

SPLINTERS OF THE WYLD



EXALTED
SECOND EDITION



SPLINTERS OF THE WYLD



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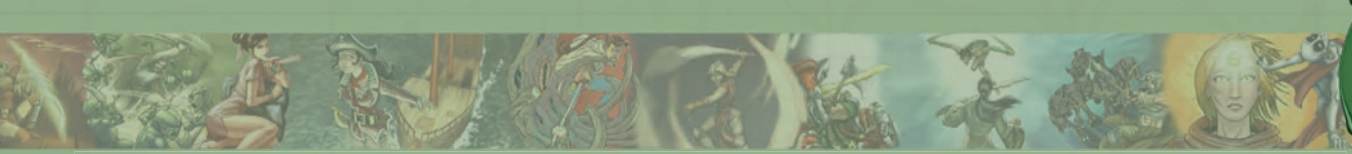
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INTRODUCTION



Sometimes writers write too much. **The Compass of Terrestrial Directions, Vol. II—The Wyld** offers many locations, people and creatures for **Exalted** games, but the writers produced quite a bit more than we expected. It seemed a shame just to throw the excess material away, though. Then, over time, other books ended up with little scraps and fragments of Wyld lore, and those seemed too cool to leave in the oblivion of a computer trash bin.

Before we knew it, we had a lot of pieces with no home, so we decided to stitch them together into a crazy quilt of additional game pieces for your **Exalted** series. The result is **Splinters of the Wyld**, additional glimpses of the madness waiting at Creation's rim. Strictly speaking you don't need **The Wyld** to use the material within for inspiration, but there are a lot of references to **The Wyld** and other books that will help explain some of the concepts within.





THE NORTHERN WYLD

THE MIDDLEMARCHES

LITTLE MOUTH

Somewhere in the Northeastern Wyld, near many other landmarks but rarely visited, stands a black granite statue about the size of an elephant. It is the bust of an unknown man. This person would look handsome if the statue were in the proper shape, but it suffers a bizarre deformity. From the lower lip down and from the upper lip to the top hair, it looks fully human. At the mouth, however, the man's head bends backward to open freakishly wide. Ringed by perfect, undistorted teeth, the mouth looks like an endless gap in space of undisturbed darkness.

The statue's Little Mouth is a direct conduit to the Mouth of the Void. A fool who leapt directly into it would fall straight down into Oblivion. People who exercise greater care can climb along the inside of the mouth and find themselves crawling on the lip of the Mouth of the Void. The statue

does not provide a reverse path. The vacant nature of Air has enough affinity with the Void that one can go from Little Mouth to Oblivion, but not back again.

Still, traces of the Abyss's nature infect the surrounding region. Although the waypoint is deep in the Middlemarches, visitors from Creation suffer Wyld exposure as though it were the Bordermarches. Some of the local beasts also feel the effects, looking more wan or deathly; a few change so far as to have visible bones in places, though to no ill effect. Despite the deathly taint, the waypoint is not a shadowland. The connection to Oblivion makes Little Mouth something much worse.

THE FEATHER STAIRWAY

In the Northeast, between the driftlands and the icicle forests farther east, a gigantic diamond feather thrusts from the ground. Its shaft pierces the frozen earth and ice, and the feather's vanes climb at an angle into the clouds. This is the Feather



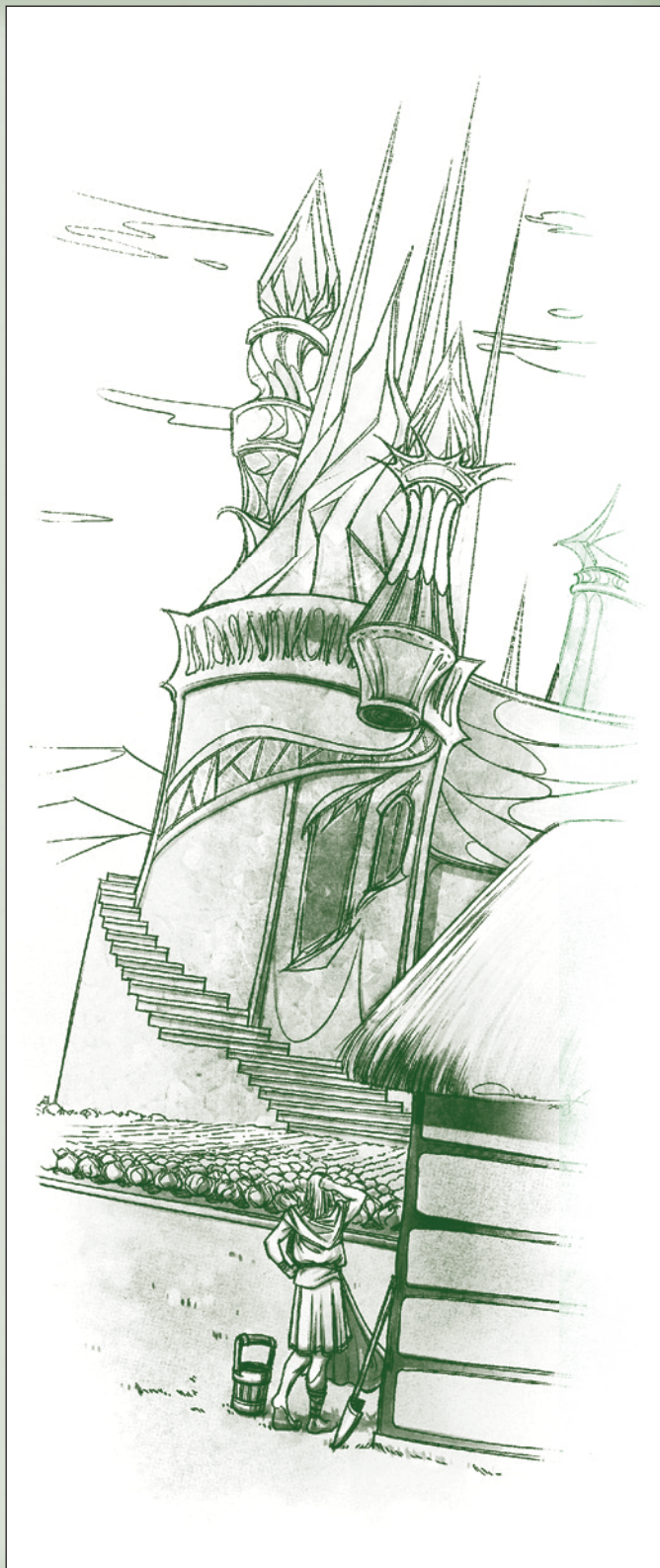




Stairway. Many creatures from the Wyld, Creation and other places dwell within this curious waypoint, maintained by a mysterious landlord.

Treasure hunters should not cut away the diamond of the stairway, because each chip taken spawns a snow ghost. These eerie entities follow thieves of the stair and assault them in the night, re-forming the next night if they are slain. Once they kill the thieves (or whoever now owns the chips), they return the stolen diamond chips to the stair and repair the damage as if it had never been done. No thief has ever discovered the means of ending the pursuit—going to the Elemental Pole of Fire. Should a snow ghost appear there at night to slay a thief, the enormous heat of the Elemental Pole would melt it, and it would never return. See the “Creatures of the Wyld” section (pp. 37–40) for snow ghost traits.

The actual stairway is inside the rachis, the hollow shaft of the feather. An open doorway lets people enter where the rachis meets the ground. Inside, visitors find a mile-wide stairway going as far up and down as anyone can see. The smooth, concave wall shimmers. Ascending, several hundred yards of travel reveals the first barbs of the feather’s vanes on both sides of the vast stairway. Each hollow barb forms an enormous passageway several miles long and as wide as a half-dozen city streets. Here, the smooth walls let in light from outside or glow softly at night. Occasional decorations adorn the walls, from paintings and wall-hangings to pieces of sculpture, running the gamut of quality from the crudest daubs to masterpieces. Every half-mile or so, there is a small collection of furniture and a greater quantity of decoration, including bookcases and rugs.

Where a feather’s barb would have a barbule, there is a landing and a doorway to an apartment where various creatures dwell. The apartments bear labels such as “Striking Aspect” or “Effervescent.”





The barb-hallways have names like “Silver Bells Hall” or “Affair-Ridden Assembly.” Individual apartments can thus be described by their full names: the Striking Aspect of Silver Bells Hall or Effervescent Affair-Ridden Assembly. By standing at the end of the appropriate barb and stating a resident’s name and apartment, that individual is notified of a visitor, assuming she is home.

The Feather Stairway holds thousands of apartments. The farther up the stairway, the shorter the barbs become. The apartments grow larger and more lavish, and the inhabitants become more rarefied. As each apartment occupies a parallel space, much like spirit sanctums, there is no limit to the size of the quarters, but they still begin smaller and grow larger.

Myriad people live in the many apartments. Not many are raksha, since the landlord of this apartment house does not permit shaping on the premises. Spirits of all kinds make up a large portion of the population. Exiles from Yu-Shan, fugitives from the Terrestrial Bureaucracy or former residents from Malfeas keep their homes here, as do Celestial and influential Terrestrial gods or elementals who want a “bachelor pad.” Even ghosts occasionally find the leverage to afford a home in the Feather Stairway.

Other inhabitants are less classifiable. Some are smaller behemoths or surviving Primordial creations, such as Arad the Hunter and Ymilarusian of Scarlets (who both have homes near the top of the feather). At least one is a mysterious hekatonkhire who despises the Underworld, Labyrinth and Void passionately enough that she refuses to return there. A few apartments hold entire clans of Wyld mutants. Many apartments await new occupants.

To obtain an apartment, a would-be resident must meet the landlord and arrange some manner of tribute as rent. The contract stipulates that a resident must never raise a hand against another inhabitant, inside the Feather Stairway or out. To do so voids the lease and ensures certain expulsion.

The Feather Stairway’s master calls itself Diamond Voice. It occupies the top three apartments, weaving their unreal spaces into one vast, palace-sized suite at the top of the feather. This

unseen landlord accepts any request for an audience, pleased to show off its opulent home and meet new prospective residents. Diamond Voice’s presence is like a space growing so dark that no one can see, except that everything grows so bright and scintillating that sight is impossible. Its voice resounds in people’s ears.

Diamond Voice gives residences only to those who can offer something it wants. Its desires are esoteric and unpredictable, so a tribe of mutants might get away with offering a mutilated gazelle carcass every month, while a Celestial god might be required once per decade to provide a name not spoken in millennia.

Diamond Voice can instantly end the life and existence of anyone it has met. The person is not *dead*, but must spend the rest of her life as someone else completely. It does not advertise this power. Fortunately, Diamond Voice uses this power only to eliminate those who break its rule of neighborly peace, so they can never return.

THE WHITE MARSHES

Farther eastward lie the White Marshes, surrounding a hill of clouds and ivory at their center. The domain is all swamplands and sinking pools of snow, and will-o-wisps glide lazily through the treacherous terrain. The raksha masters of this freehold invite visitors to stay for as long as they wish, but they also expect their “guests” to perform services for them. The longer visitors stay, the more degrading and humiliating the services become. (The raksha use their victims’ shame and anger as a conduit to feed upon their souls.) Visitors who object are stripped naked and turned out into the marshes, where they find that the paths lead to slow and suffocating death, or back to the raksha’s dwellings again, but never to actual safety.

Since these raksha live in the Middlemarches, they do not *need* to devour human souls. They merely enjoy it. Master Seldrim and Mistress Berincalle, the androgynous brother and sister who lead the freehold’s raksha, dance together in the snowstorms and couple gleefully while they plot how to lure Terrestrial Exalted into their hands. They hunger for more and better prey, but are too lazy to exert



themselves to gain it. The raksha of this freehold have few dealings with the Guild. Instead, they simply steal victims from anyone who comes within the range of their storms and lures. Of course, very few people from Creation venture this far into the Wyld. Even the villages and tribes of Wyld-dwelling folk move away one by one. The Fair Folk of the White Marshes capture fewer victims every year. Soon they must choose between their indolence and their desire for souls upon which to feed.

THE FATHER OF BIRDS

From his aerie in the Wyld, the Father of Birds watches the activity of all Northern winged creatures. Although he does not belong to the Celestial Bureaucracy (indeed, he is not a god of any kind), the Father of Birds files reports on all things he sees. His endorsements of hunting smaller creatures and regurgitating nuts are glorifying; his condemnations of inter-bird conflict are scathing.

Bird-child hybrid servants file everything their father writes in his extensive (perhaps endless) archival hallway. No one ever gets permission to review the Father's archives, but someone who did so illicitly would have access to endless, florid descriptions of hatching eggs, migrations, wing cleanings and other minutiae.

The Father of Birds himself is eight feet in height, muscular in build and paternal in aspect. He wears a white toga much too light for the climate and has two great, white wings. When showing off, he has a 16-foot wingspan.

People receive audiences with the Father of Birds quite often, whether they request them or not. The Father is most known for his ability to bestow wings upon other creatures, and his penchant for doing so. He thinks that any living thing is better off with wings, even creatures that blatantly don't need them. The Father of Birds has inconvenienced many snow wyrms by granting wings that only slow their flight.

The Father of Birds makes an exception only when people seek him out to ask for wings. Then, he grows haughty and judgmental. Such people must prove themselves worthy of such a blessing before the Father of Birds will provide it. And he judges

no one as worthy. Every petitioner is somehow inferior to his precious birds, whether in terms of beak hardness, flight speed, talon strength or other qualities that a petitioner almost certainly lacks.

Wings received from the Father of Birds are the Wings abomination (**Exalted**, p. 290). His power is to grant a significant mutation at will.

THE FLIGHT ZONE

Many things in the Northern Wyld can fly. Sometimes the air is so strong, it is hard not to. In the Flight Zone, air becomes more buoyant than it is in Creation. In the First Age, inexperienced Exalts came here to practice the flight they could achieve through Charms and artifice. Others brought their aerial combat or courier corps here for training. Vanileth, the Shogun of Artificial Flight, took pleasure in frequent visits to observe or advise the trainees. He still occasionally comes here to look upon the region and brood.

