DRAGONLANCE®

FIFTH AGE™

DRAMATIC ADVENTURE GAME

SAGA™

RULES SYSTEM

I SEE EVERYTHING.

I am the Herald, singer of songs, teller of tales. I have seen much upon the continent of Ansalon, and have learned even more. And so I pause now, for as this new day dawns we enter what the keepers of time shall call the Age of Mortals—the Fifth Age of Krynn.

From the shadows of this war-ravaged land, great and terrifying dragons have emerged to subjugate mankind. The gods have gone, and thus none remains who can contain these creatures of Evil, far stronger than any we have known.

And so I have come forth to do what I may in this time of peril. I am a man with no memories of my own—my mind knows only the memories of the world. Perhaps within my tale, within this box of Krynn's lore, lies the key to how Ansalon may rise again.

Thirty years ago, Chaos came. A misunderstanding loosened the chains that bound this malevolent power, from whose very essence the gods shaped the world. Once free, Chaos sought to defile the gods' greatest treasure: the world of Krynn. Through the power of magic, in that Summer of Chaos, all the gods' children joined together and forced Chaos to leave. He agreed, but commanded the gods to follow.

Now, more than any time in the history of Krynn, mortals are alone. As the gods exit this world, the door closes upon their precious gift of magic. Without it, mortals cannot stave off the ravages of the Dark Queen's first children: the dragons are free to rule. From across the sea comes a race of Great Dragons led by Malystryx the Red. In a grim Dragon Purge, these wyrms fight to claim the choicest lands of Ansalon for their own. At the dawn of this new age, mortals wage a desperate battle for survival as dragon fights dragon, heedless of the destruction they wreak upon the world.

The present is shadowed and uncertain. Plotting their nefarious schemes, dragons dominate and feast upon the mortals of the once free lands. Where their power fades, the Knights of Takhisis, those foes of the Good who worshiped the Dark Queen, still remain a strong force in the land. The future looks grim.

But though the gods have abandoned us, I say there is still hope. Our world was not saved from Chaos to be given over to Evil dragons. I can see a turning point coming, the light of Good shining within the dark veil of Evil's rule. New sorcerers have restored to us the most ancient magic of our world. Our Citadel of Light teaches us to look within to find the power of our own hearts. The Knights of Solamnia continue to champion the forces of Good, the Legion of Steel fights on for justice, and the Good dragons—though hidden—are at work within the world.

This is an age of discovery, an age of adventure, an age of heroes, an age of hope. Arise, beloved Krynn, to the Fifth Age, the Age of Mortals. Know that, for all peoples of Ansalon, Good shall prevail.

IT IS UP TO ALL OF US.

DragonLance

FIFTH AGE™

BOOK ONE

BOOK OF THE FIFTH AGE

The dramatic adventure game of legendary heroes, terrible villains, and great dragons.

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"Because my spelling is all Wobbly. It's good spelling but it Wobbles, and the letters get in the wrong places."
—"Eeyore has a Birthday," from *Winnie the Pooh*, by A.A. Milne

This book is dedicated, with thanks and affection, to Sue: an editor and, I hope, a friend with patience, understanding, and a chair just for me.

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Author's Foreword

Welcome to Krynn, home of the DRAGONLANCE®: FIFTH AGE™ dramatic adventure game! This role-playing game allows you to assume the personas of great heroes undertaking epic quests—you can even play characters from DRAGONLANCE novels.

In this game, players explore the wondrous continent of Ansalon—a land ravaged by the fire of Dragon Wars, shaped by the raw courage of heroes, and inspired by the passions of its living legends. If you are already familiar with role-playing games, you will find the new SAGA™ rules an easy to learn, fast-playing system. For those new to this type of game, it won't take long before you are ready to embark upon adventures limited only by your imagination!

Innovations

The SAGA rules boast quite a few elements that distinguish this role-playing game from other fantasy systems.

The Hand of Fate. While many adventure games use dice or other random number generators to determine the outcome of actions the heroes attempt, the FIFTH AGE game employs the SAGA rules. This system, tailor-made for the DRAGONLANCE setting, revolves around the Fate Deck of cards. During the game, every player holds cards—his Hand of Fate. When his hero attempts any feat, the player selects the card to use from his hand. Thus, one can hold back good cards until critical junctures in the scenario.

Roles vs. Rules. In a dramatic game such as this one, rules should never get in the way of playing one's role. The FIFTH AGE game has been designed with an eye toward drama and role-playing, not complex game mechanics. Throughout this book, you will discover rules techniques that reinforce this philosophy—the SAGA rules all focus on streamlining mechanics and giving the player more control over his hero and the storyline. For instance, the FIFTH AGE game deals with concepts such as character movement, time passage, and magic use in an abstract, freeform method. It uses no game board, battle map, spell lists, or other limiting elements. Thus, drama and role-playing take the place of odds calculation and constant table reading.

While it isn't possible to eliminate rules entirely, the FIFTH AGE game doesn't let them interfere with role-playing. Many of the duties that traditionally have fallen on the shoulders of the game master, or Narrator, now are left up to the players. This leaves the Narrator free to focus on the drama and pacing of an adventure, giving it a literary flavor reminiscent of the Saga's best novels.

Last Words

The best part about my job is knowing that many people work hard to make a game look good, and then I get to put my name on it. Don't be deceived by that. Many other folks did as much work on the SAGA rules as I did, the most important of whom are Harold Johnson, Sue Weinlein Cook, and Skip Williams. If the world were fair, their signatures would be right beside mine.

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PROLOGUE

"Now is begun what will be known on Krynn as the Age of Mortals. It will be the final age, I think. The final, the longest, and, perhaps, the best."

—Fizban to Palin and Usha, Dragons of Summer Flame

Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman's novel *Dragons of Summer Flame* ushered in a new age for the DRAGONLANCE world. In the wake of the devastation caused by the war with Chaos, life on Krynn could never be the same again. Such dramatic changes demanded a new game!

Components

The best way to begin an introduction to the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game is to take a look at its various elements.

The Book of the Fifth Age. This book details this game's SAGA rules system. Future FIFTH AGE supplements will include optional expansions to this core system, but this book explains the heart of the SAGA rules and offers creative players a lifetime of adventure.

Dusk or Dawn. Book Two in this box, subtitled *Ansalon in the Fifth Age*, provides a wealth of information about the past and present of this continent. This guidebook also details its most famous heroes and villains—both man and dragon. Narrators should make sure their players don't read sections that contain information they wish to keep secret from them.

Heroes of a New Age. The box's third book is an introductory adventure in the Fifth Age. The action begins in the realm of Abanasinia—an area already familiar to readers of DRAGONLANCE books as the meeting place of the famed Heroes of the Lance.

The Fate Deck. A pack of eighty-two cards makes up the Fate Deck. This deck, which depicts major figures of the DRAGONLANCE Saga, past and present, comprises eight suits of nine cards each and one suit of ten. The first eight suits represent the abilities of Krynn's humanoid races: Swords for Strength, Moons for Reason, etc. The ninth—the Suit of Dragons—is tied to the current reptilian lords of the land. These cards govern many aspects of the game, so players will quickly become familiar with them.

Other Components. Eighteen character cards provide game details and background for many of the major heroes and villains of the Fifth Age, as well as some new adventurers. Players who would rather not create their own heroes can assume the role of any one of these characters. Also included is a poster map depicting the continent of Ansalon, for player reference, and a folded reference card containing information helpful to the Narrator.

Campaign Overview

Prior to the publication of this game, readers could explore the world of Krynn primarily during the ages of Dreams, Might, and Despair. The novel *Dragons of Summer Flame* propels the world forward into its next Great Age.

Thirty years have passed since men and dragons defeated the Chaos god, and the pantheon of Krynn withdrew from the world. Believing themselves the only gods left to the beleaguered planet after this Chaos War, Good and

Evil wyrms waged a great battle—the Dragon Purge—which gave them control of much of Ansalon. The nature of magic changed beyond recognition with the withdrawal of the gods of magic and the loss of Krynn's three moons. (The world's recent history is presented in greater detail in Chapter One of *Dusk or Dawn.*) Even the passage of time is recorded differently, for this is the Fifth Age, the Age of Mortals—an age of hope.

Dragons

Relatively few dragons managed to survive the Dragon Purge. In fact, of the perhaps fifty dragons left in Ansalon, half cloister themselves away in hidden sanctuaries. Many of those dragons that do remain—titans of their kind—came to Ansalon from a faraway land across the sea. Indeed, so powerful are these Great Dragons—larger and more aggressive than dragons of the Fourth Age—that whole nations have fallen before them. Through the use of powers unheard of in ages past, they have caused far-reaching changes in the geography and climate of the lands they have claimed.

Magic

After the devastating final battle of the Chaos War, a disheartened young wizard named Palin Majere asked the avatar of the god Paladine whether magic remained in the world. Fizban told him that the gods of magic had gone but added enigmatically that there might be "other magic" waiting to be discovered. Many have speculated since then that, upon departing, the gods gifted their world with new types of magic. In a sense, this is true—the magic of the Age of Mortals is so ancient as to seem brand-new.

Sorcery

Today, in the Fifth Age, people practice two types of magic. The first of these is *sorcery*, which draws not upon the teachings of the departed gods of magic, but upon the ages-old power that infused Krynn at the time of creation. Certain magical creatures—particularly dragons—are rich with this enduring power. Others, like men, must work hard to seize and manipulate it.

Without the aid of the gods of magic to control this ambient magical energy, the sorcerers of the Fifth Age are less powerful than their forebears. With the traditional Orders of Magic now defunct, modern sorcerers learn their skills at the Academy of Sorcery run by Palin Majere. Even he still has much to learn about the magic of sorcery, however—it may yet prove more powerful than anyone suspects.

The masters of sorcery on Krynn are the three archmages who make up the Last Conclave. Two of these sorcerers—the Master of Wayreth's Tower of High Sorcery and Palin Majere—practiced wizardly magic in the Fourth Age. The third, however, is a mysterious figure known only as the Shadow Sorcerer. The true identity of this powerful masked character remains unknown.

Mysticism

In addition to the ancient magic of sorcery, what appears to be a new, spiritual magic has come into the world. This *mysticism* is fueled by the strength of the human heart—the power of pure emotion and faith.

Mysticism emphasizes appreciating the sanctity of life and finding one's inner strength through meditation. Its practitioners can heal themselves (and others, with effort) and employ their other mystic abilities for the good of all mankind. The study of mysticism has spread from a nexus called the Citadel of Light on the island of Schallsea. The

Important Terms

Before proceeding, readers should familiarize themselves with some key terms used in the FIFTH AGE game.

Narrator

A *Narrator* guides the players through the game scenario. It is his job to plan the adventure, answer rules questions, and play the roles of characters and monsters the heroes may meet. If the group includes new players, the Narrator should help them become familiar with the game system.

Character

Fictional individuals called *characters* behave according to the will of the Narrator rather than the players. In most cases, characters either aid or challenge the heroes during the game.

Hero

A *hero* is a fictional individual whose actions are controlled by one of the players. These protagonists should have no ties that prevent them from seizing an opportunity for adventure.

Abilities

All FIFTH AGE characters and heroes are defined by *abilities*, such as Strength, Agility, Intelligence, and similar characteristics. Each quality carries a numeric *ability score* and an alphabetic *ability code*. These indicators rate a hero's natural talent and training in skills based on each ability. Looking at these ability scores and codes helps a player decide whether to make his hero a burly warrior or a canny sorcerer—or a bit of both. Chapter One discusses abilities in detail.

Action

An *action* refers to any attempt by a character or hero to do something. When a hero tries to scale a wall, for example, he is attempting an action. When he tries to strike a draconian with his sword or cast a spell, he is attempting an action. Chapter Three describes how to attempt actions using the SAGA rules.

Trump

The SAGA rules use a few traditional playing-card terms, such as the *trump suit*. A card is considered trump when its suit (and associated ability) is directly relevant to the current situation in play. For example, any card from the Suit of Swords is trump for an action that requires Strength, the ability associated with Swords. Playing a trump card gives the hero a *trump bonus*, which increases his chance of success at a given action. (See Chapter Three.)

mistress of this modern-day temple is Goldmoon, a Hero of the Lance who, some say, has lived beyond her years through her mastery of mysticism.

Some whisper that a dark form of mysticism has emerged from the modern nation of Neraka. Built on the emotions of hate and anger, this power would embody all that is corrupt in the human spirit. Whether the stories are true remains to be seen, but it certainly seems possible that a sufficiently sinister heart could reverse the positive energy of mysticism.

DRAGONLANCE Tales

Every FIFTH AGE adventure contains certain qualities that capture the heroic flavor of the DRAGONLANCE Saga.

Character Depth

Every adventure should give players a chance to be creative with their heroes. Events should encourage them to discover or invent some aspect of their hero's personality or history and share

it with the other players. A hero grows more and more detailed as the player learns his loves, desires, hopes, and fears. In time, players will see that this hero is unlike anyone else on Krynn.

Good vs. Evil

Ansalon is a land of great Good and terrible Evil. From the heroic Knights of Solamnia to the terrible Malystryx—the most powerful red dragon known to man—heroes will find allies and enemies everywhere.

A DRAGONLANCE adventure should always drive home the presence of this moral spectrum. For one reason or another, the heroes find themselves charged with facing and defeating the evils of the world. Even heroes who have a dark side, like the great wizard Raistlin Majere, recognize that the unchecked power of Malystryx and similar Evil creatures spells disaster for them as well as for the Good things of the world.

This doesn't mean that heroes (or players) should see Krynn only in terms of black and white, Good or Evil. Steel Brightblade, son of a valiant Knight of Solamnia and a sinister Dragon Highlord, is a fine example of a character who combines elements of both sides. Shades of gray exist—especially in the Fifth Age.

In adventures, a Narrator can use many tactics to bring these truths into play. For instance, he usually provides heroes with an enemy they think has few (if any) redeeming qualities, such as one of the Evil dragons. At the same time, the heroes rely upon allies who represent all that is Good in the world. Perhaps the finest example of such a character is Goldmoon, whose Citadel of Light has become a great force of Good in Ansalon.

For the most part, however, the folk whom heroes meet while adventuring fall somewhere in the middle. They might encounter Knights of Takhisis who consider the law and order they provide crucial to the rebuilding of the land. Such a character need not be cruel or otherwise typical of these Dark Knights—he might even prove something of a hero. On the other hand, an adventuring group might encounter a Knight of Solamnia who doubts the way of her valiant Order and is, in actuality, more of a villain.

A player defines his hero's place on the continuum of Good and Evil during hero creation (see Chapter One). The other characters should be as multifaceted as the heroes. After all, few real people have personalities one can sum up in just one or two words. By introducing individuals with diverse interests into his adventure, the Narrator makes all his characters—both Good and Evil—seem more real.

Romance

What would a DRAGONLANCE tale be without romance? The legends of Krynn are filled with tragic affairs between star-crossed lovers, passion so strong that it transcends even death, and the chaste adoration of a knight for his lady. A good FIFTH AGE adventure should be equally endowed: Romance, unrequited love, or jealousy can cause conflict during adventures or even spark new ones.

Sometimes, love blooms between a hero and a character, such as a local merchant. Such encounters often evolve into sources of wonderful exchanges between the Narrator and the hero's player. In addition, a pleasant, romantic aside can moderate the pace of an otherwise hectic adventure and help add to a hero's background.

Romances may spring up between two heroes, too. For example, a player may decide that his young Caergothian nobleman hero loses his heart to the female Knight of Solamnia in the group when she rescues him from danger. These alliances can prove entertaining for everyone in the game, especially if both players make the most of their role-playing opportunities.

Tragedy

Tragedy exists in the annals of Krynn alongside high adventure and fiery

romance. No life is without suffering, and no prize is won without a price. DRAGONLANCE heroes mature through the tragic events of their adventures; they may change the world, but in the process, they experience loss and their eyes are opened to the presence of Evil.

However, Narrators must not let adventures become angst-ridden ordeals. Heroes may suffer, but they seldom whine about it. Tragedy often works best combined with romance. The story of a knight who has lost his lady to an assassin's arrow and now hunts the killer over land and sea can play very powerfully.

Heroism

Good or Evil, angst-ridden or love-struck, heroes are valiant people who face impossible odds, unbeatable foes, and incredible dangers without blinking. No FIFTH AGE game is complete until the heroes have had a chance to show their courage. Whether it's battling gruesome monsters, evading diabolical traps, or thwarting sinister schemes, heroism is the most essential element to any DRAGONLANCE story.

The Player's Task

Although it's the Narrator's job to inject many of the above touches into a DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE campaign, players also have key responsibilities to making each game session a success.

Role-Playing

Role-playing games let players pretend to shed their normal attitudes and traits and, for the duration of the game, play a unique role—possibly a role very different from the player's personality. Adopting the demeanor, habits, reactions, fixations, strengths, and weaknesses of one's hero is more than just freedom from one's own personality, however. Like professional actors and actresses, players owe a responsibility to their chosen role.

When a player creates a hero (see Chapter One), he gives the hero a distinct personality. It's crucial to the success of the game that the player remain true to those unique traits. For instance, if a player has created a brave but naive warrior, he should make his hero act like a brave but naive warrior. This may mean he has the hero charge into a battle before the rest of the party is ready, attack a monster that's far more powerful than he is, or take time out from an important mission to watch a duel between two knights.

Acting in a manner that fits the personality of one's hero, even if it involves some foolish behavior now and then, makes the game more fun for everyone. Before long, players will feel like they know each others' heroes—a familiarity that creates spontaneous interaction "in character." Over the course of the game, the group's role-playing makes the evolving story unique, as each type of personality approaches its challenges differently.

Of course, role-playing should never interfere with the flow of the adventure. Players should remember that a good game involves give and take. A self-centered player who uses up too much of the Narrator's time on his own hero's actions slows down the game for everyone. A talented role-player makes the most of a few choice moments during the adventure to display his hero's strengths and weaknesses.

Cooperation

Teamwork is a vital part of the FIFTH AGE game. Just as the Heroes of the Lance, working together, defeated the Queen of Darkness during the Fourth Age, so too can the heroes of today change the world.

To work as a team toward a common goal, players must put aside any differences they or their heroes might have. Heroes support and aid their comrades at all costs; fighting within the ranks only weakens the group's mission. This

cooperation between players, rather than competition, that makes role-playing games special.

Of course, players must cooperate with the Narrator, too. Long before a gaming session actually begins, the Narrator has created characters, drawn maps, and detailed the adventure's plot. All this work can be easily ruined by a single uncooperative player. Certainly, a hero can behave as his player decides—but not at the cost of the adventure. If the Narrator has worked hard to establish a story that takes place in the deep halls of Mount Nevermind, but the players refuse to travel there, all his effort was for nothing.

Again, Heroism

There is a good reason why the fictional roles players assume during the game are called "heroes": These people are supposed to act *heroically*.

Heroes are larger than life. They do things that normal people can't do or wouldn't try. Heroes may be knights or cobblers, farmers or shopkeeps. But no matter what their profession, they have one thing in common: They seek adventure! Heroes are not hermits—unless they allow events to draw them out of their reclusive existence into a new life of quests and excitement. In fact, many heroes may begin an adventure with several quests already completed.

Of course, heroes do go shopping, mend their clothes, and undertake other mundane tasks. However, these things are dealt with off stage. Routinely incorporating such ordinary aspects of daily life into the game only slows things down and detracts from the adventure.

Heroes should act with purpose and some degree of honor. They don't run around beating up helpless people, robbing graves, or performing other unseemly acts. They may appear sinister, greedy, or even cowardly at times, but they show their mettle when the lives of their friends are on the line.

In short, heroes must be heroic.

CHAPTER ONE

A woman like no other he had ever seen in his life stood in the doorway. Masses of silver hair framed a face that was alluring, kept its secrets, yet—by the wide, eager golden eyes—seemed to require that others give to her all of their own mysteries. Her clothes, made of brightly colored, flowing silk, were outlandish, like no well-bred woman in this part of the country would have worn. Yet they suited her. She was as exotic, as entrancing, as if she'd fallen from a star.

—Palin Majere meets Usha, Dragons of Summer Flame

Armed with a basic understanding of their role in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game, players can create their own heroes to populate the continent of Ansalon, with the Narrator's help.

Novices may want to play one FIFTH AGE adventure before creating their own heroes. Many of the figures on this game's eighteen character cards would make excellent heroes for new players. (Players can alter the names or genders.) However, even those using pre-generated heroes should review this chapter for important background.

Creating a Hero

To get a feel for this part of the game, players should create their heroes using this chapter's ten-step process.

The Hero Sheet

A blank form called the hero sheet has been printed on the back cover of this book. Players should use a photocopy of this sheet to keep track of the most important details about their heroes.

Step One: Hand of Fate

Hero creation begins with the Narrator dealing a hand of twelve Fate Cards to each player. The cards in a *Hand of Fate* allow players to piece together their new fictional heroes. It doesn't matter if a player keeps these cards to himself or lets others see them. However, players may not exchange cards. Once players have looked over their hands of cards, they should sort them either by suit or from highest to lowest.

In most cases, a group of players can all create their heroes at once. However, if the group is larger than four or five players, the Narrator may want to create heroes with only half of them at a time.

Step Two: Personality

From his hand, each player selects two cards he will use to define the opposing forces that govern his hero's personality.

The first of these, *demeanor*, indicates how the hero acts and describes the face he presents to the outside world. In a sense, the demeanor is the way the hero wants others to perceive him.

The other part of a hero's personality is his true *nature*. One's nature suggests how he feels in his heart and can often contrast greatly with his demeanor. Such a difference might represent a hero struggling to overcome his darker half or one attempting to hide his true identity by posing as someone else—it's the player's choice.

When selecting the personality cards from his Hand of Fate, a player ignores their numeric values in favor of the qualities written across the top—traits

exemplified by the character pictured on the card. For example, the One of Swords features a portrait of the Solamnic Knight Sturm Brightblade. It indicates two of this character's qualities: "courageous and inspiring." Any player should be glad to use this card for his hero's demeanor or nature.

Strategy. It's a good idea to use low-numbered cards in the two personality spaces, saving high ones for ability scores.

After selecting the personality cards, players should write one or both traits (player's preference) in the appropriate spaces, indicating the cards' suit icon and number in the boxes to the right. Then they turn the two cards face down on the table to show they've been used.

Step Three: Quests and Reputation

After defining his hero's personality, the player moves on to determine his adventuring experience by selecting a third card and writing its numeric value in the box marked *"Quests."* This number indicates how many adventures (or similarly important events) a hero has completed prior to beginning play.

The more quests a character has accomplished, the greater a *reputation* he enjoys at the start of play. Bards will sing songs about his bravery, women will gossip about their trysts with him, and children will make believe they are the hero. Players with famous heroes hold more cards in their hand during play, which gives their heroes a greater chance of triumphing over enemies and surviving other hazards.

Strategy. Players should use cards from the Suit of Dragons in this space, as they hold drawbacks if assigned elsewhere. It's also generally not a good idea to assign a card with a value below 4 to the "Quests" box. Heroes with just a couple of quests under their belts have very few cards to call on during play and often find themselves trapped in situations that more experienced heroes could escape easily.

The following table lists the reputation categories associated with various quest totals, as well as the number of cards a given reputation allows the player to hold in his hand during the game.

Quests	Reputation	Hand
0	Unknown	1 card
1	Rabble	2 cards
2–3	Novice	3 cards
4–6	Adventurer	4 cards
7–10	Champion	5 cards
11–15*	Master	6 cards
16–21*	Hero	7 cards
22–28*	Legend	8 cards
29+*	Archetype	9 cards

* Heroes gain reputations beyond Champion only by adventuring; new heroes may have up to ten quests maximum.

Only the numeric value on the card played for the "Quests" box really matters. For role-playing purposes, however, a player may want to note the card's suit icon; the suit's associated meaning might suggest the general nature of the quests the hero has undertaken. For instance, using a Hearts card might indicate that passion drove the hero to complete past adventures.

Step Four: Wealth and Social Status

Having established his hero's level of fame (or perhaps infamy), the player can move on to determine his *wealth.* Some heroes go on adventures to earn enough coin to pay for dinner, while others relax in opulent castles and adventure only for the fun of it.

Looking over the nine cards left in his Hand of Fate, a player selects one card and records its number and suit in the box marked "Wealth" on his hero sheet. The number on the card gives the player an indication of his hero's resources at the start of the game. These range from

absolute poverty (1) to filthy rich (9).

Strategy. A player might use a card from the Suit of Dragons in this space, to avoid the drawbacks associated with playing them elsewhere.

The suit of the chosen card might tell the player how his hero came to be in his current financial situation. For example, a player selecting the Seven of Swords clearly has a fairly wealthy hero. Since the Suit of Swords represents strength and combat, one might assume that he (or perhaps his father or mother) has served in a Knighthood and accumulated wealth over the course of several battles.

At the start of play, a hero's wealth is assumed to be a reflection of his *social status.* As the hero adventures, fate may increase or decrease his wealth without affecting his status. The table below indicates the social status associated with each degree of wealth.

Wealth Score	Social Status
1	Slave
2	Peasant
3	Commoner
4	Tradesman
5	Guildsman
6	Gentry
7	Aristocracy
8	Nobility
9+	Royalty

Step Five: Ability Scores

Every hero in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game is defined in part by a set of numbers known as *ability scores.* There are eight such scores, evenly divided into two categories: *Physical* abilities and *Mental* abilities. These abilities are further grouped into four pairs of *related abilities.*

Ability scores range between 1 (the worst) and 9 (the best), with a score of 5 considered average for a human being. In rare cases, a player might assign the Ten of Dragons card to an ability score. Some characters or creatures—such as dragons—might also have scores outside this range, too.

Each ability score has an associated card suit in the Fate Deck, as presented in the ability descriptions below.

Physical Abilities

A hero's Physical ability scores—grouped under the related abilities of *Coordination* and *Physique*—give the player an overall idea of his hero's athleticism and level of physical fitness.

Coordination

Those who picture their characters as keen-eyed archers or nimble rogues should assign above-average scores to their *Agility* and *Dexterity*, the related Coordination (Co) abilities.

Agility. Agility (Ag) measures the speed of a hero's reflexes and his degree of natural athletic ability. Those with high Agility scores can easily dodge missile attacks, climb walls, and usually land on their feet when they take a tumble. Skilled acrobats and nimble fighters, like Tika Waylan Majere, have high scores in Agility, represented by the *Suit of Shields.*

Dexterity. The Dexterity (Dx) score gauges a hero's hand-eye coordination and gives the player a good feel for his ability to do fine work. Talent in the former helps a hero employ missile weapons, like bows or crossbows. Heroes good at close work can pick locks, palm small objects, or indulge in sleight-of-hand. Skilled archers like Tanis Half-Elven generally have high Dexterity scores, as do members of the kender or elf races. Appropriately, the *Suit of Arrows* is linked to Dexterity.

Physique

If the player envisions his hero as a great warrior, he'll want good scores in the related Physique (Ph) abilities of *Endurance* and *Strength.*

Endurance. A hero's Endurance (En) score indicates his overall health and stamina. People with high Endurance scores are highly resistant to pain, sickness, poisons, fatigue, etc. In combat, a hero uses his Endurance score to resist attacks made with melee

weapons. Rugged adventurers like Caramon Majere are often noted for their high Endurance scores, as are many nonhuman races like dwarves. The *Suit of Helms* represents Endurance.

Strength. The Strength (St) score measures the hero's physical might and muscular development. One also uses Strength to attack a foe with melee weapons, like swords or axes. Legendary warriors such as Sturm Brightblade often have high Strength scores, as do many inhuman creatures like minotaurs, centaurs, and ogres. Strength is symbolized by the *Suit of Swords.*

Mental Abilities

A hero's scores in his Mental abilities—the related pairs of *Intellect* and *Essence*—reveal much about his intellectual and emotional capabilities.

Intellect

Sages, sorcerers, and other clever or wise folk all rate highly in the Intellect (In) abilities: *Reason* and *Perception.*

Reason. A hero's Reason (Re) score rates his logical, problem-solving abilities and the strength of his mind. In addition, Reason allows one to learn and master the science of sorcery. Characters with high Reason scores include wizards like Raistlin Majere and great sages, such as Astinus of Palanthas. The *Suit of Moons,* long associated with the practice of High Sorcery, is tied to Reason.

Perception. Perception (Pe) indicates a hero's alertness and sensory acuity. People with high Perception scores seldom find themselves surprised by attackers and often notice details that others miss. Those who remain keenly aware of the world around them prove less vulnerable to many magical attacks, too. Skilled outdoorsmen and scouts, like the barbarian Hero of the Lance Riverwind, have high Perception scores. Some heroes may even enjoy one or two especially acute senses, while others might suffer from below-average senses. The *Suit of Orbs* corresponds to Perception.

Essence

Healers, priests, nobles, and mystics have good scores in *Spirit* and *Presence,* the paired Essence (Es) abilities.

Spirit. The Spirit (Sp) score defines a hero's emotional strength. It measures the mercy and compassion of Good heroes, but indicates the depths of an Evil character's corruption. Mysticism, which springs from the power of the heart, is driven by one's Spirit. Truly passionate people, like Goldmoon of the Qué-Shu, have high Spirit scores. The *Suit of Hearts* is linked to Spirit.

Presence. The last ability on the hero sheet is Presence (Pr), which indicates the force of a hero's personality. Those with high Presence scores make good generals and find that others look upon them with respect and admiration—even fear. Great leaders like the Dragon Highlord Verminaard or the legendary Golden General Laurana have high Presence scores. The self-assurance that comes with Presence helps a hero more readily defend himself against mystic magic. Presence relates to the *Suit of Crowns.*

Determining Ability Scores

At this point, the player should still hold eight cards in his Hand of Fate. Now he assigns each of these to one of his emerging hero's abilities, writing each card's number in its proper ability score box. For example, a player choosing the Eight of Orbs as his Strength card gives his hero a Strength score of 8.

Strategy. Players receive bonuses in Step Six for matching the hero's abilities with cards of their corresponding suits—for instance, a Swords card for Strength. If the player has no card of the proper suit, the next best matches are a card from the suit of the related ability (a Helms card for Strength) or the same ability category (a Physical card rather than a Mental one). Dragons cards should be the last choice—the next step of hero creation explains why.

In addition, players want to assign their highest-numbered cards to their

abilities. Throughout the game, players will have the ability to increase their heroes' ability scores to reflect the expertise they gain as they adventure.

Step Six: Ability Codes

In addition to a numeric score, every hero has a one-letter *ability code* assigned to each of his eight abilities. If his ability score represents his natural talent or prowess in a particular area, his ability code represents his training and learned skills in that area. For example, the code associated with a hero's Strength indicates how much training he has received in the use of melee weapons. Similarly, the code associated with a hero's Reason indicates his familiarity with the art of sorcery. As with ability scores, a hero may improve an ability code during play.

Determining Ability Codes

Since the player has already assigned cards to his hero's abilities, he can easily figure out the hero's ability codes.

- If the card assigned to an ability matches that ability's associated suit, the player checks off the box for the "A" code. For example, a card from the Suit of Swords assigned to a hero's Strength gives him an "A."
- Should the assigned card have the suit of the related ability, the hero would get an ability code of "B." Assigning a card from the Suit of Helms to the hero's Strength, for instance, earns him a "B" code.
- If the card assigned to an ability comes from the same general category, either Physical or Mental, as its corresponding suit, the hero has an ability code of "C." Thus, a hero would receive a "C" for Strength if that card belonged to either the Suit of Arrows or the Suit of Shields.
- Should a player use a card completely unrelated to a given ability, (say, a Physical suit on a Mental ability) his hero gets a code of "D."
- The ninth suit of cards, that of Dragons, has no associated ability. Therefore, if a player uses a card from this suit for one of his hero's abilities, the ability gains a code of "X." While a hero's numeric ability score may indicate a high natural aptitude in a particular area, his code of "X" shows he has had no chance to study or practice the arts associated with it.

The sidebar on the next page details what each type of code means for each ability. In general terms, however, the codes can be explained as follows:

Code A: Complete Familiarity

A hero with an ability code of "A" has complete access to all the powers and/or skills associated with a given ability. For example, in the case of Strength, this code indicates a great familiarity with melee combat and weapons, allowing the hero to use any melee weapon he desires.

Code B: Sound Familiarity

A hero with a code of "B" assigned to an ability has familiarized himself quite well with the powers or skills based on that ability. He has more knowledge in these areas than the average person, but some topics still remain closed to him. Continuing with the example of Strength, a hero with a "B" rating cannot employ weapons rated *very heavy*, like the great sword.

Code C: Average Familiarity

An ability code of "C" indicates that the hero has some familiarity with areas that relate to the ability in question—about as much as the average person. Such a code in Strength lets the hero use up to *medium* weight melee weapons.

Code D: Restricted Familiarity

If the hero has a rating of "D" in a given ability, he has only a passing familiarity with its related powers and skills—for one reason or another, he has learned

Physical Ability Codes

Players select weapons, armor, and shields in Step Nine of hero creation.

Coordination

Missile weapons and shields are described in Appendix Three.

Ag	Description
A	Can use any shield.
B	Can use all but *very heavy* shields.
C	Can use *very light, light,* or *medium* shields.
D	Can use *light* or *very light* shields.
X	Can use only *very light* shields.

Dx	Description
A	Can use any missile weapon.
B	Can use all but *very heavy* missile weapons.
C	Can use *very light, light,* or *medium* missile weapons.
D	Can use *light* or *very light* missile weapons.
X	Can use only *very light* missile weapons.

Physique

Melee weapons and armor are described in Appendix Three.

En	Description
A	Can use any armor.
B	Can use all but *very heavy* armor.
C	Can use *very light, light,* or *medium* armor.
D	Can use *light* or *very light* armor.
X	Can use only *very light* armor.

St	Description
A	Can use any melee weapon.
B	Can use all but *very heavy* melee weapons.
C	Can use *very light, light,* or *medium* melee weapons.
D	Can use *light* or *very light* melee weapons.
X	Can use only *very light* melee weapons.

Mental Ability Codes

Where appropriate, players select schools and spheres of magic for their heroes, as well as acute and diminished senses, in Step Six of hero creation.

Intellect

Chapter Five describes the eleven schools of sorcery.

Re	Description
A	Can use three schools of sorcery.
B	Can use one school of sorcery.
C	Very familiar with sorcery but cannot cast spells.
D	Fairly familiar with sorcery but cannot cast spells.
X	Uninformed regarding the theory and use of sorcery.

Pe	Description
A	Has two acute senses.
B	Has one acute sense.
C	Has normal senses.
D	Has one diminished sense.
X	Has two diminished senses.

Essence

Chapter Five describes the nine mystic spheres.

Sp	Description
A	Can use three mystic spheres.
B	Can use one mystic sphere.
C	Very familiar with mysticism but cannot cast spells.
D	Fairly familiar with mysticism but cannot cast spells.
X	Uninformed regarding the theory and use of mysticism.

Pr	Description
A	Has excellent leadership skill.
B	Has good leadership skill.
C	Has average leadership skill.
D	Has slight leadership skill.
X	Has no leadership skill.

very little in that area. A restricted familiarity in Strength, for example, indicates that the hero can use only *light* or *very light* melee weapons.

Code X: No Familiarity

Heroes with an ability code of "X" have received no training at all in the skills associated with that ability. In the case of Strength, the person could use only *very light* melee weapons in combat.

Special Ability Codes

A hero might enjoy various special skills or powers based on his ability codes in Reason, Perception, and Spirit.

Magic Use

Players of heroes who can use sorcery or mysticism (codes of "A" or "B" in Reason or Spirit) should select their schools and spheres of magic at this point and write their heroes' spell points in the blank squares next to the appropriate abilities. (Chapter Five offers details).

Acute and Diminished Senses

Some heroes are blessed with the eyes of an eagle, while others are cursed with weak vision. A hero with an excellent Perception code is assumed to have one or two acute senses, while a poor code results in a diminished sense or two.

In game terms, a hero with an "A" Perception code has two exceptional senses, while one with a "B" code has a single outstanding sense. On the other end of the spectrum, a hero with a "D" code has one diminished sense while an "X" in Perception gives a hero two Players choose these senses for their heroes at this point.

Whenever a hero is called upon to attempt an action involving an acute sense, the player reduces the difficulty of that action by one degree. If the sense involved in the action is diminished, he increases the difficulty by one degree. Thus, an elf with acute vision attempting the *average* action of spotting a ship on the horizon would find the task *easy*. If the near-sighted dwarf in his party attempted this task, it would prove *challenging*. (Chapter Three explains the rules for actions.)

Exactly when an acute or diminished sense affects an action is up to the Narrator. As a rule, however, they do not alter combat or spellcasting actions.

Step Seven: Race

Krynn is a world of heroes, certainly, but not all of them are human. Across all of Ansalon and in the realms beyond it, men share their home with dwarves, elves, kender, minotaurs, and countless other races. The heroes in the FIFTH AGE game reflect this diversity.

The player chooses a race for his hero, though the Narrator may rule some races unacceptable in an adventure for one reason or another. Novice players should play humans in their first adventure. Later, when they have grown familiar with the game—and with role-playing in general—they can move on to playing dwarves, elves, or any of the races presented starting on page 19. (The chart in Appendix One can help players select a race quickly.)

Score and Code Requirements

To qualify for most races, a hero must meet certain requirements such as minimum or maximum ability scores and codes. Assigning the human race to a hero involves no special requirements; players who don't select another race are assumed to have human heroes.

Normally, if a hero does not possess a minimum score or code listed for a given race, the player may not select it. However, a player may opt to reduce one of his hero's ability codes in order to raise an ability score enough to make the hero eligible for the desired race. Players can lower only codes of "A" or "B" in this way. Reducing a code by one allows the player to increase an ability score by one.

For example, say a player wants his hero to be a centaur, but his Strength score is only 5. The minimum required is 7, so he must reduce one of his abil-

ity codes two grades from "A" to "C" (or "B" to "D") to earn the additional two points of Strength. He also could reduce two codes by one grade each.

Players may not *elevate* a character's *ability codes* to meet the minimum racial requirements. If a hero's codes do not qualify him for a specific race at this time, the player may not select it—after all, nonhuman heroes should be fairly uncommon, even in Krynn.

If a hero's ability scores or codes are too high to qualify him for his desired race, a player can reduce them voluntarily to the listed maximum. He may not increase other scores or codes as a result, though—reduced points are lost.

Step Eight: Role

Adopting a character archetype, such as a Knight or a Spy, can help a player really role-play his hero with ease. Such an archetype is called a *role*.

Playing a role encourages a depth of character in all the heroes of a game. A hero's role indicates what he did and learned prior to the adventure. It also suggests something about his background and the kinds of people that influenced him as a child.

A player must decide upon a role for his hero, with the Narrator's help. Because a role represents knowledge, skills, and habits a hero acquired during his youth, players cannot discard or change them without a good reason. The characters mentioned in the *Dusk or Dawn* sourcebook provide a wealth of examples for roles, as do the characters in the fiction of the DRAGONLANCE Saga. A hero can be a Knight of Solamnia (or Takhisis!), a War Wizard, Healer, Mariner, Spy, Bard, and so on.

A player should choose a role appropriate to his hero's race. For instance, the role of a Pyromancer (fire sorcerer) would be unusual for a dwarf hero, as dwarves naturally dislike magic. Likewise, the role should fit with the hero's established personality and ability scores and codes. The role of a Knight calls for a strong hero; therefore, he should have several high Physical ability scores and codes, as well as a demeanor and nature indicating his devotion to principles of knightly honor.

Based on his role, the hero should receive special advantages and disadvantages in play, as determined by the player and Narrator together. For instance, the role of a Healer might prevent a hero from initiating a lethal attack against a foe, due to his concern for preserving life. However, the Healer would receive a benefit, too—perhaps the ability to recognize any ailment or a strong resistance to disease.

Step Nine: Arms & Armor

Now that players have determined their heroes' ability codes, race, and role, they select appropriate weapons and armor from the chart in Appendix Two.

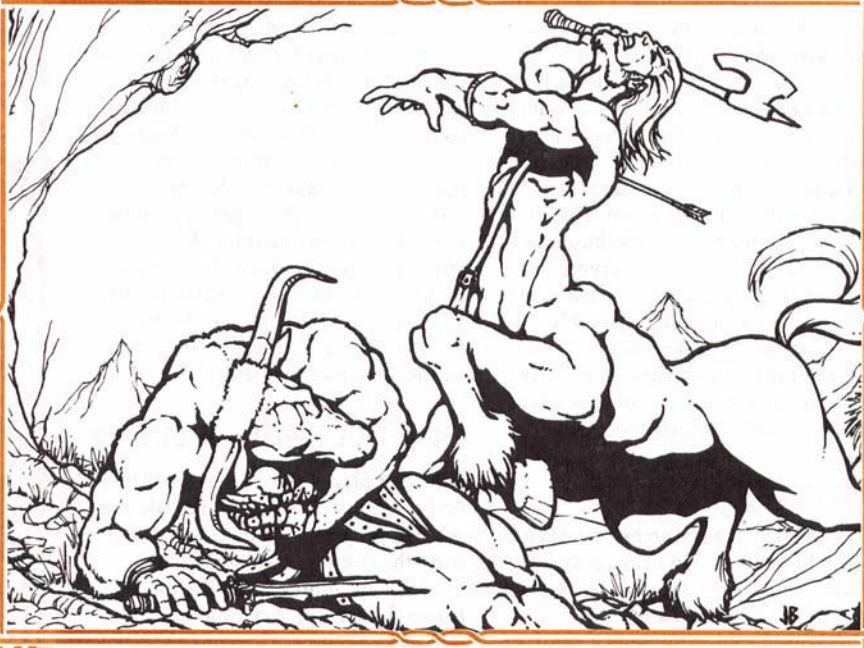
If the adventure will involve the heroes fighting some extra-tough monsters, such as ogres or dragons, the Narrator may urge them each to select one magical weapon to start with (Chapter Five describes magical arms and armor).

Step Ten: Final Touches

Lastly, players should complete the rest of their hero sheets, using their imagination to fill in personal information, descriptions, and backgrounds. Every hero also should have at least one distinguishing physical feature, like bright red hair or an unusual scar on his cheek. Rather than establishing these details now, Narrators can permit them to develop over the course of play.

Tailor-Made Heroes

Once players have become more familiar with hero creation and want to shape a specific type of hero, they can change the order of the steps. For instance, choosing a hero's race or role first (instead of personality) can let the player tailor card assignments to fit the requirements of the chosen race or role.



Growth of a Hero

As time goes by, heroes acquire more experience and a greater understanding of the world around them. This growth translates into an increased ability to face the dangers of an adventurer's life and the demands of a hero's heart. In game terms, a hero shows his accumulation of experience in two ways.

More Quests!

Upon completing each mission, the Narrator should let players record an increase in their heroes' number of completed quests on their hero sheet. Exactly what event denotes the end of a particular quest is up to the Narrator. Generally, the end of an adventure marks the conclusion of an important storyline in a campaign—something akin to the completion of a novel.

A hero's number of quests determines the size of a player's hand of cards and governs the hero's reputation rating. (Refer to the chart on page 11.) The more quests a hero completes, the more cards his player can hold in his Hand of Fate. A larger hand of cards, of course, increases the likelihood that a player will have a good card to use when an important situation arises in the game. For example, when a hero with ten quests under his belt completes an eleventh, he goes from Champion to Master. The player now holds a hand of six cards rather than five.

Ability Scores and Codes

When a hero moves up in reputation, he can try to improve in one ability.

After recording his hero's improved reputation on his hero sheet, the player selects the one ability score he hopes to improve. He then flips over the top card of the Fate Deck. If the value of that card is higher than his ability score, he increases the score by a point. If the card is a Nine and its suit matches the suit associated with the ability, the player can raise the hero's code one grade, too.

Hero Races

The following pages describe the races of heroes in the FIFTH AGE game: centaurs, dwarves, elves, half-elves, gnomes, humans, kender, and minotaurs.

Centaurs

The half-equine, half-human centaurs are one of Krynn's proudest and most noble races. They live predominantly in Duntollik, a realm of rolling grasslands south of the New Sea. Like other races, centaurs have emerged in the Fifth Age to defend their lands—and their place in history—from the Great Dragons.

Description

Physically, centaurs are fascinating, having the bodies of a great horse with a human torso, head, and arms. Long hair runs down their backs like a mane.

These creatures boast marvelous diversity in appearance.Their equine portions range from blond to black (and, rarely, dappled). Although generally dark haired, centaurs have a skin tone anywhere from a ruddy tan to rich brown to lightest gray-pink to ebony. Many have brown or blue eyes, but some have black, green, or even violet.

Centaurs do not understand other races' concept of physical modesty. Thus, they often go about unclothed. They do enjoy jewelry and decorative garments, however, and choose such items to enhance their appearance rather than for any functional purpose.

Role-Playing

Proud centaurs remain ever conscious of their appearance. Most find any disfigurement, from a battle scar to a tattoo, quite unsightly. As marked hedonists, they look upon every day as a chance to experience new pleasures, hear new songs, and undertake new amorous pursuits. Indeed, one would be hard pressed to find a more passionate race.

These creatures get along well with kender, although they find members of that race far too flighty to accept as equals. Centaurs often befriend elves, as they share certain traits, such as love of archery and aspects of physical grace and beauty. They see dwarves and minotaurs as ugly, stubborn, quarrelsome folk to avoid wherever possible.

Requirements

To qualify as a centaur, a hero must have Strength, Endurance, and Perception scores of 7 at minimum. Noted for their hedonistic outlook, centaurs are seldom considered great thinkers. Thus, they have maximum Reason scores of 7.

Since centaurs find armor bulky and uncomfortable to wear, they never train to use it; no centaur hero can have an Endurance code other than "X."

Centaurs practice archery almost from birth. As children, they dream of becoming great marksmen. Thus, a hero must have an ability code of "A" in Dexterity to qualify for this race.

Advantages

Centaurs number among the most skillful archers on Krynn. Therefore, whenever they attack using a self bow or recurved bow (rather than a crossbow), any card the player selects is automatically considered trump.

The presence of a centaur has a soothing influence over horses, donkeys, mules, etc. Thus, no such beast will panic as long a centaur remains near enough to speak to it in soothing tones. This ability cannot counter magically induced fear or panic.

Disadvantages

Centaurs practice only limited sorcery and mysticism. As such, no card played for them to cast a spell is ever trump.

A centaur's archery skill has its price. These master archers spend so long learning their craft, they never study the use of other missile weapons. Therefore, centaur heroes have a Dexterity code of "X" when using a missile weapon other than a self bow or recurved bow.

Dwarves

Builders of one of Krynn's most advanced civilization, dwarves are noted for their determination, stubbornness, and industriousness. The two major dwarf subraces—*mountain dwarves* and *hill dwarves*—look physically very similar but clash at times due to cultural differences.

Mountain dwarves live primarily in the region of Thorbardin, a great dwarven kingdom beneath the Kharolis Mountains south of Abanasinia and west of Duntollik. Other mountain dwarves make their homes in the underground Khalkist Mountains realm of Thoradin and in Kaolyn, nestled beneath the Garnet range. Thorbardin dwarves have always been fairly isolationist and slow to trust strangers. In fact, heroes should encounter very few Thorbardin natives, since these dwarves sealed their homeland two years ago to safeguard themselves from the Green Dragon, Beryllinthranox.

The largest concentrations of hill dwarves in Ansalon lie in Abanasinia—where many fled following the sealing of Thorbardin—and in the hills surrounding the Garnet Mountains.

Description

Dwarves are a stocky folk, averaging only four feet in height but weighing fully one hundred fifty pounds. Male dwarves boast thick beards, which they display as proudly as any peacock shows its feathers. Many male dwarves begin to go bald when they reach the age of fifty or sixty, however.

Female dwarves also have more facial hair than typical for Ansalon's other races, though it seldom amounts to more than a downy fringe. One might see a dwarf woman with a respectable beard, but such a rare beauty comes along only once in a generation.

Most mountain dwarves have deep, resonant voices that bring to mind the thundering echoes of falling hammers that fill the great caverns in which they dwell. These dwarves tend to have light brown skin and bright eyes, but these and other features vary, depending on their thane, or clan.

- *Hylar* dwarves have dark brown or black hair, which often turns gray or white by the age of fifty. These dwarves are natural leaders.
- Long-armed, cliff-dwelling *Theiwar* dwarves have bone-white features with bluish undertones and a penchant for cruelty and cunning.
- Dark, cave-dwelling *Daergar* feel uncomfortable in bright light and, like the Theiwar, have paler complexions than other mountain dwarves.
- The dignified *Daewar* give respect where it's due and serve as excellent merchants and builders. They also craft fine jewelry.

Hill dwarves, including the civilized Neidar and the rather wild Klar, are somewhat taller and leaner than their cousins, but every bit as tenacious and willful. Thanks to their exposure to

the weather and sun, their skin tans darker than that of mountain dwarves. Hill dwarves like their clothing brighter than mountain dwarves do, though it still seems fairly drab to humans.

Other "unofficial" dwarven races, such as the Aghar (gully dwarves) and plague-ridden Zhakar of Thoradin, are not suggested for heroes.

Role-playing

Dwarf heroes are determined and rugged. While these folk might grumble about hardships, they have come to accept them and would never shirk an unpleasant task.

Most mountain dwarves today have had enough of the world and its problems. Thorbardin's dwarves blame men and elves for the disasters that have befallen Ansalon in recent years and have retreated into the confines of their sealed mountain home. Outsiders also find the dwarves of Kaolyn and Thoradin suspicious of those they do not know and very slow to make friends. Once someone has been accepted by these folk, however, he has won a friend for life who will stand by him to the end. Mountain dwarf heroes are assumed to come from Kaolyn or Thoradin, unless they are exiles who failed to answer the call to return to Thorbardin before it was sealed.

Hill dwarves are more outgoing. They favor the world's comforts, especially good food and strong drink. Therefore, they tend to get along better with other races than do the mountain dwarves, though outsiders still tend to think of them as obstinate.

Neither subrace of dwarves gets along well with elves, though they view the wild Kagonesti more favorably than the other elf subraces. Dwarves generally find kender irritating and troublesome—a view many might agree with. Centaurs and minotaurs seem fairly well liked in dwarven circles, though the dwarves deem the former too flighty and the latter too fond of rules and regulations. Dwarves, especially mountain dwarves, view gnomes almost as kindred spirits: an industrious though loony people who could learn a great deal from a dwarf's solemnity.

Requirements

The compact build of dwarves, as well as their hardy constitutions, makes them as rugged and sturdy as any race on Krynn. As such, only heroes with Strength and Endurance scores of 6 at minimum qualify to be dwarves.

Conversely, a dwarf's body structure makes him less nimble than those of other races. Thus, dwarves have maximum Agility and Dexterity scores of 8.

Dwarves seem reluctant to practice the science of sorcery. As such, these heroes never have an ability code higher than "B" in Reason.

Advantages

The great constitution of a dwarf makes him very resistant to poisons and sorcery (though not mysticism). Whenever a dwarf is forced to resist such an attack, the card he plays is always considered trump, regardless of its actual suit.

Disadvantages

Many people view dwarves as stubborn and dour—a reputation not far from the truth. In game terms, these traits affect a dwarf's ability to interact with other races. Whenever he attempts an action that involves persuasion, charm, or similar aspects of personality, no card he plays is ever considered trump (unless he is interacting with another dwarf). Affected actions include haggling over a price, attempting to win the favor of a nondwarf woman, or convincing the constabulary of his innocence.

Elves

The elves call themselves the firstborn of Krynn. Many agree that they were created during the Age of Starbirth to embody all that is Good.

As a race, the long-lived elves divide themselves into four distinct groups, each of which has its own separate lineage and culture. The oldest branch of elves are the *Silvanesti*, who dwell in a great enchanted forest on Ansalon's southeastern coast. The *Qualinesti*, who seceded from Silvanesti more than two thousand years ago after the Kinslayer War, live in the lush woodlands that bear their name south of Abanasinia. A third subrace of elves, the wild *Kagonesti*, were forced from their homes by the coming of the Great Dragons and now live in scattered enclaves, particularly in the islands of the southern Sirrion Sea.

Aquatic races of elves, the deep-dwelling *Dargonesti* and the shoal *Dimernesti*, live beneath the waves of the southern Courrain Ocean and amid the isles of the Sirrion Sea. However, the blue-skinned sea elves rarely make effective heroes due to their limited habitat.

Description

Physically, elves resemble slight humans with exceptional beauty and grace. Perhaps their most instantly recognizable characteristics are their tapering, pointed ears, slender features, and complete lack of facial hair.

The Silvanesti have blue or hazel eyes, hair that never grows darker than honey, and loose, flowing garments. Their fair complexion often makes them seem almost radiant.

The Qualinesti have somewhat darker features, but their hair and eyes never deepen quite to the shade of brown. Qualinesti men favor elegant tunics and trousers, while women wear delicate dresses.

Kagonesti are built more strongly than other elven subraces, though even they look slight in comparison to men. They have dark, often black, hair and hazel eyes. These uncivilized elves often decorate their bodies with intricate painted or tattooed designs.

Role-Playing

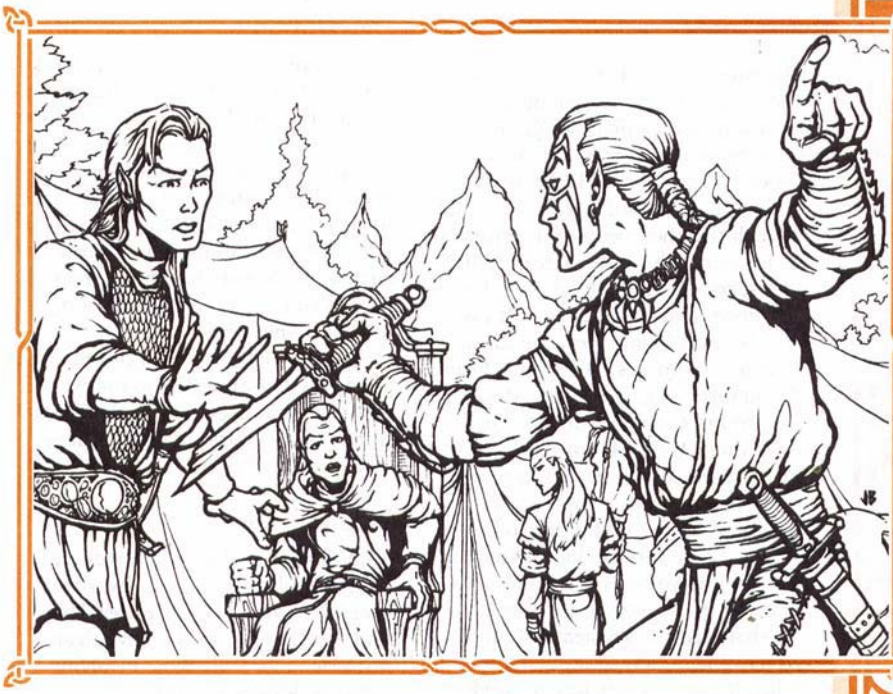
All elvish subraces seem rather elitist—they have to make an effort to welcome members of other races into their company. In addition, all elves love nature's beauty and find magic fascinating.

The above qualities seem most pronounced among the Silvanesti, who consider all other races lesser creatures (even other elves). They usually seem snobbish and arrogant, though they might try to shroud this behavior beneath a cloak of formality and etiquette. Because these elves have enveloped their forest kingdom in a magical shield to keep it safe from green dragons, most of the Silvanesti whom heroes will encounter are from Silvamori on Southern Ergoth and the islands of the south Sirrion Sea.

Though more tolerant than their brothers to the east, the Qualinesti still regard non-elves (and even the Kagonesti) as inferior. For the most part, however, Qualinesti retain the good manners to avoid lording these beliefs over those traveling with them. Like the Silvanesti, Qualinesti are seen infrequently about Ansalon, due to their dragon overlord's border restrictions.

Kagonesti also look down on the other races of the world, but for different reasons. Just as many folk see them as savage, the Kagonesti view the so-called civilized peoples of the world as weak and tame. "To appreciate what is fair in the world," one Kagonesti saying goes, "do not isolate yourself from that which is harsh."

Elves get along well enough with kender and centaurs, though they consider both races flighty—and even a touch barbaric. They generally do not enjoy the company of dwarves or minotaurs, seeing both as gruff and unpleasant. To say whether elves like or dislike half-elves is difficult. It would be truer to say they barely acknowledge them.



Requirements

To qualify as an elf, a hero must have a minimum score of 6 in Agility, Dexterity, and Presence. In addition, elves have a maximum score of 8 in Strength and Endurance.

Elves, as talented archers and skilled swordsmen, must have an ability code of "A" or "B" in both Strength and Dexterity. Members of this race never wear exceptionally heavy armor, however, and they restrict themselves to lighter shields. Thus, no hero with an ability code higher than "C" in Endurance or Agility can be an elf.

Advantages

In light of their swordsmanship, whenever elves use a sword or bow to attack an enemy, any card they play is considered trump, regardless of its actual suit.

In addition to their skill with swords, the elves have legendary senses. Whenever an elf attempts a Perception action in a forest, any card he plays is trump.

Disadvantages

An elf's haughty manners do not sit well with most other creatures—many view them as self-important and arrogant. Therefore, no card played to attempt a Presence action involving a non-elf is ever trump. This qualifier does not apply to Presence actions made to resist the effects of a mystic spell.

Half-Elves

While half-elves possess racial traits of both humans and elves, they often find themselves accepted by neither group. Nearly of human height, half-elves are a bit stockier than elves, yet they move with a grace that humans envy. Male half-elves can grow beards.

Half-elves must meet two of the three elf ability score minimums and one of the maximums. They have a code of "A" or "B" in either Strength or Dexterity. A half-elf hero gains one elf advantage but receives no trump bonus for actions involving elves.

Gnomes

The gnomish race has a most curious and troubled history. Even before the Graystone forged many of Krynn's other nonhuman races (see *Dusk or Dawn,* Chapter One), they had fallen under the shadow of a great curse that has belittled their people for centuries.

Ever since the Age of Dreams, the largest concentration of gnomes has remained in the vast network of caverns beneath Mount Nevermind, an extinct volcano west of Ergoth. During the Summer of Chaos, when Mount Nevermind exploded (due to a malfunction of gnomish war machines), this race was all but swept out of existence, making gnomes among the rarest of Krynn's nonhuman folk.

The Age of Mortals has blessed the world with two races of gnomes. The first, the *tinker gnomes,* still dwells in the shattered cities beneath Mount Nevermind. A new subrace, the so-called *thinker gnomes,* has surfaced in the wake of the Chaos War.

