

DAMA

Pulp fantasy game setting for the *Savage Worlds* system

Dama created by Don Bassingthwaite, 2003

Introduction

Dama is a fantasy RPG world — with a difference. It was conceived in the spirit of a world that embraced the pulp concept of fantasy and rejected some of the conceits of standard RPG fantasy. Dama is about turning expected stereotypes around to something fresh and interesting. Dwarves are dark sorcerers, the summoners of demons. Elves are a race divided not by good and evil but between icy reserve and passionate energy. Dragons are a reduced species, the best of their bloodlines hunted to extinction. Orcs are savage, but not primitive or evil; human cultures are not strictly what you'd expect them to be; gods are fallible.

Dama should be played big and bold. If players hesitate, the game master should introduce some element that forces them to act. There are no ten-foot poles in Dama. There is also no mead, but that's another matter. Great magic is rare and dangerous — Dama is not a place where crimes are solved by the application of mindreading and truth spells. Dama is a place where crimes are frequently not solved at all. It is a place where a good sword is important and there are miles of ruin-filled, dangerous wilderness between one crowded city and the next. It is not about historical accuracy in any way. It's about fun and good stories.

Dama and Savage Worlds

Dama is being written to use the *Savage Worlds* game system from Great White Games/Pinnacle Entertainment Group (www.peginc.com) because *Savage Worlds* is a flexible system that best fits the intended mood of Dama. Dama is a work in progress and new material will be added from time to time. *Savage Worlds* is Copyright 2003, Great White Games. Dama is not an officially licensed product and has no affiliation with Great White Games.

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This Version

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Long ago, Dama was a place of wonders and great cities, peace and plenty, light and hope. It was, as such things tend to be, a golden time. What name the ancients knew their own era by isn't remembered now, but it has come to be called it the Age of Relics for the scattered remains that mark the land, or the Varman Age for the shining pillar that was the land of Varmanhow, the heart of the world's peace.

The Varman Age ended in a storm of treachery and murder. Dwarven greed, contained through the Age, broke free of the bonds of enlightenment. Vast hordes of goblins and ogres surged across the land, their might bolstered by terrifying demons summoned and bound by dwarf sorcerers using potent tattoo-binding rituals and potions brewed from the blood of dragons. The priests of the old gods were slaughtered, massacred by one within their own ranks before they could call down the aid of their divine lords and ladies. Varmanhow fell. The cities were destroyed. Hope and wonders died. The light was extinguished in the madness of total war.

For four hundred years, the Long Fury raged in battle without end. So much was lost and forgotten, buried in rubble and ash. The great dragons were driven to extinction. But just when Dama seemed darkest, new light appeared: heroes who fought back against the lords of shadow. Their stories rekindled hope. The war turned. The Long Fury lasted another hundred years, but at last the light prevailed. The dwarves retreated back below the ground in defeat, the power of their magic broken. The Heroes of Light stood as new gods. Among the shattered ruins of the Age of Relics, around the terrible scars of the Long Fury, the world began the slow process of creating a new age built upon memories and fragments and tales of lost glory.

Five centuries have passed since the end of the Long Fury. Dama still struggles against shadow – the effects of the Long Fury were completely and utterly devastating, wiping away not only nations and cities, but entire cultures. It's entirely possible that an ancient of the Varman Age would no longer recognize the Dama of today. What's more, the evils that wracked the world during the Long Fury are not dead. The dwarves were beaten but not exterminated. Reduced in power, they still lurk in their dark clanholds, occasionally leading bands of demons out into sunlit lands. Their goblin servants have escaped their power and now bedevil the world themselves. And just as the Heroes of Light stood as gods at the end of the Long Fury, so did certain Lords of Shadow ascend to godhood; they watch the world from beyond, hoping to one day return and complete their foul domination.

Worse, the cooperation that united nations during the Long Fury has faltered. The centuries have seen unrest and struggle, channeling to destruction what could be spent in rebuilding. Currently the human lands are largely at peace, but such periods of peace never last. The cold elves keep to themselves as they have since the Varman Age, though the vibrant dawn elves who left their rigid brethren to embrace the flame of mortality now take a place beside humans. In the far east, the half-folk fade away into a dying land. Only the wild orcs seem to have truly prospered, but the source of that prosperity varies from tribe to tribe – trading and peace or raiding and riches.

For the meek and timid, it seems that little has really changed since the Long Fury, but for those who are willing to act boldly and carve out their own place, Dama offers excitement and challenge, riches and maybe even glory. Are you timid or are you bold?

The hardest part of a journey is walking out your own door. – Common Dub wisdom.

SECTION I: WORLD

Chapter 1: Geography of Dama

Chapter 2: Gods of Dama

Chapter 3: Races of Dama

Chapter 4: Magic of Dama

Geography of Dama

Dama is a world of great variety, but no matter what the land may look like or what may have stood there during the Varman Age, there is one truth: the Long Fury left this a wild world. Except along certain coasts and rivers and close to cities and large towns, wilderness is the rule. A person could walk for a day in much of Dama and not see another person. Beasts and monsters, of course, are another matter, but even the most feared monsters aren't quite so common as rumor would suggest.

There are several main regions of Dama. In the east is Tulmir, the vast, desolate country of the half-folk, where broad rivers flow out to the Koaë Ocean. Distant and exotic kingdoms bask in the sun along the southern coast of the Dalhu Ocean, strange lands of blood and jewels, thick jungle in the southeast and dry grassland in the southwest – certain ancient stories maintain that the original human homeland is somewhere among them. Great mountains dominate the more northern portions of the southwest, with vast badlands and deserts in the interior.

The west of Dama is split by the shining arc of the Boken Sea, an arm of the western Straeling Ocean. This is a more temperate zone, home to many nations trading across the relatively calm water. North of the sea, however, the land is dominated by cold, seemingly endless forests and – to the central northeast – steppes. Without a doubt, these are the homelands of the orcs. Some say the steppes stretch all the way to the north of Tulmir, but if they do, no one has traveled that way in memory or legend. The link between west and east lies at the heart of Dama along the dangerous and tainted mountain valleys of the Middle Passage.

Around the Boken Sea: The Domains

The Boken Domains is the name typically given to the region roughly centered on the Boken Sea. Spared some of the worst predations of the dwarves and their hordes during the Long Fury and blessed with relative ease of communication and transportation across the Boken Sea, a diversity of cultures has grown up in this area. The Boken Domains have always tended to attract visitors and migrants of all kinds. In legend the homeland of the elves, the region has long been dominated by humans. Since the end of the Long Fury, orc tribes moving out of the north are also found here, as are a scattering of half-folk refugees, while goblins have taken up residence in certain mountainous regions. The subterranean territories of two dwarven clans bracket the Domains – Darkglass in the distant

southwest and Steelwind in the northeast. Also located in the Domains are the ruins of Varmanhow, long a rallying point for those seeking a return to the glories of the Age of Relics.

Scurgrimme

Set in the dark, storm-tossed waters of the Straeling Ocean just north of the mouth of the Boken Sea, Scurgrimme is an island-nation, the home of sea-raiders feared throughout the Boken Domains. Unlike most of the other lands of Dama, Scurgrimme suffered less from attacks by the dwarven hordes than it did from retribution at the hands of the forces of light. The queen of Scurgrimme, Morbetta, made an alliance with the dwarves and the raiders of Scurgrimme became slavers and reavers, ruling the waves on behalf of the dwarves. Near the end of the Long Fury, the forces of light scoured Scurgrimme, but it was impossible to wipe out the foul raiders completely. Although not so strong or organized as it was under Morbetta, Scurgrimme remains a dangerous place and its black-hulled ships a force on the waves.

The Land: The coast of Scurgrimme is rocky and cut by a thousand deep inlets and coves. Tiny settlements and farmsteads dot the coast, while the interior is dominated by thick, tangled forest and short, rugged hills.

Cities: Scur is the main city and port. The Council, a collection of wicked captains and ruthless merchants, rules from Scur.

The People: What a native of Scurgrimme is called depends on what he or she does for a living. Raiders and sea merchants (often the same thing) and fisherfolk (also often raiders) are Scurans. Farmers, hunters, and land merchants are Grimman and are looked down upon (although an older Scuran who retires from the sea to the life of a farm-owner is still regarded as a Scuran). Regardless of what they are called, however, the people of Scurgrimme are tall and lean, with thick black hair (though it's not uncommon for other colorings to appear among the descendants of slaves brought back to the island). They are hard, nasty people, unrestrained and used to fighting for respect. Not surprisingly, Scurans are often very well-traveled and sometimes turn up in ports from the Boken Domains to the Dalhu Coast. This doesn't improve their temperament.

Of Note: Morbetta, known as the Queen of Chains, ascended to godhood as one of the Lords of Shadow.

Empire of Skerys

Dominating the northern coast of the mouth of the Boken Sea is the Skeryn Empire. The heart of Skerys is a deep bay, sheltered by coastal mountains from the worst of the storms that sweep off the Straeling Ocean. Good land and good access

to the Boken form the basis of a prosperous, aggressive nation — Skerys is the most warlike of the Boken Domains and still growing. The title of emperor is only a few generations old, declared by the grandfather of the current ruler. Two centuries ago, the Skeryns were little more than hunters, small farmers, and petty voyagers. A new dynasty of leaders has changed that, expanding Skeryn territory north up a broad, navigable river, then west to the Straeling coast, and finally east into the lands of the old kingdom of Barbannan. Clashes with a strong orc tribe and spider-goblins in mountains to the north have actually solidified Skerys' hold on its provinces, as has new interest in the country by traders. Skerys' expansion has yet to slow: the empire's most recent expansions have been the establishment of a colony on the southern coast of the mouth of the Boken and the seizure of land to the east right to the edge of the territories claimed by Dulcine.

The Land: Skerys is the largest area of land under single rule anywhere in the Boken Domains. Even its fringes tend to be patrolled with some regularity. Most of the populated areas are still along the Boken coast, but these areas tend to more regularly farmed than elsewhere in the Domains. Slowly but surely, the forests of Skerys are shrinking back to the north. Other than in these civilized reaches, though, the northern stretches Skerys are still quite heavily forested. Skerys also claims all or some of two mountain ranges, one in the north (inhabited by orcs and spider-goblins) and one in its southern heartlands. The southern mountains are relatively gentle and have long been explored — as Skerys becomes wealthier, they are becoming known as a summer refuge for aristocrats.

Cities: The imperial city of Skerys is Numisgard, the City of Lions. Although Skerys itself may only be a couple of centuries old, Numisgard is at least three centuries older than that and was founded (then floundered) near the end of the Long Fury.

Hunder is the name of the Skeryn colony established on the south coast of the Boken mouth. Dwarven ruins, long abandoned, have recently been discovered nearby.

The People: Skeryns are big people, tall, wide, and strongly-built. Their hair is usually blond and very fair, often turning white and gray at a fairly young age. They are very physical and fond of games and competitions. They are also, however, great lovers of learning. In fact, they have a tendency to combine the two; passionate speeches delivered in the halls of the Imperial Senate have a tendency to devolve into fights which carry almost as much deliberative weight as the original speech. Skeryn men often wear full beards. Skeryn women almost always wear their hair long and flowing. Persons of quality tend to wear snow-white mantles

to indicate their rank; important people may trim theirs in certain colors. People of the interior tend to be a bit smaller and darker, similar to Barbannans.

Of Note: Skeryns are the descendants of the troops and sailors that scoured Scurgrimme at the end of the Long Fury. The imperial dynasty claims an even older bloodline, however: that of Hero Cerus Mimr. Skerys' aggressive expansion has roused the ire of its neighbors; relations are strained at best with Dulcine to the east and Dubfeich to the south.

Lansean Sea

Less a true sea than deep bay, the sheltered waters of the Lansean are controlled absolutely by the Skeryn Empire and have been since the earliest days of Skerys' power. Pirates and raiders are virtually unknown here, though Scurran longships are not infrequently seen stealing past the mouth of the Lansean. The mighty river Lans flows south into the sea, occasionally bearing strange things down out of the mountains. Many tales speak of a powerful city of the Varman Age that was swallowed by the sea during the Long Fury; some believe that it now lies under the Lansean Sea.

Lans River

One of the two great rivers to emerge from the Akina Peaks, the river Lans flows through a broad valley to the west of the Ethuga Ru and down to the Lansean Sea. The river is navigable for most of its length and Skeryn explorers have followed it up into the mountains themselves (though actual settlement stops well short of the mountains' southern reaches). The river's valley is broad and gentle; even among the mountains, the wilderness-covered land is rolling rather than rough, though the Blood Dance orcs consider it their territory and raids by the ogres and goblins in the Ethuga Ru are a danger.

The Tiborins

The mountains across the Lansean Sea from Numisgard are old, their peaks and crags worn almost smooth by time. Their lower slopes and valleys have long been tamed; many of Numisgard's wealthiest citizens maintain summer homes here. The high valleys, however, retain their wilderness and make popular places for hunting trips. The high valleys are also, however, home to a reclusive population of humans who have lived here since before the rise of Skerys. Their own tales say that they rode out the Long Fury here and it might even be true — worship of the Dark Mother of Waters is strong among them. The mountain people call themselves Tibs and though they have some similarities with typical Skeryns, they tend to be especially pale with an exotic beauty (Skeryns

sometimes call them moon people). Skerys is working on assimilating these backward folk into the empire.

Barbannan

An independent kingdom established about a century after the end of the Long Fury, Barbannan lasted through many relatively peaceful generations before falling to Skerys a little more than forty years ago. Parts of the east, wilder than the rest of the country, remained a refuge of rebels until only about fifteen years ago. A cadet line of the royal family was allowed to remain as hereditary governors in the province, but rumors of the survival of the true royal line circulated until the last known descendant was finally captured and killed in the east. Among most people, Skeryn rule is actually quite popular for the safety and prosperity it brings.

Cities: Aufis, the old royal city.

The People: Barbannans aren't all that different from Skeryns, being only a little shorter and slighter of build, with a tendency toward light brown-blond hair. Many Barbannans living in Aufis or other smaller cities have long since adopted Skeryn styles and attitudes. Barbannans of lower classes tend to aspire to the same thing.

Of Note: Rumors circulate once more of a living heir to the royal line. The small number of people dissatisfied with Skeryn rule are beginning to agitate and there are fears their rebellion could turn violent; the governor, a weak man, is considering severe options for dealing with them.

Mirada River

Flowing east of the Ethuga Ru and down through Barbannan to Aufis, the Mirada is a faster and more dangerous river than the Lans. It is navigable for less than half the distance from the Boken seacoast to the mountains — beyond that point, it is broken by frequent rapids. The river valley is frequently deep, especially among the mountains where it has carved a deep, narrow canyon. Even the orcs respect this dark valley; ogres and goblins are not the only danger here, as strange monsters make their home in the upland gorges.

Blood Dance Orcs

The orcs that live in the mountains north of Skerys belong to the Blood Dance tribe. Actually, it's more accurate to say that the Blood Dance orcs live in the foothills and mountain valleys — the mountains themselves are a dangerous stronghold of goblins and spider-goblins. The Blood Dance is a tribe caught between a rock (the goblin-held mountains) and a hard place (the Skeryn Empire). The tribe is slowly finding itself squeezed up to the cold northwest reaches between the mountains

and the Straeling coast, but for now the Blood Dance is holding firm.

The People: Blood Dance orcs follow a wild and ecstatic tradition marked, appropriately enough, by dancing and blood. Blood Dancers paint red designs (preferably in blood but more often with ochre) on their faces and bodies before such events as raids, rituals, and long journeys. They are more likely than other orcs to indulge in berserk frenzies. The feasts hosted by Blood Dancers are legendary among orcs and certain very tough humans.

Ethuga Ru – 'Cradle of Song'

Surrounded by the southern arms of the Akina Peaks, the Ethuga Ru is a relatively compact area of mountains of middling size. They are considered to have mystical significance by the Blood Dance tribe as their spiritual home, the place where, during a wandering journey, Mur Eats-it-Raw taught the tribe's ancestral hero the ways of music and dance. The sacredness of the mountains is a casual sort of thing, however. Orcs visit the mountains freely and have no particular objection to other races passing through so long as they respect the mountains (humans prospecting for minerals, for example, should not come here). Unfortunately for the Blood Dancers, a strong force of goblins and ogres have taken up residence in the Ethuga Ru and the sacred mountains are no longer safe.

Akina Peaks

Harsh and rugged, this mighty range of mountains runs far into the north. Never fully explored, it remains something of a mystery. Three orcs tribes — Blood Dancer in the south, Bearstalker to the east, and Stormhowl to the far north — claim territory in or close to it and are perhaps the most knowledgeable of the Akinas' passes and valleys but even they seldom penetrate deep into the range. Spider-goblins and their minions claim extensive regions of the peaks. Wild demons and ancient monsters of the Long Fury are sometimes spotted in the mountains as well. Some speculate that the presence of these monsters in the Akinas indicates that there were once dwarf holdings here, but if so there are no known legends that confirm this. The Akinas are also rich in minerals, gems, and ancient ruins, however, and it isn't uncommon for brave and foolish prospectors to risk their dangers for a chance at wealth. Signs of human civilization are otherwise scattered at best, though Therin, a rough town/mining camp, can be found among the foothills on the north side of the Akinas' southeast arm, precariously located between the lands claimed by the Blood Dance orcs and those of the Bearstalkers. Tales also tell of a dark stronghold of evil sorcerers among the grey peaks.