Ruins of the First Age accommodations and storage units remain. The facilities were reinforced against Wyld exposure, but even those measures eventually failed. Today, only the tips of two stylized wings rise above the hundreds of feet of snow that cover the ground. Nothing else of the manse where visiting Celestial Exalted once resided remains above the snow.

Uncovering the Flight Zone's manse now would be a tremendous feat, as would be returning it to its original, functional state. One who did it would possess a hearthstone (Manse ●●●) that adds two successes to all rolls regarding flight. In the surrounding dormitories and equipment sheds, one might find various tools of flight such as jump harnesses and transcendent phoenix pinions (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. I—Wonders of the Lost Age**, pp. 52–53), as well as treatises on the practice of flight and the theory behind such artifacts.

Any rolls dealing with the act of flying gain one bonus die in this waypoint, and characters suffer half normal damage for falling. The higher a person flies, the stronger the upward lift gets. Every 1,000 feet of altitude adds another die to flight actions.

Flying too high here makes it difficult to leave the skies. Once the flight bonus becomes greater



than three dice, any attempt to land suffers an external penalty equal to (flight bonus - 3). Once a character goes high enough, he has little chance of coming down again. Though it is nearly impossible to see from the ground (with mortal eyes, at least), a Dragon-Blooded corpse flies in a repeating pattern several miles above the manse. It wears jade wings of the raptor (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. I—Wonders of the Lost Age**, p. 54). At that height, the air is so strong that nobody could ever get the body down. Few even dared try, with such an example.

THE DEEP WYLD

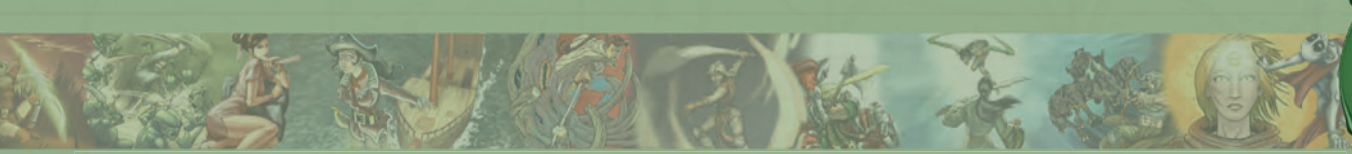
THE SLEEPER'S TEMPLE

Three hundred years ago, an Air-pected Immaculate named Mnemon Iurans traveled to



the Elemental Pole of Air in order to rear a temple there to Mela. Her efforts won the favor of Colis-Jahmen, the major-domo to the Elemental Dragon. He ordered lesser elementals to assist her by building the walls, so that Iurans herself could engrave the Immaculate Scriptures on the altar. Colis-Jahmen then laid a spell of deep preserving sleep upon Iurans, so that she could rest unharmed by the temperatures. She still sleeps beneath the altar, waiting to be woken by some worthy visitor. Her magitech gear, set with several powerful hearthstones, lies beside her. She is old-fashioned by current standards, and would stand loyally with her House if awoken.





THE WESTERN WYLD



WYLD POCKETS AND TAINTED LANDS

WINDING STAIRS

Not far from the Neck lies Winding Stairs, a freehold of mystery and dreams where the native raksha rarely speak to one another. Each one keeps her own mortal captives to drain of dreams and emotions. They attempt to enrapture each other in illusions, caught in a web of endless competition. The inhabitants are not sure themselves who rules Winding Stairs, but proclaim absolute fidelity to their unknown monarch. While Winding Stairs falls under Pearl Court hegemony, a number of these Fair Folk also follow the Jet Court. The freehold often serves as a way-stop between the two courts.

The doorway to Winding Stairs looks like a huge scallop in the side of a reef. Inside, the palace twists in on itself like a whorled shell, with stairways leading between the rooms. The stairways follow no

logic. They can travel in any direction, but always eventually lead where the raksha want to go. By local convention, the rooms are zones of peace, so all attempts to charm or delude others must take place on the stairs. Some raksha whisper that the true ruler of the place is lost on a staircase between two rooms that were simultaneously destroyed, and will not emerge until the original rooms reappear or are rebuilt.

Beneath the silver-and-opal palace lies an ancient deposit of starmetal that struck the ocean floor during the Usurpation and was lost from the records of the Sidereals. This starmetal deposit gives the freehold an unusual force of destiny that the raksha, creatures of chance and whim that they are, do not understand. When affairs of the Western raksha become tangled with the Exalted or other powerful creatures, Winding Stairs usually sees an important meeting or confrontation.





THE MIDDLEMARCHES

THE GLASS SHARK

Not far from the realm of Skyport swims the Glass Shark, the last (and perhaps first) of its kind. At first glance, it seems like just another Wyld monster, a shark large enough to swallow a First Age ten-masted vessel whole, with room to spare. Most who see it flee and never experience the wonder it has to offer.

Once swallowed, a person (or ship and crew) can live comfortably inside the Glass Shark for a long time. Fresh water drips from high, arching ribs, and live fish often float down its gullet. What's more, the shark is entirely invisible from the inside except for its jaws and teeth. No creature can see in, but every creature inside can see out.

The Glass Shark travels a complex loop. From a far corner of the Northwestern Middlemarches, it zigzags erratically toward the Southwestern Middlemarches and back. As it swims, it passes through nearly every recorded Western Middlemarch region and many that are new or have just never been seen. From within the Glass Shark, one can take a full tour of the Western Middlemarches.

ILLUSTRIOUS WATERFANG PIRATE

Creation's West endures a superabundance of pirates, but the greatest pirate of all dwells in the Wyld. Illustrious Waterfang Pirate is about eight feet tall (or long) and covered with rough, emerald scales. His long, muscular legs end in irregular fins. When underwater, Illustrious Waterfang twists and locks them together to create a single tail. His hands end in talons. A series of fins on his head resembles dreadlocks. When he smiles, his eerily large mouth reveals a set of very sharp teeth and two long, thin fangs.

Illustrious Waterfang Pirate is violently territorial. Creatures of the Wyld have long since learned not to come near the rock and coral reef he calls home. Countless piles of shining treasures and lost artifacts litter the cave where he dwells—but no one dares to risk his bite.

When the pirate bites someone or something, his thin fangs inject venom, not into the bloodstream but into the *Essence* of his victim. It affects living

organisms and inanimate objects (like ships) with comparable effectiveness. Over the next hour or so, the victim's body... loosens. Skin becomes translucent, then ripples and becomes almost transparent. The victim feels weak, *sloshy*, as though his muscles could no longer grip each other and his flesh were trying to slip off his bones. This causes no pain. At last, the victim sluices down onto the deck of his ship or dissipates forever into the ocean, the transformation into seawater complete.

Usually, though, Illustrious Waterfang Pirate uses his venom on ships. He cares absolutely nothing for the sailors or captain, desiring only to seize the goods in a ship's hold. Recent disorders have reduced shipping, so Illustrious Waterfang has seen fewer vessels wander into his grasp. Displeased with this, he has begun traveling from his home in search of ships riding low in the water. He rarely has to venture far into Creation. Illustrious Waterfang Pirate finds his richest pickings with ships of the Realm, but with few such ships heading west in the current troubles, he takes most of his prizes from other pirates. This cannot help but cause trouble throughout the West.

The creature's favorite tactic is to follow a ship until it is far from any possible help, then bite it several times without attracting attention. Once the ship has turned to water and dumped its contents in the sea, Illustrious Waterfang Pirate kills any of the crew necessary (and several who aren't, just for fun) and steals away any goods to his lair. Occasionally, a member of the crew has some method to protect the ship; Illustrious Waterfang Pirate then uses Swiftfin, his javelin, to end their lives for interfering.

Against a fleet with a treasure too attractive to ignore, Illustrious Waterfang Pirate swims quietly beneath their hulls, biting several of them. Their liquefaction distracts the rest of the fleet and often prevents them from escaping.

Motivation: To acquire. Illustrious Waterfang Pirate cares little for what he collects. He prefers objects of value, but he *must* collect.

Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 6, Stamina 10; Charisma 4, Manipulation 7, Appearance 3; Perception 6, Intelligence 4, Wits 6

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 4, Temperance 1, Valor 3

Abilities: Athletics 5, Awareness 5, Dodge 3, Investigation 3, Larceny 5, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Seatongue, 4 Western tribal dialects) 2, Lore 2, Medicine 4, Martial Arts 3, Melee 4, Occult 3 (Wyld +2), Performance 5 (Lies +2), Presence 4, Resistance 4 (Poison +3), Sail 5, Stealth 6, Survival 5, Thrown 5 (Swiftfin +3), War 2

Backgrounds: Artifact 3, Resources N/A

Essence Powers:

Illustrious Water Infusion—This power imbues Illustrious Waterfang Pirate's bite with his infamous toxin. It costs eight motes and causes his next bite attack, be it on a living creature or something inanimate, to inject the venom.

Scent of the Fat Man—This ability, combined with everyday research and tracking, enables Illustrious Waterfang Pirate to find his prey. He can smell out quantities of already-possessed treasure within 100 miles. He learns the direction, distance to within 10 miles, approximate composition (jade, silver, promissory notes, daiklaves and so on) and value (total Resources rating and highest Artifact rating) of anything with at least a Resources 3 value. This power costs 10 motes and one Willpower, and bestows only immediate knowledge, requiring repeated uses to track down a target.

Tax-taker's Wish—Many treasures Illustrious Waterfang Pirate acquires would be ruined in the water, or would eventually spoil. Neither event would please him. This power, which costs five motes, indefinitely preserves an object in good condition, ignoring the effects of both time and water. Essence-using savants who know of this ability (very few indeed) are jealous that the Essence is not committed.

Join Battle: 11

Attacks:

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 8B, Parry DV 11 (6), Rate 3

Bite: Speed 6, Accuracy 9, Damage 8B, Parry DV —, Rate 1

Javelin (Swiftfin): Speed 4, Accuracy 16, Damage 16L*, Parry DV 12 (6), Rate 1

* Swiftfin can inflict lethal or bashing damage at Illustrious Waterfang Pirate's whim.

Soak: 15L/18B (Tough hide, 10L/8B)

Health Levels: -0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 7 **Willpower:** 8

Essence: 5 **Essence Pool:** 80

Other Notes: Swiftfin, Illustrious Waterfang Pirate's javelin, dissolves into seawater the tick after it is used. After that point, its wielder may reflexively grasp it out of any body of seawater of sufficient size. When solid, the javelin looks like shimmering, black jade with a banner of red silk attached. Illustrious Waterfang Pirate may use it for a defense as long as it is currently at hand.

ILLUSTRIOUS WATERFANG'S VENOM

Illustrious Waterfang Pirate's venom has these traits: Damage: 8 Stamina/10 minutes, Toxicity: 4L, Tolerance —/—, Penalty (5 – Stamina). With each dot of Stamina loss, the victim becomes more translucent and rubbery (like gelatin) until he collapses as a puddle of water. Against inanimate objects (most notably ships), each point of Stamina damage reduces the target's soak by two, with the object turning completely to water when it has no more soak. Artifact vessels and equipment resist the poison much like a human does, using a dice pool equal to (Artifact rating x 2). The damage "heals" as if each dot of Stamina lost were a level of aggravated damage.

Some Charms, such as Hull-Preserving Technique or Shipwreck-Surviving Stamina, can help keep a ship from dissolving. At the Storyteller's discretion, Storm-Weathering Essence Infusion may add two successes to the ship's roll against the poison.

QUEEN OF THE LOST

A lost goddess lies in these waters, having slipped into madness as the Wyld and the waters devoured her former lands. In the First Age she was Soanthe-of-the-Waves, protective goddess of



a proud archipelago, and worshiped as an image of the dawn. When the raksha invaded, she rose up to protect her people and her islands. Yet, as the Wyld advanced, the lands that revered her were lost. The raksha ravaged and destroyed her worshipers, and the waves of chaos swept over her temples. Soanthe was left powerless, trapped deep in the Wyld, cast down and chained.

Some raksha worship Soanthe for a diversion. They named her Queen of the Lost, Mistress of the Forgotten and Lady of the Endless Depths. In turn, they set their human slaves to praising her as well. Soanthe's nature changed, warped by the Wyld and by her own losses. Her story became interwoven with that of the raksha in the freehold that held her prisoner. She became their prize as well as their captive, the Lady in Chains, as capricious and bitter as the raksha themselves. Soanthe has nearly forgotten her true nature, and her mansion in Yu-Shan stands decrepit and empty. The raksha are pleased to treat her as one of their own. She raids and hunts with them, and her tormented dreams ebb and flow through the freehold where she dwells with them.

THE STEAM TIDES

In the far Southwestern Middlemarches, the Steam Tides make travel a danger. Where the water

of the West mingles with the lava of the South, the ocean waters turn completely to steam. As a ship approaches, the sea at first releases thin tendrils of warm mist, then comes to a boil. Eventually, the water becomes too gaseous to buoy up the ship, which gradually rides a diminishing ocean into an unending pit of boiling water—but the crew is parboiled by then anyway. If the sailors have some way to protect themselves from scalding, they can live off the coalfish and vapor hawks until they run out of drinkable water. Before they die of dehydration instead of boiling, they

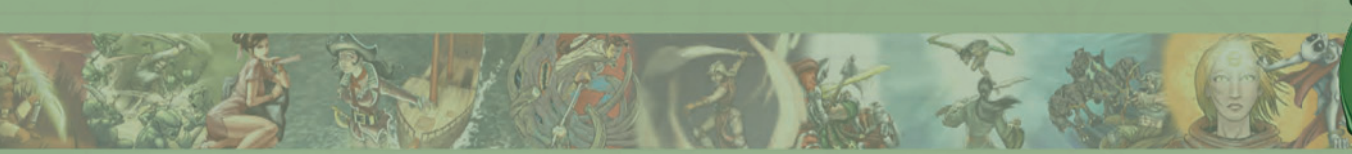
may glimpse the volcano at the center of it all—if the steam clears.

The explorer Silver Reng hopes to reach the fabled volcano and find the treasure it must have. After all, the Wyld is a place of stories, and lost islands in the middle of dangerous seas always have

treasures. Over a decade ago, he stole the plans to a Haslanti hot-air dirigible and rigged a sailing ship for the adventure. Since then, he has been trying to sail and fly to the center of the Steam Tides, but he never succeeds. Between scarcity of supplies, angry vapor hawks and other dangers, each expedition ends in failure, killing all the crew but him. Somehow, the Wyld releases him to try again, and it will continue to do so until he somehow ends his story.