During the Age of Dreams, Reorx—god of the forge—served as teacher and protector to a clan of craftsmen. However, when they grew proud and vain, Reorx cursed his Chosen, transforming them into a race of short folk who found it impossible to master the inventive genius in their hearts. Thus, their machines were chaotic and prone to failure. They became tinker gnomes.

Thinker gnomes, on the other hand, have been freed of this curse. As a parting gift to the world he forged, Reorx called a group of gnomes to leave the ruined Mount Nevermind. He lifted his curse from these clans, so they might seek knowledge and wisdom throughout the world. No one should continue viewing these gnomes as amusing mad scientists. While retaining some of their charming gnomish qualities, the thinker gnomes have become the masterful inventors they had always pictured themselves to be.

Description

Adult gnomes of either gender stand between thirty and forty inches in height. They look stocky, though not as hefty as dwarves, and weigh roughly fifty pounds. They are noted for their brown, leather-textured skin, soft white hair, and blue or violet eyes. Gnomish men almost always grow curly white beards, but the women lack facial hair. Male gnomes tend to bald as they age.

Gnomes dress in bright colors, often appearing unduly festive to the eyes of more conservative races. Tool belts and similar items adorn the garb of these craftsmen at all times.

Role-Playing

Both tinker and thinker gnomes are clever people, with a curiosity sometimes likened to that of kender. They find themselves drawn to investigate mysteries, especially those involving complex devices or traps.

Gnomes admire the keen minds of the elves, the craftsmanship of the dwarves, and the curiosity of the kender. At the same time, they

consider each of these races too easily distracted from the pursuit of science and technology.

Centaurs and minotaurs remain incomprehensible to gnomes, both too rugged and too brutal for comfort. Furthermore, neither race is particularly noted for its craftsmanship.

Requirements

In recognition of gnomish cleverness, heroes must have Reason and Perception scores of 6 at minimum to select this race. In addition, as gnomes are noted for their ability to do fine work, heroes of this race must have a minimum Dexterity score of 7. Physically, gnomes are both diminutive and weak. Therefore, all gnome heroes have maximum scores of 4 in both Strength and Endurance.

The gnomish physique makes it difficult for them to master the use of heavy weapons. Thus, no gnome hero may have codes greater than "C" in any Physical ability.

Advantages

Both gnomish subraces have their own special gifts, though neither group views the other as especially talented.

Tinker gnomes remain masters—if one could call them that—of large, overly complex machines. Any card they play when building, operating, maintaining, or otherwise dealing with such devices is automatically considered trump. Any device too large to be easily portable falls into the tinker gnome's purview; siege engines belong to this category, as do windmills, water wheels, and so on. However, the machine works as planned only if the card the hero flips for his trump bonus matches the suit of the original card played. If they don't match, the machine still works—however, it works in an unorthodox (and unexpected) way. Take the gnomish siege on Castle Gargath during the Age of Dreams as an example. For this war effort, the gnomes brought out an enormous siege engine: It fell over, toppling a tree, which, in turn, breached the castle wall.

Thinker gnomes are the masters of smaller, less flashy constructions. They specialize in clockwork mechanisms, spring-driven devices, and other compact technologies. Whenever a thinker gnome deals with such devices, any card he plays becomes trump. Thinker gnomes can probably maintain or build any object small enough for someone to reasonably carry around. Locks and many traps fall into this category, making thinker gnomes very skilled burglars when they wish to be.

Disadvantages

Just as each subrace of gnomes boasts a special area of expertise, so too does each fall subject to its own limitations.

Reorx's curse makes it impossible for tinker gnomes to create the reliable, efficient devices of their dreams. Whenever a tinker gnome fails at an attempt to build, repair, or operate a device, the player must treat it as a mishap. In most cases, the results of such mishaps are minor—the hero decided to make one final adjustment to the machine and, wonder of wonders, he breaks it. Of course, attempts with dangerous devices might lead to more severe mishap results.

Thinker gnomes work far more slowly than their cousins, taking time to make sure that every aspect of their labors is perfect before moving on to their next project. Because of this penchant, any action involving thinker gnomes and machines takes twice as long to complete as it would for a member of another race. In other words, if the gnome uses his trump card advantage for the task, it takes him a long time to complete his work.

Humans

The most common race on Krynn in the Age of Mortals is mankind. Able to adapt to a wide array of climates and gifted with an almost indomitable spirit, humanity has spread to all corners of Ansalon and beyond.

Most scholars divide the men and women of Krynn into two groups. The first, they call *barbarians*, although that term is not without its detractors. The rest of humanity falls into the perhaps inappropriately named category of *civilized men*.

In essence, the barbarians of Ansalon are those who do not live in cities or other large settlements. Often nomadic, they may have less skill in crafts that require formal training, but they seem in touch with the natural world to a degree that no civilized man could equal. The most powerful barbarian realms in the Fifth Age are Abanasinia and Duntollik, though many tribes of seafarers, arctic nomads, and other uncivilized folks might argue with that judgment.

Civilized men include members of the knightly orders, the sages of the world, and residents of the proud kingdoms of Ergoth and Solamnia. While their less-advanced brothers might consider them soft and weak, civilized men have skills and scientific advances that certainly make up for their lack of outdoor hardiness.

Description

If one must choose a single word to describe the men and women of Ansalon, it would be "diverse." From the dark-skinned, black-haired citizens of Ergoth and Nordmaar, to the pale, blue-eyed, blond-haired folk of the south and central continent, mankind has adapted to every climate and ecological niche.

On the average, a healthy human man stands five-and-a-half feet tall and weighs under two hundred pounds; women are shorter and lighter. Members of certain barbarian clans, though, can reach a height of seven feet, while others seldom stand taller than five feet.

The beautiful features of barbarian humans grow weathered by middle age, thanks to their constant exposure to the elements. The details of their appearance vary according to their native habitat.

- *Mountain, plains, forest,* and *desert barbarians* have dark hair, deep brown eyes, and golden-tanned skin. They wear clothing crafted from furs, leathers, and skins.
- *Ice barbarians* have red or light brown hair, blue eyes, and pale skin. They also wear clothing made from animal hide.
- *Sea barbarians*, the most civilized of this division of humans, dress flamboyantly in garb made of woven fabrics. Their skin tones normally range from light brown to gleaming black. These barbarians—descendants of the lost kingdom of Istar—are as volatile as the sea, generally boistrous, but always courageous.

Civilized humans can echo any of the above physical types. Mannerisms differ by individual and geographic area, but most civilized men dress in stylish woven garments that mark the wearer's standing, wealth, and profession.

Role-Playing

As with the Heroes of the Lance, most adventuring parties in the FIFTH AGE game are predominantly human. As these people are not unlike the men and women of the real world, players can expect to see any manner of normal human behavior.

Players should allow their heroes' nature and demeanor cards to guide their behavior. In addition, they should give their heroes a distinctive characteristic that adds to their personality without detracting from the game. Examples might include an unusual accent, hobby, or nervous habit.

Requirements

Because this game uses humans as its standard, this race has no set requirements. If a player does not select one of the other races for his hero, then the hero is assumed to be human.

To decide whether his hero has a civilized or barbarian background, a player should first total his Physical ability scores, then his Mental ability scores. If the hero's Physical scores total more than his Mental scores, he is a barbarian. (These humans generally spend so much time just fighting to stay alive in the harsh wilderness, they have little opportunity for schooling, hence the lower mental score total.) If the reverse is true, the hero comes from civilized stock. Should the two values come out more or less equal (within 4 or 5 points of each other), the hero may be either civilized or barbarian.

In addition, players of human heroes should keep in mind certain reasonable ability code limits. Because they do not wear the heavy armor of knights, cavaliers, and professional soldiers, no barbarian hero can have an ability code of "A" for Endurance. Civilized heroes, on the other hand, suffer a reduction in their sensitivity because of their artificial environment. Thus, no civilized human hero may have a Perception code of "A."

In both cases, a player whose hero's code is too high must reduce it to the appropriate level.

Advantages

There are certain benefits to growing up in the wilds. By the same token, those who mature in civilized regions gain advantages from their situation.

Players of barbarian heroes may select any single Physical ability score and increase it by 1 point at the time of hero creation. This bonus reflects the hardy nature of barbarians and the

demands of their lifestyle. No player can increase a score beyond 9.

Those playing civilized human heroes have a similar advantage; they may increase one of the hero's Mental ability scores by a point. This advantage reflects the better education and easier life in civilized areas. No score may be raised beyond 9.

Disadvantages

The demanding life of barbarians deservedly results in an increase in their physical characteristics. On the other hand, it limits the amount of time they can spend learning a trade or in study. As such, all players of barbarian heroes must reduce one Mental ability score by a single point (but never to less than 1).

Civilized heroes are assumed to have spent far more time than barbarian folk in school or as apprentices. Therefore, anyone playing such a hero must reduce one of his Physical ability scores by a point. No score should fall below 1, however.

Kender

Various sources have called the race of kender both a blessing and a curse to the nations of Ansalon. Some find their lighthearted nature and childlike spirit a delightful change of pace from the dour dwarves or the haughty elves. Others have noted with disdain kender's apparent inability to take life seriously and their tendency to acquire things that do not belong to them. Whichever view one takes, however, it is impossible to overlook these little people of Krynn.

In ages past, the kender spread throughout much of Ansalon, with their major population centers being Kendermore in the east and Hylo in the west. After the coming of Malystryx, however, the former nation was swept out of existence. Almost thirty years ago, refugees from Kendermore fled west in the Kender Flight, crossing thousands of miles of hostile terrain to seek haven in Hylo.

The kender found themselves welcomed by their western brothers. In time, however, it became clear that the refugees had been changed by their traumatic experience. Gone were their ever-carefree smiles and sparkling eyes. Those who had seen the great Malystryx had felt something no kender before had ever known: fear.

In recent years, the veterans of the Kender Flight have formed their own communities and distanced themselves from the other kender in Hylo. The folk of Ansalon call them *afflicted kender*, in contrast with *true kender*. Theirs is one of the saddest stories to emerge in the aftermath of the Chaos War.

Description

The kender are a small and slight race, standing between three-and-a-half and four feet tall. Though slender, most seem athletic and well-muscled, weighing just under one hundred pounds. Female kender are only slightly smaller than males.

Most "true kender" are peaceful folk who enjoy the pastoral life of a comfortable home in the company of their own playful kind. However, there comes a time—usually around the age of twenty—when they find themselves yearning to travel and explore the wonders of the world. During the few years they remain in the grip of this wanderlust, the kender go adventuring with wild abandon. (Players should assume that most kender heroes are experiencing this phase of life.) When the wanderlust passes, however, the kender happily return to their homes and live out the rest of their days in the company of friends and loved ones.

While there is no physical difference between true kender and their afflicted kindred, one can tell them apart nevertheless. The eyes of a true kender gleam brightly, full of mischief and curiosity, while those of the afflicted look hard and serious, ever watchful and cautious. Also, afflicted kender move more carefully and silently, as if conserving their energy for a sudden flight, should the need arise.

True kender tend to dress in the sort of bright, gregarious fashions one would expect of such an outgoing folk. They rely on their agility rather than armor or shields to survive in combat.

However, afflicted kender clothe themselves in darker colors, favoring earth tones that could serve as camouflage in a crisis. They do not shy away from armor, although they will not wear anything heavier than chain mail and do not employ shields. In addition to the traditional weapons of the kender, the afflicted also favor the deadly arms of men.

The kender probably suffered more than any other race during the Dragon Purge. Their numbers were cut in more than half, and many of those who remain alive carry scars, both emotional and physical, to remind them of the last three decades.

Role-Playing

True kender act lighthearted and almost childlike in their curiosity and playfulness. They know nothing of fear or similar emotions. A true kender hero should always be in the mood to investigate mysteries, examine newly found objects, and generally experience the wonders of the world.

Such purity in residents of Kendermore was tainted by the Evil of Malystryx. While afflicted kender by no means act timid, they behave cautiously. An afflicted kender has felt fear and realized he has no taste for it.

Kender admire elves, holding them almost in awe for their grace, beauty, and keen minds. Of course, they do feel that these oh-so-serious folk should try to have a little more fun.

The more rugged races of the world—such as centaurs, dwarves, and minotaurs—kender consider too violent and stern. Still, they do provide good subjects for practical jokes! A kender in the company of such creatures feels it is his duty to show them how to laugh a little. Of course, his attempts usually don't go over too well.

Kender look upon gnomes as wonderful creatures, thinking of them almost as kin. Of course, they prefer the tinkers to the thinkers, probably due to the chaos generally associated with the former group.

Requirements

Kender are graceful and agile creatures—more than one scholar has likened them to spider monkeys. To reflect this quality, kender heroes must have a minimum score of 7 in both Dexterity and Agility. A kender's slight build makes him less rugged or physically powerful than many other races. In game terms, this limits a kehder hero to Strength and Endurance scores of 6 at maximum.

True kender have minimum Perception scores of 6 to reflect their keen interest in the world around them and their curious nature. Afflicted kender,

on the other hand, seem more intense than curious. They must have a minimum Presence score of 6.

All kender have characteristics that set them apart from other races. One is their keen vision; all kender heroes must have at least a "B" code for Perception and eyesight selected as an acute sense. (Kender with an "A" code may select another acute sense in addition to eyesight.)

Members of this race feel reluctant to employ armor and shields, though afflicted kender do so at times. Therefore, true kender have an ability code of "D" or less in Endurance, while afflicted kender may have a code of up to "C." In addition, both groups must have an Agility code of "D" or less.

Advantages

Every race in Ansalon knows about the light touch and nimble fingers of kender. This "handling" ability allows them an automatic trump bonus to pick locks, disarm traps, and attempt similar tasks. Of course, they must have the tools appropriate to such endeavors; should a kender hero have lost his tools somewhere in his many pouches, the Narrator should increase the difficulty of the action somewhat.

True kender seem quite fond of tricks and stage magic, a love that has its applications in less festive situations. This affinity allows kender heroes to attempt various sleight-of-hand actions, from palming a coin to picking a pocket. When attempting such an action, any card played becomes trump.

While afflicted kender do not employ their natural talents for such whimsical pursuits as sleight-of-hand, they are no less graceful. Afflicted kender's natural caution and great agility allow them to move about almost noiselessly, hide quickly and effectively, and climb even the sheerest of surfaces with ease. This makes afflicted kender among the most successful scouts in the world—but also enables them to masterfully sneak into an enemy's quarters or operate as deadly assassins of a foul dragon's minions. Whenever an afflicted kender attempts to sneak about (or a similar action involving care and grace), any card played is considered trump.

Disadvantages

The whimsical kender seldom devote themselves to extended periods of training or study. They are no less intelligent than other races—they merely lack academic dedication and tenacity. A kender quickly loses interest in projects that become repetitive or boring. Indeed, in many cultures, a poor student is described as having the study habits of a kender.

To reflect this fact in game terms, no kender—neither true nor afflicted—may ever have an ability code of "A" in any subject except Perception. The length of training required to achieve this highest level of expertise, no matter what the subject, is simply beyond the limited attention span of a kender.

Minotaurs

One of the most impressive of Krynn's races is the minotaurs. Powerful of body and rigid of thought, they always prove a force to reckon with.

The greatest concentration of minotaur civilization lies in the Blood Sea Isles northeast of Ansalon but, of course, minotaur enclaves can be found elsewhere as well. These accomplished mariners have traveled farther than any other race across Krynn's oceans.

Description

Minotaurs, a fusion of human and bull, stand seven to eight feet tall, weigh between three and four hundred pounds, and are as physically powerful as they are intimidating.

These creatures have long, yellow-white horns, the females' slightly less pronounced. Thick fur covers their bodies and, instead of hair, minotaurs have manes. They range in color from reddish through every shade of brown, with rare tan, black, or white individuals.

Minotaurs favor spartan and militaristic dress. They use heavy weapons and armor, but few use shields, due to their fondness for two-handed weapons.

Role-Playing

Minotaur culture is militaristic in both form and function. From their earliest school days, the young train for war. While this schooling does tend to make them more aggressive than other hero races, its real value involves the degree of order it imposes on their lives. Every minotaur undertaking proceeds with a clear objective and a definite chain of command. Virtually every aspect of minotaur culture is spelled out in black and white, with very few gray areas.

Minotaurs see all other races as weak and inferior, though they prefer some over others. Centaurs and dwarves, for example, have earned a modicum of respect as rugged and determined folk. Elves and gnomes, on the other hand, are so weak and lacking, minotaurs barely tolerate them.

Kender are, if anything, even more offensive. Not only are they feeble and puny, they have no sense of order or regimentation. Minotaurs find kender good for target practice and little more. However, mankind has proven itself worthy of a grudging acceptance. Minotaurs consider humans second only to themselves as mariners and acknowledge that they can muster excellent military units.

Requirements

Few races can match these titans for sheer power and stamina. A minotaur hero must have a minimum score of 8 in Strength and Endurance. However, the same bulk that gives these creatures their great strength limits them in other ways. A minotaur hero has maximum Agility and Dexterity scores of 5.

Minotaurs' intense military upbringing gives them codes of "B" or better in Strength and Endurance. But, by the same token, minotaurs tend to overlook intellectual pursuits, which limits their Reason or Spirit codes to "C" or less.

Advantages

Minotaur seamanship makes any card played in a nautical action automatic trump. This benefit applies to actions at sea (keeping on course in a storm) and on land (determining the seaworthiness of a vessel offered for sale).

Disadvantages

Slow to change or accept new ideas, the arrogant minotaurs consider themselves superior to all other races. They act pushy and always insist on doing things their own way—traits that earn them little favor with other races. Whenever a minotaur uses his Presence to deal with others, no card he plays is trump. The only exception involves an attempt to threaten or bully someone into obeying him, in which case ferocity earns him a trump bonus.

CHAPTER TWO

Indeed, my stories are true, child." The old man looked directly at the woman and her tall escort. "Ask these two. They carry such stories in their hearts."

"Do you?" The boy turned to the woman eagerly. "Can you tell me a story?"

—Goldmoon and Riverwind encounter Fizban and a child, Dragons of Autumn Twilight

The two most important qualities to the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game are *character* and *story*. The previous chapter taught players how to create the most important characters: the heroes. This chapter tells the Narrator how to construct the story. FIFTH AGE adventures are tales of epic quests, great villains, and battles against overwhelming odds.

In addition to making each adventure the heroes undertake different from the last, Narrators must make the game challenging and entertaining. They should care about encouraging the players and making sure they have fun. To accomplish these goals, a Narrator must understand how to craft and conduct DRAGONLANCE adventures.

Creating Adventures

In many ways, creating game adventures is like writing other types of fiction. Many traits of a good novel, short story, or film script characterize a fine adventure as well. For instance, an adventure's settings, characters, and events must be interesting, unique, and vividly described—just like in a good story.

However, adventures must possess other qualities, too:

- While an author can mandate the actions of his characters, a Narrator can never be sure exactly how players will react to a given situation. Therefore, a good adventure must be more fluid than other types of fiction. Its plot should offer heroes many different options for action.
- A new adventure in an ongoing game should derive from a link to past events and foreshadow future ones.
- A Narrator should include in his adventure elements that appeal to the diverse tastes of his players. Some people like to play heroes who charge into battle with swords swinging, while others prefer to have their heroes sneak around and solve riddles. It's best to try to appeal to everyone, at least a little.
- A good adventure begins and ends on an exciting note—the former to grab players' attention and the latter to give them a grand finale that leaves them breathless.
- The outcome of the adventure must depend on the actions of the heroes, not other characters alone.
- The best adventures change both the world and the heroes themselves in some way. When this is done right, the players will have stories to tell for years to come.

The core of any adventure, of course, is the heroes' goal. Perhaps they must free a captured elf senator from the foul Knights of Takhisis or recover a lost dragonlance from the ruins of a crumbling tower. Whatever the premise of the adventure, the Narrator must define it clearly, making it readily apparent to players. No one enjoys the game when the heroes only wander around, unable to figure out what they should be trying to accomplish.

This is not to say that a good adventure plot must be completely linear. Far from it. A good story will always have subplots, twists, and turns to keep the heroes (and players) on their toes. The important thing, however, is to make sure that the subplots don't overshadow the main storyline.

Selecting the Villain

Of course, a story would not get far without a worthy foe to oppose the heroes. Two general categories of villain are *masters* and *minions*. The latter, lesser villains—such as a pack of thieves or a patroling band of draconians—can ably serve as antagonists in most adventures. A Narrator can introduce minions to challenge a relatively inexperienced group of heroes or to spice up an otherwise slow portion of the adventure. Sometimes, a minion actually is doing the bidding of a greater monster which, in turn, could be the minion of an even greater foe.

Masters are the nefarious leaders who plot to destroy the heroes, dominate the land, and otherwise crush whoever they must to achieve their goals. Ansalon's ruling Evil dragons qualify as masters, as does Mirielle Abrena, commander of the Knights of Takhisis. Usually, the heroes must complete several adventures before they meet the true master behind the Evil they have been combating. The final battle against a master should be a great climactic one, with the heroes emerging victorious only after a long struggle.

Selecting villains that will challenge the heroes without overwhelming them is a real art. In order for an enemy, either a minion or a master, to be more than just a brief diversion, the Narrator should consider the following criteria.

Threat. A villain's ability to threaten a party of adventurers might be based strictly on his raw physical power (an ogre, though dim-witted can prove quite dangerous), on force of numbers (one hundred goblins is a threat, whereas one or two are not), or on cleverness (a diabolical ruler or sorcerer might force the heroes to outwit him).

Reflections. A good villain, especially a master, teaches the heroes something about themselves—perhaps more than they wanted to know. Confronting such a fiend might show them they share a trait in common; they could fall into the trap of becoming just like their foe. This knowledge can give any hero a case of goosebumps.

Mystery. Another important aspect in choosing a villain—either master or minion—is mystery. When the Heroes of the Lance first faced draconians, for instance, they were caught off guard by their strange appearance and powers. The encounter proves more memorable if the heroes don't know what to expect.

Structuring a Basic Plot

An adventure is composed of *acts* and *scenes*. Each scene contains a plot element, or challenge, that the heroes must resolve before they can continue with the story. Some scenes involve combat, others rely on clever planning or puzzle solving, while still others constitute merely a break in the action to give the players a chance to talk over their options. A number of scenes, taken together, make up an act. In each act, the heroes take a significant step toward their ultimate goal.

Once the Narrator has established the adventure's premise and basic plot (using the guidelines for a good adventure on the previous page), he should break it down into about three major sections, or acts. Each represents one important step along the way to the heroes' goal.

Consider the following example:

Sample Plot Outline

The premise of this short adventure is that heroes are called upon to help

defend the city of Solanthus from an attack by marauding ogres (minions).

Act One
While riding with a merchant caravan out of Solanthus, the heroes fend off an ogre attack. The creatures take several prisoners, however.

Act Two
Upon rescuing the prisoners, the heroes learn that the ogres plan to unite for a major raid on Solanthus.

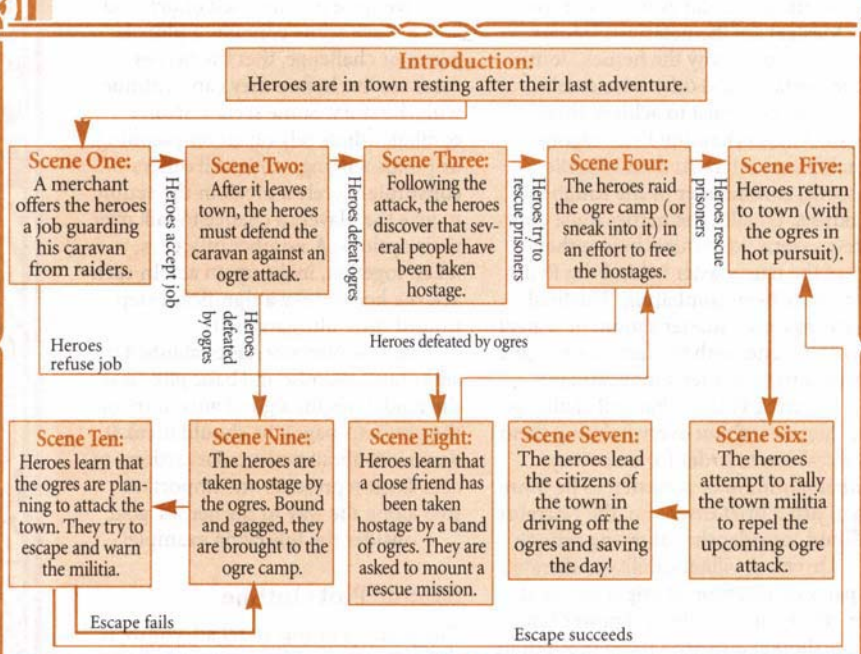
Act Three
The heroes return to warn the city watch and assist in the final battle against the ogre invaders.

Next, the Narrator should determine exactly what happens in each act by mapping out the series of events the heroes will most likely pursue as they move toward their goal. Each event gets its own scene.

We return to our example:

Act One
- **Scene One.** A merchant hires the heroes to ride along with his caravan, guarding it from raiders. This scene is primarily one of role-playing.
- **Scene Two.** Shortly after the caravan leaves Solanthus, ogres attack it. This scene involves mainly combat.
- **Scene Three.** Whether or not the ogres meet defeat, they take a number of prisoners the heroes must rescue. This scene gives the heroes a chance to recover from their wounds and plan an attack on the ogre camp.

Act Two
- **Scene One.** The heroes raid the ogre camp (probably at night) and rescue the captives. In the process, they learn that the ogres plan to join up with other bands and launch a dawn attack on Solanthus. This scene offers heroes a combination of combat and stealth activity.
- **Scene Two.** Pursued by ogres, the heroes race back to Solanthus in the hopes of raising an alarm. Along the



way, they encounter one or more natural hazards (a raging river, brush fire, or the like), which they must overcome in order to reach the city. This problem-solving scene may involve combat if the heroes delay long enough for the ogres to catch up with them.

Act Three

- **Scene One.** Reaching Solanthus, the heroes must persuade the captain of the guard to alert the watch and make ready to repel the ogres. This is a role-playing encounter.
- **Scene Two.** The heroes join the city's defenders in driving off the ogres. This combat encounter might include a one-on-one duel between the ogre chieftain and the leader of the heroes.

Fine-Tuning the Plot

With the basic plot in place and the major scenes determined, the Narrator should next give thought to other possible actions the heroes might take. For example, what if they fail to fend off the ogres attacking the caravan? What if they refuse the job as caravan guards? Before playing, the Narrator should create scenes to cover all these possibilities.

Once the Narrator has designed all the scenes he might need, he should take a look at the storyline as a whole, keeping in mind the elements of a good adventure offered earlier. Looking at the sample adventure, for example, a Narrator might note that the first scene seems rather dull. He decides to add an encounter in which the heroes witness an assault and can come to the aid of the victim—who happens to be the caravan owner. This fellow is so impressed with their fighting skill, he offers them a job. Beginning the adventure with a quick fight like this is a good deal more interesting (and plausible) than having a character walk up to the heroes and ask. "Anybody want a job?"

Adding Subplots

At this point, the story still seems too straightforward, so the Narrator can give the adventure a few subplots. Again, he should remember not to let them overshadow the main storyline.

For example, the Narrator might decide to give the caravan master a beautiful daughter, who becomes smitten with one of the heroes. If the hero returns her affections, a love interest can bloom. Should he spurn her, she might become dejected or spiteful.

Another possible subplot might present the caravan master as a thief whose crimes are discovered only after the merchant train has left Solanthus. The populace, knowing that the heroes work for him, assume them to be thieves, too. When they return to town, they'll have a hard time convincing the town watch to believe their story about the impending ogre attack.

Pacing

When creating the adventure, it is vital to plan the flow of events carefully. Like a good book or film, the storyline should feature escalating action with a series of conflicts that lead to a final climax. However, Narrators must take care to vary and pace the action. Even players who love combat scenes will quickly lose interest in a game consisting of nothing more than running around hitting draconians with swords.

Narrators can inject other plot elements between combat scenes. Such breaks in the action have a function to the story: They allow heroes to tend their wounds, plan strategies, and otherwise catch their collective breath. Even successful action films like *Raiders of the Lost Ark* or *Aliens* incorporate breaks and pauses to pace the story.

Of course, Narrators should not hesitate to cut a restful scene short in order to inject an element of surprise. Having a hobgoblin spring out of the woods when the heroes least expect it proves an excellent technique for cap-

turing players' attention and can serve as a transition to the next scene.

Campaigns

A *campaign* is a series of adventures linked by a common story thread. In some cases, the only recurring element throughout a campaign is that the same heroes appear game after game. In other campaigns, nested plots and intricate stories twist within and around each other to make the entire sequence feel like a single, neverending story. Television series like *Star Trek* are good examples of the former, while soap operas present excellent examples of the latter.

While designing each new story, the Narrator should consider its place in the greater campaign. How can he link it to events from past adventures? What new tales might spin off from this one?

Designing Scenes

After planning the overall adventure, the Narrator should go back and describe each scene in detail. The information included in a scene's description may vary, but published FIFTH AGE adventures will use a standard format. To see how a finished adventure uses this scene description format (described below), the Narrator can look over *Heroes of a New Age*, the adventure in this box.

Overview

The first section of a scene should quickly describe the event or challenge the scene presents and explain its purpose in the adventure. A Narrator could get a good "Overview" just by adding a bit more detail to one of the capsule scene descriptions in the sample plot outline offered earlier. If the heroes opt to do something unexpected in the scene, the plot can stray from the direction established here. However, knowing what must happen during a scene to preserve the integrity of the adventure can help a Narrator guide the players back on track.

Getting Started

The next section lists the special materials the Narrator should have on hand (such as a particular character card), so he is not caught off guard during the playing of the scene.

First Impressions

One of a Narrator's biggest challenges is providing players with brief but detailed descriptions of the key settings their heroes encounter. So, to begin each new scene of play, the Narrator should read the paragraph or two in the "First Impressions" section out loud. This text, printed in color, tells the players where their heroes are, what they see, and what is happening as the scene begins. It gives them the information they need to size up the situation and select a course of action.

Blocks of text printed in color sometimes appear in other sections of the scene, too. Narrators should read these descriptions aloud to their players when the heroes come to the proper point in the scene.

The Story Continues

The heart of the scene describes in some detail the events only hinted at in the "Overview." This information, intended solely for the eyes of the Narrator, explains what takes place at this point in the adventure. It reveals the behavior of important characters, offers tips on handling various possible reactions from the players, and provides contingencies for the most likely hero actions.

This section is called "The Story Begins" in the first scene of the adventure and "The Story Ends" in the final scene.

Atmosphere

A Narrator must convey the mood of each scene to players. The "Atmosphere" section offers him ideas for making the scene seem more dramatic or exciting to the players through its pacing and tone. For instance, it might suggest props, background music, or a particular style of speech to use when a certain character speaks to the heroes. It also might urge the Narrator to pick up the tempo in a combat scene to reflect the frenzy of the fight.

Actions

Heroes carry out any number of activities during a scene. Conducting everyday behavior and interacting with other characters rarely requires formal game "actions," however. The heroes can carry out basic activities (like eating breakfast) automatically. In other cases, the outcome of an impromptu role-playing exchange between the heroes and a character determines the success of heroes' activities.

Therefore, the "Actions" section of a scene describes only the most complex or important game actions—ones that require card play, as described in Chapter Three. Examples include "searching for shelter" or "breaking down a door."

Characters

Sometimes "The Story Continues" section mentions characters who could interact with the heroes during the events of a scene. The "Characters" section gives the Narrator information about these figures: monsters, townsfolk, dragons, and so on.

Some such individuals are described on the eighteen character cards included in this box, while others are adventure-specific. To save the Narrator the trouble of cross-referencing between pages, each scene in FIFTH AGE adventures includes a brief game description of all relevant characters who do not have cards. For instance:

Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).

The character detail above begins by offering the figure's name (in color), followed by her race, gender, age, demeanor, and reputation (in italics).

Like heroes, characters can have numeric scores and one-letter codes in each of eight abilities. The second part of a character detail presents the figure's ability scores and codes. FIFTH AGE adventures abbreviate the ability names as follows:

Agility:	Ag	Reason:	Re
Dexterity:	Dx	Perception:	Pe
Endurance:	En	Spirit:	Sp
Strength:	St	Presence:	Pr

Monsters and minor characters are not as detailed as major characters and heroes, so they do not have all eight ability scores. They use only the four pairs of related abilities in their character details: Coordination (Co), Physique (Ph), Intellect (In), and Essence (Es).

If the character can use magic, his spell points are listed in parentheses after his Reason score (for sorcery) or his Spirit score (for mysticism). Details about magic appear in Chapter Five.

Next in a character detail comes the figure's damage (Dmg) and defense (Def) ratings, including weapon and armor types. Finally, it lists any unusual abilities the character may have, such as magic use or a special attack.

Outcome

The final section, the "Outcome," closes the scene. It tells the Narrator where to turn next to continue the adventure, depending on the heroes' actions. For instance, the "Outcome" might tell the Narrator to proceed to Scene Two if the heroes managed to defeat their foe, or to Scene Three if they lost the fight.

Narrating a Scene

Once the Narrator has created the adventure and planned every scene, how exactly does play begin? Orchestrating the role-playing of scenes is one of the most important jobs of the Narrator in the FIFTH AGE game.

To direct the play of each scene, the Narrator must:

1. Offer a short, introductory description to set the scene.
2. Ask the players what their heroes want to do first in the scene.
3. Resolve, through card play or role-playing or both, how well the heroes' plans succeeded.

Depending on the complexity of the scene, the Narrator may have to repeat this sequence several times. Combat scenes require a few adjustments to this sequence, as detailed in Chapter Four.

Step One: Describe the Scene

Every scene begins with the Narrator describing the situation in which the heroes find themselves. This description should be brief—listening to a long narrative can get dull—but it must include enough information to help the players decide what their heroes want to do. A Narrator should keep the following few points in mind to make the scene description exciting.

Appeal to the Senses

More than any other sense, people rely on sight. Therefore, scene descriptions must include a strong visual element, even if it is only that the heroes have entered a totally dark room. This does not mean, however, that scene descriptions should ignore the other senses.

Like sight, hearing almost constantly provides people with important information about their surroundings. Mention of sounds, or their absence, adds a great deal to a description. A wolf howls in the distance. The slow drip of water echoes off the walls of a cave. The rasp of a creature's breath sounds from just around the next corner. Whatever the scene, it is vital to mention what the heroes hear.

Scientific evidence has shown that no sensory input remains more firmly set in the brain than that of smell. If a Narrator tells his players that a healer's den smells like a spice cabinet, everyone knows what he means. The fact that each player may have a different impression of exactly what a spice cabinet smells like is unimportant. Since, of all the senses, smell evokes the greatest physical reaction in a person, Narrators should always remember to mention what a place smells like.

Finding out how something feels or tastes usually requires an effort from the heroes (though they might notice an unusual temperature or humidity level), so these sensory details seldom appear in an initial scene description.

One way to use sensory information besides sight in a scene description is to focus on different senses in different scenes or parts of scenes. If one scene in a dank cave relies heavily on its smell, the Narrator might later focus on the scene's cold feel or initially describe the next one in terms of its sounds. Sensory description should *continue throughout the entire scene,* too, as heroes attempt actions and respond to events.

Personalize the Description

A Narrator can describe a scene even more effectively by tailoring it to the heroes involved. If he can bend some aspect of the description to appeal to a certain hero, the player will find himself drawn more deeply into the scene.

For example, a Narrator could describe a dark cave as being rather like the underground halls of Thorbardin, the kingdom where a dwarf character grew up. A patch of thick forest might remind a homesick elf of the Qualinesti woodland home he left behind. The *Dusk or Dawn* sourcebook offers plenty of appropriate location details.

Never Mandate Heroes' Actions

In scene descriptions, the Narrator must take care not to describe what the heroes do. That's always up to the players. For example, he should never say:

> You see a brilliant gem before you, glowing with cool blue light. Touching it, you discover that it is as cold as ice.

This description requires the heroes to touch the gem—something the players might not want them to do. If the fact that the gem is frigid is important to the scene, the Narrator can alter the description to say the stone radiates an aura of cold the heroes can feel at a distance.

In a similar vein, Narrators must not mandate the heroes' thoughts or deductions. A description can include impressions, such as mention that a given place reminds the heroes of something or that a staggering zombie fills them with revulsion. However, telling them the zombie is undoubtedly the creature that has been killing the locals is going too far.

Answer Heroes' Questions

In most cases, the Narrator should conclude a scene description with a brief, informal question-and-answer session. This simply allows the players to make sure they understand exactly what is going on around their heroes.

For example, say a Narrator tells the players their heroes have entered a sprawling garden in the tropical realm of Nordmaar. Players might ask whether a certain type of flower grows there or may want to know what condition the soil is in. The possible questions are endless and often contain good opportunities for role-playing.

The Narrator should take care to keep this question-and-answer period to a reasonable amount of time. When he feels the players have learned all that they need to know, he should move on.

In some cases, the Narrator may not allow the players to ask questions. This is especially true when the scene's activity—such as combat—directs the heroes' attentions in a particular direction. If a player really wants an answer in such a situation, the Narrator should require his hero to spend some time looking around. Meanwhile, of course, potentially important things would continue to happen all around him.

Step Two: 'What Do You Do?'

Once the Narrator has presented the players with a description of their situation, he asks them each what their heroes wish to do first. To help players decide, the Narrator should tell them about any factors that might limit a hero's options in the scene.

Time Available

Does the hero have enough time to accomplish what he intends to do?

Each scene in an adventure may represent a different amount of game time. Combat scenes are fast and furious—they're over in a matter of minutes. In a less pressing situation, a hero may have more time to act. Narrators should let common sense determine exactly what a hero has time to do in a given scene.

Training and Experience

Considering the hero's background and abilities, is he even remotely capable of accomplishing what he hopes to do?

To answer this question, the Narrator should help players examine their hero's specific game details (listed on their hero sheet). Are his relevant ability codes good enough to allow him to succeed? Or, perhaps his high reputation rating implies that the hero has had time to learn a relevant skill.

For example, a group of heroes is resting around a campfire after a fierce battle. One of them wishes to repair his armor, which was damaged during the fray. Clearly, this task clearly requires training in the maintenance of armor.

However, the Narrator notices that the hero has a poor ability code in

Endurance, the ability associated with the Suit of Helms and with armor use. Therefore, he doubts the hero has had enough training to even attempt the repairs—the hero would be wiser to ask someone with a better code to fix it.

In the same situation, the player might point out that his hero is an experienced adventurer with a high reputation rating: Surely he has made minor repairs to his armor after dozens of battles over the years. In such a case, the Narrator might allow the hero to attempt the repairs despite his poor ability code.

Step Three: Resolve Actions

Once a player has announced what his hero will do first in the scene, the Narrator must determine whether the hero accomplishes the task. Success or failure may depend on any of a number of factors, including the play of cards, the difficulty of the desired act, and the needs of the story or campaign.

In the SAGA rules system, most of the things a player would want his hero to do are considered *actions*. In short, an action is any single task that a player wishes his hero to attempt. A Narrator asks a player to perform an action if he decides the hero has a chance of succeeding at whatever he wants to do, but also has a chance of failing.

Some common actions include picking a lock, attacking an enemy with a sword, casting a magical spell, or leaping across a yawning pit. In any of these cases, the Narrator asks the player to attempt the action by playing a card or cards. Chapter Three describes how to determine the success or failure of specific hero actions.

Sometimes what the hero wants to do is so simple, the Narrator decides it involves no risk of failure at all. For example, say a hero wishes to open an unlocked chest that harbors no traps or enchantments. The task is so basic, the hero succeeds automatically—the Narrator simply informs the player that his hero opens the chest.

By the same token, some desired actions may be so difficult, the hero has no chance of success at all. Say a player tells the Narrator that his hero wants to try breaking down the castle gate before him with his bare hands. The Narrator knows that this gate was built to withstand the mightiest battering ram the local goblins could devise, let alone one individual's assault. He simply tells the player his hero wasn't strong enough to do it.

Heroes might try to address the challenge of a scene by role-playing instead of attempting actions. Perhaps they seek to win a local lord's support for their mission. In this case, the Narrator, portraying the lord, listens to the players make their heroes' request and asks them questions. Their interaction decides the outcome of the scene.

As heroes perform actions and interact with characters, the Narrator describes to them the outcomes of their endeavors, in an amount of detail appropriate to the significance of the action or role-playing encounter.

Next: Continue?

Should the above three steps bring players to the end of the scene, the Narrator moves on with the adventure. If this is not the case, however, he repeats the process, beginning by describing how the scene has altered as a result of what the heroes and other characters did. Afterward, he asks them what they intend to do next, then resolves any required actions. In many cases, a playing group may need to repeat the sequence several times before overcoming (or failing) the challenge of the scene.

Rewarding Heroes

As the heroes explore the world and successfully battle the forces of Evil, the Narrator should encourage their actions. After all, one of his duties is to make sure the players enjoy themselves in the game.

Rewarding the heroes makes players eager to continue the adventure and encourages truly heroic behavior.

Hero rewards can take many forms.

Reputation Increases

When a hero completes an adventure, he marks another quest on his hero sheet. Completing enough quests increases his reputation rating.

Monetary Rewards

Sometimes, adventures can reward heroes (especially those with a mercenary bent) with great wealth. Perhaps a powerful figure offers to pay the heroes for accomplishing the goal of the adventure, such as freeing a town from the ravages of a young dragon.

Heroes can turn a profit from quests in other ways, too. After all, dragons keep great hoards of treasure in their lairs: gold, silver, and steel just waiting to be claimed. Whenever heroes collect such a reward, they have a chance to increase their social status through the infusion of this new wealth.

Items of Magic

Among the most sought-after treasures on Krynn, items of magic can mean the difference between success and failure in heroes' later adventures. Exactly how a Narrator opts to introduce magical items into his game and what place they play in an extended campaign may vary.

Chapter Five offers details about magical items, especially weapons and armor. There are three general types of magical objects that heroes may find during an adventure.

Trinkets

Small magical *trinkets*, such as an enchanted dagger or a ring that lets its wearer see in the dark, can give a hero a minor edge in some situation. As a rule, trinkets have only limited value and just one or two specific functions. Narrators can create trinkets for heroes to keep as rewards for minor accomplishments.

Treasures

Magical *treasures* carry far greater value than trinkets. They can play a major role in many adventures and often greatly increase a hero's ability. Many magical weapons, such as extra-powerful swords, fall into this category.

Treasures should play a major part in the adventure where they first appear. For example, suppose the heroes find a bow that magically causes any arrow it shoots to become a bolt of fire. Later in the adventure, they should encounter a hostile creature that is especially vulnerable to this weapon.

Artifacts

Artifacts are incredibly powerful magical objects that the Narrator should award to heroes with great care. In most cases, the recovery of an artifact can be the focus of an adventure unto itself. The effort by the Heroes of the Lance to recover the Disks of Mishakal and the Spellbook of Fistandantilus in the novel *Dragons of Autumn Twilight* exemplifies this sort of quest.

Narrators should remember that an artifact powerful enough to have a great effect on the current quest can have a similar effect on subsequent adventures as well. And possessing an artifact can prove dangerous: Just as the heroes were willing to fight and die to claim this object, so too will others risk injury to steal it from them.

Encouragement

All this talk of wealth and rewards is not meant to imply that heroes embark on adventures merely for profit. True heroism finds its reward in winning a victory for the cause of Good. Therefore, Narrators should reinforce this pride in heroism by praising players for clever actions or excellent role-playing. Boosted by these words, players will continue to excel in their chosen roles.

CHAPTER THREE

"I'm going back to find Tanis...."

"No, my brother," Raistlin said softly, his golden eyes glittering in Lunitari's red light. "You cannot help Tanis. His fate is in his own hands."

—Caramon and Raistlin outside the gates of Neraka, Dragons of Spring Dawning

At the heart of any great adventure story lie the actions of the heroes and villains. This fact also holds true of the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game. When the heroes find themselves faced with a problem—whether a locked door or an angry dragon—they'll have to *do* something about it.

Whatever they decide to do—cast a spell, engage in combat, or attempt subterfuge—they respond with what is called an *action*. This chapter explains how heroes attempt actions, describes some common actions, and details how to determine whether the heroes' actions succeed. It also explains how to determine the behavior of other characters in the game.

Action Standards

Before getting into the details of attempting and resolving actions, it's important to make sure players and Narrators understand a few basic concepts used by the SAGA rules system. Actions have to occur in some context, after all. This initial section describes what goes on during an adventure while actions take place.

Time

In the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game, Narrators do not keep track of time in rounds, turns, or other such artificial game concepts. They use minutes, hours, days, and so on—just like in the real world.

Usually, what happens from minute to minute isn't vital to the course of an adventure. If the heroes are riding from one place to another—a journey that requires a week or two to complete—the group does not need to play out every minute of the trip. It's far more convenient for the Narrator to simply relate the major events of each day or half-day and allow the heroes to respond to them.

The Narrator should base the amount of time it takes a hero to perform an action on his estimate of how much real time the action would require. When the journey itself is not the focus of the adventure, the Narrator should feel free to resolve these hero actions in whatever time increments best suit the situation. Perhaps fixing a wagon wheel takes a hero an hour, perhaps it takes two—it doesn't really matter in the scope of the adventure.

However, small units of time become important in combat or other critical situations. During such scenes, the Narrator must keep track of time minute by minute.

Movement

Getting from place to place on a continent as large as Ansalon can take some effort—especially when the heroes have to move through hostile terrain like the Khalkist Mountains or the glacier that covers most of Southern Ergoth.

Exactly how long does it take a group of heroes to get from one place

to another? A Narrator should base his decision in part on the distance they have to cover and the type of terrain—it takes longer to travel one hundred miles than fifty and longer to traverse a mountain than a plain. However, he should also base the decision on the needs of the adventure's plot as well. If the heroes need to get to the center of action before the end of the week to preserve the plot, the Narrator should find a way for them to do it. After all, there can't be a story without them!

Walking

Many heroes, due to situation or lack of wealth, find themselves walking from one place to another. In good terrain, a walking man travels at a rate of about three miles per hour. Since most heroes are a little sturdier than the average man, the Narrator can assume that in an average eight-hour day of hiking, a group of heroes can cover a good thirty miles. Rough terrain takes longer to cross, of course. The following table provides a set of guidelines that Narrators can use during play:

Terrain	Miles/Hr.	Miles/Day
Good road	4	30
Clear/Average road	3	25
Hills/Light forest	2–3	20
Forest/Snow/Desert	2	15
Wetlands	1–2	10
Thick forest	1–2	10
Mountains/Swamp	1	5

It takes much longer for heroes to cover distance underground than these above-ground rates. Narrators should consider most caves the equivalent of mountainous terrain, limiting the movement of would-be explorers to about five miles per day.

Riding

Mounted characters usually can travel at twice their walking rate, assuming that their mounts are native to the terrain. Those trying to ride elephants through wetlands, however, can expect something less than optimal performance from their mounts (possibly a quarter of their optimum rate).

Vehicles

Movement involving horse-drawn wagons and other conveyances generally comes to half again the listed walking value—better than walking, but slower than a single rider. Once more, this rate assumes the draft animals are suited to the terrain.

Ships

Two major factors govern movement at sea: the type of vessel and the weather conditions. The table below lists some common vessels.

Vessel	Miles/Hr.	Miles/Day
Barge* /Raft	1	20
Canoe*/Kayak*	2	30
Bireme/Trireme‡	2–3	40
Longboat/Drakkar	3	50
Caravel/Galleon	3–4	75
Great galleon	4	100

* Indicates craft designed primarily for inland and coastal travel. The Narrator should regulate their use in seafaring fairly heavily.

‡ Refers to oceangoing craft similar to galleys, with either two or three tiers of oars.

The movement rates in the table above assume that the vessel is traveling under average weather conditions. In excellent conditions, Narrators may increase the movement rate by half. In poor weather, they should halve the listed movement rate.

Journeying by ship assumes a longer traveling day than land-based methods. Often, a naval vessel will travel twenty-four hours a day. If heroes at sea do not use this full travel day, Narrators should cut the listed rates in half.

Some of the above craft can also serve for river travel (starred vessels) or

marsh or pond/lake travel (as judged by the Narrator).

Anyone wishing to set an entire adventure aboard ship, of course, may want to add further detail on the vessel's motive system (sails vs. oars), crew, and even water hazards.

Aerial Movement

Clearly, men, elves, and dwarves are not flying creatures. On the rare occasions that they travel by air, heroes ride winged creatures such as dragons, pegasi, and griffins. In such cases, the Narrator should base the rate of travel upon the type of mount; the following chart offers some guidance.

Mount	Miles/Hr.	Miles/Day
Chimera	5	40
Wyvern	6	50
Dragon	7	60
Roc (giant eagle/owl)	8	70
Griffin	9	80
Pegasus	10	100

Again, the above rates assume typical flying conditions, an eight-hour traveling day, and a standard load. If a mount is being asked to carry a heavy load or fly in bad weather, the Narrator should halve these rates. Under ideal conditions, they might increase by as much as fifty percent. Generally, mounts can keep up these rates daily for a week before needing a couple days to rest.

Some heroes may have the opportunity to travel by aerial conveyance such as a balloon or glider. In such cases, the Narrator should estimate the speed of the vehicle based on the figures above in addition to wind or magical effects.

Weather

One of the most volatile forces adventurers will confront as they explore Ansalon is weather. Usually, though, weather does not become a pressing issue in game terms. Whether it's cool and cloudy or warm and sunny doesn't affect the average legendary quest.

Sometimes, however, the local climate becomes important. For example, climbing a sheer cliff isn't easy under the best of conditions; in a freezing ice storm, it seems almost impossible.

A good way to decide the weather in most cases is to simply match the conditions in the adventure with the current weather as the players arrive for the game. Thus, if it's raining outside, it's raining for the heroes, too.

Of course, this doesn't always work. If the heroes are adventuring on the Icewall Glacier, they're going to be cold, even if the players have gathered for the game in August in the heart of Texas. The Narrator can choose to describe the game's weather by checking the geographic descriptions in Chapter Two of *Dusk or Dawn*.

As with every standard discussed in this section, the most important aspect of the weather is its effect on play. If the adventure involves the heroes exploring the haunted towers of Dargaard Keep in Nightlund, the Narrator should describe a savage thunderstorm with pounding rain, booming thunder, and brilliant flashes of lightning. Should the group become stranded in the hot desert of the Northern Wastes, the sky should certainly be clear, and the Narrator's description should help the players feel the merciless rays of the sun streaming, blistering, upon the heroes.

Lighting and Vision

Many times, heroes find themselves forced to explore unlighted places. Whether the scene is a dark and mysterious dungeon or simply the gloom of a thick forest at midnight, the heroes need to worry about light sources and their range of vision.

Unless darkness is important to the story, Narrators should assume the heroes can make a light of some sort. Whether they have lighted torches, a glowing gem, or a magic spell, resourceful adventurers like the heroes won't let themselves be caught in the dark.

When the issue of light and darkness becomes critical to the game, the Narrator should assume that most conventional light sources illuminate an area somewhere between twenty-five and fifty feet in diameter, depending on the source. (A torch might provide effective light for up to thirty feet, for example.) Specially designed spells or other radiances may light larger areas, at the Narrator's discretion.

The Hand of Fate

During the game, each player holds a hand of Fate Cards he uses to determine whether his hero succeeds at the various actions he attempts. The hero's reputation rating, as determined during hero creation, dictates how many cards a player can hold. This *Hand of Fate* generally contains between four and five cards for new heroes.

After shuffling the Fate Cards and dealing out the correct number to each player, the Narrator places the remainder of the deck face down on the table as the draw pile. Players place the cards they use in action attempts face up next to it as the discard pile.

For games of up to six players, Narrators need only one Fate Deck. However, larger groups may run through cards faster, requiring an extra deck. After the players have gone through the entire draw pile, the Narrator must reshuffle the deck.

Only players keep hands of cards—the Narrator does not maintain a Hand of Fate for each character or monster.

Types of Actions

Over the course of an adventure, a hero will attempt many actions. Most of them will fall into one of two groups: *unopposed actions* and *opposed actions.*

Unopposed Actions

An action is unopposed when the hero faces no active resistance from a character, monster, or other creature. All that matters is the hero's own skill. Attempting to pick a lock is an unopposed action; attempting to hit someone in a brawl is not.

An unopposed action is easier to resolve than an opposed action, for the hero generally has a good understanding of the variables the action entails. In picking a lock, for instance, the hero knows that the mechanism isn't going to try wiggling around to avoid his pick. The hero determines the success—or failure—of an unopposed action wholly by his own efforts.

Opposed Actions

An opposed action is one in which the hero faces active resistance from someone. A hero attempting to arm-wrestle with a character in a tavern must pit his abilities against his opponent's to emerge from the contest triumphant. There are various types of opposed actions, all of which use the same basic SAGA resolution rules.

Combat Actions

A hero's attempts to strike an enemy or defend himself from an attack generally meet some opposition. Because of the many unusual features of battle, however, combat actions are dealt with separately in Chapter Four.

Magic Actions

Ansalon in the Fifth Age features two types of magic: sorcery and mysticism. Attempts to use such arcane powers are resolved using magic actions, which are frequently opposed. Like combat actions, spellcasting has so many variables, it is described separately in Chapter Five.

Performing Actions

As mentioned earlier, a player uses cards from his Hand of Fate to attempt various actions. No matter what type of action the hero is trying

to perform—from casting a spell to picking a lock—the Narrator determines success or failure through a simple action resolution method.

The general sequence of action resolution is as follows:

1. Player declares hero's intended action (or Narrator declares that the scene requires an action).
2. Narrator determines the ability relevant to the action's success and announces it to players.
3. Narrator decides action's difficulty.
4. Player selects one card to attempt the action. (For opposed actions, the Narrator applies an opposition value at this point.)
5. If the player's point score beats the action's difficulty (including opposition), the hero completes the action.

Step One: Declaration

In most cases, an action begins when the player tells the Narrator what his hero will attempt to do in the current scene. For example, Jim might announce that his character, Kalan, is going to try his hand at picking a lock or hitting a monster with his sword.

Sometimes the Narrator begins the process, by telling a player his hero must attempt an action. This usually happens when a hero has to avoid a monster's attack or otherwise resist a hazardous situation. For example, Kalan, while battling a troll, may find himself called upon to defend himself from the beast's slashing claws.

The hero with the highest Perception score usually declares his intention (or responds to the Narrator's announcement) first. Should two heroes have identical scores, the one with the best Perception code goes first. If the heroes have identical scores and codes, the players repeat the process using the heroes' Agility scores. If the tie persists, the hero with the higher reputation rating takes precedence. Should all these options fail to break the tie, the Narrator can assume that both heroes act simultaneously.

Step Two: The Action Ability

Now the Narrator considers the declared action and the various factors that might relate to it. First he determines which of the hero's abilities is best suited to the task at hand. This is called the *action ability.* For instance, if Kalan wants to lift a heavy weight, he would make use of his Strength.

The suit associated with the ability score becomes the trump suit for the action in question. The following guidelines can help with this decision:

- **Agility (Shields):** Used to dodge missile weapon attacks or attempt acrobatic feats of nimbleness.
- **Dexterity (Arrows):** Used to attack with missile or thrown weapons and for fine manipulation tasks like picking locks or palming objects.
- **Endurance (Helms):** Used to resist melee attacks, survive poisoning, withstand pain or fatigue, and other shows of physical stamina.
- **Strength (Swords):** Used to attack with a melee weapon or to resolve tests of raw, physical strength.
- **Reason (Moons):** Used to solve logic puzzles, recall details, or invoke the powers of sorcery.
- **Perception (Orbs):** Used to resist attacks based on sorcery or to receive information from one's senses.
- **Spirit (Hearts):** Used to draw upon one's willpower, test one's passions, and invoke the powers of mysticism.
- **Presence (Crowns):** Used to resist an attack based on mysticism, make a good (or bad) impression, inspire one's followers, and intimidate a foe.

Once the Narrator has selected the ability relevant to the challenge at hand, he tells the player the action ability. Thus, if Kalan were trying to break down a door, the Narrator would tell his player to attempt a Strength action. The player then can begin thinking about which card from his hand he wants to play for this action.

Step Three: Action Difficulty

With an action ability in mind, the Narrator must next determine the likelihood that the hero will succeed in his efforts. The given action's degree of challenge is reflected by its *difficulty level*, with its associated numeric *difficulty rating*. The following table describes the range of action difficulty:

Difficulty Level	Difficulty Rating
Easy	4
Average	8
Challenging	12
Daunting	16
Desperate	20
Impossible	24

Easy (4)

Easy actions require almost no thought or effort on the part of the hero. Examples of easy tasks include remembering the path to the home of a friend the hero visits regularly (Reason) or catching an object tossed by another hero or character (Dexterity). However, easy actions do involve some small risk of failure, to distinguish them from activities heroes could perform automatically.

Average (8)

Average actions require some attention from the hero but present only a minor obstacle. Examples include staying in the saddle during a vault (Agility) or following a marked trail (Perception). Most of the actions a hero attempts during a game will be average. If the action sounds like something a common man would hesitate to try but that a hero does all the time, it's probably considered average. However, even an average action can prove difficult if opposed by a foe.

Challenging (12)

Other actions pose a serious *challenge* to the heroes. Examples include picking a high-quality lock (Dexterity) or scaling a crumbling, dangerous wall

(Agility). Challenging actions should give even a great hero pause.

Daunting (16)

Heroes likely will attempt *daunting* actions in the heat of an adventure, but normal folks would never consider trying such things. Examples include leaping across a flaming gorge (Agility), picking a masterfully-constructed lock (Dexterity), or deciphering an ancient code (Reason). Narrators should understand that an action this difficult is doomed to failure if the character doesn't have a trump card (see below).

Desperate (20)

Even experienced heroes attempt *desperate* actions only in the most dire of situations. Examples of such herculean feats include holding up a collapsing wall (Strength) or shaking off the effects of a very deadly poison (Endurance). Even heroes think twice about attempting these actions, as they are impossible without a trump card and a good second draw.

Impossible (24)

Impossible tasks become the stuff of legend—such as when the great Solamnic Knight Huma drove a dragonlance through the scales of the Dark Queen Takhisis herself in the Third Dragon War. Anyone who succeeds at an impossible feat automatically increases his number of quests by one, for word of his feat soon spreads to all corners of Ansalon.

Keep Difficulty a Secret!