Dulcine

More a loose confederacy of cities than a kingdom, Dulcine occupies some of the wildest territory of any Domain: a narrow strip of lowlands along the northeast coast of the Boken Sea combined with a wide upland region extending across the northeast. Alliances between the cities are both tenuous and incredibly strong – though they bicker among themselves, they unite in the face of any outside danger. Although wild, Dulcine is actually the heart of a culture of the Age of Relics. Its forests are full of ruins and its cities and towns are built on ancient foundations. People in some regions of the great cities live in the broken shells of old palaces and halls. Nowhere else in the Boken Domains are ancient ruins so freely accessible. Scholars, storytellers, and adventurers come from all around the Boken Sea to marvel at and explore the ruins. Surrounded by these reminders of the past, Dulcinians see themselves as a bulwark against the orc-held north, though ironically they are also the nation most at peace with their neighboring orcs.

The Land: The degree to which the wilderness has overwhelmed the ancient ruins of Dulcine is eerie. Although the remains of civilization can be found everywhere, true civilization is sparse. Small settlements tend to be heavily fortified and far between. Most people cluster around the great cities. Except in the lowlands (which are looked down on by those who consider themselves "true children of the Dulce"), easily arable land is sparse, opened up close to the protection of cities only through considerable effort. The lowlands are separated by the uplands by a sharp and distinct escarpment. Legends say that the split was created by dwarven magic during the Long Fury.

Cities: Solana is a port city of the lowlands. An ancient road leads inland to Pier, a city split by the escarpment — half of it lies in the uplands and half in the lowlands. Other roads lead from Pier. One goes west to Enea (which overlooks the Skeryn province of Barbannan), while the other goes northeast to Cira. Dulcine itself once lay to the northwest, but it has been abandoned since the end of the Long Fury. Each city is ruled by a prince.

The People: Dulcine breeds strong, self-reliant people. They tend to be lean and muscular, with sharp features, dark hair, and tanned complexions. Few things are as dangerous as a Dulcinian backed into a corner. Dulcinian culture is a mix of the wild and the courtly; hunters and rangers are much respected here, but so are grace, courtly manners, and ritual. The people of Dulcine are much like their cities: beautiful but trapped by wilderness. Stoicism and practicality tempered with passion and culture are much admired traits. Dulcinian clothes tend to be dark and often earth-toned, no matter what their quality.

Of Note: There are conflicting stories of why the city of Dulcine was abandoned. Interestingly, even the orc tribes who pass through the area regularly are loathe to stay for long in its ruins. Many of the cities have some ancient mystery to them; in Pier, it's a legend of deep passages within the escarpment opened up by the magical catastrophe that raised the uplands.

The Hero Renzo Dicacce was a Dulcinian, an aristocratic son of Dulcine itself. Although he could be considered a model Dulcinian in many ways, he is more often used as an example of someone who has left the city too far behind.

The Dulcine Rise

The escarpment that lifts much of Dulcine's territory up above the other Boken Domains is known as the Dulcine Rise, a rough crag that snakes across the face of Dama and varies in height between only about fifty feet (especially in the west) and over two hundred (in the east and a few other locations). At the divided city of Pier, the Rise is about a hundred and twenty feet high. The uplands of Dulcine are actually broken by a multitude of lesser and often older escarpments — the ruins of Dulcine itself sit atop one such. Except at Pier and Enea, where ramps and lifts have been constructed, there are no easy ways up or down the Rise for caravans and large groups. Smaller groups travelling on foot or with only lightly burdened mounts may have an easier time of it as local communities often know of secret ways up and down both the Rise and the lesser escarpments of the uplands.

Bearstalker Orcs

Somewhere in the wilds, the territory of Dulcine ends and the territory of the Bearstalker tribe of orcs begins. Exactly where can be difficult to tell — an uneasy truce has existed for generations between nation and tribe, and much of the northern wilds are something of a no-man's land. Humans and orcs give each other a wide berth here, but that's no guarantee of safety. The Bearstalkers are proud and fractious and one of the strongest tribes. Hunting bands and small clan units tend to break off and wander where they will. Fortunately, the Bearstalker experience with Dulcine has been a good one (and vice versa) and most Bearstalkers are as willing to talk and trade as they are to fight. In fact, it's not unknown for Dulcinians and Bearstalkers to work together when the dwarves of Clan Steelwind march.

The People: Bearstalkers are one of the most "civilized" of orc tribes and possibly the least territorial outside of what they consider their core lands (found a long way to the north of Dulcine and well-marked). They have adopted something of totem relationship toward bears; they would never

kill one except out of necessity, but take great pride in the bravery and patience necessary to successfully stalk and approach one. Bearstalkers are somewhat larger than other orcs and are often extensively tattooed.

The Famas

Beyond the forests of the Dulcine uplands, the land opens in a dry, grassy region between the Akina Peaks and the Mountains of Steelwind. Not quite steppe, these grasslands are known as the Famas. Many camps of the Bearstalker tribe of orcs make their summer homes here, retreating to the forests in the winter.

Mountains of Steelwind

As rugged and grey as the Akinas, the Mountains of Steelwind are a smaller range, though no less dangerous — Clanhold Steelwind is located at their eastern end and dwarven tunnels run under almost the entire length of the range. There are fewer wild demons to be found there than in the Akinas, however — the dwarves of Steelwind keep a tight leash on their vile servants. Small holds of goblins are a greater threat. The ruins that dot the Dulcine uplands extend into the western portions of the mountains.

Ramholt

A swiftly growing city of the northeast coast, Ramholt is only about a century old. This young city was founded for one purpose only: to draw the scant trade emerging westbound from the Middle Passage. It's a near lawless place ruled only by merchant interests and quickly won a reputation as a place where anything can be purchased or sold. Only its remote location has kept it from becoming a serious concern to legitimate trading cities like Numisgard or Dubfeich.

The Land: The area around Ramholt is wild, damp, and unpleasant at best.

The People: Mad, bad, and dangerous. For the last century, Ramholt has been attracting traders and mercenaries from both the Boken Domains and the Middle Passage. Anyone could be found here, especially, of late, mad men.

Of Note: Ramholt is named in honor of the ram symbol of the hero Isau Jabren, patron of commerce.

Pryshydd

Located at the northeastern end of the Boken Sea, Pryshydd is a land under a curse. The traditional ruler of Pryshydd is Tafyd Ambros, a king reborn every few generations to bring prosperity to his people. Bound about by tradition and a deep belief in Da, the force of prophecy and destiny, Pryshyns are as tied to their king as he is to them. Unfortunately, Tafyd Ambros' last incarnation

coincided with the Long Fury and the Lords of Shadow reached the child king before the monks of Pryshydd. The Lords forced Tafyd Ambros to lead his nation over to side with the forces of darkness. Although few Pryshyns did so willingly, the opinion of the other nations of Dama at the end of the Long Fury was clear: Pryshydd was evil. For many decades, the armies of light tried to scour Pryshydd as they scoured Scurgrimme — to no avail. Pryshydd is and always has been a land of prophecy. Pryshyn seers and prophets foretold every attack by the armies of light and the Pryshyn people melted away before them, never counterattacking in numbers, but never defeated. Occasionally greater magics were called into play: the armies of light were never able to destroy the greatest of Pryshyn temples because they could never find them. Eventually, they simply gave up and left Pryshydd alone.

Even today, Pryshydd is a nation commonly feared and misunderstood — Tafyd Ambros is held to have ascended in death to godhood as a Lord of Shadow. His nation, however, waits patiently for his rebirth. Pryshydd is a quiet place of crags and fens. Remote towns and villages are more common here than in other domains, often because they are built around or close to stout monasteries that can provide shelter in times of need.

The Land: Cool and wet, with many fens and swamps punctuated by rugged hills and dark forests. The most common creatures found here are sheep. Pryshydd has an eerie, haunted feel to it, as if the land lies under a perpetual shadow. The landscape rises slowly and gently from the Boken Sea until it reaches a barren plateau and the brackish Loch of Dur that marks the beginning of the Middle Passage.

The Cities: Gleis, the City of Curses, is the capitol of Pryshydd. It's quite a small city and was regularly ravaged by various other nations at the end of the Long Fury. The current city is built on the rubble of its predecessors. While it might seem that the Regent living in Gleis is the head of government (holding the Ash Throne until Tafyd Ambros is reborn), he shares power and consults frequently with the abbots of the monasteries that interpret the ancient Pryshyn Oracles.

The People: Pryshyns are usually somewhat shorter in stature, with very dark hair and long, pale faces; men are usually cleanshaven. They are serious people and while other cultures might call them superstitious, they are actually profoundly religious — fate (what they call Da) is a very real force to them. In private moments or among themselves, they enjoy music and singing. They distill a fiery brandy from black plums.

Of Note: One of the most horrific periods of the Long Fury, the massacre of Weeping's End, had its origins in Pryshydd — the dwarven hordes

mustered at the Loch of Dur before travelling along the Middle Passage (a journey known as the Passing of the Steelwind) to Tulmir. The half-folk have never forgiven Pryshydd for allowing this. In fact, so hated is Pryshydd that those travelers emerging from the Middle Passage have for centuries swung north and around Pryshydd to avoid it (thus giving rise to Ramholt).

The Pryshyn Oracles are both an extensive written record and the ongoing predictions of a number of particularly holy seers and oracular phenomena. The Oracles are not active all the time, but when they are, it is a sign of great changes. The last time the Oracles were all active at once, it was to predict the ill-fated return of Tafyd Ambros.

Loch of Dur

Marking the western end of the Middle Passage, the Loch of Dur is a dark, still body of water. Although narrow, it is very long, extending for several days journey along the Middle Passage, and extraordinarily deep. At its Pryshyn end at least, no boats ply its surface and no one fishes from its shore, but there are rumours that further along the Middle Passage, entire villages are built on its shores and live on the harvest of its tainted water.

Staran Mounts and Pander Hills

The western end of the Middle Passage is closed on the north and south by two ranges of rugged land. On the north are the Staran Mounts, bleak and rocky. On the south are the Pander Hills, less rough but still dangerous. Both the Starans and the Panders were heavily tainted, like all of the Middle Passage, by the Passing of the Steelwind. Demons and monsters of all kinds are a constant danger.

Further along the Middle Passage, the northern and southern ranges close in and the Passage narrows and rises into the terrible Shi Mountains that lie at the heart of Dama before descending into Tulmir.

Varmanhow

The Heart of Peace, the Pillar of the Age, the First City — all of these were epithets for Varmanhow, the great city-state for which the Varman Age and the unprecedented Varman Compact of Peace were named. Destroyed very early in the Long Fury, all that remains of Varmanhow now are shattered and half-buried ruins along the neck of land that separates the Boken Sea from the much smaller freshwater Jada Sea. Varmanhow has never been forgotten, however, and many attempts have been made to resurrect the city. One such attempt is currently underway, led by Tirond Belander, Immaculate Knight of the Shining Lord Anderes Glorian, a quest made more difficult by the fierce Bleakmoon orcs to

one side and the stubbornly distant cold elves of Illirisen to the other. Still, Belander's work is proceeding and has drawn a great number of supporters to him. Varmanhow is slowly rising again, a mix of new buildings and old ones rebuilt based on tedious excavation and research.

The Land: Varmanhow stood (or stands) on a narrow stretch of land that is no more than a day's ride from one side to the other. It is currently an area dominated by forest, though Belander's followers are quickly clearing the trees.

The People: Not unlike Ramholt, nearly anyone can be found in Varmanhow. Distinctly unlike Ramholt, however, the men and women of Varmanhow are much more behaved. They work with a mission, ever alert for the sudden appearance of cold elves or an attack by orcs.

Of Note: Many nations aren't entirely sure they want Varmanhow restored. Having a major city here would divert trade south from Ramholt and north from the caravan trails to Dubfeich. Skerys sees Varmanhow as a potential political rival. Ever-practical Dulcine sees it as a colossal waste of time. It's not at all clear what the cold elves think, but they don't seem enthusiastic. The Bleakmoon orcs certainly don't want this intrusion on the fringes of their territory made permanent!

Jada Sea

Shallow and sunwarmed, the Jada would be a pleasant place except for the predations of the Bleakmoon orcs to the east. Fortunately, they do not often take to the water (though they have no fear of it). Only the narrow northern and southern shores are even remotely friendly to travellers, though: Varmanhow polices the north, with Daimanhow, a tiny, ancient colony (surviving in isolation since shortly after the Long Fury) clinging as best it can to the south. Illirisen turns back all who approach the western shores but on occasion graceful elven boats have been seen sailing along the coast.

Bleakmoon Orcs

The lands east and south of Varmanhow have long been claimed by the fierce Bleakmoon tribe. Orcs with a chip on their collective shoulder, members of the Bleakmoon tribe tend to be belligerent and warlike, never taking 'yes' for an answer. Their territory is marked with carved trees and the bones of enemies; they defend it without mercy. This doesn't mean that they respect anyone else's borders, however. Those trying to resurrect Varmanhow are subject to frequent raids (much of the ancient Varman nation now lies with Bleakmoon territory) and the orcs frequently test the wooded boundaries of Illirisen as well. It is said that Pryshydd should consider itself lucky to be cursed or else the Bleakmoons would venture north

and lay it waste (in fact, some of them do already raid that far).

The People: Bleakmoons are massively broad and powerful orcs. They are probably more nocturnally active than other tribes, frequently painting their skin with black grease as camouflage. Their aggression isn't reserved for their enemies: Bleakmoon culture is viciously competitive and only the strong survive. Most of their rituals are centered around who can absorb or dish out the most punishment. Bleakmoons are almost always deliberately scarred or branded, often very visibly.

Illirisen

Once, in some vastly remote age, elves lived all across the Boken Domains but now they have only one kingdom: Illirisen. The forest nation of the cold elves occupies a long tract of land stretching from the middle of the southern Boken coast to the interior of the southlands, where trees give way to grass. Humans, orcs, half-folk, and even dawn elves have no place in this rigid culture – the cold elves do not wish to be disturbed. Tales have spread, however, of wonders predating the Varman Age, of cities that never knew the chaos of the Long Fury, of immortal elves so ancient that they remember ages of myth. Illirisen keeps many secrets behind its silent borders. With the departure of the dawn elves, there are few remaining who see any need to pass through those borders.

The Land: Little is known about the precise geography of Illirisen but tales tell of an ancient forest groomed for so long that it grows with a rigid perfection. The cold elves live among the trees in cities of glass and silver; there are uninhabited stretches of the great forest for certain, but they could never be considered wild. Still, there are dangers here, wild beasts and creatures forgotten by Dama beyond the forest. Tales also tell of sacred mountains at the heart of Illirisen, but if they exist, only elven eyes have seen them.

Cities: A single open port exists on the Boken coast of Illirisen – Vreelandar is a crowded place strictly controlled by the elves. Travelers hoping to see a city of glass will be disappointed; Vreelandar was built and is inhabited only by humans dealing with the elves on matters of diplomacy and trade.

The People: As rigid and cool as their name would suggest, the cold elves are tall, thin, and elegant. Cold elves who find life in Illirisen unappealing either leave on their own or are pressured to do so. Very few cold elves are dissatisfied, however – virtually all of the troublemakers departed long ago to become dawn elves. The culture and appearance of cold elves is described under *Races of Dama*, below.

Of Note: Those attempting to penetrate the borders of Illirisen typically meet either with a swift end on an elven blade or a slow death wandering

lost in the magic that protects the forest; the few that find their way out again count themselves lucky. The queen of the cold elves, Besirith Irosal, is a living god of tremendous power.

Dubfeich

The Bright City stands proud at the middle of the southern coast of the Boken Sea, the hub of a vast trade network that extends across the Domains and throughout the interior southlands. Caravans travel to and from the distant Dalhu Coast, a voyage that can consume the better part of a year. Old, though not ancient, Dubfeich is a place of excitement and wealth, a city of adventure and tall tales. Although it is a city-state with a responsibility only to itself, Dubfeich has slowly become the de facto power center of the entire south coast and all of the smaller cities of the coast defer to it. Even the nomads of the interior respect Dubfeich's power and wealth. Goods from across Dama are available here (though Ramholt has taken away some of Dubfeich's traffic in less acceptable goods). The visitor to Dubfeich should be wary, however – while the city may seem a shining, adventurous place filled with friendly people, it does have a dark side and new "friends" can be quick with a knife. Dubfeich is ruled from the Rose Palace by the Learned Man, a ruler elected for life by his or her predecessor and a council of powerful men and women.

The Land: Dubfeich is primarily a sprawling city, but one with many green spaces, parks, and public gardens. Although this is an arid region, the coast is damp enough to provide greenery and Dubfeich itself is well-supplied by the mighty river Ride that flows north out of the southlands. Venture too far from coast or river, however, and the landscape quickly becomes dry grassland, then desert.

The People: Cleverness is the quintessential Dub trait – natives of Dubfeich think fast on their feet and are generally considered to be great wits and passionate speakers. They are quick to anger but also quick to forgive most of the time. They share blood with the nomads of the southlands, the Medan, and if each group has a secret disdain for the other, it's at least clear that they are the same people. Both Dub and Medan are sturdy people with wide grins, blue or green eyes, and hair that covers all shades of red; most are also prone to freckles. Bragging and storytelling are well-respected pastimes.

Of Note: Chaotic building practices have turned Dubfeich into a maze, with alleys, courtyards, and structures buried so deep they don't see the sun. Older ruins are said to stand forgotten beneath the modern city. In a city with relatively little available land, landowning nobles are not the only aristocracy – this fact is well-

recognized and landed nobles mix easily with landless, but wealthy merchant-princes.

Ride River

Most Dub are unaware that the great river that brings water to their city and fields begins in the driest parts of the Boken Domains. Scant streams of meltwater from the peaks of the Brundais, the Rukuas, and the Velas, and thin trickles from springs deep beneath them come together in a slow, muddy journey to the Boken Sea. On the way, they are joined by brooks and lesser rivers from the Medarian Plains. The Ride is subject to high floods in the spring but in the summer, it can sometimes fall drastically. On those rare occasions when an explorer from Dub wishes to venture into the mountains or the badlands, he will travel up the Ride; the reverse, however, is also true when Startooth orcs or foul mountain monsters wish to pay a visit to less hostile climes. The upper reaches of the Ride can be as dangerous as the badlands themselves.