Jade-Beaked Ukari has not found the treasure yet herself, but she has never tried. This Child of





Luna spends most of her time riding the hot winds of the Steam Tides in her spirit shape, that of an albatross—and using powerful Charms against the heat. Rather than seeking a treasure, she stores valuables of her own within the volcano. Among her fellow Lunars, Ukari has a reputation for knowing the best places to hide things, including people. She currently spends time alone, contemplating the hidden connection between Solar and Abyssal Exalted and allowing her reputation to grow through her absence. Someone who wishes to explore the volcano for its treasure or contact Ukari had better have a trick up his sleeve to get there.

THE WHALE ISLANDS

A traveler can see the Whale Islands from quite far off. They hang hundreds of yards in the air, supported only by the unending spouts of water from the blowholes of enormous whales.

These huge black whales swim slowly through the waters of the Middlemarches with their mouths open. In this manner, they gather water to support the islands and collect food for themselves. Meanwhile, they live out a life cycle of their own, communicating with each other through a series of low moans and producing young that also grow to support an island.

Younger whales propel water with less force, so they support only the smaller islands, which hang lower in the sky and provide easier access for visitors from Creation. Getting up to the lowest islands is a minor feat, as they are no more than 100 feet in the air. Moving from there to the higher places requires patience and some ingenuity. The islands always hover above their respective whales, which swim about each other as they feed and interact, so travelers must time their ascent carefully and prepare to scale at least 100 feet to each successive island.

Two cultures live in the Whale Islands. They each speak a separate dialect of Seatongue, and each calls itself simply “the People.” The people who live on the whales’ backs call the islanders the Sky People. The people who live on the islands call the folk who dwell on the whales the Whale People.

The Sky People have ropes and readily help visitors climb up to their islands. The Whale People

taught them that to visit another place is an invitation to be eaten. It makes them very welcoming of strangers. They treat visiting characters very well until the feast. When their guests run or fight, the islanders believe it is just part of the guest gift to bestow a hunt and combat. Visitors may roam between islands at will, because the Island People inhabit them all. The only thing visitors may not do is leave.

The Island People are tall and dark, and usually wear only breechcloths. Their society is so haphazard that children sometimes rule over entire factions of them. Nothing they do really matters as long as their island stays floating in the air. On the topmost island lives the current guardian of the islands and his or her many wives and husbands. The guardian supposedly oversees the defense of the Whale Islands, but exercises little real command. Really, the guardian family is a dynastic legacy in the middle of near anarchy, set up by an unknown entity centuries ago to protect a magical artifact. By this point, the guardian family has forgotten everything except that it should live on the oldest and highest island.

The Whale People do not eat strangers. It is their way to eat what the Sky People drop or discard from their bountiful gardens and orchards. From this, they learned that anything that comes from above is food, including Sky People who once descended to meet their neighbors. Now, Sky People do not come down anymore. Not on purpose.

The Whale People insist that each of them is the transitive spirit of a great whale. When a new whale is born, one of the Whale People must leap into the new whale’s mouth to give it a soul. If the whale dies anyway (as many of them do), the spirit was not strong enough or pure enough. Families that produce unworthy spirits lose standing in the community. Inside each whale that lives, they say, is the seed of a soul that, if swallowed, can ease a person’s worst suffering.

Whale People mix their food with blubber they cut from the creatures they ride. Their unique digestion cannot subsist on solely whale blubber or the food that drops from the sky; they must consume both. Their careful butchery trims excess fat from the quick-healing whales, ensuring that the whales





can move quickly enough to consume enough food to stay alive and water to keep the island aloft, supporting the Sky People. The Sky People, in turn, drop fruits and vegetables down to the Whale People. This interdependence could break easily, but it has somehow remained stable for centuries.

THE DEEP WYLD

ASLEEP IN THE DEEP

Wings-of-the-Storm, the first viceroy of the Elemental Dragon of Water, rose up in horror during the Usurpation as he saw the Dragon-Blooded

cut down their Solar masters. He was bound with ties of friendship to a number of the Eclipse Caste, and sought to rescue them from destruction. As he entered the Western sea, a number of Siderals raised a mighty astrological curse against him. They bound him to lie on the border between the Elemental Pole of Water and the Western horizon until the day that one of the Eclipse Caste Solars whom he had failed to save should come to forgive him. He lies a thousand fathoms down, bound in sleep, while lesser spirits tend and guard his unconscious body.





THE SOUTHERN WYLD



THE BORDERMARCHES

GOJUEN, THE INFINITE CITY

The raksha led by Faramé Silvereyes travel between lairs, but currently take shelter at the fortress of Goujuen, the Infinite City. Faramé is a minstrel whose voice could lure a baby from his mother's breast. Young men and women come running to her, begging to be taken away to share her bed. The raksha of her entourage prize music. They treat skilled human singers and musicians well, pacting with them to learn new songs and even releasing them after a set period of entertainment. (Of course, the duration of that set period is likely to be decided by the raksha, and any promised reward likely contains a catch.)

From the outside, Goujuen looks like a small walled town of obsidian and gold. Within its four gates, however, its streets and corridors go on forever and bend subtly at the horizon. It is actually an old Solar manse capping a four-dot demesne. Its architect



designed it as an experiment in spatial recursion (perhaps inspired by, or inspiring, the city of Ilio Stara—see **The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. II—The Wyld**, p. 134). Goujuen can provide lodgings for an infinite number of people.

Perhaps more importantly, Goujuen's infinitude protects its center and the presumed stronghold of its builder. Faramé's is only one of the half-dozen raksha bands that live in Goujuen. All are of comparable strength. They constantly feud and make and break alliances while they attempt to discover the city's secrets. None of them have yet mapped the manse's full geometry or located its hearthstone. Faramé's band offers fealty to the Lapis Court. She parleys with Neshi of the Double Whips to organize an expedition that would pierce Goujuen's secrets to the core and allow it to be converted into a freehold.

RANU'S SILENT ONES

The Fair Folk known as Ranu's Silent Ones hunt through the savannas west of the Summer Mountains.





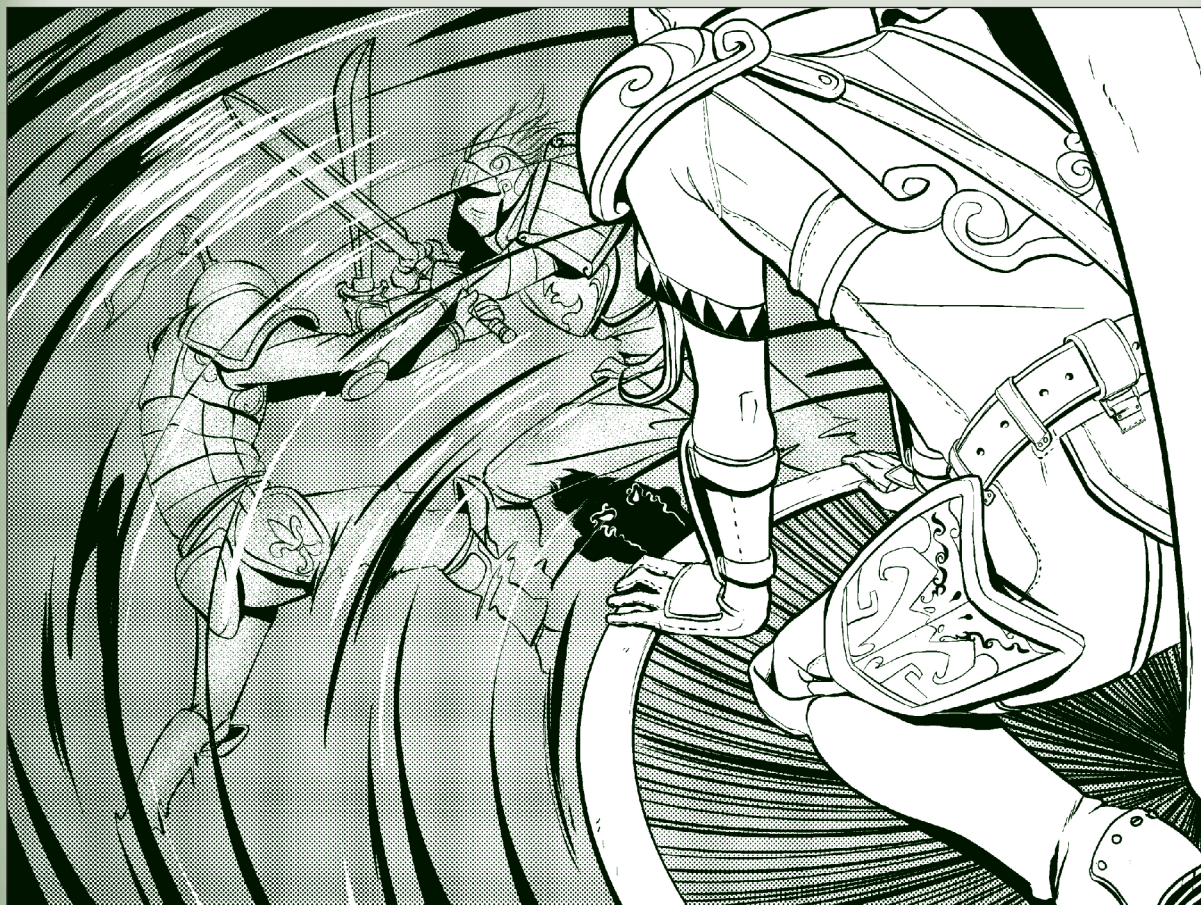
These raksha always hunt at midday and in total silence. They disdain luring humans from their houses, and would rather go hungry than lower themselves to the seduction games practiced by other Southern raksha. As a result, they are few—barely a dozen—but all are highly skilled, and they race the dry winds across the savanna.

Although they hunt in the Southern edge of Creation, Ranu's Silent Ones lair in the Bordermarches, where the Summer Mountains turn volcanic. They have no freehold. Their nest of lava tubes runs beneath a tall spire of black stone, whose shadow always points toward the Elemental Pole of Fire whatever the time of day. The lava tubes stay unnaturally cool, walled and floored with amber and jacinth. Yellow silk birds and crystal children serve the raksha. Ranu himself never speaks, communicating by gesture or by writing on strips of human skin.

THE PLAIN OF SINGING ASH

Traveling across the Plain of Singing Ash guarantees only that a traveler becomes filthy, but many go there to become wise. At its center, a tall and thin black-iron volcano constantly exhales clouds of soot. Songs also emanate from thin air in this plain, though the ignorant attribute the singing to the ash.

Each song heard on the plain is an actual song that has been sung at some time. Scholars of music quest to reach the plains and record the lost music of yesterday; historians visit to learn of the wars and heroes of the past. Other visitors can never predict what they'll hear, but could pick up interesting tidbits. A betraying vizier might have sung quietly the details of her plot to her beloved son, or a famous thaumaturge-engineer could sing a powerful recipe rather than write it down.





What song one hears depends on both time and place, and the songs shift in a pattern that is hard but not impossible to predict. This is a form of vision-questing (see **The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. II—The Wyld**, pp. 139–141), but the time interval is only days rather than months, and limited to finding particular songs. Storytellers can apply a bonus or penalty of up to three dice to the player’s (Perception + Occult) roll, depending on the generality or specificity of the knowledge the character seeks. For instance, seeking “songs from the Old Realm” could give the player a +3 bonus, because the request is so general. Seeking “songs that Silur might have made up as she developed her theory of magic” would impose a -3 penalty because it’s so specific... and assumes that the arch-sorceress put her thoughts to melody as she worked.

THE MIDDLEMARCHES

THE BAKING DUNES

People sometimes speak of “baking sands,” but only these dunes of the far Southwest actually live up to that description. The desert here *steams*, giving the dunes the appearance of baking bread, as the fire of the South meets the water of the West. The location’s name has a deeper meaning, though. Food is the fuel of life, and the Baking Dunes are edible. The sands taste like spiced sugar. Beneath them lies a layer of moist clay with the texture of dough. If a lump of said clay is separated and buried in the steaming sands for an hour, this clay becomes a delicious confection very similar to sugared bread.

Some property of the Baking Dunes gives things baked there nutritious properties. Eating two handfuls of baked clay makes a single decent meal, and anything buried and baked there becomes similarly worth eating. You could bury a disease-ridden human brain or a hunk of granite and take it out safe and delicious, though the rock would be too hard for most humans to bite.

Even farther down, a layer of magma flows slowly toward the ocean-Wyld farther west (where it creates oceans of steam, in which certain creatures swim). This is one of the heat sources that bakes anything buried in the dunes (though the sun contributes as well). A glob of magma, buried in the sand and

baked, reduces to a chalky orange paste that, when mixed with the juice of certain summer fruits, becomes an elixir of health equal to seven bounties paste (**Exalted**, p. 378).