In the real world, of course, we don't know the difficulty of a task until we've tried it a time or two. Therefore, the Narrator *does not inform the player of the difficulty level or rating* of his hero's action. Thus, he would keep the difficulty of Kalan's Strength action to himself. This forces the player to carefully gauge what his hero is about to attempt—just as he himself would before attempting an action in real life—and play a card accordingly.

Step Four: Playing a Card

Now that he knows his action ability, the player selects one card—known as the action card—from his hand to play. Because he doesn't know the difficulty level and rating assigned to the task, the player must try to estimate the severity of the challenge before him and select the best single card for it.

For example, Kalan attempts to force open an ancient door. Meanwhile, a pack of ghouls is charging toward him—he knows that if he fails to open the door, he could die in their clutches. Looking at his Hand of Fate, Kalan's player sees that his highest card is an Eight. Because of the importance of this task, he plays the Eight and hopes for the best.

Having selected a card from his hand, the player lays it face up on the discard pile. This done, he draws a card from the draw pile to replace it. Unless his hero is wounded, the player always maintains the number of cards indicated by his reputation rating.

Action Score

Now, the player adds the value of the action card he just played to his hero's action ability score. The total of these two numbers is called his *action score.*

For example, say Kalan is currently attempting a Strength-based action. His Strength score is 7, and his player discarded an Eight, so Kalan has an action score of 15.

Trump Cards

If the suit of the action card matches the suit related to the action ability, the action card is considered *trump*. Sometimes, a hero's race or role gives him the advantage—for certain types of actions only—of treating the action card as trump regardless of its actual suit.

After drawing a replacement card and determining his action score, a

player who has just used a trump card may turn over the top card of the Fate Deck and add its numeric value to his action score. If that card is also trump (that is, if its suit matches that of his original action card), the player repeats this process until either a nontrump card turns up or he opts to stop turning over new cards.

A trump bonus based on a racial or role advantage applies only to the original action card, not to the subsequent cards turned from the deck.

Players are never required to take advantage of the trump bonus. If a player is confident that his hero will succeed at an action with his current action score, he can choose not to turn over an extra card but instead stand with his original action score. Perhaps, he wants to keep those trump cards in the deck for when they become really necessary. A player also might decide not to use his trump bonus if using it carries a racial disadvantage. For instance, if a thinker gnome hero uses his racial trump bonus to fix a device, the action takes him twice as long as it normally would. (See Chapter One for more on racial advantages and disadvantages.)

Let's return to the example of Kalan and his attempt to break down the door (a Strength action). If the card chosen by Kalan's player, Jim, was the Eight of Swords, Jim could turn over the top card on the Fate Deck and add its score to his action score. Because he isn't sure how difficult his task will be, he decides to do so. After all, it is a big door, and those ghouls are getting closer. Jim turns over the Six of Helms, increasing Kalan's action score from 15 to 21. If the card had been the Six of Swords, Jim could have decided to flip the next card to further increase his total.

Step Five: Resolution

If the player's total action score is equal to or higher than the action's difficulty rating, the hero has successfully accomplished the action.

Should the action score come out lower than the action difficulty rating, the hero has failed. The Narrator might judge the severity of the failure by the number of points the hero lacked to achieve his difficulty rating.

Mishaps

In most cases, a failed action doesn't have any ill consequences associated with it (apart from those inherent in the action, of course).

From time to time, however, something unforeseen goes wrong. When that happens, it's called a *mishap*.

A mishap becomes possible only when a player uses a card from the Suit of Dragons to attempt his action. Thus, only by choosing such a card does a player open himself up to the chance of a mishap. When a player attempts an action with a card from the Suit of Dragons and fails, a mishap occurs. The Narrator determines the exact consequences based on the nature of the attempted action.

If Jim had played the Eight of Dragons for Kalan's attempt to break down the door, he would have risked a mishap. Assuming Kalan's action score came just a few points shy of the difficulty rating, the Narrator would probably rule that Kalan had hurt his shoulder when he smashed into the door, reducing his Strength score by a point for the rest of the game (or act, or session). If he missed by more than a few points, however, the Narrator might rule that he had broken his shoulder and would be unable to use his arm for the rest of the game.

Opposed Actions

An opposed action is one in which the hero faces active resistance from another person or monster. Because the other figure involved in the action is doing his best to thwart the efforts of the hero, the action resolution process requires an extra step.

Opposition Value

A foe uses one of his abilities to try to resist the hero's action. Right after he determines the action difficulty (Step Four of an opposed action), the Narrator selects the foe's appropriate *opposition ability*: His Endurance might block a hero's melee attack, Perception opposes a sorcerous spell, and so on.

Naturally, the action becomes harder when someone opposes the hero's attempt. To reflect this increased difficulty, the Narrator must add the opposition ability score—called the *opposition value*—to the action's difficulty rating.

For example, if the kender Belladonna wants to go through Kalan's backpack without his knowledge, the Narrator realizes Kalan might notice her. Therefore, he uses Kalan's Perception as the opposition ability for Belladonna's action. His Perception score is 3. Assuming that the backpack was readily accessible, the Narrator might consider this an *easy* action, with a difficulty of 4. After adding Kalan's opposition value, the final difficulty of the opposed task becomes a 7.

Most actions will be not be opposed by another hero or character, but by a monster or similar creature. Creatures do not normally have the eight ability scores that describe heroes; they have only the four pairs of related abilities: Physique, Coordination, Intellect, and Essence. In these cases, the creature's appropriate related ability becomes the opposition ability. (Chapter Six offers additional details on monsters and similar creatures.)

Returning to the example of Belladonna, this time the kender is trying to sneak past a goblin sentry. It is night, and nothing in the environment makes sneaking especially difficult. All things considered, the Narrator considers this an *easy* action (4). As the goblin opposes this action with his Intellect rating of 4, the difficulty of the action increases to 8.

Action Format

Published FIFTH AGE adventures use the format below to present any complex actions heroes are expected (or asked) to attempt:

➢ Name of Action

Difficulty:	Level (rating)
Action ability:	Ability name
Opposition ability:	Ability name*

Comments: Adjustments to the difficulty of the action or other important facts are presented in the first paragraphs of an action description. Unless this section states otherwise, a failure merely means the action doesn't work; it carries no unusual repercussions.
Mishap: The next section of an action description explains the ill effects of a mishap, should the player employ a card from the Suit of Dragons and fail in the action.

* A specific opposition ability is always listed here, even though the individual resisting the hero's action might be a monster or minor character with only the four related ability scores. In case the opponent is a hero or a fully detailed character, the action description always lists the exact ability.

Shorthand Notation

Adventures present actions that are less complex—or not vital to the flow of a scene—in the shorthand format below:

Difficulty, action ability (opposition ability).

This technique works best when an action's effects appear obvious, with minimal or equally apparent mishap effects. For instance, a hero might have to attempt an *average Perception* action to notice the telltale odor of a particular poison. Such a straightforward action does not require a long explanation such as the one described above.

The descriptive passage on the next page offers an example of how a reader might see the shorthand action format used in a FIFTH AGE adventure:

As the heroes explore the tunnel, they may feel the effects of the dangerous gases that have seeped in over time. This hazard forces all heroes to attempt an *average Endurance* action for every ten minutes they stay underground. Those who fail lose consciousness.

The effects of failure at this unopposed action appear clearly in the text. A mishap might indicate that a hero suffered an injury during his collapse or had an allergic reaction to the gas. The Narrator can resolve either possibility without special instructions.

As with full action descriptions, shorthand notations for opposed actions list a specific opposition ability (in parentheses). If a creature rather than a major character resists the action, the Narrator should substitute the appropriate related ability.

Sample Actions

The following examples should give Narrators an idea of the types of actions heroes will attempt during play and the difficulties associated with them. These samples also can serve as templates for constructing other actions during play.

The first two are unopposed, while the second two offer opposition. A listing of other standard actions appears in Appendix Three.

➢ Break Down a Door

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Strength
Opposition ability: None

Comments: The above difficulty applies to an attempt to break down a standard, exterior door. For interior doors, this action becomes *easy*, while a reinforced or barred door increases the difficulty by one degree to *challenging*.
Mishap: The hero has injured himself in his attempt to force open the door. He must discard one card from his hand until he is healed or recovers.

➢ Pick a Lock

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Dexterity
Opposition ability: None

Comments: The above difficulty applies for an average lock and assumes the hero has lockpicks or other appropriate tools. For a lock of unusually good manufacture (or if the hero must use improvised tools), the difficulty increases one degree. A poor lock or the use of superior tools makes the action *easy*.
Mishap: The hero has broken the lock, making it impossible for anyone to pick.

➢ Tell a Convincing Lie

Difficulty: Easy (4)
Action ability: Presence
Opposition ability: Perception

Comments: This action's above difficulty assumes the hero has made up a fairly believable story and that his listener is not predisposed to doubt him. A real whopper or a suspicious audience might increase the difficulty of this action to *average* or even *challenging*.
Mishap: Not only has the listener detected the falsehood, he reacts very poorly to being lied to. He may attack, call for the local authorities, or publicly denounce the hero.

➢ Intimidate a Thug

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Presence
Opposition ability: Spirit

Comments: The *average* difficulty applies when the hero and the thug are more or less equally matched in strength. If the hero is overly imposing or the thug particularly cowardly, the Narrator could reduce the difficulty. If the reverse is true, the action becomes more difficult.
Mishap: Someone has called the hero's bluff, which enrages the target of this intimidation. His exact response will vary depending on the circumstances, but he might attack the hero.

Creating an Action

The beauty of the SAGA rules system is that everything a hero wants to do in a scene can be treated as an action—any activity the heroes think to attempt, they can try using the process related in this chapter.

All players and Narrators need to create actions on the spot is determine:

1. What ability does the hero use to attempt the action? Is it a Strength action? A Reason action?
2. How hard should it be to accomplish the action, based on the circumstances of the situation? Logically, it's easier to leap a three-foot chasm than an eight-foot one.
3. Does anyone oppose the attempt? If so, with which ability?

Action Strategies

It's important for the Narrator to drive home the fact that every action challenges the heroes. These attempts reflect the most important and exciting events in each scene, so no player should undertake them lightly.

High vs. Low Cards

All actions require card play. If the player thinks a particular action facing his hero is fairly simple or has no opposition, he should take that opportunity to use a lower card from his hand, reserving the high cards for more difficult actions.

However, players may be tempted to get rid of their low cards by attempting many frivolous actions that present little risk of failure. Narrators should recall from Chapter Two that any activity a hero should be able to perform automatically is not strictly considered an action. Such a minor feat requires no card play—after the player announces his hero's intent, the Narrator should simply reply that he succeeded automatically.

Role-Playing and Actions

While role-playing an encounter can be an alternative to attempting an action, the Narrator should not treat actions as activities devoid of role-playing. After all, it's the hero's reaction to the events of a scene that spurs him to action, and his response to his action's outcome involves role-playing as well.

The following few hints can help Narrators keep role-playing prominent while heroes attempt actions:

- Let the suit of the action card reflect how the hero attempts the action. If faced with a locked door, for instance, a player might use a Strength card, indicating his hero's trying to force it open. Another hero might play a Reason card, which would give his hero a chance to figure out a way to find a key or get around the door. Actions offer limitless role-playing possibilities.
- In any action, the Narrator should provide plenty of description, evoking a clear picture in the players' minds of the scene unfolding before them. Card play without storytelling bores players. If a hero attempts to search for a clue and finds one, thanks to his high Perception action score, it's up to the Narrator to make the players feel the frustration of the search and the excitement of the discovery.

Character 'Actions'

As stated earlier, heroes are the ones who actually attempt actions during a scene. However, the characters in an adventure (both friends and foes) should be able to act in their or the group's interest as well. The activities of these individuals are usually resolved in one of two ways.

Because the SAGA rules are meant to focus on the heroes, the success or failure of enemies' "actions" is reflected in their opposition to the heroes' actions. For instance, say a hero is trying to hide from an ogre. The hero attempts an *average Reason* or *Agility* action to hide,

opposed by the ogre's Perception (or Intellect). So the ogre need not attempt an action to find the hero—if the hero fails his hide action, it discovers him.

Sometimes, the Narrator determines a character's actions based on the needs of the story. For instance, a character's failure at attacking a dragon (and his resultant injury or death) should hint to the heroes that perhaps they should flee. Therefore, the Narrator should simply describe to the players what the character attempted and what consequences arose. In this way, character actions can further the plot and promote the flow of the adventure.

From time to time, however, the Narrator may find it desirable to use other methods to resolve characters' actions.

Friends and Companions

If the character in question is a close ally or companion of one of the heroes, the Narrator can instruct that hero's player to select a card for his action. This method is especially appropriate when the character has come to mean a great deal to the players, such as someone's sidekick or an important hireling.

This resolution method treats the action just like an attempt by a hero, including the playing of trump cards (even trump bonuses based on the character's race and role), the potential for mishaps, and so on.

If a Narrator sees that players are continually using their lowest cards for allies' actions, he should remind them that it's not in the group's best interest for the characters to fail. Perhaps he could even set up several crucial character actions to drive the point home.

Other Characters

The Narrator might also use a random draw from the Fate Deck to see whether a character's "action" succeeds. Once he has decided the action ability and difficulty, he simply flips over the top card of the deck and treats it as the action card. He then handles all the action resolution normally, including the drawing of an additional card after trump and the potential for mishaps.

Optional Methods

The cards of the Fate Deck allow truly inspired Narrators to resolve heroes' actions in various ways. This chapter has already described the easiest, most all-purpose method. However, Narrators should sprinkle some uses of other techniques throughout their games as well, for variety.

The Narrator can choose one of two alternate methods for resolving actions—or he can create a new one all his own, based on the concepts described in the following sections.

Random Draw

Resolving a hero's action with a random draw begins normally: The Narrator assigns the task an action ability, opposition ability (if needed), and a difficulty. However, to add a feeling of chance to the action, the Narrator can ask the player not to use a card from his hand to complete the action.

Instead, the player draws a card from the top of the Fate Deck and uses it to resolve the action. The player figures his hero's action score based on the numeric value of the random card he just drew. A trump card allows another draw, as usual, and a Dragons card still causes a mishap. The player discards his random draw upon completing the action.

Interpretive Methods

Narrators might choose to use other features of the cards, instead of their numeric value, to resolve actions.

Reading Card Color

By now, readers have probably noted the marbled background colors on the cards in the Fate Deck. A card's primary background color identifies its suit:

Suit	Ability	Color
Shields	Agility	Green
Arrows	Dexterity	Turquoise
Helms	Endurance	Blue
Swords	Strength	Purple
Moons	Reason	Brown
Orbs	Perception	Maroon
Hearts	Spirit	Orange
Crowns	Presence	Gold
Dragons	(mishap)	White/Red/Black*

* The three swirled colors of the Suit of Dragons refer not to an ability but to the continuum of Good and Evil, as described below. The presence of all three colors on each card indicates the unpredictable nature of dragons. Even chromatic, Evil wyrms may do a hero a Good turn—if it suits their hidden purposes.

The suits of a related pair of abilities have similar colors, and the colors of the Physical and Mental abilities each come from the same color palette.

Each card's icon box contains an *aura color,* determined by the card's numeric value. This color symbolizes one of Krynn's three lost moons, which vanished at the close of the Fourth Age. It also indicates relative position of the card's illustrated character on the continuum of Good and Evil.

Aura/Moon	Value	Symbolism
White/Solinari	1–3	Good/Positive
Red/Lunitari	4–6	Neutral/Uncertain
Black/Nuitari	7–9	Evil/Negative

Narrators can make quick and easy decisions regarding the outcome of a hero's action by referring to the colors on a randomly drawn card.

For instance, say the warrior Kalan attempts to create an accurate map of the fortress he just escaped. His success depends on how the Narrator chooses to interpret his action card's colors.

Perhaps the Narrator is looking for a turquoise card, indicating the Suit of Arrows—the trump suit for actions such as drawing and other fine work. If Kalan's player draws turquoise, the warrior successfully sketches the map—the card's numeric value can even indicate his degree of success. However, should he draw a different color, he fails to accurately render the floorplan.

The Narrator might decide to use the color associated with the action ability as just a starting point for determining whether the action succeeds. Playing a turquoise card might indicate that Kalan has drawn a perfect map, while a green card (representing the Suit of Shields, Arrows' related suit), means he created merely a good map. Any color associated with a Physical ability could imply some degree of success, while a Mental ability color reflects varying degrees of failure.

If the Narrator wants to give the player a more even chance, he can base his judgment on the aura color, interpreting white as a positive factor pointing to success, black as indicative of failure, and red as an uncertain result.

The fact that every card has a positive, negative, or neutral identity makes the Fate Deck quite useful during play for fleshing out the role-playing experience. For instance, say Kalan enters the Inn of the Last Home and notices a man eyeing him. This character may have been a mere background detail in the Narrator's description of the Inn—one who serves no real purpose to the scene.

However, should Kalan focus on this character and ask about him, the Narrator can make a random draw. A white aura makes the character a kindly old man. Red means the figure looks mysterious. Black, of course, tells Kalan that the brute's twisted scowl sends a shiver down his spine. Of course, the man may just have had a bad day—but Kalan doesn't know that.

Mix in the primary color of the randomly drawn card, and the Narrator can easily generate a profession or physical appearance for the new character. A card with a white aura and a gold background makes the figure a benevolent nobleman, and so on.

Interpreting the Portraits

Of course, the cards of the Fate Deck feature not only numbers and colors, but also portraits of more than eighty

of the DRAGONLANCE Saga's best-known characters, with a couple of words describing each one. A Narrator familiar with these characters can use what he knows to help him determine the outcome of a hero's action.

For instance, for Kalan's attempt to draw the map, the warrior's player has used the Tasslehoff Burrfoot card. The Narrator knows that Tas always had a map for every occasion—though some were of questionable accuracy—and rules accordingly. If the player had drawn the Tanis Half-Elven or Riverwind cards (each portraying characters with excellent direction sense), he'd have succeeded even better. The Lord Ariakan card would have yielded a good map as well: This master of battle strategy invented the Battle Box to help him map out the deployment of his troops. Of course, the Highbulp I gully dwarf card would mean trouble.

Even those who don't feel extremely knowledgeable about the characters on the cards can still gain role-playing color by interpreting the portraits and/or descriptive terms on each card. For instance, the terms might illustrate the manner in which a character succeeds or fails in an action resolved using a noninterpretive method. The Appendix of *Dusk or Dawn* contains brief descriptions of all the figures pictured in the Fate Deck, to help with interpretation or to jog a player's memory about a character.

A Bit of Both

Sometimes it's interesting to inject a bit of randomness into play while using an interpretive technique. The random draw technique works best in situations where the hero's fate is not entirely in his own hands. Say Kalan enters a town he has never visited before and wishes to look up the local circle of Solamnic Knights. Is there a group of Knights here? Kalan's actions can do little to influence the answer to that question: Either the town has a circle or it doesn't. A card draw using the positive/negative meanings of the aura can answer yes or no.

Both of these resolution techniques also help prevent players from delaying play while they build up the high-numbered cards in their Hands of Fate in preparation for an important event in the adventure. Clever players might putter around, attempting nonrelevant actions and trying to avoid an impending combat encounter until they draw a Nine of Swords, for instance. Narrators should treat such attempts to manipulate fate by shifting to random draw or interpretive actions.

Finally, using an interpretive method—or using interpretation of random draws—increases the importance of the low-numbered cards in the players' hands. The cards with white auras, representing predominantly Good characters with positive qualities, also bear the lowest numeric values: One to Three. Players might not find these cards useful to complete certain actions using an action score-based resolution method. After all, a Two of Moons can't add to the point total the way an Eight would. However, if the Narrator uses an interpretive resolution style, that Two—a positive card—suddenly becomes quite a valuable commodity.

A Final Word on the Optional Methods

Frequent variations in action resolution method are important to the FIFTH AGE game in that they allow players to manipulate the storyline and utilize their low cards to their best advantage. Narrators who use only the action score-based resolution method in their games are not taking full advantage of the many facets of the Fate Deck.

CHAPTER FOUR

"Draconians!" Tanis shouted....

Tanis jumped to attack the dazed creature before it could gather its wits. He swung his sword; the draconian's head parted from its neck and blood spurted. Sheathing his sword, Tanis grabbed the body before it could topple, dragged it up over the wall, and shoved it over the edge.

—Battle of the High Clerist's Tower, Dragons of Summer Flame

Heroes often find themselves called upon to engage in battles ranging from minor brawls and wrestling matches to knightly jousts and chaotic melees. Large or small, however, the Narrator handles all battles in the same way.

Combat, like most other events in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game, is resolved via scenes and actions. Although combat sequences get somewhat more complex than the general actions presented in the last chapter, Narrators resolve them using the familiar rules.

Standard Terms

Before discussing combat in detail, this chapter offers definitions of a number of commonly used terms.

Ranges

Many role-playing games depend on careful battle measurements to resolve combat. As the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game focuses on drama rather than strict calculations of weapon ranges, it uses a more abstract system of combat ranges.

Visual Range

Two characters at *visual range* can see each other but are too distant to actually interact in any meaningful way. They could conceivably communicate via flags or other signals but could not enter combat at such extreme range.

Artillery Range

As characters draw closer, they leave visual range and enter *artillery range.* Although still quite distant, such figures could attack each other with catapults, bombards, or other massive weapons. Personal weapons, like bows and crossbows, remain useless at this range. Communication via flags or other signals is possible, but voices seldom carry this far.

Far Missile Range

Moving still closer, characters will come into *far missile range.* Here, they may freely exchange fire with weapons like bows and crossbows, but thrown weapons (like spears) fall short of their targets. At this distance, enemy units are assumed to be too close to attack with artillery weapons (see above). Those at far missile range can communicate with shouts.

Near Missile Range

At *near missile range,* thrown weapons like spears, javelins, and war darts prove effective, as do missile weapons like bows and crossbows. Characters at near missile range can communicate by shouting.

Melee Range

At *melee range,* characters have drawn close enough to attack each other with swords, axes, and other hand-held weapons. Any manner of bow, crossbow, or other missile weapon becomes

useless in melee combat. The same is true of thrown weapons, although certain of these arms can be held and used in melee. Unarmed attacks also become possible at this range. Opponents at melee range can communicate freely by speaking in a normal voice. Indeed, heroes and villains often exchange threats or taunts during melee combat.

Personal Range

Personal range, the closest of the range categories, seldom comes into play. Characters at this range are locked in a wrestling hold or otherwise entangled. They can use only *very light* melee weapons, as all others prove too clumsy for such intimate combat. Characters battling at personal range can communicate in normal voices or even hushed whispers inaudible to others in the area.

Time

In most combat sequences—as well as other fast-paced scenes like chases—the Narrator keeps track of time minute by minute. This manner of timekeeping becomes especially important when characters fight at far missile range or closer. If the opposing units remain at artillery range, the Narrator should probably track time in five- or ten-minute intervals. With characters at visual range, time passes in quarter- or half-hour increments.

The chart below indicates the average time required for a single exchange of attacks at a given range. At longer ranges, where attacks are impossible, the Narrator can take the time requirement figure as a timekeeping suggestion.

Range Category	Time Required
Visual	1 hour
Artillery	15 minutes
Far missile	1 minute
Near missile	1 minute
Melee	1 minute
Personal	30 seconds

So, according to the chart, heroes may attempt one action per minute at melee range and two actions per minute at personal range, but only one action per hour at visual range. Of course, the circumstances of the game may dictate a different rate of play.

Heroes' Duties

This chapter describes certain combat-related tasks assigned to various heroes in the group. The players themselves may assign these duties, or the Narrator may determine them as needed. The most frequently assigned hero duties include:

The Leader

Unless the players indicate otherwise, the *leader* of an adventuring party is the hero with the highest Presence score. Narrators should note that this term applies only to military matters; it does not indicate that peasants might give orders to members of the nobility by virtue of higher Presence scores.

Throughout the adventures of the Heroes of the Lance, Tanis Half-Elven usually served as the leader.

The Scout and the Sentry

A group of heroes often employ a *scout* when moving through unexplored or dangerous regions. When a party of adventurers sets up camp for the night or otherwise pauses in its travels, the heroes often position a *sentry,* or lookout, to make sure no enemies sneak up on them. Unless otherwise assigned, the two heroes with the highest Perception scores serve in these two capacities, switching roles as often as they like.

Often, the cheerful kender Tasslehoff Burrfoot operated as the scout for the Heroes of the Lance, while Sturm Brightblade and the plainsman Riverwind frequently held sentry duty.

Surprise

At the start of any combat sequence, each side risks being caught off guard by the enemy. When *surprised*, an individual is unable to act for a brief time except to defend himself, and his opponent receives one free attack (as described below). A Narrator bases the chance that a group will surprise opponents (or be surprised) on the skills of its leader, a scout, or a posted sentry.

A hero surprised by his enemy loses his attack action for that exchange of blows but recovers in time to defend himself normally. Thus, he has a chance to escape injury, though he can inflict no harm upon his attacker.

Surprise during combat doesn't always occur right at the start of battle. A force that makes a sudden, unexpected maneuver can catch its enemies off guard in the midst of the fight.

There's always a chance both sides in an encounter could be surprised, in which case *both* sides receive free attacks.

Related Disadvantages

In combat, Narrators should also consider other conditions besides surprise that can put an individual at a disadvantage. In some cases, a combatant might face a slight penalty due to a previous injury. Other times, a figure might take another so unawares that he automatically hits him—possibly even killing the foe before he knows what's going on.

Several terms describe combat disadvantages related to surprise:

- **Helpless:** A figure is *helpless* when paralyzed, asleep, or otherwise unable to defend himself in any way. Normally, an attacker can automatically slay or incapacitate a helpless person instantly without an actual attack action.
- **Stunned:** A *stunned* individual may feel dazed from a blow, confused by a spell, or otherwise bewildered. Such a person can neither attack nor defend himself—any attack targeted at him inflicts its normal damage.
- **Impaired:** An *impaired* figure has been partially blinded or finds himself otherwise unable to operate at his full potential. An impaired person defends himself normally and can even attempt to hit his enemy. However, when an impaired individual attacks, the Narrator increases the action's difficulty one degree.

Attacks and Counterattacks

Once combat begins, it proceeds with a series of *attacks* and *counterattacks*. In essence, an attack is simply an opportunity for every hero (on the same side of the battle) to perform an action. A counterattack offers the heroes' foes the chance to do the same.

The term "attack" is used to define a strike by the heroes, while a "counterattack" indicates a blow from an enemy. Thus, it becomes possible for a counterattack to occur even without an initial attack from the heroes or for a counterattack to precede the heroes' attack.

While attack and counterattack actions are usually combative in nature, heroes and characters may attempt other (nonviolent) actions during combat as well, such as maneuvering.

Combat in a Scene

With the terms defined, players and Narrators can move on to the actual process of handling combat. For ease of reference, this section contains three separate parts: "Before Combat," "During Combat," and "After Combat."

Before Combat

Narrators must weigh a number of considerations before combat can begin. For the most part, these factors dictate the flow of the coming battle:

- What is the initial combat range?
- Were the heroes surprised?
- Did the heroes surprise their foes?

Combat Range

The first thing a Narrator must determine is the range at which combat begins. Often, he can simply mandate the range, according to the game situation or the actions of the heroes.

However, the terrain that heroes are traveling through frequently dictates that initial range. The following table offers a list of terrains and the range at which combat usually begins in each type of region.

Terrain	Initial Range
Desert	Visual
Ocean/Lake	Visual
Sandy beach	Visual
High road	Artillery
Major river	Artillery
Rolling hills	Artillery
Savannah	Artillery
Light forest	Far missile
Minor river	Far missile
Road	Far missile
Rocky foothills	Far missile
Forest	Near missile
Marsh/Swamp	Near missile
Mountains	Near missile
Trail	Near missile
Village streets	Near missile
City streets	Melee
Indoors	Melee
Thick forest	Melee
Underground	Melee

Of course, not every encounter must begin at the listed range. If two groups are parlaying when one side decides to spring an attack, the encounter range will almost certainly allow melee or missile attacks, regardless of the surrounding terrain.

Affecting the range at which a combat encounter begins can prove critical to winning the battle. For instance, if most of the heroes are archers, the group would want to limit the combat to missile range. Should the heroes wish to increase or decrease the range at which a combat encounter begins, the scout or sentry attempts the following action:

➢ Change Range

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Perception
Opposition ability: Perception

Comments: If the enemy has taken special steps to sneak up on the heroes or to avoid encountering them altogether, the Narrator should increase the action's difficulty by one degree. Success allows the heroes to increase the range by one level (to a maximum of visual range) or decrease it by one level (to a minimum of melee range).
Mishap: The enemy surprises the heroes, making any surprise action unnecessary before combat begins.

The heroes are not the only ones who might try to change the range at which combat begins: Their foes can attempt to alter it as well. If the heroes wish to maintain the current initial combat range in such a case, the scout or sentry should attempt the action below:

➢ Maintain Range

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Perception
Opposition ability: Perception

Comments: As with the previous action, this one becomes one degree more difficult if the enemy is trying to to sneak up on the heroes or to avoid them entirely. Succeeding at this action means the heroes have effectively mirrored their foes' movements, keeping the combat range the same.
Mishap: The heroes have inadvertently allowed the foe to surprise them. In addition, they lose their own chance to gain surprise before combat begins.

Avoiding Surprise from the Foe

Ambushing one's enemies remains a time-honored means of ensuring success in battle. While a Knight of Solamnia—or even a dark Knight of Takhisis—would never stoop to an ambush, others are not so noble.

Immediately after determining the combat scene's initial range, the Narra-

tor calls upon the scout or sentry to attempt the following action:

➢ Avoid Surprise

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Perception
Opposition ability:	Agility

Comments: If the enemy is attempting to sneak up on the heroes, this action becomes *challenging*. Success indicates that the heroes have seen or heard their attackers and may prepare to meet them. **Mishap:** The enemy surprises the heroes without giving them a chance to gain surprise as well. Play proceeds to actual combat exchanges.

The heroes may not attempt to avoid surprise if a mishap occurred while determining the encounter's initial range. In addition, the above action is unnecessary when the enemy has no interest in surprising the heroes.

Surprising the Foe

If the enemy did not surprise the heroes, they perceive his approach and may decide to set up an ambush of their own. Even if the enemy did surprise them, there is a chance that both groups might surprise each other: Perhaps both parties come around a corner and bump right into each other.

Of course, the heroes do not *have* to try to surprise the enemy, but if they wish to do so, their leader attempts the following action:

➢ Gain Surprise

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Perception
Opposition ability:	Agility

Comments: If the foe is wary, or has taken special steps to detect an ambush, the Narrator increases the action's difficulty to *challenging*. Success means the heroes have caught their foes unawares. **Mishap:** The enemy has surprised the heroes instead of the other way around.

Whether or not either side surprises the other, the time has come for combat to begin in earnest.

During Combat

In game terms, combat is resolved through an exchange of blows. When one side has vanquished the other (or caused the other to flee or halt the attack), the battle comes to an end.

An exchange of blows consists of the heroes' attempt to hit their enemy, followed by their attempt to avoid their foe's assault. As the SAGA rules focus the attention of each combat scene on *the actions of the heroes*—whether they are attacking or defending—rather than on other characters or monsters, the players stay involved at every stage of the action.

This chapter describes conventional combat only. Heroes both attempt and resist magical attacks using different abilities than listed for the actions in this section. (Details on using and opposing magic appear in the next chapter.)

Combat Sequence

Resolving an exchange of blows in combat requires several steps. The group repeats the steps below until one side emerges victorious.

1. Conduct surprise attacks (if any).
2. Handle combat maneuvers.
3. Attempt hero attack actions.
4. Determine enemy's wounds.
5. Attempt counterattack defense actions.
6. Determine heroes' wounds.
7. Resolve the battle or return to 2.

Step One: Surprise Attacks

The side(s) that won surprise, if any, has earned the right to one free attack (or counterattack, in the case of non-heroes) before the enemy can respond. This blow can prove the deciding factor in an otherwise even battle. An initial salvo of arrows, for example, can leave an unprepared force crippled before they know what hit them.

When one side has achieved surprise, the Narrator lets that group make an immediate attack (or counterattack). After the free attack is resolved, combat proceeds as usual.

Again, readers should recall that the term "attack" is used to define a strike by the heroes, while a "counterattack" indicates a blow struck by an enemy character. Thus, the surprise rules make it possible for a counterattack to precede an attack.

Step Two: Combat Maneuvers

As this combat system uses abstract ranges instead of measurements like feet, yards, and so on, the Narrator does not have to keep careful track of exactly where the various combatants are standing or the exact distance between any two of them. All that matters is the combat range.

Before each exchange of blows, each side has an opportunity to close with or withdraw from the other force. Regardless of whether one's side attempts to maneuver, it may attack normally in each exchange.

The Heroes' Maneuver

The following action details how a group of heroes closes with or pulls back from an enemy. It resembles the range adjustment action that can occur at the start of an encounter (see the "Before Combat" section), but reflects the positioning of troops during battle. For this reason, the leader, not the scout, attempts combat maneuvers. If the group splits up, the hero with the highest Presence in each group may attempt the following action.

➢ Maneuver the Range

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Agility
Opposition ability:	Agility

Comments: Maneuvering allows the heroes to move one range closer to an enemy—for instance, from near missile range to melee range—or one range farther away, such as from far missile

range to artillery range. Failure means the foe has matched the heroes' movement, keeping the range the same. The leader of the party attempts this action, which affects all members of the group.
Mishap: The heroes find themselves unable to move closer to their enemy. In fact, the other side may opt to maneuver the range themselves, automatically pulling back or closing in one range to thwart the heroes' attempted maneuver.

The Enemy's Maneuver

Just as heroes can attempt to maneuver toward or away from their foes, so too can the enemy jockey for position. When the foe attempts combat maneuvering, the leader of the heroes may oppose it. If he does not resist, the Narrator automatically adjusts the distance between them by one range to reflect the enemy's successful maneuver. If the heroes' leader wants to thwart the movements of the enemy, he attempts this action:

➢ Resist a Maneuver

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Agility
Opposition ability:	Agility

Comments: Resisting a maneuver allows the heroes to thwart an enemy's attempt to move one range farther or closer. The leader of the party attempts this action, which affects all members of the group when successful. A success means the party has matched the foe's maneuver with one of their own.
Mishap: The enemy's maneuver catches the heroes so off guard, they are automatically considered surprised for the next exchange of blows.

Quitting the Field

When the tide of battle turns and defeat seems inevitable, most thinking creatures attempt to flee. When one side wishes to quit the field of battle, they give up any further attempt to injure their foes and flee headlong.

In essence, fleeing from an enemy is nothing more than opening range. As such, heroes or characters attempt to quit the field using the change range action described earlier. Because of the single-minded nature of this flight, however, the action's difficulty falls one degree to *easy*.

Once a fleeing force manages to move beyond visual range, it has escaped. Normally, escaping may require one or more attempts to open range. If, however, the other side does not wish to pursue, escape is automatic, regardless of range.

Should the attackers wish to prevent the enemy's retreat, they need only continue making change range actions to close the distance, countering the attempts to withdraw.

Step Three: Hero Attacks

A hero can attempt an attack action at any range of combat except visual. Unlike maneuvering, in which their leader attempts the action, attacks at most ranges are made by each hero against a foe.

The type of weapon a hero can use to attack an enemy depends on the range of the encounter. At melee range, for example, fighters may exchange blows with swords, axes, or similar melee weapons. Farther away—at near or far missile range—they may rely upon missile weapons, such as bows, or thrown weapons, like spears. Appendix Two, "Arms and Armor," lists the various weapons available. Of course, magical attacks can come into play at nearly any range (see Chapter Five).

When a hero wishes to attack an enemy, he attempts the attack action appropriate to the range. There are various similarities between attacks at personal and melee range, as well as between those at near and far missile range.

➢ Personal or Melee Attack

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Strength
Opposition ability:	Endurance

Comments: Attacks at personal range consist of blows between two people

locked in a brawl or wrestling match. Such close combat can involve only natural weapons (fists, claws, fangs, and such) or *very light* melee weapons (daggers, etc.).

Melee attacks occur between individuals fighting with swords, axes, and similar melee or thrown weapons.

The *average* difficulty assumes a more or less even fight, with neither side at a disadvantage.

Mishap: The hero has left himself open to a quick strike by his enemy. As such, he must immediately defend himself against a free counterattack by his foe. This attack takes place outside the normal combat sequence and does not prevent the enemy from making his normal counterattack (if he has not already done so).

➢ Missile Attack

Difficulty:	Average (8) or Challenging (12)
Action ability:	Dexterity
Opposition ability:	Agility

Comments: A near missile attack is of *average* difficulty, while one at far missile range becomes *challenging*, due to the greater distance between the heroes and the enemy. Of course, if one side has an advantage over the other in this combat scene, the Narrator should alter the difficulty further.

Combatants can attempt attacks at near missile range with both thrown and missile weapons but can use only the latter at far missile range.

Mishap: The hero has inadvertently allowed a quick strike by his enemy and must immediately defend himself against a free counterattack, which takes place outside of the normal combat sequence. In addition to the free attack, the enemy also makes his normal counterattack.

➢ Artillery Attack

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Dexterity
Opposition ability:	Agility

Comments: An attack at the widest combat range assumes that the heroes are firing artillery at a group of enemies or a large target, not at a specific individual or small target. If the artillerist wants to attempt a more exact attack, the difficulty increases. (Artillery weapons include such massive arms as catapults and bombards.)

Mishap: The attacker's weapon malfunctions, requiring repair before he can use it again. The Narrator should base the difficulty of the repair action (and the time it takes) on the value of the Dragons card responsible for the mishap: A low card indicates a minor mishap easily fixable in four or five minutes, while a high card implies severe damage, which will require hours to remedy.

Step Four: Determine Enemy's Wounds

A successful attack means a hero has defied his enemy's resistance, dodge attempts, and the other factors represented by the action's opposition value. Whether he was able to wound his enemy, and the severity of that resulting injury, depends on two factors.

The first of these is the weapon itself. Obviously, all else being equal, it hurts a whole lot more to be hit by a battle axe or a war hammer than it does to be poked with a kitchen knife. The "Arms and Armor" table in Appendix Two offers a *damage rating* for each type of weapon, which indicates relative lethality.

The other aspect governing the severity of a wound is the attacking character's Strength (for melee weapons) or Agility (for thrown or missile weapons or artillery). Again, all things being equal, it hurts a character much more when a burly warrior hits him than when a scrawny sorcerer connects.

At this time, players calculate the amount of damage they have inflicted upon their enemies. However, the penalties from these wounds are not actually applied until after the counterattack step, to allow for the enemy's simultaneous counterattacks.

Damage Points

Players rate the severity of a wound in *damage points.* The more damage points an attack inflicts, the deadlier it is.

A given attack causes a number of potential damage points equal to the attacker's Strength score (or Agility, in the case of thrown or missile weapons or artillery) plus the damage rating of the weapon itself. In the case of fisticuffs and wrestling, when the combatants use no weapons, the attack inflicts potential damage points equal to the attacker's Strength score alone.

For example, say the mighty warrior Kalan has engaged a mercenary in battle. Kalan attacks with his scimitar and achieves an action score high enough to land a blow. The potential damage from this attack equals Kalan's Strength score (7) plus the damage rating of the scimitar (+5). Thus, Kalan's flashing blade inflicts a total of 12 potential damage points whenever it hits.

Armor and Shields

The previous section used the phrase "potential damage points" because many characters and some monsters wear armor and employ shields to protect themselves from attack damage. In game terms, these items offer protection by reducing the number of damage points an attack inflicts. Just as a weapon has a damage rating, a shield or suit of armor has a *defense rating,* also listed in Appendix Two.

Say that Kalan takes up battle with the mercenary warrior, inflicting 12 potential damage points on his foe. Unfortunately for Kalan, this character wears chain mail armor (with a defense rating of –3) and carries a kite shield (with a defense rating of –2). Thus, the mercenary's armor and shield block 5 potential damage points, leaving him to suffer only 7 actual damage points in the end.

A shield's or suit of armor's defense rating wards a number of damage points equal to its defense rating *per attack.* So, if Kalan and a companion had faced the mercenary in the last exchange, each inflicting 12 damage points upon him, that character's total defense rating of (–5) applies to each blow, leaving him to suffer two 7-point wounds.

In most cases, both armor and shields offer protection from any type of conventional (nonmagical) attack. At personal range, however, shields become ineffective—they cannot come into play in such a tight range.

Record Keeping

Once players and Narrators determine the number of damage points from the heroes' attacks that actually penetrate the targets' armor and shields, they should note the injuries for reference after the counterattack phase (below).

Despite any injury the heroes inflicted in this exchange of blows, the foes conduct their simultaneous counterattack before technically suffering the damage points.

Step Five: Enemy Counterattacks

For the purpose of this discussion, a counterattack is assumed to be an attack by creatures or other characters on the heroes and their allies.

In order to keep the focus of the game on the heroes and their actions, players and Narrators resolve counterattacks as the heroes' attempts to defend against enemy assaults. Thus, the Narrator never attempts a "counterattack action" for the enemies to see whether they hit their targets. Should the hero successfully defend himself, the counterattack misses. If not, the counterattack has found its mark.

As with attacks, each hero in combat makes his own attempt to avoid damage from a counterattack. (The Narrator uses his judgment to determine the foes' targets. If the enemies are outnumbered, some heroes may not need to defend themselves at all—the foes, like heroes, can usually attack only one target at a time.) The nature of counterattack defense actions depends on the current combat range.

➢ Personal or Melee Defense

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Endurance
Opposition ability: Strength

Comments: A hero attempts a personal defense action to protect himself from a foe's natural weapons (fists, claws, fangs, and such) or *very light* melee weapons (daggers, etc.) in a brawl or wrestling match. Shields prove too bulky to provide any defense at personal range, although armor functions normally.

Melee defense actions involve the hero resisting melee and thrown weapons, such as swords and axes. Shields and armor provide their normal defense.

If the two combatants are not evenly matched, the Narrator should adjust the action's difficulty accordingly.
Mishap: The hero has left himself vulnerable to a quick strike by his enemy. As such, he must immediately defend himself against a second counterattack, which takes place outside the normal combat sequence.

➢ Missile Defense

Difficulty: Average (8) or Easy (4)
Action ability: Agility
Opposition ability: Dexterity

Comments: Due to the greater distance between combatants, defending oneself at far missile range is easier than at near missile range: Aiming bows at this distance becomes harder for the enemy (just as it would for the hero). The Narrator should also adjust the action's difficulty if one side in this exchange has the other at a disadvantage.

Heroes may find themselves forced to defend against either thrown or missile weapons at near missile range. However, enemies at far missile range can use only the latter; thrown weapons would fall short.
Mishap: The enemy has gotten in a quick strike against the hero, forcing him to immediately defend himself against a free counterattack outside the normal combat sequence.

➢ Artillery Defense

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Agility
Opposition ability: Dexterity

Comments: The *average* action difficulty assumes that the enemy is firing artillery at a group of enemies or a large target, not at an individual or small target. This defense action becomes *easy* when the artillerist seeks to pinpoint a more exact target.
Mishap: The hero has opened himself up to a quick strike by his enemy and must defend himself immediately against another counterattack. This counterattack takes place outside of the normal combat sequence.

Step Six: Determine Heroes' Wounds

Players determine the wounds their heroes received, in damage points, exactly as they resolved the damage their heroes inflicted earlier. Everyone should note this damage for reference during the next phase of combat.

Step Seven: Resolution of Battle

After players have determined how much their heroes have wounded their enemies as well as the extent of their own wounds, they must determine how much these injuries have affected the combatants.

Hero Injuries

A hero's wounds force his player to lose some of the cards in his Hand of Fate. The player cannot replace these cards by drawing until the hero's wounds have healed—those with wounded heroes must play with fewer cards than usual.

The player of a wounded hero must give up cards with a total value equal to or greater than the number of damage points the hero sustained. The reduction in cards reflects the effect of the injury on the hero.

For example, say the valiant Kalan has suffered 8 damage points (after applying defense ratings for his shield and armor).

If he has an Eight card in his hand, he can discard it and end the process right there, playing with one less card until his wound has healed. By the same token, he might be forced to discard two cards, say a Five and a Three, to meet this requirement. That would put him two cards down until he regains full health.

Should the player find himself forced to give up more points than the actual value of the wound, he doesn't get new cards as "change." In the example, if Kalan's player had to give up two Five cards to satisfy his 8-point wound, he would simply lose the extra points.

When a player gives up his last card, his hero is assumed to have fallen unconscious. Any subsequent attack will kill the hero. Only the healing magic of the mystics can save a hero attacked while unconscious (see Chapter Five).

The Wounding Trump Rule

One should never overlook the power of a hero's physical stamina and mental determination to help him resist the effects of a battle injury. Therefore, the Suits of Helms and Hearts, which represent Endurance and Spirit, are considered trump suits in resolving heroes' wounds. Whenever a player uses any Helms or Hearts card to account for his hero's injury, he can flip the top card on the Fate Deck and apply its value to that of the one he just played.

For example, say Kalan suffered 24 damage points in an exchange of blows. Such a devastating blow might ordinarily leave him crippled for an extended period of play. However, Kalan's player has a pair of trump in his hand. He plays the first, the One of Helms, flipping the top card of the Fate Deck to reveal the Seven of Swords. His 1-point card now wards off 8 of Kalan's 24 damage points. He next plays his Three of Hearts, turning over the Five of Helms from the deck. Because this is also a trump suit, he turns yet another card, revealing the Five of Orbs.

All told, Kalan's player has discarded only 4 points from his hand and yet has managed to account for 21 damage points through the use of trump. He now discards a third card from his hand to settle his remaining 3 damage points, and play continues.

Wounding Mishaps

The Suit of Dragons represents mishap the way the Suit of Swords symbolizes Strength. Therefore, using a Dragons card to satisfy the requirements of an injury tells the player that his hero has suffered a particularly severe blow.

For the duration of the battle, players must consider this hero as fighting to remain conscious. All of his ability scores fall 1 point during this period. Additional wounding mishaps can reduce the hero's ability scores further, at the Narrator's discretion. After combat, the hero regains his lost points at a rate of 1 point in each ability per fifteen minutes of game time.

Character and Creature Injuries

As no one holds a Hand of Fate for characters and creatures, the method for applying combat damage to them differs slightly from hero damage assessment. It's even a little simpler.

The Narrator assumes that each character or creature can sustain a number of damage points equal to his Endurance (or Physique) score before being rendered unconscious. When the total number of damage points inflicted on a character (cumulative) has reduced his Endurance score to zero or less, he falls unconscious. Any subsequent attack will kill him. This system applies even if the character or creature has fought as the heroes' ally.

Other Actions During Combat

Of course, there is often more to combat than simply two people hitting each other with swords or exchanging volleys of arrows. This becomes especially true when a Narrator is blessed with especially imaginative players.

Suppose that Kalan, facing a draconian, decides he is clearly outmatched. Therefore, he chooses not to

attack the creature with his scimitar, but attempts to knock it down and flee into the night. How does that work?

In most cases, anything the players want their heroes to do in combat can be resolved fairly easily as routine actions. (See "Creating an Action" in Chapter Three.) However, the Narrator must remember two key factors before assigning difficulty to such actions.

Creating a Combat Action

First, he should remember the overall nature of any battle. Combat is generally a very confusing and fast-paced environment. Something a Narrator might term an *easy* action at other times may well prove an *average* or even *challenging* one in the midst of combat. This fact becomes especially true in melee or personal combat or with very delicate work. Picking a lock, for example, seems much harder if a hero has to worry about being hit in the back by an arrow or wild swing.

The Narrator also should remember, when resolving other combat actions, to emphasize that they should not be too complex and they have to happen fast. In most cases, an exchange of blows lasts just a minute—a hero can do only so much in just sixty seconds!

These two considerations clearly limit the sorts of activities a hero can attempt during combat. Below is a list of actions common to combat situations. It should give Narrators an idea of what heroes can and can't do during a minute or so of battle. (The Narrator must decide whether the action succeeds automatically or else determine its difficulty and its action and opposition abilities based on the circumstances.)

- **Change weapons:** A hero returns his current weapon to its sheath (or drops it) and readies another.
- **Ready an item for use:** If a hero can reach the object in question fairly easily—if it's not buried at the bottom of a loaded backpack—he can retrieve it and ready it during the space of one combat exchange. Hard-to-get-at items may take longer than one minute to ready.
- **Use an item of magic:** Heroes can use most magical items once per minute instead of making a normal attack. Of course, some items may prove difficult to employ, while others —like enchanted swords—are always functioning. They don't require the hero to take time to activate them.
- **Break down a door:** A hero who succeeds at this action, mentioned in the last chapter, takes a minute to break down the door. Should the action fail, the hero has still spent a minute throwing his shoulder against the door before giving up.
- **Something else?** Other actions are possible during combat, of course. The Narrator should use the above ideas as guidelines to decide what a hero can accomplish in one minute.

Each of these actions forces a hero to skip an attack, though he still may defend himself normally from counterattacks. If an action seems especially tricky, the Narrator can rule that the hero will have a harder time protecting himself from counterattacks, increasing the difficulty of defense actions by one or even two degrees.

Special Combat Situations

Combat doesn't always go according to plan. Sometimes events occur in the heat of battle that pit two heroes against each other—perhaps one of them has fallen under an Evil spell that allows an outside force to dictate his actions. Or, aggression might spring up between two characters, who stage a duel to decide the better swordsman.

Hero vs. Hero Combat

Whether the fight is accidental or intentional, a hero involved in a fight against another hero should attempt his normal combat actions.

However, if surprise is a possibility, neither hero should bother with the action to gain surprise. Instead, both should attempt to avoid being sur-

prised. Should one fail, he is surprised. If both fail or both succeed, combat continues normally.

Narrators should handle the ensuing battle in the simplest way. Each hero attempts a normal attack action followed by a counterattack defense action. (This sequence actually illustrates *two* combat exchanges, as each hero gets a chance to strike his opponent both as the "attacker" and as the "counterattacker.") Afterward, both heroes resolve their wounds normally.

Character vs. Character Combat

The guidelines offered in the "Character 'Actions' " section of Chapter Three apply to combat actions as well.

After Combat

The battle finally ends—one group of combatants has vanquished the other. Before the adventure continues with the next scene, the players and Narrator must tie up a few loose ends.

The Coup de Grâce

At the end of a battle, the winning side may opt to go about the field of battle administering killing blows to foes who have been merely knocked out. Of course, such behavior is not the sort of thing heroes—or even honorable villains—would do. If the fallen happen to be dangerous beasts or monsters, however, the heroes may consider the *coup de grâce* essential to protecting their backs later in the adventure.

Narrators should note that villains, even Evil ones, do not automatically kill their opponents after a battle. Many less intelligent foes simply don't think of it, while others depart hurriedly after battle in a rush to accomplish their next goal. Thus, even if all the heroes fall in battle, chances are the victors will simply leave them for dead.

Healing and First Aid

Mystic healing, covered in the next chapter, can greatly increase the rate at which a hero or character recovers.

However, even without the aid of magic, heroes can offer basic medical care to the wounded immediately after a battle, using the following action:

➢ Offer First Aid

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Dexterity
Opposition ability:	None

Comments: Successfully offering first aid restores one card to the hand of a player with an injured hero. If this card restores the player's Hand of Fate to its normal size, his hero has been fully healed. Those who are still short a card (or more) require more medical attention or must let time work its wonders.

A hero can give first aid to himself (as above) or to a character—the latter by flipping over the top card of the Fate Deck and restoring to the character a number of points equal to its value. However, one can receive only a single attempt at first aid, immediately following a fight in which he lost at least one card (or suffered any damage, in the case of characters).

Mishap: The "healer" has actually made the wound worse, forcing the hero to discard his lowest card, just as if he had been injured anew.

Natural Healing

The process of healing from severe battle injuries can be slow and tedious, so most adventuring parties depend upon the skills of a mystic to keep them healthy. Sometimes, however, magical healing is not available and heroes (or characters) must rest, relying on Nature to stitch their wounds.

Natural healing occurs at a rate of one card per week of rest and relative inactivity. If an individual stays confined to bed and undertakes no stressful actions, he automatically regains one lost card at the week's end.

Should the hero be forced to undertake moderate activity, such as travel, his body might not be able to heal itself. To determine if such a hero heals successfully, his player flips the top card on the Fate Deck at the end of the week. If this card is equal to or less than his Endurance score, or if it is from the Suit of Helms, the hero has healed and may replace one lost card.

A hero forced to undertake any form of major physical activity, including combat, more than once or twice during the course of the week cannot benefit from natural healing. The only way that such an adventurer will recover fully from his wounds is through the auspices of mysticism.

Spoils of Victory

Heroes might seek to loot the bodies of their fallen enemies. In some cases, taking such spoils of victory is acceptable:

- When the enemies are nothing more than monsters or honorless thugs;
- If the fallen foes clearly used valuable items of magic; or
- When the heroes believe their foes held information or objects that could help them reach their goal.

If, however, players seem tempted to go too far, the Narrator must step in with some guidance. For instance, most honorable heroes, especially knights, should refuse to loot the bodies of the fallen—particularly in the case of an enemy who fought well and with honor of his own. Such characters deserve as fine a funeral as can be arranged under the current circumstances. After all, even the Dark Knight Steel Brightblade personally returned the bodies of young Solamnic Knights Tanin and Sturm Majere to their parents for burial and recited the Prayer for the Dead at the gravesite.

It is also considered somewhat less than heroic to loot the bodies of one's comrades out of mere greed. Anyone who has fought beside you deserves the respect shown by a decent funeral.

Of course, players will inevitably find gray areas in matters of spoils. In all cases, the players must let their heroes' nature and demeanor guide them, with the Narrator always having the final say.

CHAPTER FIVE

"How many spells do you have?" Steel asked, shouting over the rush of wind in their ears. "Are they powerful? What do they do?"

"I may not speak of such matters," Palin answered, clutching the spellbook under one arm. "It is forbidden."

Steel looked back at him, suddenly grinned. "The hell it is. You don't have that many, do you?"

Palin smiled. "They are very complex. And I didn't have much time to study them."

"How many do you have?"

"One. But," Palin added gravely, "it's a good one."

—Flying to do battle with Chaos, Dragons of Summer Flame

Krynn's history tells the story of the battle of heroism and virtue against darkness and chaos. To be sure, knights and armies have played their role in this saga, defending towers and holding out against impossible odds. However, as the above passage illustrates, one should never overlook the part that magic has played in the forging of history.

The Old Magic

Long ago, the gods created three moons and set them in the sky over Krynn. Each of the three gods of magic—Good, Evil, and Neutral—took one of these moons as an abode and gifted the world with his own special variety of magic.

At the close of the Fourth Age, however, this triad of deities withdrew from the affairs of the mortal world along with the rest of Krynn's pantheon. In the wake of their departure, the world's magic seemed to flicker out like a candle flame snuffed by a sudden wind.

In the last hours of the Fourth Age, Palin Majere, a young mage of the White Robes, felt terrified by the loss. Hesitating, he asked the great god Paladine (in the form of the wizard Fizban) whether any magic remained in the world. The god responded by saying: "Not as you know it. There may be other magic. It is up to you to find it."

Taking this advice to heart, Palin set about determining what supernatural powers might exist in a world without gods. In conjunction with the other members of the Last Conclave of Wizards, he discovered that the newest magic of Krynn was also the oldest.

When the god Reorx fashioned the world, all the gods imbued it with magical energies. It is this divine power that also gave life to the dragons and other magical creatures. When the gods departed in the wake of the Chaos War, their radiance remained behind. Though the powers of the priests and mages faded from the world, it lingered on.

Compared to the Orders of Magic, which the gods taught their chosen mages during the Age of Dreams, this primordial power was difficult to harness and seemed much less powerful. It took three of the finest minds on Krynn—the Master of the Tower, the archmage Palin Majere, and the mysterious Shadow Sorcerer—to master this arcane power.

From this Last Conclave, knowledge of *sorcery* (as this new ancient magic became known) trickled out to the rest of the world. It did not take long for Palin to found a great Academy of Sorcery, where those interested in the magical arts could come to study under the skilled hands of master sorcerers. (Chapter Three of *Dusk or Dawn* offers

more details on the Academy.)

At the current time of Fifth Age campaigns (the year 31sc), only a handful of people understand the theory and practice of the new sorcery. Heroes who can wield this magic are practitioners of a rare and exciting art.

The New Magic

Just as the Fifth Age is a time of primordial sorcery, so too is it an era shaped by the discovery of a new form of magic. Called *mysticism* by it practitioners, it is the power of life and the energy of the heart. Where some have called sorcery a cold and hard magic, mysticism remains generally warm and nurturing.

Exactly when the powers of mysticism first manifested themselves on Krynn has become a subject of some debate. However, none argue the fact that it was the Hero of the Lance and priestess Goldmoon who first quantified and perfected the use of this power.

After the departure of her goddess—Mishakal, patron of healing—and the death of her husband and daughter, Goldmoon experienced an epiphany: She found the strength within herself to heal a young dwarf badly wounded in a battle between two green dragons. After becoming aware of this power, she traveled to the island of Schallsea, site of a once-powerful magical godmark called the Silver Stair. There, with the help of a wise old sage and band of dwarves and other followers, she began to build the fastness that would become the Citadel of Light. Goldmoon's dream was to create an example to inspire the races of Krynn to live together in peace and harmony.

In the years that followed, Goldmoon felt the power within her growing stronger and stronger. She became sensitive to a warm radiance that seemed to emanate from within her—and from within all living things. In time, she learned how to exert her will and control these energy fields.

Having mastered the art of mysticism, Goldmoon began to teach others the skill. At first, its practice was confined to Schallsea, but before long, those who had come to study under Goldmoon—especially former priests and clerics of the departed gods—began traveling the world and taking on students of their own. (Chapter Three of *Dusk or Dawn* offers more details on the Citadel of Light.)

Using Magic

From the standpoint of game mechanics, sorcery and mysticism work in more or less the same way. Only heroes with an ability code of "A" or "B" in Reason have the training to cast sorcerous spells. Similarly, only those with a Spirit code of "A" or "B" can employ the powers of mysticism.

Of those individuals eligible to practice magic, only those with high scores in the appropriate ability can gain much benefit from their spellcasting. Those with lesser scores may have received magical training enabling them to cast the occasional spell, but their lack of natural aptitude makes this effort fatiguing and difficult for them.

The Role of Magic

The amazing power of sorcery and mysticism makes it possible for heroes to accomplish feats that would be impossible for the common man. However, this is not a power without limits. Narrators and players must consider some important checks and balances in the use of both sorcery and mysticism.