Medarian Plains

As travellers move south into the rainshadow of the Brundai ranges, the land becomes progressively drier. The Medarian Plains are the most hospitable of these dry lands. Along the edge of the northern forest, they are relatively lush, but quickly turn into dry grasslands — not completely uninhabitable, but still fairly barren and dangerous for the untrained. They are home of most of the nomadic Medan, a great chain of human clans that stretches almost to the Dalhu Coast. Herd animals thrive here and trading caravans can be found making their way between south and north. Unfortunately, the Sandforged orcs haunt the Medarian as well, striking in swift raids, then retreating back to the desolation of their desert home. Immense grassfires can also be a danger on the tinder-dry plains.

Ha'ish Desert

Closer to the Brundai ranges, the Meharian Plains give way to the Ha'ish, a restless desert of sands and rock. The only humans that make their homes here are a few hardy groups of Medan and even they stick to the less harsh northern fringes of the desert. Most of the desert is inhabited only by the Sandforged clan of orcs and even they treat their home with healthy respect. There are rarities in the desert, however, that the orcs bring forth for trade and that sometimes draw explorers of other races into the Ha'ish. Those who emerge from the desert tell strange tales of abandoned cities like no other and regions of desert with sands like bright glass or black cinders. Often they succumb to the call of the desolate sands and return to the Ha'ish — usually to meet their death. Even some among

the Sandforged give in to this lure and the orcs refer to the Ha'ish as the Grudanun Mogra, the 'hungry wilderness.'

Kadi'ma

According to tradition, Kadi'ma is the site of the very first use of magic anywhere on Dama. There is no proof of any kind that could offer substance to this claim, but certainly Kadi'ma or some other city has long existed on this site and the city has always attracted sorcerers of all types. During the Long Fury, the dwarven hordes were held off by the heroic and desperate actions of spellcasters. Even when they fell, the hordes found that the heart of the city was protected by some inexplicable mystic shield.

More realistic tales claim that Kadi'ma (or at least the most recent city to occupy the site) began as the northernmost colony of the cities of the Dalhu Coast — Kadi'ma unquestionably shares more culturally with the far south than it does with the other Boken Domains. Indeed, it is almost a courtesy to call it a Domain since it actually rests among the mountains of the Straeling coast south of the Boken Sea. If it did begin as a colony, however, Kadi'ma has surpassed its mother-city as a nation in its own right, a gateway between north and south and a center of learning. It is the library of the west — if anything is worth knowing, it is known in Kadi'ma. This does mean that the city itself has blurred a bit over the years. "Old Kadi'ma" refers to the ancient city of stone that nestled against the mountainside and survived the Long Fury largely intact. It is the haunt of scholars and sorcerers. "New Kadi'ma" or simply "Kadi'ma" is more nation than city and encompasses the settlement below the mountain-city as well as all the smaller towns that farm the coastal plains.

The Land: Kadi'ma has three regions. The first is the coastal plain, well-settled and well-farmed — warmer ocean currents from the south soften the normally harsh weather of the Straeling coast. As the plains rise to the mountains, they become thick with great old trees, a lush cloud-forest. The cloud-forest stretches among the mountain valleys, but the mountains themselves are the third region of the land, harsh and unforgiving. Kadi'ma does not claim the interior of the mountains, but its natives tell many stories of the rocky wilderness, the orcs that live there, and other strange things.

Cities: Most cities of Kadi'ma are small and little more than large towns. The only true city of note is Old Kadi'ma, a cramped place of stone steps and stacked houses built across mountainsides. Relatively few people outside of sorcerers and scholars live in the city itself anymore because of its isolated position, though at beginning of the Long Fury it was a crowded community.

The People: A Kadi is immediately recognizable: their skin is rich dark brown and their black hair tightly curled. They share much with the Dalhu Coast, including a distinctive cut to their clothes, a fondness for bold, earth-toned colors, and a spicy cooking style, although all these things tend to be modified to better suit the colder Straeling coast. Their art is strong, with heavy lines, and lines are in fact a common theme in Kadi culture (the Kadi have invented many games involving the apparently simple manipulation of an ordinary piece of string). They love to laugh and joke, but are otherwise solid, dependable, and practical; many ordinary Kadi will snort disdainfully at the interest of sorcerers in Kadi'ma.

Of Note: An oft-repeated tale suggests that the mountains above Kadi'ma conceal a strong dwarven presence, though there is no actual evidence for this. Kadi'ma was the mortal home of the Hero Sariph of the Book.

Brundai Ranges

The largest and harshest mountains anywhere in the Boken Domains are found in the extensive Brundai ranges. The Brundais proper are the long chain furthest west and following the Straeling coast. Their seaward flanks are cloaked by the cloud-forests of Kadi'ma and are actually well known to Kadi explorers. So tall and massive are the Brundais that they force virtually all moisture from the air; the lesser ranges on their eastern side receive even less precipitation than the Ha'ish. These eastern ranges are somewhat less tall on average, but no less rugged and are perhaps even more dangerous than the Brundais. From north to south, these ranges closest to the Boken Domains are known as the Rukuas, the Velas, the Irai and the Natans. The midreaches of the Irai and the Natan hold a special danger: among their roots twine the halls of Clanhold Darkglass and the monstrous creations of that clan roam throughout all the Brundai ranges.

Karok — The Badlands

Most races know the desolate areas that lie between the Brundai ranges simply as 'the badlands.' Only the Startooth orcs give it another name. They call it Karok and no article is ever applied to this name. Karok is a hard place, mile upon mile of dead, dry, broken stone. Life exists here, but even the Sandforged would be hard pressed to find it. The true beauty of this high, arid wasteland comes at night, when Karok seems to be the closest place on Dama to the Sea of Stars. Like the Brundais, however, Karok is haunted by the monsters of the Darkglass dwarves and by isolated clans of ogres and spider-goblins. What few streams emerge east of the Brundais tend to run to the north toward the Boken Sea; although most of

them are little more than gullies for years at a time, enough water does come down from the mountains (especially the comparatively gentle northern reaches of the Brundais) in trickles and creeks to form the headwaters of the river Ride.

Below Ground

The clanholds of the foul dwarves extend for unknown miles under the surface of Dama, both parallel to the upper world and deep beneath it. Entrances to this dark place are rare and well-hidden — any that come to the attention of surface-dwellers are swiftly dealt with. Still, it's no easier to seal the dwarven clanholds entirely than it would be to demolish every single human hut. The Boken Domains happen to have the misfortune of lying between two of the three great clanholds, **Steelwind** and **Darkglass**. The third clanhold, **Goldhand**, is mercifully far to the southeast, and if there is any truth to the rumors of other clanholds lying deeper yet beneath Dama, they seem to spare as little thought for the surface as the surface spares for them.

Clanhold Darkglass lies under the easternmost of the southerly mountain ranges, separated aboveground from Kadi'ma by the coastal range and a wide, deadly badland of broken stone. Clan Darkglass has a special reputation as a clan of alchemists and breeders of horrors. They are slippery customers, more weasel than dwarf, but generally more interested in making plans than carrying them out.

Clan Steelwind, on the other hand, is direct, forthright, and deadly — they are the most martial of the dwarven clans and probably the least satisfied with their defeat during the Long Fury. Clanhold Steelwind lies beneath old mountains to the northeast of Dulcine and east of the Bearstalker lands, but Steelwind warbands have a tendency to spread far and wide through an extensive tunnel network and careful stealth. Fortunately, Steelwind tends to be split by internal struggles that keep it from uniting and becoming a more serious threat than it already is.

For general information on the appearance and culture of dwarves, see *Races of Dama* below.

Other Nations of Influence

Certain other nations have a reputation — for good or bad — in the Boken Domains, though they are so far away that they have no real impact on daily life or regular politics.

Far to the northwest of Dulcine is the territory of the wild and bloodthirsty **Stormhowl** tribe of orcs. In the depths of the coldest winters, they have been known to raid south. Not so the near-legendary **Thundermother** tribe of the distant northeast — supposedly guardians of the orc

ancestral lands, they are as isolationist as the cold elves.

East of Pryshydd lie the tainted lands of the **Middle Passage**. Forever corrupted by the Passing of the Steelwind, the Middle Passage is a wilderness of mountains, savage kingdoms, and petty freeholds. Even the relatively well-protected caravan routes are not without their dangers. Tales abound of bandits, monsters, necromancers, and cannibals. Those who survive the horrors of the Middle Passage arrive in **Tulmir**. An empty, haunted place, the vast and rolling river country of the half-folk is a shadow of what it once was. Still, there is enough here to keep trade flowing — slowly — between east and west.

South of the Bleakmoon territories is a small, isolated human nation called **Nithisant**. According to their own legends, they are the heirs of Varmanhow, descendants of refugees who fled the Heart of Peace as it was destroyed.

Orcs tell stories of a tribe that left the north while Dama was young; supposedly they settled in the far southeast of the world in the mountains above the Dalhu Coast and became the cultured savages of the **Stoneknife** tribe. They are not the only tribe in the far south, however. The nomads of the southlands below Dubfeich fight a running battle with the **Sandforged** orcs, while the dry badland valleys across the mountains east of Kadi'ma are home to the small **Startooth** tribe, orcs known for a mystic bent and outlandish body piercings.

Beyond the Physical World

The hard and fast lands of Dama are not all there is to existence. High above Dama, beyond the moon, is the **Sea of Stars**, the home of the Heroes and a marvelous afterlife to which the souls of all those who are truly deserving may go after their mortal bodies die. Occasionally souls may also return from the Sea of Stars if the need is truly great; in Pryshydd, the tradition of Da teaches that this happens frequently.

Counterpart to the Sea of Stars is the dark land of **Shadow**, a terrible place of nightmares and demons. It exists alongside Dama. Sorcerers summon demons forth from Shadow to do their bidding and the Lords of Shadow took up dwelling places there after the Long Fury. The souls of the truly evil pass into Shadow upon their death. Tales tell of sorcerers who cross into Shadow to draw on the horrid power of the place; such tales describe it as a twisted reflection of Dama where it is always night but no stars are visible and the moon is always full. Tales also say that sometimes, when the full moon casts strong shadows in Dama, it is possible for anyone to step by accident into Shadow.

Gods of Dama

Like so many other aspects of Dama, religion and even the gods themselves were shaped by the Long Fury. The dominant faith across Dama is a belief in the Heroes of Light and the Lords of Shadow, opposing forces roughly representing good and evil.

The Heroes are literally the legendary heroes who led the forces of light during the Long Fury. Most humans, half-folk, and dawn elves follow the Heroes as a general group of protectors, following a loose ethos (the Ethos of Light or simply the Ethos) of community, service, and good works. Some who feel more strongly for the tradition of a particular god chose to identify themselves with that god exclusively, adopting him or her as their patron and often joining the cult of mysteries associated with that god (a mystery cult does not refute the general ethos of the Heroes, but builds on it or reinterprets it according to the teaching and deeds of a particular Hero).

Opposing the Heroes are the Lords of Shadow (also known as the lords of darkness or simply the Lords). Dwarves and the goblin races are the most common followers of the Lords, but there are those of all races who are drawn to their dark promises. Unlike the Heroes, the Lords do not promote a common ethos (at least not intentionally) and their worshippers are almost always devoted to one Lord or another. Some Lords are on better terms than others and will sometimes work together — their followers generally mimic these attitudes. The Lords are the legendary villains of the Long Fury, those who destroyed the Varman Age in their lust for power and ruled the world until the Heroes arose to defeat them.

Outside of the Heroes and the Lords are a tiny number of deities that are remembered as Those Who Stood Apart, gods who did not side with either the Heroes or the Lords during the Long Fury. Neither good nor truly evil, they generally have a limited number of worshippers. Mur Eats-it-Raw is the hero-god of the orcs, a shaman of tremendous power. Besirith Irosal is the queen of the cold elves — and the still living ruler of Illirisen.

Heroes, Lords, and Those Who Stood Apart all have in common an origin at some point or another as mortal beings transformed during (or before) the Long Fury. The details of this ascension to godhood is usually part of a god's mysteries, though the basic story of each is generally common knowledge. All, however, are shrouded by the mists of time and chaos and few are easily sorted out into a sensible

history, though some share a common story (Anderes Glorian and Arlora Irosal, for example).

There is one additional deity worshipped in the world: secretive followers of the eldwitchen tradition venerate the Dark Mother of Waters, an ancient goddess said to have participated in the creation of Dama (specifically, she is said to have created the oceans of the world from her saliva and the rivers from her tears). As a goddess of the world, she is a cold and distant deity and has few followers outside of eldwitches and a few scattered wilderness communities, though desperate sailors will sometimes invoke her for luck on the ocean. Worship of the Dark Mother is the last remnant of the religion that existed in Dama before the Long Fury. In fact, storytellers say that the Long Fury truly began with the massacre of the priests of the old gods by the Lord of Shadow Apos the Damned and the loss of all but a few of their traditions.

Regardless of what god they worship, all peoples of Dama agree that the souls of evil beings fall into Shadow at their death (followers of the Lords alternately fear and welcome this). Opinion of what happens to the souls of the good and not-quite-evil varies. Followers of the Ethos believe the deserving soul ascends to peace in the Sea of Stars while undeserving souls simply fade away. Followers of the eldwitchen tradition believe souls pass into a great ocean for a time before eventually returning to life. Orcs believe any soul that is not completely stained by evil is reborn as an orc to enjoy life again. Cold elves seldom contemplate death but believe that an elf who dies prematurely is gathered into the memory of Besirith Irosal.

The Heroes of Light

The Heroes of Light are worshipped in principle as group but in practice they are so venerated only on certain holy days. More typically each will have his or her own shrine in an area, varying in grandeur according to local popularity. In some places, Heroes may share a shrine; in others they not be represented at all.

Shrines are attended, and Heroes represented, in the community by priests who have devoted themselves to the mysteries of a particular Hero. Priests of the Heroes generally work together and cooperate just as the Heroes themselves did (although individual personal conflicts are far from unknown). Priests generally follow a very loose organizational structure; in a certain sense, they evolved out of travelling storytellers who spread word of the exploits of the Heroes during the Long Fury, providing solace and inspiration with their tales (in fact, the Book of Courage, the holy text of the Heroes, is a collection of those tales). Over the

centuries, an informal hierarchy has evolved and the priests in a given area will typically look to the wisest (and often oldest) among them for leadership, and so on. Traditional power centers have solidified over time such that there are regional traditions, but the leaders of these traditions generally get along well.

Common folk (with the exception of certain warrior orders) do not generally have any special devotion to one Hero or another, invoking and worshipping them at any time when their blessing might seem appropriate. There is no particular holy day through the week, but the major turning points of the day (dawn, noon, dusk) are common times of prayer.

The tradition that gave rise to priests, however, also gave rise to another form of religious figure in Dama: the storyteller. Storytellers are often considered blessed by the Heroes and though not all storytellers are holy or even religious, they often have remarkable luck and seem touched by the divine. Priests as a whole look down on storytellers; storytellers, typically irreverent, seldom care what priests think.

Faith and Mystery Cults

All characters with Arcane Background (Faith) have been initiated into the mystery cult of their patron deity and hold a position of some respect and responsibility, whether formal or informal. Any character with the desire to do so may elect to join a mystery cult, however. There is no cost, but no character may belong to more than one cult and any attempt to join a cult after character creation should be roleplayed out.

The benefit to belonging to a mystery cult is that other initiates (including priests) are better inclined to respond favourably to reasonable requests for aid. In return, initiated character should also expect to be asked for aid. Characters who abuse this system or who fail to live up to the creed of their patron should expect significant social censure (priests also risk the loss of their arcane powers). Joining a mystery cult is a serious undertaking.

Note that only followers of the Ethos form mystery cults as such.

Anderes Glorian, The Shining Lord

Anderes Glorian was a young noble of Varmanhow and a leader in the resistance against the Lords of Darkness. Although that fight was sometimes brutal, Anderes is known as the embodiment of virtue, honor, and mercy. His love for Arlora Irosal drew the dawn elves into the Long Fury. He sacrificed himself to bind the Master and

end the Long Fury, though he lives again among the Sea of Stars and leads the Heroes of Light. He is depicted as a young, handsome man in armor. His symbol is a flame. His aspects are sun/fire and nobility/heroism.

The sect of Anderes Glorian is quite open and popular, but subtly favors the nobles and wealthy. Priests of Anderes Glorian make prayers at noon. Because Anderes Glorian is the champion of virtue and mercy, he has attracted a specific martial following – the order of paladins.

Arlora Irosal, The Dragon Queen

Arlora Irosal was the daughter of Besirith Irosal, a princess of the cold elves. Horrified by her mother's inaction during the fall of Varmanhow, Arlora left Illirisen to stand by the humans, embracing the fire and passion of mortality and redeeming the elves who chose to follow her. Her ferocity and passion are legendary, though tempered by the influence of Anderes Glorian. Patron of the dawn elves, her temper has also made her the patron of true dragons (an honorific at best since true dragons are now extinct). An unrivalled beauty, she is identified with the dawn and the ocean, some say because she met Anderes Glorian on a beach after turning her back on Illirisen. She is depicted as a beautiful elf woman, often surrounded by a gentle halo. Her symbol is a dragon. Her aspects are beauty/passion but also the ocean/ferocity.

Like shrines of Anderes Glorian, shrines of Arlora Irosal (also called the cult of the Dragon Queen) are quite open and very common. She attracts a wide range of worshippers and is a favorite of women of all races who seek to imitate either her beauty or her ferocity. Her priests offer their prayers at dawn.

