are semi autonomous, requiring concentration to issue them with commands more complex than kill or eat. Each zombie fights with its original Combat Style but their skill cannot exceed the value of the caster's Lore (Zorak Zoran) skill. As with Create Skeleton, combining this spell with Extension allows the magic animating the bodies to persist longer.

Crush

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

This spell, when cast on a bashing or crushing weapon, increases the Damage Bonus of the wielder by one step every two points of the spell's Magnitude. Thus casting Crush with

a Magnitude of seven would increase the Damage Bonus of an average Uzko four steps from +1d6 to +2d6.

Dark Walk

Duration 15, Rank Acolyte, Touch

This spell allows the user to be totally silent and invisible within a patch of shadow or darkness. Not even a troll's Darksense will detect the recipient. If the user interacts with an object or makes an attack, he temporarily emerges from the shadows but can merge back into invisibility once the combat or interaction is complete.

Darksee

Duration Special, Rank Initiate, Touch

This spell allows recipient to see properly no matter what their normally preferred lighting conditions are. Under its effect, humans can see in pitch blackness and trollkin or great trolls are not blinded in bright daylight. It lasts for up to one hour per point of Magnitude. This spell cannot be recovered or released, until the spell ends.

Decrease Temperature

Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Rune Lord/Priest

This spell lowers the ambient temperature a number of degrees equal to its Magnitude. Although the drop appears modest, it can have significant effects during certain seasons when it is naturally near zero. The magic affects an area whose diameter equals the Magnitude of the spell in kilometres. If maintained by use of Extension, it can eventually freeze lakes and seas. It is normally used to plunge valleys in the Rockwood Mountains into arctic conditions, in preparation for attack by the legions of Valind.

Elemental Summoning (Shade)

As per the Elemental Summoning spell in the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook* but specifically summons Shades.

Freeze

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

Cast on close combat weapon or the claws of an Uzhim, this spell causes frostbite or severe freezing. Whenever an attack inflicts a Serious Wound which is not resisted, the location will literally freeze solid, potentially killing the victim. A successfully resisted Major Wound, is the same; but failing the resilience test causes the location to shatter into thousands of




Shades

Shades are elementals of darkness, composed of undulating shadows. They must be summoned from an existing patch of darkness large enough to accommodate the shade's SIZ. Once formed, the shade animates the patch of darkness, in an oily, swirling way. Shades cannot float through the air but they can flow over any surface, even up walls and across ceilings.

Abilities

A shade will slowly chill anything it touches. Given sufficient time it will drain the vitality of living creatures. A shade can also be used to cut off a victim's sensory perceptions, rendering him blind, deaf, numb and even stops exotic perceptions including Darksense. A shade extinguishes or suppresses any source of light it engulfs. They are impenetrably dark.

Combat

In combat, a shade attempts to engulf its foes in darkness. This attack cannot be parried but must be evaded. It can swallow 10 SIZ points of an enemy per cubic metre of volume. If engulfed the victim is cut off from all his senses. At the start of every round, a shade automatically inflicts one level of fatigue to those it has engulfed.

Anyone attacking a shade which has engulfed one or more targets may actually strike a victim too. Treat any successful attack on the shade as hitting one of its victims too but do not apply any combat manoeuvres to them.

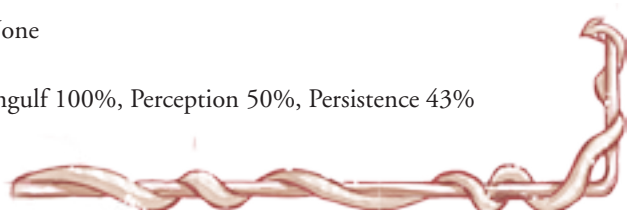
In addition, a shade may use a Combat Action to cause fear on those it has engulfed. Victims must make an opposed Persistence test against the shade. If the shade wins, the victim is temporarily overwhelmed with utter terror, rendered either catatonic or into a hysterical shrieking fit. They remain incapacitated by the terror for a number of minutes equal to the shades' POW.

Characteristics & Attributes

All of a shade's Characteristics except its DEX are predicated upon the size of the shade. Each cubic metre the shade possesses gives it 1D6 STR, 1D6 POW, one point of fixed INT and 1D6+6 Hit Points. All shades have a DEX of 3D6. A shade lacks any Damage Modifier since it never attacks with kinetic force.