Invocation Time

Magic is difficult to use. Only heroes with exceptionally high ability scores and codes can cast spells fast enough to be effective. To be sure, many heroes have an

understanding of magic; they may cast minor spells, but they find the whole process far too difficult to make regular attempts practical. In most cases, lesser sorcerers and mystics will find themselves forced to spend much time and effort casting even the simplest spells. Such heroes undoubtedly ought to depend more upon their swords than their spells.

Other Common Limitations

Practitioners of either sorcery or mysticism find themselves faced with certain limitations in addition to invocation time. Some restrictions affect both types of magic, while others apply to just one.

Words and Gestures

Most sorcerers invoke words of power to help them focus the energy of Krynn's primordial magic while casting a spell. Similarly, many of those attempting to harness their own spiritual energies intone personal mantras or chants.

The arcane arts may not require magical words and gestures for successful spellcasting, but most practitioners find such behavior helpful—and the concepts make for colorful role-playing. Because the speaking of these words becomes so vital to many workers of magic, a hero suddenly deprived of speech finds it much more difficult to channel the diffuse energies around and within him—he might not be able to do it at all. In fact, some societies cut out the tongues or hands of sorcerers and mystics who have used their power for Evil.

Time Travel

The River of Time flows unendingly, often torrentially, from Krynn's past. The power of wizards from past ages actually tapped into this current, enabling others to travel in time.

However, magic in the Fifth Age is not fueled by the machinations of the gods, as was the power of past ages. It is an integral part of a world moving forward in time from the dawn of all things. It is grounded in the spirits of those who live in the here-and-now. It moves with the world on its journey, never against it or beyond it. The cosmic forces that hold Krynn and its people to their path in the fabric of time and space also hold its arcane power to the same path.

In short, magic cannot be used for any form of time travel. The closest spellcasters of the Fifth Age can come to traveling in time is using divination magic. Diviners may see events that transpired long ago or prophesy those that may yet come to pass. But they neither travel in time nor in any way affect that which has been or will be.

Spell Points

Spellcasting is a demanding practice. Channeling and expending magical energy saps both mind and body. To reflect this toll, the SAGA rules employ a spell point system to govern the number of spells sorcerers and mystics can cast each day. Majestic, impressive spells deplete these points rapidly, while lesser magics allow casters to conserve their allotment of spell points.

As spell point totals derive from a hero's Reason or Spirit ability score, only exceptionally gifted people will generate enough points to make spellcasting possible. A player determines his sorcerer's total daily sorcery points by squaring his Reason score (multiplying it by itself). Thus, the great wizard Palin Majere, with a Reason of 10, has 100 points available to him each day (10×10). Players of mystics square their heroes' Spirit score for their total daily mysticism points. Thus, a mystic with a Spirit of 7 has 49 points available to him every day. Rare heroes with high Reason and Spirit scores accumulate both sorcery and mysticism points and, therefore, can wield both types of magic.

How many spells can a hero cast with 100 or 49 points? The number of spell points required for casting is equal to the spell's difficulty rating—just like an action's difficulty, as explained in Chapter Three. Full details on the use and recovery of spell points are offered later in this chapter.

The Scope of Sorcery

Without a doubt, the greatest difference between the old Orders of Magic and the magic that springs directly from primordial Krynn is its effect on living creatures.

During the Age of Starbirth, celestial magic glowed in the molten rock Reorx shaped into the planet Krynn on his great Forge. The dragons, formed by Reorx from the world's metals, were born to the magic of Krynn. Other races, such as the Irda (ancient ogres) and elves, were gifted with this magic by the gods themselves.

But at the dawn of the world, magic was not available to all. Eventually, with the assistance of the three gods of magic, nonmagical creatures like humans learned the wizardly arts, called the Orders of Magic. But now, without the gods to sustain their arcane Orders, the magic born of the Forge can no longer directly affect the living.

Magical creatures like those mentioned above still enjoy the benefits of Krynn's primeval magic, but only according to their ancestral gifts, not according to their wills. No sorcerer in the Fifth Age can restore life to the dead, heal the wounded, read another's thoughts, or directly strike down the living. Without the touch of the gods, any effect that involves a mental or biological process remains beyond the reach of even the most powerful sorcerers.

This limitation frustrates Fifth Age sorcerers who remember casting such spells in the previous age. A good example is the simple charm spell Raistlin Majere once used on a gully dwarf maiden named Bupu. Because its magic affects the mind of its subject, this once simple spell lies utterly beyond the power of any sorcerer on Krynn today.

Spells like the charm mentioned above are not unknown in the world, however. Certain items of magic created in a past age under the Orders of High Sorcery still retain their life-related functions. Sorcerers wielding these items can perform magic they could not create on their own.

In addition, individuals who have mastered the power of mysticism can wield such life-magic quite readily.

The Scope of Mysticism

The energy of the living spirit powers the forces of mysticism. This magic is created and renewed by processes of life and emotion and faith. To harness the energies living in himself, a mystic must achieve a state of inner harmony and emotional purity. When he has, the power of mysticism can do wonders.

Just as sorcery cannot affect the living, however, mysticism does not influence lifeless matter. No mystic can cause fire to spring from his fingertips or raise a wall of stone from the earth. But mystic magic can have profound effects on all living things.

Casting Spells

Using sorcery or mysticism requires the utmost concentration and mental effort by the spellcaster. Most adopt hand gestures and words of power or personal mantras to aid this concentration.

In game terms, casting a spell is an action, just like breaking down a door or picking a lock. The action ability for all attempts at sorcery is Reason, while mystic actions require Spirit. Before attempting the action, the player figures out his hero's spell difficulty (which depends on the desired effect of the spell, as described below). Then he plays a card to attempt the spell action, enjoying a trump bonus for Moons cards (sorcery) or Hearts (mysticism).

Just as there are various types of actions, as described in Chapter Three, wielders of magic encounter different varieties of spells as well.

Unresisted Spells

In some cases, a sorcerer or mystic will cast a spell without a specific target. For example, a spectramancer (a sorcerer whose magic deals with light) may wish to cause his quarterstaff to glow while he

explores a dark cave. Because the staff offers no opposition, the action score associated with the casting depends only on the difficulty of the spell.

Of course, cases may arise in which a user of magic doesn't realize his spell faces opposition. For example, a sorcerer might cast the above light spell on an object that was, for some reason, resistant to magic. The spectramancer, believing his spell should work, might meet with disappointment when the Narrator informs him that it failed.

Often a hero or character casts a spell not on an inanimate object, but on a person or creature who is aware of the effort and does not wish to prevent the spell from taking effect. Prime examples of such spells include a mystic's healing magic. When the spell's target is a willing recipient, it is unresisted.

Resisted Spells

Spells cast at living creatures—a sorcerer's offensive fire spell or a mystic's sleep spell—are considered the equivalent of opposed actions. The unwilling target of a sorcery spell uses Perception as his opposition ability to avoid the effects. A target of an unwanted mystic spell uses his Presence to oppose it.

In rare cases, a Narrator might allow a spell's target to resist the magic using another ability score. For example, if a sorcerer magically poisons a hero's glass of ale, the hero may attempt to resist the spell's effects using Endurance.

Should a hero attempt to cast a resisted spell upon multiple targets at once, he need only overcome the highest opposition ability score in the group, not all of their scores added together.

Casting Multiple Spells

Because the effects of a spell can linger for a while, it is possible for a wielder of magic to have more than one spell in operation at a time. This ability has its limits, however—the act of maintaining a spell over a long duration still requires some mental effort from the caster.

In game terms, a hero with an ability

code of "A" in Reason or Spirit can maintain up to three spells of the appropriate type (sorcerous or mystic) at once. Heroes with a "B" code can keep only one spell in operation at a time. The caster can terminate an existing spell voluntarily any time he wishes to cast a new one.

For example, suppose a mystic with a Spirit code of "A" casts a spell to increase his Strength score for twelve hours. In addition, he uses a similar spell to increase his Agility. Shortly afterward, he finds himself forced to enter a region of toxic fumes and casts a third spell to enable him to breathe normally. While exploring the poisonous mists, a creature attacks and injures him. If he wishes to use a spell to heal his wounds, he must cancel one of his three existing spells.

Designing Spells

The SAGA rules allow heroes to cast any type of spell they want, not just ones from a master spell list. Players whose heroes employ the powers of sorcery and mysticism can decide on the spot exactly the effect that they wish to manifest. The spell's difficulty depends on its strength and general effect. For instance, a spell that throws a small bolt of fire at a single goblin will prove much easier to cast than one that raises a wall of fire before an advancing cadre of goblins.

The members of the Last Conclave knew that magic was still present in their world, but for a long time they didn't understand why wizards' spells failed. Finally, they realized that the Orders' concept of spell memorization had become useless with the departure of the gods of magic, who first taught wizards this system so long ago.

The priests of old felt equally frustrated at the dawn of the Fifth Age. The gods used to bless spiritual folk with the ability to cast specific spells, but now the departed deities could not hear the prayers of the faithful. But the priestess Goldmoon, like the sorcerers of the Last Conclave, ultimately managed to put aside the old methods and find a new way to harness the magic of Krynn.

In the Fifth Age, mystics and sorcerers don't pray for spells or memorize them—they *construct* them. A wielder of magic can visualize all the layers of a spell—its effect, duration, and so on—and, through force of mind or spirit, shape the necessary magical energies into the form he sees. Today, the Citadel of Light and the Academy of Sorcery teach these internal constructionist techniques to the followers of their distinct disciplines.

In game terms, a player builds his hero's spell by selecting its various properties from the tables in this section. Each property has a listed difficulty rating. By totaling the difficulties for each aspect of the spell, the player determines the spell's final difficulty, in spell points. To succeed at a spellcasting action, the hero must achieve this total as his action score as well (higher if resisted). Of course, the lower the total difficulty score, the easier the spell is for someone to cast.

Spellcasters should remember that *most magic meets with resistance*; like opposed actions, it can be blocked by the target's abilities, such as Perception (for sorcerous spells) or Presence (mystic spells). So the caster should direct more spell points toward the casting than the spell's actual required total number of points.

A complete spell must have each of the following properties:

1. An invocation time
2. An effective range
3. An area of effect
4. A duration
5. A spell effect

Step One: Invocation Time

The first, and often most important, property of every spell is the length of time it takes someone to cast it. Casting any spell requires some amount of invocation time, even if only a moment for a quick hand gesture or the utterance of a single word of power.

The longer a sorcerer or mystic takes to invoke a spell, the easier it becomes

to cast it correctly (therefore, the lower the difficulty rating). Those who try to rush their magic are prone to errors and mishaps.

The following chart indicates the difficulty rating (in spell points) associated with a spell's invocation time:

Invocation Time	Difficulty
30 minutes	1 point
20 minutes	2 points
10 minutes	3 points
1 minute	4 points
Instant	5 points

While a longer invocation time makes a spell easier to cast, it also gives others a chance to thwart the caster's efforts. If a sorcerer or mystic finds himself forced to take some action (such as defending himself from an attack) or suffers any injury during the invocation period, the casting process is disrupted. The would-be caster loses half the spell points that would have been required to cast the spell and gains nothing for his efforts. To cast the spell now, he must begin anew.

Step Two: Range

The second aspect casters must consider with every spell is its intended range. Spells required to function at very long ranges carry a much greater chance of failure and demand more effort (spell points). For instance, healing a comrade's wounds becomes much easier if you can lay your hands upon him than if you must heal him from some distance.

Range	Difficulty
Personal range	1 point
Melee range	2 points
Near missile range	3 points
Far missile range	4 points
Artillery range	5 points

Spells designed to function at personal range require the caster to actually touch the target. This range also applies to spells a hero casts upon himself.

Step Three: Duration

The effects of some spells are over almost as soon as they have begun, while others linger for minutes—even an hour—after casting. Of course, the longer a caster expects a spell to remain in effect, the more difficult it becomes to cast. The chart below indicates the effect of a spell's duration on its casting difficulty.

Spell Duration	Difficulty
Instant	1 point
1 minute	2 points
15 minutes	3 points
30 minutes	4 points
1 hour	5 points

In previous ages, priests and wizards cast spells known to last beyond the duration listed here. Such spells, however, benefitted from the intercession of the three gods of magic or other deities. In the Age of Mortals, even the most potent wielders of magic cannot maintain a spell for more than an hour, though research on this matter continues at the Academy of Sorcery and the Citadel of Light.

Rumors circulate through the halls of the Academy and the Citadel of ways to cast spells that remain permanently in effect. However, no technique is known to have proven successful; current methods allow casters to use magic to do a job, but then the energies dissipate again.

Step Four: Area of Effect

The fourth aspect of a spell's design concerns the amount of area its effects cover. Spells designed to affect a single individual prove much easier to cast than those intended to destroy dozens.

One of the three tables in this section can help players assign a difficulty rating to this spell property, depending on whether the spell targets individuals, a spatial area, or a period a certain amount of time from now.

'Group' Areas of Effect. The chart on the next page is appropriate for spells that affect people, from an individual to a group. The targets must remain

more or less together, however, not scattered across an open field.

Area of Effect	Difficulty
Individual	1 point
Couple	2 points
Small group (5 people)	3 points
Large group (10 people)	4 points
Crowd (25 people)	5 points

'Place' Areas of Effect. If the caster can better define a spell's area of effect in terms of spatial size, the player should consult the following chart to determine this property's difficulty rating.

Area of Effect	Difficulty
Individual	1 point
Small room	2 points
Large room	3 points
Small house	4 points
Large house	5 points

'Temporal' Areas of Effect. Divination spells sometimes look into the future or past in their quest for information. In such cases, the number of hours (or weeks) a sorcerer has to reach backward or forward for the view dictates the spell's area of effect. Players should take care not to confuse a temporal area of effect with a spell's duration.

For example, the table below shows that a spell designed to let a hero see what happened on a given spot an hour ago would have a difficulty rating of 2 points. The same spell used to see the events of a month before would cost 5 points.

Area of Effect	Difficulty
1 minute	1 point
1 hour	2 points
1 day	3 points
1 week	4 points
1 month	5 points

From time to time, spells may come along with more unusual areas of effect. In such cases, the Narrator or player should use the above charts as guidelines to determine the difficulty.

Step Five: Effect

The most difficult aspect of a spell to quantify is its effect. Nevertheless, the following tables provide appropriate difficulty ratings for various spell types.

Numeric Adjustments. When a caster intends a spell to cause damage or offer defense against an attack, a player can rate the casting difficulty of its effects fairly easily.

Whenever a spell's sole purpose is to adjust either a damage or defense rating in combat, the additional difficulty is dictated by the value of the adjustment (either up or down), as indicated below. Spells designed to increase or decrease ability scores can use this chart, too.

Numeric Adjustment	Difficulty
+/– 1 to 2 points	1 point
+/– 3 to 5 points	2 points
+/– 6 to 9 points	3 points
+/– 10 to 14 points	4 points
+/– 15 to 20 points	5 points

In most cases, *spells designed to inflict damage on someone are not affected by armor or shields*—for both heroes *and* their enemies. Thus, if a pyromancer (a sorcerer who specializes in fire spells) hurls a 5-point bolt of flame at an enemy, his target suffers 5 damage points, whether he is buck naked or wearing full plate armor. After all, magic works in mysterious ways.

Healing Spells. One of the most valuable aspects of mystic magic is its curative ability. In game terms, this effect takes the form of returning lost cards to a hero's hand (or lost Endurance points to a character). When a hero casts a spell intended to heal someone, the number of cards (or Endurance points) to restore indicates the difficulty rating.

After a mystic successfully casts a healing spell, the player of the wounded hero may draw a new card(s) from the Fate Deck.

Healing Effect	Difficulty
1 card/point	1 point
2 cards/point	2 points
3 cards/point	3 points
4 cards/point	4 points
5 cards/point	5 points

However, the act of healing has its risks. Should the player of the healed hero happen to draw a Dragons card, a healing mishap has occurred. The Dragons card indicates that this spell has proven exceptionally taxing for the mystic: The healer must give up a number of mysticism points equal to the total value of the card(s) the player just drew to add to his Hand of Fate. This loss is in addition to the spell points he sacrificed to cast the spell in the first place.

If the healer does not have enough mysticism points available to "pay" for these cards in a mishap, he suffers a number of damage points equal to the surplus card value. Thus, a healer might render himself unconscious by suffering a mishap while attempting to heal a seriously wounded individual.

For example, say Goldmoon uses a spell action to restore one card of damage to the injured kender Belladonna. She must expend mysticism points equal to the spell's difficulty: For this example, say the total difficulty was 10 points. After spending the points, Goldmoon's player uses a high enough card to allow the action to succeed.

However, Belladonna's player draws the Seven of Dragons from the top of the Fate Deck! Goldmoon then must expend an additional 7 mysticism points to account for the extra fatigue associated with healing magic in a mishap. If, at the time, the mystic has only 4 spell points left, she would suffer 3 damage points, which her player would pay out from his Hand of Fate.

This additional mishap cost applies even to spells intended to cure oneself. Conditions that have not actually caused a victim to lose cards, such as a malady caused by a creature's special attack, carries no risk of mishap.

Other Spell Effects. If the spell effect does not seem as easily defined as the above examples, the Narrator assigns it a difficulty rating based on his assessment of the spell's desired outcome. Most such magics are cast with injurious or otherwise negative purposes; the table below lists some general degrees of spell effect, along with their associated numeric adjustments.

Nature of Spell Effect	Difficulty
Irritating (+/–1)	1 point
Troublesome (+/–2)	2 points
Hindering (+/–3)	3 points
Impeding (+/–4)	4 points
Painful (+/–5)	5 points

Obviously, the above terms are vague and subject to some interpretation. With a little experience, however, the Narrator can learn to make these judgment calls easily. However, if no obvious difficulty level presents itself, the Narrator can simply assign the spell effect a difficulty of 2 or 3 points and get on with play.

If the "effects" category doesn't seem to apply to a spell in question, just assign this property a minimum difficulty rating of 1 point.

Sample Spells

The following two examples illustrate the process by which a wielder of magic casts a spell. The first typifies the use of an unresisted spell (an unopposed action). The second sample shows how to construct a spell to cast upon a resisting target.

Just as warriors have favorite weapons, most sorcerers and mystics have preferred spells, too. Those playing magic-using heroes should keep copies of the spells they create, to speed play.

Billim's Bifrost Bridge

A force of draconians is pursuing a group of heroes led by the young sorcerer Billim. The heroes come to a great fissure, which they must cross in order to escape. Billim, skilled in the ability to

manipulate stone, furiously develops a magical solution: to create a crystal bridge spanning the chasm.

Time is of the essence, so Billim can afford to spend only one minute casting the spell, imparting a difficulty of 4. He wants to create the bridge right before him (melee range, difficulty of 2) and make it about the size of a large room (difficulty of 3). The bridge effect must last long enough for all the heroes to cross safely—but not so long that the draconians could use it: Billim's player calls for a one-minute duration (difficulty of 2). Lastly, the Narrator decides that the general spell effect has already been accounted for by the area of effect requirement. He assigns the category the minimum difficulty of 1.

The spell's total difficulty factor is:

Invocation (one minute)	4
Range (melee)	2
Area (large room)	3
Duration (one minute)	2
Spell effect (minimum)	1
Total difficulty	12

To successfully cast this unresisted spell, Billim must attempt a Reason action with a difficulty rating of 12. As the spell faces no opposition, Billim's player knows exactly what action score he needs to make his spell take effect.

Palin's Pyre

The following fire spell was one of the first that Palin Majere cast after he had begun to understand the use of primordial magic. While traveling south from Solace to the Tower of High Sorcery at Wayreth, Palin fell under attack by a troop of goblins. Unable to bargain with them, the wizard was forced to risk using the fire magic he did not fully understand in order to escape.

Palin had to act fast, so he relied on an instantaneous invocation time (difficulty of 5). His targets had drawn close (melee range, difficulty of 2), but he had many to deal with (ten targets, difficulty of 4). As with most combat spells, its duration was instantaneous (difficulty of 1). Lastly, Palin sought to deliver a fair amount of damage to his

targets (6 damage points, difficulty of 3). Such an injury seemed unlikely to actually kill the goblins—something the good-hearted Palin hoped to avoid—but almost certainly would drive them off.

The final difficulty of Palin's spell is:

Invocation (instant)	5
Range (melee)	2
Area (ten men)	4
Duration (instant)	1
Spell effect (+6 damage points)	3
Total difficulty	15

This fire spell presents a casting challenge. It requires a sorcerer to do little more than snap his fingers (hence the short invocation time), yet it inflicts significant damage on a large number of targets.

The real difficulty lies in the fact that the goblins can attempt to block this resisted spell with their Intellect scores of 3 (Intellect being a monster's related ability appropriate to Perception actions). Luckily, only the highest opposition score in the target group applies to the spell's difficulty, not the score of every member of the group. Therefore, to cast this successfully, Palin should expend 18 sorcery points and aim for that number as his action score as well.

Spell Points

Technically, every living creature has a small pool of magical energy to draw from: the primordial magic of Krynn (sorcery) and the energy of life (mysticism). However, those without training in either of these magical arts cannot actually make use of it.

The FIFTH AGE game reflects this energy using the concept of *spell points.* As stated earlier, there are two types of spell points: sorcery points and mysticism points. A spellcaster's spell point total equals the square of his Reason or Spirit score, whichever is appropriate. Players can write in their heroes' spell point totals in the empty boxes next to the appropriate ability on the hero sheet.

The following table indicates the points provided by a given ability score.

Ability Score	Total Spell Points
1	1 point
2	4 points
3	9 points
4	16 points
5	25 points
6	36 points
7	49 points
8	64 points
9	81 points

For characters and creatures with scores above 9, the progression on this chart continues. Thus, the number of sorcery points for a creature with a Reason score of 15 equals 15 ×15, or 225 points. Clearly, very intelligent creatures (like dragons) can draw from immense magical reserves.

Expending Spell Points

As heroes cast spells, they reduce the number of spell points available to them. The number of points it costs to cast a given spell is equal to the spell's difficulty rating, as described earlier.

However, the opposition value of a resisting spell target is not included in the basic cost of the spell. To allow for resistance, a spellcaster should estimate how many points of opposition the spell faces and allot as many extra spell points as he feels necessary.

Regaining Spell Points

Using up all one's spell points means the mystic or sorcerer has exhausted his mental or spiritual reserve—an individual can channel, shape, and direct only so much magical energy in one day! At this point, he can cast no further spells until he has earned back a measure of his lost points. He can regain lost points at a flat rate of 1 sorcery and/or 1 mysticism point per hour. (If the spellcaster has access to both mystic and sorcerous magic, he can regain both at once.) The hero regains points at the same rate whether he spends this time resting or fighting.

Heroes vs. Magic

Just as most heroes have spellcasting allies, they also may find themselves attacked by spellcasting enemies. Whether these foes are dragons, mad wizards, or other adventurers, facing offensive magic can prove a crisis.

Monsters and other characters use magic the same way that heroes do. However, just as these figures do not attempt combat actions, they also do not attempt formal spell actions. In keeping with the primacy of the hero in the game, the SAGA rules reverse the game mechanics governing spellcasting by a nonhero.

When any nonhero launches a spell at a hero, the casting is reflected in the hero's attempt to avoid its effects. This action is resolved as follows:

➢ Avoid a Spell

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Perception or Presence
Opposition ability:	Reason or Spirit

Comments: A hero uses Perception as the action ability to avoid a sorcerous spell and Presence to resist mysticism. The difficulty may vary depending on the severity of the spell effect. Failure indicates that the spell has had its full effect, while success allows the hero to escape unscathed.

Mishap: Not only has the spell taken effect on the hero, it also produces some unexpected and detrimental effect. For example, a "blind" spell might have knocked the hero off his feet in addition to blinding him.

Schools of Sorcery

The Academy's instructors divide the magic of sorcery into distinct fields known as *schools*. Spells belonging to the same school have similar properties; all the spells in the school of transmutation, for example, deal with the use of magic to change one type of matter into another. The eleven schools do not remain wholly distinct from each other, however—some spells do overlap. For example, a sorcerer could create a magical light either with spectramancy or through the auspices of the enchantment school.

The challenge of harnessing the sorcerous magic makes it impossible for an individual to master more than a few of these branches. Anyone with a Reason code of "A" is assumed to have mastered three schools of magic. Those with a "B" code can wield spells from a single school.

A player selects the schools familiar to his sorcerer during hero creation. Once selected, they may not be changed. Players might find it advantageous to select complimentary schools, so they produce unique effects from the schools' combined properties. For instance, a spell that combines the schools of pyromancy (fire) and aeromancy (air) could produce a wall of smoke—an effect not otherwise available to a sorcerer.

The schools of magic and their characteristics are described below.

Aeromancy

The school of *aeromancy*, encompassing the spells of elemental air, can create anything from a breeze to a gale. Aeromancers might shroud their enemies in clouds of choking vapor, call up cloaking patches of dense fog, fly above the trees, or encase themselves in a bubble of air to travel underwater.

Aeromancy also allows a sorcerer to affect the weather, at least to a limited extent. Such a dramatic action, however, proves very difficult because of its broad scale; only the most powerful spellcasters can wield most weather magic.

Cryomancy

Some sorcerers consider *cryomancy* nothing but a hybrid of aeromancy and hydromancy (water magic). However, such contenders cannot deny the fact

that a skilled cryomancer can accomplish feats no aeromancer or hydromancer could: He can manifest great cold and call into being large quantities of ice.

The spells of cryomancy can create walls of ice, freeze rivers solid even in the heart of summer, and sear enemies with a wicked frostbite that stops them dead in their tracks.

Divination

Divination is one of the most widely practiced forms of magic on Krynn. Through the use of primordial power, a diviner attempts to gain information about the world around him. A spell of divination might allow him to see magical auras or to note the presence of a trap in an otherwise harmless-looking hallway. It even offers glimpses into the past and future. The trick to divination magic is knowing what to ask and when to ask it.

Divining spells are not flawless, of course, and they do not make a sorcerer effectively omniscient. Because of sorcery's natural limitations, divination does not let a hero read another's mind. In addition, while a diviner might be able to see events of the past with great clarity, his visions of the future remain subject to change—they may not even come to pass at all. Indeed, many sages say that the very act of observing the future changes it.

Electromancy

Few natural forces prove more powerful or widespread than electricity. From the devastating potential of a lightning strike to the all-pervasive sting of a static spark, most people come into contact with the forces of *electromancy* every day.

A skilled electromancer can unleash streams of lightning from his fingers to burn or terrify his enemies, or he can summon a faint blue aura of charge to light his way in the night.

Enchantment

The magic of *enchantment* can imbue common objects with sorcerous energy.

Heroes may well encounter a variety of enchantments during their adventures. Examples include an enchanted weapon (offers a bonus to its damage rating) or an enchanted shield or suit of armor (provides a bonus to its defense rating). Enchantments can take many forms, however; sorcerers should not limit them to combat. A clever enchanter might use his power to cause the crystal on the end of his walking stick to glow, effectively eliminating any need for a torch or lantern.

Of course, at present, an enchanted item retains its magic for only as long as the spell's duration allows.

Geomancy

Just as sorcerers can command the air above, so too can they make the earth below do their bidding. *Geomancers* are noted for their ability to draw great stone walls from the earth or cause the ground to turn into quicksand beneath the feet of their enemies.

A geomancer's powers can affect stone, earth, metals, and even gems and other crystals. No aspect of the geological world—even alloys such as steel—can resist this sorcerer's will.

Hydromancy

The ability to manipulate all the life-giving waters of the world appears most frequently within coastal communities, although *hydromancy* is not unknown in other regions. More than one tribe of desert barbarians exists only because one of its members can draw water from the arid ground. Hydromancers can prove quite valuable during ocean voyages, as their powers can cause swift currents to run beneath a ship, hastening it along its route.

However, players should note that a hydromancer's power affects only water

in its liquid state. This sorcerer can manipulate ice or steam only in an extremely limited fashion, even though both are forms of water—something about the solid or vapor state makes the substance proof against the power of hydromancy. Of course, as ice melts or steam condenses, it becomes the tool of the hydromancer again.

Pyromancy

Among the most ancient of mankind's tools is that of fire. For millennia it has heated homes and driven away the beasts of the night. Is it any wonder that the magic of fire holds a particular fascination to sorcerers? The spell called "Palin's Pyre" presented earlier in this chapter exemplifies just some of the great potential of *pyromancy*.

The power of pyromancers makes them among the flashiest of Ansalon's sorcerers. Indeed, more than one bard has described them as living, breathing fireworks shows.

Spectramancy

Light and color have always fascinated mankind. As such, the school of *spectramancy* numbers among those most commonly studied by young sorcerers. A spectramancer can create light, alter the color of existing radiances, and otherwise manipulate luminescences.

In addition to simply creating or extinguishing sources of illumination, knowledge of spectramancy permits sorcerers to create images and illusions. While these phantasms remain nothing more than tricks of light and shadow, they can easily fool the unsuspecting. Some of the most common spells of illusion are those of invisibility.

Summoning

Through the magic of *summoning*, a sorcerer can transport himself or others across distances by actually folding space. Those who have mastered such powers provide great service to adventurers and other traveling folk. Of

course, transporting a large number of people any great distance can prove such an exhausting, time-consuming, and difficult ordeal that few summoners embrace the challenge frequently.

Sorcerers can combine the art of summoning with those of other schools to draw powerful magical creatures into the world from the various elemental planes of the universe. For example, a character gifted with knowledge of both pyromancy and summoning might draw a living creature of fire (see Chapter Six) into the world from the elemental plane of fire.

Transmutation

The spells of *transmutation* involve magically manipulating unliving matter at its most basic level.

While those with limited knowledge of this power can alter the structure of matter in only minor ways, a master transmuter can totally change the nature of an object. A sorcerer with a Reason code of "B" who opts to study transmutation can induce only limited types of changes. He might transform one type of metal into another, for example, but he could not change it into stone or glass.

A true master of transmutation, one with an "A" Reason code, can alter the very nature of matter, to some extent. The exact limit of his ability depends on which of the sorcerous schools he has studied. For instance, one skilled in aeromancy, geomancy, and transmutation could turn a stone wall (something geomancy affects) into a cloud of fog (an aspect of aeromancy).

Changes made with transmutation remain impermanent, however—every spell must include a duration. When that duration lapses, the transformation reverses itself.

Mystic Spheres

The study and practice of mysticism requires a great deal of dedication and devotion. Those who would master it must look deep inside themselves, finding and tapping the energies that glow within them.

As with sorcery, the magic of mysticism fits into various categories. Goldmoon and the other mystics at the Citadel of Light refer to these divisions as *spheres*, a holdover from the clerical magic of previous ages.

A hero (or other character) with a Spirit code of "B" can draw upon the magic of but a single sphere. More powerful mystics, those with an ability code of "A" in Spirit, may tap into three of these spheres. In both cases the player selects the sphere(s) at the time of hero creation and cannot change it afterward. As with sorcery, players can select complementary spheres whose combined magical properties can produce unique effects.

The spheres of mystic magic and their properties are described below.

Animism

Those with access to the powers of *animism* can commune with any living thing. By harnessing these forces, animists can communicate with and control the beasts and plants of the world. The animist can affect only natural creatures and plants, not those with magical powers. In addition, creatures with Reason scores of more than 2 are immune to the magic of this sphere.

Some people call animists "druids," a term that actually describes the priests of nature from previous ages. While the name is not strictly accurate—the source of druidic power was not mystical—so many people misuse the term that most folk have no idea of its erroneous roots.

Alteration

Heroes who have mastered the art of *alteration* can physically transform their bodies into the forms of other creatures.

For example, an alterer could assume the shape of another individual, an animal such as a horse, or even a creature like a wyvern. In addition, alterers can change the shape of someone else, though casting alteration spells on another is harder than casting upon oneself, due to the increased range.

When the mystic assumes his new shape (or alters another), he must determine the new figure's Physical ability scores. The total number of points assigned to the new form's Strength, Endurance, Agility, and Dexterity must equal the total of the altered individual's own scores. Thus, a hero with a score of 7 for each Physical ability (a total of 28 points) could become a creature with scores of 5, 6, 8, and 9 (also totaling 28).

It is possible, though difficult, for a mystic to alter himself or another into a significantly larger or smaller creature. For every point the total of the figure's new Physical scores differs from his original total (either greater or less), the spell's difficulty rating goes up 1 point. Thus, to alter the 28-point hero above into a creature with Physical numbers totaling 38 would add 10 points to the spell's action difficulty and, hence, its cost in mysticism points.

An individual's Mental ability scores remain unchanged by any alteration. The same is true of his ability codes, although the nature of the new form may prevent him from using certain weapons or wearing armor.

Once a change has taken place, it remains in effect for the duration of the spell (as selected by the mystic) or until the caster opts to cancel it. If the altered individual dies or falls unconscious, he reverts to his true form. An altered individual can retain his new shape even during sleep. However, a mystic who altered himself cannot maintain his new form during magically induced slumber, as this effect blocks his concentration, causing him to assume his true form.

Only mystics with an ability code of "A" in Spirit have skill enough to assume the shape of a specific creature. Thus, a hero with a code of "B" could become an elf, while a mystic with an "A" code could alter himself to resemble a specific elf and even pass for that person under close scrutiny. Of course, as the mind of the altered individual remains unchanged, others can often spot such imposters through conversation.

Channeling

Through sheer will, a mystic who has studied the art of *channeling* can use the magical energies within him to adjust his (or another's) Physical ability scores. Thus, a channeler could make himself tremendously strong or as nimble as a great cat. Indeed, the art of channeling can even increase a hero's ability scores beyond the normal limit of 9 or decrease an enemy's score. However, channeling cannot affect someone's ability codes.

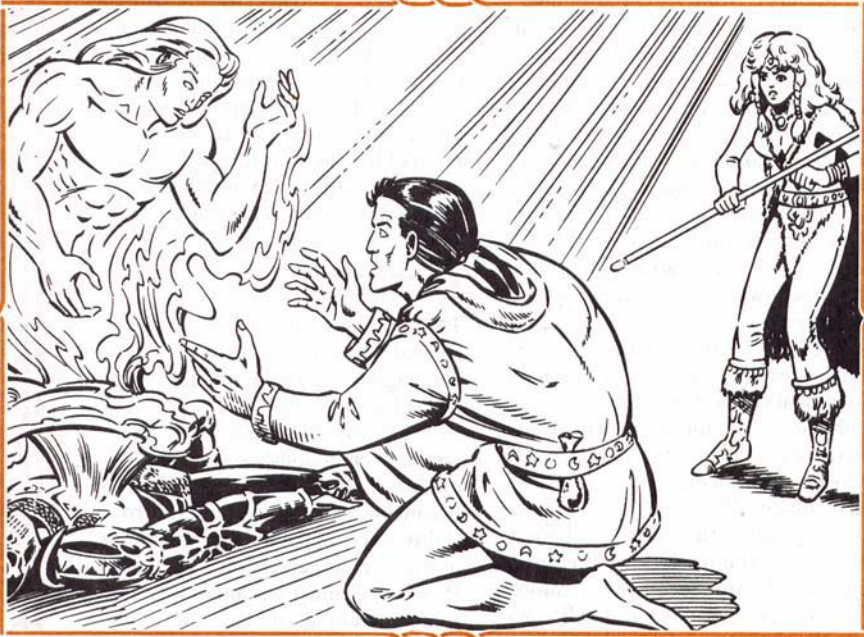
If a mystic wishes to channel energy to adjust more than one Physical ability score, he must weave a separate spell for each ability. Thus, a hero could not use a single spell to increase his Strength and Agility. This rule simply reflects the fact that the caster must direct energy in a particular fashion to attain each specific result.

Healing

Among the most potent of the mystic's arts is the ability to heal wounds, cure disease, and otherwise combat the ills of the world

This *healing* art can save lives, but it does have its perils: Any attempt to heal might bring about a mishap, which could exhaust or even injure the mystic. (See the "Designing Spells" section of this chapter for more on the healing mishap.)

Players should also note that healers can never use this sphere of magic to inflict harm. Actually causing physical damage with mysticism is an aspect of necromancy.



Meditation

The sphere of *meditation* allows a hero to alter his (or another's) Mental ability scores. In almost every way, the work of meditators mirrors that of channelers, including the use of a single spell to adjust each separate score.

One important factor to remember about the art of meditation is that a mystic cannot use it to affect his (or another's) number of spell points. Using meditation to increase or decrease a Reason or Spirit score does not change that individual's total number of available spell points. Such increases do make it easier to cast spells, of course; a higher score in the spellcasting action ability improves a caster's chances of reaching his required action score.

As with channeling, mastery of meditation can allow a hero to increase a Mental ability score beyond 9 points but cannot affect a hero's or character's ability codes.

Mentalism

Among the most interesting aspects of mysticism taught at the Citadel of Light is the skill of *mentalism* or, as many people call it, telepathy.

A hero skilled in mentalism can project his own thoughts into the minds of others. In addition, he may attempt to read the thoughts and memories of another, often learning valuable unspoken facts.

Those with a Spirit code of "B" can read and send thoughts but cannot attempt to change memories, induce hallucinations, or subjugate another's will. These latter powers are reserved for true masters of this mystical art—those with a code of "A."

Necromancy

The mere utterance of the word *necromancy* can send shivers down the spine of the bravest warrior. If there is a forbidden art in the world of Krynn, it is this blackest of black magics.

Mystics who have mastered the sphere of necromancy deal in the very essence of life and death. They can wound their enemies, sap their vital energies, or cause them to simply drop dead. By the same token, they can infuse a corpse with a sort of pseudo-life, forcing it to rise as a zombie. Obviously, Goldmoon and her followers never practice this dark art. Only heroes who have special permission from the Narrator—such as the Skull Knights of Takhisis—can opt to study necromancy.

Sensitivity

The sphere of *sensitivity* gives mystics powers similar to the divination abilities of sorcerers. It allows a hero to read the spiritual auras that surround living creatures. Sensitivity can help a mystic gain information about an individual's nature and demeanor, determine whether someone is acting under the influence of a spell, and otherwise analyze the nature of a creature.

Those with a Spirit code of "B" derive this knowledge by actually observing the creature, while those with a code of "A" can sense this information in the afterglow left by an individual's passing or on an object he once possessed.

While the end result of sensitivity sometimes overlaps that of mentalism, the two spheres remain functionally different. Sensitivity might reveal that a person felt angry and aggressive. However, it would not allow the mystic to see into the target's thoughts to determine the reason for these emotions, as mentalism could. Conversely, mentalism cannot help a hero sense things like the presence of spellpower, altered forms, and the like—the purview of sensitivity.

Spiritualism

Although somewhat less scorned than necromancy, the sphere of *spiritualism* resembles it greatly. Unlike that dark art, which deals with the corporeal dead, spiritualism allows a mystic to commune with the dead and create incorporeal undead.

Those with a spirit code of "B" can use this power to deal with existing undead and commune with the spirits of the dead. When used by a mystic with a Spirit code of "A," magic of this sort can call back the spirits of the dead and create ghosts, wraiths, and other spectral, insubstantial undead.

It is important to keep in mind the difference between necromancy and spiritualism. While both deal with the undead, the former magic focuses only on corporeal creatures, like zombies and ghouls—all of which fall outside the sphere of spiritualism.

Items of Magic

So far, this chapter has discussed magic as wielded by spellcasters, as well as techniques for heroes to resist the effects of hostile spells directed at them. However, nonspellcasters also have the ability to wield the arcane energies of Krynn—using items of magic.

Magical items from earlier ages retain their potency even in the absence of the gods. After all, the members of the pantheon did not remove their blessings from holy items like true dragonlances or blessed swords before they departed. In addition, items of magic hold some of the last vestiges of the old power of High Sorcery left in Krynn. Just like creatures who retain their preexisting inherent magic in the Fifth Age, so do items of magic remain arcane and powerful (despite some understandable functional failure in the immediate aftermath of the Chaos War).

Such objects—classified in Chapter Two as *trinkets, treasures,* and *artifacts*—have become more valuable than ever, as the gods can no longer bestow new holy articles. In addition, Fifth Age sorcerers currently find it impossible to enchant items permanently, due to the limit on enchantment spells' durations.

Arms and Armor

Throughout the world are scattered various magical weapons, suits of armor, and shields. These range from slightly enchanted daggers that can provide a mild advantage in combat to mighty artifacts like the great dragonlances themselves. Each of these articles is unique, with its own powers, history, or legend. Many have names, such as Sturm Brightblade's family sword, the Brightblade, and Tasslehoff Burrfoot's special dagger, Rabbitslayer.

All magical weapons or armors have a numeric bonus. This modifier applies to both the action card a player discards while his hero uses it *and* the damage or defense rating of the item itself. Thus, if a magical suit of armor bears a –2 bonus, it will add 2 more points to an action card played to resist an attack and stop 2 damage points more than normal armor of the same type.

Obviously, the more power a holy weapon or piece of magical armor has, the more success its wielder will enjoy in battle and, thus, the greater the fame of the item. Therefore, the people of Ansalon generally rate magical weapons and armor by the caliber of their associated legends and stories.

Items of Distinction

An *item of distinction*, a trinket, enjoys only a minor reputation. Its fame probably has spread no farther than one city or similar region.

Such an item gives its owner a +/–2 bonus when used in combat. Thus, a long sword of distinction would have a +9 damage rating instead of the +7 normally associated with such a weapon (see the "Arms and Armor" chart in Appendix Two).

Items of Renown

Items of renown, quite well-known and powerful trinkets, are often associated with minor heroes. Such items generally prove familiar to most of the people in a specific realm.

These objects carry a +/–4 bonus. Therefore, chain mail of renown offers a defense rating of –7, while a dagger of renown has a damage rating of +6.

Items of Fame

An *item of fame* is so well known, its reputation has spread throughout several realms or among all members of a given race. Anyone using a treasure of this type is entitled to a bonus of +/–6.

A good example of such an item is the axe wielded by the dwarf prophet Severus Stonehand in reclaiming the city of Thoradin just a few years ago. This weapon, called Avenger, is known to all of Ansalon's dwarves—some have even written songs recounting Stonehand's remarkable battles against the plague-ridden Zhakar dwarves. In combat, this battle axe of fame has a damage rating of +12 instead of an axe's normal +6.

Items of Glory

Among the rarest magical treasures are *items of glory*, generally known to the inhabitants of an entire continent—all in Ansalon will know a weapon of glory when they see it employed.

The defense rating of shields or armors of glory is 8 points higher than normal for the item. Thus, a suit of chain mail of glory would have a defense rating of –11 points. The dwarven Hammer of Kharas, of similar enchantment, has a damage rating of +17 points.

Items of Legend

The most powerful magical items on Krynn are *items of legend*—very few in number, but known on sight by nearly everyone on the planet. Examples of such artifacts include the mighty dragonlances so instrumental in the outcome of the War of the Lance and the sword and shield used by the great Huma Dragonbane in his battle with the Dark Queen.

A legendary weapon offers a bonus of +/–10 points to its damage rating,

with a similar improvement applied to the defense rating of such armor or shields. Thus, the broad sword wielded by Huma would have a damage rating of +16, while the plate armor of that great Knight would provide a defense rating of –15.

Special Abilities

In some cases, a magical weapon, enchanted suit of armor, or mystical shield has other powers besides an increased damage or defense rating. Narrators should stretch their imagination to make each magical item they introduce into a campaign unique. Adding a special ability or two is an ideal start. Consider these examples:

Dragonlances

The mightiest weapons against dragons are also the most famous and deadliest artifacts known on Krynn. Normal dragonlances come in two varieties: lesser and greater. A third type remains in Ansalon only in lore. The special abilities of these weapons of legend increase their powers in combat against dragons, their intended foes.

Lesser dragonlance. This legendary artifact, with a damage rating of +16—a base of +6 and a +10 enchantment—is considered a *heavy* weapon, intended for use by foot soldiers. If a hero uses it against a dragon, he doubles its damage rating (and the bonus it gives the attack action card) for a damage rating of +32.

Greater dragonlance. Larger than the footman's lance described above, a greater dragonlance has a damage rating of +19, derived from its bonus of +10 and its base of +9 (mounted lances rate 3 points higher than normal lances). This weapon is designed for a mounted dragon rider; it cannot be employed by someone on foot. Against a dragon, the weapon's damage rating doubles to +38.

True dragonlance. The only weapon more powerful than those above is the true dragonlance. According to legend, such a weapon (either lesser or greater) must be forged by a smith bearing the legendary Silver Arm of Ergoth and using the Hammer of Kharas. As true dragonlances require the blessing of Paladine, none may be forged in the Fifth Age. The last true dragonlances were believed lost in the Battle of the Rift at the close of the Chaos War. Such a weapon has double the normal bonuses associated with the type of dragonlance.

The Brightblade

A weapon of glory forged long ago by dwarf smiths, the Brightblade may be some thirty centuries old. This great sword bears a total damage rating of +17. Only those of noble heart can wield this weapon—its blade will shatter if used by one of dark virtue.

The special runes that mark the Brightblade make any card played for a Presence action trump. A hero also can command the sword to radiate light that illuminates a fifty-foot radius. Lastly, the Brightblade glows with an aura of magical protection that provides the wielder with a defense rating of –3. As this defense supplements that provided by the hero's armor, a champion with chain mail and the Brightblade has a total defense rating of –6.

Sturm Brightblade received the sword of his Solamnic Knight father in the years before the War of the Lance. Though Sturm died before bequeathing it to his own son, his shade offered it to Steel Brightblade just before he took the Blood Oath of the Dark Knights. The sword was laid with Steel in the Tomb of the Last Heroes.

Shield of Huma

The Shield of Huma, a horse shield of glory, has a defense rating of –12. Anyone using it to defend himself from dragon breath may add its defense rating to the value of the card he plays to avoid the attack. Should the hero suffer injury from the dragon breath, the shield's magic halves the number of potential damage points he accrues.

Other Items of Magic

Of course, magical items come in many shapes and sizes other than weapons, armor, and shields. Stories abound of magical rings, wands that can hurl lightning bolts, pendants that let their wearers vanish from sight, and so on.

Using Other Magical Items

Many magical items—such as the arms and armor described earlier—function automatically when heroes pick them up. Others require activation (as decided by the Narrator), which calls for an action:

➢ Use a Magical Item

Difficulty:	Easy (4)
Action ability:	Reason or Spirit
Opposition ability:	Perception or Presence

Comments: Using an item of magic resembles the casting of a spell—the hero usually must speak and gesture to activate the magic. Unlike spellcasting, however, the hero makes no adjustment to the difficulty for the effect's range, area of effect, duration, or result. The action ability is generally Reason if the effect is sorcerous and Spirit for mystic effects. An opposition ability applies only when the hero directs the item's effect at a resisting individual. A target resists most sorcerous effects with Perception and most mystical effects with Presence.
Mishap: Varies according to the particular item's magical effect.

When a character uses an item of magic against a hero, the hero can attempt the following action.

➢ Resist a Magical Item's Effect

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Perception or Presence
Opposition ability:	Reason or Spirit

Comments: Resisting a magical effect from an item is the same as resisting a spell. The action ability is usually Perception to resist a sorcerous effect and Presence against a mystical effect. The opposition ability (usually needed) is the item user's Reason or Spirit, as appropriate to the magical effect.
Mishap: Varies according to the particular item's magical effect.

Sample Items of Magic

A Narrator can place the following examples of magical items in his campaign or use them as models to create new items of his own.

Dalamar's Golden Ring of Healing

The magical circle of braided gold that belonged to the great Fourth Age wizard Dalamar the Dark has the power to restore one card to the hand of a wounded practitioner of sorcery. This treasure, like many similar rings created by the Conclave of Wizards long ago, has the power to heal its wearer up to once per day.

Should a sorcerer wearing this ring suffer a fatal wound, the item automatically restores one card to his hand. However, after doing so, it no longer functions at all for that wearer. If passed on to another wielder of sorcery, it returns to normal.

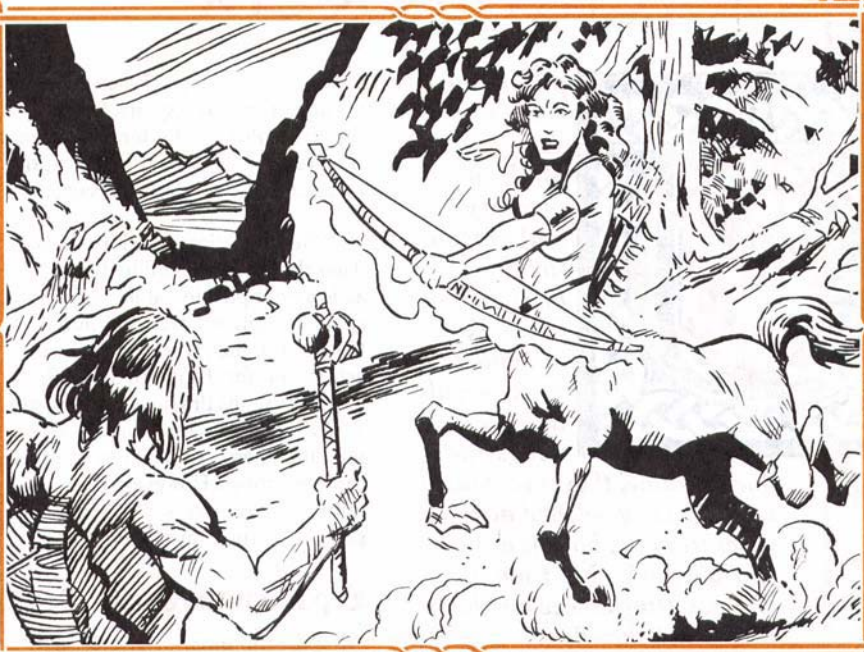
This ring (and others like it) was crafted by the Orders of High Sorcery for use by wizards. The dark elf mage Dalamar used it to survive the deadly attack of his former lover, Kitiara.

Thunderstaff

The plainsmen of what is now Duntollik created the magical Thunderstaff long ago. Rumors claim that the barbarians harvested this treasure's six-foot length of dark hardwood from the heart of a tree that was struck by the lightning breath of a blue dragon.

If used in combat, the thunderstaff acts as a quarterstaff (with a damage rating of +2). However, it is not truly intended for such use and will shatter if a mishap results when someone wields it against a foe.

The true power of the Thunderstaff appears only when the clouds of a great



storm roll in. During a thunderstorm, the holder of the Thunderstaff may call down strokes of lightning at the rate of one per minute upon a desired target. Each such strike inflicts damage points equal to the wielder's total Spirit plus Presence scores. While magical armor offers protection against such attacks, normal armor does not.

The owner of the Thunderstaff receives a beneficial side effect as well. Any lightning- or electricity-based attack directed at someone holding this magical staff inflicts only half its normal damage.

Smokeberries

In the Fifth Age, the simple, magical smokeberries remain a favorite among young apprentices of the magical arts: These trinkets, which resemble large blueberries, are easy to create and can work all sorts of mischief.

A sorcerer creates a smokeberry by casting an enchantment spell on a clay marble. If thrown against a solid object, the berry breaks, spilling out a great cloud of blue-gray smoke that fills an area some twenty-five feet in diameter. This smoke reduces visibility to no more than a yard. On a calm day, the smoke takes between two and three minutes to dissipate. A bit of wind, however, can whisk the clouds away in no more than a minute.

Anyone can use a smokeberry once it's made. However, a sorcerer wielding one gains a special benefit—he can drop the berry but delay the explosion a desired amount of time if he makes a successful action to use this magical item (see the previous page).

A common variation on this item is the dreaded stinkberry. Although indistinguishable from a smokeberry, this trinket produces putrid clouds that require anyone breathing in to succeed in an *easy Endurance* action or begin to gag and retch. A hero so afflicted finds any action he attempts one degree more difficult than normal until the smelly clouds fully dissipate.

CHAPTER SIX

p from the rift came fire dragons. Made in mockery of real dragons, the fire dragons were formed of magma, their scales obsidian, their wings and manes flame, their eyes blazing embers. They belched noxious gases from the bowels of the world. Sparks flew from their wings, setting ablaze anything over which they flew.

The knights stared at these monsters in despair....

—The Battle of the Rift begins, Dragons of Summer Flame

The world of Krynn remains known as much for the creatures that inhabit it as for the heroes who battle them. Ansalon's most familiar beasts include the vile goblin races, the foul draconians, and the incredibly powerful dragons themselves.

This chapter outlines the races that, at various times, can fall under the category of "creature." Creatures include animals, nonhuman races, dread monsters, undead figures, dragons, and draconians. Even groups such as elves, kender, and humans can be treated as creatures when they oppose the aims of the heroes.

Creature Abilities

The various creatures of Ansalon have only four ratings: Physique, Coordination, Intellect, and Essence. These correspond to a hero's four related abilities:

Rating	Includes
Coordination (Co)	Agility, Dexterity
Physique (Ph)	Endurance, Strength
Intellect (In)	Reason, Perception
Essence (Es)	Spirit, Presence

When an action description mandates the use of any ability (as the action or opposition ability), a player should simply resolve the action using the appropriate rating. Thus, if an action calls for the use of Strength, a creature uses its Physique rating instead.

As a rule, the same numeric scale used for a hero's scores (1 to 9) applies to these ratings. However, various inhuman creatures, such as ogres, surpass certain human scores.

Expanding Creature Details

From time to time, a Narrator may want to expand a creature's ratings and determine all eight of its ability scores—perhaps the creature has become an important character in an adventure and deserves greater detail. In such cases, the Narrator can use the creature's four related ability ratings as an initial guideline. If a creature has a Physique score of 10, both its Strength and Endurance scores become 10 as well. The creature may deviate from these values, as long as the average of the two ability scores always equals 10.

When assigning ability codes, the Narrator should assume that all creatures have a code of "C" in all abilities. If there is a special reason for a particular creature to have a different code—perhaps a creature must wear a certain weight of armor or can cast mystic spells—the Narrator can make any changes that common sense requires.

Of course, a particular ability code can never give a creature a power or skill prohibited by his very nature. No matter what Strength code one assigns to a unicorn, for example, it still won't be able to use a long sword in combat.

All Creatures . . .

This section offers information about and illustrations of some of Ansalon's most common or fascinating species, as well as explanations of their special abilities. The creatures are grouped according to general families: hostile nonhumans, animals, the Lost Folk, special mounts, monsters, the undead, and hero races. Narrators can use them as either friends or foes to the heroes.

This chapter is by no means exhaustive; Narrators should feel free to create new and unique creatures to challenge players. Dragons and draconians, two of the most important types of creature on Krynn, are dealt with in their own sections at the end of this chapter.

Using the Charts

The creature charts that follow present game details in a condensed, easy-to-reference form. The information there describes the adult of each species; Narrators may wish to modify some of the specifics based on maturity or subspecies. Each entry includes the following data:

Creature Name

The name by which the creature is most commonly known appears first on the creature chart. Some species have different names in various parts of the world.

Ratings

The nature of some creatures may force the Narrator to adjust one or more of their listed ratings (especially Physical abilities). For example, a very agile creature has a high Coordination score. However, if it lacks any manipulatory appendages, like hands or tentacles, it isn't very good at Dexterity-related tasks like picking locks or disarming traps.

In addition to the creature's scores in its four related abilities, the charts list its *damage* and *defense* ratings as well. In cases where a given creature uses a special attack or defense instead of a normal damage or defense rating, its entry lists N/A, or *not applicable.*

Damage (Dmg)

The creature's damage modifier indicates the harm that its natural weapons (claws, fangs, etc.) can inflict in melee combat. This score is used just like the damage rating for a sword or other melee weapon. Unless otherwise indicated, animals and creatures cannot attack at ranges greater than melee.

For example, a jaguar has a Physique score of 8 and a damage rating of +7. Therefore, a melee attack by this creature would inflict 15 damage points (8+7) to an unarmored target.

Defense (Def)

The defense category, which rates a creature's preferred and/or natural armor, works just like a hero's armor and shield ratings. Thus, if a creature with a defense rating of –3 suffers 12 damage points, its injuries total only 9 points (12–3).

Special Abilities

The diverse abilities of the world's creatures have fascinated scholars since the dawn of time. The various special abilities appropriate to each species appear in a separate column in each creature chart. These abilities, described in sidebars throughout this section, help a Narrator quickly determine exactly what a given creature might do in any situation.

Many of these descriptions mention one of the eight character abilities, either as the creature's opposition ability to a hero action or as a guideline of some sort. For clarity, the descriptions refer to the *specific* ability—such as Presence—even though the creature chart entries list scores merely in the four related pairs. The distinction becomes important only when the Narrator uses expanded creature ratings. Otherwise, the appropriate related ability (such as Essence) applies.

Special Abilities

The descriptions of offensive abilities use the term "attack" to describe their effects in combat. This is merely a term of convenience: Any of the abilities could be used against the heroes in a foe's counter-attack–and often are!

Aeromancy

See the *aeromancy* school of sorcery.

Alteration

See the *alteration* mystic sphere. In some cases, a limit on this ability may be indicated parenthetically. For example, a creature with the listing "alteration (avian)" could assume only birdlike forms.

Animism

See the *animism* mystic sphere. As with alteration, an entry might note a parenthetical limitation, like "animism (avian)."

Aura

An attack form or other ability described as an *aura* affects all creatures at melee range. Thus, everyone that comes within melee range of a creature with a fear aura becomes affected by the fear special ability. A Narrator would then turn to the "fear" description later in this section for details on this aura's exact effects.

Camouflage

The difficulty of surprising a creature with the *camouflage* ability (or avoiding surprise from one) becomes one degree higher than normal for the action. (In most cases, the action is *challenging* against such a creature.) In addition, camouflage allows the creature to encounter a group of heroes one range closer than the terrain type would normally demand (but never closer than melee range).

Charm

Anyone affected by a *charm* attack must succeed in an *average Spirit (Presence)* action to avoid falling under the control of his attacker. A charmed creature obeys all instructions the attacker gives him until the control is lifted—either voluntarily or through the charmer's death. A creature can charm a number of individuals equal to its Spirit score at once. It can control no more than that number at any given time.

Crush

A hero suffers additional damage when a mishap occurs during an attack against (or a defense from) a creature with the *crush* ability. In either case, the extra damage inflicted equals the creature's Strength score. Shields cannot protect a hero from crushing attacks.

Cryomancy

See the *cryomancy* school of sorcery.

Death

Some creatures can instantly strike a living creature dead. When such a *death* occurs, the target of the attack must make a successful *average Endurance (Spirit)* action or be instantly slain. A hero so destroyed can be revived only through the most powerful mystic spells.

Despair

When a hero falls under attack by a creature with the ability to cause *despair*, he must succeed at an *average Presence (Spirit)* action or find himself smothered in gloom and depression. While mired in despair, the hero suffers the effects of the paralyze ability (see description later in this section).