Cerus Mimr, The Sword of Death

Cerus Mimr was a great general and a powerful warrior. Never one to command from behind, he was famed for leading his troops into battle and his devotion to the defeat of the Lords of Shadow was absolute. So absolute, in fact, was his devotion that when he died in battle, he rose again to continue the fight — the Sword of Death is undead, the paragon of duty and focus. Unlike the other Heroes, he does not dwell among the Sea of Stars but in the land of Shadow. His symbol is a sword and his aspects are battle and duty/devotion. He is the patron of warriors. Although he is undead himself, he is also the enemy of evil undead. He is portrayed as a grey-faced old warrior with a notched and worn sword.

Priests of Cerus Mimr are strong and stern. His shrines are generally small. There is nothing gentle about his worship; those who pray to him regularly are generally tough and harsh and those who

invoke him irregularly usually do so in dire circumstances. His priests worship him at dusk, just after the sun has set.

Radi Last, The Shield of Life

Radi Last was an ordinary half-folk, but emerged as a leader of her people after the massacre in Tulmir known as Weeping's End. More than the other Heroes, she is a god with two faces. One is joyful, a tender and protective mother who delights in every moment of life and is a symbol of regeneration. The other is grim, a defender and avenger of those who are victimized and who stands against injustice. She is the particular enemy of the Lord Kalthas of Steelwind, who led the dwarven armies at Weeping's End. She is one of the most popular Heroes because of her connection with the common people and her role as a healer. Naturally, she is the patron of half-folk and is typically portrayed as a serious half-folk with a child in one arm and a shield in the other. Radi Last is also known as the Shield of Life. Her aspects are protection/healing and defiance/resistance; her symbol is a serpent.

Shrines to Radi Last are generally small, but almost always numerous — many households have a small figure of her in their kitchen. Her priests attain great skill as healers though they are by no means averse to taking up arms. Surprisingly, they generally get along very well with those of Cerus Mimr. They make their prayers in the morning after the sun has risen.

Rumors persist that there is actually a tradition of avengers and assassins devoted to the grim side of Radi Last. Her priests vehemently deny the existence of such a dark cult.

Sariph of the Book

Sariph was a Kadi sage in life, a wise woman of learning and an arch-sorcerer. It is said that secrets of magic from the Age of Relics passed to her and that she holds them in trust, contained within the great book of knowledge that is her symbol. Sariph is a patient Hero; it is said that during the Long Fury, she matched wits with the Master himself in strategies that played out over centuries. Her power is tempered by her insight — she realizes that no matter how much she knows, she can never know absolutely everything. Her aspects are knowledge (especially magic) and patience; her symbol is a book. She is portrayed as an elderly woman of Kadi'ma, holding an enormous book and wearing a stole striped in the five colors of magic (red, blue, brown, white, and black — the four pure elements and Shadow). Sariph is the patron of sorcerers, sages, and any who seek knowledge.

Sariph has very few public shrines. Instead, she is represented as a mentor figure in shrines of Anderes Glorian or a guardian in libraries and other

places of knowledge. Those who devote themselves to her worship are generally already sorcerers and come to her seeking new secrets; true initiates form a wide-flung but well-informed fellowship, communicating with each other over vast distances through a variety of means (from messenger to carrier bird to magic).

Isau Jabren

Isau Jabren is something of an unlikely Hero. A wealthy, acquisitive trader, he made his contribution to the struggle against the Lords of Shadow by secretly sharing his wealth and goods and by carrying messages across Dama. He is a sly and slippery character, very charismatic. No one nation claims Isau Jabren as a native son, though he is thought to have been born either south of Varmanhow or somewhere east of Pryshydd along the Middle Passage — certainly stories say that he turned to the Light after the passing of the Steelwind through the Middle Passage en route to Tulmir. Dubfeich has adopted him fondly, though more recently, the trading nation of Ramholt has taken his ram symbol as their own. Isau is portrayed as a handsome, plump man of middle years, well-dressed and always smiling. His aspects are luck/charm and wealth/plenty (always used to the benefit of others). He is beloved of half-folk for the aid he gave to Tulmir after Weeping's End and is the patron of merchants and storytellers. Travelers will invoke his protection on journeys.

Worship of Isau Jabren is wide spread — everybody wants the wealth and aid that he brings. His priests pray before meals. Stories say that unlike the other Heroes, Isau Jabren did not ascend to the Sea of Stars after becoming a god, but still wanders Dama keeping an eye on things.

The Wolf, Renzo Dicacce

Renzo Dicacce, also called the Wolf, is a silent hunter. At one time the younger son of a great house of Dulcine, he watched his nation fall to destruction and the wilderness during the Long Fury. Bitter and dark, he chose to adapt to the ways of the wild to fight the Lords of Shadow. He is a rival of Anderes Glorian — dark where the Shining Lord is bright, ruthless where Anderes is merciful. One of the tenets of his teachings is that sometimes dark things must be done for the good of the community. Although he has taken to the wild, the Wolf is not a nature god. He is as comfortable in cities as he is in the wild places (though cities might not be comfortable with him). He is a particular enemy of demons. His symbol, naturally enough, is a wolf. His aspects are hunting/wilderness and storms/cold. He is the patron of wanderers and explorers; those journeying through the wilderness make offerings to him rather than Isau Jabren.

Although he cares little for worshippers who beg his aid (except in extreme circumstances), he willingly accepts devotees who fight for themselves. Weak in civilized places, his cult is strong in the wild. Like Anderes Glorian, the Wolf's cult has a martial arm — rangers are followers of the Wolf. His priests make their prayers at night.

The Lords of Shadow

The Lords of Shadow may be referred to as a group, but they are far from unified in the way that the Heroes of Light are. The Long Fury was marked by shifting alliances between the Lords and while certain power blocks may be more solid than others, each Lord is primarily interested only in his or her own goals. The Lords are never worshipped in common, they have no specific shared ethos, and their priests act only in their own interest. Just as followers of the Ethos do, however, the mortal forces of darkness sacrifice to individual Lords in time of need — the Lords are cruel gods and demand constant appeasement. Indeed, it is not entirely unknown for otherwise good people to try appeasing a Lord in particularly trying circumstances.

The Master

Ultimately the most powerful of the Lords, the Master was the undisputed leader of the dwarves during the Long Fury, uniting the fractious clans, and is generally portrayed as a cloaked and hooded dwarf. No one has ever seen his face and no one knows where he came from; no dwarven clan acknowledges him as their own. He is a wizard of unimaginable power and is said to have created the tattoo-binding rite that enabled the dwarves to control their demonic armies. His schemes are subtle and treacherous. He is feared (rightly so) by Lord and Hero alike. The Long Fury was ultimately brought to an end when the Heroes defeated him and trapped him in a prison of jade. Although he is bound, his priests are still active and keep the fear of him alive. He has only one aspect: magic. His symbol is a twisted rune. His followers are typically sorcerers who care only for power and unfettered knowledge. His priests pray to him at midnight.

Apos the Damned

In the Varman Age, Apos the Damned was a priest of the old gods. It is widely believed that he struck the first blow of the Long Fury, turning against his faith and killing his brother and sister priests. During the centuries of the Long Fury, he hunted them relentlessly, seeking them in their refuges and murdering them all. His involvement with the other Lords seems to have been almost accidental and always at his whim. It is possible that he may even be as powerful as the Master; though

he never challenged the Master, neither did the Master interfere with him.

Apos' motives are still a mystery. He has very few followers and even fewer priests, though those who do take up his mantle are terrors. His aspects are betrayal and murder. He is also the lord of the undead and all evil that has returned from beyond the grave owes him some allegiance. What priests he has must offer a living sacrifice with their prayers. Unlike other gods, Apos has no known symbol. On rare occasions when he is portrayed, it is as a tall, bald man in long, ancient robes.

Muz of Darkglass

A master alchemist, Muz led the Darkglass clan of dwarves through the Long Fury. He is known as the creator of monsters and is said to have been responsible for the creation of the dragonblood potion that endowed dwarven sorcerers with their powers of legend. When battles with the Heroes of Light destroyed parts of his body, Muz replaced them with substitutes of magical metal and swore to keep fighting. His symbol is a silvery orb and his aspects are alchemy, creation, and revenge. He is the patron of Clan Darkglass; sorcerers who revel in their mastery of the physical world also seek his favor. His priests are always masters of some art (whether magic, alchemy, or simple smithing) and typically use their abilities to craft fantastic and disturbing constructs. They worship him in the afternoon. Muz is portrayed as a gaunt dwarf with metal covering the left of his face, his left arm and hand, and right leg.

Kalthas of Steelwind

The most infamous of the dwarven warlords during the Long Fury, Kalthas led hordes of demons, goblins, and dwarves in the decimating sack of Tulmir that came to be known as Weeping's End. The passing of the Steelwind through the Middle Passage enroute to Tulmir also left that region twisted and haunted. He is the particular enemy of Radi Last. Kalthas is less the patron of evil warriors than the patron of leaders and commanders; his aspects are unquestioning duty and uncaring ambition. He is also the patron of Clan Steelwind. His symbol is a skull and he is depicted as an armored dwarf bearing a huge hammer. His priests seldom hide their worship of him, making their prayers in the morning, just before noon. There is nothing subtle in Kalthas' presence, though his strategies and tactics are never less than brilliant.

Goldhand

Early in the Long Fury, a great champion of dwarven Clan Goldhand, possibly the greatest dwarven warrior who ever lived, was crippled. By the craft of his clan (undisputed masters of

metalwork) and the combined dark arts of Muz and the Master, he was given new life in the body of a metal giant. Their work was only partly successful. Goldhand is a tremendously strong and lethal fighter, but retains only fragments of his intelligence and memories. Even his personal name has been lost and he is known only by his clan name. During the Long Fury, other Lords were known to fight over control of him. Since its end, Goldhand has vanished. Although the hero of Clan Goldhand, he cannot truly be considered its patron; no one worships him and he has no priests. Warriors will sometimes, however, make offerings to his memory and invoke his name in hopes of channeling his ferocious skills. His symbol is an axe and he is depicted as a dwarf of enormous size, his skin and armor all in gold.

Tafyd Ambros, the Blessed and Reborn

Tafyd Ambros was the eternal king of Pryshydd, a wise and benevolent ruler who would return to his country at irregular intervals in new incarnations heralded by the Pryshyn Oracles. His last incarnation, however, coincided with the beginning of the Long Fury and the Lords of Shadow found the child-king before the elders of Pryshydd. Bending him to their will, they took control of Pryshydd through him — bound by the Oracles, the people of Pryshydd were forced to follow the Lords. The name of Tafyd Ambros has become synonymous with weakness and capitulation even among Pryshyns, though believers await his next incarnation, certain that he will be redeemed. The symbol of Tafyd Ambros is a spiked crown; his aspects are fear and weakness. He has neither followers nor priests. He is depicted as a pale boy of about twelve years, dressed in black and wearing a dark crown.

Eskikri, Matriarch of the Spider-Goblins

Once merely freaks in the service of goblin society, the spider-goblins proved resistant to the plague unleashed against the goblin races by Mur Eats-it-Raw late in the Long Fury. Although not literally the mother of all spider-goblins, Eskikri was quick to take advantage of the situation and led her people to dominance over the goblin races. Freedom from servitude did not make her good, however, and she sided first with the dwarves, then struck out on her own after their fall at the end of the Long Fury. She is the patron of the spider-goblins first and of other goblin races a distant second. Nothing else concerns her. Her symbol is a spider and her aspects are power and cunning. Much like Besirith Irosal, she is the living god-queen of her people on Dama. She is depicted as a goblin-spider of unusual size and fierce aspect, a strand of web drawn between her hands.

Earthshaker

A dwarf imbued with the powers of earth, Earthshaker is one of the most personally powerful of the Lords in both physical strength and raw magical power. Relatively little is known about him other than his devastating appearances on battlefields during the Long Fury and his alliances with various of the other Lords. Some storytellers speculate that he was a creation, like Goldhand, of the Master, while others say that he is something much more, an elemental power in his own right drawn to the side of Lords. It is generally believed, however, that he is the patron of a secretive dwarf clan dwelling deep under Dama's surface. Shrines to his appeasement are sometimes found in dwarf cities, though, and are usually attended by stern, battle-prone priests. Dwarven warriors often follow him. His symbol is a stone; his aspects are earth, anger, and combat. He is depicted as a dwarf with stone-like skin and dark eyes.

Morbetta, the Queen of Chains

The island nation of Scurgrimme turned to raiding during the Long Fury, especially raiding for slaves that could be sold to the dwarves. Morbetta was the cruel queen of Scurgrimme and led her people into a willing alliance with the forces of darkness. She became an enemy to freedom. Morbetta is the patron of oppressors of all varieties, but especially slavers, raiders, and bandits. She is portrayed as a tall warrior-woman with red hair and armor hung about with the chains that are her symbol. Her aspects are the inflicting of fear, captivity, and oppression. She seldom has priests as such, but grants her divine favor to those who are zealous in their worship of her.

Torment, First of the Fell

Although Eskikri is not literally the mother of the spider-goblins, Torment was the first of the fell — the first to awaken to sentience in the laboratories of dwarves while the dragonblood potion was being developed and among the first whose progeny bred true. He embodies all of the primal traits of the fell: self-loathing, madness, a penchant for self-mutilation, and a fierce drive for survival. Recognizing that only cooperation with the dwarves would give him and his people a chance, he followed their orders until the fell were able to find a place in the world. Over his life, however, the Scale Dream ultimately drove Torment dangerously insane. Only the fell regard Torment as something of a hero, yet even they acknowledge that he wrapped himself too thickly in shadow to be considered part of the light. He is portrayed as a figure with the body of a strong human, the head, claws, and tail of a rat, and the eyes and horns of a true dragon. His symbol is a

scarred scale. His aspects are madness and pain, but also hope.

Torment has two cults that follow him. One cult worships him in his aspects of madness and pain; they are generally lunatics and draw followers from all the races. Priests of this cult pray at night before a fire. The other cult exists only among the fell, who revere Torment as a fallen hero and a tragic figure. Priests of this cult also pray at night but before beautiful candles.

Breaker, Scourge of Sorcerers

Breaker was an ogre endowed by the Master with tremendous power and the ability to resist the effects of magic — he was a living weapon intended to fight the sorcerers that joined in the resistance. Tales persist that the Master had some hold over him — surely he would not otherwise have given Breaker power that could resist his own. Breaker is portrayed as an ogre of enormous size wielding an iron morningstar. His aspects are persistence and hatred. He is revered both by those who loathe magic and sorcerers and by goblins and ogres, who see him as a counter to Eskikri (indeed, no love was ever lost between Breaker and the magic-wielding matriarch). His symbol is a morningstar. Priests who follow him pray in the harsh sun of noon.

Jev Thorn

A man of Varmanhow, Jev Thorn was gifted with supernatural powers of grace and persuasion. He was the great seducer and a great musician. He drew many people to the cause of darkness, but his greatest conquest was the icy queen of the cold elves, Besirith Irosal —while she dallied with Jev Thorn, the armies of Illirisen stood idle and the hordes of the dwarves threw down Varmanhow. He is both the consummate bard and the consummate assassin, charming but deadly. He is depicted a handsome man with dark hair and bearing a viol. His symbol is a crescent moon; his aspects are music, passion/seduction, and death. Many people (even those who follow the Ethos) secretly sacrifice to Jev Thorn in the belief that their worship of him will enhance their own abilities of charm. His priests pray in the evening. It is said that at the end of the Long Fury, he was stripped of his powers, horribly scarred, and left to wander Dama as a mere human. He has no priests as such, but those devoted to him often lure others to his service.

Sharahz the Flawless

The envoy of the Lords of Shadow, she served as an advisor to countless courts throughout the Long Fury, each time betraying them to the dwarves or leading them into folly and ruin. She is a master shapechanger, though her natural form is that of a stunningly beautiful woman, possibly even

as beautiful as Arlora Irosal. In fact, tradition says that Sharahz is the child of Jev Thorn and Besirith Irosal, a human-elf half-breed and half-sister to the Dragon Queen. This has never been substantiated (if it was true, Sharahz would be the only known instance of such breeding between species). Sharahz always played the role of the innocent, but in fact she was the most intelligent and treacherous of the Lords, a special student of the Master. Her aspects are cruelty and manipulation; her symbol is a scepter. Her favor is sought out by those who wish to seize hidden power and influence (in this she is an enemy of Kalthas of Steelwind, who believes in wielding power openly). Like Jev Thorn, she has devoted followers rather than priests. They pray before mirrors, but take care to never reveal themselves — who would trust the follower of such a deceiver?

Those Who Stood Apart

Naturally, the worshippers of Those Who Stood Apart do not share a connection with each other or with the Heroes or Lords. The teachings and goals of Besirith Irosal and Mur Eats-it-Raw are their own and are usually focused. They may work with Heroes or conceivably with Lords, but it is under their own terms. Their "priests" maintain their own traditions as well.

Besirith Irosal

Proud and cold, the god-queen of the cold elves has ruled her people at least since the height of the Varman Age. She is the paragon of the rigid, formal cold elves; over time, she has also come to be identified with the moon. She is always depicted in formalized style as an elf queen of harsh beauty. Her aspects are ice, control, and ritual. Her only followers are cold elves who worship her at numerous small public shrines throughout Illirisen. Her priests are her handmaidens; they pray each day at moonrise. She is also served by a martial order similar to Anderes Glorian's paladins but cold and unyielding.