The following statistics are for a shade of three cubic metres.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6	11	1-20	Body	-/29
CON	—	—			
SIZ	3m3	3m3			
DEX	3D6	11			
INT	3	3			
POW	3D6	11			
Combat Actions		2		Typical Armour: None	
Damage Modifier		—			
Magic Points		11		Traits: None	
Movement		8m			
Strike Rank		+7		Skills: Engulf 100%, Perception 50%, Persistence 43%	



pieces of frozen flesh. Any Hit Points lost due to the effects of this spell, even Minor Wounds, can only be healed with higher magic.

Frost Breath

Area Special, Instant, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Resilience)

The caster breaths out a cloud of freezing cold ice crystals, which drain the endurance of any non-Himile worshiper nearby. The cloud spreads across an area with a diameter equal to the spell's Magnitude. Those who fail to resist have their fatigue level reduced by one level per two Magnitude of the spell.

Gather Shadows

Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Initiate

The caster can weave together shadows and dimness to create a small area of deeper darkness. This spell is usually only cast in the day to provide a pool of darkness from which to summon a shade. The caster either can form a pool of pitch darkness equal to the Magnitude of the spell in cubic metres, or create a larger area of twilight dimness with a diameter equal to 10 metres multiplied by the Magnitude of the spell. The latter provides enough protection to negate the traits of Light Blindness and Sun Cursed.

Healing Trance

Duration Special, Rank Initiate, Touch

Under the supervision of the caster, the recipient of the spell drops into a deep slumber and begins healing at an advanced rate. The target's natural healing rate is sped up by a factor equivalent to the Magnitude of the spell. Thus a troll under the effects of a Magnitude 8 Healing Trance will heal eight times faster than normal. Both the caster and the recipient (who can be the same person) remain in a catatonic state until all recoverable damage is healed and must be cared for if the period stretches for more than a day. The spell repairs all injuries, except for Major Wounds that have not been successfully treated by surgery prior to starting the trance. In such cases the wounded location is no longer life threatening but remains maimed or severed and the Hit Point loss is permanent. This spell cannot be used offensively.

Ignore Cold

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch

For the Duration of the spell, the recipient can ignore any natural cold damage or effects. Magical cold, such as the Freeze spell, is disregarded if the Magnitude of the Ignore Cold is greater or equal to the Magnitude of the attacking magic.

Safe

Duration 15, Rank Initiate, Touch, Resist (Persistence)

This spell can be cast on a single container or portal no bigger than the SIZ of the caster. It seals the item, preventing anyone save the caster, or someone in Mindlink with them, from opening it. Anyone trying to open the container or pass through the portal must make an opposed test of their Persistence against the Lore (Cult) skill of the caster. Failing to resist the spell not only prevents access or entrance but also inflicts a secondary effect according to the Runes of the cult. Argan Argar's Safe spell instils fear, causing the trespasser to flee in fear; whereas Gorakiki's Safe spell inflicts a poison, acid or pheromone depending on the sub-cult. This spell may benefit from Extension.

Seal Wound

Duration 15, Rank Rune Lord/Priest, Touch

This horrifying spell is cast on a weapon, or the teeth and claws of the troll. Any wound inflicted by the weapon cannot be regenerated or healed magically but must knit itself back together naturally over time. Wounds can still be stabilised using First Aid or given surgery using the Healing skill.

Shield of Darkness

As per the Shield spell in the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook*, save that it also acts as a Darkwall spell too.

Snow

Area Special, Duration 15, Rank Acolyte

As per Rain spell in the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook*, save that it summons light to heavy snow instead. If the snowfall is heavy enough, or a wind is blowing, it quickly conceals fresh tracks; and will reduce Perception skill by up to 5% per Magnitude of the spell.

Speak with Insects

Duration 15, Rank Acolyte

The caster can communicate freely with the alien minds of insects. It does not necessarily guarantee friendly contact but worshippers of Gorakiki are considered allies. The magic allows contact with one giant insect per Magnitude of the spell, or a (normal) insect swarm of a size described in the following table:

Magnitude	Hive Size
1–2	Very Small
3–4	Small
5–6	Large
7–8	Very Large
9–10	Huge
11–12	Colossal

Summon Swarm

Duration 15, Rank Acolyte

This spell summons forth an Insect Swarm (see *RuneQuest Monster Coliseum*) of normal sized insects of the type applicable to the sub-cult of Gorakiki. For example the cult of Gorakiki-wasp would summon a swarm of wasps. The swarm arrives in 1D3 Combat Rounds and remains in the area for the entire spell Duration. The number of six-sided dice of *stings* the swarm inflicts is equal to half the Magnitude of the spell. The insects mindlessly attack all those not of the cult of Gorakiki.

