

BLACK BOX BOOKS: FOMORIANS AND FAITH REFEREE GUIDE

This booklet expands the information in the *F&F Player's Guide* with information and adventure seeds.

High Tech

By default, Athconnit does not have any fossil fuels and is not volcanically active, so there isn't enough sulfur around for gunpowder. This can be tweaked if the Referee has some preferred primitive firearm rules or wants more high tech in the campaign. It does mean that sulfur is actually a resource worth adventuring for, perhaps even worth bargaining with demons to obtain. Patrons will want to make *some* gunpowder, and there could be all manner of unusual things deep under Athconnit other than magma. Also, high tech from other realms, whether as "simple" as a crate of solar-powered calculators or as complicated as a bio-engineered language-translating fish, create additional variety in treasure.

The Enemies of the Fomorians

The Referee does not have to specify the original enemy right away, though it is implied the Fomorians were trying

to protect themselves from some sort of faeries. Because the old enemy cannot enter Athconnit, except in a world-shattering event that player characters would be involved in, the nature of that enemy determines what sorts of monsters that the Referee might exclude from the game and what sort of items are laying around from the invasion. Was the enemy sword-wielding sidhe, raygun-wielding aliens, or something else altogether? Some "items" might even be intelligent constructs who seek to return their masters in an aforementioned world-shattering event!

The second wave of unplanned "invasion" started right after the ritual completed and continues to this day, in the form of people and creatures stumbling through certain faerie rings into Athconnit. Although people enter the rings one at time, it is quite possible for everyone who entered a single ring over the course of centuries to appear in Athconnit at the same place and time. The largest influx was centuries ago, on the day after the ritual was cast, admitting medieval Nestorian Christians, Caliphate-Era Sunni Muslims, and demi-humans in large enough numbers to sow the seeds of the current political situation.

Both invasions are likely to have greatly influenced the

current condition of the Formorians. Perhaps their outposts vary widely in tech level, isolation having eroded one community to the point of barbarism while only miles away a group of technician-priests still maintain a solar power station. As a twist, maybe the Formorians are actually the original invaders, locked inside Athconnit and living in golem-patrolled prison complexes.

Regardless, if the player characters were born in another time or place, they may wish to leave Athconnit. This means killing at least one Fomorian. Details are left to the Referee; it is only suggested that escape be as hard or easy as one's players are likely to tolerate.

In any case, at the end of this booklet is one potential game-statistical take on the Formorians.

Player Characters

Obviously, the nature of the setting is such that the Referee can import any race, class, or element they want from other OSR games or even much, much further afield. And while it should go without saying, the Referee should not be shy about changing or banning anything, even "canon" races like Elves and the Chorals.

Speaking of the latter, a lot is deliberately left up to the

Referee about the Chorals. What was the place they came from like? What technology level did they have? Why did Christianity appeal to them enough to convert?

The author likes to imagine the Chorals had reached the equivalent of human 20th century technology before coming to Athconnit. Just imagine what a typewriter or automobile designed by and for a Choral would look like!

Athconnit's Map

Some additional notes, mostly possible adventure seeds, and details on 3 locations not on the player's map, marked with an asterisk (*).

(A) Nyse: Lots of people from higher-tech places gather at this metropolis. They're going to want sulfur, high-tech items, and maybe just the most dangerous treasure of them all, *scientific data*. They make good quixotic patrons.

(B) Hameau du Chœur Coloré: Perhaps Hameau's original inhabitants were a secret bug-cult dedicated to bringing the Chorals to Athconnit; after all, they named the village *before* the Chorals arrived. Or the inhabitants were *transformed* into the Chorals, their memories erased until a Choral PC encounters a *Remove Curse*...

(C) Ys: Imagine all the Referee's favorite crazy

underwater creatures, except they've built a cosmopolitan society down there. Then, the player characters hear a rumor that the literal Holy Grail was in Ys when it sank...

(D) Dwartheim: Maybe Dwarves really don't have souls; there is actually only one real dwarf, and the rest are his constructs. Perhaps the real problem is the dread Marble God the secret Dwarven priests worship...

(E) Dogsard: Every campaign needs a hive of scum and piracy. But domesticated owlbears? Maybe they're secretly very intelligent. And plotting to take over Dogsard...

(F) Balor's Teeth: See the previous section. Maybe the Fomorians were the first to domesticate owlbears?

(G) The Foot: This is the place for the Referee put that mega-dungeon they've been writing since 1983.

(H) City of Eyes: The player characters are surprised to find that the crumbling records indicate the city was founded by their future selves...

(I) Candymarsh: Whimsical or deadly? Well, we all know the old-school fantasy genre is rife with both. But who'd think a serious threat would live in the *Candymarsh*?

(J) Gerena: Given its location, despite its claims of neutrality, this city is likely a satellite of Irem, but

independent enough that the Christian powers might be plotting to install their own puppet government. Maybe the city is split between two governments, one propped up by Nyse and one by Irem. How would one implement the Berlin Air Drop in a fantasy game?

(K) Irem: The scholars of Irem are also interested in the dangerous exchange of *scientific data*. Plus cat-smuggling and old fashioned Cold War intrigue.

(L) The Curse: The Referee will find sample statistics for the Elfcursed in the next section. Perhaps the Elf Queen just wants an undead army to march on Balor's Teeth, which sounds almost benign, except when you consider what happens to Athconnit and the people trapped there if all the Fomorians are dead...

(M)* Angry Rand: Not on the player map, this is a village of modern atheists, LeVey Satanists, and industrial-era neo-pagans. It's a place to hide from the religious wars and learn about actual, working magic. Their spells don't hide the place as well as Grovehaven, but they do the job. The name is a deliberate joke on the part of the inhabitants, many of which are American Libertarians. If Nyse or Irem found out about this place, they'd want to co-opt it,

convert it, or conquer it...

(N)* Don't want to go home, but still want to leave Athconnit? This crashed starship, once repaired, might do the trick. Non-electronic literature on the ship indicates it comes from some place called "the Kelron sector."

(O)* Grovehaven: Though mentioned in the *Player's Guide*, this is where Grovehaven actually *is*. It's as a bucolic a place as you could ever imagine, a major breadbasket, and a trade nexus between the Dwarves and the Chorals. If the spell around it was defeated, knowledge of its location would be *valuable*.

Elfcursed

Armor Class: 4 [15]

Special: Fire, see below

Hit Dice: 7

Move: 12

Attacks: Claw

HDE/XP: 8/800

These intelligent, cunning walking corpses patrol the edges of the forest claimed by the Elves of Athconnit, attacking non-Elves and retaliating in self-defense against any Elves inclined to hunt them.

They are wreathed in cold blue flame, dealing 2d6 damage per round to anyone in melee range. *Remove*

***Curse* will destroy one, but not before the caster briefly bursts into flame, taking 3d6 damage.**

Fomorian of Athconnit

Armor Class: 2 [17]

Special: See below

Hit Dice: 10

Move: 18

Attacks: Punch or stomp

HDE/XP: 11/1,700 (and up)

Fomorians vary widely in size, shape, and appearance, from twisted, two-headed gnomes to beautiful women as tall as castles, and everything in between. Formorians are hostile to most outsiders, though most are highly susceptible to flattery, as well as lacking in common sense, making them easy to fool, like giants in fairy tales.

Every Formorian can cast at least one Magic-User spell of at least 5th level at will, as a natural ability, often connected to a physical trait, such as an eye covered by a special patch that casts *Disintegrate* over and over when exposed. This may mean an individual Fomorian may merit more XP than the baseline given above...

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