Mur Eats-it-Raw

An orc shaman and warrior, Mur is at one with nature. He is wild and unconquerable, fighting both dark and light with equal vigor if they get in his way. He is something of a trickster. During the Long Fury, he did fight against the Lords, the dwarves, and their goblin and demon servants, recognizing that they would destroy him if he did not destroy them. He tends to think before he acts, however. His attacks on the Lords sometimes interfered with the battles of the Heroes of Light (or vice versa, if orc tales are to be believed), and his unleashing of a plague against the goblin races gave the dangerous spider-goblins their chance at ascendancy. All orcs

revere him (although they also revere heroes within their tribes, even tribal heroes are acknowledged to have followed Mur) and is imitated by a loose cult of shamans who pray at dusk. Certain dedicated warriors follow him as well and in fact Mur's rangers and the Wolf's rangers often get along fairly well. Mur is depicted as a big, bold, cunning orc with a spear.

The Dark Mother of Waters

Often referred to only as 'the Mother', the god of the eldwitches is ancient and, to those who do not worship her, seems largely withdrawn from the world. Eldwitches, however, claim that her voice can be heard in all things. Although not a kind mother, she can be harsh. Her eldwitches, scattered across Dama, see themselves as guardians of the natural order and balance of the world. There is division among them as to exactly what this means: some believe it means that the sanctity of the wilderness must be protected, while others believe it means that the natural balance between the needs of the world and the needs of the races inhabiting it are what is important. The Mother and the eldwitches tend to have the most influence on the edges of civilization and in the wilderness, though even here that isn't much. Eldwitchen worship takes place at night, ideally under an open sky and/or with some reflective surface. The Mother is very seldom depicted in art, but when she is, it is as a woman's face formed from the night sky.

Races of Dama

Humans

Unfettered by the bonds of land and time experienced by the orcs and elves, humans have always experienced an intense curiosity and wanderlust. They spread out of their southern homelands very early in the history of Dama – so early that any ties to the south are less than myth in human minds. Those who concern themselves with such things imagine that migration to the Boken Domains occurred in roughly four or five waves. The oldest brought the ancestors of Scurgrimme and Skerys north and west around the Boken Sea. A second wave brought migrants who would split into northern and southern branches – the former going around the Boken Sea to settle in what would become Dulcine, the latter settling the southern Boken coast. A third wave related to the second came along later and settled at the end of the Boken to become the Pryshyns. The fourth migration brought the nomad inhabitants of the southlands into contact with the peoples on the southern coast of the Boken; their mingling gave rise to the ancestors of the Dub. The fifth wave, if it is counted, is that which brought the ancestors of the Kadi up from the Dalhu Coast.

The traditions and physical appearance of the humans of Dama, whether from the Boken Domains or elsewhere, varies greatly and can best be broken down by nation (see *Around the Boken Sea* above). All humans, however, tend to share a certain restlessness and a greater ability to break with tradition than any other race.

Most humans also speak the same language, regardless of where they're from, a legacy of the Long Fury and a need to communicate effectively in the struggle for survival. Many humans seldom even give their common tongue a second thought, but they are in fact speaking Varman. This isn't the only human language still spoken, however: Scurran and Grimman speak Skaer, a thick and harsh language; Pryshyn is the language of Pryshydd, never spoken to outsiders though the Pryshyn Oracles have been known to issue their prophecies in any language; and Feigen is a rapid-fire street language spoken among the lower classes of Dubfeich. Of highly limited utility is High Skeryn, a rich, rolling tongue used only in formal situations among the nobles and scholars of Skerys. In fact, it is virtually identical to Skaer and storytellers know many humorous tales that revolve around Skeryn ladies being addressed in the rudest of terms by Scurran raiders. It should be noted that many strange dialects exist along the Middle Passage – every thing is tainted in the lost lands. Varman, Pryshyn, and High Skeryn/Skaer exist in written forms (as do fragments of older languages from the Age of Relics; Feigen, however, has no

distinct written form) but literacy is a relatively rare gift among humans.

Dwarves

The dwarves of Dama are wicked, greedy, and cruel. The dwarven personality is brilliant and tenacious, but basically vile and nasty. Essentially, dwarves believe they are destined to rule the world. Their ties to their clan are strong, an in-grained loyalty that is really the only reason dwarves are any threat at all and also the only reason the clans do not unite again as a single overwhelming force.

Dwarves are squat and broad with a general style that is both militaristic and influenced by the importance of sorcerers in their culture – mystic symbolism, severe cuts, and dark colors are common, as are tattoos. Dwarves get along with those who are willing to acknowledge their superiority: in other words, the goblin races and enslaved demons. Non-dwarves who both respect them and win their respect are accepted grudgingly; the raiders of Scurgrimme are a good example. Dwarves of the individual clans exhibit some diversity in appearance, but there is remarkably little within any given clan. Clan Steelwind tends to be heavier and stronger, favoring black both in their dress and in the color of their hair (leading some to speculate that they dye their hair and beards). Clan Darkglass is paler in coloring, dressing in garments of leather and ornately worked metal; unlike other clans, they shave their heads and go bald. Clan Goldhand shows off its wealth with brightly colored clothes of elaborate cut.

Dwarves speak their own guttural language; many read and write it as well. Sorcerers and certain military commanders among them often speak the foul tongue of demons.

Elves

Cold Elves

Truly cold only in their demeanor, cold elves are chill, distant, stiff, and haughty. Their society is quiet and rigid. They have no plans to dominate the world or even to expand beyond their scattered enclaves. They contemplate the night sky and drink dark wine made from the sap of trees, letting the rest of the world go its way. Extremely long lived, it seems that some cold elves may actually be immortal — according to some schools of thought among the elves, it matters little that their territory has shrunk to the borders of Illirisen as the cold elves will come to rule the world simply by outlasting all other races. In a way, cold elves are bound by time to timelessness. Once they tend to settle in a place or on a way of doing things, it's

almost impossible to move them away from that way or place.

There are those cold elves who take a somewhat different view. Although they still believe that elves are above other races and should keep to themselves, they also know that Illirisen needs some contact with the outside world. Since that world cannot be allowed into Illirisen, these elves go or are sent out into it. Departure from Illirisen is almost always reluctant; cold elves are generally genuinely happy with affairs as they stand. They seldom get along well with other races (especially dawn elves) but never show it.

Cold elves are pale – their hair ranges from ash blonde to white to pale silver, while their eyes are pale blue, grey, or faded violet. In build, they are somewhat taller than humans, but much lighter. It seems that passion is unknown to the cold elves. Even in their art and pastimes, they prefer activities that follow clear patterns and rules. Most of the time they dress in simple clothing of light colors, but chose ornate costumes for formal occasions. Cold elves speak Elvish, a relentlessly formal and liquid language that most believe should be spoken exclusively by cold elves. Addressing a cold elf in her own tongue is insulting. Although they may seem passionless, cold elves do not hesitate to march to war; they are precise and merciless warriors.

Dawn Elves

When Arlora Irosal left her mother and Illirisen to stand with Anderes Glorian and the forces of light, she did more than reject her own immortality: she redeemed all of those elves who followed her. Embracing all the fire of life that cold elves deny, dawn elves are lively, energetic, daring, and passionate. Dawn elves do not typically form large communities but often dwell among other races (although in some areas, small tribes of dawn elves are not unknown). Creatures of little patience, dawn elves are always active. They get along well with virtually all races save dwarves and goblins – even orcs admit to a grudging respect for dawn elves. Dawn elves have a tremendous competitive streak, but are seldom poor losers or poor winners; they compete for the joy of it and immerse themselves in life.

The change from cold elf to dawn elf isn't just a matter of attitude. It is a real, physical change. Dawn elves age and die like any other race, although they remain somewhat longer lived (rare dawn elves live to about twice the lifespan of a human). They are sturdier than cold elves. Their eyes are usually dark, but bright, and their skin tanned from time spent outdoors. Their natural hair color is usually light, but dawn elves frequently dye it almost any color. Piercings and tattoos are common among them and their clothing tends to

the outrageous (though seldom impractical). A dawn elf enclave is a wild place, full of color and music. Many dawn elves speak Elvish, though with a distinct clipped accent, and take delight in making cold elves uncomfortable by speaking Elvish around them.

It should be noted that while dawn elves frequently and joyfully take lovers among humans and orcs, the three species cannot reproduce among themselves and mating does not produce offspring.

Fell

When the dwarves were experimenting with the fabled dragonblood potion that gave their sorcerers the power to summon demon hordes, they often fed their concoctions to animals and slaves in their laboratories. Over time, some test subjects were changed by these potions, most frequently into short-lived abominations. In a tiny number of test subjects, however, the changes were subtle but powerful and stable. Dwarves nurtured these beings and sometimes bred them together. Out of the laboratories of the dwarves emerged a peculiar, tortured race: the fell. Initially employed by dwarves as expendable troops, the fell came to resent their enslavement. When the opportunity came, many fell defected to the forces of light and fought their former masters.

Today fell are rare but generally recognized as a civilized species, though not everyone trusts them. The Heroes, however, accept fell as worshippers. Fell generally fall into the underclasses of any given city. They do not form their own nations and generally live in the cities of others where they can blend in and hide, struggling in the face of a destiny that has dealt them a harsh hand. They speak their own language, a rattling, hissing tongue. The Fell language has a crude written form known as Fellsign, but it is generally used only for scratching short messages and warnings.

Fell combine features of the three races that begat their species: dragons, lab rats, and humans (or humanoids of some kind). Most fell have a humanoid shape of medium-size, with only a few ratlike and draconic features. They tend to be lean and lightly-built, with sparse hair (if any), and delicate scales covering most of their body (lending a light, multi-colored shimmer to their skin). Their eyes are large and luminous eyes, shining in the dark like a cat's. Their features are usually pinched and slightly elongated; their ears are long, pointed, and usually slightly scalloped. Older fell often develop small horns, crests, and other bony growths. A delicate, low crest runs down their spine (it causes no discomfort under clothes). Fell have long, delicate fingers tipped with claws, sharp teeth, and powerful jaws. Very rarely, fell are born

with extremes of appearance, from intelligent rats with brassy scales to huge beings with the bulk of dragons and the intellect of rodents. All fell are extraordinarily tough and can pass unscathed through raging fires.

All fell share in what they call the Scale Dream: when a fell dreams, he dreams the memories of the extinct great dragons, including the sensation of flying (ironically, no matter what draconic features fell develop, they never have wings). The Scale Dream is a curse and blessing on fell. It haunts them, but provides great pleasure and insight. Some fell have been known to escape into the Scale Dream whenever they can, leading to addiction. At the same time, fell who explore the Scale Dream often come away from it with remarkable understanding and hints of the future or the past.

Goblin Races

Before and during the Long Fury, the goblin races were the troops and servants of the dwarves. Ancient tales are divided on whether the goblins were created by the dwarves in some distant past or whether they have always lived in the underground of Dama and were simply enslaved by the dwarves. The question is really of no importance — goblins exist as a plague on the other peoples of Dama. Although they once lived underground, they now make their homes mostly among mountains. All the goblin races speak Dwarven.

Goblins

The base stock of the goblin races, goblins are small folk (maybe two-thirds the height of a human, but constantly hunched over) with thin but wiry bodies. Their skin is black — not black in the way of a Kadi human, but black like the darkness beneath the ground. Their eyes are large and long whiskers not unlike a cat's sprout from their face. They are extremely flexible, can fold themselves to slide through small holes, and have the ability to creep along walls and ceilings. They are remarkably fast.

Goblins are mean and nasty, always hungry and always vicious. Fortunately, they aren't especially bright and smarter beings can usually cow the majority of them into submission. Tougher goblins cow their lessers as well and take the position of chief within the loose clans that make up goblin society (there are so many of these clans and their membership is so fluid, that naming them is virtually impossible). There are no known goblin sorcerers — spider-goblins kill them as soon as they are discovered.

Ogres

Ogres are the largest of the goblin races and there is good argument that they were bred — deliberately through dwarven intervention or

unintentionally over untold centuries of natural selection — as warriors. Whether they might ever (or eventually) have become the leaders of the goblin races is debatable. Ogres are big, larger than the largest orc, and massively strong. There's nothing spindly about them. They don't have their smaller cousins' abilities to fold themselves or creep along walls, but they are still remarkably fast. By and large, however, they are no smarter than goblins, though somewhat more difficult to frighten into submission. They're still mean and vicious. If anything, they're even hungrier than goblins.

That hunger is one thing that keeps their numbers in check (it's hard to feed too many ogres in one place). The other is the aftereffects of the Bile Plague unleashed against the goblin races by Mur Eats-it-Raw. Ogres were most susceptible to this plague and their numbers were so depleted that they are still recovering; in addition, they remain susceptible to it and tend to die off if the plague resurfaces in an area. Few things frighten an ogre more than the genuine threat of the Bile Plague.

Spider-goblins

If ogres came into being as warriors, spider-goblins were originally servants, freaks to be hidden away in the corners of goblin clan holdings. They are taller than ordinary goblins, as tall as a human, and spindly as a cold elf. Their limbs are long and gangly. In fact, they have an extra pair of limbs, a second set of arms extending from their torso. Their fingers are long and tipped with delicate needle-like claws. They are the hairiest of the goblins, with long, coarse hair growing all over their faces and in manes down their backs. For ages they were considered fit for nothing more than menial tasks, but then came the Long Fury and eventually the Bile Plague.

To the surprise of all, spider-goblins proved both immune to the Bile Plague and naturally adept at magic, a hidden talent they had nurtured in secret for a very long time. Led by Eskikri, the spider-goblins quickly assumed dominance over the goblin races and even threw off the yoke of the dwarves. Their control of the goblin races is somewhat precarious at best, however — as the goblin population recovered from the Bile Plague, ordinary goblins quickly came to outnumber spider-goblins once more. Goblins are not always found with spider-goblin leaders, nor are spider-goblins always found with goblin (or ogre) followers. Spider-goblins tend to be unbelievably haughty and arrogant, but with good reason — they are dangerous.

Half-folk

The half-folk of Dama are a troubled race, deeply scarred by the catastrophic events of

Weeping's End, the horrific rape of the lush river-country of Tulmir by the horde led by Kalthas of Steelwind. Over the span of about a century, nine out of ten half-folk were tortured, starved, or killed out right by the dwarves, their goblins, and their demons.

No other race has been so deeply affected by the Long Fury. A half-folk's mood can change suddenly from happy and carefree to sober, serious, and hard. If there is a word to sum up half-folk, it is "survivor." Half-folk very seldom seek to stir up trouble, but they react to it swiftly. No one has ever seen a half-folk cry in pain or sorrow since the Long Fury. The harsh lesson of Weeping's End has taught half-folk to enjoy what they have now, because tomorrow it could be taken away. They tend to have less attachment to material things and give gifts freely, but they love tales and experiences. Family is extremely important to half-folk and bonds of loyalty tie them tightly to friends as well as relatives.

After the Long Fury, half-folk spread throughout Dama, but the largest numbers are still to be found in their traditional homelands in the east. There are few half-folk to be found in Pryshydd, however — they still nurse a grudge toward that nation for its role in Weeping's End. Where they are found elsewhere, they often form small, protective enclaves. Half-folk have natural talents for working with their hands and with plants; there are many half-folk artisans, herbalists, brewers, and winemakers. Half-folk have their own language, though much of their lore was lost during the Long Fury.

True to their name, half-folk stand about half as tall as a human and tend to be somewhat slim and athletic in build. Their hair is usually curly and black or dark brown and their eyes dark. Their skin ranges from pale tan-white to nut brown — half-folk describe themselves as almond colored and almonds are a rare symbol of happiness and fortune among them.

Orcs

Among those who don't know them, orcs have a reputation as savage and stupid. This is simply not true. Orcs are fierce fighters, raised from the cradle on tales of heroism and struggle. They have a close bond to the land, living with it in a way of life that has served them well since the ancient times before the Age of Relics. Their culture (or rather cultures, since each orc tribe has their own traditions) is strange to most humans partly because the orc experience of the Long Fury was different — just as Mur Eats-it-Raw stood apart from the Heroes of Light, so did the orc tribes most of the time (though they sometimes allied with the forces of the resistance to fight the dwarven hordes). Orcs are seen as stupid, for example, because many do not

speak the language shared by the other races of Dama — they don't speak it because there was no pressure during the Long Fury to learn it. In fact, orcs have a richer oral culture than any other race or nation. Those few storytellers who have learned Orcish and befriended orc lorekeepers have been startled to discover that orc tales claim to recall events from the Varman Age well prior to the Long Fury.

Most orcs are somewhat larger and stronger than humans. Their skin tones range across various shades of grey-green, colors that blend in with their northern wilderness homes. Their hair is thick and almost always black except in old age. Their features are coarse and their teeth large, their lower canines sometimes protruding like tusks. This feature, combined with broad, flattish, upturned noses have led humans to traditionally compare them to pigs. Naturally, orcs find this very insulting. Overall, orcs have a penchant for marking their bodies, though certain traditions are stronger among certain tribes (tattooing among Bearstalkers for example). It has been suggested that dawn elves learned this practice from orcs.

Orcs generally live in semi-permanent camps or villages of limited size scattered across their tribal territories — they practice limited agricultural and live mainly from hunting, so this dispersed lifestyle is well suited to their way of life. Tribes whose territory butts up against each other typically fight as much as any human nation; they tolerate most travelers in a like manner. Most orcs tend to stick within their tribal territory (the orc lifestyle tends to satisfy most cases of wanderlust), but occasionally an orc will strike off on his or her own.

The bonds orcs feel for their tribal territory are more than just fanciful loyalty — or at least they were. Tales say that long ago, orc tribes were literally joined to their territory in an unbreakable union, hence the reason that orcs tended to remain in the north close to their original homelands. Sometime close to the beginning of the Long Fury, Mur Eats-it-Raw broke those bonds, freeing the orcs to spread to the south. The tale is widely held to be true, though it doesn't explain the presence of the Stone Knives in the distant southern mountains. Orcs continue to feel a connection to the land and the countless, mostly benign spirits that they believe inhabit it. Small rituals of veneration and propitiation fill orc culture while significant events are marked by larger, more elaborate rites and feasts.