Suppress Aether

Duration 15, Rank Rune Lord/Priest, Touch

Protects the user against creatures of, or linked to, the Runes of Fire, Heat or Light. Fire or heat damage inflicted on the caster is reduced by one point per Magnitude of the spell. In addition, the spell also acts as a Countermagic Shield of equal Magnitude but only against spells of the Fire, Heat or Light Rune, or magic cast by someone linked to them.

Transform Body

Duration 15, Rank Rune Lord/Priest, Touch

This spell turns the torso of a Gorakiki worshiper into the thorax and abdomen of his sub-cult's insect. A follower of

Gorakiki-Wasp could have their body transformed into a giant wasps' for example. Recipients of Transform Body spells add the insect chitin *atop* the troll's natural armour. No other armour may be worn on the transformed body and must be removed in advance otherwise it may be burst apart during the change.

Beetle's Carapace: The troll's flesh darkens to deep blue, brown or pitch black and forms into a cockroach's carapace, giving the Adventurer an AP rating equal to the Magnitude of the spell to the torso Hit Locations.

Wasp's Stinger: The Adventurer's lower body swells into a giant wasp's abdomen and his legs split into four separate, thin insect legs each with a thin layer of chitin with an AP rating equal to one quarter of the Magnitude of the spell. The Adventurer gains +5% per Magnitude to his Unarmed attack skill and the ability to deliver a poison attack with each successful Unarmed attack. This poison functions akin to giant wasp venom (see Cult of Gorakiki).

Moth's Featherscales: The troll's Body Hit Locations (but not the Head or Limbs) become covered in dense, feathery clouds of loose scales akin to the furry flesh of a moth with an AP rating equal to one quarter of the Magnitude of the spell. Any weapon that lands on one of the transformed Hit Locations – even without doing damage – is rendered blunted and ineffective, gummed up by sticky, fluffy scales from the troll's body that cling to the weapon's edge or head, reducing it to half-damage until the wielder spends several minutes cleaning off the clogging fur-scales.

Locust's Chitin Flesh: The troll's flesh is encased in a stone-hard chitin shell which gives an AP rating equal to half the Magnitude of the spell to all Torso Hit Locations. The caster may choose the colours and patterns on his chitin-skin. For the Duration of the spell, the Adventurer's SIZ increases by two points.

Transform Head

Duration 15, Rank Rune Lord/Priest, Touch

This spell turns the head of a Gorakiki worshiper into the insectoid head of his sub-cult. A follower of Gorakiki-Locust could have their head transformed into a giant locust's head for example. Recipients of Transform Head spells can automatically communicate with insects of a corresponding nature as if they had 100% in the Language skill of that species. Transform Head spells will add the insect chitin atop the troll's natural armour. No helmet can be worn on the transformed head and a helm must be removed in advance otherwise it, or the head, may be damaged during the change.

Example transformations are:

Beetle's Head: The Uz gains six Armour Points on his Head Hit Location. The Adventurer also gains +5% per Magnitude to his Unarmed attack skill when making bite attacks. His huge mandibles deliver 2D6 damage in addition to his standard damage modifier.

Wasp's Head: The Uz gains four Armour Points on his Head Hit Location. The Adventurer also gains +5% per Magnitude to his Perception tests to see anything that moves.

Moth's Head: The Uz gains two Armour Point on his Head Hit Location. The Adventurer also gains +5% per Magnitude to his Tracking rolls involving taste or scent and gains the Life Sense trait as detailed in the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook*.

Locust's Head: The Uz gains three Armour Points on his Head Hit Location. Due to his modest mandibles, the troll gains a further +5% per Magnitude to his Unarmed attack skill when delivering bite attacks, which deliver 1D6 damage in addition to his standard damage modifier. Additionally, he gains the Life Sense trait.

Transform Limbs

Duration 15, Rank Rune Lord/Priest, Touch

This spell adds or transforms limbs (or wings) to the Gorakiki worshiper, in keeping with his sub-cult's insect. Recipients of Transform Limb spells add the insect chitin atop the troll's natural armour. No other armour may be worn on the transformed limbs and must be removed in advance.