THE FIRE DOOR

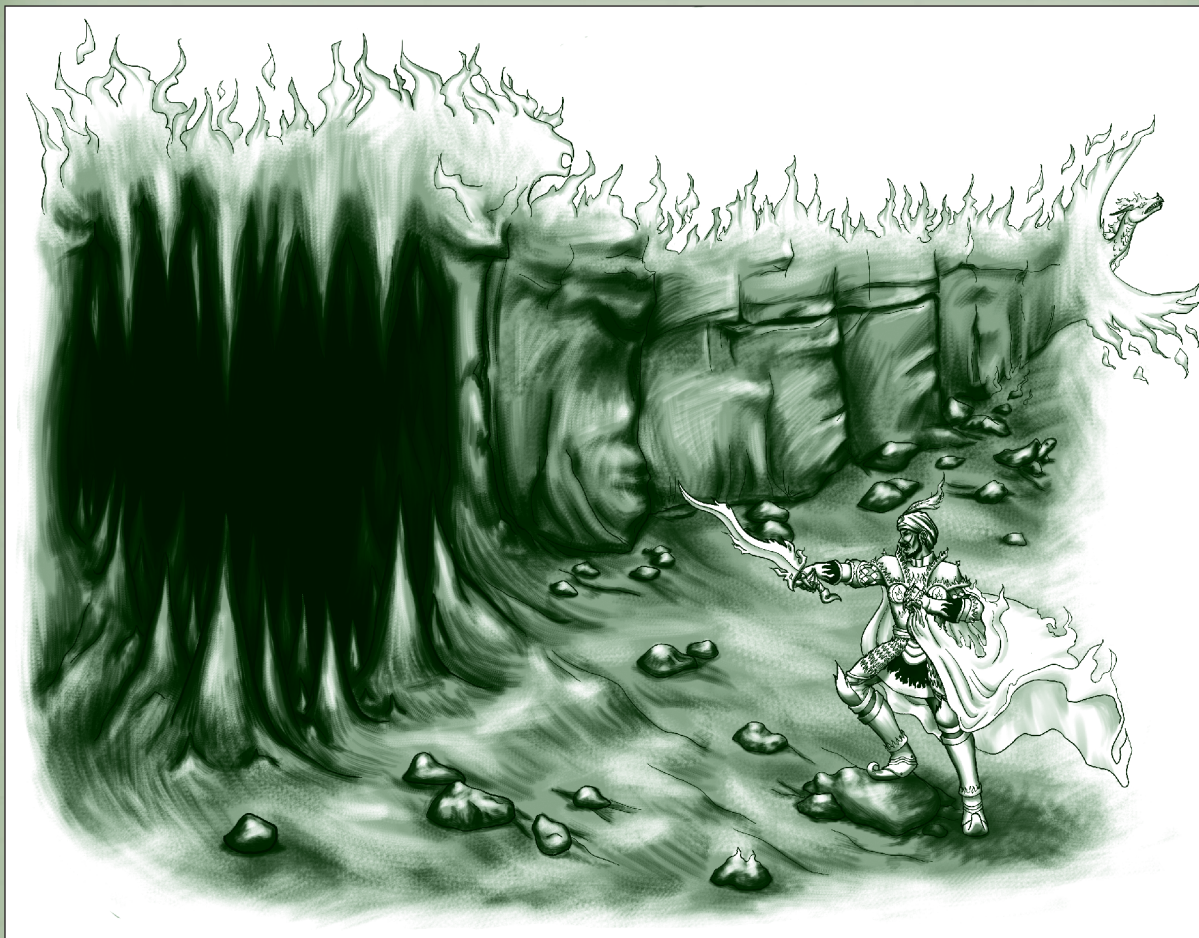
The Fire Door stands in nearly a dozen places across the Southern Middlemarches. Its shape varies. It might look like a standard door set into a wall, a trapdoor in the floor or grand double doors in the unexplored recesses of the Marching Sands. In every case, however, the door is completely ablaze, a door made entirely of flame.

With proper protection (such as sturdy fireproof gloves), an explorer can open the Fire Door. Through it, one can see an entire flaming landscape—not a far cry from what can be found many other places in the Southern Wyld. Stepping through the door reveals the difference: That one step changes the traveler from a being of Creation into an entity of living flame. The metamorphosis does not harm the person, and allows him to explore the fiery world on the other side in relative safety. Characters who proof themselves against such shaping effects, such as Solars using Integrity-Protecting Prana or tattooed Lunar Exalted, do not become flame, which has the unfortunate effect of *not* protecting the character against the eternal fires on the other side of the door. Such a person would be wise to have powerful protections against the heat and fire before passing through the Fire Door.

Beyond the Fire Door, a traveler finds Seared Creation. It looks like a replica of some other part of Creation, rendered in solid and liquid flame. Through the space-bending properties of the Wyld, Seared Creation stays perfectly to scale. Sidereal Exalted who visit the realm beyond the door wonder how this waypoint manages to remain true to its source. Some posit a mysterious connection to the Loom of Fate. However it happens, it happens. As far as any visitor can tell, every mountain, stream, forest and building in Creation has a flaming duplicate.

The people of Seared Creation have a human shape and nature, if not composition, just like people outside the Wyld. Some are friendly, some cruel and all try to get along and get ahead in the world.





After some time in the fiery world, a character learns to tell the fire-people from one another. Stay somewhat longer, and one learns to read their emotions.

Yet, in truth, there is no Seared Creation. Instead, the region through the Fire Door is a formless realm of flame. It takes on the shape of a place familiar to the first person to pass through the Fire Door, then shifts according to its visitors' perceptions. As people imagine they travel, the waypoint changes its appearance to match. Explorers easily come to believe they occupy an entire alternative Creation when they actually move back and forth within a single waypoint. Some people can become lost within Seared Creation, absorbed into its truth, and disappear. Other explorers find them only by tracking them down within Seared Creation, which takes its cues from everyone inside it to make a false

world as mutually acceptable as possible. Charms that completely block unnatural mental influence, or infallibly penetrate illusions and delusions, reveal the true formlessness that lies beyond the Fire Door.

JADE OASIS

This small waypoint offers a deadly relief in the midst of unforgiving desert, volcanoes and flame. Here, the Middlemarches' fiery substance gives way to a small field of vibrant green grass, pale white palms with broad leaves, a shimmering pool, scattered black stones and red sand. It seems like a place of peace and quiet and, most importantly, a cool place to relax. Here, tears of suffering do not turn to steam before they reach the greedy sands.

As its name suggests, everything in the Jade Oasis is actually made of that magical material. Only the slight stony sheen to the various materials



gives their true nature away. Even the small pool itself is made of liquid jade. The oasis's promise to travelers is not entirely false. All of it, though jade, can serve its seeming purpose. The grass is comfortable. Travelers can crack the white jade coconuts and sup upon the white jade milk and meat. Most importantly, people can drink the jade water. All these things are as healthful and nutritious as their true counterparts would be in Creation... as long as one stays within the Jade Oasis.

Taking anything away from the Jade Oasis changes its nature. The farther they go from their source, the more like stone they become. Blades of grass become hard and brittle, and liquids thicken. In Creation, they become nothing but jade—good for a merchant, but terrible for someone who needs that drink of water.

It doesn't help that the consumables remain so for three scenes after a traveler leaves the Jade Oasis. If, by that time, a character who partook has not eliminated this food and drink, she feels the pains of having jade embedded within her system. A character immediately suffers two unsoakable dice of lethal damage if she took a drink, four if she ate, six if she did both. These wounds are internal and cannot be healed until surgery removes them. At least the cost of the surgery is paid by the blockages.

Last of the Jade Oasis's qualities is that it is never far for travelers in the Southern Middlemarches, but neither is it easy to reach. It can connect to nearly all other waypoints that far in the Wyld; only some dangerous places and raksha strongholds are separated from it. Explorers could come upon it at any time, as long as they do not actively seek it. For this reason, usually only explorers who have never heard of it can find the Jade Oasis, because all others wish for it in their times of need.

THE MARCHING SANDS

This waypoint wanders the Southern Middlemarches in the form of a colossal mammoth. Twenty miles long and nearly as high, the sand-creature marches slowly and aimlessly, accidentally devastating Wyld cultures and acting much like a natural disaster. Sand constantly rises upward through its body, lifted from the deserts it crosses until it reaches

the mammoth's head and back, where it falls to the ground or blows away. It sometimes picks up vast stones from the earth, which look like small pimples on its immensity until they come crashing to the ground months later.

Complex tunnel systems thread through the Marching Sands' form, averaging four yards wide. They are surprisingly stable and solid for a giant creature made of shifting sand. Tunnels open all over the monster's bulk. Openings in the feet provide access to the Marching Sands' interior, and others in the head or tusks let people reach the mammoth's greatest heights. Occasionally, disasters close tunnels or open new ones. Although the Marching Sands constantly absorbs and shed its substance, the tunnels are relatively constant—something placed in them could stay there through the turning of an Age.

Inside the Marching Sands lives Master Garudo, one of the Lunar Exalted whose Exaltation dates from the end of the Low First Age. Long ago, Garudo drew mortal followers from Southern Creation and created his own small society within the beast. He has developed and taught thaumaturgic techniques that ward off the Wyld's effects a little. He hopes eventually to develop a strain of human that resists mutation.

Master Garudo's Sandmen, as they call themselves, travel in groups for safety and hunt at night when the desert is cool. They have developed books full of tactics for dealing with the fantastic threats of the Middlemarches. They are generally friendly to explorers they meet, but the Sandmen are not averse to consuming human flesh in times of famine.

When the Wyld is strong and surges nearer Creation, the Sandmen occasionally leave the safety of the Marching Sands and communicate and trade with people of Gem and other nearby societies. Garudo encourages them to return with wives or husbands for fresh blood, and he occasionally introduces new populations to mingle with his people.

Even after several centuries, Garudo and his Sandmen have not fully explored the Marching Sands' interior. Master Garudo has found many secrets, treasures and monsters in the Marching Sands, and has no doubt that many more await discovery.





THE SEA OF BULLS

On a field of pumice and black sand, the Sea of Bulls ebbs and flows. An apparently infinite herd of black bulls with golden horns constantly stampedes out of a bed of boiling black lava, then runs westward and disappears into a white cloud of steam after several miles. Each bull is identical save one part of the body that is made of orichalcum rather than flesh or bone. Acquiring this treasure involves killing a bull and somehow saving the valuable piece before the endless stampede tramples it into the ground, never to be seen again.

Savants who know of the Sea of Bulls sometimes speculate that piecing together an entire bull from the small bits of orichalcum would trigger something wondrous—instant Exaltation, ascension into godhood or something even more fantastic. Currently, a museum in the Varangian city of Third Bell contains the largest single collection... so far, despite pressure from the Realm to hand over the precious orichalcum.

The bulls are not alone. Hundreds of ghostly soldiers are doomed to run forever on the back of the Sea of Bulls or fall and be trampled—until they rise again a day and night later. Each of these soldiers was once a dream-warrior that Ahlat, Southern God of War and Cattle, drew from the mind of one of his wives to set to warring for his guests' entertainment. When such a phantom survives or escapes, it finds itself drawn to the Sea of Bulls. What knowledge or powers the ghostly soldiers have—being born of dream and given substance by a Celestial god—no one can say.

THE WILDFIRE COURT

A hollow globe of smoky crystal perches on a six-mile pillar of volcanic rock. Here the Wildfire Court convenes and plans its misdeeds. The birth of the Court of the Orderly Flame, a convention of fire elementals that tries to keep order in the Southern Terrestrial Bureaucracy, left many fire gods and elementals discontented. Some tried to join the forming political scene and were rebuffed. Others just wanted the freedom to do as they

pleased. As the Orderly Flame grew stronger, these unhappy creatures fled to the last place they could find privacy: the Wyld.

In their crystal refuge, members of the Wildfire Court meet to trade complaints about the state of Creation and plot new ways to disrupt the Court of the Orderly Flame. The spirits bring the treasures they have stolen, storing them for future mischief, and boast about what trouble they have already caused. The spirits convene on nights of the new moon. On these nights, the crystal globe shines from all the flame these spirits produce. From far away in the Middlemarches, it resembles a weak sun or a strong full moon.

Few of the Wildfire gods had any influence over the Wyld when their group formed, but many of them now cooperate to protect their tower and themselves from further changes in nature or aspect. The Court of the Orderly Flame has not yet realized the organized nature of the gods' and elementals' rebellion, but the Wildfire Court intends to change that soon.

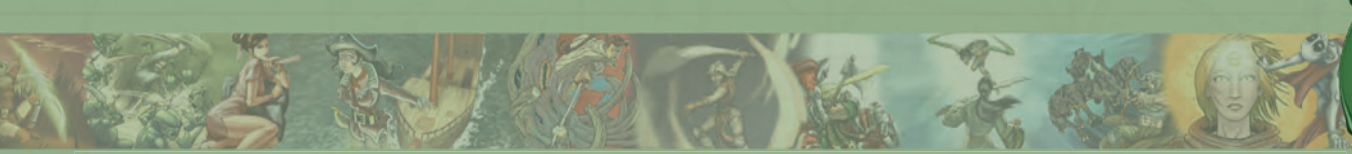
The discontented spirits settled here because the crystal sphere is impenetrable to all things and creatures of fire—including the Court's members—unless it first receives the smoke of a particular herb from the East. The spirits don't know who discovered this fact or how, but they enjoy a secret bastion secure from the nosy Orderly Flame. They also produce an uncommon call in the South for an otherwise unremarkable herb.

THE DEEP WYLD

SECRET STAIRS OF FLAME

Nestled deep near the heart of the Elemental Pole of Fire is a way to Malfeas. It passes down a long staircase of flame elementals that have been slain and beaten into steps, and it leads to the dominion of She Who Lives in Her Name. The Yozi does not allow her agents or her component souls to pass through this entrance into Creation, fearing that it would be discovered, but instead saves it for later use. Not even the Elemental Dragon of Fire knows of its existence.





THE EASTERN WYLD



THE MIDDLEMARCHES

CUTTING WOODS

The Eastern Middlemarches hold many forests of glass, metal, ice or gemstone. Ice forests also grow in the North, and mineral forests in the South. Some of these forests retain the resilience of wood, but others are dangerously brittle. Any impact might send down a shower of razor-edged leaves and twigs as sharp as arrowheads. High winds can turn the entire forest into a killing zone.

Forests of ice and glass are the most fragile. Twigs and branches have no soak at all, and even the tree trunks have no more than 1L/2B soak. Any branch thinner than a grown man's wrist breaks when it suffers even a single level of damage, while trunks take only one level to damage and seven to destroy. Gemstone forests tend to be a little sturdier (add +1L/1B soak), while metal forests generally offer at least 1L/2B soak for twigs and branches and the trunks may be solid metal pillars. You never know in

the Wyld, though. Something that looks like solid steel or bronze might actually be as brittle as glass.