Of Other Races: Dragons and Demons

There are two other "races" of beings in Dama, though they share very little in common with the true races of the world.

Since the Long Fury, **dragons** have been nothing more than vicious, powerful beasts. During

the Varman Age and before, however, they were mighty creatures of great intelligence, though fairly rare. Storytellers say that elder dragons would teach their ways to younger dragons, raising up a new generation. Once the dwarves discovered their dragonblood potion, however, the elder dragons were hunted down without mercy — only they had blood potent enough to create the potion.

Attempts were made to raise younger dragons in captivity in hopes that their blood would grow stronger with time, but the experiment failed, almost as if the knowledge passed from elder to younger dragon was the catalyst for power.

Without elder dragons to teach them, the race of dragons faltered. The lesser dragons of the modern age are still dangerous, cunning predators, but the magic-wielding wyrms of the Varman Age are no more and are remembered only by storytellers and in the Scale Dream of the fell.

Dragons vary in form, but the great scaled beasts generally have four legs, wings, a long whip-like tail, a sinuous neck, and the ability to breathe out some horrible substance. Dragonbreath varies greatly, but common forms are noxious poison, fierce fire, or cutting, venomous cold.

Demons, on the other hand, are something that most people of Dama wish would fade into memory. Legends say that sorcerers have summoned demons for untold ages, but never lightly — sorcerers of old never summoned more than one demon at a time and always kept them under tight control. Dragonblood potion, however, gave dwarven sorcerers the power to summon many demons at once, while the tattoo-binding ritual devised by the Master bound them almost completely to the will of the summoner. Dwarves made such extensive use of demon soldiers in their hordes during the Long Fury that it seems something has happened: the walls between Dama and the land of Shadow where demons dwell has stretched thin. Virtually any sorcerer willing to pay the price can now summon demons, and demons, as if somehow broken to the leash of command, have become easier for a sorcerer to control. There are even tales of demons drawn into Dama without being summoned or of demons surviving in wilderness ruins since the Long Fury. Certainly dwarves still make use of demon servants. Though they may not appear in the great numbers they did during the Long Fury, even a few demons of middling power are a horror.

The many types of demons are well-documented. Most seem to have an affinity for some element or substance and appear as twisted, bestial humanoid monsters sculpted out of the thing of their affinity. Fire demons are common, but frost demons, stone demons, venom demons, and blade demons are not unusual in story or experience, while even more esoteric demons may

be known to dwarf sorcerers. When they have not been summoned to Dama, demons dwell in Shadow, battling each other in the haunted night.

Magic of Dama

Magic is an uncooperative force. Sorcerers experience magic as a cold, rushing force that resists efforts to control it. Sometimes they find the words of their spells twisting as they speak them. Sometimes magic escapes from their control, leaving them numbed with cold. Those sorcerers who have taken the time to research the nature of magic say that it comes to Dama like a wind from beyond the stars.

Those priests and holy warriors who have the ability to work magic claim a completely different experience. Their magic likewise comes to them from the stars, but in a gentler form. Wrapped in the embrace of their god — if they follow a Hero — magic flows through them with ease. If a priest follows one of the Lords, magic may burn and crackle, but it still obeys.

Many priests and ordinary people have come to the obvious conclusion: sorcerous magic is not a true part of Dama and should not be trusted. Sorcerers, or at least those who survive their own magic, disagree. There is no difference between priestly and sorcerous magic, they say, only in the way sorcerers and priests deal with the flowing power. Priests experience magic as filtered through their god. Sorcerers experience the raw power directly. Priests may be persuaded by this argument but ordinary people still regard sorcerers with suspicion.

Orders of Sorcery

Unfortunately, philosophy doesn't help sorcerers control their magic to any greater degree. Some sorcerers, however, have discovered that there are certain secrets and techniques that can. A sorcerer who learns and embraces these secrets, commonly referred to as orders (though they may not call themselves such), may find his ability to work magic enhanced but at the cost of limits in other aspects of his magic.

The Order of the Mantle, for instance, studies the tales of the Hero Sariph of the Book and sorcerers who join this tiny order learn abilities of foresight and far reaching power, but also become priests and serve the interests of Sariph. Other orders teach secrets of necromancy, fighting demons, or fire magic. Sorcerers may join an order at any time, though most do so only after they have reached a point when they feel they cannot progress any further in their study of magic without

becoming a risk to themselves. There is nothing to prevent a sorcerer from learning the secrets of more than one order except that some of those orders guard their secrets jealously, while other secrets are simply incompatible.

The Power of Prayer

Priestly magic is inherently limited by the outlook of the relevant god. Priests seldom see this as a weakness — if they didn't agree with the outlook of their god, they wouldn't have dedicated themselves to him or her in the first place. Some gods allow a wide range of spells to their priests but require adherence to a strict code of behavior. Others may require only minimal obedience on the part of their priests, but allow only a select number of spells or grant their priests only certain powers.

Tellers of Tales

Popular folklore holds a special place for storytellers, but the true storyteller of Dama is a rare being gifted with mysterious abilities. Not all are truly tellers of tales, nor are all truly wanderers, but they are generally inclined to a rootless life and to aiding those in need. Storytellers form a third group of magic workers among the good people of Dama, at once more popular than either sorcerers or priests but at the same time more mysterious—storytellers are often tasked with doing the Heroes work whether they want to or not. No one chooses to become a storyteller—the gift is put upon them.

Magic and Enchanted Objects

Although the tales of storytellers might be full of magic rings, swords, and armor, the truth of the matter is that such things are very difficult to craft. Both sorcerous and priestly magic require a living will to shape them and placing such magic into an item that may outlast its maker is very difficult. Frequently it's even deadly. Neither sorcerers nor priests undertake the creation of enchanted items without very good reason. Most of the enchanted items in Dama truly are the stuff of legends and have long histories of passing through the world.

Simple items of limited power are much easier to make, however. Potions, for instance, are not terribly uncommon, especially the simplest kinds.

SECTION 2: ***GAME***

Chapter 5: Character Races

Chapter 6: Skills, Hindrances, Edges

Chapter 7: Arcane Backgrounds

Chapter 8: Gear

Character Races

Character creation in Dama follows the pattern as described in *Savage Worlds*. The races available to characters in Dama vary, naturally. For cultural and physical details of the various races, see *Chapter 3: Races of Dama*.

Races which are not listed below (specifically dwarves and the goblin races) are not available as character choices.

Languages: numerous languages are spoken and written in the Boken Domains of Dama. A character's race determines what languages he speaks and reads initially. Literacy and facility with other languages are gained through Edges (all of which overlap).

- For followers of the Ethos, Arcane Background (Miracles) grants literacy in Varman.
- Rich and Noble grant literacy in one language that the character speaks (Noble characters do not receive an additional language for also being Rich).
- Scholar and Wizard grant literacy in two languages, one of which can be a language the character does not speak.
- Investigator grants literacy in one language that the character speaks or the ability to speak an additional language.
- Dreamwalker grants facility and literacy to fell in one of a number of possible languages.
- Polyglot and Booklearned deal with language facility and literacy directly. See *Edges* in Chapter 6.

Note that in cases where characters are indicated to be bilingual (ie. characters from Pryshydd speak both Varman and Pryshyn), it is entirely possible that many average people speak only the minority language if they are isolated and do not travel.

Humans

The humans of Dama are treated as described in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook.

- **Languages:** all human characters speak Varman. In addition, characters from Scurgrimme speak Skaer, those from the upper classes of Skerys speak High Skeryn, those from Pryshydd speak Pryshyn, and those from the lower classes of Dubfeich speak Feigen. No human is literate in Varman or any other language unless they have an appropriate Edge.

Elves

Cold Elves

Cold elves have the advantages of **Agile** and **Low Light Vision** as described in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook. Notoriously distant and haughty, they suffer the **Outsider** hindrance.

- **Unaging:** once they have reached adulthood (at around 100 years), cold elves do not age in any appreciable way until they are *extremely* old. Cold elves may not take the Elderly hindrance.
- **Languages:** all cold elves both speak and are literate in Elvish. Cold elf characters have also learned to speak and read Varman before leaving Illirisen.

Dawn Elves

Dawn elves also have the advantages of **Agile** and **Low Light Vision**.

- **Can't Sit Still:** dawn elves are caught up in the pageant of life and remaining inactive is difficult. A dawn elf always wants to be doing something, preferably something lively. They don't take unnecessarily stupid risks, but they do tend to live fast lives and frequently suffer the consequences (Can't Sit Still can be considered a minor variation on the Curious or Overconfident hindrances).
- **Languages:** dawn elves speak both Elvish and Varman. They are not literate in either language unless they have an appropriate Edge.

Fell

While fell can vary in appearance, it is recommended that player fell stay within the humanoid model for size and shape.

- **Low Light Vision:** fell see very well in the dark.
- **Tough:** fell are hardy folk and receive an initial Vigor of d6 instead of d4
- **Dragon Blood:** fell have supernatural resistance to fire or fiery effects and receive a +2 bonus to Toughness when resisting damage from fire or smoke inhalation. They take no extra damage from a burning weapon.
- **Outsider:** while they might not be uncommon in large cities, fell are not well accepted in most company (even the lowest of human scum tends to feel they can look down on fell). Outside of cities, fell are sometimes treated as servants of the Lords.

- **Scale Dream:** the memories of dragons that surface in all fell haunt their dreams for good or ill. This psychic turmoil means they draw one less bennie per game session. For fell who delve into their dreams, however, the Scale Dream can also be a benefit (see the Dreamwalker weird edge).
- **Languages:** fell speak both Fell and Varman. They are able to "read" Fellsign but are not literate in any other language unless they have an appropriate Edge.
- **Languages:** all orcs speak Orc, but only characters who have left their tribes for contact with other races speak Varman (and even then often with a thick accent) and may be literate in it if they have an appropriate Edge. It is not possible to be literate in Orc as it has no written form.

Half-Folk

The half-folk of Dama have identical abilities to those described in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook, but the rationale behind them is altered slightly (although **Small** is still small):

- **Survivor's Luck:** half-folk of Dama still gain the benefit of **Luck**. This reflects their awareness of, and willingness to seize, desperate opportunities that others might not be aware of.
- **Hardened:** half-folk of Dama also begin with d6 Spirit instead of d4, reflecting a strength of will that refuses to be crushed.
- **Languages:** half-folk speak and are literate in their own language. Any half-folk in the Boken Domains (though not necessarily in Tulmir) also speak Varman, though they are literate in it only if they have an appropriate Edge.

Orcs

Orcs in Dama are not monsters. Although the orc and orc chieftain presented in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook can be used in encounters without alteration (save to their attitude; orcs take prisoners as frequently as any other race), player orcs are created with the following abilities:

- **Strong:** orcs begin with d6 Strength instead of d4.
- **Wilderness Lore:** orcs receive a free d6 in the Survival skill.
- **Favor of the Land:** belief in spirits and the need to keep them happy is deeply rooted in orcs. Whether truly spiritual or just going through the motions, all orcs have their little rituals. This amounts to a cultural **Quirk** that other races regard as superstition. So do some orcs, but an orc who ignores this tradition tends to find himself on a streak of bad luck—once per game session, the gamemaster draws a bennie specifically to be used against the hero. A significant ritual, possibly involving

Skills, Hindrances, Edges

Skills

Of the Skills listed in *Savage Worlds*, only Piloting has no place in Dama. All other Skills work as expected. Note that Driving applies only to wagons and carriages and Shooting only to bows. Dama has no guns.

Language is not a Skill. A character who speaks or reads a language does so automatically in most circumstances, although their ability might be hampered by other conditions (roll Notice to hear a conversation or read an obscured inscription). A character who does not speak a language may attempt to understand someone or convey a basic concept by making a Smarts roll with a -2 modifier (-4 if you can't see the person you're trying to talk to; body language is important).

A character who is not literate in a language they speak may attempt to read simple words in it by likewise making a Smarts roll at -2; it is not possible to read a language you do not speak without at least some training. A character who is literate in and/or speaks a language may attempt to read or communicate in variations of it with a Smarts roll, modified for situation (ie. a Scholar with an appropriate background might receive +2 to read a scroll written in ancient Varman).

Hindrances

Two Hindrances listed in *Savage Worlds* aren't appropriate for Dama: All Thumbs (the technology of Dama is not so advanced that even an orc barbarian can't figure it out) and Doubting Thomas (strange and supernatural things are everywhere in Dama—"not believing in them" is just not an option).

Hindrances from other products

Other *Savage Worlds* books are a great source for Hindrances that are also appropriate to Dama. Here are some, along with a very brief description of them. If you want to use them, get the book for specific details.

Deadlands: The Savage West (download)
Big Mouth (Minor) – character doesn't know when to shut up.
Heavy Sleeper (Minor) – character sleeps deep.
Lyn' Eyes (Minor) – character is a bad liar.
One-Armed Bandit (Major) – character has only one arm.

Slave to Da (Minor)

Prerequisite: Pryshyn

The force of Da rides you, plaguing you with visions of the future. These are never happy visions and range from minor accidents to full-scale catastrophes. They don't always come to pass, but they do so frequently enough that you know they're real.

Whenever you wake from sleep, including an Incapacitated state, make a Spirit roll. If you fail, you wake up screaming with the full knowledge that something bad is going to happen. What that may be is up to the gamemaster; what you do about it is up to you.

At the gamemaster's discretion, you may suffer these effects under a condition other than waking: your visions may visit you when you stare too long into a fire or look into still water. Only one condition will provoke the visions, however.

Tainted (Major)

Something is just not quite right with this character and other people can sense it—she might be the nicest person in the world, but the character simply exudes "wrongness." Strangers are always willing to believe the worst of the character and even friends will have nagging misgivings. She will be blamed for crimes and held responsible for accidents (the character likely had a very rough childhood). Common belief ascribes this wrongness to some heritage from the Long Fury—maybe even demonic blood—and it is not uncommon among people who have immigrated from the twisted lands of the Middle Passage. The character has a -2 penalty to Charisma in addition to the roleplaying effects described above. On the other hand, Tainted also grants +2 to Intimidation rolls.

Edges

Some Edges described in *Savage Worlds* are not available or work differently in Dama. Obviously Edges that are dependent on more advanced technology (ie. Rock and Roll!) are not available. A number of new Edges are available as well.

Ace

The Ace Edge can be applied to Boating or Riding and Driving (all vehicles in Dama are animal-drawn).

Arcane Background

The Arcane Backgrounds Weird Science and Psionics (and thus Edges that have them as a prerequisite) are not available in Dama. Arcane Background (Super Powers) is not

available as such, but the same rules are used for Arcane Background (Storyteller). See *Chapter 7: Arcane Backgrounds* for details.

Holy/Unholy Warrior

This Edge is not available. The faiths of Dama do not have this tradition.

Booklearned (Social Edge)

Prerequisites: Novice. Smarts d6+

You are able to read and write in one or more languages of your choice, one for each die type of d6 or above you have in Smarts. The first language you learn to read must be one that you speak, but any additional languages are a free choice. If this Edge is taken at character creation, languages may be left open for later selection and learned as desired—learning a language requires some period of access to a teacher or books (it is not instant). If the Edge is taken after character creation, each language must be learned separately as described above. Players should describe the circumstances in which the character came to study the language (ie. a friendly priest, a charitable noble, etc.), especially for ancient languages which have no current spoken form.

Languages which can be learned with this Edge (ie. languages that have a written form) are: Dwarf, Dalan (an ancient script from the Dalhu Coast), Elvish, Fellsign, Half-folk, High Skeryn/Skaer, Old Dulcinian (the ancient script of Dulcine), Pryshyn, Varman. Note that Pryshyn is a secretive language generally known only to natives of that country and that while High Skeryn and Skaer are basically the same language, they do differ somewhat and are considered different languages by those who use them (a character will consider himself to speak one or the other).

Child of Da (Background Edge)

Prerequisites: Novice, Pryshyn

Da visits you with visions of the future. What you see doesn't always come to pass, but it does so with remarkable frequency. Once per game session, you may make an attempt to divine the future (chose a method of divination when you take this Edge—common divinations in Pryshydd are dreams, casting carved sticks, and gazing into water, fire, or smoke. Cards are not used). Ask the gamemaster a specific question about some future event and make a Spirit roll. If you are successful, the gamemaster should describe the vision to you (visions never return simple yes or no answers). Beware of the future for Da is fluid: your subsequent actions may alter what comes to pass.

On occasion, Da may fall upon you without warning. When and if this happens is at the discretion of the gamemaster.

You were most likely taken in by Pryshyn monks at some point and spent some time in one of their monasteries so they could study your gift. You are literate in Pryshyn and had some exposure to the Pryshyn Oracles—between this exposure and your own gift, add +2 to any rolls you make to interpret the Oracles.

Dreamwalker (Weird Edge)

Prerequisites: Novice, Fell, Spirit d6+

Dreamwalkers are fell of mystic bent who explore the deeper meanings of the Scale Dream and come away with greater understanding of the memories of their dragon heritage. A Dreamwalker can make a Spirit roll at –2 to access these fragmentary memories (as flashes of vision or whispers of lore) with regard to a place, object, or situation. The memories are exclusively of the Age of Relics or the early years of the Long Fury but may resonate with contemporary situations (ie. a memory of a similar situation millennia ago may prove useful).

Occasionally, these memories also manifest spontaneously as a gut feeling or an overwhelming vision. When and if this happens is at the discretion of the gamemaster.