Dive

Many flying creatures hunt by diving from great altitudes onto their prey. Certain airborne creatures may begin a *dive* from either far missile or artillery range. The range of the encounter changes instantly to melee as the flier swoops down upon its target.

During the dive, the flier may attempt a ranged attack, such as one using fiery breath. Defenders who are aware of the creature diving toward them may employ missile or thrown weapons during the dive, but the difficulty associated with such an attack increases to one degree above normal.

At the end of the dive, the flier receives a free melee attack—the hero can defend himself but cannot attack the diving creature. Normal melee combat then can begin.

Narrators and players should note that this ability is similar, but not identical, to

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Hostile Nonhumans

The race of tall, thin humanoids from a land east of Ansalon was named **brutes** by the Knights of Takhisis, who use the rugged creatures as troops and slaves. Their blue-painted skin frightens many civilized races, as does their rough-sounding language. (The blue pigment reportedly provides brutes with the protection of armor and resistance to magic, in addition to healing properties.)

Ogres, once the most beautiful of all races, fell from grace during the Age of Dreams. They now number among Krynn's ugliest, dimmest, and most brutal inhabitants. These savage, Evil creatures average about nine feet in height and dress in skins and rags.

Related to the ogres are the many races of **giants.** Standing between eight and sixteen feet tall, these humanoids inhabit Ansalon's rugged landscapes. **Cyclopes** bear a distinguishing single eye in the center of their foreheads. The stupid **hill giants** revile their dirty, two-headed kin, the **ettins**.

The ravenous, warty **trolls**—also of ogre stock—live in packs and have rubbery skin, sharp claws, and thin frames that hide surprising strength.

Goblins are snivelling, Evil little creatures, derived from the offspring of elf and ogre. The prolific beasts have flat faces, pointy ears, and sharp teeth. **Bugbears**—their tall, hairy cousins—have an appearance more suggestive of a carnivorous beast than a sentient creature. Perhaps the most intelligent of the goblin-kin are **hobgoblins**: fierce, militaristic creatures as tall as a man.

Gnolls, which resemble a cross between a hyena and a man, have greenish-gray fur and roam Ansalon in loose bands.

Hostile Nonhumans

Name	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Brute	6	11	6	8	+8	–5	Missile weapons
Bugbear	5	10	4	6	+4	–3	Missile weapons
Cyclops	4	21	3	3	+10	–4	Thrown weapons
Dwarf, Zhakar	4	6	6	6	+2	–2	Missile weapons
Ettin	4	17	3	4	+8	–4	Thrown weapons
Giant, hill	6	38	3	4	+15	–4	Thrown weapons
Gnoll	5	7	3	5	+4	–3	Missile weapons
Goblin	4	3	4	5	+3	–2	Missile weapons
Hobgoblin	5	4	5	5	+4	–3	Missile weapons
Kobold	3	2	5	5	+2	–2	Missile weapons
Ogre	5	13	3	6	+5	–3	Thrown weapons
Sirine	8	8	6	8	+2	–4	Hydromancy, charm song, alteration (self)
Troll	6	24	4	7	+14	–4	Regenerate

The cowardly, sadistic **kobolds** resemble three-foot tall skinny rats. They hate gnomes above all other races.

Sirines, beautiful humanlike females, live alone in aquatic environments and dislike intruders immensely.

The **Zhakar** are a thane of dwarves to reckon with. Plagued for centuries by a strange mold disease that once permeated their home of Thoradin, these angry dwarves still suffer from the illness that tatters their skin, raises lumps in their flesh, and ultimately drives them insane.

Animals

The animals in the table on the next page match their normal-world namesakes in every way. **Giant** versions of animals such as insects, bats, eagles, etc., can grow ten to one hundred times their normal size. **Ice bears**, a cross between cave bears and polar bears, live in southern Ansalon. **Mammoths** serve as pack animals for the Knights of Takhisis. **Dire wolves** are larger than normal varieties of the species. **Worgs**, an Evil and intelligent offshoot, often act as goblin mounts. Dwarves harness the thirty-foot **tractor worms**, also called Urkhan worms (for a lake in Thorbardin), to pull carts and work sleds. The tunneling of young worms tills the soil in the dwarves' farming warrens.

the dive attack ability of dragons. (See the "Dragons" section later in this chapter.)

Drain

Drain attacks number among the most dreadful special abilities an adventurer might encounter in a creature: This ability actually reduces one or more of a hero's ability scores.

A character suffering a drain attack must attempt an *average* action to resist it, using his ability to be drained as the action ability, opposed by the same trait in the attacker. Thus, avoiding a Strength drain attack calls for a hero to make a successful *average Strength (Strength)* action. A hero who fails in this action loses a point from the specified ability score. This loss is permanent, although a powerful spell cast by a mystic might be able to restore a hero to normal—at least temporarily.

Some creatures can make more than one type of draining attack. In such a case, the player should attempt to avoid both drain attempts separately.

Fear

A hero affected by a creature's magical *fear* attack must succeed in an *average Presence (Spirit)* action to resist it. Should he fail, the hero finds himself overcome with fear and must flee the encounter at once. He may attempt no other action but retreat until the fear is lifted from him. Magical fear lasts for one hour after the hero has lost sight of the creature that frightened him.

The fear special ability differs from the natural ability of dragons to instill fear in those who see them. This *dragonawe* is described in the section on dragons.

Geomancy

See the *geomancy* school of sorcery.

Hydromancy

See the *hydromancy* school of sorcery.

(continued on page 98)

Animals of Ansalon

Name	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Ant, giant	9	8	1	1	+4	–4	None
Ape, carnivorous	6	12	3	3	+5	–2	None
Bat, giant	5	12	3	2	+5	–2	Infect
Bear, grizzly	6	13	2	2	+7	–2	Crush
Bear, ice	6	18	3	5	+12	–2	Crush and immune to cold/ice
Beetle, giant	3	15	1	1	+10	–4	None
Buffalo	8	15	2	2	+8	–2	None
Camel * †	11	12	3	2	+2	–2	None
Cat, domestic	5	1	2	2	+1	–2	Rake
Centipede, giant	9	4	1	1	+3	–3	Poison
Cheetah	8	9	2	2	+6	–3	Sprint and rake
Crocodile	5	9	1	1	+10	–3	None
Dog, domestic	5	3	2	2	+1	–1	None
Dog, hunting/wild	6	4	2	2	+2	–2	None
Dog, war	7	6	2	2	+4	–4	None
Dolphin	15	8	5	7	+4	–3	None
Eagle, common	15	4	1	1	+3	–2	Dive
Eagle, giant *	24	12	2	2	+12	–2	Dive
Eel, electric	6	4	1	1	+2	–1	Lightning
Eel, giant	5	6	1	1	+4	–2	None
Elephant * †	8	33	2	2	+8	–4	Trample
Horse, light * †	12	10	2	2	+4	–2	Kick
Horse, riding *	9	10	2	2	+2	–2	Kick
Horse, war *	9	16	2	2	+8	–3	Kick and trample
Jaguar	8	13	2	2	+7	–2	Rake
Leopard	8	11	2	2	+6	–2	Pounce and rake
Lion	6	17	2	2	+9	–2	Rake
Lizard, giant	8	10	1	1	+4	–3	Swallow whole
Mammoth †	6	45	2	2	+10	–5	Trample
Octopus, giant	6	24	1	1	+18	–2	Camouflage
Pony *	6	4	2	2	+1	–2	Kick
Rat, giant	6	2	2	2	+2	–1	Infect
Scorpion, giant	4	8	1	1	+5	–3	Poison
Shark	12	18	1	1	+4	–2	None
Snake, constrictor	5	8	1	1	+2	–2	Crush
Snake, viper	8	2	1	1	+1	–2	Poison
Spider, giant	6	12	1	1	+4	–3	Poison and web
Squid, giant	3	36	3	1	+34	–3	Crush
Tiger	6	20	2	2	+10	–2	Rake
Wasp, giant	11	12	1	1	+5	–3	Poison
Wart hog	6	9	1	2	+8	–2	None
Wolverine	6	9	2	2	+7	–3	Musk
Whale, common	6	27	3	4	+20	–4	None
Whale, killer	8	20	5	6	+12	–3	None
Whale, sperm	4	40	4	4	+25	–5	None
Wolf, common	7	9	2	2	+3	–1	None
Wolf, dire (worg *)	7	12	3	4	+5	–2	None
Worm, tractor	3	24	1	5	+4	–4	None

* Refers to an animal characters can use as a mount.

† Refers to a pack animal.

The Lost Folk

Name	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Bakali (lizard man)	5	7	5	8	+5	–2	Thrown weapons
Huldrefolk	9	4	9	8	+8	–8	Sorcery (1 school), mysticism (1 sphere)
Kyrie	8	7	5	6	+3	–3	Thrown weapons and animism
Shadowperson	7	5	6	7	+4	–4	Sensitivity and mentalism
Thanoi (walrus man)	6	8	3	4	+8	–3	Immune to cold/ice

The Lost Folk

The lizard-men called **bakali** are stoop-shouldered, thick-bodied creatures with long tails. This suspicious race stays away from civilized folk. They seem savage but have a strong sense of honor. Their legends tell them they were created during the Age of Starbirth to worship the First Born Five dragons.

The gray-skinned, tiny **huldrefolk** range from one to four feet tall. These large-eyed, long-fingered creatures each control one element of creation and can assume a variety of forms associated with that element. Mysterious, emotional creatures, the huldre have apparently gone from Krynn but left a legacy of twelve monolithic portals to their realm: the Gray.

Kyrie, a race of hawk-people, live peacefully in the Dragon's Spine but will defend their nests to the death from the invasive minotaurs or other tresspassers. They support their

Immune to . . .

Many creatures seem highly resistant to certain forms of magical or mundane attacks. For example, an ice bear is *immune* to any attack that depends upon cold or ice to inflict damage. Thus, it becomes all but impossible to harm an ice bear with magic from the sorcerous school of cryomancy. Other creatures might be immune to metal weapons, fire- or heat-based attacks, and so on.

Infect

Some loathsome, filthy creatures carry terrible diseases with them. Any hero who fails to defend himself from a creature with the *infect* ability must succeed in an *average Endurance (Strength)* action or become diseased. An infected hero loses one card every day (beginning the day after the infection) until he collapses (when the player discards his last card) and dies (one day later).Usually, only mysticism can cure such an infection.

Kick

One of the more common attacks of equines and similar creatures is a powerful *kick* delivered with the hind legs. Players and Narrators should treat such a kick as a free second attack that inflicts the same number of damage points associated with the creature's other melee strikes.

A creature cannot attempt to kick the same person it has just made its normal melee attack against, however. It will usually kick only when under attack by more than one individual.

Lightning

Some amazing creatures, from the electric eel to the blue dragon, can generate strong electrical charges. Any hero attacked by *lightning* suffers damage points equal to the creature's Strength score, unless he succeeded at an *average Agility (Dexterity)* action.

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frail, feathery bodies in flight by wing-arms but also can walk on their taloned feet.

Shadowpeople have large, apelike heads and bodies resembling a cross between man and bat. Their fangs and long claws make them formidable foes. Most considered this underground race mythical, until they helped the Heroes of the Lance discover the corruption of the Good dragons' eggs by the Dragon Highlords almost sixty years ago.

Many of the primitive walrus men, or **thanoi**, have been relocated from their polar home to the glacial Southern Ergoth to serve the White Dragon. Their impressive two-foot tusks, webbed and clawed feet, and layer of blubber serve them well in the icy climes. Though these merciless creatures waddle on land, they swim swiftly.

Special Mounts

At times, the creatures in the chart on this page serve as mounts for those in need. However, players should never assume these creatures will react in a friendly fashion to heroes they meet.

The fierce half-lion, half-eagle **griffins** often carry elves in battle and on missions. A griffin loves horseflesh and is more likely to serve as a mount than the **hippogriff** (half horse, half eagle) or the **hippocampus** (half horse, half fish). The giant, telepathic **owls of the Darken Wood** carried Tanis Half-Elven during an adventure before the War of the Lance. **Nightmares**, black steeds with glowing red eyes and burning hooves, carry only Evil riders. **Rocs** (sixty-foot birds of prey), **pegasi**, and **unicorns** seem the most particular of all about those who seek to ride them.

Special Mounts

Name	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Darken Owl	12	18	8	9	+7	–2	Mentalism and sensitivity
Griffin	15	21	2	6	+12	–4	Dive
Hippocampus	12	18	5	6	+2	–3	None
Hippogriff	18	15	2	5	+11	–3	None
Nightmare	18	24	6	7	+14	–7	Spit fire and immune to fire/heat
Pegasus	24	15	5	6	+8	–2	Kick
Roc	15	54	1	6	+12	–3	Dive
Unicorn	12	16	5	7	+12	–4	Kick and immune to mysticism

Monsters

The blue, snakelike **behir**, whose head resembles that of a crocodile, measures forty feet long. Its dozen or so legs help this solitary, horned monster slither quickly.

A **chimera** is a territorial predator with the hindquarters of a goat, the forequarters of a lion, and the wings of a dragon. It also has three heads—goat, lion, and dragon—which tend to fight, due to the hybrid's conflicting natures.

The **cockatrice**—a turkey-sized creature that resembles a yellow rooster with gray bat wings and a lizard's green tail—seems too silly-looking to be dangerous. However, a touch of this fierce fowl's beak means death.

Creatures formed of the very **elements of air, earth, fire, and water**, come in a wide range of sizes and levels of intelligence. Their mastery of their specific element allows them to employ ingenious elemental weapons against foes. Water elementals have a lower Coordination rating on land than in their environment and must remain within artillery range of water.

Gargoyles, ferocious magical predators found in ruins, will attack any creature in a surprise swoop. They prefer to inflict a slow, painful death.

Gorgons, female humanoids with hair of snakes, petrify anyone who looks upon them.

Ugly, smelly **harpies** have the body of a vulture and the torso and head of a woman. Their beautiful song entices victims to them to feast upon.

A rare form of giant squid, the **kraken** grows to a length of ninety feet. This intelligent creature breathes water and air and can drag a

Meditation

See the *meditation* mystic sphere.

Mentalism

See the *mentalism* mystic sphere.

Missile Weapons

The listings for some creatures, mostly humanoids, indicate the use of *missile weapons*. Such beings can attack at both near and far missile range, not merely at melee range. Heroes attempt to avoid these attacks as they would any missile fire. However, for simplicity's sake, a successful attack inflicts damage points equal to the creature's melee attack, regardless of the missile weapon used.

Humanoids with this ability frequently wield missile weapons such as bows, crossbows, and so on. In some cases, a creature might employ a natural missile weapon—such as a porcupine shooting quills.

It is assumed that creatures with missile weapons can attempt normal melee attacks as well. Any creature that can use missile weapons can use thrown weapons also.

Musk

To mark their territory, animals in the wild commonly spray scented *musk*. In some creatures, this ability has evolved into a powerful weapon.

Anyone with a normal sense of smell who is subjected to a musk attack must succeed in an *average Endurance (Strength)* action to avoid becoming ill. (The action is *easy* for those with a diminished sense of smell.) A hero who fails becomes nauseated; no card played by a nauseated character is ever trump.

The effect of a musk attack is even worse for a victim with an acute sense of smell. In addition to losing his trump bonus, he must attempt all his actions as if they were one degree more difficult than normal until he gets rid of the odor on his clothes and person.

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Monsters

Name	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Behir	8	36	3	8	+7	–3	Lightning, immune to electricity
Chimera †	5	27	2	7	+17	–3	Pyromancy
Cockatrice	9	15	1	6	+2	–2	Petrify
Elemental, air*	18	24–48	3–5	8–11	+10	–4	Dive, aeromancy
Elemental, earth*	3	24–48	3–5	8–11	+16	–4	Crush, geomancy
Elemental, fire*	6	24–48	3–5	8–11	+12	–4	Trample, pyromancy
Elemental, water*	9/3	24–48	3–5	8–11	+15	–4	Crush, hydromancy
Gargoyle	6	16	3	6	+8	–3	Dive
Gorgon	5	8	6	6	+2	–3	Petrify and poison
Harpy	8	21	3	7	+6	–2	Charm song
Kraken	5	54	10	9	+54	–4	Crush
Leviathan	4	60	6	8	+40	–8	None
Manticore	9	21	3	7	+7	–3	Missile weapons
Mermaid/-man	9	4	5	5	+4	–2	None
Naga	8	30	8	8	+7	–3	Spit poison, sensitivity, necromancy, meditation
Owlbear	6	17	3	5	+12	–3	Crush
Wyvern †	12	28	4	7	+11	–4	Dive and poison
Yeti	7	16	5	7	+6	–2	Crush, thrown weapons, and immune to cold/ice

*Elementals are immune to attacks with their element.

† Can be used as a mount.

sixty-foot ship under the waves to its great maw.

The lords of whales, **leviathans** measure up to one thousand feet long. One such monster lives in each of Krynn's oceans, hibernating for years until called upon to respond to the needs of whales. A leviathan can swallow a target up to eighty feet long and inflict crushing blows with its fins and tail.

Manticores have a lion's body, bat-like wings, and a man's head. These carnivores, roughly as tall as a man, are clumsy fliers but can shoot deadly spikes from the tail.

Mermaids (and **mermen**) are creatures with the upper bodies of humans but the tails of fish. They dwell in undersea communities but sometimes surface to sun themselves on rocks or attack ships.

A **naga** is a snakelike monster with a humanoid head. These hostile creatures, found in both woodland and water environs, have been known to serve as village guardians. Before striking, a naga often uses mentalism to boost its Mental ability scores, then reads its victim's mind.

Ravenous, aggressive **owlbears** (with the body of a bear, head of an owl, and coat of feathers and fur) have cruel tempers that inspire fear across Ansalon's forests.

Wyverns—flying, brown or gray lizards with no front legs—measure some thirty to forty feet long..Though relatively stupid, these aggressive monsters bear a deadly stinger in their tail.

The apelike **yeti**, eight-foot-tall denizens of cold climes, have icy blue eyes and heavy hands and feet. Their thick, long white fur keeps these fierce hunters warm.

Washing off the musk is a time-consuming process—it takes ten minutes per attacker's Strength point to wash off the scent. While washing eliminates the musk's negative effects, fully ridding oneself of the scent requires a number of hours equal to the creature's Strength score.

Necromancy

See the *necromancy* mystic sphere.

Nullify

Without a doubt, *nullify* is the most unusual and awesome of all special creature abilities. This power not only causes the victim to instantly vanish, but alters the memory of all sentient creatures to make it seem as if the victim had never lived. No one remembers his name, all his material goods go unclaimed, and his past deeds remain forgotten. Written accounts of a victim's actions still exist, but will almost certainly considered fictional in the wake of his nullification.

Only shadow- and frost-wights, spawned by the Chaos god in the last days of the Fourth Age, wield this incredible power. To avoid being swept out of existence by the touch of such a creature, a hero under attack must make a successful *average Presence (Spirit)* action. Because of its dire ramifications, Narrators should use creatures with this ability very sparingly.

Paralyze

The *paralyze* ability can prove far more deadly than one initially might think, for it leaves a victim utterly defenseless. To escape a paralysis attack, a hero must succeed in an *average Endurance (Strength)* action. Failure immobilizes him for a number of minutes equal to the attacker's Endurance score. While paralyzed, a hero cannot attempt to defend himself from any assault.

Someone with the appropriate talents can free a hero from paralysis using mysticism. A hero paralyzed by the despair ability of a shadow-wight can break free by making a successful *daunting Spirit (Presence)* action.

Petrify

Perhaps the best-known creature with the ability to *petrify* remains the snake-haired gorgon. A target of petrification is instantly turned to stone (and, hence, slain) unless he succeeded at an *average Endurance (Strength)* action. Only one skilled in both mysticism and sorcery can muster the magical energies needed to reverse a transformation to stone.

Poison

Nature equipped many creatures with *poison* to help them defend themselves. Anyone who suffers damage from an attack made by a poisonous creature must succeed in an *average Endurance (Strength)* action or find himself injected with toxin. While the outward manifestations of poisoning may vary, the game effect is always the same. Starting the minute after he was affected, the hero's player gives up one card from his hand every minute. When he loses his last card, the hero collapses and, a minute later, dies. Prompt first aid can help a victim cling to life, but only mystic healing can save a poisoned hero.

Pounce

Any attempt to avoid surprise by a creature who can *pounce* becomes one degree more difficult than normal. If the creature attains surprise, two things happen. First, the encounter begins at melee range, regardless of the terrain type or other factors. Second, the creature instantly springs on its victim, closing to personal range and making a free melee attack. The victim of a pounce cannot attempt to defend himself from this attack.

Pyromancy

See the *pyromancy* school of sorcery.

Rake

When certain creatures enter combat, they follow their normal melee attack by *raking* their victim with rear claws or other natural weapons. This ability is most commonly found among Ansalon's great cats, like leopards and tigers. If a creature with the rake ability closes to personal range with its foe, it can attack twice in each combat exchange. The first blow represents its normal melee attack, while the second is a raking assault. A creature may rake its target during each exchange of blows, as long as it remains at personal range.

(continued on page 104)

The Undead

Name	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Banshee	7	6	8	7	+4	–5	Death aura
Daemon warrior	9	12	9	9	+12	–8	Fear aura, immune to physical attack
Death knight	6	27	9	9	+8	–5	Fear aura and necromancy
Ghost	5	6	7	8	N/A	N/A	Fear aura and drain Spirit
Ghoul	5	6	3	3	+6	–2	Paralyze
Shadow	6	10	3	4	+3	–3	Drain Strength
Skeleton	6	4	1	1	+3	–2	None
Spectre	15	6	7	8	+4	–4	Drain Endurance
Wight	6	12	5	7	+4	–2	Drain Presence
Wight, frost	6	15	5	7	N/A	N/A	Alteration, nullify, and cryomancy
Wight, shadow	6	15	5	9	N/A	N/A	Alteration, despair, and nullify
Wraith	12	8	6	8	+6	–3	Drain Spirit
Zombie	3	8	1	1	+3	–1	None

Undead

The most eerily frightening creatures in Ansalon are the incorporeal undead. **Banshees**, the spirits of Evil female elves, scream in pain in the presence of the living. **Ghosts** died emotional or wrongful deaths and hunger for their lost life. Clinging to dark places, **shadows** seek victims to drain of strength and transform into their own kind. Powerful **spectres** hate the light and retain a frightening semblance of their living selves. **Wights**, dwellers in catacombs, have mummified bodies, burning eyes, and sharp claws.

Black, cloudlike **wraiths** are the spirits of the Evil dead seeking to absorb life energy.

Some minions of Chaos remain to plague Ansalon long after the close of the Chaos War. **Daemon warriors**, made of the stuff of nightmares, appear in different forms to different people. These ice-hearted warriors have glowing red eyes and may ride fire dragons into battle. **Shadow-wights**—the black clouds of nothingness that once nullified the Dark Knight defenders of the High Clerist's Tower—can assume various forms also. They, like the white **frost-wights** of southern Ansalon,

Regenerate
The defensive ability to *regenerate* can make a creature far more deadly than it appears. A regenerative creature regains 3 damage points per minute. However, regeneration cannot occur after death.

Sensitivity
See the *sensitivity* mystic sphere.

Spit
Some creatures can *spit* either poison or acid at foes, although these are by no means the only special weapons of this type. A creature can spit at only a single individual and only at melee range. To dodge this assault, a hero must succeed in an *average Agility (Dexterity)* action. The creature can make a normal melee attack against one target and spit at another during the same exchange.

The description of the poison ability offers guidelines for the damage a spitting attack might inflict.

Sprint
Some animals and creatures can move very rapidly for brief periods of time. When a creature with the *sprint* ability wishes to close or open range, those resisting the attempt find their action one degree more difficult than normal. If no one opposes the range change, the sprinting creature can alter the distance of the encounter by two ranges.

Thus, if a sprinter begins an encounter at near missile range, it can flee out to artillery range or suddenly close to personal range. Creatures can use this ability only once per encounter.

Swallow Whole
Many large creatures, including whales and dragons, have maws so massive that they can swallow a man-sized creature in a single gulp. Any hero wounded at melee range by a creature with the ability to *swallow whole* must succeed in an *average Agility (Dexterity)* action or be consumed by it.

A swallowed hero cannot attempt any actions and will die after a number of minutes equal to his Endurance score. Only by slaying the creature that swallowed him and cutting him free can the hero's companions rescue their friend.

Once a creature has consumed creatures whose total Endurance scores equal its own, it can no longer use its swallowing attack. It digests the creatures it has consumed at a rate of 1 Endurance point per half hour.

Thus, a creature with a score of 30 that swallowed six normal men (with scores of 5 each) would find itself sated and unable to use its swallowing attack. After five hours, it would have digested two of these men (10 total Endurance points) and could swallow two more. Once digested, a hero cannot be restored to life.

Thrown Weapons
The ability to use *thrown weapons* resembles that of wielding missile weapons. This ability, however, reflects a creature's fondness for spears, thrown rocks, and similar arms. Creatures can throw weapons at melee or near missile range (inflicting damage as though for melee attacks).

Trample
Many very massive creatures can grind their enemies beneath their feet. Usually, a *trample* follows a successful attempt to close range. Whenever an animal with this ability successfully closes from melee to personal range, it can make an immediate attack by trampling an enemy, in addition to its normal assault. To escape a trample, a hero must make a successful *average Agility (Dexterity)* action. Failure means he suffers normal melee damage from the attack. If the victim of a trample cannot open range before the next exchange of blows, he is trampled again.

Web
Spiders are not the only creatures who can make *webs*. Instead of making a normal melee attack, a web-spinning creature may attempt to ensnare its enemy. Anyone subjected to such an attack must succeed in an *average Agility (Dexterity)* action or find himself bound up tightly in sticky strands.

An entangled character suffers a reduction in his Agility score to just 1 point until he escapes. To free a trapped person (or pull oneself free from the web) a hero must succeed in an *average Strength (Endurance)* action.

take on the appearance their victims find most disturbing and speak mesmerizing words of despair to convince a person he is nothing. One touch makes their words true. Blessed weapons can kill all the above minions of Chaos.

Corporeal undead are mindless creatures. **Skeletons** and **zombies** act only to follow the commands of the necromancer who raised them, while **ghouls** range freely in search of human flesh on which to feed. A **death knight**—the tortured shell of a Knight who once betrayed his honor—is cursed with eternal unlife. He retains his warrior skills and can command other undead.

One subrace of dwarf, however, bears mention here. The Aghar, or **gully dwarves**, are backward, dumb, well-meaning little creatures who never mean to be obnoxious—but somehow always manage it nonetheless. These dirty, ever-cheerful creatures live in clans all over Ansalon. They are legendary cowards.

The chart below distinguishes between heroes and "common" members of these races. As a rule, heroes are assumed to be a cut above their fellows, superior in many ways (as their scores reflect). Narrators can use the "hero" line of the appropriate race to create a hero for a player quickly or when creating heroic characters that adventure with the group.

Hero Races

Most of the races in the chart below are described more fully in Chapter One, following the hero creation rules.

Hero Races

Name	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Centaur, common	7	7	5	5	+3	–3	Missile weapons
Centaur, hero	9	9	7	6	+3	–3	Missile weapons
Dwarf, common	4	6	5	5	+2	–2	Missile weapons
Dwarf, gully	8	6	2	5	+1	–1	Missile weapons
Dwarf, hero	6	8	7	7	+3	–3	Missile weapons
Elf, common	6	4	5	6	+2	–2	Missile weapons
Elf, hero	8	6	7	8	+4	–2	Missile weapons
Gnome, common	7	3	6	4	+1	–0	Missile weapons
Gnome, hero	9	4	7	5	+2	–1	Missile weapons
Human, barbarian	6	6	5	5	+2	–1	Missile weapons
Human, civilized	5	5	6	6	+1	–0	Missile weapons
Human, hero	7	7	7	7	+4	–2	Missile weapons
Kender, common	8	4	7	5	+1	–2	Missile weapons
Kender, hero	10	6	8	6	+3	–4	Missile weapons
Minotaur, common	5	8	4	5	+3	–2	Missile weapons
Minotaur, hero	6	10	6	7	+5	–4	Missile weapons

Draconians

Before the War of the Lance, the Dark Queen set out to create a loyal army of inhuman minions. In an unholy ceremony, she taught her chief priest and a Black-Robed mage how to taint the egg of a Good dragon, causing it to swell and spawn hundreds of slimy creatures that quickly grew into *draconians.*

A different draconian species evolved from each type of metallic dragon egg. The scaly skin of these dragon-men reflects the color of the metallic egg that hatched them. They have heavy bodies, reptilian snouts, and thick lizard tails. Most have wings that enable them to glide, but only one species can actually use them to fly well.

Draconians tend toward base pursuits, crude behavior, and perverse desires. They live a strictly military lifestyle, and never hesitate to mock or insult those they believe inferior—even others of their own race.

Scholars used to believe that draconians were genderless and could not reproduce. However, the female draconians that emerged following the Chaos War proved that theory false. In any case, these Evil creatures— fearsome warriors all—seem invulnerable to magic, disease, aging, and every other normal means of mortality.

Aurak Draconians

Coordination	12	**Intellect**	8 (64)
Physique	10	**Essence**	8
Damage	+10	**Defense**	–5

Auraks—derived from gold dragon eggs—are the most powerful and sinister of the draconian races. In addition to their exceptional combat abilities, these creatures have 64 sorcery points to devote to spells from the schools of pyromancy, electromancy, and divination. (Certain individual Auraks favor the mystic sphere of mentalism as well.) Unlike other draconians, however, Auraks have no wings.

Auraks also can attempt to control the mind of another creature once per day. To resist, the victim must make a successful *average Presence (Spirit)* action. Once an Aurak gains control of a hero, it effectively places its own spirit in the victim's body. An Aurak can retain this control for up to one hour.

Slaying an Aurak releases its inherent magical energy in a powerful explosion that causes every living creature—friend or foe—within melee range to suffer damage points equal to the draconian's remaining sorcery points.

Baaz Draconians

Coordination	8	**Intellect**	6
Physique	6	**Essence**	7
Damage	+4	**Defense**	–3

The weakest and most sadistic of the draconian races, the *Baaz* formed the core of the dragonarmies during the War of the Lance. However, by the Fifth Age, these creatures, made from the eggs of brass dragons, have dwindled greatly in number—too many have died in battle. Although Baaz cannot fly, they glide fairly well on their small, batlike wings.

When a Baaz is slain, its body turns to stone. In melee combat, this death effect requires the person who delivered the killing blow to attempt an *average Agility* action. Should he fail, he finds his weapon trapped inside the petrified corpse. One hour later, the statue crumbles into dust, freeing any captured weapons.

Bozak Draconians

Coordination	6	**Intellect**	7 (49)
Physique	6	**Essence**	7
Damage	+4	**Defense**	–4

Bozaks, products of tainted bronze dragon eggs, are skilled at spells from the schools of aeromancy and pyromancy. Their natural caution makes them excellent commanders, and they enjoy the web special ability (described earlier in this chapter).

Bozaks' strong wings allow them to glide indefinitely in a good wind. However, these less than graceful creatures cannot actually fly without the aid of aeromancy.

When a Bozak is slain, the flesh crumbles instantly away from its bones, leaving only a skeleton behind. One minute later, these bones explode, inflicting 5 damage points on every creature within melee range.

Kapak Draconians

Coordination	8	**Intellect**	5
Physique	6	**Essence**	7
Damage	+2	**Defense**	–3

Born of copper dragon eggs, *Kapak* draconians are noted for their stealth, as well as their ignorance and boorishness. However, they make skilled assassins. They move very silently and have keen senses, making it one degree tougher than normal for a hero to surprise them (or avoid being surprised by them). The wings of a Kapak do not support it in flight but do enable it to glide a considerable distance.

These draconians, poisonous as any viper, have a very dangerous bite. Anyone who suffers damage from a Kapak's assault in melee combat must succeed at a *challenging Endurance* action or find himself instantly paralyzed for one hour.

Upon its death, a Kapak's body dissolves into a pool of acid roughly ten feet in diameter. Anyone coming into contact with this caustic liquid suffers 5 damage points. After one hour, the foul liquid evaporates.

Sivak Draconians

Coordination	10	**Intellect**	7
Physique	12	**Essence**	7
Damage	+12	**Defense**	–5

Sivak draconians are massive creatures spawned from the corrupted eggs of silver dragons. Their enormous wings enable them to fly with great speed, and their fantastic strength makes them more dangerous than any other draconian in melee-range combat. However, Sivak lack the intelligence of their Aurak cousins and prefer to follow orders rather than give them.

When a Sivak kills a roughly man-sized creature, it can immediately assume that creature's shape and likeness. It can retain this shape for up to one hour, when it reverts back to its normal form. To change shape again, the Sivak must seek out a fresh victim.

Slaying a Sivak causes it to burst into flame, inflicting upon its killer 10 damage points from burns.

Dragons

Of all Krynn's creatures, none strikes fear into the hearts of mortals like dragons. These reptilian juggernauts were gifted in the Age of Starbirth with great strength and potent magic. Their incredible intelligence and cunning transcends that of nearly any other race—which makes their seemingly mindless obedience to their passions all the more difficult to comprehend. Fierce, alien drives rule a dragon's life: hunger, jealousy, rage, territoriality, triumph, mating urges, and even sleep. Undoubtedly, mankind will never truly understand these first children of the gods.

In the decades since the dawn of the Fifth Age, many regions of Krynn have come under the rule of these great beasts. These dragon lords are mentioned later in this section and detailed further in Chapter Two of *Dusk or Dawn.*

The folk of Krynn group the species of dragon into two general classes: *chromatic dragons,* whose distinct color denotes their associated elemental force, and *metallic dragons,* seemingly crafted from shining precious metals. Chromatic dragons are generally Evil, while the metallics tend toward Good. However, corrupted metallics and kind-natured chromatics are not unknown.

The chart below describes Krynn's dragons by age category:

General Appearance

Whether metallic or chromatic, dragons share many physical characteristics in common. Males are bulky and rough-looking with thick horns. Their large bodies bulge with muscles and their hides are covered with large scales and long spines. A distinctive male characteristic is a scaly frill, like a lion's mane, framing the wyrm's face. Dragons flare this frill in challenge to each other and to demonstrate their fearsomeness.

Compared to males, females are slimmer and more angular. They have smaller, thinner horns and long, graceful limbs. Females have no frill around their faces, but they often feature a spine ridge. The hides of female wyrms, sleeker than those of males, have finer scales.

Regardless of gender, the intelligence of these superior creatures shows in their distinctive faces. Facial structure, brow shape, and the hint of emotion differ with the individual dragon.

Dragon Names

Most dragons have a variety of names. First, they have a dragon name (such as "Khellendros"), plus the name humans call them ("Skie"). The five biggest wyrms–the Great Dragons—also have a title, such as "the Blue Dragon." Some of the beasts also have fearsome colloquial names, like "the Storm over Krynn."

Dragon Age	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def
Wyrmling	8	15-30	4	4	+7	–4
Very young	8	21-36	6	6	+10	–6
Young	9	27-42	8	8	+12	–8
Juvenile	9	33-48	10	10	+14	–10
Young adult	10	36-54	11	11	+16	–12
Adult	10	39-54	12	12	+18	–14
Mature adult	11	42-57	13	13	+20	–16
Old	11	45-60	14	14	+25	–18
Very old	12	48-63	15	15	+30	–20
Venerable	12	51-66	16	16	+35	–25
Wyrm	13	54-69	17	17	+40	–30
Great wyrm	13	57-72	18	18	+50	–35
Ancient wyrm	14	60-75	19	19	+60	–40
Legendary wyrm	14	63-78	20	20	+70	–45

Draconic Aging and Diet

Dragon young hatch from eggs one to two feet long. The sheen of the eggs echoes the color or metal of the young dragon inside. Eggs incubate for a century before hatching.

Emerging wyrmlings actually look nothing like their parents. The serpentine creatures poke through the egg membrane with sharp beaks and slither from the shell. They can walk shakily on their underdeveloped legs, which grow stronger over the course of decades. It takes even longer for their wings to form.

Dragons age slowly, maturing from wyrmling to adult in centuries. Some of Ansalon's oldest dragons were alive during the Second Dragon War three thousand years ago. Such ancient wyrms increase their life spans by hibernating for hundreds of years at a time.

At their wyrmling stage of development, dragons feed on small animals, craving larger prey as they mature. As adults, they must consume enormous amounts of meat to sustain their great bulk. Of course, metallics seem less likely to feed on intelligent creatures than do chromatics, but one rule holds for all dragons: They can eat whatever they want.

Land of Origin and Size

This book's Prologue stated that dragons from a mysterious land across the sea conquered large regions of Ansalon, partly due to their great size. Dragons native to Ansalon generally grow no larger than "great wyrm" size on the age category chart: That translates into a maximum of two hundred to three hundred feet long.

However, mature dragons from the homeland of Malystryx the Red can reach "ancient wyrm" or "legendary wyrm" size. These dragons, which grow to over four hundred feet long, have evolved to their current immensity through centuries of natural selection. A human's entire height equals only the distance from chin to brow ridge on the *smallest* of the dragon overlords.

Chromatic Dragons

The most terrible beasts on Krynn are the chromatic dragons. Many believe these creatures—descendants of the original First Born Five dragons formed by the gods—to be Evil incarnate.

Each type of chromatic dragon has an associated school of sorcery.

Black Dragons

Found primarily in swamps, marshes, and other dank places, *black dragons* are one of the smallest dragon races. These yellow-eyed beasts have long, slender bodies and necks; triangular, flat heads; thin, forward pointing horns; and bat-like wings. They can breathe water, a helpful asset considering their favored environs.

The savage, vicious black dragons often hunt and kill for the sadistic pleasure of murder. Their independent nature makes them valued spies and guardians. However, as they tend toward nervous, compulsive behavior, they can't always be trusted to do as they are told.

Like their dragon kin, black wyrms hunger for wealth, favoring precious stones and objects fashioned from them. These slimy creatures can breathe a stream of acid more caustic than any other known to man. They prefer direct combat to spell use but do enjoy hydromantic sorcery.

Blue Dragons

Found in desolate, barren regions like deserts and badlands, *blue dragons* are the second largest type of chromatic. They have powerful forelimbs with long burrowing claws. A short, tapered tail acts as a blue dragon's rudder for burrowing or gliding on the desert winds. His wedge-shaped head features fleshy folds designed to cover the dragon's ears, mouth, and nostrils when burrowing. Protective membranes shield his eyes, while his horns, spines, and wings fold flat into fleshy grooves to help the dragon slide through rocky ground. Despite their digging proclivity, blue dragons become the very picture of grace when soaring high in the clear desert skies.

These self-centered creatures seem interested only in their own survival. Most blue dragons seem willing to cooperate to reach a common goal, and they enjoy contact with humans more than any other chromatic race. In fact, as the favored mounts of Knights of Takhisis, they have formed some strong bonds with their human riders.

The greedy blue dragons hoard gold, silver, platinum, and other precious metals in their cave-lairs beneath the sand.

Before attempting any other maneuver in combat, a blue dragon generally employs his dragon breath: a stroke of actinic lightning, with an accompanying, deafening crash of thunder. These creatures all possess electromantic magic, and some also create illusions and weather-related spells.

Green Dragons

Green dragons live in the most verdant forests and jungles, ruling all the creatures who dwell there. These beasts, larger than blacks and whites but not as massive as blues, are distinguished by the large, ridged crest that runs from the top of their heads down their long necks.

While not as utterly Evil as their crimson cousins, the scheming green dragons seek to dominate everything near their lairs. They will follow only a leader whom they respect, and they enjoy playing clever tricks on their foes.

The avaricious greens love surrounding themselves with a hoard of magical artifacts. They also revel in ivory, pearls, and other treasures of the natural world.

Green dragons prefer to cast spells at enemies in battle, especially magic from the school of enchantment. However, they can breathe a caustic plume of chlorine gas that burns the eyes and sears the lungs. They attack physically only as a last resort.

Red Dragons

By far the most destructive, Evil members of dragonkind are the *red dragons*. These immense creatures, larger and stronger than any other chromatic race, reside in mountainous or volcanic areas. Everything about their impressive crimson forms suggests ferocity, from their wicked claws to their curved horns.

Reds, ever-hungry for raw power, do not hesitate to destroy any person, city, or dragon that stands between them and their goals. Though quite intelligent, sometimes red dragons allow their egos and feelings of superiority to get in the way of clear decision making.

These covetous creatures stash all manner of treasure in their rocky lairs. They never become so bent on destruction that they overlook the opportunity to loot victims for new and valuable additions to their hoards.

In combat, reds use both magical and physical assaults, keeping in reserve their fearsome dragon breath: a blistering cone of fire hotter than any found in a blacksmith's forge. Of course, these dragons are master pyromancers.

White Dragons

The frigid *white dragons* dwell atop great peaks or in other regions of snow and ice. Slightly smaller and less intelligent than black dragons, whites can swim through glacial waters just as easily as fly. Should a person draw near enough to touch one, he would find the dragon's scales painfully cold.

White dragons are mean. They tend to let their animalistic passions to rule them. These arrogant, haughty creatures prefer lives of icy solitude, away from "lesser races."

White wyrms revel in obtaining jewels, gems, and other crystals of the very purest quality.

Their dragon breath, which they use before all other offensive measures, is a cone of superchilled air that leaves their enemies frostbitten or even frozen solid. Whites also wield magic from the school of cryomancy.

Metallic Dragons

Just as the world of Krynn is cursed with the presence of Evil wyrms, so too is it blessed with races of Good dragons. These wyrms—ancient and powerful beings forged from the world's most precious metals—appear just as fearsome to a human as do their chromatic cousins.

In the Fifth Age, however, most Good dragons have gone into hiding to save themselves from the savagery of the Dragon Purge. Those who remain active in Ansalon take other forms to disguise themselves. In general, they tend to disapprove of the chromatic Great Dragons' technique of absorbing the magical life-essence from fallen foes, though a few individuals have been known to adopt the practice.

Each type of metallic dragon has an associated mystic sphere.

Brass Dragons

Brass dragons, slightly larger than bronzes, favor regions of badlands and vast stretches of sandy desert for their homes. They love to nestle down in the sand to warm themselves, the bony brows of their tough faceplates shielding their eyes. These self-indulgent creatures also enjoy catching the sun's rays on their shiny, platelike brass crests.

Though good-natured, brass dragons believe the strong should survive—it's no wonder a brass is the only metallic dragon in Ansalon to become lord of a realm. Most brasses know many languages and converse at length with those they meet. These boisterous creatures enjoy tales and songs, too, considering such lore their most valuable possession.

Of course, their vanity forces them to accumulate great treasure hoards as well, particularly items fashioned from brass. Unlike golds and silvers, however, they do not seek out culture or art.

Although they attack first with tooth and claw, brass dragons can breathe a great gust of superheated air that blisters the flesh and sends the unwary sprawling. They favor mystical magic from the sphere of channeling.

Bronze Dragons

One cannot overstate the love of a *bronze dragon* for the sea. These creatures, nearly the size of brass dragons, find few things more pleasant than watching the antics of soaring gulls, listening to the crashing surf, or diving beneath the waves themselves. Reflected sunlight dazzles the eye as it glints off a flying bronze's neck spines and back ridge.

Perhaps the most warlike of the Good dragons, bronzes never hesitate to defend their homes or join an attack against Evil foes. Though curious about other races, bronzes seem less than fond of carrying riders.

In addition to items made of bronze, these dragons treasure relics that remind them of the sea—anything from pearls to artifacts recovered out of sunken ships.

A bronze dragon normally assails his foes with his claws and tail, after first using mentalism to learn their intentions. He can also breathe a brilliant sunbeam, which both sears and blinds his enemies. More than one mariner has mistaken the sight of this dragon breath in the distance for the beacon of a lighthouse.

Copper Dragons

People easily distinguish *copper dragons,* the smallest of the metallics, by their thick, backswept horns and blunt faces. These wyrms favor heights and tend to make their lairs in temper-

ate, mountainous regions.

Copper dragons—great pranksters—enjoy creating puzzles and asking riddles. Though canny, they seem less confident than some dragons; rather than make a decision on their own, they usually defer to others or seek advice.

They favor all manner of treasures, especially those made of copper. Their hoards always include stockpiles of coins.

Possibly because of their small size, coppers seem less inclined to fight than other metallics. However, their dragon breath is deadly: a scintillating shaft of energy that causes any form of matter to break up and disintegrate. In addition, they all command the mystic magic of sensitivity.

Gold Dragons

Of all the great wyrms, only the *gold dragon* is markedly serpentine in appearance. These magnificent creatures, larger than any other dragon race on Krynn, believe themselves to bear the form of the god Paladine, known to them as the Platinum Father.

Gold dragons, the most noble and majestic of their ilk, behave as honorably as any knight and as compassionately as any follower of the mystic Citadel of Light—though sometimes with a hint of condescension. The intelligence of these creatures is legendary, as is their aloof demeanor. They consider few their equals.

As all dragons do, golds hoard treasure. These wise wyrms have a marked fondness for forgotten scrolls, rare tomes, and other chronicles.

A gold's dragon breath is a tremendous roar, whose powerful shock wave shatters bones and topples walls. However, gold dragons attempt first to subdue enemies using spells, especially the magic of the sphere of meditation.

Silver Dragons

With glossy, shimmering bodies and glorious fanned crests down their back and neck, *silver dragons* are arguably the most beautiful metallic race. Many silvers—second only to golds and reds in size—favor cold, isolated mountaintops and glacial wastes for their lairs, while others prefer to dwell near communities of men.

Silver dragons have always cared deeply about the welfare of mortal races. Most of them seem friendly and open, enjoying the company of members of Good races. However, as this openness causes the Great Dragons to hunt silvers in particular, they tend to go about only in human or elf form, limiting their contact to a handful of trusted friends.

These dragons surround themselves with finely crafted treasures, especially objects made of silver.

As spells fascinate silver dragons, most use magical assaults first in battle. However, as they also serve as mounts to Knights of Solamnia, many choose an initial physical onslaught instead. Their dragon breath is a stream of quicksilver—a liquid metal (and deadly contact poison) that they can project with great force. Silvers favor the mystic magic of alteration.

Dragons in Combat

Dragons of any age or size are terrible enemies. From birth, they prove a match for any party of adventurers. As they age, however, dragons increase in power until they become almost unstoppable.

These beasts have many combat options, from clawing and biting to using their dragon breath. For simplicity's sake, most of these different offensive maneuvers have the damage rating listed in the age table. Only the dragon's breath inflicts a different amount of damage (see below).

Melee Combat

Most dragons employ their claws, fangs, and slashing tails in melee combat. Because they have so many possible means of attack, heroes in melee combat with one dragon must all attempt to defend themselves from its counterattacks in the same exchange.

Dragons are also known to use their wings to buffet enemies with great gusts of air. If a dragon opts for this tactic, it may not make any other counterattacks; that is, the heroes need not defend themselves from its natural weapons. Instead, they all must succeed at a *challenging Agility (Strength)* action or be swept off their feet. While the heroes are regaining their footing, of course, the dragon swoops in for a normal volley of melee attacks.

Dragons also can swallow man-sized creatures whole, as described for the "swallow whole" special ability in the previous section.

Dragon Breath

All chromatics and metallics have powerful dragon breath. Although its exact nature—flame, ice, lightning, and so on—is dictated by the dragon's race, the strength of the dragon breath depends on the creature's age.

A dragon can use its special breath while at near missile, far missile, or artillery range (although younger dragons may not be able to breathe as far as adults). The dragon breath may

affect a number of targets equal to the beast's Coordination rating, provided that they are more or less together (Narrator's judgment). To avoid injury, every target of the dragon breath must defend himself as if from normal missile fire—an *average Agility (Dexterity)* action. Any hero who fails to defend himself from the dragon breath suffers damage points equal to the dragon's Physique rating.

Magic Use

Dragons are among the most enchanted creatures known to man. The absence of the gods of magic affects them not at all; they work incredible feats of magic that no other creature could contemplate.

Chromatic Magic

The gods formed the First Born Five dragons from the very metals of their divine creation: the world of Krynn. This composition richly imbued these chromatic dragons with the power of Krynn's primordial magic, making them masters of sorcery with the equivalent of an "A" Reason code. Individual dragons of each color all inherently use three different schools of magic. Red dragons all wield pyromancy, for instance, plus two other schools of the dragon's choice.

In addition, Evil dragons are assumed to have a Spirit code of "B," enabling them to use spells from one sphere of mysticism. Many enjoy using the sphere of alteration to take on human or elf form.

Metallic Magic

Metallic dragons have spent centuries in meditative contemplation, learning the secrets of inner peace and tranquillity. Because of their wisdom and power, the Good dragons of the world have mastered the art of mysticism; their presumed Spirit code of "A" allows them to employ three spheres of mysticism. Exactly which three spheres varies by individual and by dragon type, but quite a few use alteration magic to assume the guise of humanoid creatures.

These dragons, formed of Krynn's precious metals by the god Paladine after the corruption of the chromatics, also contain primeval magic from the birth of the world. This magical nature allows Good dragons to employ sorcery as well as mysticism. As metallic dragons are assumed to have a Reason code of "B," they can invoke spells from one school of sorcery.

Dragonawe

There is no creature on Krynn more majestic or powerful than a dragon. Beyond their intimidating physical presence, all dragons radiate a powerful magical aura called *dragonawe*, which can intimidate, stun, or panic lesser creatures. The exact effect of this aura on an individual depends on the dragon's behavior.

The mere sight of one of these astounding beasts causes a creature to attempt an *easy Spirit (Presence)* action. Should he fail, he becomes so overwhelmed by the dragon, he forfeits his next action. However, he comes to his senses after that.

If the dragon is moving toward the party when it comes into view, the action becomes *average* instead of *easy*. In this case, failure results in an overwhelming fear that causes the victim to flee or seek shelter at once. Only after getting out of sight of the dragon does the awed person come to his senses.

A dragon may affect its foes with awe a second time, as it begins its attack. To avoid this dragonawe, a targeted hero must succeed in a *challenging Spirit (Presence)* action. Failure causes the hero to freeze with fear, unable to attack or defend himself from the dragon's counterattack. Afterward, the hero must flee from the creature, not hesitating until it is out of sight.

Dive Attacks

Suddenly, with no warning or apparent cause, the blazing noonday sun went out.

Man and dragon glimpsed their enemy clearly at the same moment. This black behemoth, easily thrice the size of Sirocco, filled the sky above them like the clouds of a looming storm. The obsidian black of her scales set off the ivory white of her teeth, each as long and sharp as a great sword. Her yellow-green eyes burned with all the hatred of her kind, and the sickly odor of swamps and decay filled the air around her. This was one of the Great Dragons from across the sea, and she was bearing down on them with the dizzying speed of a falling star.

—From "The Endless War"

One of a dragon's most effective combat tactics involves diving from a great altitude at a land-based target. This maneuver resembles the hunting practice of hawks and eagles—but has much more dramatic effects.

First, any creature who finds himself the target of a diving dragon must attempt a *daunting Spirit (Presence)* action to resist dragonawe. Failure leaves the target frozen with fear and unable to move to defend himself.

After the targets of the dive have felt the power of dragonawe, the beast unleashes its dragon breath. This deadly strike often eliminates targets before the dragon ever reaches them. Those paralyzed with fear born of dragonawe remain helpless.

When the creature completes its blasts of dragon breath, it lands with a crash amid its enemies. Those who have been paralyzed with fear find themselves unable to defend themselves as the dragon makes a melee (or magical) counterattack.

After this combat's resolution, those who were frozen with dragonawe can finally move again. The only action available to them, however, is unrestricted and panicked flight.

Few people survive dragon dives to tell about them.

Dragon Overlords' Power of Shaping

In the Fifth Age, many parts of Ansalon have fallen under the domination of a handful of exceptionally powerful Great Dragons from across the sea to the east. The mightiest of these creatures, known as *dragon overlords*, rule great domains throughout the continent. (These five dragons are described in more detail in Chapter Two of *Dusk or Dawn*.)

The five chromatic dragon overlords have a supernatural power that most others of their kind do not share. Known as *shaping*, it enables a Great Dragon to alter the landscape of his realm to suit his terrain preference. This is not a small-scale change, but a sweeping transformation of terrain that has remade the very face of Ansalon over the last three decades.

Shaping is a time-consuming and difficult process. On the first day a dragon begins to shape an area, he affects all the land within one mile of his primary lair. On the second day, the radius of the effect extends outward to two miles. This process continues, with the radius increasing by one mile per day, until it reaches a maximum radius equal to ten times the Physique rating of the beast. After a day of shaping, a full night's rest allows a dragon to recover.

The map illustrates the scope of the five shaped Dragon Realms, ruled by:

- **The Red Dragon.** Malystryx, or Malys, dominates Ansalon's eastern coast. Her might has raised mountains and opened volcanic vents, transforming her domain from predominantly sprawling forests and rolling hills into a great wasteland now known as the Desolation.
- **The Blue Dragon.** Khellendros, also known as Skie, rules the northwestern region of continental Ansalon. He has caused the searing deserts of the Northern Wastes to spread to the city of Palanthas and across the Plains of Solamnia to the very shores of the Vingaard River.
- **The White Dragon.** Gellidus, or Frost, has had perhaps the most terrible effect on the lands around his home. Through the power of shaping, he has buried the once fertile land of Southern Ergoth beneath a great glacier and filled the Straits of Algoni with a fearsome Gale.
- **The Black Dragon.** Onysablet, whom men call Sable, has taken up residence on the eastern shores of the New Sea, choking the waters around her lair with seaweed and silt. The great sargasso she created has drowned the entire region, turning it into a teeming salt marsh hundreds of miles across.
- **The Green Dragon.** The last of the dragon overlords is Beryllinthranox, or Beryl, who rules the Qualinesti Forest. Under her fearful reign, the woodlands of that region have spread south and east at an unnatural rate. Whole cities in the Kharolis region have been swallowed up by the tangle of vines, undergrowth, and trees, despite the realm's proximity to the southern pole.

Unique Dragons

In addition to the chromatic and metallic dragons, lesser variants on the race appear in Ansalon occasionally. Certain reptilian races, such as wyverns and bakali, were mentioned earlier in this chapter. However, four unique species of dragon deserve mention in this section.

Dracoliches

Coordination	*	**Intellect**	*
Physique	*	**Essence**	*
Damage	*	**Defense**	*

* Determine using dragon age chart

A *dracolich* is an undead, skeletal dragon that, in addition to the powers it had in life, has been greatly augmented by the evils of necromancy. The powerful aura of dragonawe surrounding a dracolich makes it one degree more difficult than normal for anyone to escape its effects.

In addition, the gaze of a dracolich can paralyze an enemy within far missile range.

Fire Dragons

Coordination	12	**Intellect**	4
Physique	70	**Essence**	4
Damage	+65	**Defense**	–40

The Chaos god created *fire dragons* at the conclusion of the Age of Despair to do battle with the forces of Krynn. Spawned of the Rift, these creatures exist only to wreak destruction upon the world and to serve as mounts for daemon warriors.

Unlike true dragons, these are elemental creatures of varying size, composed of living magma. They have scales of obsidian and eyes like glowing embers. Most of them departed Krynn in the wake of the Chaos War, although a handful remained behind. These creatures of fury and rage lack the intelligence and magical abilities of true dragons.

In combat, fire dragons have at their disposal all a dragon's normal offenses, including dive attacks and dragonawe. This creature's dragon breath—a stream of superheated, sulfurous vapor—burns and chokes its targets. A flying fire dragon leaves a shower of embers in its wake that sets alight forests and cities on the ground below.

As with other creatures of Chaos, magical weapons, blessed by the departed gods, can kill fire dragons.

Sea Dragons

Coordination	*	**Intellect**	*
Physique	*	**Essence**	*
Damage	*	**Defense**	*

* Determine using dragon age chart

The folk of Krynn debate whether to consider these aquatic dragon cousins true wyrms. Although *sea dragons* don't have wings or radiate dragonawe, they do possess dragon breath: a stream of boiling steam that scalds their foes.

True dragons or not, these sea serpents can reach lengths of up to two hundred feet, terrifying sea elf communities and threatening the merchant marine. Sea dragons look quite serpentine, their long black bodies shading to a dark green neck and head. They have powerful flippers instead of legs and a long tail, which ends in a great fluke they can whip at passing ships.

Shadow Dragons

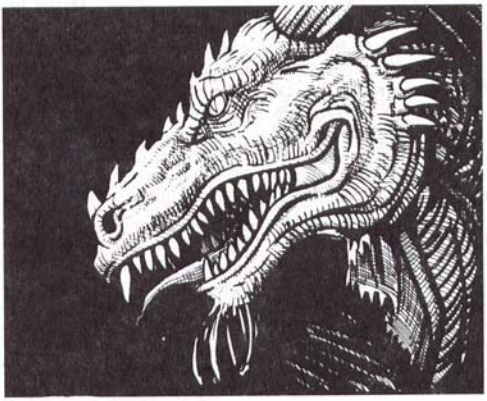
Coordination	*	**Intellect**	*
Physique	*	**Essence**	*
Damage	*	**Defense**	*

* Determine using dragon age chart

Shadow dragons are extremely rare on Krynn, though legend calls them sly and cunning. Apparently uncomfortable in either bright light or total darkness, these intelligent dragons are said to lair in ruins and caves. No one has ever claimed to have seen a shadow dragon more than one hundred fifty feet from nose to tail.

The dark scales of a shadow dragon differ from those of black dragons in their translucence. From a distance, this creature looks like merely a mass of shadows. Using this natural camouflage to their advantage, they have adopted ambush combat techniques, hiding in shadows until they can leap out upon their prey.

In addition, shadow dragons can breathe a cloud of blackness that both drains enemies of Spirit and blinds them; this latter attack requires a target to succeed at a *challenging Perception (Presence)* action or be rendered blind, curable only by mystic healing. Stories tell that these dark wyrms can command both shadows and shadowwights to do their bidding.



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Races Quick Reference

Centaur

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
En 7 min. St 7 min. Re 7 max. Pe 7 min.	Dx "A" En "X"	By role	Trump bonus using bow. Soothes horses.	No trump bonus for spellcasting; Dexterity code of "X" for any missile weapon but bow.

Dwarf

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ag 8 max. Dx 8 max. En 6 min. St 6 min.	Re "B" max.	By subrace or by role	Trump bonus to resist poison or sorcery.	No trump bonus for certain personality-related actions.