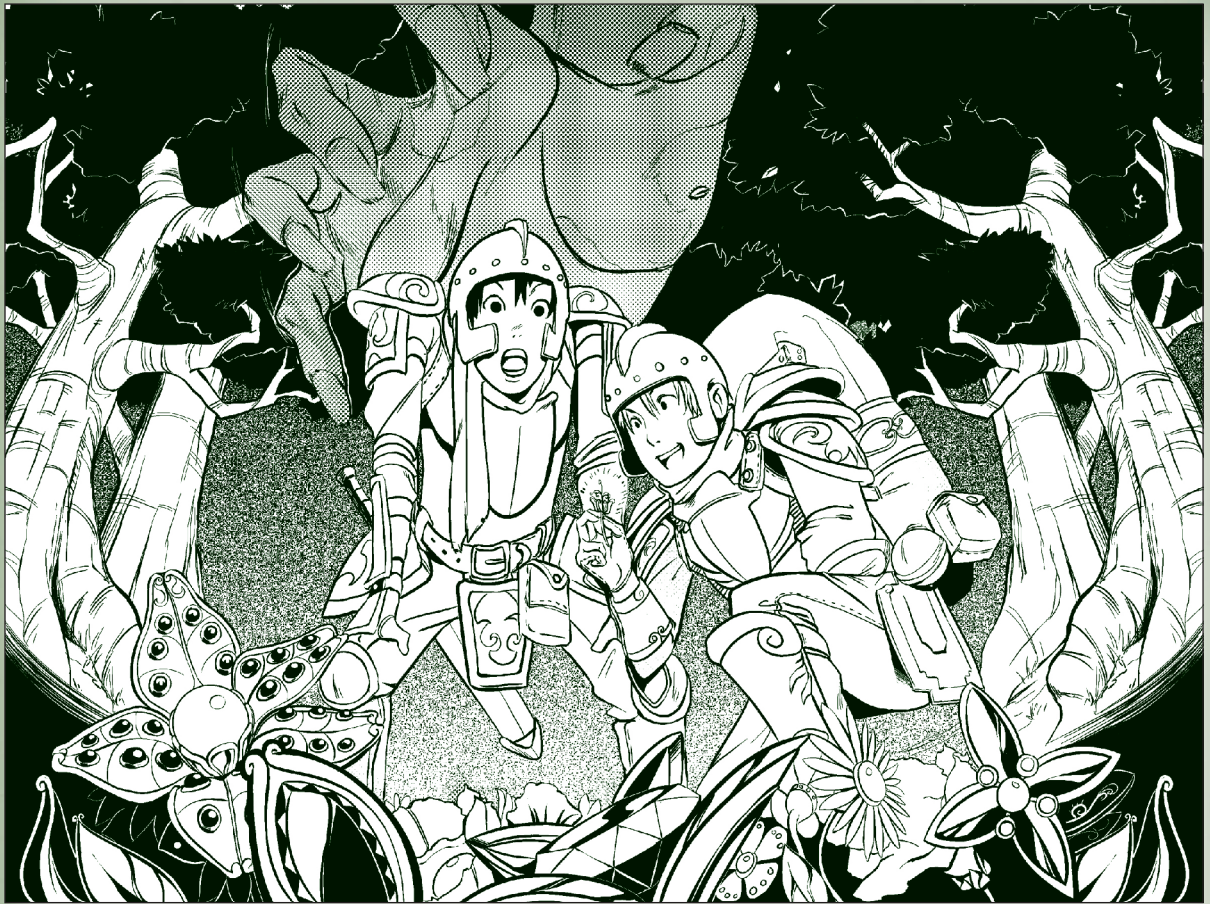
Any impact that damages a tree in a Cutting Wood causes slicing, piercing shards to rain down on everyone within three to seven yards of the tree, depending on the tree's size. The cutting rain generally deals half as many dice of damage as the attack on the tree, to a maximum of 6L. The rain of shards cannot be parried without a stunt, but it can be dodged. Give the rain of shards a dice pool of (6 + the number of levels of damage the rain inflicts), and compare the results of the attack roll to the Dodge DV of everyone in the area.

A windstorm in a Cutting Wood is best treated as an environmental effect. A supernatural ice storm (**Exalted**, p. 131) makes a good analogue to such a peril.

GRANDILOQUENT GARDEN

Travelers find this giant-sized garden when they first come upon the enormous wooden fence





designed, presumably, to keep huge herd animals out. It certainly won't keep out normal animals—a mammoth could fit under the lowest rail.

Inside the garden are miles and miles of vegetables and other plants, all sized for someone many times larger than a human. All the standard crops one can find in the East are present, from cabbages, radishes and carrots to qat and opium poppies. Anything people grow in rows can be found here in similar, if larger, rows.

Although the foods are edible (and the drugs pleasantly potent), some explorers have trouble eating what they find here—because what grows here can talk. Every individual plant can speak and appears to have its own mind, memory and personality. String beans make up one “race” and tomato plants another. Rows and other sections make communities. Some marijuana plants make generalized, disparaging remarks about the pumpkins, but they're not all

that prejudiced. The plants cannot move, but they still manage to have active social lives. They quiet down when strangers enter the garden, but they never stay silent for long.

That's part of the problem. Some of the crops are actually... plants, set there by the mysterious and frightening farmer that rules Grandiloquent Garden to inform on their comrades. He is never seen by most of the garden's inhabitants, so he borders on myth for them. Still, the flora whisper that one should not talk of escape or make light of the farmer, because he might come for those who misbehave and tear the life from them with his mighty hands. They say that the farmer can hear every word spoken in the garden, but this is untrue. Certain of the plants know how to contact the farmer, and occasionally someone who has grown too bold disappears in the night.

“Farmer” is the only name for the creature that owns Grandiloquent Garden. He lives in the colossal



farmhouse at one corner of the garden, visible from anywhere within its boundaries. Farmer generally enters the garden twice in the lives of each crop: once to plant and once to pull. (Making wayward plants disappear is the exception.) His body, large enough that the fence reaches only to his mid-chest, is made entirely of the crops he has grown over the years.

It is Farmer's nature and desire to grow ever larger, which he accomplishes by growing season after season of crops, pulling them and adding them to his bulk. From a distance, the colors of the plants blend to make him look rather human, if very green. Up close, there's no question that he is the conglomerate of uncountable vegetables. His voice is that of all the vegetables of his body speaking together as one.

Each time Farmer completes a growing season (about once every decade), he harvests the crops and sorts the plants. Most, he eats or smokes. The cream of his crops he adds to his own body more directly, growing in size. He then replants with seeds from his own body. Since he is now larger than he was, he rebuilds the entire farm to match his new size before the next season's crops begin to grow from the ground. The plants also grow larger than they did before, remaining proportional to the rest of the farm.

Farmer has no ambition in life other than to farm, eat and grow. Still, he fears and hates fire, as it once consumed his farm and much of his body, reducing him greatly in size. Someone playing on this fear might be able to manipulate Farmer into assisting various causes—at least until it's time for the harvest.

FARMER

Motivation: Farm. Eat. Grow.

Attributes: Strength 16, Dexterity 3, Stamina 11; Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 4, Temperance 2, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Craft (Wood) 1 (Carpentry +1, Gardening +2), Dodge 1, Integrity 2, Investigation 4, Linguistics (Native: Forest-tongue;

Others: Old Realm) 1, Martial Arts 3, Melee 3, Presence 4, Resistance 4, Survival 2, Thrown 4

Backgrounds: Resources 2

Special Abilities:

Immense Vegetable Creature—Farmer's enormous size makes him very easy to hit, but nearly impossible to damage (and besides, he's made of vegetables). He suffers a -3 penalty to his Dodge DV due to being so large. By the same token, though, his huge fists, feet or farm tools have +6 Accuracy against human-sized foes.

Arrows and similar narrow, piercing weapons (including firewands and flame pieces) cannot deal more than one level of damage to Farmer unless they are empowered by Charms, in which case they cannot deal more than the attacker's Essence in damage. After rolling for damage against Farmer, no matter what the source, cut the number of resulting levels in half, as attacks do little more than mash and knock a few vegetables from his body.

Replenishment—If Farmer is in his garden, he can heal damage to himself by grabbing vegetables and adding them to his body. Doing so is a standard miscellaneous action and heals three levels of any sort of damage (bashing, lethal or aggravated).

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 13, Damage 16B, Parry DV 8, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 12, Damage 19B, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 12, Damage 16B, Parry DV —, Rate 1

GiantFarmImplement (Blunt): Speed 6, Accuracy 12, Damage 22B, Parry DV 6, Rate 1

GiantFarmImplement (Sharp): Speed 6, Accuracy 12, Damage 18L/6, Parry DV 6, Rate 1

Soak: 6L/11B



Health Levels: -0x6/-1x12/-2x12/-4x6/Incap

Dodge DV: 1 **Willpower:** 8

Essence: 4

Other Notes: Because of Farmer's long arms and legs, his base Move is 10 yards and his base Dash is 16. He can kick and stomp opponents within three yards of himself, and his oversized farm tools increase his reach to eight yards. He cannot punch





human-sized foes unless they place themselves at least waist-level to him. Farmer can whack at enemies with the flat of a shovel, chop at them with the blade of a shovel or hoe.

MUSHROOM STALK SWAMP

In this strange swampland, toadstools float cap-first in water thick with algae, duckweed and small, water-going fauna. The toadstool caps range in size from a hand span to a quarter of a mile. From them grow white, spongy stalks of commensurate thickness. The thickest stalks are a few hundred feet across. Thick or thin, the stalks rise into a murky sky, where they are topped with more toadstool caps. Sometimes the top cap belongs to the same variety as the cap at the bottom, and sometimes they are entirely different. They rock a bit on their floating bases, but the toadstools never topple.

Explorers unfamiliar with the East's bounty of toxic foodstuffs might feel tempted to eat some part of these toadstools. Outdoorsmen with more experience recognize them as the most deadly varieties known to man. People who frequent Mushroom Stalk Swamp (a select group indeed) know that they are both right.

Eating safely from the swamp's toadstools is like dining on the infamous *fugu* of the Western islands. It requires the chef to take specific cuts only and prepare the food carefully. And, since everything else in the swamp is poisonous (and many also venomous), to eat there is to eat toadstool.

Despite the danger of starvation or any one of a long list of terrible, toxin-induced deaths, travelers sometimes seek out the Mushroom Stalk Swamp. The raksha and their servants never enter its border. No one knows why except the raksha themselves, but this makes it a safe haven for the raksha's prey. Some raksha love to play cat with their mice, waiting as long as it takes for the hunted to die or come out and be caught. Other raksha simply call off the hunt in disgust that their game could come to such a boring end.

Someone who climbs a toadstool stalk all the way to its other cap can discover the most bizarre property of the Mushroom Stalk Swamp. He finds that the cap there floats in a swamp of its own, which

also teems with life. The explorer also realizes that the cap he thought was up is actually down, and he is now standing on a toadstool cap looking "up" at another cap in a murky sky. A person can leave the Mushroom Stalk Swamp and find himself in a different section of the Eastern Middlemarches, possibly thousands of miles away. The world feels like it isn't "right-side-up," though, and this sensation can drive one mad.

PERILS OF THE SWAMP

Preparing a non-toxic dinner from the floating fungi requires a successful (Intelligence + Craft [Water]) roll at difficulty 3. Failure means ingesting the equivalent of one dose of coral snake venom with every mouthful.

Climbing to the other Mushroom Stalk Swamp and leaving without climbing back to one's original perspective triggers a Wyld exposure roll at difficulty 5. A character whose player fails this roll suffers an affliction-strength derangement that he has left the real, right-side-up Creation and entered an upside-down, other Creation that looks much like the real world—but isn't. A deranged character becomes obsessed with looking for inconsistencies and differences that "prove" the world isn't real. Finding the Mushroom Stalk Swamp again and climbing to the other side does not cure the derangement—the character thinks he's just found yet another fake Creation.

SINNER'S MARSH

This marsh is not for all sinners—only those who choose to overindulge their taste for liquor. The East is home to many of the best and worst distilleries ever to produce brandy, whiskey, ales, rice wines, malts and other spirits, so the Eastern Wyld reproduces those spirits in Sinner's Marsh.

In the marsh, thousands of separate pools of distinct colors dot the lightly forested landscape. Each



contains a unique alcoholic beverage. Many of these have been brewed or distilled at some point or time in Creation, ranging in quality from the Empress's favorite plum wine to the worst wood alcohol that ever made a man blind. The real finds are the drinks never seen or tasted outside of Sinner's Marsh—these are why the real connoisseurs seek it.

Large and small koi swim lazily in these pools, uniquely-colored to highlight the individual spirit's hue and translucence. Eating one of these fish curses a person with bad luck (three botched rolls, applied whenever the Storyteller would find it most humorous) and taints the pool forever. Barring such a terrible event, the pools never dry up. When a pool runs low, a small rain cloud forms above it. The localized shower washes the pool clean and causes small trees to grow, whose flowers drip nectar that slowly refills the pool with its specific drink. This is also how new pools formed when Creation's folk devise new drinks, or when Sinner's Marsh unpredictably creates one of its own.

A dog lives here, a mutt of clearly poor breeding. It has no name but is apparently a great lover of spirits. It welcomes any visitors and is always eager to discuss and debate the merits of various drinks. The dog refuses to tell others how it manages to live in a region that seems to produce no food of any nutritious value, perhaps because it prefers company to cohabitants.

KHRYAL

(An expanded version of the material in **Scroll of Fallen Races: The Dragon Kings**, p. 15.)

Even those in Creation who hear tales of the wonders of Rathess, ancient capital of the Dragon Kings, are often too daunted by the dangers of the city to mount serious expeditions. Although the city's location is reasonably well known, savants also realize that Rathess has seen repeated scavenger raids over the last seven centuries. Given the ruined city's huge and known population of feral stalkers—Dragon Kings who lost their civilization and sentience—the potential rewards might not seem worth the risk. Over the last few decades, however, rumors of a more lucrative prize made their way back to civilization: the lost outpost of Khryal.

According to the tale of a wounded explorer who escaped the area and made her way back to a Realm outpost before she died, Khryal is an ancient Dragon King citadel located within a Wyld zone about 350 miles southeast of Rathess, on the south side of the Vaniwayan River. Some powerful and forgotten magic enables the citadel to resist being within a Middlemarch. Its First Age infrastructure remains nearly intact. Even more remarkably, a colony of civilized Dragon Kings still lives in Khryal. They have endured in isolation since the end of the First Age and maintain their advanced society to the present day... though the explorer found them quite unfriendly.