Beetle's Arms: This spell gives the troll a second pair of arms that sprout from his sides just under his natural arms. In most ways, they appear identical to his natural arms, though these additional limbs are sheathed in AP 6 black, blue or brown chitin. The Uz gains an additional Combat Action per arm, per turn. The arms use the same skill ratings as the Adventurer's natural arms.

Sprout Wings: The Adventurer's shoulder blades become greatly muscled and sprout delicate, fine wasp wings as long

as the Adventurer is tall. These can be held folded against the back or extended to allow flight. Through the magic of this spell, the troll can fly at a speed of 12 metres (considered Light Activity). The wings emit a loud buzzing drone when they beat, making stealth impossible. If attacked in the air or from behind, strikes to the Adventurer's torso Hit Locations have a 50% chance of striking the wings, which have four Hit Points and no Armour Points.

Mothflight: The Adventurer's shoulder blades and back become greatly muscled, sprouting delicate, soft moth wings twice as wide as the Adventurer is tall. These can be held folded behind the back or extended to allow flight. Through the magic of this spell, the troll can fly at a speed of 10 metres (considered Light Activity). The wings make low thrumming sound when they beat, reducing Stealth tests by -20%. If attacked in the air or from behind, strikes to the Adventurer's torso Hit Locations have a 50% chance of striking the wings, which have six Hit Points and no Armour Points.

Locust Limbs: The troll forms tiny bony spines on his forearms which can be rubbed together, creating a crackling, creaking drone which can be used to communicate with other Gorakiki-Locust cult members above the rank of lay member. Using this spell, trolls can communicate in this strange language without risk of eavesdroppers. Additionally, the Adventurer's legs warp and twist to have backwards knees and become capable of incredible leaps. The Adventurer can jump distances of up to his STR x 5 metres.

Turn Blow

Duration 15, Ranged, Rank Rune Lord/Priest

This spell duplicates any damage inflicted on the recipient and applies the exact same wound (damage, location and any injury specific Combat Manoeuvres) to the attacker, providing they are within range and the Magnitude of the Turn Blow spell exceeds the attacker's magical defences. Armour does not protect against the reflected damage. This spell is normally used by Rune Lords of Xiola Umbar in concert with Attract Attention.

TROLL VOICES

In which several trolls of different species describe themselves, their people and their motivations.

The Mistress Commands

Who Am I?

Quake before me thing of the surface world. I am Thorktor Thon, Great Matriarch of Kygor Litor. Once ambassador of the Kingdom of Night and representative of the Dagori Inkarth Circle of Eight. I Uzuz.

Where do I come from?

I was born in time before time, in the paradise of Wonderhome before its darkness was pierced by light. Blessed was the true darkness unsullied by light. I fled with great Kygor Litor to the Hurtplace, when the dead sun burned our home.

What have I done?

I summoned many spirits of Darkness to aid construction of the Castle of Lead. I helped to resist the advance of chaos and contacted the dwarfs of Greatway, which led to the establishment of the infernal World Council of Friends, who betrayed and cursed us. I fought against Gbaji to redeem my honour. At his fall I accompanied my mother down into the bowels of her fortress.

What is my future?

The fall of Gbaji broke not, the great curse. So I sit here in darkness pondering a way to consume the troll bane. When I have enough mighty spirits of darkness I shall return to the time of the Sun Stop and smother the blinding light of the Bringer of Chaos, imprisoning him within unsullied night and ripping his curse from him before he can bite Uz. I will sacrifice my immortality to devour our greatest enemy.

What do I believe?

We are the darkness people. We were the first. We are big and strong and our teeth are bigger than yours. Our magic is better too. The storm gods destroyed our peace, the sun people burned our home, the earth people broke our caves and we fought against Chaos since no other would stand against it. All these peoples have proven their lack of honour, so having no worth we treat them as the food they are. When Chaos next comes, the surface peoples will rue the treacherous curse

they do not help remove, for without the full Uz armies by their side, they will fall.

What must I do?

I must break the curse of Gbaji and make the Uz strong and numerous once more. Great Kygor Litor stands firm with the Compromise but I her daughter can fulfil her wishes, which she sends me in the darkness.

Why do I adventure?

I no longer stride across the wide open lands of Hurtplace. My power is best used to seek allies in the Otherworld. I must tread a careful line, for if I become too strong Arachne Solara will weave me into her web and I shall loose the freedom to act. Now I shall eat you for disturbing my meditations, your strength shall feed me on my quest, as is right and proper.