Elf

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ag 6 min. Dx 6 min. En 8 max. St 8 max. Pr 6 min.	Ag "C" max. Dx "B" min. En "C" max. St "B" min.	By subrace or by role	Trump bonus in sword combat and when using Perception in the forest.	No trump bonus for non-elf related Presence actions (except to resist mystical spells).

Gnome

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Dx 7 min. En 4 max. St 4 max. Re 6 min. Pe 6 min.	Ag "C" max. Dx "C" max. En "C" max. St "C" max.	By subrace or by role	Trump bonus for large devices (tinkers) or small devices (thinkers).	Failures at machinery-related actions are all mishaps for tinkers. For thinkers, they take twice the normal time.

Half-elf

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Two elf minimum scores *and* one elf maximum	Dx "B" min. *or* St "B" min.	By elf subrace or by role	Choose one elf advantage	No trump bonus for elf-related Presence actions (except to resist mysticism).

Human

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
None	En "B" max. *or* Pe "B" max.	By subrace or by role	Raise a Physical or Mental score by 1 point.	Lower a Mental or Physical score by 1 point.

Kender

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ag 7 min. Dx 7 min. En 6 max. St 6 max. Pe 6 min. *or* Pr 6 min.	Ag "D" max. En "D" max. (true) *or* En "C" max. (afflicted) Pe "B" min.	Acute eyesight and by subrace and by role	Handling; trump bonus for sleight-of-hand (true) or sneaky (afflicted) actions.	Short concentration. "A" code allowed only for Perception.

Minotaur

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ag 5 max. Dx 5 max. En 8 min. St 8 min.	En "B" min. St "B" min. Re "C" max. Sp "C" max.	By role	Trump bonus for nautical actions and ferocity.	No trump bonus for non-minotaur-related Presence actions (except hostile ones).

Arms and Armor

	Weapon	Type	Class	Dmg	Description
Swords	Stiletto†	Melee*	VL	+1	6-inch needlelike blade
	Dagger†	Melee*	VL	+2	8-inch blade
	Short sword†	Melee	L	+3	15-inch blade
	Cutlass†	Melee	L	+4	30-inch curved blade
	Scimitar†	Melee	M	+5	3-foot curved blade
	Broad sword†	Melee	H	+6	3-foot blade
	Long sword†	Melee	H	+7	3.5-foot blade
	Two-handed sword‡	Melee	VH	+8	4-foot blade
	Great sword‡	Melee	VH	+9	5-foot blade
Hammers	Sap†	Melee	VL	+1	Leather pouch of lead pellets
	Baton†	Melee	VL	+2	Slender wooden club
	Bludgeon†	Melee	L	+3	Short, weighted club
	Cudgel†	Melee	L	+4	A traditional club
	Mitre†	Melee	M	+5	A short, sturdy mace
	Flail†	Melee	H	+6	Two batons connected by a chain
	Mace‡	Melee	H	+7	A haft with a heavy head
	Morningstar‡	Melee	VH	+8	A heavy, spiked mace
	War hammer‡	Melee	VH	+9	A hammer with a large spike
Axes	Adze†	Melee	VL	+1	A carpenter's tool
	Hand axe†	Melee*	VL	+2	A carpenter's tool
	Sickle†	Melee	L	+3	A slender crescent blade
	Scythe‡	Melee	L	+4	A sickle mounted on a staff
	Pick†	Melee	M	+5	A heavy spikelike mining tool
	Battle axe†	Melee	H	+6	A hefty axe with a spiked head
	Broad axe‡	Melee	H	+7	A single-bladed headsman's axe
	Great axe‡	Melee	VH	+8	A double-bladed broad axe
	Poleax‡	Melee	VH	+9	A broad axe on a shaft
Polearms	Quarterstaff‡	Melee	VL	+2	6-foot iron-shod pole
	Javelin‡	Thrown**	VL	+1	Slender spear for throwing
	Spear‡	Thrown**	L	+3	Traditional throwing weapon
	Fork‡	Thrown**	L	+4	Long shaft with two pikes
	Trident‡	Thrown**	M	+5	A three-pronged spear
	Lance‡	Melee	H	+6 ¥	A heavy spear (incl. dragonlances)
	Billhook‡	Melee	H	+7	A staff with a many-pronged tip
	Pike‡	Melee	VH	+8	A staff with a spiked tip
	Halbard‡	Melee	VH	+9	A staff with a spiked, bladed tip
Bows	Prodd‡	Missile	VL	+1	Pellet-firing crossbow
	Self bow‡	Missile	VL	+2	Very light, simple bow
	Light crossbow‡	Missile	L	+3	A basic crossbow
	Horse bow‡	Missile	L	+4	Built and backed recurved bow
	Crossbow‡	Missile	M	+5	A stirrup-drawn crossbow
	Long bow‡	Missile	H	+6	Large, recurved bow
	Heavy crossbow‡	Missile	H	+7	A crank-drawn crossbow
	Great bow‡	Missile	VH	+8	Large, compound recurved bow
	Arbalest‡	Missile	VH	+9	A massive crossbow
Unusual	Blowgun‡	Missile	VL	+1	A long, hollow tube for firing darts
	Shuriken†	Melee*	VL	+1	An oriental throwing star
	War dart†	Melee*	VL	+2	A heavy, barbed dart
	Sling†	Missile	L	+2	A strap for hurling stones
	Staff sling‡	Missile**	M	+4	A sling on a long pole
	Chakrum†	Thrown**	M	+3	A sharp-edged throwing disc
Armor	Padded silk	N/A	VL	–1	A quilted suit of silk and cotton
	Leather	N/A	L	–2	A suit of stiffened, boiled leather
	Chain mail	N/A	M	–3	A suit of fine, metal mesh
	Scale	N/A	H	–4	A suit of small, overlapping plates
	Plate	N/A	VH	–5	Traditional knight's armor
Shields	Buckler	N/A	VL	–1	A very small, circular shield
	Kite	N/A	L	–2	A small triangular shield
	Target	N/A	M	–3	A heavy circular shield
	Horse	N/A	H	–4	A heavy triangular shield
	Tower	N/A	VH	–5	A massive rectangular shield

† Requires only one hand to use. ‡ Requires two hands; no shield allowed. * Also can be thrown. ** Also usable in melee combat. ¥ Mounted lances gain a +3 bonus.

Standard Hero Actions

Action	Difficulty	Abil.	Opp.	Comments
Avoid a spell	Avg (8)	Pe/Pr	Re/Sp	Perception resists sorcery, Presence resists mysticism
Break an average code	Avg (8)	Re	—	A brief message
Break a masterful code	Daun (16)	Re	—	A brief message
Break down a door	Avg (8)	St	—	A standard door
Build something simple	Avg (8)	Dx	—	No moving parts (a chair)
Build something complex	Chal (12)	Dx	—	A few moving parts (a cart)
Build something intricate	Daun (16)	Dx	—	Many moving parts (a clock)
Calm a panicked tame animal	Avg (8)	Pr	Sp	Used for mounts, pets, etc.
Chase a fleeing individual	Avg (8)	Ag	Ag	Combat ranges denote distance
Climb a tree or fence	Easy (4)	Ag	—	New action each 25 feet or so
Climb a rough wall or cliff	Avg (8)	Ag	—	New action each 25 feet or so
Climb a sheer wall or cliff	Chal (12)	Ag	—	New action each 25 feet or so
Climb a slick, sheer wall	Daun (16)	Ag	—	New action each 25 feet or so
Dig a tunnel or mine	Chal (12)	St	—	Includes shoring and bracing
Disarm a common trap	Chal (12)	Dx	—	Trip wires, poison needles, etc.
Don a general disguise	Avg (8)	Pr	Pe	For instance, passing as a member of the city guard
Don a specific disguise	Chal (12)	Pr	Pe	For instance, imitating the watch captain in particular
Drive a wagon or vehicle	Avg (8)	Dx	—	In typical conditions
Fight a fire	Avg (8)	En	—	Used for most uncontrolled blazes
Fight a raging fire	Daun (16)	En	—	Involves combustibles or explosives
Hide from passersby	Avg (8)	Ag	Pe	Assumes no one is searching
Hide from a casual search	Chal (12)	Ag	Pe	Assumes no hounds or such are used in the search
Hide from a thorough search	Daun (16)	Ag	Pe	If searchers use bloodhounds, etc.
Intimidate a thug	Avg (8)	Pr	Sp	When hero and thug are fairly evenly matched
Palm an object	Avg (8)	Dx	Pe	Includes most sleight-of-hand
Pick a common lock	Avg (8)	Dx	—	Hero must have proper tools
Pick an excellent lock	Chal (12)	Dx	—	Hero must have proper tools
Pick a pocket	Chal (12)	Dx	Pe	Assumes target is not on his guard
Repair an item	Varies	Dx	—	One degree easier than "build" action
Resist a magical item's effect	Avg (8)	Pe/Pr	Re/Sp	Perception resists sorcery, Presence resists mysticism
Search an area	Chal (12)	Pe	—	For hidden clues, etc.
Search an object	Chal (12)	Pe	—	For traps, catches, panels, etc.
Sneak past a sentry	Avg (8)	Dx	Pe	Assumes no one raises an alarm
Start a fire in the wild	Avg (8)	Re	—	With a lens, firebow, flint, etc.
Swim in rough waters	Chal (12)	Ag	—	Crossing rapids, during storms, etc.
Tell a convincing lie	Easy (4)	Pr	Pe	For a believable story and listeners not predisposed to doubt the hero
Track a beast in the wild	Avg (8)	Pe	—	Useful for hunters and the like
Track a person in a city	Avg (8)	Pe	Pr	Assumes the person isn't cautious
Use a magical item	Easy (4)	Re/Sp	Pe/Pr	Opposed only when targeted at another individual

Creature Charts

Animals of Ansalon

Name	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Ant, giant	9	8	1	1	+4	–4	None
Ape, carnivorous	6	12	3	3	+5	–2	None
Bat, giant	5	12	3	2	+5	–2	Infect
Bear, grizzly	6	13	2	2	+7	–2	Crush
Bear, ice	6	18	3	5	+12	–2	Crush and immune to cold/ice
Beetle, giant	3	15	1	1	+10	–4	None
Buffalo	8	15	2	2	+8	–2	None
Camel*†	11	12	3	2	+2	–2	None
Cat, domestic	5	1	2	2	+1	–2	Rake
Centipede, giant	9	4	1	1	+3	–3	Poison
Cheetah	8	9	2	2	+6	–3	Sprint and rake
Crocodile	5	9	1	1	+10	–3	None
Dog, domestic	5	3	2	2	+1	–1	None
Dog, hunting/wild	6	4	2	2	+2	–2	None
Dog, war	7	6	2	2	+4	–4	None
Dolphin	15	8	5	7	+4	–3	None
Eagle, common	15	4	1	1	+3	–2	Dive
Eagle, giant*	24	12	2	2	+12	–2	Dive
Eel, electric	6	4	1	1	+2	–1	Lightning
Eel, giant	5	6	1	1	+4	–2	None
Elephant*†	8	33	2	2	+8	–4	Trample
Horse, light*†	12	10	2	2	+4	–2	Kick
Horse, riding*	9	10	2	2	+2	–2	Kick
Horse, war*	9	16	2	2	+8	–3	Kick and trample
Jaguar	8	13	2	2	+7	–2	Rake
Leopard	8	11	2	2	+6	–2	Pounce and rake
Lion	6	17	2	2	+9	–2	Rake
Lizard, giant	8	10	1	1	+4	–3	Swallow whole
Mammoth†	6	45	2	2	+10	–5	Trample
Octopus, giant	6	24	1	1	+18	–2	Camouflage
Pony*	6	4	2	2	+1	–2	Kick
Rat, giant	6	2	2	2	+2	–1	Infect
Scorpion, giant	4	8	1	1	+5	–3	Poison
Shark	12	18	1	1	+4	–2	None
Snake, constrictor	5	8	1	1	+2	–2	Crush
Snake, viper	8	2	1	1	+1	–2	Poison
Spider, giant	6	12	1	1	+4	–3	Poison and web
Squid, giant	3	36	3	1	+34	–3	Crush
Tiger	6	20	2	2	+10	–2	Rake
Wasp, giant	11	12	1	1	+5	–3	Poison
Wart hog	6	9	1	2	+8	–2	None
Wolverine	6	9	2	2	+7	–3	Musk
Whale, common	6	27	3	4	+20	–4	None
Whale, killer	8	20	5	6	+12	–3	None
Whale, sperm	4	40	4	4	+25	–5	None
Wolf, common	7	9	2	2	+3	–1	None
Wolf, dire (worg*)	7	12	3	4	+5	–2	None
Worm, tractor	3	24	1	5	+4	–4	None

* Refers to an animal that can be used as a mount.
† Refers to a pack animal.

Creature Charts

Hero Races

Name	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Centaur, common	7	7	5	5	+3	–3	Missile weapons
Centaur, hero	9	9	7	6	+3	–3	Missile weapons
Dwarf, common	4	6	5	5	+2	–2	Missile weapons
Dwarf, gully	8	6	2	5	+1	–1	Missile weapons
Dwarf, hero	6	8	7	7	+3	–3	Missile weapons
Elf, common	6	4	5	6	+2	–2	Missile weapons
Elf, hero	8	6	7	8	+4	–2	Missile weapons
Gnome, common	7	3	6	4	+1	–0	Missile weapons
Gnome, hero	9	4	7	5	+2	–1	Missile weapons
Human, barbarian	6	6	5	5	+2	–1	Missile weapons
Human, civilized	5	5	6	6	+1	–0	Missile weapons
Human, hero	7	7	7	7	+4	–2	Missile weapons
Kender, common	8	4	7	5	+1	–2	Missile weapons
Kender, hero	10	6	8	6	+3	–4	Missile weapons
Minotaur, common	5	8	4	5	+3	–2	Missile weapons
Minotaur, hero	6	10	6	7	+5	–4	Missile weapons

Hostile Nonhumans

Name	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Brute	6	11	6	8	+8	–5	Missile weapons
Bugbear	5	10	4	6	+4	–3	Missile weapons
Cyclops	4	21	3	3	+10	–4	Thrown weapons
Dwarf, Zhakar	4	6	6	6	+2	–2	Missile weapons
Ettin	4	17	3	4	+8	–4	Thrown weapons
Giant, hill	6	38	3	4	+15	–4	Thrown weapons
Gnoll	5	7	3	5	+4	–3	Missile weapons
Goblin	4	3	4	5	+3	–2	Missile weapons
Hobgoblin	5	4	5	5	+4	–3	Missile weapons
Kobold	3	2	5	5	+2	–2	Missile weapons
Ogre	5	13	3	6	+5	–3	Thrown weapons
Sirine	8	8	6	8	+2	–4	Hydromancy, charm song, alteration (self)
Troll	6	24	4	7	+14	–4	Regenerate

The Lost Folk

Name	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Bakali (lizard man)	5	7	5	8	+5	–2	Thrown weapons
Huldrefolk	9	4	9	8	+8	–8	Sorcery (1 school), mysticism (1 sphere)
Kyrie	8	7	5	6	+3	–3	Thrown weapons and animism
Shadowperson	7	5	6	7	+4	–4	Sensitivity and mentalism
Thanoi (walrus man)	6	8	3	4	+8	–3	Immune to cold/ice

Creature Charts

Monsters

Name	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Behir	8	36	3	8	+7	–3	Lightning, immune to electricity
Chimera†	5	27	2	7	+17	–3	Pyromancy
Cockatrice	9	15	1	6	+2	–2	Petrify
Elemental, air*	18	24–48	3–5	8–11	+10	–4	Dive, aeromancy
Elemental, earth*	3	24–48	3–5	8–11	+16	–4	Crush, geomancy
Elemental, fire*	6	24–48	3–5	8–11	+12	–4	Trample, pyromancy
Elemental, water*	9/3	24–48	3–5	8–11	+15	–4	Crush, hydromancy
Gargoyle	6	16	3	6	+8	–3	Dive
Gorgon	5	8	6	6	+2	–3	Petrify and poison
Harpy	8	21	3	7	+6	–2	Charm song
Kraken	5	54	10	9	+54	–4	Crush
Leviathan	4	60	6	8	+40	–8	None
Manticore	9	21	3	7	+7	–3	Missile weapons
Mermaid/-man	9	4	5	5	+4	–2	None
Naga	8	30	8	8	+7	–3	Spit poison, sensitivity, necromancy, meditation
Owlbear	6	17	3	5	+12	–3	Crush
Wyvern†	12	28	4	7	+11	–4	Dive and poison
Yeti	7	16	5	7	+6	–2	Crush, thrown weapons, and immune to cold/ice

*Elementals are immune to attacks with their element.

†Can be used as a mount.

Special Mounts

Name	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Darken Owl	12	18	8	9	+7	–2	Mentalism, sensitivity
Griffin	15	21	2	6	+12	–4	Dive
Hippocampus	12	18	5	6	+2	–3	None
Hippogriff	18	15	2	5	+11	–3	None
Nightmare	18	24	6	7	+14	–7	Spit fire, immune to fire/heat
Pegasus	24	15	5	6	+8	–2	Kick
Roc	15	54	1	6	+12	–3	Dive
Unicorn	12	16	5	7	+12	–4	Kick, immune to mysticism

The Undead

Name	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Banshee	7	6	8	7	+4	–5	Death aura
Daemon warrior	9	12	9	9	+12	–8	Fear aura, immune to physical attack
Death knight	6	27	9	9	+8	–5	Fear aura, necromancy
Ghost	5	6	7	8	N/A	N/A	Fear aura, drain Spirit
Ghoul	5	6	3	6	+6	–2	Paralyze
Shadow	6	10	3	4	+3	–3	Drain Strength
Skeleton	6	4	1	1	+3	–2	None
Spectre	15	6	7	8	+4	–4	Drain Endurance
Wight	6	12	5	7	+4	–2	Drain Presence
Wight, frost	6	15	5	7	N/A	N/A	Alteration, nullify, and cryomancy
Wight, shadow	6	15	5	9	N/A	N/A	Alteration, despair, and nullify
Wraith	12	8	6	8	+6	–3	Drain Spirit
Zombie	3	8	1	1	+3	–1	None

DragonLance Fifth Age™

Personal Information

Hero	
Race	
Role	
Demeanor	Card
Nature	Card

Physical Description

Age	Sex
Hair	Eyes
Height	Weight
Distinguishing Features	

Background

Homeland		
Social Status		
Reputation		
Hand	Wealth	Quests

Special Abilities/Limitations

Ability Scores

Coordination			*Intellect*		
Agility	A	D	Reason	A	D
	B			B	
	C	X		C	X
Dexterity	A	D	Perception	A	D
	B			B	
	C	X		C	X
Physique			*Essence*		
Endurance	A	D	Spirit	A	D
	B			B	
	C	X		C	X
Strength	A	D	Presence	A	D
	B			B	
	C	X		C	X

Arms & Armor

Melee Weapon	Damage
MissileWeapon	Damage
Armor	Defense
Shield	Defense

Additional Information

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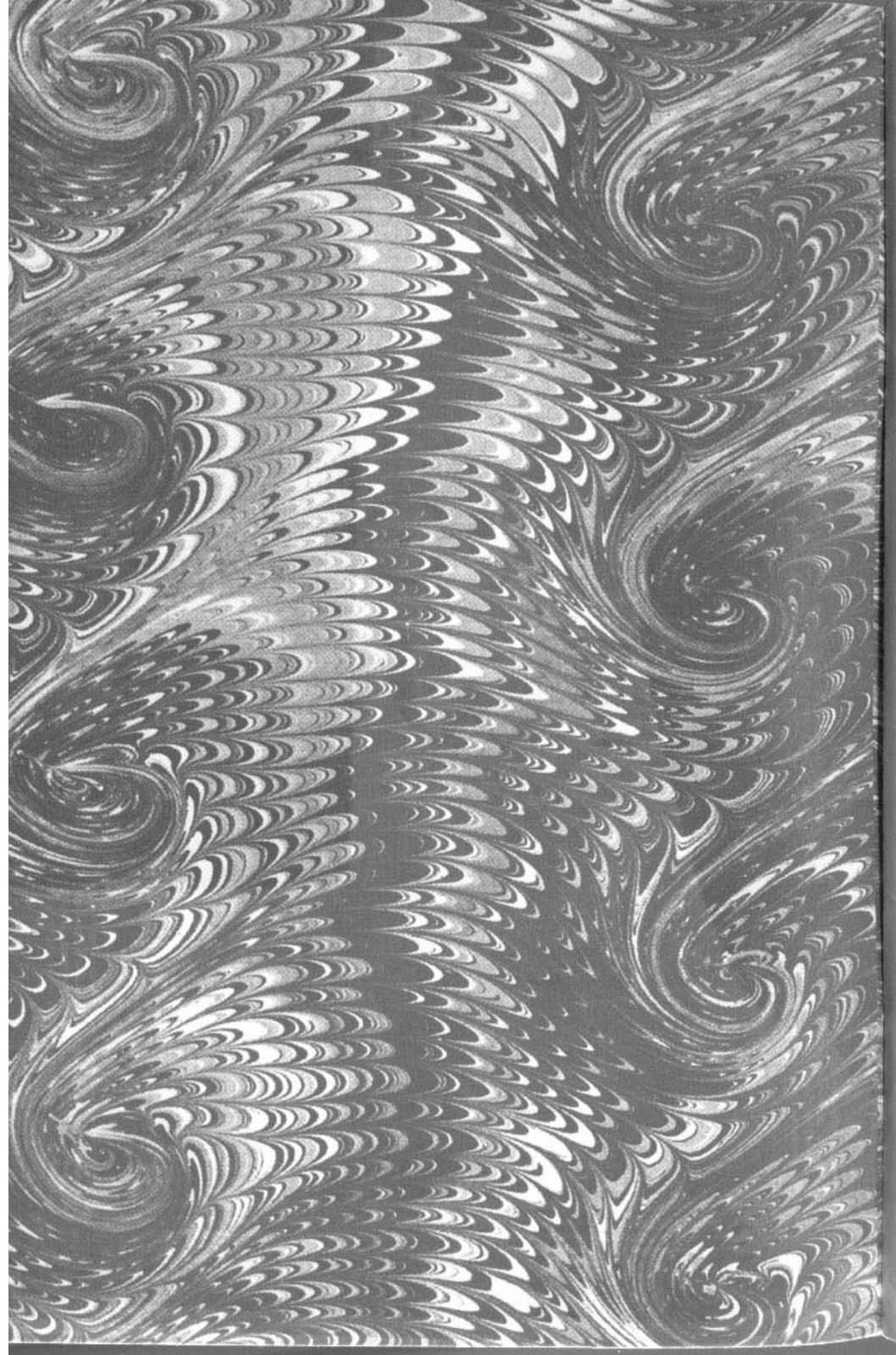
DragonLance

FIFTH AGE™

BOOK TWO



DUSK OR DAWN

Ansalon in the Fifth Age.

By Sue Weinlein Cook

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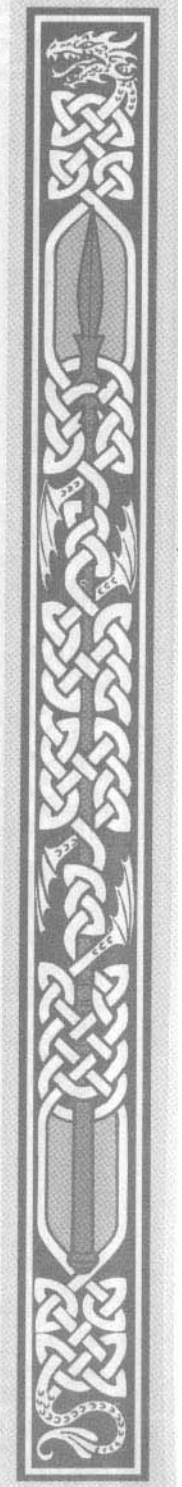

Foreword

Dusk or Dawn: Ansalon in the Fifth Age presents a vision of this beloved land as readers have never seen it before. Chapter One, "The River of Time," updates the *Iconochronos* of Astinus of Palanthas, including descriptions of important events of the current Age of Mortals. Chapter Two, "The Land," shows how the Chaos War and the coming of the Great Dragons have changed the face of Ansalon—some traditional lands have fallen under dragon rule, while new nations have sprung up as well, such as the draconian realm of Teyr and the centaur homeland, Duntollik. Chapter Three, "Today in Ansalon," examines some factors that shape daily life, especially knighthoods and other important groups. Finally, the Appendix, "Figures of Legend," offers capsule descriptions of more than eighty important people of Krynn. Portraits of these characters, from the Companions to new heroes of today, appear in gorgeous color on the cards of the Fate Deck.

The authors of the FIFTH AGE™ game would like to thank the DRAGONLANCE® Saga novelists for providing the foundation to carry Krynn into the Age of Mortals. The works of Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman—in particular, *The Second Generation* and *Dragons of Summer Flame*—offered key inspiration and direction. These and other DRAGONLANCE novels contain background to make games come alive! The spirit of these authors will always remain at the heart of the Saga.

Canticle of Man

From "Songs of the Herald"

Alone,
I watched the Watcher in his solitary
thought—the great god Gilean lost
in the fragrance of time's eternal bloom.
And always the silence of my presence sang
softly through pen-stroke and parchment,
until the earth-kin, tragic Irda,
in their ignorance loosed
the Darkness from its jeweled cage.

Now,
the gods have left the world, the temple
chants have stopped, and one uncaring,
pallid eye looks down upon the land.
And yet the eldritch fire still burns
within the hero's heart—bright Goldmoon
walks the fields of faith and Light shines
forth upon the Citadel's high top.

Arise,
then, greet the dawning of Our Age!
Though dragonwings obscure the foreign sky and
wardrums beat the tempo of discord, one Knight
has walked in night to show the Way: This
is our world, our land, our Krynn! All
humans, gnomes, kender, dwarves, and elves,
the time has come to sing the hero songs ourselves!

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Ansalonian Calendar ...(back cover)

CHAPTER ONE

"Mankind's affairs are my affairs," said Astinus. "How not? I have written them, lived them—every one of them—for centuries."

—The scribe to Raistlin Majere, Dragons of Summer Flame

The history of Krynn is a long and glorious saga of heroes, villains, triumphs, and disasters. While no one document can fully relate all the countless events that have shaped the world of the Fifth Age, this chapter provides an overview of Krynn's fabled River of Time.

The Iconochronos

The events of the first four Great Ages were compiled by Astinus of Palanthas, the world's most revered historian, in a famous document called the *Iconochronos*, or River of Time. The first three ages fall before the Cataclysm (the great devastation that accompanied the destruction of the corrupt land of Istar); scholars label events in these ages with PC dates, for *Prae Cataclius*, or "pre-Cataclysm".

The Fourth Age—the time of the famed War of the Lance—is dated AC, for *Alt Cataclius*, or "post-Cataclysm". This is also the last age treated in the annals of Astinus; the immortal scholar abandoned his Great Library in the city of Palanthas at the close of the Summer of Chaos and vanished into memory.

The events of that terrible summer just over thirty years ago wreaked destruction upon Krynn, the likes of which had not been seen since the Cataclysm. Appropriately, the scholars left to carry on the work of Astinus consider the Summer of Chaos the close of a chapter in history similar to the Cataclysm itself. New historical chronicles date all modern events from the *Saer Cataclius*, or Second Cataclysm (SC). While this new classification is not universally accepted, most scholars across the continent of Ansalon use it.

The Great Ages

Thanks again to the pen of Astinus, the Ageless One, modern-day scholars divide the history of Krynn into ages: Starbirth, Dreams, Might, Despair, and Mortals. Each age is further subdivided into "times," defined by key events. However, historians still disagree about where various "times" end and others begin. The dates in this text make use of the most reliable information available at the dawn of Krynn's Fifth Age.

The Age Of Starbirth

The telling of history begins with the creation of the world. Astinus himself translated the events in this Age of Starbirth from the Plates of Pakafhas, named for an early historian and religious leader. While his peers considered much of the text apocryphal, it remains the most reliable source of written prehistory.

Before the Beginning... there is Chaos—without form, without purpose. A maddening silence blankets the swirling mists.

The High God Awakens.
Out of the Chaos, there comes thought and being—the High God. With celestial hands, the god draws the plans for a new realm and writes them in his divine tome, the Tobril.

The Gods are Called.
Into the Beyond, the High God calls. Two divine beings answer: one of light, and one of darkness. The king and queen of wyrms, Paladine and Takhisis, seek greatness in the Chaos and abandon their twining struggles.

Gilean is Drawn Forth.
Out of Chaos, out of time, the High God summons a third figure: Gilean, the greatest sage. Gilean alone is found worthy to bear the High God's plan for the universe. And Gilean becomes the plan, and the plan becomes all that he is. The knowledge of all creation makes him a god. Receiving the Tobril, Gilean pledges to serve the Balance between Good and Evil for all time.

Then the High God departs into the Void, for the planning is done. Creation is about to begin.

The Companion Gods Come.
Together the three speak their divine words, and this time many answer. There comes Majere, who is hope and dream; Chislev, the essence of nature; Sirrion, the transforming flame; Reorx, the forge; and Mishakal, the light of life and compassion. But they know not how to tame the Chaos.

Then Reorx, greatest of the companion gods, says, "Give of yourselves, so that I may reshape the Chaos." From the gods, Reorx forges a mighty hammer and smites the Chaos. As he works, sparks fly up from the hammer to light the heavens—stars!

Godhomes Arise.
Then Reorx fashions homes for the gods and for those who will come later. One day men will see these godhomes and call them the constellations.

Krynn is Made.
Reorx shapes a great globe and hangs it in the heavens to cool. Paladine and Takhisis help him separate the land from the sea, light from dark, and heaven from earth. Then, the other gods bless Krynn with plants, beasts, seasons, weather, and untold beauty. Finally, Reorx fashions a sun to shine upon their world, moons to light the night, and other planets as companions to the new world.

The Gods Form Dragons.
The gods ponder which creatures shall have mastery over their world. Takhisis says, "Let us make rulers in our own image, that they might know their makers and obey us."

"Yes, let us make them in our own image," Paladine says, "but let us do so that they may learn to love us."

The two gods unite, and from their essence Paladine draws forth strands of elemental fury, spirits of exceeding power. Reorx crafts five shells for these spirits from the base metals of the earth. Into these shells the five are given form, and Mishakal makes them fertile that they might multiply. However, in a great act of treachery, Takhisis plots to corrupt their very natures, tarnishing their metals and drawing the dragons to her service.

Good Dragons are Made.
Paladine mourns the loss of his dragon children. He turns to Reorx, who forges five monuments to the lost dragons from precious metals. Longing for his children, Paladine breathes life into the statues of gold, silver, copper, bronze, and brass.

All Dragons War.
Incensed, Takhisis calls forth Hiddukel, the double-headed serpent trickster, Chemosh, the goat-headed god of betrayal and unlife, and Sargonnas, god of vengeance. The new gods bring war to the face of Krynn. Gods, dragons, beasts of the world—even the light and darkness themselves—do battle for the grief of Paladine and for the jealousy of

Corruption of the First Dragons

In the Age of Starbirth, the world belonged to the First Born Five dragons: iron, copper, nickel, lead and tin. Yet only the copper dragon was true and dutiful. The others quickly grew willful and rebellious.

But the Dark Queen saw their strength of spirit nonetheless, and coveted the five to be solely her own. From this black place in her heart sprang forth a dark soul-sibling, whom Takhisis named Morgion.

"Help me, my sibling," she hissed. "Help me to make these five mine and mine alone." The new god nodded and smiled, for the two were of one mind.

The Dark Queen went to the five dragon children and hissed lies in their ears. "Your father fears your power. He would see you destroyed!" Morgion hovered in shadow and whispered, "Your father covets your glory. He would see you enslaved!"

The five dragons growled and snapped at the lies, allowing the words to poison their hearts. "We are betrayed!" they shrieked. "He shall never enslave us!"

So they all forsook their father and pledged allegiance to their mother—save for the copper dragon, who argued for his king. But, the dragon of nickel, with clever and seductive words, lured her copper brother away from Paladine. Morgion's words further twisted and bent the spirits of the dragons, tarnishing and corrupting the metals from which they were made.

Thus were born the chromatic dragons. Iron became rust red, hot with anger. Copper became blue as the crackling storm. Nickel turned green, venomous like the snake. Lead turned black, stained and marked with its tongue of acid. And tin turned white, the brittle bite of frost.

And the Dark Queen's wicked laughter echoed in the heavens.

Takhisis. The battle releases terrible devastation upon the world.

Seeing the harm they have caused, the ashamed gods again vow to stop their warring, and they withdraw to the Beyond. Each goes to his own place: light to light, dark to dark, and gray to gray. There they live for eons, and the alliances formed in this silent, empty time yield divine children: the lesser gods.

To Paladine and Mishakal are born twin sons: Kiri-Jolith, champion of justice, and Habbakuk, bounty of life. The song of creation swells at their birth, and Habbakuk laughs. His laughter multiplies and brings to life a playmate, Branchala.

To Takhisis and Sargonnas is born the moody and violent Zeboim, mistress of tempests, weather, and dark seas. With Chislev's aid, Gilean forms a brother from his own shadow. This is Zivilyn, the Tree of Life. He becomes a friend to Gilean and the consort of Chislev.

Now, only Sirrion has no companion. So, he begins sculpting a mate from the finest alabaster, adorning her with precious metals and gems. When he embraces the finished sculpture, the fire in his bosom quickens the stone. Thus Shinare is born. But her industriousness and pragmatism oppose her sculptor's nature, making the two destined to fight throughout time.

The Stars are Claimed.

Into the silence that surrounds Krynn comes the sound of chimes. Pondering the heavenly singing, the gods return to find that the shining stars live! They are the divine particles Reorx let fly from his hammer at the creation of the world. The gods covet these countless saint-spirits, quickly forgetting their oath to make no more war.

The All Saints War.

Again, battle erupts in the heavens, and the firmament shudders. The gods of light seek to nurture and lead the star spirits, while the gods of darkness seek to bind and control them. The gods of gray seek only to make them free to choose their own path. The winds and waves, frosts and fires wreak great havoc upon the weary world of Krynn.

The Balance is Restored.

Hearing the battle, the High God returns from the Void, wrathful. The High God proclaims that each family of gods may offer the spirits one gift, then leave them to themselves. The gods of light give the spirits physical bodies to master the world. The gods of darkness curse them with weakness, want, and mortality. Lastly, the gray gods give them free will, to shape their own fates.

A Time of Birth.

Then the gods form the first three peoples of the land. The deities of Good fashion elves from the trees of the forests. Slender, individual, and long-lived, the elves are one with nature. They wield the life power to reshape the land to their will. But though the elf folk can transform the world, they change very little themselves with the passage of time.

The gods of Evil shape ogres from the bones of the world. These folk have the sturdiness, beauty, and coldness of stone. The ogres are created to desire order and utter obedience, living to follow the commands of Takhisis and the other Evil gods.

Finally, the gods of Neutrality cast humans from the clay and waters of Krynn, making them malleable but impermanent. These short-lived folk thus have the greatest potential for Good or Evil, and the greatest freedom to choose between them. Their short lives make them quick to act, giving motion to the pendulum of history and a dynamic balance for the world.

The High God also forms children of Krynn—guardians of the beasts and the land. The High God makes centaurs and satyrs, pegasi and griffins, unicorns and chimera. These—as well as other races, some vanished from the face of Krynn—choose, according to their nature, to protect their lands.

Coming of the Last Gods.

To seal their agreement nevermore to make war upon Krynn, each family of gods creates a child to bless the world with magic. Solinari, son of light, presides over quiet, constructive magic. Lunitari, daughter of Neutrality, governs illusion and reshaping magic. And last, as son of darkness, Nuitari controls magic of destruction and domination. Each new deity takes as his symbol one of Krynn's three moons.

The Age Of Dreams

Following the First Age is a span of years called the Age of Dreams. This period was chronicled only uncertainly in folk songs and ballads during later periods of Krynn's history. The elf bard Quevalin Soth compiled them in the "Lifescroll of Song." Some time later, a copy of that scroll was presented to the Library of the Ages at Palanthas. Finding it there, Astinus added the most reliable of its text to his *Iconochronos.*

The Foundation Time

9000-8500PC: Choosing Homes.
Ogres, first to awaken, claim Krynn's lofty mountains. Elves withdraw to the forests to live in quiet harmony. But to humans fall the plains. Exposed to the savage winds and rains, these folk grow savage as well.

8500-5000PC: Birth of Civilization.
Ogres enslave humans to build their mighty empire of cold stone. The elves watch as civilization grows.

8700PC: The Chosen of Reorx.
Reorx, seeing that elves lack drive and ogres lack creativity, gathers a group of humans together in a northern land, where they may remain safe from war, to learn his craft and assist him in his heavy labors. The marvels they wrought have never been equalled.

6320-5980PC: Heresy of Igraine.
Inspecting one of his mines, an ogre

Irda View of Creation

Although Astinus never collected this document, which Usha gave to the Great Library at the dawn of the Fifth Age, the modern scholar Nathal Bartyn became intrigued by the parallels between it and the events surrounding the Second Cataclysm. Nathal, one of Bertrem's scribes, abridged this creation myth for his Chronicles, *but has retained its original Irda voice.*

According to our ancestors, the gods Paladine, Takhisis, and Gilean dwelt together on the immortal plane. These three were siblings, born of Chaos—the Father of All and of Nothing—as were all the gods of the pantheon.

Bored, Takhisis went to her brothers one day with the idea of creating an orderly world and spirits to dwell within it. Both agreed to her plan, blindly accepting that the venture had received their father's blessing.

Next, she found Reorx at his forge. Captivated by the opportunity to forge a new world, Reorx followed Takhisis back to where her brothers waited. There, in the midst of the dark and endless night of Chaos, he placed a chunk of red-hot, molten metal upon his forge and struck the first blow with his hammer.

At that moment, Paladine and Gilean realized that Chaos surely would oppose this plan to bring order to the universe; Takhisis had deliberately kept her plot from him. The Father of All and of Nothing could have destroyed his children and their plaything right there, but instead decided to make sure chaos thrived within their creation.

After the All Saints War—the first manifestation of Chaos—the three gods decided to rule the world together. They gave their spirits gifts and physical forms—elf, ogre, and human—so they might live and prosper in the new world. To increase the likelihood of turmoil, Chaos created dragons, possessed of wisdom, intelligence, long life, magic, strength, and formidable natural weapons.

During this time, the Balance of the world began to shift toward Chaos, as each race fought for its own desires. Hiddukel, god of trade, saw in the tilting a way to increase his power, for war always seems to provide a boon to commerce. Hoping to further the turmoil, he went to Chislev, goddess of nature, and convinced her that doom was at hand. His clever talk fooled her into believing she could stop the feuding among the races by giving the world a new force of neutrality to realign the Balance. An item like a gem of neutrality, he said—something Reorx could make for her.

So Chislev went to Reorx and asked for a plain gem that would anchor neutrality in the world; a small portion of Chaos captured within the stone should do the trick, they agreed. No one knows how Reorx managed to steal a bit of Chaos and imprison it in the stone, but the god ultimately brought his completed "Graygem" to Lunitari, goddess of neutral magic, for safekeeping, as Chislev had asked. The stone caused all who looked upon it to covet it, so Lunitari never let it out of her sight—even when its creator begged to have it back.

Reorx fretted and fumed and at last hit upon a way to retrieve the Graygem. In a dream, he showed the stone to a gnome, one of his Chosen, who grew to want it more than anything. Surprisingly, this gnome managed to capture the gem—but he refused to give it up, even to Reorx himself. In the ensuing argument, the stone escaped its captors and floated away across the land.

The gnome and others gave chase, watching as the Graygem wreaked havoc upon all it touched: altering plants and animals, affecting wizards' spellcasting, and eventually letting a human, Gargath, capture it again. The gnomes laid siege to Gargath's castle and eventually managed to grab the stone once more. As they fought over it, the gem cast its gray light on them, turning some into kender, and some into dwarves. Then the Graygem vanished over the horizon.

Legends tell that over time Reorx and others made further attempts to recapture the Graygem. The stone exhibited a pattern of permitting people to catch it, using them for its own purpose, then "escaping" again. Its final captors, the Irda, sought to break it open and subdue the magic within to their will. Of course, history has taught all Ansalon the outcome of this tragic endeavor.

governor named Igraine barely escapes a cave-in that traps his daughter, Everlyn. He sadly orders the mine closed, knowing that further collapse is imminent. However, one of his human slaves, Eadamm, ignores the order and leads a team that rescues the ogre girl.

Eadamm's selfless act teaches Igraine compassion. The ogre sentences the man to death, as the law of his race requires, but fails to carry out the sentence and, indeed, gives all his slaves more freedom. When other ogres learn of Igraine's heresy, he is forced to flee. Eadamm and his fellow slaves cover his escape, then lead revolts throughout the land. This man's eventual martyrdom leads the humans to rise up in even greater numbers against their ogre masters. Meanwhile, Igraine and his family and friends start a new life; they become known as the Irda.

6000-5000PC: Decline of Ogres.
As ogres embrace cruelty, humans rise up to slay their masters. The ogre civilization falls, and barbarism reigns.

5000-3000PC: Elves Ascendant.
Elves seek to build their own civilization in the enchanted woods near the southern ridge of the Khalkist Mountains. They create an island on which they will one day build their capital, Silvanost. However, this forest and its surroundings are already home to the chromatic dragons.

The Time of Light

4000PC: House Silvanos Rises.
The elf leader Silvanos convenes the first Sinthal-Elish, or Council of High Ones. He tells the council that the elves can inherit the grandeur of the ancient ogre civilization without its evils. Many families unify, swearing allegiance to Silvanos to protect themselves from the human barbarians. Balif, of a prominent elf family, becomes Silvanos's lieutenant. The elves prepare for war against the dragons.

Reorx Angered. Distressed at the pride and haughtiness of the humans who serve him, Reorx curses his Chosen by reshaping them into a short folk who forever burn to tinker. Many consider this the birth of the gnomes.

3500-3350PC: First Dragon War.
The dragons fight fiercely, refusing to leave the elves' chosen land. The gods of magic send three mages to give the elves five magical dragon stones. The mages lure the dragons to the stones, capturing their spirits within, while the dragons' bodies turn into stony mountains. The victorious elves ride their war griffins north to a seemingly bottomless pit in the Khalkists, where they drop the dragon stones.

The gods of magic are exiled from Krynn for interfering in the affairs of mortals.

Graystone Forged. The exiled gods of magic approach the trickster god, Hiddukel, asking him to help them return to the world. He convinces the nature goddess, Chislev, to ask Reorx to make the Graystone for the exiles as a remembrance of their lost world. Reorx sets this magical gem on the moon Lunitari, and the gods of magic secretly fill it with their essences.

3350PC: Building of Silvanesti.
At the second Sinthal-Elish, elves again pledge allegiance to Silvanos. The Kingdom of Silvanesti is decreed, and all elf families receive lands.

Graystone Released. The gods of magic have Hiddukel, with Reorx's help, trick one of his Chosen, Milgas Kadwar, into climbing up to Lunitari using a device called a skyhook ladder and stealing the Graystone from its hiding place there. However, little Milgas fumbles, dropping the stone from the sky onto Krynn. With it, the gods of magic reenter the world.

3100PC: Magic Returns.
The marauding Graystone releases wild magic into the world; Reorx commands a group of his Chosen to follow and

reclaim it. When the populace, terrified by the gem's chaotic effects, threatens to kill all the Chosen for bringing the stone to Krynn, the Graygem transforms this group of them into Scions: silver-bearded, golden-eyed wielders of wild magic.

3100-2900PC: Kal-Thax Built.
The Scions urge the rest of Reorx's Chosen to leave their secluded northern home. In great barges, they all flee south toward Ansalon, though the Scions are hated and feared by even the other Chosen folk, because of their supernatural abilities. The long and difficult voyage takes its toll on the little fleet; upon making landfall at Nordmaar, the few surviving Chosen of Reorx feed most of the Scions to the raging waters. The thirteen Scions allowed to live are shoved onto one of the remaining barges and told to set sail, never to return.

Still fearful of Graygem retribution, the Chosen of Reorx hide in limestone caves among the bluffs. But, when their craft fails them in this new home, they receive a vision from their god that gives them the impetus to leave their cave and find the hated gem.

Later, dwarves will call this site their first kingdom: Kal-Thax, meaning "cold forge." While its location eventually becomes lost—possibly destroyed by minotaurs—dwarves will come to use the term Kal-Thax to describe any ruins found in limestone caves.

3051–3050PC: Graystone of Gargath.
A human ruler named Gargath captures the Graystone using two god-gems from Zivilyn, the Tree of Life. He recruits humans, ogres, and other mercenaries to defend his trapped prize.

Buoyed by their vision, the Chosen contact Gargath and demand the stone's return. Elves and other curious creatures, fascinated by wild magic, help them lay siege to the human's tower. The war machines of the Chosen eventually dislodge the god-gems, releasing the stone.

The mysterious light of the Graygem touches all present at the tower, altering their forms to reflect their true natures. Stubborn ogres become bull-headed minotaurs, and so, too, are born the dwarves, kender, goblins, and other races. None participating in the siege escape unchanged (although dwarves maintain that Reorx created them in their current "perfect" form and heartily reject the notion that they share gnomish ancestry). Then the stone again escapes to wander the land. Some gnomes pursue it all the way west to Sancrist Isle, where many of them settle, finally giving up the chase. As the Graystone passes over the seas, it forms the Dimernesti from fisher elves and the Dargonesti from elf sea merchants.

2900-2700PC: Thorin Delved.
To escape the Graystone's chaos, the dwarves make homes underground and become miners. Leaving Kal-Thax, the Calnar thane travels south to the Khalkist Mountains, where they delve their new home: Thorin, or "New Hope."

Scions Land. The remaining thirteen Scions make landfall on Ansalon once more and take separate paths across the continent, tutoring folk touched by the Graygem in the ways of wild magic.

2750PC: Balif Dies.
The kender hero Balif, a close friend of the elf lord Silvanos, dies. Balif, who may have been present at Castle Gargath during the gem's escape, built the first kingdom of kender in Balifor.

c. 2700PC: Minotaur Kingdom.
An expeditionary force of minotaurs founds Mithandrus, land of the bull.

2710PC: Dragon Stones Discovered.
While delving in Thorin, Calnar dwarves discover the five magical dragon stones—covered with runes and glowing with magic—which the elves had dropped deep in the Khalkist Mountains after the First Dragon War. Hating magic (a legacy of their experience with the Graystone), they return the stones to the surface.

2690-2645PC: Second Dragon War.
Once minions of Takhisis recover the dragon stones, they release the imprisoned spirits of the five dragons and reunite them with their stony forms. Thus awakened, the Evil dragons strike at the Silvanesti with armies of bakali, or lizard people. Three wild-talent elf mages and a Scion order the ground to swallow the dragons. Though the beasts fall, thousands die as magic runs wild. The three mages, hiding in a tower, call upon the gods of magic in fear. These three deities take the tower into the Beyond, where it becomes the Lost Citadel.

The gods of magic then seize the five runestones they had given to the elves centuries earlier and hurl them into the sky, so the dark dragons can never again awaken. There, the stones become the five eyes of the Dark Queen's five-headed constellation. Silvanesti withdraws from the world to repair its lands.

2645-2550PC: Magic Defends Itself.
The gods of magic help Ansalon's wild mages escape the wrath of the populace by offering them seclusion in the wilderness. For a century, they train them to perfect the discipline of magic. Meanwhile, the three lost mages create laws to govern three Orders of Magic. Returning to Krynn, they will guide other mages to build five bastions of magic—the Towers of High Sorcery.

Thorin Closed. Ashamed for causing the Second Dragon War, dwarves seal their mountain city, shutting their doors to the world.

2600PC: The Rise of Ergoth.
Barbarian chieftain Ackal Ergot unites the Khalkist human tribes into a grand kingdom named Ergoth, founded with booty from pillaging ruined ogre cities. He begins absorbing plains tribes as well, destroying those who will not yield. Ergoth's borders spread from the southern Kharolis Mountains to the northern shore, but expansion ceases with the death of Ackal Ergot.

Hylo Founded. The second kender nation (sometimes called Highlo or Hilo) is founded when a kender clan becomes trapped in the first floating citadel (created as a prototype for the Towers of High Sorcery), which crashes against the Sentinel Mountains.

2500-2200PC: Ergoth Dominant. Emperor Ackal Dermount brings the empire into a grand, mercantile age. Ergoth annexes Hylo in 2200PC and expands to touch the Silvanesti borders. Trade begins with elves, some of whom marry humans, and the first half-elves are born.

Gully Dwarves Arise. An outcast race of dwarves appears, thought to be the first of the Aghar.

2515PC: Death of Silvanos. Silvanos dies and is buried in a crystal tomb. His son Sithel takes command and orders the construction of a tower, the Palace of Quinari, in his memory. Sithel would never have the patience and tolerance of his father, though, and his rule heralds the beginning of elves' disdain for the other races of the world. Border relations became strained among humans, half-elves, and elves.

2150-2000PC: Thorbardin Delved. The Hylar dwarves migrate from Thorin to the southern Kharolis Mountains to delve an underground home near what was thought to be the site of Kal-Thax. There they meet the thanes of Daewar, Daergar, and Theiwar and build a new kingdom. Priding itself on remaining more open to the world than Thorin, Thorbardin (or "Best New Hope"), exploits trade opportunities with Ergoth. Thorin, in decline after its isolation and a failed human invasion a decade earlier, will henceforth be known as Thoradin: "Lost Hope" or "Lost Home."

2308PC: Royal Twins Born to the Elves. Sithel's wife, Nirakina, gives birth to twin sons, Sithas and Kith-Kanan. As they grow, their open friendliness hides a smoldering rivalry just beneath the surface. Kith-Kanan, the younger twin, will one day lead the Wildrunner border elves, protecting Silvanesti from incursions and maintaining the peace for nearly a century.

2192-2140PC: Kinslayer War. On his way to sign a peace accord, Sithel is accidentally slain by humans hunting on Silvanesti's western border. Sithas ascends to the throne and declares war on Ergoth, naming Kith-Kanan his general. The humans, under General Giarna, fiercely resist the elves' attempts to drive them from their borders. Half-elves are forced to take sides, with brother fighting brother.

The long battles are broken only by interludes of retrenchment, starvation, disease, and fierce storms. Kith-Kanan enrages Sithas by marrying a human: the oracle Suzine des Quivalin, a relative of the great Emperor Quivalin V of Ergoth.

The Siege of Sithelbec reduces that elf town to rubble. After almost forty years of exhausting battle, the lines become blurred —shifting alliances now force elves to fight elves and men to fight their human brothers. As described in the "Song of the Lost Sadness," Suzine attempts to put an end to this madness by bravely confronting her former master, General Giarna. When he proves invulnerable to attack, she slays herself rather than be used against her husband.

As though inspired by the death of this innocent, a tempest of wind and fire wreaks havoc with both sides. Cities fall, and tens of thousands die, including Giarna. The opposing forces negotiate a truce, acknowledging in words unspoken that a divine hand has judged both elves and men.

2140-2100PC: Elf Lands Sundered. Kith-Kanan's western elves, ashamed of the bloodshed, sue for social change and declare their independence. Sithas grants land to Kith and his Wildrunner followers, who have by now become heavily interbred with humans.

2128-2073PC: War of the Mountain. Disputes between Thorbardin and declining Ergoth over borders and mineral rights result in warfare.

2073PC: Swordsheath Scroll. Kith-Kanan engineers the signing of a peace treaty between the elves, dwarves, and Ergoth. An enchanted forest between dwarves and humans, renamed Qualinesti, goes to Kith-Kanan and his western elves. This new elf state becomes a buffer between the humans and dwarves. Ergoth stops mining the Kharolis Mountains, and dwarves relax trade restrictions, under the leadership of their fabled first king, Derkin Lawgiver.

2072PC: The Hammer of Kharas. Thorbardin dwarves forge a replica of the Hammer of Reorx, presenting it to Ergoth as a peace offering. Annual passage of the hammer among nations reinforces the terms of the Swordsheath Scroll. A thousand years from now, the hammer will be used to forge the dragonlance of Huma Dragonbane. It later will come to be known as the Hammer of Kharas, after a hero of the Dwarfgate War who will take it from Thorbardin with the prophecy that only a righteous leader can retrieve it and unite the thanes of dwarves.

2050-2030PC: The Great March. Western elves migrate to their new homeland: Qualinesti.

2009PC: Thoradin is Lost. The population of Thoradin has vanished inexplicably. Some say the dwarves were destroyed by the discovery of black flame—a living embodiment of darkness. Others claim an earthquake leveled Thoradin's terraced mountainside, making the entrance to the realm utterly unrecognizable.

The Time of Knights

2000-1900PC: Pax Tharkas. Ergoth and all prosper. Kith-Kanan

convinces humans, dwarves, and elves to join to erect the fortress of Pax Tharkas, a monument to the "Peace of Friends." The just reign of the Quevalin line continues in Ergoth.

1900-1750PC: Rebellion Comes.
A military coup brings about the end of the Quevalin line and places Emperor Macqui Hellmann on the throne. He and subsequent brutal emperors exploit Ergoth's holdings to the point where the East and North revolt—in vain.

1812PC: Solamnus Promoted.
Vinas Solamnus becomes Praetor (general of the imperial armies) and commands the guards in Ergoth's capital.

1801PC: Great Uprising.
Solamnus marches east with a huge army to crush a rebellion against the empire in Vingaard. He wins initial victories.

1800PC: Year of Waiting.
Reviewing the Vingaard rebels' motivations, Solamnus realizes the empire's repressive treatment of its citizens has provoked the rebellion. He and most of his army join the rebel forces.

1799-1791PC: The Rose Rebellion.
Nations of eastern Ergoth rally to Solamnus, who trains a revolutionary army in secret and turns back imperial forces. He marches to Daltigoth in 1791PC, outmaneuvering Ergoth's forces and laying siege throughout the winter. In spring, Emperor Emann Quisling grants his states independence. Many western provinces, close to Daltigoth, remain loyal to the empire, but most northeastern provinces and Hylo assert their independence. Human nations name Solamnus their lord, and Vinas proceeds to honor the Swordsheath Scroll with the dwarves and elves.

1775PC: Knights of Solamnia.
During his Quest of Honor, Vinas Solamnus receives a vision from Kiri-Jolith, Habbakuk, and Paladine. In response, he founds an Order of Knights to fight for Good. His Crown, Sword, and Rose Knights become the guardians of the world.

1750-1300PC: Birth of Nations.
Sancrist, Solamnia, and Istar arise, as do the city-states of Palanthas, Caergoth, and Lemish. Solamnia prospers as Ergoth declines, and Silvanesti withdraws from the world's affairs.

1600-1560PC: Minotaur Dynasty.
The hero Ambeoutin founds a nation of brutal honor in northeastern Ansalon. Upon his death, his sons, Mithas and Kothas, divide the realm in two.

1480PC: Istar Grows in Power.
Istar develops into a nexus for world trade, while Solamnia remains a military power.

1399-1010PC: Dark Queen Plots.
With her dragons still buried (as a result of the Second Dragon War), Takhisis calls on the bakali, or lizard people, to seed the mines of Thoradin with dragon eggs. Miners find these "rare crystals" and sell them to collectors as precious gems. When the eggs hatch, wyrmlings devour the owners. Thus, dragons return to Krynn—with no one left alive to know.

1060-1018PC: Third Dragon War.
The dozens of mature dragons, along with bakali ground troops, unleash their fury upon Ansalon. After conquering many small kingdoms, they eventually turn toward Solamnia and Palanthas, the Knights' homeland. For a while, the mighty forces seem evenly matched.

Mages of the Three Robes, including the Black-Robed Fistandantilus, gather at the Tower of Palanthas to defend all the Towers of High Sorcery and to aid the human war efforts. On the Night of the Eye (when all three moons are in high sanction), they create five Dragon Orbs, which they imbue with a shadow-spirit that calls the dragons to their doom.

1018PC: Huma Dragonbane.
The young Solamnic Knight Huma Dragonbane falls in love with the elf healer Gwyneth—really the silver dragon, Heart. Paladine guides them to the first dragonlances, forged with the Hammer of Kharas (although it has not yet been given that name), and their victories rally the other Good dragons. At last, Takhisis herself falls to a lance and swears to depart with her dragons, if only someone would remove the lance. Sadly, Huma and Gwyneth die in the battle, leaving only Huma's stalwart minotaur companion, Kaz, to free her of the lance. The Dark Queen fulfills her oath: She sends her dragon children to sleep beneath the ground, then she herself departs for the Abyss.

The Age Of Might

The end of the Third Dragon War heralded the beginning of a golden age. Although severely scarred, the land was at least free from the grip of dragons. Ergoth, however, would never again achieve the glory of its lost empire.

This period, called the Age of Might, was well chronicled beginning with the rulership of Karthay Pah in Istar, who ordered the keeping of a standard historical chronicle. Scribes of that era etched the events of the day on plates of gold (if they involved Karthay Pah himself) and silver (if they did not), storing them on rings in his treasury. Two centuries after Karthay Pah's reign, a scribe journeyed from Palanthas to Istar and spent three decades transcribing these records onto scrolls. As he worked, he shipped his translations back to the Great Library of the Ages in Palanthas.

1000-800PC: Istar Dominant.
Istar, in its remote location, remains untouched by the Dragon War's ravages. Its trade standards now have spread throughout the world.

Resurgence of Thoradin. Dwarves of Thorbardin reopen Thoradin, driving out a few occupying ogres. Istar's proximity makes Thoradin a major manufacturing center, sending dwarf-made weapons, coinage, and tools to Istar.

Kender Treaty. Hylo allies with Solamnia in 1000PC.

980PC: Thorbardin Opens Kaolyn.
Solamnia grants Thorbardin mining rights in the Garnet Mountains, grateful for the dwarves' aid in the recent Dragon War. The dwarves delve the city of Garnet and found the kingdom of Kaolyn. Its mines complete a triangle of trade between Garnet, Thorbardin, and Istar, with Thoradin at its hub.

967PC: The Life Tree of the Hylar.
Thorbardin's Hylar thane begins work on the city of Zakhalax, or the Life Tree.

948PC: Hill Dwarves Rise.
Thorbardin founds Hillow, an outlying Neidar (hill dwarf) kingdom.

940PC: Elves Withdraw.
Silvanesti and even Qualinesti grow more isolationist.

910-825PC: The Ogre Wars.
Exiled ogres unite to flush the foreign dwarves from Thoradin. The dwarves call upon the Knights of Solamnia to drive the ogres away.