Any explorer who makes his way through 20 miles of Middlemarches to Khryal can indeed discover an intact society of about 200 Dragon Kings. They are of the Raptok breed: lean, scaled humanoid with claws, fanged muzzles, tails and crests of feathers along their heads, spines and forearms. The Dragon Kings live peacefully in a small First Age community with working Essence lights, magical plumbing, moving vehicles and all the other amenities that First Age society took for granted. The Dragon Kings are hostile to most explorers—probably lethally so—but they happily form an alliance with any Exalted who come to Khryal. This is especially the case for Twilights, No Moons or master craftsmen and savants of any caste or aspect.



The Dragon Kings eagerly reveal the secret of Khryal's survival to such sages: The bowels of Khryal hold a still-functioning reality engine, one of the devices used by the First Age Solars to convert the Wyld into stable Creation. The Dragon Kings know how to maintain the reality engine, but they lack the technical skill to use it to actually alter the conditions of the surrounding Wyld zone. As a result, while Khryal has successfully resisted the Wyld since the Fair Folk invasion, its inhabitants cannot leave without risking destruction or mutation in the Wyld zone.

Or so these "Dragon Kings" say, at least.

THE TRUTH OF KHRYAL

In fact, nearly everything the Dragon Kings reveal to visitors is a lie—including their identity





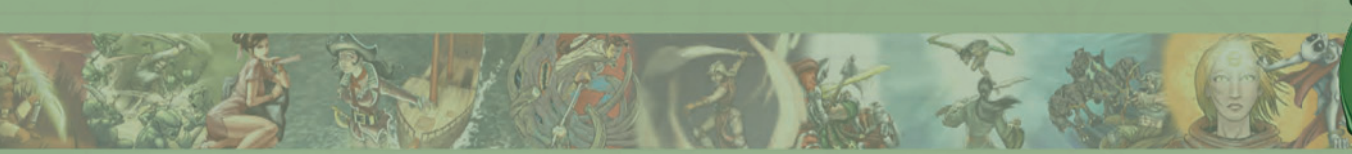
as Dragon Kings. The inhabitants of Khryal are actually Fair Folk, mainly hobgoblins with a few noble leaders. Khryal really was a First Age citadel. The Shogunate really did keep Khryal's Dragon King personnel to operate its potent magitech. The Great Contagion, however, wiped out all the original inhabitants. Worse, the citadel's reality engine (used to stabilize reality for certain delicate technomagical devices, now wrecked) somehow suffered damage. The damaged reality engine induced powerful Wyld storms throughout the area, creating the 50-mile-wide Middlemarch that now surrounds Khryal.

Eventually, local Fair Folk investigated and discovered Khryal. They could not overcome the citadel's defenses until about 200 years ago, when they hit upon the strategy of using their glamour magic to masquerade as Dragon Kings. Since then, these Fair Folk have lived the lives of First Age Dragon Kings while maintaining and studying the reality engine.

These Fair Folk wish to understand and master the technology underlying the reality engine. They understand that the malfunctioning engine creates the Wyld zone around Khryal. Mechanisms that could transform a major city into a Middlemarch with the flip of a switch would give the Fair Folk an enormous advantage in their struggle to destroy Creation. They want to learn how to build reality engines, so they can run them in reverse.

The second goal of the Fair Folk—which arguably interferes with the first—is simply to enjoy the experience of life in Khryal. Few raksha adopt any role as intensively or as long as these have. After spending centuries as Khryalian Dragon Kings, most of them are addicted to the experience. It doesn't hurt that the manner in which the damaged reality engines manipulate Wyld energies is, for some reason, highly pleasurable to the Fair Folk. Although it is difficult to interpret the alien mindset of a raksha, the best analogy might be to say that the Fair Folk find living as Dragon Kings





in Khryal to be erotically stimulating. Only completely different.

Unfortunately for the Fair Folk, while they can maintain the reality engine (at least as long as they continue to wear the shapes of Dragon Kings), they admit defeat in trying to reverse-engineer the device. Accordingly, they now try to lure in Exalted who might master the reality engine, in hopes they can cajole them into revealing the artifacts' secrets. In this case, the Fair Folk really have no weapon except subterfuge. Despite their numbers, the Fair Folk are simply not a serious challenge for a circle of Celestial Exalted—at least not Exalted who possess the power, experience and knowledge the Fair Folk require.

The greatest disadvantages the raksha face are the nature of their disguises and, concomitantly, the danger that the citadel itself poses to the raksha if those disguises slip. The potent glamour used to create these disguises is not dispelled by the touch of cold iron. A character needs a (Perception + Essence) total of at least 9 to have any chance of seeing through the glamour. Even then, the disguises still function, but the character can see glimpses of the Fair Folk's true form out of the corner of her eye if her player succeeds at a (Perception + Awareness) roll at difficulty 4. Twice a month, however, the Fair Folk must renew the glamour used to create the disguises. This takes place in a ritual celebration the Fair Folk call the Two-Moon Festival. Although the "Dragon Kings" try to prevent any guests from observing the Two-Moon Festival (during which the raksha briefly leave the city and resume their true forms), a clever character can use this opportunity to discover the truth about them.

CLAIMING KHRYAL

Khryal is essentially a large fort, with six largish buildings contained behind a fortified adamant wall. The buildings are full of minor artifacts, but most of these do not function outside Khryal's limits. They draw their power from the same manse that powers the reality engine. Non-Essence wielders can use them, but only within the confines of the citadel. There are no transportation artifacts within Khryal, no artifact weapons rated higher

than two dots and no weapons at all made of any magical material. The citadel has powerful defenses against the Fair Folk, though they have currently been circumvented.

If any raksha reveals his true form within the confines of Khryal, his player must attempt a Valor roll for every six hours spent in the fortress and get at least two successes in order to remain within half a mile of the citadel. For the purposes of this defense, a raksha reveals his true form when he uses any Fair Folk Charms other than Beguile and Undetectable Lie. The defense mechanisms can also see through any form a raksha takes except that of a Dragon King adopted through the special glamour sorcery spell used by the Khryalian Fair Folk. As a side effect, all of the wonders of the citadel cease to function for one month after the anti-Fair Folk defense systems activate, as all available power in excess of that used by the reality engine is redirected to the defenses. At the Storyteller's discretion, Khryal may have other defenses that it can put at the disposal of any characters that masters the fortress.



THE REALITY ENGINE

The reality engine was the pinnacle of Old Realm magitech. They surpass the understanding of the most puissant minds of the modern Age. Currently, the engine surrounds Khryal with a stable buffer of pseudo-reality stretching about five miles in every direction from the citadel's walls. Beyond that, a Middlemarch extends another 20 miles, with a mile of Bordermarch beyond that.

See **The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. II—The Wyld**, pp. 28–29 for information about re-tuning and repairing reality engines. With a few weeks of study, a gifted savant could re-tune the engine to create a corridor of stable reality through the Wyld zone, or repair the device and eliminate the Wyld zone entirely.

Actually *reverse-engineering* a reality engine (as the Fair Folk would like) is completely beyond the capacity of anyone save a master artisan with at least six dots each in Essence, Lore, Occult and Craft (Magitech). Even if a non-Solar character met the Essence and Ability requirements, building





a new reality engine requires a fully operational factory-cathedral or decades spent in study, research and crafting the Artifact tools needed to build the reality engine—not to mention an incredible outlay of resources. It also certainly requires highly specialized Solar Craft and Lore Charms, or the Sidereals would have produced their own reality engines long ago.

THE FAIR FOLK OF KHRYAL

In their Dragon King disguises, the Fair Folk are at a serious disadvantage in comparison to any invading force of Celestial Exalted. While disguised, the Fair Folk *are* Dragon Kings in every way that matters, except that they lack that race's distinctive magic. Accordingly, for disguised Fair Folk, use the traits for the Dragon King Raptok in **Scroll of Fallen Races: The Dragon Kings** (pp. 42–43), except that they have none of the traditional Dragon King magical powers. Astute characters might find this suspicious. If exposed as Fair Folk, the Khryalians consist of about 180 hobgoblin extras (see **Exalted**, p. 286), led by 15 cataphractoï and five diplomats (**Exalted**, p. 284–285).

THE DEEP WYLD

HEALING HERBS

Alone among the poles, the Elemental Pole of Wood actively tries to devour visitors from Creation. Life feeds on itself, and here the power of life is strongest. As every apothecary knows, Wood is the element of medicine and poison—they are the same; only the dosage matters. At the Elemental Pole of Wood, everything heals and everything kills.

Anyone who consumes matter from the elemental pole might be healed of disease, poisoned, transformed into something else or maybe all three. For every mouthful of material from the Elemental Pole of Wood, a character's player must roll on the Wyld Mutation table multiple times (see **Exalted**, p. 283 or **The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. II—The Wyld**, p. 140). In the elemental pole itself, roll three times on the line for the Deep Wyld. For material brought out of the pole, roll twice on the line for the Middlemarches.

Success means healing all diseases (mundane diseases outside the pole; supernatural diseases, including the Great Contagion, if the person con-

Khryal, a Magnitude 1 Supernatural Dominion

Military: 1 **Government:** 1 **Culture:** 2

Abilities: Integrity 2 (Keeping Secrets +2), Occult 1 (Fae Wonders +3), Performance 2 (Awe-Inspiring Bluff +3)

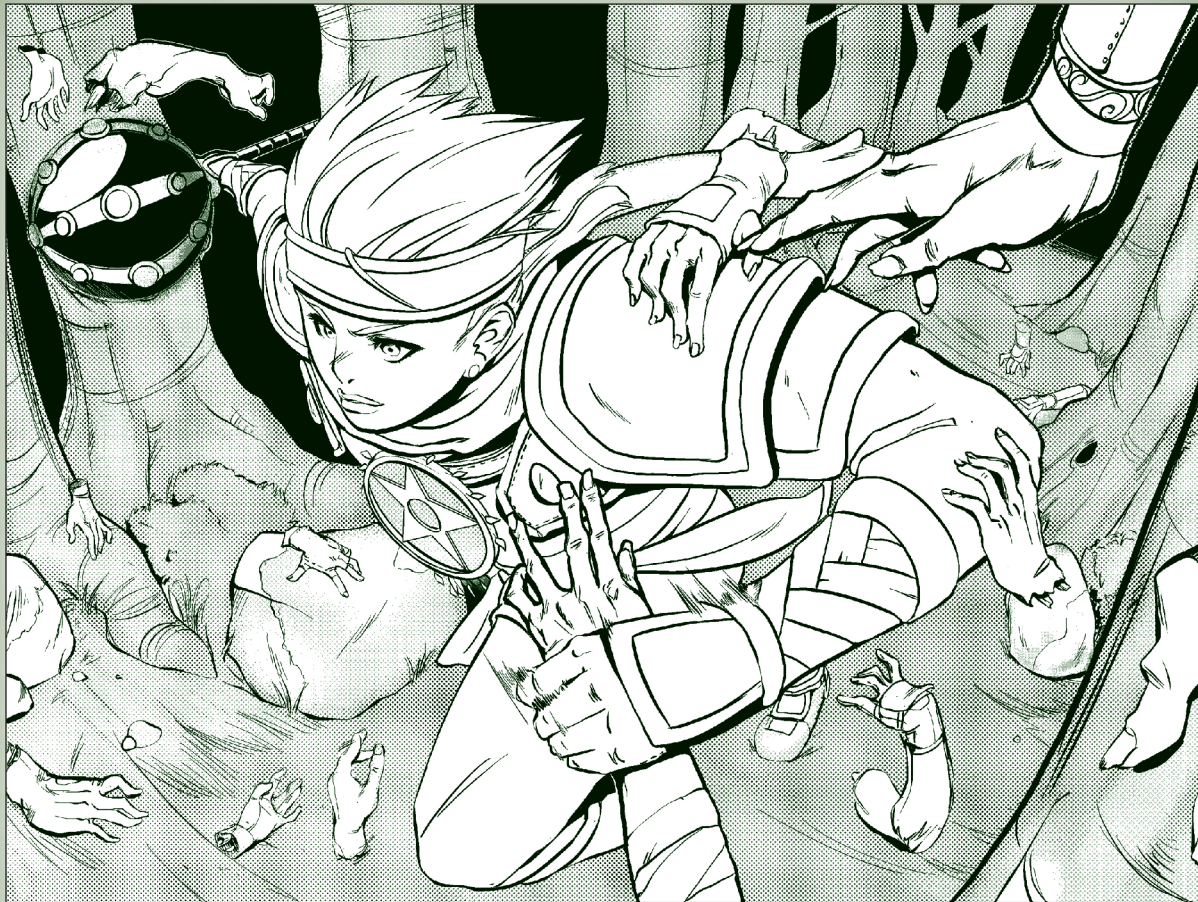
Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 4, Valor 2

Virtue Flaw: 7 **Current Limit:** 2

Willpower: 7

Bonus Points: 5 **External Bonus Points:** 3

Notes: As a dominion, Khryal's power is almost entirely a bluff. The resident raksha pretend they possess awesome and powerful Dragon King lore and First Age magitech when actually they understand very little about these things. The dominion's bonus points go to Integrity and Performance specialties for maintaining the bluff. The external bonus points come from the raksha's connections to other Fair Folk and their own powers. These points go to the Occult specialty, which represents how the Khryalians can produce wonders of glamour and gossamer with which to bribe or bamboozle power brokers in other dominions. The leader of the Khryalians, a noble raksha called Rashka, the Timbrel Matachin, is a sorcerer with legitimacy. In Limit Break, the Khryalians can no longer maintain their elaborate lie. They sweep through accessible communities in a cavalcade of wonder and horror that reveals their true nature, most likely ending their imposture for good.



sumes the material at the pole itself). In the absence of disease, success grants the healing of one level of aggravated damage, three levels of lethal damage or all levels of bashing damage.

Failure means poisoning, as if by arrow frog venom—one dose per non-success rolled.

A botch means the character incurs an abomination, or six points of lesser mutations. This effect has nothing to do with the Wyld,

though. Rather, the surging Essence from the Elemental Pole of Wood makes the person evolve into something else.

In the First Age, Exalted doctors brewed matchless medicines from leaves, bark, roots and flowers harvested from the Elemental Pole of Wood. These secrets are now lost, or known only to gods of medicine in Yu-Shan. Recovering them would be a formidable quest all by itself.