The Darktroll Speaks

Who Am I?

Impudent human, I Gerak Kog, Thogsfriend. Me a Karrg's Son of Kygor Litor. I true Uz.

Where do I come from?

I born in Gash Skull, place where great Uz hero die killing Chaos. My cave lies under hill where he falls, it full of much stuff I plunder from caravans and Praxian nomads. I have stuff I fish from Skyfall Lake also. You come, you see, you not take – or I eat you.

What have I done?

I killed broo for Uzbirther, during her Holy Day celebrations. I fathered strong Uzko children. I wrestled with giant, we friends now. I travelled far to the south of Dagori Inkarth, slain many nomads damn their sun cursed lands. I too travelled east of the Zola Fel into the Chaos Wastes, hunted broo and faceless spawn for Kygor Litor my goddess. I seen the city where they slay Small Giants, found it foul with sorcery and treacherous humans.

What is my future?

My mother with far-seeing eyes says I shall destroy the walls that are yet to be built and make them stronger in my failure. Yet my sons' son's son will be far greater than I. Prideful am I

in the strength of my seed. Before I die, I shall slay humans in their thousands and laugh at their laments.

What do I believe?

We Karrg's sons strive to be good sons and husbands. We lead armies to battle against the eternal foes, Elfs, Dwarfs and Chaos. I believe it good to eat the heart of brave enemy and that those who not strong should serve the strong. I treat Enlo bad, like they deserve. We make them slave for us. If they wear out from overwork, there are always more to replace them. When I extra hungry, I eat them. Sometimes the little worms betray us to our enemies. Maybe we should treat them even worse.

What must I do?

I must obey matriarchs. I must master my weapons and lead the armies of my mother-wife. I must fight Chaos. I must show Karrg's sons are better in fight than followers of Zorak Zoran.

Why do I adventure?

The world is full of good things to eat, if you go out to get them. Or you can get gold. Do not eat this, for you can trade it in for even more food. Well, eat it if you really want to. Somewhere out there is the secret that will eliminate the Womb-Biter Curse. If I find it, I will be remembered forever, like Arkat.

Speaking of Arkat, he could come back any day to usher us back to Wonderhome. Maybe I go look for him to make it happen sooner. Maybe he trapped and needs our help.

The Great Troll Grunts

Who Am I?

I Zorx. I Uzdo.

Where do I come from?

I come Sha-dow Plat-aeu.

What have I done?

I kill. I eat.

What is my future?

I hun-gry. I eat.

What do I believe?

Food good. Dark good.

What must I do?

Me do Uzuz say.

Why do I adventure?

Urg?

The Trollkin Mumbles

Who Am I?

Err, I am Neep, spear holder, valued Enlo, initiate of Argan Argar. What does my master wish?

Where do I come from?

I come from the temple sanctuary of Xiola Umbar below the Tower of Bones on Xarxarsh. Her daughters raised me from a litter of discarded runts. I give offerings to the Goddess of Protective Dark when I find or steal things; she saved me from being eaten at birth. Our mountain fortress is tall and strong. None have broken its defences.

What have I done?

I have seen Peloria and Dorastor, as a mercenary in the ranks of Argan Argar. I have raised myself in the god's ranks to gain his deeper magic. I have even faced Chaos and survived, although I had to run fast to escape.

What is my future?

If I fight well I might be granted the chance to become an acolyte of the lord I serve. If I make mistakes, I may instead be seen as little value save as food, then I must run. I have heard that many brave trollkin have fled the clan but I am too valued to throw it away, not yet at least. I do not wish to be eaten.

What do I believe?

I believe that within every trollkin there is the spirit of a troll. If I am allowed to show my worth then one day I might be seen as a troll too. I dream of being allowed to take the test of rebirth, by performing a great deed, then perhaps great Kygor Litor will allow me to be reborn as a true troll. That way takes much courage and strength though, so I pray to Xiola Umbar too, who promises my rebirth if I faithfully serve her cult.

What must I do?

I must show my worth at all times, else be eaten. I am enthusiastic, not slovenly. I try to be brave, not cowardly. I think about being honest, not pragmatic. I do what I need to survive, as my own people are a greater threat to me than the Chaos of Dorastor.

Why do I adventure?

I seek experience of the world, new forms of magic and better training so that I might survive the wrath of my masters. I seek wealth so that I can pay my way to higher rank, or if necessary, flee to another place, safely away from Uz. I seek my freedom.

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