850-727PC: Trade Wars.
Istar's strict trade standards rile the kender of Balifor, who begin a trade war. After years of military and legal action, Istar is defeated and signs the Kendermeld, or Kender Tax, exempting them from the standards.

673-630PC: Istar and Elves Clash.
Istar's expansion threatens Silvanesti naval merchants. Sea skirmishes lead the elves to blockade Istar successfully. The besieged realm appeals to the Solamnics, who convince the elves to let Istar sign the Swordsheath Scroll in the Elfmeld. Istar learns the value of treaty over strong-arm tactics.

530-522PC: Kernen Skirmishes.
Ogres from the new Khalkist nation of Kernen threaten trade routes, but Thoradin, Istar, and the Knights of Solamnia drive them back. Thoradin signs the Swordsheath Scroll, as well as the Dwarfmeld: an exclusive trade treaty with Istar.

490-476PC: Raiders/Greatmeld.
Solamnia becomes more dependent on Istaran trade, currency, and ideals. Meanwhile, barbarians from Khur, Nordmaar, and the Estwilde, resenting Istaran trade routes, raid their caravans. Calling them agents of the gods of darkness, Istar convinces Solamnia to attack the barbarians and resign the Swordsheath Scroll.

460-280PC: Peace in the Land.
Istar, the center of commerce, tax, and art, rules all Ansalon.

280PC: World Righteousness.
Claiming to be the moral compass of the world, Istar installs a Kingpriest. Solamnia approves this effort to promote Good. However, the Kingpriest soon becomes caught up in worldly affairs, forgetting the needs of the spirit. Istarans, in their perceived moral superiority, repeat the error of the ancient ogre empires: suppressing the freedom of the individual in favor of national decrees of the Kingpriest and his corrupted priesthood. Silvanesti grows antagonistic toward Istar, but few others note the signs of impending doom.

260-212PC: The Temple of Istar.
The finest artisans in the world build a Temple to the glory of Istar.

250-100PC: Corruption of Justice.
Istar represses the independence of anyone who disagrees with the Kingpriest's policies and divinity. The elves, disgusted at human arrogance, withdraw into their forests.

118PC: Manifest Virtue.
The Kingpriest declares Evil an affront to both gods and mortals. Those guilty of offenses on his list of Evil acts—the Proclamation of Manifest Virtue—face confiscation of their lands and property, slavery, execution, or the gladiatorial arena. Priests of Istar begin losing their clerical magic as they drift away from the teachings of their gods and become merely the Kingpriest's enforcement squad. Meanwhile, the Knights of Solamnia are too disorganized and dependent on trade with Istar to openly resist its laws.

94PC: Extermination of Evil Races.
The Kingpriest adds a clause to the Proclamation of Manifest Virtue, stating that certain races are inherently Evil and must be exterminated. Hunters work to eliminate these creatures and earn high bounties.

80-20PC: Istar's Clergy Dominant.
Istar is now the center of religion, and all aspects of life require the approval of the priesthood. The status of Istar's clergy rises. Wizards—a threat to the Kingpriest—are hunted as ungodly. By now, the priests of Istar have lost all magical abilities.

41PC: The Turning Point.
The Kingpriest begins plotting his own ascension to godhood.

19PC: A Siege on Sorcery.
Urged on by the Kingpriest, the people of Ansalon lay siege to the five Towers of High Sorcery and nearly occupy those at the Ruins and Daltigoth. The mages within these two, not willing to let the mobs unleash magic's fury, destroy the Towers. Fearful that rampant magic use might arise if all Towers are destroyed, the Kingpriest grants the mages safe exile if they leave the other Towers intact. A Black-Robed wizard lays a curse upon the Tower at Palanthas: Falling from the tower's top, he impales himself on the front gate, barring all from the Tower until the "Master of the Past and Present" should return. The Kingpriest claims the Tower of Istar for his abode. Only the Tower of Wayreth in Qualinesti remains in the hands of wizards.

6PC: Edict of Thought Control.
The Kingpriest asserts that Evil thoughts equal Evil deeds. Priests use renegade mages to read people's minds, and a reign of terror ensues.

1PC: The Last Days.
The Kingpriest tries to elevate himself to godhood and command the pantheon to do his bidding. Wrathful, the gods send thirteen omens to warn the doomed people, but no one heeds the signs. True priests disappear from Krynn on the Eve of Yule (now also termed "the Night of Doom"), called to the heavens by their gods. The Solamnic Knight Lord Soth, though given the chance to save Krynn from the Cataclysm, refuses.

0: The Cataclysm.
The populace, failing to recognize the signs of disaster sent by the gods, seals its doom. From the heavens, a fiery mountain is launched upon Istar. The impact drags the entire realm to the depths of the new Blood Sea. The Temple of Istar itself is removed to the Abyss. Ergoth, torn from the mainland in the upheaval, becomes two great isles. Waters pour into central Ansalon, forming the New Sea and shrinking the plains. To the south, land rises and water recedes: The port of Tarsis, unscathed, now lies far from the sea. Waters inundate most of Balifor, then recede, leaving only a desert waste.

All creatures, Good and Evil, hide in mortal terror.

The Age Of Despair

The recording of history immediately after the Cataclysm was, as might well be expected, sketchy at best. Most in Krynn stayed far too busy attempting to rebuild their shattered world to make note of passing events. This preoccupation held true especially during the Shadow Years, as the first three centuries of the *Alt Cataclian* period are known. Still, the practice of keeping journals and records in places relatively untouched by the Cataclysm have allowed modern historians to compose a fairly detailed accounting of events in even those dark days.

Since the Shadow Years, of course, the practice of maintaining detailed historical accounts has come back into favor. As a result, the Fourth Age is far more accurately chronicled than the previous ages of Krynn.

The Time of Darkness

1-300AC: Shadow Years.
Famine and plague spread across the world. Ansalon becomes a land of distrust and hatred. The Knights of Solamnia are widely persecuted for failing to save Krynn from the Cataclysm. The survivors of Thoradin, now in ruins thanks to its proximity to Istar, become known as the cursed Zhakar dwarves. Scholars of Solace and Haven begin the Seeker movement, which leads folk to adopt new gods and new political leadership: the Seeker Theocracy.

3-140AC: Dark Queen Finds Istar.
Takhisis finds the Temple of Istar, which was transported to the Abyss when the Cataclysm fell upon the land.

39AC: The Dwarfgate War.
The humans and hill dwarves of Xak Tsaroth flee south, seeking refuge in Thorbardin to avoid the ravage of barbarians and famine. The mountain dwarves—unable to feed their own citizens, let alone thousands of refugees—bar their gates. The Evil mage Fistandantilus, from his fortress of Zhaman, rallies the refugees and launches an assault on Thorbardin. When, after weeks of devastating magical warfare, it seems that the wizard will fail, he looses four great spells that not only devastate his enemies but obliterate himself, his allies, and Zhaman as well. The Skullcap forms from the melted mountain keep.

141AC: The Stone is Planted.
Using the Foundation Stone from the

Signs of the Cataclysm

In the days before the Great Rending, the gods sent thirteen omens to warn the folk of Ansalon of their approaching doom. How quickly the people forgot the prophesy foretold by the elf priest Loralon: "If ever man, in pride, should challenge the gods, woe betide the world."

These signs passed all but unrecognized among the populace:

I. The gods shall withdraw their hands from the world, and man shall face his doom alone.
II. The sky shall lament and beat the earth with its tears and cries of anguish.
III. Fear shall visit the land.
IV. Light shall be devoured. Hope shall flee.
V. Darkness and despair shall be rekindled.
VI. The flame shall fail on the hearth.
VII. The plains will be cleansed.
VIII. Brother shall turn against brother.
IX. Knowledge shall be veiled.
X. Our children shall bleed for our sins.
XI. Nature shall turn against man in outrage.
XII. The bounty shall end, and the blood of the land will wash the blot from the earth.
XIII. Finally, the very earth shall awaken!

And so it came to pass that, on the Eve of Yule, the gods called their true clerics to them. Then, the pantheon left Krynn to its fate.

- The sky over Istar turned a sickly green, and a cyclone pelted the city with a rain of marble for seven days, destroying one of the towers of Istar's Temple.
- A pall spread over the nations of Balifor and Hylo, sending the merry kender to huddle beneath their beds.
- The night sky darkened as the black moon Nuitari devoured the silver god's eye of Solinari and the red night candle of Lunitari.
- The black flame—the living destroyer of life—awakened to burn again in the dwarven halls of Thoradin.
- In Solamnia, firewood failed to light, leaving hearths cold and dark.
- Brush fires raged across the plains of Abanasinia, destroying the land.
- Lord Soth split from the brotherhood of Solamnic Knights to retire to his keep. The Knights pursued, seeking to redress him in war.
- In Palanthas, an impenetrable white mist made the scribes of the Great Library of the Ages unable to see their work before them.
- In Silvanesti, the trees wept blood.
- From Qualinesti, herds of animals rampaged across the land.
- Red tides washed through the streets of various northern ports, and the fishing nets came up empty.
- Finally, the Lords of Doom in the Khalkist Mountains and many other sleeping volcanoes belched forth rivers of lava and ash. Tremors shook the land, a mighty roar filled the air, and the burning sky rained fire!

Thus the Cataclysm descended upon an unsuspecting world.

ruined Temple of Istar, Takhisis opens a gateway to Krynn. She plants the Stone in the remote vale of Neraka, where it grows into a dark version of the Temple.

142-152AC: Dragons Awaken.
For ten years, the Dark Queen wanders the land in disguise, awakening the Evil dragons and preparing them to do her bidding. Then she returns to the Abyss to gather her forces.

157AC: Berem Finds the Stone.
The young hunter Berem and his sister Jasla discover the Foundation Stone in Neraka. Berem covets its gems and pries one loose, though Jasla warns against it. They struggle, and she strikes her head on the Stone and dies. Fearful, Berem flees. The living gem, hidden in a pocket of his tunic, bonds with the man's flesh, becoming imbedded in his chest. Jasla's spirit is drawn into the growing Foundation Stone to occupy the void left when Berem stole the gem.

210AC: The Gate is Barred.
Because the Foundation Stone stands incomplete, Takhisis can no longer use it as a gate. Her sleepless senses soon discover Berem, and she learns of his capricious act.

287AC: Egg Theft.
Evil dragons raid the homes of Good dragons and steal their eggs, which they hide beneath the Lords of Doom volcanic peaks in the Khalkist Mountains.

296AC: The Dragons' Oath.
Takhisis wakes the Good dragons and threatens to crush their eggs unless they stay out of her way. When the metallic wyrms agree, Takhisis promises to return their eggs once the war she plans has concluded.

300-320AC: Agents of Evil.
Takhisis sends minions to search for Berem, whom she needs to complete the Foundation Stone and reenter the world. Berem flees to Tarsis, Barter, and finally Thorbardin, where the dwarves throw him in a dungeon. The gem sustains Berem for years in his dark cell beneath the mountains, where not even the Dark Queen can find him.

The Time of Darkness

332-340AC: Dragon Highlords.
At their Queen's direction, the Evil dragons ally with wicked humans and ogres in a frightening union. These Highlords prove as willing to torture their own forces as those they conquer.

337AC: Neraka Corrupts its Neighbors.
The Evil seeping through Neraka from the blighted Foundation Stone begins to spread. Takhisis takes the lava-besieged city of Sanction as her major port and uses the Evil folk of the Estwilde as her reserve army.

341AC: The Dragonarmies' Offer.
The dark forces offer an alliance to Kern, Khur, Blöde, and the Pirate Isles. All these realms accept, as refusal means death.

342AC: Draconians Created.
Takhisis teaches a dark mage and an Evil priest to create draconians by corrupting the stolen eggs of the Good dragons in a foul rite. They raise an army of dragon-men, called draconians, from a single egg.

343-347AC: Evil Gathers Its Forces.
Takhisis and her generals train an army of human rogues, goblins, hobgoblins, and ogres. Violence among the allies of Evil weeds out the weak.

346AC: The Companions' Journeys.
The future Heroes of the Lance go their separate ways to pursue personal quests, searching for any sign of the lost gods's presence in the world.

348AC: War of the Lance Begins.
In spring, the dragonarmies pour from the Khalkists to overrun Nordmaar and Balifor and threaten lands beyond. Silvanesti accepts emissaries of the Highlords, who swear not to attack the elves.

349AC: Silvanesti Betrayed.
Flushed with victory, the dragonarmies turn south on a "routine patrol" and attack Silvanesti's northern border. Losses are heavy on both sides. When the elves lure their foes into ambush, Takhisis commits the rest of her troops to the battle, ravaging the forest border. The elves retreat to their capital, Silvanost, where they stand a good chance of outlasting the siege.

However, King Lorac Caladon of the Silvanesti has become enchanted by the Dragon Orb of Istar, an artifact he rescued from the lost city before the Cataclysm. When he orders the evacuation of Silvanesti, the elves flee in ships for Southern Ergoth and Qualinesti. As the dragonarmies reach the edge of Silvanost, Lorac commands the orb to destroy them. However, Viper—the Evil dragon spirit residing in the orb—seizes control of Lorac. The Dragon Orb projects Lorac's mad nightmares onto the land he loved. Silvanesti becomes a spiralling terror. The dragonarmy abandons its conquest, now worthless and corrupt.

350AC: Evil Rearms Itself.
The dragonarmies rebuild their forces from the Evil folk they have conquered. Takhisis controls all eastern Ansalon, except Saifhum in the Blood Sea. The minotaurs of Mithas and Kothas harry the retreating Silvanesti refugees.

351AC: Evil Turns West.
In spring, the dragonarmies begin skirmishes on Solamnia's eastern border. The Blue Dragonarmy, aided by the goblins, strikes across the Dargaard Mountains. The Knights of Solamnia, in disarray, cannot repel the attack. The army occupies Kalaman, Hinterlund, and Nightlund and presses the borders of the Plains of Solamnia and Gaardlund. Betraying humankind, Lemish opens a door for the dragonarmies to enter Solamnia from the south. Kaolyn's dwarves, however, prove a stout bulwark against the advancing troops.

By autumn, the Knights have responded, and Solamnia becomes entrenched. The Red Dragonarmy leads an amphibious flanking assault along the New Sea and across the Plains of Abanasinia. The human tribes there fall to their advance. After delaying the foe's advance, the Qualinesti elves flee to join their cousins in Southern Ergoth. The dragonarmies march against Thorbardin, laying siege to its Northgate. Meanwhile, a wing of the Blue Dragonarmy strikes south around the New Sea to Tarsis and the Plains of Dust, then marches toward the Kharolis to cut off the dwarves' retreat.

By year's end, much of Ansalon has fallen. But the Heroes of the Lance have reunited at the Inn of the Last Home in Solace to champion the side of Good. By chance or Fate, they meet a barbarian couple, Goldmoon and Riverwind, who possess the blue crystal Staff of Mishakal: proof at last that the gods of Good have returned! When Lord Verminaard's dragonarmy overruns their homeland, these Companions—along with Laurana and Gilthanas, children of the Qualinesti ruler—rescue their people from imprisonment in Pax Tharkas, then flee south to escape the dragonarmies.

352AC: The Whitestone Council.
Representatives of the surviving nations gather on Sancrist at Whitestone Glade to forge an uneasy alliance. When the Companions rediscover the legendary dragonlances, the allies—under the leadership of Laurana, the Golden General—begin forging them anew.

In spring, the Blue Dragonarmy besieges the High Clerist's Tower near Palanthas. The army is repelled by the Knights of Solamnia using their newly forged dragonlances. Hero of the Lance Sturm Brightblade dies in the battle, but the tide begins to turn.

A special force of Knights, in a surprise stab at Sanction, discovers the blackmail keeping the Good dragons out of the war. With the aid of the silver dragon D'Argent and the copper dragon Cymbol, as well as several Heroes of the Lance, this force rescues some of the Good dragon eggs. The metallic dragons swiftly enter the war.

In summer, the armies of Whitestone begin to strike back against Evil. They reclaim much of Solamnia. The dragonarmies respond by bringing five flying castles into the battle, but already, their conquests are slipping away. The siege of Kalaman by Whitestone forces marks the beginning of the end.

Released from nearly fifty years of imprisonment in the dwarf kingdom of Thorbardin, Berem—the gemstone man—is sighted again. Takhisis moves her agents to find and capture him, so she might open the gates of the Abyss and bring her infernal minions to reinforce the flagging dragonarmies. However, Berem constantly evades her.

In a desperate ploy, the Golden General marches her Whitestone forces across the Estwilde to assault the vale of Neraka, stronghold of Takhisis's might. Lord Ariakan, son of the Emperor of Ansalon, is taken prisoner. By Fate's hand, the Heroes of the Lance find Berem and journey to Neraka, though it costs the life of hero Flint Fireforge. As Evil rallies its forces around the crippled form of the Dark Temple, Berem reunites the gem with the Foundation Stone. Whole at last, the Temple heals itself. Then, as Jasla's spirit flees the Stone, the structure crumbles, destroying Takhisis's gateway. The dragonarmies collapse, and the weak alliances of Evil fight over the dropped crown of rulership.

353AC: The War of the Lance Ends.
The former armies of the Dark Queen fragment and flee to the remote corners of Ansalon. The dragons retreat.

Draconian Activity: Unbeknownst to anyone, a group of draconians steal several Good dragon eggs during Neraka's last days and flee south with them.

353-357AC: Harrying the Foe.
The Whitestone forces continue to scour darkness from the land. The dragonarmies still occupy parts of central, eastern, and southern Ansalon, but

the forces of Good systematically hunt them down and work to destroy them.

355AC: The Knighthood Evolves.
Lord Gunthar uth Wistan is named the first Grand Master of the Knights of Solamnia since the Cataclysm. He orders an update of the Measure of the Knighthood for modern times.

356AC: Master of Past and Present.
Raistlin Majere and his brother Caramon use a magical device to journey into the past. They reach corrupted Istar, intent on changing history and challenging the Dark Queen. Raistlin becomes one with the spirit of the infamous wizard Fistandantilus. He moves through time and into the Abyss, hoping to defeat the Dark Queen.

357AC: The Blue Lady's War.
The Blue Lady, one of the most powerful and ruthless Dragon Highlords, makes a pact with the death knight, Lord Soth. Together, they lead a dragonarmy from Sanction and, with a flying citadel, attack northern Solamnia. They besiege even Palanthas, but their effort fails.

Ariakan Goes Free. The Solamnic Knights release the son of Highlord Ariakas from the High Clerist's Tower after years of captivity. Following a visit from the Dark Queen, he decides to form the Knights of Takhisis.

358AC: Sealing the Portal.
In the Abyss, Raistlin Majere sacrifices his freedom to hold off the Dark Queen, while Caramon seals the Portal of the Abyss to trap her—and his twin—inside, presumably forever.

360AC: Qué-Shu Rises Again.
Survivors of one Abanasinian village, razed in the war, rebuild their home and select Heroes of the Lance Riverwind and Goldmoon to lead them.

362AC: A Union of Elves.
Silvanesti queen Alhana Starbreeze and Qualinesti heir Porthios of House Solostaran are married in the hopes that their union would unite their nations.

370AC: Knights of Takhisis Born.
Lord Ariakan oversees the official investiture of the first Knights of Takhisis. All Knights receive the Vision: a look at their own personal roles in the Dark Queen's divine plan.

378AC: A Journey of Honor.
Two Heroes of the Lance, Tanis Half-Elven and Caramon Majere, visit Storm's Keep, the secret stronghold of the Knights of Takhisis. Tanis warns the Knights of Solamnia, the Temple of Paladine, and the Wizards' Conclave of the threat the Dark Knights present, but few heed his cautions.

380AC: United Plainsmen.
All the scattered tribes of Abanasinia now look for leadership to Riverwind and Goldmoon of Qué-Shu.

381AC: Mages Storm the Keep.
The Wizard's Conclave sends a group to Storm's Keep to attack the wizardly Gray Knights of Takhisis. Justarius, Red Robe head of the Conclave, dies in the ill-fated attempt. Dalamar the Dark, once apprentice to Raistlin Majere, becomes leader of the Conclave.

382AC: Elven Succession.
Porthios, Qualinesti Speaker of the Sun, succeeds in his twenty-year battle to end Lorac's Nightmare, still raging in Silvanesti. However, Qualinesti elders force his nephew, Gilthas of House Solostaran, to take Porthios's office by threatening the life of Alhana Starbreeze. Most believe young Gilthas nothing but the puppet of the elder senators. Porthios and Alhana become dark elves—exiles.

Changes in the Knighthood. Solamnic Grand Master Gunthar retires. Sir Thomas of Thelgaard becomes commander of the High Clerist's Tower. Tanin and Sturm Majere, sons of Caramon, become the first non-Solamnics to enter the Knighthood.

383AC: The Summer of Chaos.
Intending to use what they believe is the Graystone's magic to protect their island from the Knights of Takhisis, the Irda break open the gem and accidentally free the god Chaos, Father of All and of Nothing. He destroys their island and threatens the entire world.

Knight of Takhisis Steel Brightblade takes the young White Robe mage Palin Majere to the Tower of High Sorcery in Palanthas, hoping to open the Portal of the Abyss there to free the Dark Queen. Raistlin Majere, still in the Abyss, learns of the release of Chaos and draws Palin through the Portal. Inside the Abyss, they overhear the gods conclude that the only way to fight Chaos is to impel mortals to unite under their strongest force—that of Takhisis. Raistlin leaves the Abyss with his nephew—but without his magic.

Meanwhile, the Dark Knights have begun their attack on Ansalon by seizing the northern port of Kalaman. Armies of Takhisis march south to take Neraka, gaining aid from their dark minions in the Khalkists, then move west. They conquer the High Clerist's Tower and, from there, easily take Palanthas. Ariakan's Knights capture all Solamnics in the city and imprison them in the High Clerist's Tower. The Dark Knights restrict mages of the Conclave to the Towers of High Sorcery, close schools, and apply capital punishment to all lawbreakers.

Within a month, they rule Southern Ergoth, Qualinesti, and all the land from Nordmaar southeast through the Khalkist Mountains (including Kendermore), south to the Plains of Dust, and west into Solamnia and Abanasinia. Northern Ergoth and Silvanesti manage to hold out, as do Thorbardin and some Khalkist hill dwarves. Mount Nevermind erupts, due to gnomish attempt to use their war machines against the Knights of Takhisis.

0: The Second Cataclysm.
Suddenly, before the Knights can solidify their grip on Ansalon, signs of Chaos erupt throughout the land. Thorbardin falls under attack by underground minions of Chaos. Elves and ogres fight side

by side to protect greater Blödehelm-Silvanesti. The Vingaard Mountains begin to burn. A rift opens in the Turbidus Ocean between the Dragon Isles and Ansalon, and from it spring flames, shadow-wights, and daemon warriors astride fire dragons. The shadow-wights—creatures of darkness—wreak havoc upon western Nordmaar, the Estwilde, the Northern Wastes and the northern Plains of Solamnia. They also appear unexpectedly in the Sirrion Sea islands. Dalamar the Dark leads a group of mages to the Rift to discover the nature of the creatures of Chaos.

All the while, the ocean boils.

Then the forces of Chaos strike at the High Clerist's Tower. Metallic dragons arrive to fight alongside the chromatics, but all mortals in the fight meet defeat. Every Knight there dies defending the tower except Steel Brightblade's unit of dragon riders and the Solamnic prisoners. Lord Ariakan is among the slain. Takhisis withdraws from Krynn, and the Vision becomes lost to the Dark Knights.

The sun halts its journey across the sky, and the familiar stars and moons vanish. Chaos runs wild across the face of Ansalon: He draws frost-wights from the Icewall Glacier, cuts a huge canyon in the Solamnic Plains, causes the Lords of Doom to erupt again, soothes the Maelstrom in the Blood Sea, and boils the ocean.

Palin aids the god Reorx in reclaiming the broken Graystone from the devastated Irda island. He carries it down the Rift and into the Abyss, where Steel Brightblade's Knights and the Solamnic prisoners ride blue and silver dragons in battle against the forces of Chaos. Ultimately, Tasslehoff Burrfoot, a Hero of the Lance, stabs Chaos in the toe. Usha, Palin's beloved, catches a drop of the god's blood between the two halves of the Graygem, forcing Chaos to leave Krynn. However, he insists that all the other gods depart into the Beyond, too. Then the Graygem explodes, shooting thousands of tiny crystals into the air.

Palin, Usha, and Steel, the only survivors of the Abyssal battle, find themselves in a field in Solace, along with the dead; Steel dies there of his battle wounds. Fizban, an avatar of Paladine, appears to explain that magic has left the world with the departed Solinari, Lunitari, and Nuitari. If other magic exists, the heroes must find it on their own, he says. Raistlin Majere leaves with him for a much-deserved rest. (Usha does as the mage asks and tells a relieved Palin she is *not*, indeed, his cousin.)

Now the sky of Krynn holds only one pale moon and the new stars formed from the explosion of the Graygem. Islands called the Teeth of Chaos have sprung up at the site of the Rift. And the people of Krynn have only their memories of the gods left to them—but they have each other.

The Age Of Mortals

Krynn's Fifth Age began at the dawn after the Battle of the Rift, when a new red star appeared in the sky—as though to show that mankind was not alone after all.

1SC: The Last Heroes' Tomb. In Solace, dwarves construct the Last Heroes' Tomb to commemorate those who died in the Second Cataclysm. Knights of Takhisis and Solamnia are laid out side by side. The only Knights—of Takhisis *and* Solamnia—left alive now are those who were in Northern Ergoth during the Second Cataclysm or on southern duty (in Kendermore, Qualinesti, or at the Silvanesti-Blödehelm front). The Council of the Last Heroes cedes land in eastern Ansalon to the battered Knights of Takhisis.

The entire continent reels from the loss of magic and the pantheon of gods. Frost-wight activity in the southern Plains of Dust chases all tribes from the area. Shadow-wights continue to play havoc with the south Sirrion Sea islands. Artifacts of lost Istar, spit out by the Maelstrom during the Chaos War, are discovered on the Blood Sea shores.

Palanthas is Attacked. Without warning or explanation, a mysterious robed figure destroys one of Palanthas's most treasured landmarks: its Tower of High Sorcery. At the same time, the contents of the Great Library of the Ages disappears. Now only one Tower of High Sorcery is left—in Wayreth. Its Master remains silent.

2SC: The Coming of Great Dragons. The fierce red dragon Malystryx lands on Misty Isle east of Ansalon. Larger and more powerful than any dragon ever seen before, she promptly burns the island clear with her infernal breath. Word of her arrival from a land beyond the Courrain Ocean spreads across Ansalon, but most consider the story—and the idea that other giant dragons might follow the first—little more than rumor.

Riverwind's Last Quest. Hearing of the great red dragon, Riverwind and his two daughters travel east to investigate. Goldmoon, a healer and tribal leader, remains in Abanasinia, while their son, Wanderer, walks the Plains of Dust. Riverwind sends a group of kender to warn the Solamnic Knights of the threat Malystryx presents.

3SC: The Kender Flight. Moving west from the Misty Isle, Malystryx crosses the Dairly Plains and comes upon Kendermore. For the first time, kender know fear as the terrible wyrm lays waste to all the lands on the Bay of Balifor. Riverwind leads a kender attack against the dragon; though he saves one village, he can only slow the wyrm's relentless advance. Riverwind and his younger daughter, Brightdawn, are slain in the fruitless battle. Moonsong, the elder daughter, survives to lead the kender in a mass exodus of Kendermore and Balifor, though she was horribly burned by the fire breath of Malys.

The Herald Appears. A new bard has become recognized throughout Ansalon. Known only as the Herald, he claims to have no memory of his own—his memories are those of Krynn, he tells listeners.

4SC: The Dragon Purge Begins
Using a frightening arcane ritual, Malys begins to destroy the dragons of Ansalon, consuming their life energy and becoming more powerful with every victory. The lands around her new home, now known as the Desolation, become burnt wastes littered with the bones of slain dragons. Other Evil wyrms learn her secrets and begin destroying Good and Evil dragons alike in their desire for personal power. Human lands become mere battlefields for these titanic clashes. Most metallic dragons vanish to the Dragon Isles. Khellendros the Blue, the famed Skie of the War of the Lance and the Blue Lady's War, seizes the Vingaard Mountains region, including Palanthas. His realm comes to be called the Blue Waste.

The Knights' Accord. Surviving Knights of Takhisis found their dark legion's new stronghold in Neraka, forming tenuous alliances with local dragons.

The Legion of Steel. During a visit to the Last Heroes' Tomb, Lady Sara Dunstan—once a Knight of Takhisis—is inspired to form an Order of knights in honor of the late hero Steel Brightblade, her adopted son. She envisions a group committed to no principle but justice and no power beyond each other. By year's end, every major city in Ansalon contains a cell of her Legion of Steel. Most members are disillusioned former Knights of Takhisis and Solamnia who understand that, in a godless world, the line between Good and Evil isn't as clear as it once was.

5SC: Goldmoon's Epiphany.
Still distraught over the death of her husband and daughter, the departure of the goddess Mishakal, and the loss of her clerical magic, Goldmoon embarks upon what she believes will be her last journey: a trip to the Inn of the Last Home in Solace. On her way, she meets the Sage, an old man who tells her to look inside her heart to find the new magic.

A battle of the Dragon Purge erupts in the air above the Inn, and the great green dragons' vicious attacks destroy the much-loved landmark. Desperate to save a young Neidar priest wounded in the fray, Goldmoon calls upon the power within her heart—a power she never knew she had—and through her, he is healed. The Sage vanishes.

6SC: Dark Knights Expand.
Restored to a fraction of their former power, the Knights of Takhisis begin spreading their influence out from Neraka. Sanction, now a walled fortress of a city, manages to defend itself. The Knights still cling to their rule of Qualinesti through its Speaker, Gilthas. Those draconians in the Khalkists wishing to avoid the rule of the Dark Knights move north to form their own realm, which they call Teyr after its major city.

The Black Dragon Arrives. Onysablet the Black conquers her foes, winning the right to take the eastern New Sea. She begins transforming New Coast and Blödehelm into swampland.

7SC: The Power of the Heart.
The Sage returns to help Goldmoon grow in the powers of the heart. Word of her new mystic magic begins to spread.

Palin Leads the White Robes. From his home in Solace, Palin Majere has become a leading voice of the former mages of the Conclave. As the head of the Order of White Robes, he finds himself constantly butting heads with the leaders of the other two Orders regarding the Conclave's new emerging philosophy in a world without magic. As no wizard can cast even rudimentary spells, mages begin to abandon their art.

8SC: The Citadel of Light.
Goldmoon and Jasper, the hill dwarf whose life she saved, found a mystic order on the Isle of Schallsea, at the site of the Silver Stair.

A New Red. The red dragon Pyrothraxus takes Mount Nevermind.

9SC: Solamnic Knights' Council.
The death of Lord Gunthar forces the Knights of Solamnia High Command

The Story of Khellendros

The Herald of Ansalon tells many grand tales of the fearsome dragon Khellendros, whom humans call Skie. As a young dragon, Khellendros declined tradition and, instead of joining a harem of mates, he became the sole mate of the female blue, Nadir. She died during the Third Dragon War, after laying her only clutch of eggs. Skie retired from battle to protect the clutch, hiding the eggs deep beneath the sands. Then, like all dragons, Khellendros went into hibernation. He awakened in 147AC, returning to raise his wyrmlings. Several lived to become young dragons in the desert wastes of Khur. The eldest was a daughter, whose human name was Zephyr. She joined her sire in service to the Dark Queen but, growing up in hiding, she had never quite developed his survival instincts and wits.

Then Skie encountered a young human rising through the ranks of the Blue Dragonarmy. This woman, Kitiara uth Matar, exhibited all the traits a blue dragon needed to know: cunning, wit, and finesse in manipulating lesser creatures. Khellendros matched his daughter with her, and together they rose to become first lieutenants to him and his rider, Kartilann of Khur. After the dragonarmies' victories in the East, they turned west toward Solamnia and the New Sea. The invasion did not go well, though, and during the final sweep of Schallsea, a sniper's arrow killed Kartilann as, upon Skie, he led a charge. The treacherous shaman Shirlinn then summoned a creature of wind to batter the disoriented Skie, and only Zephyr's quick actions saved her sire. Sadly, Zephyr could not save herself.

When a dragon lost his rider or a Highlord lost his mount, the remaining partner, dishonored, fell out of favor with the Dark Queen. Therefore, Khellendros quickly made a pact with Kitiara, and they rose to replace his general and lead the Blue Army to victory. From that moment, they were the most loyal of pairs. Their exploits during the war are told and retold. When at last the Dark Queen fell in defeat, Skie and Kitiara led the only dragon force to retain its sovereignty. Years later, the two of them returned with the death knight, Lord Soth, to try to stop the dark mage Raistlin from foiling their Queen's reign. In the resulting defeat, Kitiara was said to have fallen, but her body was never found. Reports that Soth had claimed her led Skie to the death knight's castle, but he found only an abandoned, haunted hall —and no sign of Kit.

Khellendros pledged never to rest until he has found and restored his partner, more dear to him than his own daughter. His search for Kitiara led Skie into the Gray realms, where time flowed differently. Not only did he miss the battle with Chaos, he returned to Ansalon much older and stronger than when he left, now one of the mightiest blue wyrms on Krynn. Believing he had discovered his Highlord's disembodied spirit within the Gray, Khellendros returned to find a new form for her and reopen the gates to the Gray that the Chaos War slammed shut. He knew the Tower of High Sorcery and the Great Library in Palanthas held the resources his plan demanded. Only after taking the city did he realize, furious, that an unknown force had razed the Tower and emptied the Library during his absence from Ansalon. Now this dedicated dragon pursues other means of returning the Blue Lady to the world.

to call a Knights' Council. They elect a new Grand Master, Sir Liam Erhling, who unveils Lord Gunthar's revised Measure.

11SC: The Purge Continues.
Though green dragons are frequently sighted battling over and within Qualinesti, the elves (technically still under Dark Knight rule) manage to hold onto their land. A magical shield appears around Silvanesti, preventing both dragon and man from entering the enchanted wood.

The Inn is Rebuilt. Caramon and Tika Majere oversee the reconstruction of the Inn of the Last Home.

12SC: An Unwelcome Frost.
Gellidus the White claims Southern Ergoth, causing a glacier to form over all but the westernmost fringe of the land mass. Many resident elves flee to the nearby isle of Cristyne, while humans escape to the nation of Gunthar on Sancrist. The proximity of Frost's new glacier to the prevailing warm currents creates vicious winds and storms in the Straits of Algoni and Ergoth. Sailors begin calling the vast channel "the Gale."

13SC: Belladonna Leads Hylo.
Billee Juniper, a veteran of the Kender Flight, changes her name to Belladonna to reflect the sorrow her race has known. She claims power over all kender of Hylo.

14SC: Stenndunuus and Iyesta.
A blue dragon, whom humans call Thunder, and a brass, nicknamed Splendor, take up adjoining realms in the eastern Plains of Dust. Splendor becomes the first metallic dragon to seize territory in the Dragon Purge.

15SC: The Vision Returns.
Thanks to a triumvirate of strong Evil mystic leaders, the Vision returns to the Dark Knights and tells them Takhisis will return. They plan to be ready.

Death of Sara Dunstan. On her deathbed, the founder of the Legion of Steel bequeaths followers her Legacy.

16SC: Northern Dragons.
A red dragon named Fenalysten slices himself a piece of the Estwilde and the Throtl Gap. Green Lorrinar takes command of the northeastern forest, while black Mohrlex seizes Nordmaar's southern swamp.

17SC: Polar Dragons.
Two white dragons, Cryonisis and Frisindia, take up residence in the Icewall Glacier.

18SC: The Desolation.
Men explore the Desolation, by order of the Solamnic Knights' High Command.

20SC: Shadow Sorcerer.
A robed figure appears out of the Desolation, armed with new sorcerous abilities.

22SC: Elf Disappearances.
Elves begin vanishing from the Qualinesti wood. One specific green dragon is sighted repeatedly in the area, but the elves' attempts to hunt the monstrous beast have met with disaster.

24SC: Sorcery in Chaos.
Certain members of the old Orders of High Sorcery wrestle for power, endangering the continuation of what little magic the wizards have left. Palin Majere, new Head of the Conclave, determines something must be done.

25SC: Qualinesti Bows to the Green.
The Green Dragon, Beryllinthranox, claims Qualinesti Forest with the aid of the Dark Knights. When she demonstrates her horrifying ability to steal the life-essence of elves to form items of power, Gilthas has no choice but to give in to her demands for lordship over the forest. Gil appeals to Palin, who has no magical answer. Beryl begins her rule by forcing bands of elves to search for the elusive Wayreth—the Last Tower of High Sorcery. Elves continue to vanish. Alhana and Porthios vow to free the Qualinesti and place their own son, Silvanoshei or "Hope of Silvanos," on the throne of a united elven nation.

28SC: The Last Conclave.
Palin, the Shadow Sorcerer, and the Master of the Tower convene at Wayreth to solve both the elf and magic dilemmas. Palin has learned that magical energy still exists within certain objects and living things, but most spells still won't work. The Shadow Sorcerer reveals that the mages must restructure the way they think of magic: One does not memorize spells anymore. A sorcerer must *feel* the magic inherent in the earth—Krynn's primordial magic—and shape it to his will. The Master of the Tower declares that this meeting constitutes the Last Conclave, instructing Palin to dissolve the old Orders of Magic and teach the world the new arcane methodology. Sorcerous aid saves the elves from genocide. The Shadow Sorcerer withdraws.

29SC: Thorbardin Sealed.
Stymied in her plans for the elves, Beryl pushes outward, magically spreading the Qualinesti Forest into much of the Kharolis Mountains and the Plains of Dust. Her expansion is halted by the frost-wights and Thorbardin to the east. The dwarves seal their mountain fortress, as they did so many years ago. The dissenters, followers of the messianic Daewar leader, Severus Stonehand, travel to reclaim the Khalkist realm of Thoradin from the cursed Zhakar dwarves. Hill dwarf refugees flee to Abanasinia.

A New Magical Order. Palin founds the Academy of Sorcery near Solace.

30SC: Dragon Purge Ends.
Malystryx establishes the borders of the Dragon Realms and declares an end to the Purge, unwilling to allow more Great Dragons to challenge for land.

Thoradin Reborn. Severus's dwarves retake Zhakar, conquering its residents and reviving its former name. Using mysticism, Severus cures the land's mold plague. Those Zhakar dwarves that will not bow to him, he exiles.

31SC: The Present.
FIFTH AGE campaigns begin.

"I should never have left." Flint grumbled, looking down into the valley below..., his eyes lingering fondly over the familiar landscape. The mountainside below him formed one side of a high mountain bowl carpeted in autumn splendor. The vallenwood trees in the valley were ablaze in the season's colors, the brilliant reds and golds fading into the purple of the Kharolis peaks beyond. The flawless, azure sky among the trees was repeated in the waters of Crystalmir Lake. Thin columns of smoke curled among the treetops, the only sign of the presence of Solace. A soft, spreading haze blanketed the vale with the sweet aroma of home fires burning.

—Flint Fireforge comes home, Dragons of Autumn Twilight

The face of Krynn has changed throughout the Great Ages. Its geography and borders have remained always subject to the whims of the gods as they battled in the heavens and inflicted their judgment upon the world. Twice, the gods have called down Cataclysms upon Krynn, each one transforming the continent of Ansalon in the southern hemisphere.

In the ages before the first Cataclysm, Ansalon stretched uninterrupted for five thousand miles, from the tip of eastern Karthay to the far edge of Ergoth. Only the western Isle of Sancrist stood apart. In the Cataclysm about four centuries ago, the Blood Sea washed over fallen Istar in the northeast, creating a Maelstrom that warned away naval traffic. Ergoth was ripped from the mainland and broken in two. When the New Sea formed in central Ansalon, water receded in the south.

While the map of Fifth Age Ansalon still resembles that of the Fourth, no one can deny that both Chaos and the dragon overlords have brought great change to the land. The Teeth of Chaos island chain has surfaced to the north, forest has encroached upon the Plains of Dust, ice covers much of Southern Ergoth, and the New Sea has expanded into a forbidding morass.

Even greater than the geographic change introduced in the wake of the Second Cataclysm is the political transformation the continent has undergone. Gods no longer fight each other for control of Ansalon: The dragons own the land. Mortals can merely try to keep hold of the few remaining independent realms and work toward the day when they can once again call the world their own.

Beyond Ansalon

Elsewhere on Krynn lie other rich lands cloaked in mystery and legend. To the northeast sprawls the continent of Taladas, where it is said minotaurs have a mighty empire. North of the Dragon Isles await lands spoken of only in fable. Some whisper of a realm of dragons across the sea far to the east; Lord Ariakan discovered a race of humanlike "brutes" during a Fourth Age exploratory voyage east. And who knows what might lie west of the vast, tempest-tossed Turbidus Ocean? But, these realms are topics for another day, and another book.

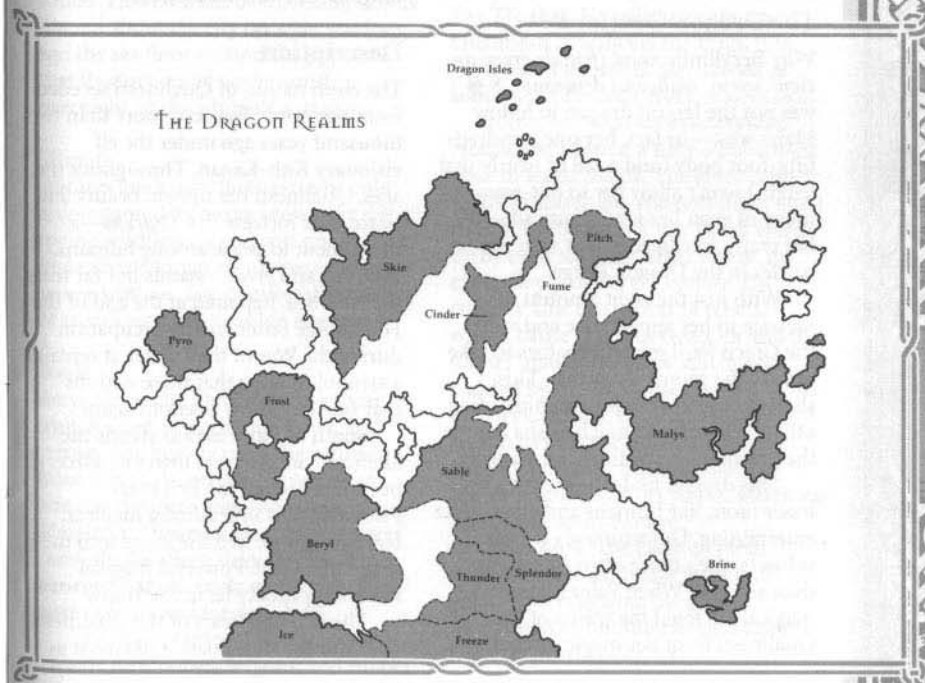
Dragon Realms

The arrival of Red Malystryx from across the Courrain Ocean wrought as great a change in the lives of the common folk as did the Second Cataclysm itself. The dragon's immense size and unprecedented magical abilities made her—and those who followed her to Ansalon—the most powerful force in a continent already shattered by war.

Malystryx began hunting lesser dragons, defeating them in battle, then feeding upon their life energy to become stronger still. Many dragons of Ansalon fell in these early days of the Dragon Purge, unable to compete with their counterparts from across the sea. The most powerful native chromatics, however, saw Malys's arrival as an opportunity: No longer servants to the absent Dark Queen, they also began to battle their fellows for power and control of realms. Khellendros the Blue (whom men call Skie) was the first to master the outland dragons' arcane methods. For reasons only he knows, Skie chose the Vingaard Mountains region—including Palanthas, the Northern Wastes, and the northeastern Plains of Solamnia—as his realm.

The victors of the Dragon Purge settled where they chose: blue to the desert hills, green to the forests, black to the marshes, white to tundra, and red to rocky highlands. The victorious dragon overlords' unique, inherent magic let the five greatest dragons alter the terrain to suit their preferences—and woe to the mortals who once called these lands home.

Although life under draconic rule varies from realm to realm, freedom lives in none of them. So the folk of these hostage lands resist as best they can while awaiting salvation from the Knights, the fled metallic dragons, or the hand of Fate.



Beryllinthranox the Green

Beryllinthranox fought dozens of wyrms in the Dragon Purge to win Qualinesti. She desires to one day best Malystryx, but first must add to her power. Initially, she had hoped to build up an arsenal of magic by infusing the spirits of elves into a collection of nefarious implements. However, the Last Conclave recently foiled that plan (see Chapter One).

Since then, Beryl has concentrated on expanding her domain to rival Malystryx's in size, if not magic. Her influence now spreads from Qualinesti south to the Kharolis shore and as far east as Thorbardin and the edge of the frost-wight lands. All this she has transformed into woodlands through the dragon magic born to her. Though she controls the Qualinesti using various administrators, the Knights of Takhisis, and the elves' Speaker, Gilthas of House Solostaran, she still lacks the one thing that made her desire this land for her realm: the key to Wayreth, the elusive last Tower of High Sorcery.

The Dragon Overlord

Wily Beryllinthranox *(female green ancient wyrm, malicious demeanor, 8)* was not the largest dragon to follow Malys west—in fact, her one hundred-fifty-foot body (and a tail of nearly that length) won't allow her to out-muscle many of even her green comrades. It's her crafty intelligence that won her battles in the Dragon Purge.

With just the right amount of menace in her appearance and voice, the Green Peril maneuvers foes to take exactly the stance she wants. This shrewd bargainer enjoys manipulating others as almost as much as she enjoys the prizes she gains from her plotting.

This dragon finds the ineptitude of lesser races, like humans and elves, quite entertaining. Unfortunately for her subjects, she's more often impatient than amused. When Palin Majere's magical aid freed the spirits of the Qualinesti from her magic arsenal, she visited terrible wrath upon the people. One might wonder how long she and her green minions will tolerate the elves' failure to locate the Tower of Wayreth. If the elves could find her lair, perhaps they could make the first strike.

Important Holdings

Kharolis, monument of Pax Tharkas, Qualinesti, city of Tarsis, Wayreth Forest.

Main Populace

Green dragons, humans, Neidar dwarves, Qualinesti elves.

Personalities

Speaker Gilthas *(Qualinesti young male, serious demeanor, Hero, 2)*; Porthios, exiled Qualinesti ruler *(Qualinesti adult male, distant demeanor, Hero, 6)*; Laurana, the Golden General *(Qualinesti adult female, inspiring demeanor, Legend, 2)*; Lady of Tarsis Shanira Luckwand *(human adult female, purposeful demeanor, Novice)*; Dreselenimus *(green juvenile male dragon, crafty demeanor)*.

Description

The elven nation of Qualinesti seceded from war-torn Silvanesti more than two thousand years ago under the elf visionary Kith-Kanan. Throughout the ages, Qualinesti has upheld beauty and peace. The fortress Pax Tharkas—a monument to peace among humans, dwarves, and elves—stands not far from the New Sea. Repaired at the end of the Fourth Age (after enemy occupation during the War of the Lance), it remains a symbol of hope that these nations may one day know freedom again.

South of Pax Tharkas stands the Skullcap, once a great tower of sorcery, but ruined when the Evil mage Fistandantilus unleashed a magical barrage that melted the stone into the shape of a skull. Powerful magical items supposedly lie in the ruins.

The thriving heart of the Qualinesti Forest to the west boasts Qualinost as its single city of note. Kith-Kanan's elven capital is as beautiful as it is well-fortified. Its elegant spires serve as look-out towers, and its buildings' smoothly curving surfaces prove difficult to climb. Instead of city walls, Qualinost is ringed by four arched bridges spanning the guard towers. The Speaker of the Sun resides in the gold-burnished Tower of the Sun. At the city's center lies an open square, the Hall of the Sky.

Beryl's magic has transformed the land south of Qualinesti from tundra to temperate woodland. The walrus men and ice bears have fled south, leaving the land to humans. Most residents of the Kharolis Mountains to the east have fled also, since Thorbardin's sealing.

Perhaps the only good to come from Beryl's rule is the renewal of the city of Tarsis, southwest of the Kharolis. A chief port during the Age of Might, Tarsis was ravaged when the Cataclysm left it landlocked. Today, with the spread of Beryl's forest to just west of Tarsis, the city once again shines as a jewel of commerce, the key stop along all trade routes. However, the ocean-going vessels littered about the city on what was long ago the sea floor remind the populace that its glory could again vanish overnight, at the whim of a dragon.

Climate

Winters are harsh, their extreme cold accompanied by heavy snows. Yet the spring wildflowers and soft grasses can make locals forget about even the most severe winters. The comfortable canopy of trees keeps folks cool in summer.

Trade

Beryl allows the Qualinesti to export fruit, leather, wine, liquor, bows, and arrows. She heavily taxes the income from this trade, greedy for wealth to one day compete with the power of Malystryx. However, she watches ports carefully: No elven ship may leave the besieged nation; trade goods may leave port only aboard foreign ships.

The main staples of Tarsis's trade include furs, horses, wagons, and timber from the encroaching western wood. The city also hires mercenaries to fight Icewall thanoi who draw too near.

Current Happenings

From the days of Qualinesti's founding through the Fourth Age, western elves followed the Speaker of the Sun, a descendant of Kith-Kanan and, thus, of Silvanos. The Speaker guided the *Thalas-Enthia*, or Senate, made up of all the Heads of Households.

Current Speaker Gilthas of House Solostaran actually was maneuvered into becoming head of state by elder senators who tricked him into visiting the land of his ancestors when he was a youth. During the Summer of Chaos, Gil remained subject to the will of the governing Dark Knights; these days, it is Beryl. However, over the years, the son of Heroes of the Lance Tanis Half-Elven and Lauranalanthalasa has become quite savvy at evading manipulators.

Gilthas has a pact with the dwarves of Thorbardin, who have spent the last two years tunneling from Northgate to Pax Tharkas. He will evacuate many Qualinesti quietly via the tunnels to Cristyne in the south Sirrion Sea as soon as the dwarves reach Abanasinia.

Today, he helps his countrymen escape just a few at a time—those that wish to leave, that is. The elves Gilthas sends to search for Wayreth often don't return; the Master of the Tower spirits them away to other lands where, in exile, they plot Beryl's demise. Gil covertly aids this group of rebels, whose battle cry, "For freedom and the forest!" makes the elves' spirits soar. Guided by the ever-wise counsel of his mother Laurana, Gil should give Beryl reason to worry. However, the frail Speaker remains plagued with the health problems of his youth, which no mystic can seem to cure.

Meanwhile, the Lady of Tarsis maintains her stout city walls and guard towers against the attacks of frost-wights from the east and raiders from the Icewall Glacier.

Gellidus the White

In the Fifth Age, the fourth dragon to seize a realm in the Dragon Purge was *Gellidus*, whom men call Frost. His assault took Southern Ergoth quite by surprise: Who would expect a white dragon to seek dominance over such a temperate land?

It actually wasn't the dragon's initial choice. But, as Gellidus surveyed the colder climes, he realized he'd get little satisfaction from ruling the scattered ice barbarians and walrus men indigenous to the polar region. As this bully looked north, his gaze settled on the isle of Southern Ergoth. Not only could he control the great human capital, Daltigoth—recently recaptured from ogre rule—but also the Vale of the Dragon: legendary Huma's resting place. He gleefully wrested these treasures from humans and, in Daltigoth's case, returned control to the ogres.

So far, the lazy overlord has not pursued governance of the western portion of his island, which remains unfrozen but still unnaturally cold and wracked by severe weather. This fringe remains a haven for the elves of Silvamori and Qualimori, as well as increasing numbers of Knights of Solamnia and refugees from the realm of Beryllinthranox.

The Dragon Overlord

Though rather small by Great Dragon standards, Gellidus *(male white ancient wyrm, sadistic demeanor, 9)* remains a massive creature. He measures about two hundred-thirty feet long from the tip of his blunt nose to the end of his flattened tail. This tail stretches more than one hundred feet, and his wings span almost three hundred feet.

This dragon resembles a long, snaky iceberg. Frigid, blue shadows and sparkling silvery streaks highlight his snow-white scales. His round, green eyes have a frosty sheen, and his blunt wedge of a head boasts a scaly fringe that sweeps back from his jowls and the top of his head; five tapering horns sprout from the fringe. The white has a lean, hard body with a short, thick neck and stumpy legs with spadelike claws. His tail is flattened like an eel's, with a finlike ridge.

Nasty, contrary Frost jealously guards his territory from all others. However, he's not particularly bright, and he resents humans and other dragons for their greater intelligence. He especially hates heroes who can wield magic—a power that depends on superior reason.

Like all bullies, Frost delights in frightening weaker creatures. His favorite battle tactic is to fly low and fast over enemies, to see if they succumb to dragon-awe. If they do, he hunts them down, killing them one by one. If they do not, he flies away and hides for a while, returning to launch a series of sneak attacks that wear down foes.

Important Holdings

Cities of Daltigoth, Zhea Harbor, Pontigoth, Qualimori and Silvamori, Foghaven Vale (Vale of the Dragon), Castle Eastwatch, south Sirrion Sea isles.

Main Populace

Qualinesti and Silvanesti elves, a few Kagonesti elf natives, humans, ogres, draconians, white dragons.

Personalities

Dictator Tdarnk of Daltigoth *(ogre adult male, cruel demeanor, Champion)*; Warlord Thunderbane of the Wild Ogres *(ogre elder male, pessimistic demeanor, Adventurer)*; Lady Merathanos of Qualimori *(Qualinesti adult female, vain demeanor, Champion)*; Belthanos of Silvamori *(Silvanesti adult male, belligerent demeanor, Champion)*; Solamnic Knight Riva Silverblade *(human adult woman, motivated demeanor, Champion)*; Shiver *(white young adult female dragon, grandiose demeanor)*.

Description

The ice came to Southern Ergoth more than fifteen years ago, transforming hill, grassland, and scrubby plain alike into a chill white wasteland. However, the Last Gaard Mountains (the Mountains of Ergoth) blocked Gell's magic, leaving the island's western fringe unfrozen—but inhospitable nonetheless. The wall of cold flowing from the glaciers produces wild storms when it hits the warm air over the Straits of Algoni to the east. The effect produces an ever-present gale that batters the western shores of Solamnia; similar conditions prevail in the waters north of the island. Icebergs now float in the straits as well.

Within a year of Gell's arrival, the mouth of Morgash Bay (the Bay of Darkness) froze up. The bay itself, too deep to freeze entirely, remains a chill lake in the center of the great island. Daltigoth, former capital of the Ergothian Empire, stands on the southern shore of this new Morgash Lake. Ogres rule there in the dragon's name; wild ogres live as nomads in the surroundings. However, the goblins of the plains beyond fled to Northern Ergoth when the ice came. Peeved to lose minions, Gellidus captured thanoi villages in the southern Plains of Dust and brought them north to serve him.

In the center of the spinelike Last Gaard Mountains lies Foghaven Vale, the site of the Tomb of Huma, hero of the Third Dragon War. Aware of its value to the Knights of Solamnia, Frost has stationed a group of thanoi there to guard the revered landmark against intrusion.

The grasslands and forests that used to lie west of the mountains have become windy plains that butt up to the stormy Sirrion Sea. The Solamnic Knights of Castle Eastwatch, under the leadership of Riva Silverblade, look down upon this region. The cities of Silvamori and Qualimori lie here, too, some twenty miles from each other across the river Thon-Tsalarian (the River of the Dead). During the War of the Lance, elves fleeing their embattled homelands founded these towns, which enjoyed an antagonistic relationship—with each other and the native Kagonesti elves—until the years just prior to the Chaos War.

South of elf territory, the south Sirrion Sea isles Enstar and Nostar have lain deserted since the Chaos War, their residents all victims of clouds of hovering shadow-wights.

Climate

Constant blizzards, biting winds, and sub-zero weather characterize most of Gellidus's realm. The land west of the mountains enjoys a bit of a respite from the bitter cold but is ravaged by the high winds created by the meeting of diverse weather systems.

Trade

Gone are this icy realm's once plentiful herbs and fruits. Residents have given up their former self-sufficiency in favor of increased trade just to survive. Now, the wild ogres of Thunderbane's clan and the Daltigoth ogres trade in fish and furs, while the nascent elven nation exports a bit of grain and leather, also.

Current Happenings

The arrival of Frost has led the elves of Silvamori and Qualimori to work together admirably. However, to maintain their traditional outdoor lifestyle, most native Kagonesti elves have fled the now inclement area for the more hospitable Cristyne to the west. Other local elves would enjoy relief from the rough weather too, but their leaders try to keep them from migrating, to preserve Ansalon's only unified elven state.

As the Age of Despair was drawing to a close, Qualinesti's previous Speaker of the Sun formed a peace treaty with the elves of Southern Ergoth. These pre-existing good relations proved vital when Gilthas requested permission for escaped Qualinesti to seek refuge there. A current rumor hints that these refugees seek to contact Gellidus himself, for aid against Beryllinthranox. While Gilthas and the Lady of Tarsis do not like the notion of exchanging one dragon overlord for another, they believe Frost would prove easier for them to defeat on their own.

Khellendros the Blue

The dragon known as the Storm Over Krynn once again darkens the skies. *Khellendros*—or Skie, as humans also call him—is perhaps the most driven dragon in Ansalon. Motivated by a vow he made long ago to his human rider, Kitiara uth Matar, he became the first dragon to join the court of Malystryx and to adopt her wicked methods. From the moment he learned of her arrival and the new age of dragon overlords, Khellendros set his sights on the jewel of the continent: Palanthas.

The Dragon Overlord

The body of sleek and powerful Skie *(male blue ancient wyrm, wrathful demeanor, 7)*—which deepens from iridescent azure on his belly to dark indigo on his back—measures one hundred-sixty feet in length. His tail stretches an additional one hundred-forty feet, and his wings span almost four hundred. Despite his massive size, his sinuous form favors him with an unexpected grace.

Skie's face often appears cryptic—at once amused, sinister, and distracted. A spiny, blue-black flare and crest frame his terrifying head. His pair of tapered horns, cream-colored at their base, shade to steel-blue at their tip. Wickedly slanted amber eyes combined with a perpetual toothy grin give Khellendros a look of calculating Evil.

An honorable dragon, Khellendros is renowned for his loyalty to his former Highlord partner, Kitiara. The two struck a pact during the War of the Lance to mutually assist and protect each other. Through careful manipulations, they rose through the ranks of the dragonarmies to become General of the Blue Wing, one of the top five commands.