CONTACT WITH THE WYLD

Despite the distance that separates the civilized world from the Wyld, the two regions do interact. Some people set aside their fear and revulsion of Wyld-dwellers for the sake of profit.

TRADING WITH WYLD BARBARIANS

A few tribes of Wyld barbarians swap treasures from the Wyld (such as life flowers—see sidebar) for useful goods from Creation. Ordinary barbarians seldom trade with Wyld barbarians, but the Guild has no such reservations. Young and ambitious Guild representatives can earn riches and status through expeditions to meet Wyld barbarians... if they survive. These same merchants also sometimes trade with beastmen or relic races from the First Age. Sure, most people think the Wyld-dwellers are blasphemous mockeries of the human form—but the Guild sees them as *profitable* blasphemous mockeries. A few Guildsmen even learn to see Wyld-dwellers as people.

POTENTIAL WYLD TRIBES

When designing tribes of Wyld barbarians, Storytellers can take inspiration from ancient wonder-tales about distant lands and the strange folk who live there, such as the Chinese *Shan Hai Jing* (or *Classic of Mountains and Seas*) and the Roman writer Pliny. The ordinary giants and pygmies of these stories made it into the Generic Fantasy Warehouse, but the stranger creatures remain virtually ignored. These are only a few of the bizarre races that people once imagined living in the lands beyond reliable knowledge.

Arimaspi: These strong and warlike one-eyed giants (a less familiar version of the famous Cyclops of Greek myth) battle griffins to take gold from the beasts' nests. Also known as the yimumin or qizhongmin.

Asinaga: The Long-Legged People are larger than ordinary humans in any case, but their greatly



LIFE FLOWERS

These glowing blue orchids grow only in the deep forest of the Far East, where the trees grow miles tall. During the First Age, these were among the most valuable wonders that the tree folk harvested for their masters. They are still some of the greatest treasures obtained from the fringe of the Wyld. Merchants who deal fairly with the tree folk can still acquire life flowers and become extremely wealthy from this trade.

When a wounded character eats a life flower blossom, she heals wounds three times as fast as normal for that day, and is cured of all but the direst diseases. An even rarer species of life flower, which glows a soft purple, cures all known diseases except the Great Contagion. People who consume it also heal as much in a day as they would in a week. The purple life flower grows only in the farthest Eastern Bordermarches, where the ground has given way to endless trees. The bonuses from both types of flower apply only to wounds the character incurred before he took the life flower.

Cost: ●●●● (blue flower), ●●●●● (purple flower)

extended legs make them truly gigantic and enable them to run quickly. They live near the seashore and wade in water too deep for humans. Also known as changgumin or changjingmin.

Astomi: The Apple-Smellers have no mouths. Instead, they live off the odors of fruit and flowers, especially apples. Bad smells can kill them.

Blemmyae: The Headless People have their eyes and mouth on their torsos. Some descriptions say that blemmyae have golden-hued skin. Other stories say they eat people. Also known as epiphagi or anthropophagi. The Chinese spirit Hsing-t'ien has the same appearance.

Cynocephali: The Dog-Head People have canine heads and, some say, fur. Instead of speaking,

they bark like dogs. Most tales call them ferocious cannibals, but *Mandeville's Travels* describes a nation of pious cynocephali who all wear a small silver or golden image of an ox to represent their god. Also known as quanrong.

Danermin: The Pendant-Ear People, or panotii, are variously described with oversized ears reaching to their shoulders, to their elbows or all the way to the ground. All versions have exceptionally keen hearing. The panotii with the largest ears sleep using one ear as a mattress and the other as a blanket, and some stories describe them gliding on their extended ears.

Dinglingmin: The Horse-Legged People, or hippopodes, have human bodies but the legs and hooves of horses. They run with great speed and live as nomads.

Maomin: The Hairy People are pygmies with bodies covered in short, dense fur like that of a boar. They live in mountain caves, go naked despite the cold, eat millet and train four kinds of birds.

Sciapodes: The Shadow-Foot people, or monopods, live in a very hot country. They have just one leg and a foot so large they can use it as a sunshade while they rest in the hottest part of the day. Sciapodes run (or rather, hop) with great speed.

Tenaga: The Long-Armed People are larger than ordinary humans, with amazingly long arms. They stand on the shore and snatch fish out of the water, or grab people from passing boats. Also known as changbimin. Asinaga and tenaga sometimes team up, with each tenaga riding on an asinaga's shoulders, to combine their height, reach and running speed.

Troglodytes: The Hole-Creepers live in caves and cannot speak. Some tales say they eat snakes and lizards, or go on all fours. Tales describe other mute races that communicate by gestures, so perhaps troglodytes do too.

Yibimin: The One-Arm People are each only one half of a normal person, with one arm, one leg, one eye and one nostril. If they want to walk and act normally instead of hopping around, yibimin must strap themselves together in pairs.





MORE MUTATIONS

Here is an expansion of the Mutations section in **The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. II—The Wyld**, pp. 144–148.

ALTERNATE NUTRIMENT

The mutant can eat and digest something her species does not normally consider food, such as meat-eating rabbits or people who live off sweet odors. The creature might still eat the normal food of its species. If not, the alternate nutriment is common enough that feeding presents no significant difficulty.

This pox stacks. Taken once, the mutant can feed on some substance that at least *some* natural creature regards as food, such as people who can digest grass and leaves as a cow could. Taken twice as an affliction, the mutant feeds on something bizarre but harmless, such as ground red ocher or newly fallen snow. Taken three times, as a blight, the mutant can eat and digest something that should be physically

impossible or even lethal, such as solid rock, flute music or concentrated acid. The basic pox might not be obvious, but affliction and blight versions always include blatant physical changes such as iron grinding-plates for teeth, to chew up pebbles.

A mutant can have the Diet negative mutation as well as Alternate Nutriment, for a creature with truly strange requirements, such as a mutant who can survive *only* on the smell of apples.

EXTENDED LIMBS

One set of the mutant's limbs extends to freakish length. Extended arms add one yard to a person's reach; extended legs add one yard to a person's Move and two yards to Dash actions.

The basic mutation is a pox, but it can stack. Taken twice to become an affliction, its effects double. Taken three times, as a blight, its effects quadruple (*i.e.*, +4 yards to reach or +4 yards to Move and +8 yards to Dash).



HEADLESS

A creature with this abomination lacks a head. Since this is still a more-or-less positive mutation, however, the creature's mouth and eyes relocate to some other part of its body. This abomination may combine with other mutations. For instance, a mouth relocated to a headless person's belly could be a Hideous Maw (*The Manual of Exalted Power—The Lunars*, p. 208).

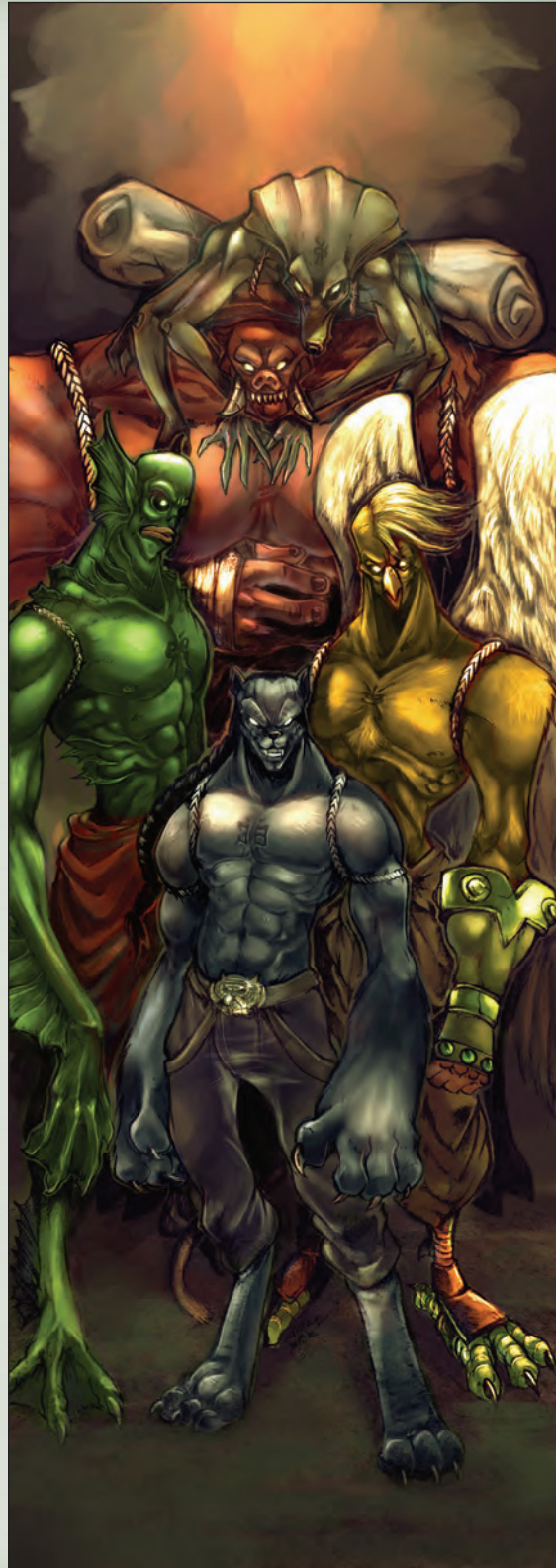
MISSING BODY PART

A creature with this negative mutation does not have a sufficient number of a particular anatomical feature. The One Eye deficiency is an example. Others include people with only one arm, one leg or one ear. The mutation is a deficiency if the missing body part causes minor but easily survivable problems. For instance, one leg would be a deficiency if it were centrally placed and strengthened so the person could hop as fast as he used to run. Taken repeatedly, the mutation can become a deformity—survival becomes problematic for a person without arms, say, or legs (unless positive mutations supply alternate limbs). Intermediate cases, such as a person who loses a leg to the Wyld but can move using crutches, are debilities.

REGENERATION

This abomination is also the result of taking the Exalted Healing affliction twice. The Wyld mutant heals lethal damage at the same rate as an Exalt heals bashing damage, and aggravated damage at the rate of lethal damage. Doing so costs the mutant three motes (if an Essence-channeler) or one Willpower point per day. What's more, the mutant grows back severed limbs, crushed eyeballs and other such damage. For the same three motes or one Willpower, he can instantly heal any effect short of actual maiming to which the Crippling keyword applies.

Re-grown body parts, however, grow back *wrong*. Serpent scales cover the re-grown hand; the re-grown eye functions but is made of wood. The character always carries two points' worth of Skin/Hair Color to represent these harmless but visible and disturbing deviations from her proper physical form.





MORE DERANGEMENTS

Here is an expansion of the Derangements section in **The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. II—The Wyld**, pp. 148-150.

MANIC/DEPRESSIVE

This is an expansion of Mood Swings, **Exalted**, p. 288. In the high times, the character has energy enough to do anything and can take on the world. Hitting her lows, nothing is good enough, nothing will help and she might as well lie down and starve to death. The mood swings become more rapid and extreme with greater levels of derangement.

Deficiency: The derangement has a slow pace, providing about three days of mania and three days of depression each month, about two weeks separated. During the manic period, the character ignores penalties from fatigue and lack of eating, drinking or sleeping (though she can still die of deprivation). The character requires successful Temperance rolls to resist impulses to sing loudly when she's happy, start a fight over minor irritations

or finish any task that takes more than a scene before moving on to something else. All penalties hit her at the end of the high. During the low, the player must roll Conviction for the character to initiate any new plan or continue it past a scene.

Debility: The character shifts more quickly. Each phase of mania and depression lasts five days, with only one to 10 days of normalcy between phases. Temperance and Conviction rolls are at -1 die, and all tasks suffer a two-die penalty as the character itches to drop what he's doing for some other idea (which seems foolproof and utterly brilliant) or wants to give up because it's all futile. While manic, the character eats or sleeps only when forced to and tends to babble.

Deformity: Each manic, depressive or equable phase lasts one to five days. Temperance and Conviction rolls suffer a -2 external penalty, and all tasks suffer a four-die penalty. While manic, the character tends to rave incoherently because the ideas and impulses come so quickly. While





depressed, the character can hardly get out of bed, except possibly to drink or drug herself into a stupor. In either phase, the character might additionally suffer hallucinations.

MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES

More than one person lives in the character's head. Multiple personalities usually develop to handle circumstances that the (or an) existing personality cannot. A proud and noble character might gain a cowardly personality that can flee a mind-bending Wyld danger. He might gain another when only an insidious, lying poisoner will do and so on. This derangement often accompanies mutations that give characters multiple heads.



Typically, the player's character is considered one of the personalities and the others are under the Storyteller's control, but players can control all personalities, if they and the Storyteller would

like. The character does not remember what happens when another personality is dominant. Characters who gain additional derangements after developing Multiple Personalities have a chance that one of the "other" personalities develops that mental dysfunction.

The derangement might not be immediately evident to other people. As the derangement grows in severity, however, personalities become more fragmented, specialized and divergent from the character's own.

Deficiency: At its mildest, the character has only two personalities. Both are (relatively) sane and complete. One, his own, is normally dominant. When the character encounters the sort of situation in which the secondary personality excels (often something the character subconsciously wishes to avoid), his player rolls the character's Temperance. Success prevents the identity from rising;

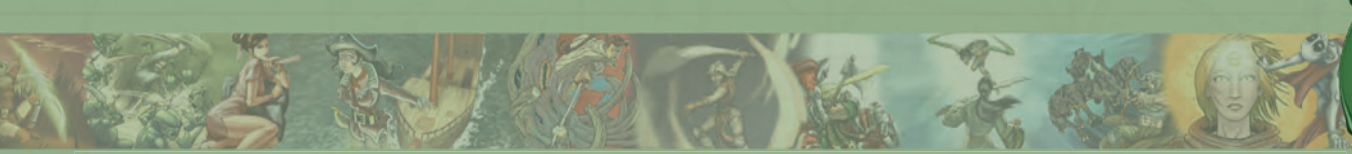




failure gives it the lead. In control, the personality (which is functionally identical to the character) does whatever it is wont to do. At the end of every scene, the personality's player rolls Temperance. Failure ends its control over the body and returns the baseline personality.