Memories also grant Dreamwalkers the ability to speak Drakon, the ancient language of true dragons, and to speak and read (if it has a written component) an additional language of ancient times as if they were a native (no accent; select any language under either the Booklearned or Polyglot Edges except Feigen). Drakon itself has no written form.

Polyglot (Social Edge)

Prerequisites: Novice. Smarts d4+

You are able to speak one or more languages of your choice, one for each die type of d4 or above you have in Smarts. If this Edge is taken at character creation, languages may be left open for later selection and learned as desired—learning a language requires some period of access to a teacher (it is not instant). If the Edge is taken after character creation, each language must be learned separately as described above. Players should describe the circumstances in which the character came to study the language (ie. an orc friend, a grizzled fighter of goblins, contacts in the lower classes of Dubfeich, etc.). You speak a language well, but with a noticeable accent (take the language a second time to eliminate it).

Languages which can be learned with this Edge (ie. languages that have a spoken form are): Dwarf, Demon, Elvish, Feigen, Fell, Half-folk, High Skeryn/Skaer, Orc, Pryshyn, Varman. Note that Pryshyn is a secretive language generally known only to natives of that country and that while High Skeryn and Skaer are basically the same language, they do differ somewhat and are considered different languages by those who use them (a character will consider himself to speak one or the other).

Whisper of Legend (Weird Edge)

Prerequisites: Seasoned, Arcane Background (Storyteller), Faith d8+

Tales and legends come naturally to a true storyteller. They tend to remember what they hear and part of their Heroes-granted gift is access to a sort of collective memory of stories and lore. Some storytellers choose to develop this ability further. Storytellers with this Edge add +2 to any Spirit roll based around telling a story (including singing, dance, instrumental performance, or acting a part) as they call on great themes and archetypes.

They may also make a Smarts role to dredge up some fact or rumor of noteworthy significance. This information is often vague (sometimes little more than a gut-feeling), especially when the subject is ancient. Even storytellers who have plumbed the depths of this ability (relatively few) have been unable to obtain more the whiffs and hunches about the Age of Relics or the early periods of the Long Fury. Whisper of Legend will not reveal secret information, though it may reveal rumors that suggest something is being concealed.

Warrior Order (Professional Edge)

Prerequisites: Novice, Vigor d6+, Fighting d6+, additional skill as below, appropriate patron deity.

Note: this Edge is adapted from the Agent/Texas Ranger/Soldier Edges as described in PEG's *Deadlands: The Savage West*.

Certain deities of Dama sponsor a specific martial tradition among their followers: these are recognized orders with their own structure and tradition, devoted to fighting in one way or another for their deity. Anderes Glorian is patron the Shining Order, more commonly known as paladins. Besirith Irosal sponsors the Viiran Dalir (Elvish for 'well-timed strike') — ironically also more commonly referred to as elven paladins. The paladin orders are quite structured and disciplined. In the stark contrast, the orders sponsored by The Wolf (called the Blackcloaks) and Mur Eats-it-Raw (called simply the Sworn) are much looser; both of these

orders are often known as rangers. Blackcloaks and paladins of the Shining Order are considered to be initiates of their patrons' mystery cults.

Each warrior order has slightly different criteria for membership, however, as shown below. In return for these benefits, the warrior is, of course, at the command of the order and is expected to carry out commands. All four orders grant similar benefits, however, and members advance through the order in a similar fashion.

- **Weapon:** members of an order receive a free weapon worth up to 300 tavos (300T - see *Chapter 8: Gear* for details on currency. This weapon is marked with the sign of the order. If lost it will not be replaced.
- **Respect:** members of an order receive +2 Charisma when dealing with those who respect their order. They must identify themselves as members of an order to receive this bonus. Identifying symbols and broad respect group (there are individual exceptions, of course) are described below.
- **Holy Succor:** members of an order can expect reasonable aid from priests of their patron deity.
- **Benefits of Rank:** members of an order may draw on the resources of their order to the equivalent of 50T plus 20T per rank each month in equipment, supplies, or a small amount of coinage (no more than 10% of total allotment) from an orderhouse or allied merchant (automatic in large centres for paladins, automatic in wilderness centres for Blackcloaks, automatic in orc territories for Sworn, otherwise Smarts roll at -2 to locate in a particular locale for the first time). This allotment does not need to be used all at once (the character could "run a tab" over the month). Ranks in all orders can be summed up as 0-5, though most give ranks a distinct name.
- **Promotion:** Upon reporting to a superior at the completion of a mission or assignment, roll 1d20 and add the modifiers below. A roll of 20 or greater means the character has been promoted.
 - +2 Difficult mission
 - +4 Very difficult mission
 - +6 Suicidal mission
 - +2 Character committed conspicuous act of bravery that was noticed by others
 - -2 Character is Rank 0

Paladins of the Shining Order

Additional skill requirement: Healing d4+
Symbol: right-hand gauntlet marked with flame of Anderes Glorian
Respected by: followers of the Ethos
Ranks: Warrior, Knight, Knight-Captain, Knight-Commander, High Knight
Traditions: Paladins are expected to follow a code of aid, mercy and honor in all of their actions. More than any other order, the Shining Order maintains an open presence and orderhouses can be found in all large centres. They are allied in general with the rulers and nobility of the Boken Domains, especially Skerys. Until recently, their largest orderhouse was to be found in Numisgard; it has now been outstripped by the rebuilt orderhouse in Varmanhow. The leader of the order is titled the Immaculate Knight (currently Tirond Belander, an old and holy man). Paladins are not over fond of sorcerers with the exception of those of the Order of the Mantle.

Viiran Dalir

Additional skill requirement: Riding d6+
Symbol: elven sword marked with a triangle symbol on the pommel
Respected by: cold elves, The Shining Order
Ranks: Sala, Miir, Benta, Sere, Liran
Traditions: Viiran Dalir are the elite warriors of Illirisen and are seen in the outer world only when on a mission. The elven paladins are expected to maintain their rigid purity, though most slowly warm to small groups of companions. Their natural allies in the outer world may be few (they are respected but not well-liked by the Shining Order) and generally found only in larger centres, but they have a deep respect for Viiran Dalir. The weapon with which they are presented on entry to the order is always a bright elven sword. The leaders of the Viiran Dalir are a council of extremely old elves who never leave Illirisen.

Blackcloaks

Additional skill requirement: Stealth d6+, Survival d4+
Symbol: stylized tattoo of a wolf on left shoulder.
Respected by: followers of the Ethos dwelling in the wilderness, Sworn
Ranks: Blackcloaks don't refer to specific ranks, but are aware of them. Anyone of lower rank is "child," anyone of equal rank is "brother/sister," anyone of higher rank is "uncle/aunt."
Traditions: Loners by nature, Blackcloaks have a very loose structure but a wide-flung network of contacts and allies. They also tend to have more contact with sorcerers than other orders.

Among the Blackcloaks, weapons are returned to the order at the bearers death and given to new warriors (option: player may make a Spirit roll – on a raise, the character bears a weapon with a storied past; on a failure, a weapon of infamy). The order maintains an ancient lodge in the uplands near the city of Pier. The head of the order is called "grandfather/grandmother." Blackcloaks are actually no more likely to wear black cloaks than anyone else.

Sworn

Additional skill requirement: Taunt d6+, Stealth d4+
Symbol: scar, brand, piercing or tattoo (according to tribal style) of a dragon pierced by a spear
Respected by: orcs, Blackcloaks
Ranks: Sworn never refer to ranks in any way, although they are aware of them and generally know enough to give way to the more experienced warrior.
Traditions: Of even looser structure than the Blackcloaks, Sworn are inducted into their "order" by senior members and shamans; together with shamans, they represent a side of orc society that transcends boundaries of tribe. They are clever warriors and value wit and stealth as much as brute force. They work very closely with shamans and many become shamans should they survive that long.

Warrior Orders and Arcane Backgrounds

So long as a priest or sorcerer meets the requirements for joining a warrior order, they may do so. Among the Shining Order and the Blackcloaks, priests become a special part of the order, responsible for its lore and rituals. Among the Viiran Dalir, handmaidens of Besirith Irosal are often adjuncts to commanders of Sere and Liran rank (they receive greater respect but still advance in rank as any other warrior). The Sworn treat shamans no differently than warriors—but while warriors and shamans work together, they seldom overlap and aside from older shaman-warriors are relatively rare.

Sorcerers are generally discouraged in the ranks of the warrior orders, but are not unknown. Only blackcloaks actually welcome sorcerers who choose to join them; regardless of their rank, they are referred to as "cousin" and receive a tattoo of a raven instead of a wolf.

Storytellers may never join a warrior order as this would require serving one deity.

Arcane Backgrounds

While this chapter presents the rules and options for Arcane Backgrounds in Dama—sorcerers, priests, and storytellers—gamemasters and players should keep in mind that these are options only. Magic is a relatively rare and powerful thing in Dama. There is not a sorcerer under every bush, nor is every priest in a shrine endowed with the ability to work miracles. Magic most often also comes at a price, whether responsibility to a sorcerous order or subjection to the will of the gods.

Powers from other products

Dama references Powers from various published *Savage Worlds* books. In the Arcane Background descriptions below, Powers taken from other products are marked with an asterisk (*). Refer to the Powers section at the end of this chapter for notes on where the Power comes from and any changes made to it in Dama. Powers marked † are new and are also described in the Powers section.

Arcane Background (Magic)

The essential game mechanics for Arcane Background (Magic) are largely unchanged from the *Savage Worlds* rules. Sorcerers have access to a similar range of powers (shown on the Magic Base Powers List below), with additional Powers and abilities granted by the Orders of Sorcery as described below.

At the gamemaster's option, backlash can be handled differently in Dama. Backlash is the numbing cold experienced as magic escapes the wielder's control. A sorcerer who does not wish to spend a bennie to escape a Shaken result in the event of backlash may attempt to Tame the Magic.

- **Tame the Magic:** A sorcerer who experiences backlash has the option of attempting to exert his will over the flows of magic without the benefit of a bennie. The attempt, however, is not without its risks and a sorcerer who dares it must suffer the consequences. The sorcerer continues his casting action into the next round and cannot take other actions (he is fighting the unruly magic while staving off numbing cold). He does not lose his power points, but cannot add or subtract points to powers with variable effects. On the next round, he rerolls his Spellcasting.

- Success with a raise: the spell is cast and the sorcerer is left gasping from the effort but suffers no other effects.
- Success (no raise): the spell is cast but the sorcerer is Shaken.
- Failure: the spell fails (power points are lost) and the sorcerer suffers a nonlethal wound (and is Shaken as a result of the wound)
- Critical Failure (1 on the Spellcasting die): the spell fails and the sorcerer suffers a wound (and is Shaken)

The sorcerer may not use a bennie to reroll an attempt to Tame the Magic, but he may continue his efforts if so desired. Repeat the same procedure for the next round. All penalties, however, are *doubled*: the sorcerer requires a success with two raises to avoid being Shaken; if the roll fails, the sorcerer suffers two nonlethal wounds; and if it is a critical failure, he suffers two wounds. The sorcerer may continue a third round with triple penalties, but not a fourth.

Taming the Magic does not get easier as a sorcerer becomes more powerful. Taming the magic of a Seasoned spell imposes a -1 penalty to all attempts, a Veteran spell -2, and a Heroic spell -4. Taming the Magic is intended as a simulation of the drama of spellcasting when success is critical at any cost and should be treated as such.

Magic Base Powers

Armor
Barrier
Blast
Bolt
Boost/Lower Trait
Cone of Flame*
Deflection
Detect/Conceal Arcana
Dispel
Fear
Invisibility
Light
Obscure
Puppet
Quickness
Smite
Speed
Stun
Telekinesis
Wave Runner
Zombie (Demon)†

† special variation. See Powers descriptions.

Orders of Sorcery

Sorcerers have gathered in orders and schools since before the Long Fury, sharing some few of their secrets and working together to further common interests. Many of the orders were wiped out during the Long Fury, but a few survive.

At Seasoned rank and above, sorcerers may attempt to join one of the surviving orders so long as they share its attitudes and goals (in other words, meet its prerequisites). Deceivers beware, for sorcerers do not appreciate being taken advantage of. Membership is usually subject to trials and interviews and an order may reject a potential member. There is no game mechanic for joining an order of sorcery. It is an experience best roleplayed. No sorcerer may ever join more than one order (even if they have left a previous order).

The orders differ in their traditions, but all share a variation on the secrets of Taming the Magic. A sorcerer who joins an order does not suffer penalties for attempting to Tame the magic of a powerful spell. In return for this secret and for access to powers unique to the order, sorcerers restrict themselves to the Trappings of the order (spells known previously retain their trappings, but do not benefit from the secrets of the order).

On Trappings

Like Powers themselves, Orders of Sorcery and the priesthods of deities specify Trappings. In general, the Trappings associated with orders and priesthods are quite broad and more along the lines of themes. A priest or member of an order should try to incorporate both kinds of Trappings when describing her Powers.

Order of the Mantle

Prerequisites: Follower of Sariph of the Book, two Knowledges at d6+

Attitudes/Goals: patience, sophistication. Goals unknown but frequently work behind the scenes with influential rulers and nobles

Special Powers: Courier⁺, Hunch*, Mindrider*

Trappings: light, patience, subtlety, manipulation, knowledge

Traditions: Sorcerers of the Order of the Mantle are the closest thing to priests of Sariph. They are the most respected of the sorcerous orders. Members tend to be older, but wise, sly, and devious. The goals of the order are mysterious—a tradition harkening back to the extended games played between Sariph and the Master during the Long Fury. Some of

those with a distrust of sorcerers reserve a special suspicion for members of the order and their tightlipped ways; others, notably the Paladins of the Shining Order, actually accord members greater respect because of their association with Sariph.

The Solemn

Prerequisites: None

Attitudes/Goals: fascination with death, desire to aid others. Goals are service and survival.

Special Powers: Walk with Death⁺, Gravecloak⁺, Lay to Rest⁺, Zombie

Trappings: masks, cloaks, cold, darkness, silence, graves, decay

Traditions: The most misunderstood of the sorcerous orders, the Solemn are generally regarded as foul graverobbers when in fact they are the last remnants of an old and glorious tradition—the necromancers of the Solemn served heroically during the Long Fury. So much of that time has been forgotten or altered with the passing of years that the order now struggles just to maintain itself. The order is not entirely benevolent, however: some members do go mad, dragging the name of the order down with them.

Sorority of Ash

Prerequisites: Female, two powers with fire related Trappings

Attitudes/Goals: personal power, power for the order. On a more esoteric level, fire as a source of renewal.

Special Powers: Healing (special), Telekinesis (Elemental), Firewalk⁺, Smoulder's Kiss⁺, Shape⁺. Banned: Sisters may not learn Wave Runner.

Trappings: fire, smoke, ash, burning, dancing, fascination/charm

Traditions: The Sorority of Ash understand that fire is a far more subtle source of power than many people (even sorcerers) understand. They may be fond of Blast and Bolt Powers, but Sisters know the value of less drastic abilities. Although the Sorority presents an ideal of fire as a metaphor for change and renewal, the order is really about power. Sisters have a deserved reputation for tremendous beauty and longevity.

Ancient stories tell of a companion order, the Fraternity of Ember, that was extinguished during the Long Fury.

The Nightwalkers

Prerequisites: Strongwilled, Knowledge (Demons) d6+

Attitudes/Goals: dominance over demons, greater understanding of Shadow. Goals are primarily greater control of demons.

Special Powers: Binding Sign⁺, Demon Pierce⁺, Shadownsight⁺, Shadowstride⁺

Trappings: symbols, bindings, chains, shadows

Traditions: Dark, proud, and self-interested, the Nightwalkers are all that the Solemn are not. These sorcerers specialize in binding demons, some working in defense of others, but most conjuring their demonic servants for their own benefit. They are also the sorcerers most attuned to the alien landscape of Shadow and frequently travel there. Fortunately, they are not numerous—a Nightwalker who is less than skilled does not last long.

Ironmasks

Prerequisites: Vigor d6+

Attitudes/Goals: defense of communities, defeat of forces of darkness.

Special Powers: Telekinesis (Elemental), Courier⁺, Burrow⁺. Banned: Ironmasks may not learn Quickness.

Trappings: earth, stone, metal, loud noises, massive damage.

Traditions: The most secretive of the sorcerous orders, Ironmasks gather together for one purpose: to fight darkness. They are devoted to the defense of the people and communities they care for and are not gentle about it. There is nothing subtle about Ironmask magic, but it is very effective. Ironmasks, as their name implies, frequently don masks when fighting the forces of darkness as their activities often gain them implacable enemies. Ironmasks have a special enmity toward dwarves.

Arcane Background (Miracles)

The essential game mechanics for Arcane Background (Miracles) are unchanged from the *Savage Worlds* rules, though the specific patron to which faith is given will affect Trappings and Powers. A character with this background *must* select a patron deity. The Heroes of the Ethos, Those Who Stood Apart, and the Dark Mother of Waters gift their followers with a similar range of Powers; see Miracle Base Powers below. Each also grants additional or special powers while sometimes banning others; these are described below.

Characters with Arcane Background (Miracles) may attempt to Tame the Magic on a failed spellcasting attempt just as sorcerers do. If they do, however, they forego the protection of their patron and open themselves to backlash.

There are no prerequisites to selecting a patron deity beyond generally sharing common attitudes (summed up below as the deity's creed) and having the appropriate faith or (in the case of cold elves and orcs) race.

Miracle Base Powers

Armor
Barrier
Deflection
Detect Arcana†
Dispel
Healing
Light
Obscure
Smite
Stun

† Priests do not have the ability to Conceal Arcana.

Anderes Glorian

Creed: Honour, strength, and mercy—these are our weapons against darkness.

Special Powers: Bolt, Sacrifice*

Trappings: fire, light, the sun, nobility

Traditions: Often seen as leaders among priests as their patron is the leader of the Heroes, priests of Anderes Glorian are common everywhere. There is something of a rift developing in the faith, however, as some priests gravitate toward serving the nobility while other dispense love and mercy to the lower classes.

Arlora Irosal

Creed: Embrace the dawn, fight, love, and live!

Special Powers: Blast, Quickness (special)

Trappings: fire, pearls, dawn, dawn elves, beauty, water

Traditions: The priests of Arlora Irosal have a reputation for passion in all things, including combat. Naturally popular among dawn elves, the faith is not restricted to them—many fell are attracted to Arlora Irosal, in fact. She has also become something of a patron to those in love and lust.

Cerus Mimr

Creed: My blade does not dull, my duty does not end.

Special Powers: Fear, Quickness, Sacrifice*

Trappings: swords, armor, steel, death, strength, duty, cold

Traditions: The grim priests of Cerus Mimr are often warriors, forced from the battlefield by age or injury. They may be seen as a corps of old men, but youth (equally grim) are not uncommon among them. Despite his popularity as a patron of warriors, Cerus Mimr does not sponsor a warrior order.

Radi Last

Creed: Every life saved is an act of defiance—defy darkness with all your strength.

Special Powers: Great Healing, Invisibility, Shield[†], Luck*, Sacrifice*, Succor*

Trappings: shields, serpents, children, defiance, healing

Traditions: Healers, but not pacifists, priests of Radi Last find respect almost everywhere. What they lack in strength, they make up for in guile.

Sariph of the Book

Creed: Patience and knowledge have broken many swords.

Traditions: Sariph is not served by priests—sorcerers of the Order of the Mantle take that role. Although Sariph is respected among the Heroes of Light, it is not possible to select her as a patron deity.

Isau Jabren

Creed: Gold is wealth, wealth is life, and life is precious.

Special Powers: Boost/Lower Trait, Hunch*, Luck*, Mindrider*, Trinkets*

Banned Powers/Edges: Smite, Champion

Trappings: gold, wealth, ram/sheep, speech and words, food, plenty, luck, charm

Traditions: Everyone loves a priest of Isau Jabren, but beware for they can be slippery characters. Isau is not a warrior's god and his priests are more likely to solve problems with a sharp wit than a sharp blade.

The Wolf, Renzo Dicacce

Creed: Sharp teeth in the night.

Special Powers: Fear, Speed, Shape Change (special), Call of the Wild*, Wilderness Walk*

Trappings: wolves, darkness, cold, storms, stealth

Traditions: Relatively rare, priests of the Wolf have a frightening reputation for harshness and cruelty. The reputation isn't entirely undeserved. They aren't as grim as the priests of Cerus Mimr, but they can be very single-minded.

Besirith Irosal

Creed: Such has always been the way.

Special Powers: Telekinesis, Bind Emotions[†], Succor*

Trappings: cold, ice, control, the moon, cold elves

Traditions: Known as Handmaidens, the priestesses of Besirith Irosal are beautiful but hard and cold as ice. If they are found outside Illirisen, they have been dispatched on some mission ordered by their god-queen. Only female cold elves may become handmaidens.

Mur Eats-it-Raw

Attitudes/Goals: Scream and shake the heavens! Whisper and command the world!

Special Powers: Shape Change, Call of the Wild*, Succor*, Curse*, Wilderness Walk*

Trappings: wilderness, life, bones, blood, spears, spirits, drums, orcs

Traditions: Like their adventurous trickster god, the shamans of Mur do nothing by half-measures. They hoard many secrets but, when they use them, use them boldly. Their miracles tend to be unlike anything familiar to priests of Ethos, invoking unseen spirits rather than the power of their deity. More so than most priests of the Ethos, shamans are important figures in the lives of their tribes.

Dark Mother of Waters (Eldwitchen)

Creed: Oldest of old, weeper of oceans, I will follow in the footsteps of nature.

Special Powers: Telekinesis (Elemental), Great Healing, Call of the Wild*, Hunch*, Mindrider*, Wilderness Walk*

Trappings: wilderness, stars, water, air, darkness

Traditions: The secretive eldwitches, followers of the last of the ancient gods, practice a religion that is strange and alien. Even orc shamans find eldwitchen worship discomfiting, however—the Dark Mother of Waters is a cold, distant force without much love for her followers. Where Mur Eats-it-Raw teaches respect for the wild, the eldwitchen tradition teaches submission to it. Eldwitches themselves range from implacable guardians of the wild to warm protectors.

The distance of their god has a major impact on the miracles of eldwitches: because she does not shield them from magic, they suffer backlash just as sorcerers do. Eldwitches suffer no penalties when attempting to Tame the Magic of powerful spells, however.

What about priests of the Lords?

Your gamemaster has information on these foul traditions. The civilized person of Dama knows little about the long suppressed rites practiced by followers of the Lord and most of what they do know comes from stories and legends. Common knowledge on the subject can be gleaned from *Chapter 2: Gods of Dama*, perhaps supplemented by secret information at the gamemaster's discretion.

Arcane Background (Storyteller)

Prerequisite: follower of the Ethos.

Although the abilities of those favored as true storytellers are granted by the Heroes, they operate differently from the miracles of priests: storytellers generally have only one Power to set them apart and they seldom feel the same rush of magic as priests and sorcerers. In addition, only the Heroes tamper with lives of their followers in this way—cold elves, orcs, and eldwitches cannot become storytellers.

Storytellers take Arcane Background (Storyteller), which operates in essentially the same manner as Arcane Background (Superpower) described in *Savage Worlds*. Because Storyteller is also a form of Faith, storytellers may take the Champion Edge providing they meet all other prerequisites. They also have access to a unique Edge: Whisper of Myth (described Skills, Hindrances, and Edges).

There are limits on storytellers as well. Their choice of available powers is limited (see Storyteller Base Powers table below). They are unable to Tame the Magic. They are barred from joining mystery cults—storytellers who formally devote themselves to one Hero lose their powers. Their behaviour must be broadly in accordance with the Ethos, but rather than losing their powers, storytellers who consistently act outside of the Ethos find themselves marked for retribution by other storytellers. Finally, they are frequently pawns of the Heroes. Storytellers seldom live quiet lives. Such is the price of their gift.

Storyteller Base Powers

Armor
Barrier
Boost/Lower Trait
Deflection
Detect/Conceal Arcana
Dispel
Healing
Hunch*
Luck*
Obscure
Quickness
Shape Change
Smite
Speed
Stun

Trappings: subtlety, deception, fortune, stealth, intuition, instinct

Powers

Power descriptions follow the standard *Savage Worlds* format with the addition of a *Restricted* line where the power is available only to certain orders or faiths.

Bind Emotions

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 2

Range: Smarts

Duration: 3 (1/round)

Trappings: gestures, harsh light, harsh words

Restricted: Besirith Irosal

The cold Handmaidens of Besirith Irosal are able to control emotions in others as well as in themselves. Targets of this Power are fixed in their current emotional state for the duration of the Power. This is likely to be confusing, embarrassing or distracting for the target, but it also provides a +2 bonus to resist all appeals to emotions (including Taunt) as well as complete but temporary protection when a Guts check is called for. Memory is not blotted out, however, and after the spell ends, the target should roll the Guts check as horror comes crashing down.

Binding Sign

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 4

Range: Smarts

Duration: 3 (1/round)

Trappings: glowing symbols drawn in air, firm commands

Restricted: The Nightwalkers

On a successful use of this Power, the substance that makes up the body of a demon is rendered inert and the demon temporarily powerless. Binding Sign is an opposed roll of the character's arcane skill versus the target demon's Spirit. The bound demon can be attacked to disperse its substance, but is treated as a solid object of appropriate toughness (see *Savage Worlds* p66, Breaking Things).

On an unsuccessful use, the demon is immediately aware of the caster and of what was attempted. The caster should expect a counterattack.

Burrow

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 3

Range: Self

Duration: 5 (2/round)

Trappings: soil, stone dust

Restricted: Ironmasks

This remarkable Power allows Ironmasks to move through the ground. Although they refer

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to it as burrowing, it is actually more closely akin to swimming or wading. The character can move at his normal Pace through sand, soil, or loose gravel and half Pace through stone or rock (worked or natural). He cannot move through glass, crystal, or metal (naturally occurring veins can generally be avoided). The character cannot breathe while burrowing and must "surface" for air (see *Savage Worlds* p24 for rules on holding breath), nor does he gain any special ability to see through the earth, though a successful Smarts roll will always indicate the nearest air surface.

Additional effect: For 2 additional Power Points (+1/round), the character can bring another person through the earth with him. His pace is reduced by half. Person released (deliberately or accidentally) by the character remain affected by the Power until the end of its duration and may attempt to escape, although they do not have the Ironmask's benefit of sensing the surface.

Call of the Wild*

Restricted: The Wolf, Mur Eats-it-Raw, Eldwitchen
See *Deadlands: The Savage West*. No changes.

Cone of Flame*

See *Evernight*. No changes.

Courier

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 3
Range: Known destination
Duration: Special
Trappings: trained animal, message in a bottle
Restricted: Order of the Mantle, Ironmasks

Courier allows a message to be sent swiftly, though not instantaneously and not without a small amount of risk. The message is carried in some form—the sorcerers of Dama commonly use animals carrying a small note or trained to speak. Though it does not appear to move any faster than normal when observed, the courier actually travels 100 miles in a day and can travel to an individual in any location that would be normally accessible to an animal of its type. The courier's destination must be specified and known to the caster—the courier cannot go to a destination that the caster could not himself find. Upon arrival, the courier will present itself to the target, but it is up to the target to realize the courier's significance. If the target is not present, the courier will attempt to seek him out within the location; if there is no sign, the courier will wait.

The courier can be stopped. Anyone deliberately attacking the courier can bring it

down but is at -4 on attack rolls. The courier cannot carry anything larger than a small scrap of paper.

Sorcerers of the Order of the Mantle typically use birds as couriers; those of the Ironmasks often use burrowing animals (especially rabbits).
Additional Effects: for 1 additional power point, the courier can be magically imbued with the power to speak its message once in the caster's own voice. For 2 additional power points (+1 to capture the subject's voice), the courier can take a return message to the caster; the return message must be sent by the first dawn or sunset after arrival.

Curse*

Restricted: Mur Eats-it-Raw
See *Deadlands: The Savage West*. No changes.

Demon Pierce

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 2-6
Range: 24/48/96
Duration: Instant
Trappings: swirling shadows, an explosion of iron fragments
Restricted: The Nightwalkers

A version of Blast that affects only demons. The Nightwalker conjures a swirling, fist sized mass of shadows which is then hurled at the target (its range is magically augmented); when it hits, it explodes in a shower of what appear to be sharp, dark iron fragments. Non-demons within the burst feel nothing but a chill and a foul breeze, but the fragments inflict wounds as a Blast on demons. All other properties are identical to Blast.

Firewalk

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 3
Range: Smarts (in miles)
Duration: Instant
Trappings: fire, flash of light, flung powders
Restricted: Sorority of Ash

A useful Power that allows the user to step into one fire and emerge from any other fire within range. Both fires must be large enough to accommodate the user (a campfire or decent-sized fireplace). If the user knows the location of the destination fire, she may go there automatically, otherwise the destination is random (gamemaster determines direction and exact location, but caster determines approximate distance). Provided the user enters and exits the fires immediately on departure and arrival, she takes no damage from them.

Additional effects: For an additional 3 points, the user may draw another individual with her to the same destination.

Gravecloak

Rank: Veteran

Power Points: 3-6

Range: Self

Duration: 3 (2-4/round)

Trappings: shadows, chill wind, rank odors

Restricted: The Solemn

A damaging aura surrounds the character to the radius of a small burst template (centred on the character). All creatures (alive or undead, but not constructs) that come within this area, whether through their own actions or those of the character, suffer 2d6 damage.

Additional Effects: for double the power points, the aura expands to the radius of a medium burst template. Damage does not increase, but the larger aura costs more to maintain from round to round.

Healing

Sister of Ash - Trappings: when used by a Sister of Ash, Healing is accompanied by burning pain and leaves the healed wound black with ash.

Hunch*

Restricted: Order of the Mantle, Isau Jabren, Eldwitchen, Storyteller

See *Deadlands: The Savage West*. No changes.

Lay to Rest

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 1

Range: Spirit

Duration: Instant

Trappings: words of power, presentation of signs, sharp gestures

Restricted: The Solemn

This power duplicates the Holy/Unholy Warrior Edge, but can be used by the Solemn only against undead creatures and spirits.

Luck*

Restricted: Radi Last, Isau Jabren, Storyteller

Same as the Holy Roller Power. See *Deadlands: The Savage West*. No changes.

Mindrider*

Restricted: Order of the Mantle, Isau Jabren, Eldwitchen

See *Deadlands: The Savage West*. No changes.

Quickness

Arlora Irosal - Trappings: when used by priests of Arlora Irosal, Quickness is accompanied by a

raging fury. Any attempt to do anything beyond engaging in combat must be accompanied by a successful Spirit roll.

Sacrifice*

Restricted: Anderes Glorian, Cerus Mimr, Radi Last

See *Deadlands: The Savage West*. No changes.

Shadow Sight

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 2

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 hours (1/Hour)

Trappings: dark ointment smeared on eyes

Restricted: The Nightwalkers

Shadow Sight grants the ability to see in total darkness. It is not without risk: it also allows glimpses into the realm of Shadow. Those under the effect of the Power should make a Spirit roll each hour (Nightwalkers roll at +2)—failure indicates they see something that isn't actually there.

Shadow Stride

Rank: Heroic

Power Points: 5

Range: Touch

Duration: Instant

Trappings: shadows, darkness

Restricted: The Nightwalkers

A powerful Nightwalker is able to step physically into Shadow, possibly drawing others with her. The effort is draining and the caster must make a Vigor roll or gain a level of Fatigue (as if from lack of sleep) after passing into Shadow. A second use of the Power is necessary to return to Dama.

Additional effects: Additional beings may be drawn into Shadow for a point per being (ie. 2 humans and a dog costs 3 points). The caster must also make a Vigor roll for each being drawn into Shadow.

Backlash is also dangerous when attempting to draw others into Shadow (though not when returning to Dama). If Backlash occurs and the caster fails to tame the magic, she must make a Smarts roll for each being other than herself. Failure means that being has fallen into Shadow alone (the Nightwalker can never fall into Shadow in this way).

Shape Change

The Wolf - Rank: Seasoned, *Power Points:* 4

Priests of The Wolf are able to transform themselves into only one shape: a wolf.

Shield

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 2/target

Range: Spirit

Duration: 3 (1/round/target)

Trappings: muted shimmer

Restricted: Radi Last

Identical in effect to Armor, Shield can protect many individuals with a single casting.

Smoulder's Kiss

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 3

Range: Touch

Duration: 3

Trappings: touch or kiss

Restricted: Sorority of Ash

On a successful touch attack, the user leaves the target with a smouldering wound that inflicts 1d10 damage each round for three rounds (as if the target was suffering damage from a spot fire; see *Savage Worlds* p.97). The Power is accompanied by a horrendous pain, a noticeable burning smell, and smoking flesh, but there is no actual flame.

Succor*

Restricted: Radi Last, Besirith Irosal, Mur Eats-it-Raw

See *Deadlands: The Savage West*. No changes.

Telekinesis

Elemental – Restricted: Sorority of Ash, Ironmasks, Eldwitchen

If a sorcerer or priest has elemental access to Telekinesis, the power only affects the appropriate element. However, the element itself can be manipulated to affect other things. To create grasping tentacles, use rules for lifting creatures (fire effects do 2d4 damage while held). To attack, use rules for telekinetic weapons as if wielding a weapon that did Strength+2 (telekinetic damage will therefore be Spirit+2); fire effects do +2 damage as if from a burning weapon. The manipulated element is treated as solid even if it is not (air or fire).

To use elemental telekinesis effects, the source material must be roughly malleable (ie. water or snow but not ice; dirt or sand, but not solid stone) and must be available in an appropriate volume (ie. a fiery tentacle from a campfire but not from a torch). Only elemental aspected sorcerers and priests may use Telekinesis in this way (they are commanding the elements rather than actually using "telekinesis").

Trinkets*

Restricted: Isau Jabren

See *Deadlands: The Savage West*. No changes.

Walk with Death

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 3

Range: Self

Duration: 3 (1/round)

Trappings: ashes, grave soil, a shroud

Restricted: The Solemn

This Power cloaks the user from the sight of undead creatures. It has all the effects of Invisibility, but at a reduced point cost. Because many predatory undead have a keen sense of smell, the Power disguises the user's odor as well (though living beings near him sense a disturbing smell of wet earth and death).

Wilderness Walk*

Restricted: The Wolf, Mur Eats-it-Raw, Eldwitchen

See *Deadlands: The Savage West*, but change Power Points to 1/target, Range to Touch, and Duration to 1/hour/target. Priests may use this Power on others as well as themselves, but each use requires a new casting roll.

Zombie

Demon – Trappings: signs, chanting, blood

Identical to Zombie in Power Point cost, Range, and Duration, Demon instead summons a number of lesser Demons out of Shadow to serve—grudgingly—the character. The demons are obedient, but resent their servitude. They fight willingly, but must be watched lest they try to pervert some more peaceful command.

Demons are formed from the substance with which they share an affinity and there must be a quantity of that substance available in order to summon them. A quantity roughly equivalent to a smallish person per demon is sufficient; the substance is consumed in the summoning.

If the caster's maintenance of this Power should ever fail, he must make an opposed roll of his arcane power versus the Spirit for each summoned demon. If he fails, that demon turns against him and attacks (on a success, that demon is banished back to Shadow).