Debility: The character has three to five personalities. At least one of them is psychologically troubled all on its own. In situations that would draw out a particular personality, the character's player rolls (Temperance) at difficulty 2. Failure releases the relevant personality. A personality remains in control until its player fails a difficulty 1 Temperance roll, made at the end of each day, or until it encounters a situation that better suits one of the other personalities—in which case it has the same chance of submitting as any other.

Deformity: All the personalities are of approximately equal strength. There could be five or more, but many are quite submissive and resemble each other a great deal. At least half the personalities are completely broken, and the character often seems excessively delusional when he acts like a five-year old child, an old woman, a cold-blooded killer or a self-loathing flagellant. The character might also suffer auditory hallucinations as different personalities break the barriers of mind and chatter with each other. The major personalities have their own Social and Mental Attributes and some different Abilities—but nothing exceeds the original character's traits. They are merely fragments of the baseline character. The personalities rise and fall as needed, and the original personality is frequently forced under. The character might be able to watch in horror as he performs actions he never wanted to perform.



CREATURES OF THE WYLD



SNOW GHOST

A snow ghost looks like a nude, genderless human outline, invisible except for the flakes of snow that whirl through it. In an actual snowstorm, attempts to spot a snow ghost suffer a -5 external penalty. Although it is as light as falling snowflakes, a snow ghost's touch inflicts terrible wounds. If its target is immune to cold-based environmental damage (as by Element-Resisting Prana or similar Charms—Elemental Adaptation: Air is not enough), a snow ghost inflicts only lethal damage.

Snow ghosts are automatons: Valor rolls for them never fail and other Virtue rolls are never necessary. They have no genuine minds, only directives and simple, fixed plans of action that neither natural nor unnatural mental influence can change.

Although snow-ghosts are particularly associated with the Feather Stairway (see pp. 4–6), they can appear in other ways at the Storyteller's option; for instance, as an occasional, random side effect of using powerful magic in frozen fog or in Northern Middlemarches.

WING CHILDREN

Each of these creations of the Father of Birds (see p. 7) is a unique mix of human child and some sort of bird. Half-raptor wing children are the most common, but a determined observer can find nearly any avian represented. Wing children cannot disobey the Father of Birds, and they revere him without question. The traits presented are for a reasonably combat-capable wing child; others are more or less physically able.



CREATURES OF THE WEST

KRAKEN-WHALE

These beasts appear to be nothing stranger than whales of unusual size... until they open their mouths. Inside their maws, the kraken-whales hide rough, broken-looking teeth and eight huge, mottled tentacles that can double their normal 120-foot length. The ever-hungry kraken-whales can eat nearly anything, and attack boats and anything else they see for sustenance. Although few observe them separately, kraken-whales are actually two symbiotic beasts, a kraken living inside a huge whale. The kraken's tentacles grasp food, and the whale's monstrous teeth mash it up for digestion.

LIVING ISLANDS

Many islands float in the Western Middlemarches, each one an adventure waiting for discovery. These particular "adventures" are alive. While they appear to be normal floating islands anywhere from several hundred yards to a few miles across, their malleable flesh merely settles naturally into the shapes of mountains and jungle trees.

Living islands usually rest quietly, letting sustenance flow into underwater mouths as they drift. Explorers can awaken the island by trying to dig too far through the ground or lightning bonfires. Then, the island becomes hostile. It makes travel difficult by "growing" dense thickets of brambles, opening deep chasms, creating sharp rocks underfoot or otherwise controlling the terrain. The living island can also grow tentacles or snapping beaks to attack. Such battles usually end with the island growing a mouth on its back, which chews up its meal and sends it straight to the creature's stomach.

People can encounter these creatures anywhere in the Western Bordermarches or Middlemarches, and raksha occasionally use them as homes or vehicles. Living islands seldom survive in Creation, which stifles their protean nature. The few that manage the feat grow more solid and static, becoming little more than islands with a heart. Some islands occasionally shape themselves into giant hermit crabs or other creatures, with their legs or feet tucked away beneath the now-stable shell.

TENTACLE MAN

Tentacle men are roughly humanoid, but they have the mottled, rubbery skin of octopi and they have no heads. Where the neck would be on a human, this monster instead has eight suckered tentacles and a large beak. Tentacle men stand at least twice the height of a normal man, and their long tentacles give them at least 10 feet of reach. Normally, they walk on the bottom of the sea, but they can swim at their normal speed or walk on dry land for long periods.

Tentacle men live in small family units when left alone, but they are easily tamed. Several Western Fair Folk use them as servants or workhorses. A few raksha breed tentacle men in captivity.

CREATURES OF THE SOUTH

FIRE WHALE

Fire whales are huge, whale-shaped beasts constantly sheathed in blazing flames. They swim in the largest fire rivers and seas of the South. No fire can harm them except for the rare and deadly golden fire. These creatures are usually peaceful, but the sight of things not aflame sometimes enrages them, causing them to ram vessels and try to consume intruders. Fire whale skins dance with flame-fur, which feels warm and silky to the touch. The skins are useful in many applications dealing with fire.

MANTICORE

These creatures look like large lions whose semi-human heads are even broader than normal—creating space for a wide mouth with three rows of shark teeth. The manticore has a long scorpion's tail that injects venom from its barbed stinger (use arrow frog venom; **Exalted**, p. 131). Mortals, weak Fair Folk and young Dragon-Blooded might evenly match a manticore, but entities that are more powerful have little to fear from them.

Manticores are at least as clever as the smartest apes and can perfectly imitate any voice they have ever heard. Worse, they can make this voice come from anyplace within 30 yards of their actual location. While manticores are not smart enough to carry on a conversation, they

can learn what sounds attract people to them, such as calls for help.

CREATURES OF THE EAST

CAT TREE

The smaller sort of tree in the Cat Forest (not to be confused with the great cat-trees) consists of many normal-sized cats, crawling up and down the mass that somehow keeps its tree-shape as it travels with the forest. Cat trees attack visitors only if severely provoked, at which point many small claws whip out of the “trunk” to tear at the tree’s attackers. Each attack inflicts only one die of damage, not adding extra successes on the attack for determining damage.

HATRA

These small, gliding carnivorous beasts look like a furless cross between small monkeys, cats and flying squirrels. A single hatra presents little threat to an experienced traveler, but the flocks of 30–60 in which they attack can kill even large animals.

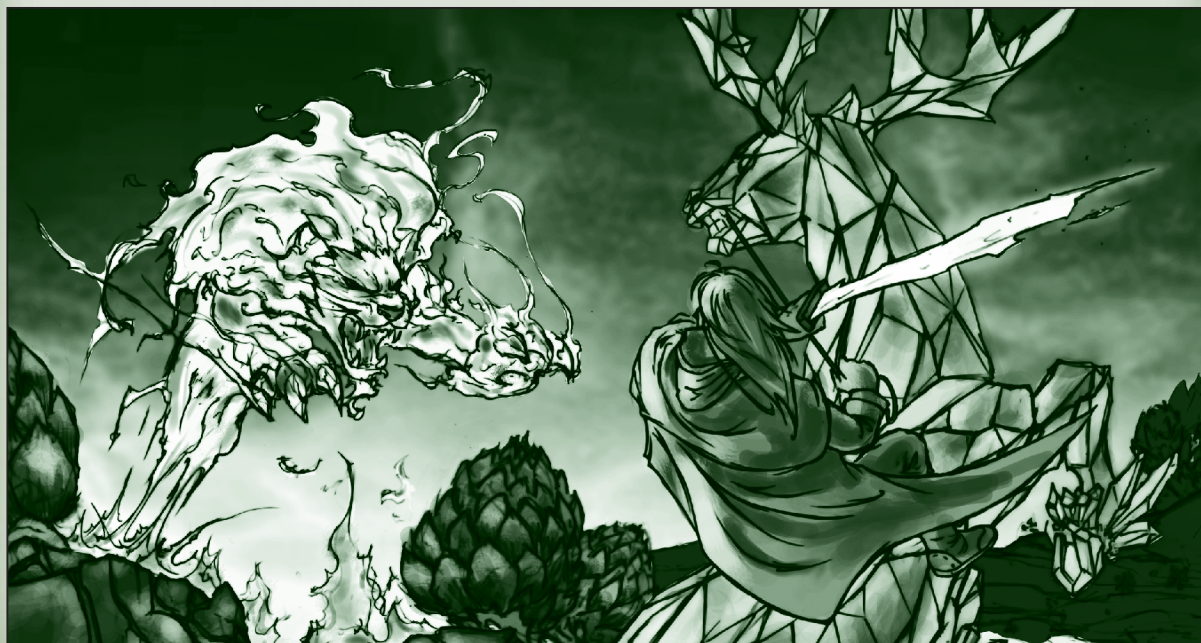
Hatra live throughout the Eastern woodlands (which is why they also appear in **The Compass of Terrestrial Directions, Vol. III—The East**). In the Wyld, however, these small creatures hatch from hatra trees. The wide and bush-like trees stand

from 15 to 30 feet tall and can hatch as many as six hatra a day in season. Hatra live on their trees, guarding the source of future eggs and eating what comes near. When a tree becomes overpopulated, a flock of hatra migrates away from the tree. Several of the creatures bury themselves underground to become seeds for a new hatra tree.

VINE WYRM

Vine wyrms resemble nothing so much as a dragon’s head with an unending neck, but when quiet and still it is easily mistaken for one of the East’s impossibly thick vines, or perhaps a vine-covered tree. These are deadly mistakes. A vine wyrm can strike quickly and without warning, usually biting twice. The first bite injects its venom, which slows the prey and begins the digestion process, and the second bite often takes its prey whole. Hanging from far above, most vine wyrms never need to move in pursuit of prey. If it comes in range for the first attack, it should be in range for the second.

Vine wyrms can grow to be up to 100 feet long and six feet in diameter. They slither like snakes through the trees. The wyrms rarely appear outside the Eastern Bordermarches and Middlemarches, but sometimes venture into the Southeastern jungles. Venom: (8L/action, 3, —/—, -4).





Name	Str/Dex/ Sta	Per/Int/ Wits/Will	Health Levels	Attack (Spd/Acc/Dmg/Rate)	Dodge DV/Soak
Creatures of the North					
Snow-Ghost	3/6/8	3/1/2/1	-0x4/I	Ice Razor Touch: 4/10/3A/2	5/4L/8B
Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Dodge 4, Martial Arts 3, Stealth 4					
Snow Lion	10/3/8	3/1/2/3	-0x2/-1x2/-2x3/-4/I	Bite: 6/7/12L/1, Claw: 5/7/10L/2	2/6L/12B
Abilities: Athletics 3 (Tunnels +3), Awareness 3 (Tremors +3), Dodge 2, Integrity 1, Investigation 2, Martial Arts 3, Presence 2, Resistance 3, Stealth 3 (Ambush +3), Survival 3					
Wing Children	2/3/2	2/2/2/4	-0/-1x2/-2x2/-4/I	Talon: 5/6/4L/2	2/1L/3B
Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Dodge 2, Integrity 2, Investigation 3, Martial Arts 3, Presence 1, Resistance 1, Stealth 2, Survival 2					
Creatures of the West					
Kraken-Whale	18/3/20	2/1/1/6	-0x6/-1x4/-2x4/-4x2/I	Bite: 6/9/21L/1, Clinch: 6/10/18B/8	2/12L/23B
Abilities: Athletics 2 (Swim +3), Awareness 2, Dodge 2, Integrity 4, Investigation 2, Martial Arts 4 (Bite +2, Grab +3), Presence 5 (Intimidation +2), Resistance 4, Stealth 1, Survival 4					
Living Island	20/4/17	1/1/1/6	-0x8/-1x4/-2x4/-4x2/I	Bite: 6/12/+24L/2, Smash: 5/11/22B/3, Clinch: 5/9/20B/2	3/11L/20B
Abilities: Athletics 1, Awareness 3, Dodge 2, Integrity 3, Investigation 1, Martial Arts 5 (Bite +2), Presence 2, Resistance 5, Stealth 1, Survival 4					
Tentacle Man	9/4/8	4/1/3	-0x2/-1x4/-2x3/-4/I	Bite: 4/7/7L/1, Clinch: 6/10/9B/3	3/6L/11B
Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Dodge 2, Integrity 1, Investigation 1, Martial Arts 3 (Clinch +3), Presence 1, Resistance 1, Stealth 2, Survival 3					
Creatures of the South					
Fire Whale	12/2/14	1/1/2/4	-0x5/-1x6/-2x3/-4x2/I	Bite: 6/4/16L/1, Ram: 6/5/20L/1	1/7L/14B
Abilities: Athletics 2 (Feats of Strength +3), Awareness 2, Dodge 1, Integrity 4, Investigation 1, Martial Arts 2 (Bite +1, Ram +1), Presence 2 (Intimidation +1), Resistance 4, Stealth 1, Survival 3					
Manticore	8/4/6	3/1/3/3	-0x2/-1x3/-2x3/-4/I	Bite: 6/8/11L/1, Sting: 5/10/9L + poison/1	3/6L/9B
Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Dodge 2, Integrity 2, Investigation 2, Martial Arts 4, Performance 3, Presence 2, Resistance 2, Stealth 4, Survival 3					
Creatures of the East					
Cat Tree	1/3/10	2/1/3/4	-0x6/-1x5/-2x5/-4x3/I	Scratch: 3/8/1L/10	2/7L/13B
Abilities: Athletics 1, Awareness 5, Dodge 1, Integrity 3, Investigation 1, Martial Arts 3 (Scratch +2), Presence 3, Resistance 5, Stealth 1, Survival 3					
Hatra	1/4/2	3/1/3/3	-0/-1/-2/-4/Incap	Bite: 4/8/3L/2	3/1L/2B
Abilities: Athletics 3 (Climbing +1), Awareness 3, Dodge 4, Integrity 1, Investigation 2, Martial Arts 4, Resistance 2, Stealth 4, Survival 3					
Vine Wurm	9/5/8	4/1/3/6	-0x3/-1x3/-2x4/-4/I	Bite: 5/11/13L + poison/1	4/12L/15B
Abilities: Athletics 3 (In Trees +2), Awareness 3, Dodge 4, Integrity 2, Investigation 1, Martial Arts 4, Presence 4, Resistance 4, Stealth 4 (In Trees +3), Survival 4					