But no one realizes that Skie's devotion surpasses normal standards: He continues to pursue Kitiara's spirit beyond the boundaries of life. (The dragon understands that the spirit can transcend mere mortal existence.) Skie views Kit as his daughter and would willingly sacrifice whatever it takes to bring her back to the world.

Ruthless in battle, this clever dragon knows when to charge and when to make a calculated retreat. When he chooses to back off, it is usually because Skie believes his foe to be more valuable to him alive than dead. No single creature in Ansalon save Malystryx herself could hope to best Skie in a physical confrontation.

The great Blue Dragon has several lairs in his northern desert, including a cave complex in the northeastern Vingaard Mountains and an ancient ring of carved stone monoliths hidden among a sea of enormous dunes.

Important Holdings

Regions of Coastlund, Elkholm, and Hinterlund, the Northern Wastes, city of Palanthas, Tanith, High Clerist's Tower, Vingaard Mountains.

Main Populace

Humans, mountain dwarves, ogres, draconians, blue dragons.

Personalities

Gale *(blue young adult male dragon, forthright demeanor)*; Knight-Officer Elstone Kinsaid, a Knight of Takhisis *(human adult male, decisive demeanor, Adventurer)*; Lord of Palanthas Xavier uth Nostran *(human elder male, just demeanor, Champion)*; Rindia Rolanta, a Legionnaire *(human adult female, cynical demeanor, Adventurer)*; Bertrem, chief Aesthetic *(human elder male, dedicated demeanor, Adventurer, 8)*; Nathal, an Aesthetic *(human young adult male, clever demeanor, Novice)*.

Description

One who knew Palanthas during the aftermath of the War of the Lance might not recognize the city today. Only a year after the devastating Summer of Chaos, when the Solamnic capital was still reeling from the former occupation of the Knights of Takhisis, an unidentified figure launched a devastating night attack upon the city's Tower of High Sorcery. The mages within couldn't counter the explosive force, having been abandoned by their gods of magic, and barely managed to escape alive. When the dust settled, the Shoikan Grove guarded nothing at all—only a strange, mirrorlike black pool remained where the Tower had stood—and the figure had gone.

The same night, the volumes within the Great Library of the Ages vanished inexplicably, to the astonishment and dismay of the Astinus's Aesthetic order of scholars.

Then, the Storm hit.

Many think it strange that Khellendros the Blue sought to take dwarf-built Palanthas so early in the Dragon Purge, yet spends so little time there. Instead, he rules his capital through human agents. He instated a weary but fair local statesman in the Palace of the Lord of Palanthas. A garrison of Dark Knights works as the lord's personal attendants and as law enforcers. With the arrival of these overseers, citizens flooded from Palanthas. The few members of the Knights of Solamnia and Legion of Steel in the city today operate underground.

And so a cloud has descended upon Palanthas. The city houses the highest population of Dark Knights anywhere outside of Neraka. Under Khellendros's authority, they have revived certain restrictive mandates from their Summer of Chaos days, such as nightly curfews. However, Skie refused to allow mandatory capital punishment for all crimes—he wants to keep the populace just content enough to maintain the economy. The dragon takes a hefty cut of his city's earnings for his own purposes.

The return of the Knights of Takhisis is only one reason the city has dwindled in size during the Fifth Age. The apparent destruction of the Tower of High Sorcery and the disappearance

of the contents of the Great Library caused many to flee, fearing what might come next. Many more left when the Blue began transforming the terrain into his preferred desert environment. Many residents have fled to Solamnia and Northern Ergoth, leaving those that remain with an even heavier tax burden to support Skie's neverending demand for funds.

Palanthas, with its deep harbor on the Bay of Branchala, still serves as an important trade center. However, the loss of its Library and the Great Temple of Paladine (which closed years ago with the departure of the clerics of Good for the Citadel of Light) hit the city hard. Under the direction of chief Aesthetic Bertrem, the scribes of the Great Library have been working to rebuild Astinus's collection for the last thirty years, but their progress is slow. Although the University of Palanthas still stands, scholars no longer flock there from across Ansalon as they did during the Fourth Age.

North of Palanthas, the Summer of Chaos has left its mark upon the land. When the shadow-wights erupted out of the Rift in the Turbidus Ocean, they passed over the Northern Wastes and the eastern spur of the Vingaard Mountains to the Tower of the High Clerist. Not only did they kill every living thing in their path, their dark nature wiped the memories of the dead forever from the minds of the living. Today, even the nonsuperstitious hesitate to venture into this wasteland.

At a gap in the central Vingaard Mountains stands the ruined High Clerist's Tower. This former headquarters of the Knights of the Sword was destroyed by shadow-wights and fire dragons in the first battle of the Chaos War. A road from Palanthas past the High Clerist's Tower runs to Vingaard Keep, a heavily fortified citadel guarding the confluence of the Vingaard River and a tributary. This former Ergothian outpost used to defend the Solamnic heartland.

Climate

Early in Skie's dominance over the lands surrounding the Northern Wastes and Vingaard Mountains, the dragon extended the sandy desert of the north throughout much of his realm. Now most of the area experiences long summers and no identifiable winter, with scant rainfall. A narrow strip along the long seaboard of Coastlund west of the mountains still retains its lush climate of ages past. The valley of the Vingaard River, which forms the border between Khellendros's realm and Solamnia, still enjoys advantageous farming weather. In this area, folk celebrate planting and harvest festivals.

Trade

Khellendros takes pains to keep trade flowing smoothly in his realm. Ships, books, beer, ale, and textiles remain the chief exports of Palanthas. The Vingaard horse and cattle business has moved south to the more welcoming terrain of Solamnia's Heartlund, but the Vingaard River valley still produces grains for the realm's trading partners.

Current Happenings

Khellendros does not play a large role in the lives of his subjects; most believe him driven toward a mysterious personal goal. The Blue spends much of his time secreted away in one of several cave residences in the northeastern portion of the realm, these days called the Blue Waste. A particular circle of standing stones there is known to hold a special, secret interest for the Storm Over Krynn. Knights of Takhisis have been sighted in that area, as have Skie's draconian and blue dragon minions.

Meanwhile, the Knights in Palanthas have stepped up law enforcement lately, rounding up criminals and dissenters and removing them to an unknown site outside city walls. Those who are taken never return.

Malystryx the Red

Malystryx rules a vast stretch of eastern Ansalon, the largest of any of the Dragon Realms. In the days of the Fourth Age, this region held rolling woodlands, wild steppes, pleasant forests, and was home to kender, humans, goblins, and ogres. In the wake of the Red Marauder, the area has been transformed to a burned-out stretch of badlands and mountains, with a single jagged promontory and a ring of volcanoes at its heart.

Malystryx began her conquest about a year following the Chaos War. Her attack was swift and devastating. Sweeping in from the east, she landed on Misty Isle, then burned across the Elian Wilds and the Dairly Plains. It wasn't until she had neared Kendermore on the Goodlund Peninsula that the rest of Ansalon learned of her attacks. However, the group of heroes sent to the kender's aid—led by the barbarian ruler Riverwind of the Qué-Shu—proved no match for the vicious giant wyrm. The best they could do was to slow her attack, allowing surviving kender to flee west.

Upon reaching the Bay of Balifor and sweeping its western coast, Malys moved north, leaving wreckage behind. She rampaged as far as the Kern peninsula before turning back, bored. For a while she enjoyed watching molten lava flow from the distant Lords of Doom, as it has continually since the Chaos War. For fun, she raised new volcanoes beneath the Bay of Balifor, which cause portions of that body of water to boil and froth.

After ravaging the land, Malystryx remade it. Exercising her innate abilities she caused mountains to erupt savagely from the ruined peninsula and burned back the vegetation. The highest point in the new Goodlund Range is the Peak of Malys, where the Red Dragon makes her home, south of the city of Flotsam. From the top of this peak, ringed with new volcanoes spouting magma, she may survey all her vast holdings.

The Dragon Overlord

Malystryx *(female red legendary wyrm, megalomaniac demeanor, 10)* was the first of the Great Dragons to come to Ansalon from across the sea at the beginning of the Age of Mortals. In those days thirty years ago, the sight of this red horror swooping low over human and kender villages was all too common. The titanic creature's fierce torrents of flame incinerated everything in sight. Indeed, she liked to pursue the crowds fleeing before her and, with her scorching breath, send them screaming to oblivion. Even when she is not employing her devastating fiery breath, curling wisps of smoke tend to drift from Malystryx's nostrils—it only increases the aura of menace about her.

This true monster stretches more than four hundred feet from snout to tail. The massive, batlike wings that sprout from her back each measure nearly as long as her body, giving her a wingspan of almost five hundred feet. The dragon's reptilian form is covered with deep red scales, each as large as a knight's shield and as hard as steel. A pair of long, straight horns emerges from the ridges above Malystryx's smoldering eyes, jutting back along the side of her skull and extending some twenty-five feet behind her head.

It would be difficult to imagine a creature more cruel than Malystryx. She values nothing save personal power and wealth. She loves destruction and torment, often going out of her way to make her enemies suffer. Self-centered Malys would gladly sacrifice even the most loyal followers to further her own ends. Those who dare oppose her are destroyed on sight, in as painful and terrifying a way as this Queen of Dragons can imagine. Those who have been neither a help nor a hindrance receive about as much consideration as a man might show an ant.

Malys's one weakness is her ego. She loves to wear the bright golden jewelry from her treasure hoard. The vain wyrm looks down upon even her mightiest enemies, considering them, at best, irri-

tations to be rid of as soon as possible. Because she never foresees the possibility that a foe might thwart her schemes, she never plans escapes or fall-back positions. Her raw fury and incredible power always propel her to victory.

Important Holdings

Khur, Balifor, Kendermore, the former Dairly Plains, Elian Wilds, Misty Isle.

Main Populace

Goblins, humans, kender, ogres, draconians, red dragons.

Personalities

Khan Hali-no *(human adult male barbarian, wild demeanor, Adventurer)*; Kronn Thistleknot of Kendermore *(kender adult male, motivated demeanor, Master)*; Crahda *(adult ogress, simple demeanor, Novice)*; Hollintress *(red adult female dragon, murderous demeanor)*.

Description

The Fourth Age names for sites on the barren, craggy Goodlund Peninsula—Somber Coast, Hollow Lands, Restless Waters, and the Maw—in hindsight seem to have foreshadowed Malystryx's onslaught. Today, the dragon has reduced the once green Dairly Plains and lush forest of Kendermore to rocky waste. Littered across the scorched badlands lie the bones of those who fell to the Red in the Dragon Purge. So terrible is this peninsula now, people call it simply "the Desolation."

Farther west on the Goodlund Peninsula lies a land little altered by the Red Marauder. Balifor, the forest ceded to the kender by Silvanos during the Age of Dreams, was devastated hundreds of years ago in the Cataclysm. When the impact of the gods' wrath flooded its central region and rendered its forest into a harsh waste, locals retreated east into the woodland they called Kendermore. By the Fifth Age, the only real targets left here for Malys were the region's two cities of note: Flotsam and Port Balifor, then bawdy dens of carousers and criminals. Survivors of the attacks somehow eke out a living in ruined tenements and storefronts, out of sight of their dragon overlord. Sometimes they even manage to make a few improvements—just in time for Malys to return.

Due north lies the dry and rugged land of Khur. Its southern and eastern edges contain vast sandy wastes, but it was the region's rocky badlands and jagged mountains that enticed Malystryx the most. The few water sources in the area remain under close guard by tribes of rugged desert nomads. These militant folk—remnants of the old barbarian Khanate of Khur—respect the power and beauty of their trackless desert. They love the land, even though they must constantly fight the ravages of Malys. Khan Hali-no still maintains his capital, Khuri-Khan, despite the dragon's periodic sweeps.

All along the extensive coast of the Red Dragon's realm lie eerie reminders of the Chaos War. Before the Maelstrom stilled, it unexpectedly disgorged artifacts from the bottom of the Blood Sea, throwing the remains of doomed Istar high into the air. The expedition of Solamnic Knights that visited the Desolation a dozen years ago was amazed to discover a weird array of ancient relics scattered in a crescent more than a thousand miles long. Today, some sorcerers are tempted to brave the great wyrm's wrath to seek powerful magical items here.

Climate

Malystryx's domain is among the driest places in Ansalon. While enough rain falls along the coast to allow savanna grasses to spring up, the inland areas are not so lucky. In the south, rainfall sinks quickly into the insatiable sand of the desert, leaving the surface dry. In the north, rainwater quickly runs off the blasted rock, though the tenacious mountain plants manage to collect enough moisture to survive.

Most of the year, the days inland are blisteringly hot, while one can see one's breath in the chill nights. Coastal dwellers might at least feel the respite of a slight breeze off the stilled Blood Sea—or hot blasts off the boiling Bay of Balifor.

Trade

Not much trade takes place in a land whose citizens live in fear of their deadly overlord. However, the scattered clans in Khur trade horses, harnesses, diamonds, glass, and exotic spices for weapons and armor. They also deal in items found in ruined cities of old Istar. Folk along the Blood Bay coast trade in coral, fish, and the Istaran antiquities thrown up out of the Maelstrom in the Chaos War.

Current Happenings

After the arrival of Malystryx, the region's kender fled west to seek the distant land of Hylo, but many of Khur's human clans settled in neighboring Neraka. These clans, warlike by nature, seek treaties with the Knights of Takhisis for aid against the dragon. A few renegade kender—under Kronn Thistleknot, son of the heroic leader Kronin—remain in their old homeland to offer what small resistance they can. However, most of those within Malys's realm either serve her—as do local ogres, draconians, and goblins—or just live to escape her one more day. The Red is the most unpredictable and cruel of all the dragon overlords, and one of the most active within her realm. Every day she overflies her lands, causing random destruction.

However, it's interesting to note that she has not attempted to expand farther west into the Khalkist Mountains. The Knights of Takhisis take credit for the containment, pointing to their good relations with the Red Dragon. Many groups posit that other Great Dragons threaten to band together to keep her in her place. More likely, Malys remains contained only because she chooses to devote her time to a pursuit other than expansion. What that scheme might be, no one knows.

Onysablet the Black

When the first Cataclysm washed central Ansalon with water, it created the New Sea. In the wake of the Second Cataclysm, the black dragon *Onysablet*, or Sable, decided to make a transformation of her own.

After years of fierce Dragon Purge battles high above the region from the New Coast nearly to the edge of Silvanesti, Sable won the power to reshape the landscape into her favored terrain—swampland. Today, only a few scattered points of high elevation remain dry land within her realm. The southwestern Khalkists, now steep, rocky fingers jutting into the marshland, mark the northeast edge of her New Swamp.

The Dragon Overlord

Sable *(female black ancient wyrm, treacherous demeanor, 6)* is the largest black dragon left in Ansalon after the Dragon Purge. In fact, the ogres of the mountains of Blöde say that, when she soars over the countryside, it's as though clouds have obscured the sun. Her dusky body measures close to one-hundred-twenty feet, and her tail adds another hundred to her length. The dragon's dull black scales have a flexible quality (not that anyone gets close enough to tell), and her yellow eyes glow in dim light. She can twitch her wicked, downswept ivory horns, much as a cat twitches its ears.

Like all black dragons, Sable is strong-willed and independent. Slightly less impulsive than normal for her kind, she considers herself a "scientist." She frequently wears a contemplative expression—particularly when studying the creatures of her swamp. Sable's favorite experiments involve parasitic life forms; when she deals with them, her face lights up in malicious glee.

Dark as the bog where she dwells, Sable frequently goes unnoticed by those who trespass in her domain—until it is too late. This solitary creature resents intrusions of any kind, especially unwelcome visitors to Shrentak, the rocky island near the center of the realm, where she makes her home.

She grows angry whenever disturbed: Her yellow eyes flash, and acid drips from her mouth. She can also spit a stream of acid, which has been known to dissolve castle walls. Sable, like other black dragons, wields sorcery and mysticism and even breathes underwater.

Important Holdings

Portions of the New Sea, New Coast, old Blöde, and Blödehelm.

Main Populace

Humans, bakali, draconians, black dragons, ogres.

Personalities

Kliment, a hunter *(Baaz draconian, rash demeanor, Novice)*; Flenty, a slave *(young adult male human; lunatic demeanor, Unknown)*; Reek, a trustee *(adult female ogre, somber demeanor, Rabble)*; Ricandroth *(black juvenile male dragon, ruthless demeanor)*.

Description

The New Swamp oozes between the arms of the southern Khalkist Mountains, encompassing the areas formerly known as New Coast, Blödehelm, and the Blöde plains. Most Fourth Age points of interest lie submerged in stagnant water now, but the Thon-Thalas and Blood rivers still wend their way slowly through the eastern marsh.

The ruins of Takar, on Sable's eastern border, remain partially sunken in brackish water, no longer offering even a memory of a bygone age of glory. Instead, the Black keeps her human slaves marooned there until she's ready to either send them to the Trueheart Mines (named for a nearby battle site) or to her citadel in Shrentak for "study." The imposing face of the southeastern Khalkists blocks the only escape path the swamp allows.

In and around her rocky isle of a lair, Sable keeps a most unusual hoard: living beings. The damp remains of the river port of Shrentak house the specimens that so fascinate the dragon: creatures indigenous to swamps, as well as hybrids spawned by her own experiments. Ogres and draconians walk the run-down streets, helping to oversee the menagerie. But these trustees are not free—any attempt to flee reminds them that they, too, form a part of Sable's weird zoo.

Finally, far to the south in the New Swamp, on the border with the realm of Iyesta the Brass, lies the City of Morning Dew, abandoned since Sable's arrival. However, desert barbarians from Iyesta's realm venture across the border now and then to graze their herds near the surrounding wetlands. The Legion of Steel periodically launches secret missions from this city as well.

Climate

Formerly an arid plain, the New Swamp has become the largest marsh known on Krynn. The area enjoys temperate but humid summers and mild winters, thanks to its proximity to the New Sea.

Trade

Onysablet sends her minions out hunting in her swamplands to feed her menagerie and her slaves, so she has little need for trade. Only when one of her agents has a new specimen for her will she part with some of the wealth her slaves mine from lodes in the far eastern portion of her realm. Of course, she would never part with one of her specimens in barter.

Current Happenings

The Black has spent a great deal of time lately in her Shrentak lair observing and experimenting with parasitic beings. Her intense involvement in her work apparently distracts her interest from conquest, but one must wonder why she does not expand her New Swamp north to close the narrow strait leading to the harbors of Haligoth and Sanction.

Minor Dragon Realms

Although the five chromatic dragon overlords control the largest regions of Ansalon, many smaller wyrms survived the Dragon Purge, too. Some of these dragon lords have entrenched themselves in realms of their own.

Brynseldimer, a Sea Dragon

Dragons rule not only the land, but beneath the waves as well. The sea lord best known today is *Brynseldimer*, the enemy of the Dimernesti sea elves.

The Dragon Lord

Brine *(sea dragon male wyrm, tyrannical demeanor)* arrived at the undersea nation five hundred miles southeast of Ansalon less than five years ago and attacked the capital, Dimernost, with steam breath. The super-heated water killed the elves sent to confront him, as well as resident fish and coral. Then he besieged the land; within weeks, the elves had exhausted their food supplies and had to capitulate.

Brynseldimer often swims by the capital, scooping up sea elves and other marine life to feast upon and bashing buildings with his huge tail. He has, at times, conscripted shoal elves to serve as his slaves, forcing them to mine great caches of wealth for his hoard.

Many elves have left for other shallow waters, hoping to start new lives far away. Those who won't leave their home have tried and failed to conquer the monster. Neither can they locate his lair, though they have learned he remains a loner, with no minions. Yet, how can they resist him when his steam breath could boil their nation alive?

Important Holdings

Dimernesti.

Main Populace

Dimernesti elves, dolphins.

Personalities

Speaker of the Sea Nuqala *(Dimernesti adult female, vigilant demeanor, Master)*; Veylona *(half-elf young adult female, inquisitive demeanor, Unknown)*.

Description

The Dimernesti elves settled long ago upon an island that had sunk beneath the surface of the southern Courrain Ocean during the Cataclysm. From tall lookouts near settlements, guards remain on the watch for sharks, dragon turtles, and the greatest danger: Brine.

Dimernost features twining towers of colorful coral and stone, some of which have crumbled in dragon attacks. Coral columns and sculptures decorate the homes of the wealthy. The city is lit by glowing underwater lichen. Sunlight, diffracted through hundreds of feet of waves, angles down to cast flickering shadows upon the city. Its most striking feature is the Tower of the Sea, home to Dimernesti's Speaker as well as the sacred Crown of Tides, an artifact said to date back to the dawn of the Age of Dreams.

Climate

The cold polar current mixes with warm Balifor bay waters to give Dimernesti a moderate temperature year-round.

Trade

Dimernost's immense open-water market features a bewildering array of seafood and marine plants plus rare delicacies: meat and fruit from human merchants. The Dimernesti have found it increasingly difficult to stay in touch with their trade partners, though, as Malys discourages Courrain shipping.

Current Happenings

Recently, the sea elves decided to ask Silvanesti for aid. Signaling to coastal towns has brought no response yet.

Cryonisis and Frisindia, White Dragons

The twin whites *Cryonisis* and *Frisindia* have never been separated since they hatched from the same egg centuries ago. These White Wyrms, known to the folk of Ansalon as Ice and Freeze, managed to seize a sizable polar domain—and hang onto it—because they never hesitated to come to each other's aid in the Dragon Purge.

The Dragon Lords

For years, scattered tribes of ice barbarians scraped out an existence on the Icewall Glacier, craftily evading attacks of the remnants of the White Dragon-army that remained after the War of the Lance. However, these barbarians with harpoons were no match for this draconic pair.

About fourteen years ago, two white dragons native to the area fell upon the entire southern polar region with a vengeance. After teaming up in the Dragon Purge to conquer the reigning white dragon Sleet, Cryonisis *(white female wyrm, brutal demeanor)* coveted the western land, while Frisindia *(white female wyrm, relentless demeanor)* took the eastern half. It was a simple matter for them to subjugate or eliminate other lingering whites.

Important Holdings

Icewall Glacier.

Main Populace

Draconians, humans, thanoi, white dragons.

Personalities

Njord Hakan of the Ice Folk *(ice barbarian adult male, heedless demeanor, Adventurer)*; Kanatygh *(thanoi adult male, aggressive demeanor, Rabble)*; Franatik *(Sivak draconian, unimaginative demeanor, Champion)*; Chyllantra *(white adult female dragon, fair demeanor)*.

Description

Although normally only dragon overlords can alter the terrain of their realms, Cryonisis and Frisindia are learning to achieve the same effect by working together. Today, the White Wyrms have managed to spread their glacial domain north as far as Zeriak.

The ice around the south pole remains as thick as ever, with vast crevasses and caves cutting into its mile-long depth. No one knows for certain whether land lies beneath this monstrous glacier, or whether the polar ice forms a floe upon the sea.

Climate

The dragons Ice and Freeze keep Icewall Glacier blanketed in chill air and fierce blizzards year-round. In the winter, the sun barely emerges.

Trade

Trade with Tarsis provides barbarians with what they can't gain by hunting and ice-fishing: metal implements, including harpoon heads, fish hooks, and sled runners. Thanoi have no interest in trade, and most draconians serve the dragons.

Current Happenings

While the two dragon lords, served by resident draconians and other whites, control most of the realm's meager resources, walrus men vie with humans for whatever remains. The desperate barbarians get no help from dragon-controlled Tarsis, as the wyrms agreed not to interfere with each others' realms.

These polar realms together are even bigger than that of Gellidus—a fact that Frost is just realizing. While the twins hope to inch their domain north bit by bit into the Plains of Dust, Gellidus seeks to contribute to their downfall.

He may not have long to wait: Frost-wights in the central Plains of Dust pose a threat to all who dwell on the Icewall Glacier. To keep them at bay, Cryonisis and Frisindia send their subjects on frequent quests for holy weapons—the only ones that kill the beasts of Chaos.

The Dragon Isles

Most metallic dragons retired to their ancestral refuge in the early years of the Dragon Purge to escape the ferocity of the enormous dragons from the east. This band of Dragon Isles supposedly lies some three hundred miles northwest of the Cape of Nordmaar, beyond the Teeth of Chaos; the wyrms allow no mortal to know its exact location.

Important Holdings

From west to east, the eight islands are: Tayol, Winged Majesty, Berann, Heart, Jaentarth, Misty Isle, Mind, and Alarl.

Main Populace

Metallic dragons and certain of Krynn's lost races, including some huldrefolk, kyrie, and shadowpeople.

Personalities

Regia, the philosopher-queen *(gold female great wyrm, thoughtful demeanor)*, Aurumnus, the dragon-king *(gold male ancient dragon, imperious demeanor)*.

The Dragon Lords

The residents of these isles reportedly follow an oligarchy of five gold dragons, who rule from the capital: the City of Gold, on the Misty Isle.

Description

The makeup of the stony mountains on the Dragon Isles indicates both volcanic and sedimentary origins, as well as subsequent massive upheaval—doubtless, the Cataclysm had a great effect on the current position and shape of these isles.

This chain contains every kind of terrain, from lush plains to high mountains. This wide variety makes each isle a beautiful and idyllic world unto itself. But humans or other nondragons rarely have an opportunity to see this beauty.

The Dragon Isles are magical. Legends say they shift in shape and position when human ships approach. Many a captain has reported pursuing one of the isles out to sea, only to have night close in and obscure his vision. This defensive tactic proves vital in shielding the metallic dragons from invasion by any of the Great Dragons.

Sometimes, bards will speak of the home of the metallics as the "Isle of the Dragons," rather than as a chain of islands. Usually, such a remark refers to the Misty Isle and its City of Gold.

Climate

Their location just north of the equator keeps the Dragon Isles quite warm year-round. Normally, the air feels steamy, the sky looks fiercely blue, and the waves roll calmly onto the white-sand shores. The heat and humidity make these islands dense with plant life. Seasonal storms boil up from time to time, unleashing bouts of rain and furious, crashing waves. Such storms can batter the coastline for days with their fierce winds.

Trade

The Dragon Isles have little need for trade with each other or the outside world; such contact could lead enemies to them. In any case, each isle contains foods and resources for a rich life. Islanders usually obtain finished goods such as metal weaponry or glassware from wrecked or derelict ships in the northern Courrain.

Current Happenings

Although collectively called the Dragon Isles, only a tenuous political affiliation binds these lands. The settlements here all belong to different factions looking out for their own interests. However, these populations do share one common goal—helping mortals survive the onslaught of the dragon overlords.

Though apparently withdrawn from the face of Ansalon as completely as Krynn's pantheon of gods, the metallic dragons have implemented various covert plans to assist humans in this Age of Mortals. Of course, most humans remain unaware of this aid.

Fenalysten, a Red Dragon

The red dragon *Fenalysten* occupies the broad, hilly basin between the Dargaard Mountains and the northwestern Khalkist Mountains. Humans refer to him as Cinder.

The Dragon Lord

This red dragon, at two hundred feet long, offers no competition to Malystryx. Fenalysten *(red male great wyrm, heedless demeanor)* is burly and strong, though, and would pose quite a threat to neighboring Throt, Teyr, and Neraka—except that the Red Marauder has ordered that none shall challenge the established borders of the Dragon Realms following the end of the Dragon Purge.

Nevertheless, Cinder wants nothing more than to acquire some of the tempting mountain lands of Neraka and the Astivar range to the east. In fact, he seems jealous of everything Malys is and everything she has. And one has only to look into his large black eyes to know this dragon has a plan.

Important Holdings

Region of Midlund, including Firstwal.

Main Populace

Centaurs, draconians, goblins, humans, Neidar dwarves.

Personalities

Chieftain Julinot *(centaur adult male, scheming demeanor, Champion)*; Pernika, Firstwal innkeeper *(human adult female, self-centered demeanor, Rabble)*; Raskellion *(Bozak draconian, artistic demeanor, Adventurer)*; Granch *(goblin adult male, conniving demeanor, Adventurer)*.

Description

Unlike the smooth, verdant Solamnic Plains to the west, Fenalysten's realm consists of dry, rugged foothills. In the south, a mountain pass of arid hills abuts the western Khalkists.

Ever since the area's dragon lord arrived fifteen years ago, he has behaved much like the Great Dragon he envies—to the misfortune of the land's inhabitants. Local centaurs, humans, and goblins remain subject to the cruel whims of the red, who frequently overflies his hilly land to scour it of life. He never flames the small city of Firstwal, though, believing it to his advantage to send his draconian minions to loot the settlement periodically for treasures to add to the hoard in his hidden lair.

Fenalysten's realm holds little wildlife. Its sparse grassland, sandwiched between the Dargaard and Khalkist Mountains, can feed only tough grazing animals such as goats.

Climate

The weather in Cinder's territory remains dry and calm all year long.

Trade

Goods trickle into Firstwal from Kalaman to the north and Throtl to the west, but residents here have learned to live on very little. Local goblins do a brisk trade of their own—raiding caravans from the west bound for Neraka.

Current Happenings

Cinder knows the Knights of Takhisis have monitored his activity for some time. However, they recently opened negotiations with him, seeking an overland route for invasion forces to the coastal Estwilde.

Fenalysten is thinking about agreeing to the deal, under the condition that he receive in return the mountainous portion of green Lorrinar's realm, which borders his own. His indignation that he has a realm less mountainous than Ansalon's other two red dragon lords—Pyrothraxus and Malystryx—might make him foolish enough to try seizing land without permission from the Red Marauder.

Iyesta, a Brass Dragon, and Stenndunuus, a Blue Dragon

Shocking as it may seem, one dragon realm is ruled by a metallic dragon lord. During the Dragon Purge, blue *Stenndunuus* fought many competitors for the vast eastern tract of the Plains of Dust. Just as he defeated what he believed was his last foe, brass *Iyesta* descended upon him, claiming the land for herself. After a grueling battle—the subject of many a bardic tale—Stenndunuus retreated to the west bank of the Torath River, and there he stayed.

He launched several attacks upon his rival before Malystryx called an end to the Dragon Purge, but to no avail. He has nursed his hatred for the brass over the years; he constantly watches for a weakness that might allow him to reclaim what he considers his land. Iyesta, however, sees herself as a much more fit lord.

The Dragon Lords

Brass Iyesta *(brass female great wyrm, vain demeanor, 5)* looks like a great metal statue come to life. Also called Splendor, she measures nearly three hundred feet long: a bit larger than Stenndunuus *(blue male wyrm, heedless demeanor)*. Her tail is quite a bit longer than the blue's, accounting for nearly a third of her length, but their great wingspans measure about the same—more than four hundred fifty feet. While Iyesta's scales have the warm, burnished look of brass buttons, the blue's are a glossy, shifting azure hue.

Splendor has a vaguely catlike look: a delicate head with a mouth full of curving teeth, a fairly short neck, and a long, arched back. Stenndunuus, on the other hand, resembles a wild beast. Where the brass moves delicately, the blue pounds the sands—the reason neighboring humans call him Thunder. His horned face is unpleasant to see.

An incorrigible gossip, Iyesta has an opinion about everything. This gregarious, pushy dragon won't hesitate to remove from her sight visitors who insult her or refuse to chat—she'll use lethal attacks if threatened. The tirelessly inquisitive brass simply must know what every important creature in Ansalon is up to. For a price, she will share her considerable knowledge or agree not to divulge what she has discovered.

Stenndunuus, on the other hand, isn't interested in buying or selling—only taking. Unsatisfied with his own domain, he's always certain Iyesta harbors secret designs on what is rightfully his. The powerful blue believes Splendor guilty of helping spies cross the border into Sable's New Swamp and, in his paranoia, believes she sends Legionnaires to infiltrate him as well.

Though the dragons seem to live currently in a state of détente, most observers believe the eastern branch of the Torath River won't be enough to separate the two dragon realms for long.

Important Holdings

The Missing City and the ruins of Elial and Purstal.

Main Populace

Centaurs, half-elves, humans, thanoi.

Personalities

Falaius Taneek of the Legion of Steel *(desert barbarian middle-aged male, tough demeanor, Adventurer)*; Warshkt, Guardian of the Ruins *(thanoi adult female, dishonest demeanor, Rabble)*.

Description

In the Fifth Age, the entire Plains of Dust has begun to revert to its pre-Cataclysm state: grassy tundra terrain. The harsh, near-arctic conditions inhabitants endured in recent centuries are tempered by warmer winds off the hot Bay of Balifor, the cessation of the Maelstrom (no longer are all warm currents directed eastward), and the forestation efforts of Beryllinthranox.

Despite these transformations, walrus men and ice bears still outnumber humans here. In fact, Thunder's realm is perhaps the most depopulated land in the entire continent—a fact the blue dragon resents terribly. His southern lands resemble the frigid Icewall Glacier, while Iyesta's southeastern coast has improved so much that humans and half-elves have come to build new homes in the Missing City vicinity.

Climate

Thanks to recent climactic changes, residents of these dragon realms enjoy the comfortable temperatures of summer four months of the year, before the region plunges into its chill winter. Most precipitation comes in the form of snow, but the Torath River runs strong and clear into the New Swamp.

Trade

Little trade takes place in Thunder's realm, considering the blue's jealous vigil over his land. The few daring merchants who manage to traffic their exotic pelts and cold-water fish across the blue's domain to the Missing City usually find great rewards. But the route east is longer than it used to be; the southern Torath no longer stays frozen long enough in winter to serve as a reliable roadway for caravans.

Current Happenings

Thunder's suspicions about his brass neighbor are correct: Iyesta does help Legionnaires travel into Sable's realm to rescue the slaves of Takar. She also provides haven to Legionnaires and Knights attempting to break through Silvanesti's magical barrier, asking for treasure or news in return. Knights must take care what they tell her, though—Splendor is not known for keeping secrets. Some Legionnaires purposely tell her false rumors, knowing she'll spread them to Stenndunuus. The blue has other things to worry about, though, such as killing the frost-wights on his western border.

Lorrinar, a Green Dragon

Some dragons weren't excited at the prospect of seizing expansive domains in the Dragon Purge. When *Lorrinar* arrived in Ansalon, he wanted only to find a secluded wood to escape from the world. After searching the land over, he thought he'd found it in the eastern Estwilde: a small forest backed against a far northern spike of the Khalkist Mountains.

He thought wrong.

The Dragon Lord

The reclusive dragon men call Fume *(green male great wyrm, introspective demeanor)* is possibly the easiest dragon lord in the entire continent to serve. He has been spotted very seldom since the Dragon Purge ended; reports from fifteen years ago indicate that he measures about a hundred feet long, with a tail of similar length. Local gossips speak of his speed and agility with a certain amount of awe, and they wonder why he never sought a bigger realm during the Dragon Purge.

However, Lorrinar's subjects rarely see him on forays outside his woods. Every now and then, someone gets the idea of searching for his lair. Those who try it never return.

Important Holdings

Woods of Lahue, Astivar Mountains.

Main Populace

Humans, draconians, mountain dwarves, ogres.

Personalities

Krun Silverchisel, a thane *(mountain dwarf elder male, eccentric demeanor, Hero)*; Hrench, a chieftain *(ogre adult male, tight-lipped demeanor, Adventurer)*; Gibrana Rentir of the Legion of Steel *(human adult female, charismatic demeanor, Adventurer)*; Brodarn *(Kapak draconian, inventive demeanor, Adventurer)*.

Description

The wiry trees of the Woods of Lahue form a dense forest against the Astivar Mountains. Lorrinar reportedly has no servants and makes no demands of his subjects—except that he be left alone.

And most people are happy to do so. The little realm's dwarf population resides within the Peak of Clouds, while ogres have claimed the area surrounding Mount Brego. Humans make their homes in scattered woodland villages.

Climate

The elevation of Lorrinar's realm makes summers temperate but brings fairly little rain, so the stony mountains stay fairly barren. In winter, snows can pile higher than a man's head.

Trade

Most trade passes to the north of Lorrinar's domain. However, caravans from Kalaman bound for points east still use the high road called Haekel's Causeway along the green's southern border. Paying a small toll to Lorrinar seems preferable to the risk of venturing into Fenalysten's realm or Neraka.

Current Happenings

Lorrinar may be reclusive, but he values his continued survival, so he keeps an eye on his neighbors. He actually stays remarkably well-informed about the state of the world through his human spy, Gibrana Rentir.

Sizing up Fenalysten to the west, Lorrinar decided it would be only a matter of time before the red sought to wrest the Astivar Mountains away from him. Of late, he's been seeking magical items throughout his realm to offer to Beryllinthranox the Green in exchange for her aid in defending his realm. He knows that such tribute, along with plenty of flattery, should convince Beryl of the value in acknowledging him as a vassal—one whose realm lies in easy spying distance of Malys.

Mohrlex, a Black Dragon

The land along the northwestern shores of the Miremier belongs to a black dragon named *Mohrlex*—a very different dragon from the great Black Onysablet, ruler of the New Swamp.

The Dragon Lord

Mohrlex *(black male wyrm, hedonistic demeanor)*, also known as Pitch, resembles Sable in appearance, at least. His charcoal-colored body spans almost one hundred fifty feet, including the tail. His yellow eyes are not as piercing as Sable's, though, and his ivory horns are much thicker.

However, Mohrlex's personality diametrically opposes that of his marsh-dwelling fellow. Where Sable is studious, Mohrlex is laid back. While Onysablet wants only her work around her, the smaller dragon is quite a hedonist. He enjoys wallowing in the steamy warmth of his realm, dining on the exotic fruits the area is known for (especially the fermented ones). He loves to be entertained by his minions, who fail to understand a dragon with a sense of humor.

Important Holdings

The Great Moors of Nordmaar.

Main Populace

Bakali, draconians.

Personalities

Kaneel *(Sivak draconian, pessimistic demeanor, Novice)*; Voram Cidroveh *(Human barbarian adult male, purposeful demeanor, Champion)*.

Description

Nordmaar's lush equatorial plain drops gently away toward the south into a broad and dangerous moor. Here, the realm's jungle undergrowth becomes steeped in water up to twenty-five feet deep, and sinkholes can catch travelers unawares. Those who venture into the Great Moors must beware of alligators, carnivorous plants, quicksand, and disease carried by the swarms of indigenous insects. In this immense marsh grow many exotic fruits found nowhere else on Krynn.

Climate

Not many creatures enjoy the climate of Mohrlex's Great Moors. The equatorial heat becomes almost insufferable in the drippingly humid air. Humans avoided the place even before the dragon made his home there, but the black revels in the swamp's tropical stickiness.

Trade

Some Nordmaar natives venture into Mohrlex's realm to gather the peculiar local fruit, from which they make liqueurs. They usually bring along several bottles from their last batch as an offering to the dragon, should they get caught trespassing.

Current Happenings

More than any other dragon lord, Mohrlex keeps out of the affairs of the world. He doesn't have many plans for the future beyond taking a swim and doing a little hunting. As none of his neighbors care to fight him for his swampy domain, everyone's happy—except merchant sailors bound for Kern or Neraka who get blown onto his shores.

This black dragon can find company *very* entertaining.

Pyrothraxus, a Red Dragon

The island of Sancrist off the western coast of Ergoth became home to gnomes in 3050PC, when a group of them decided to quit chasing the Graystone and settle down within a dormant volcano. The fact that the red dragon *Pyrothraxus* now rules their land doesn't bother them too much. After all, they hardly noticed back in 2500PC when Mount Nevermind fell to the Ergothian Empire, so intent were they upon their incessant tinkering.

The Dragon Lord

Pyrothraxus *(red male wyrm, egomaniacal demeanor)* couldn't believe his good fortune when he arrived in Ansalon in the middle of the Dragon Purge and found a tantalizing, unclaimed mountain range on the isle of Sancrist. He soon saw all too well why no red had seized it.

Pyro wasn't used to gnomes. When he claimed their city, his new subjects didn't quake in fear. They didn't grovel, begging for their pitiful lives. No, either they ignored their new lord, intent upon their inventions, or they quizzed him incessantly about his natural internal combustion system. Finally, he decided to give them a demonstration. But the gnomes somehow managed to avoid his fiery breath with their flame-and-heat-retardant clothing! (They were supposed to be flying suits.)

The gnomish penchant for nonstop talking and tinkering made Pyrothraxus retreat to the surface to forget about his small subjects. But they did not forget about him. Almost immediately, they began visiting his lair, testing their latest weapons on him, pelting him with questions, and recording his furious responses. Not a day goes by without the gnomes finding a new way to aggravate Pyro. Any losses he inflicts they suffer valiantly, chalking them up to the price of progress.

If Pyrothraxus were less stubborn, he would abandon this holding for one more suitable. But he refuses to let anyone think the gnomes have gotten the better of him, so he continues to live in the smoking remains of Mount Nevermind, a unique figure in all of Krynn—

A dragon gone mad.

Important Holdings

Mount Nevermind.

Main Populace

Tinker gnomes.

Personalities

Clanmaster Jarrig Thingmach, head of the Grand Council *(tinker gnome elder male, thoughtful demeanor, Champion)*; Guildmaster Socket Greezmoor, council member *(tinker gnome adult female, impulsive demeanor, Novice)*.

Description

During the Summer of Chaos, a titanic explosion blew off the top half of Mount Nevermind and wrecked the gnomes' underground city. (Its well-meaning residents caused the blast themselves when they tried launching their war machines against the Knights of Takhisis.) The few left here continue to putter contentedly within their rebuilt home.

Climate

Winters on Sancrist tend to be mild, and the geothermal activity melts snow quickly. Summers are pleasant, cooled by sea breezes.

Trade

The gnomes mine Mount Nevermind for gold, silver, platinum, jewels, and granite, which they offer Pyrothraxus as gifts and export in return for food.

Current Happenings

The gnomes spend all their time inventing gadgets for mining ore and gems and fighting dragons. Rumors have begun to circulate that some of these inventions actually . . . work!

The Free Realms

Not all lands fell under the sway of dragon overlords. From free realms like Abanasinia, Schallsea, and Ergoth comes the hope for the future that fires mortals to continue their struggle against the Great Dragons.

Abanasinia

The forbidding mountains, swamps, forests, and seas that ring Abanasinia used to insulate this region from the spread of civilization. In the Fifth Age, these features protect it from the spread of the Great Dragons' influence. Thanks to the influx of refugees from the Dragon Realms, this region's population has soared in recent decades.

Important Holdings

Crossing, Darken Wood, Haven, Long Ridge, New Ports, Qué-Shu, Sentinel Peaks, Solace, Xak Tsaroth, Zaradene.

Main Populace

Centaurs, goblins, humans, Neidar dwarves.

Personalities

Lady Bin Curston of Tantallon *(human young adult female, plotting demeanor, Rabble)*; Lord Santo Hristol of Zaradene *(human elder male, shrewd demeanor, Master)*; Lord Owen Mantilla of North Keep *(human middle-aged male, gregarious demeanor, Adventurer)*.

Caramon Majere *(human elder male, thorough demeanor, Legend, 1)*; Tika Waylan Majere *(human elder female, opinionated demeanor, Legend, 1)*; Palin Majere *(human adult male, impulsive demeanor, Legend, 1)*; Usha Majere *(human adult female, optimistic demeanor, Hero, 2)*; Ulin Majere *(human young adult male, inventive demeanor, Adventurer)*.

Moonsong of the Qué-Shu *(human adult female, resolute demeanor, Master, 3)*; Alhana Starbreeze *(Silvanesti adult female, reserved demeanor, Hero, 1)*.

Description

Abanasinia lies south of the Straits of Schallsea and north of Qualinesti. Despite the Sentinel Peaks here, people think of this area as plains.

In the extreme east stands a fetid swamp, which hides the ruins of Xak Tsaroth, lair of the dragon Khisanth during the War of the Lance. To the southwest lie Plainsfolk villages such as Qué-Shu, Qué-Teh, and Qué-Kiri. Moonsong, the daughter of Riverwind and Goldmoon, leads this tribal confederation, as her parents once did.

Farther west, sitting high in the vallenwood trees, rests the city of Solace, site of the legendary Inn of the Last Home. This growing settlement also contains the Academy of Sorcery, run by Palin Majere; the headquarters of the Legion of Steel; and the Tomb of the Last Heroes: a memorial to those who died in the Chaos War. The western road from Solace leads around the wild, haunted Darken Wood to the even larger city of Haven.

Climate

Despite its growing population, this area remains highly agrarian. Its hot summers with sporadic downpours provide near-perfect grain conditions. In winter, moist air from the Straits of Schallsea clashes with cold mountain air, producing heavy snowfalls. The Sentinel Gap often snows closed, cutting Solace off from Haven.

Trade

Plainsfolk trade in grain, furs, horses, feathers, woven blankets, pottery, and hides, while towns specialize in armor, ale, smithing, weapons, and hospitality.

Current Happenings

Abanasinians feel for beleaguered Qualinesti to the south, and most folks will do what they can to aid the escape of refugees and spies. In addition to the Legion of Steel, the Knights of Solamnia maintain a strong presence here, guarding the Tomb of the Last Heroes and preventing encroachment by the powerful surrounding dragons.

Blöde

The ogres of Blöde were driven from a sizable portion of their holdings when Sable the Black arrived and transformed their verdant grasslands to swamp. Now these ogres have returned to their longtime mountain strongholds in the southern Khalkist Mountains.

Important Holdings

Blöten, portions of the Khalkist Mountain range.

Main Populace

Draconians, giants, humans, mountain dwarves, ogres.

Personalities

Chieftain Donnag *(ogre adult male, fierce demeanor, Champion).*

Description

The nation of Blöde sprawls across the southern arms of the Khalkist mountain range. Its ancient capital, Blöten, still stands, its crumbling walls nonetheless attesting to a lost greatness among the ogre folk. The hunched, wart-riddled ogres who now shamble through the mighty stonework structures seem but twisted shadows of the high ogres who founded the city in the Age of Dreams. Local flora and fauna tends to be scrubby, scabrous, and stunted—much like the ogre folk themselves.

Climate

The weather of Blöde resembles that of Neraka in the northern Khalkists. Summers remain temperate, due to the elevation, but the land receives little rain, leaving the stony mountains fairly barren. Winters bring chilling winds and deep snows.

Trade

The ogres of Blöde conduct trade only with those they cannot pummel into submission, such as the fierce nomads of Khur. Typically, ogres barter pork, shale, clay, coal, and lizards to the nomads in exchange for exotic trade goods and second-hand equipment the ogres have neither the resources nor the skill to produce. The ogres and their trading partners conduct most such deals at bargaining tables, with the coins and items for sale placed on the table—and deadly knives within easy reach, in case of a double-cross.

The ogres of Blöde routinely raid caravans venturing north, so merchants constantly seek brave escorts, and some even pay bounties for each ogre head collected.

Current Happenings

Blöde's chieftain still maintains an alliance with the ogre nation of Kern to the northeast. Any antipathy these nations shared during the occupation of competing dragonarmies after the War of the Lance has vanished in the light of the shared threats presented by Malystryx and Neraka. Chieftain Donnag also benefits from his predecessor's diplomacy: Blöde's existing ties to the nomads of Khur provide the ogres with a valuable ally today.

Blood Sea Isles

When Chaos quieted the Maelstrom thirty years ago, he changed the fortunes of most in the Blood Sea Isles. No longer must human and minotaur mariners fear this stretch of water above drowned Istar. Now captains sail freely across it to points north—but they always beware navigating too close to the realm of Red Malystryx.

Important Holdings

Karthay, Mithas, Kothas, Saifhum.

Main Populace

Kyrie, minotaurs, and humans.

Personalities

Grand Mariner Trelleau Hankel of Saifhum *(sea barbarian adult male, roguish demeanor, Adventurer)*; Emperor Chot Es-Kalin of Mithas *(elder male minotaur, cruel demeanor, Champion, 7 |).*

Description

When a fiery mountain struck the land of Istar four hundred years ago during the Cataclysm, it dragged the nation to the sea floor. Only the coastal mountains along the northern Courrain Ocean remained as islands above the surface.

The harsh, rocky hills of Saifhum hide only stunted vegetation and a few native creatures. The island boasts the mariner's settlement of Sea Reach and a quite extensive road system. Wind-powered wagons rumble along these roads, carrying goods from Sea Reach to points inland.

Karthay, the largest and northernmost isle, contains hot plains and the high, rain-forested Worldscap Mountains. No known adventurer has explored this range, whose exotic forests are called impenetrable. Ruins of Istar lie all along the coast; some say that magical artifacts lie hidden among these ruins, disgorged from the bottom of the Nightmare Sea before the stilling of the Maelstrom.

Just south of Karthay lies Mithas, a fiery island whose scrub plains lie in the shadow of four great volcanoes. Minotaurs rule this isle from the port capital of Lacynos.

Kothas, also, is home to minotaurs, who govern the isle alongside human pirates. Although Kothas is not plagued by volcanoes as is its northern neighbor, neither is it blessed with Mithas's vegetation. Most of this island's scant population dwells in the capital city of Kalpethis and along the coast.

Climate

None of the isles in this equatorial band ever experience winter. Summer brings broiling temperatures, oppressive humidity, and frequent rain—conditions that encourage plant life to thrive.

Trade

The mariners of Sea Reach sell their exotic tropical fish, kelp, and salt as far away as Palanthas and even beleaguered Port Balifor. Mithas and Kothas specialize in bronze tools and weapons, salvage operations, and mercenary sailors. With the arrival of Malys, they've curtailed shipbuilding, though, as they can no longer safely log the Elian Wilds.

Current Happenings

The minotaurs' aggressive privateering in the Fourth Age made them a nuisance from Nordmaar to Balifor. Things have only gotten worse in recent years, now that the Maelstrom no longer makes sailing the Blood Sea a hazard.

The sea barbarians of Saifhum still battle the minotaurs for control of their portion of the Blood Sea. They fish the waters north and east of Saifhum, run trade routes to Kern and Nordmaar, and continue to sabotage the minotaur fleet. Currently they fear the minotaurs will make a trade pact with Malystryx herself.

Duntollik

The threat posed by the Great Dragons has made for some strange allies. The human-centaur realm of Duntollik, for instance, was formed in 25sc, when Beryl seized the land surrounding Qualinesti. Many human tribes from the eastern Plains of Dust had fled west years earlier to escape the rule of the blue dragon Thunder. However, the presence of the Green on the western border proved enough to convince the human tribes of greater Duntol—now completely cut off from the Plainsfolk of eastern Abanasinia—to form a mutual protection pact with the centaurs of Willik.

Important Holdings

Northern Plains of Dust surrounding Duntol, Willik, and Stone Rose.

Main Populace

Centaurs, humans.

Personalities

Medeus, centaur chieftain *(centaur adult male, observant demeanor, Adventurer)*; Heavy Heart, plains barbarian chieftain *(human elder male, sensible demeanor, Champion)*; Wanderer, originally of the Qué-Shu *(human adult male, enigmatic demeanor, Master)*.

Description

Like Abanasinia, the northern Plains of Dust has grown in population of late, thanks to thousands of refugees from New Coast, fleeing Onysablet's rule.

Its location east of stubborn Thorbardin has prevented Beryl from transforming most of Duntollik's barren landscape. However, the area around the southwestern settlement of Willik has greened naturally in recent years, as it lies near the edge of the dragon's magically expanded forest. Elsewhere, Duntollik consists of grassy tundra and dusty plain. Though growing, this realm remains a land of isolated settlements and outposts, not cities.

Climate

Duntollik enjoys a climate more pleasant than the chill weather the rest of the Plains endures year-round. Increased precipitation would make this arid land hospitable.

Trade

The dual threats of Beryllinthranox to the southwest and the frost-wight cloud to the south encourage merchants in the Fifth Age to travel the northern roadways when they traverse the Plains of Dust. Barbarian villages have popped up along Beryl's border, where the Plainsfolk can barter for a wealth of goods coming from Qualinesti and sell them in turn to merchants who carry them farther afield.

The Plains themselves produce leather goods and pelts. The residents also deal in fish from the New Sea, and centaur-made weapons.

Only foreign merchants may cross from Beryl's domain into Duntollik; the Green Dragon's agents turn back all citizens of her realm at the border.

Current Happenings

Strangely, the human and centaur chieftains have seen no sign that Beryl seeks to extend her territory. Spies and scouts returned from Tarsis never bear news to cause their people concern. Still, the centaurs of Willik maintain a vigilant watch on their neighbor.

The tough centaurs of the southeast patrol their land for sign of frost-wight activity, declaring it too risky to venture south of the road known as the Run. Many of these centaurs are refugees from Khel, driven north after the Chaos War by the sudden appearance of the frost-wights in their homeland.

Meanwhile, Wanderer—brother to Moonsong of Abanasinia, named for his great-grandfather—travels the Plains seeking news from Thorbardin and exchanging information when he can with the tribes of Abanasinia.

Ergoth

One of the few lands that did not fall to the Knights of Takhisis during the devastating Summer of Chaos, Ergoth was founded circa 2600PC, when Ackal Ergot's campaign of war and extortion united the barbarian tribes of western Ansalon. The civilization that bore his name exhibited his talent for war and obsession with law. By 2200PC, the Ergothian empire sprawled from the Turbidus Ocean in the west to Silvanesti in the east.

But the heart of Ergoth was still barbaric, which translated into tyranny for the empire's many subjugated realms. In 1801PC, Vinas Solamnus led the oppressed provincials to attack the empire's capital, Daltigoth. In time, the emperor sued for peace; the new nation of Solamnia took all of Ergoth's lands east of Palanthas and Xak Tsaroth. Today, the once mighty empire shares the island of Northern Ergoth with kender and goblins.

Important Holdings

Gulfport, Gwynned, Hillfal, Hillfort, Lancton, Lusid, Manic.

Main Populace

Dwarves, goblins, humans, ogres.

Personalities

Emperor Mercadior Redic VI of Gwynned *(human adult male, kind demeanor, Champion)*.

Description

West of mainland Ansalon lies the island of Northern Ergoth. The western section of this isle contains Ergoth proper: a lush, grassy plain backed up against the Sentinel Mountains. Ironically, the Solamnic Knights' fort in the Ergothian capital, Gwynned, allows the populace to breathe a bit easier in these uncertain times.

The southern end of Northern Ergoth contains a hilly desert of scrub and sage, populated by goblins fleeing the frozen island of Southern Ergoth.

Climate

Northern Ergoth enjoys a mild climate, though its southern coast gets buffeted constantly by the fierce Gale winds from Southern Ergoth. The humid sea air brings heavy thunderstorms in summer and thick snows in winter.

Trade

Ergoth produces copper, brass, steel tools, and cut stone to trade with Solamnia, Sancrist, and Hylo. In return, the empire imports precious metals from Sancrist, wood carvings from Hylo, and fruits and leather from Qualinesti.

Current Happenings

Since the aftermath of the War of the Lance, the emperor of Ergoth has sought to rebuild his realm, whether by trade or by war. The Fifth Age has brought him closer to the glory days of empire than any ruler has been since the victory of Solamnus. Of course, today the Solamnics have become important allies rather than foes.

The stability of Ergoth in the wake of the Summer of Chaos gave the land an excellent position relative to other realms. With the fall of Palanthas—first to the Dark Knights, then to Khellendros the Blue—Ergoth has become once again the hub of human civilization.

While its old capital, Daltigoth, remains under the influence of Gellidus, the new capital of Gwynned has grown dramatically in recent years. In fact, the influx of refugees from the Blue's domain has swelled the populations of Ergoth's cities and has brought increased trade and political power. The Knights of Solamnia maintain a strong presence here to stave off any threat from the Dark Knights.

Currently, the emperor sponsors missions to explore the ruins of the old Ergothian Empire on the island. The throne seems quite interested in locating ancient magical items, so valuable to sorcerers—and dragons.

Estwilde

The Estwilde has always been home to an unsavory populace. The mountain barbarians, centaurs, and hill dwarves here are selfish types that rarely hesitate to do business with local goblins and giants—then stab them in the back when the deal is done. The peoples of the Estwilde unite only to defend themselves against common enemies.

Important Holdings

North Shore region, including Ohme.

Main Populace

Centaurs, giants, goblins, humans, Neidar dwarves.

Personalities

Thane Qarant *(mountain dwarf adult male, prying demeanor, Adventurer)*; Khan Karriga *(mountain barbarian elder male, wrathful demeanor, Champion)*; Chieftain Htulok Kak *(mountain barbarian elder male, brutal demeanor, Champion)*.

Description

The only folks more unsavory than the residents of the Estwilde are their neighbors. Some might be moved to pity the locals, surrounded as they are by dragons on three sides, in addition to the dark creatures of Nightlund. To their credit, most residents these days just try to tend their goats and keep to themselves.

The sovereign khanates, tribes, and clans of the Estwilde occupy a much smaller territory than they enjoyed prior to the Dragon Purge. Fenalysten grabbed the Estwilde's southern hills, while Lorrinar seized the Woods of Lahue and the Astivar Mountains to the east. What's left of this realm consists of rolling plains, high steppes, and pampas. Some of the northern coastland was ruined immediately following the Chaos War's Battle of the Rift, when the marine life killed by the boiling Turbidus Ocean began washing up on shore. However, the years have healed all that damage.

Climate

During the long summer months, hot equatorial winds blow across the Estwilde from the west. As clouds tend to drop their rain onto the Woods of Lahue when they hit the Astivar Mountains, this broad plain enjoys precipitation only when the ocean blasts it with hot, steamy air. After the occasional summer downpour, the dead, rugged countryside becomes green for a fortnight. Then it dries out again.

Trade

Distrustful of outsiders, the folk of the Estwilde subsist on local cheese, beef, goat meat, grain, and spices rather than engaging in trade. What they must import from Nordmaar or elsewhere they usually obtain in exchange for quantities of koko, a bitter powder used in beverages and a variety of folk remedies.

Current Happenings

Residents of the Estwilde may not like outsiders, but they have survival instincts enough to keep tabs on their neighbors. Surveying Neraka's current situation, local clanlords, khans, chieftains, and thanes have surmised that the Knights of Takhisis eventually will seek access to ports on the Turbidus Ocean. It is only a matter of time before the Estwilde falls under attack.

All of the Estwilde's possible allies back in the Fourth Age—Sanction, Neraka, and Khur—remain options no longer, for one reason or another. Though locals have always despised the Solamnics, they envy the protection Nordmaar to the east receives from the Knights. At the first hint of trouble, the Estwilde's leaders will seek an alliance with this neighbor, pointing out that their realm is all that stands between Nordmaar and a nation of Dark Knights.

Gunthar

The southwestern half of the isle of Sancrist has been noteworthy since the time of Vinas Solamnus. The Whitestone Glade is where the famed general experienced a vision that led him to found the Knights of Solamnia. In that same glade, the Knights of Solamnia regrouped after the Cataclysm and the forces of Good held a historic meeting during the dark days of the War of the Lance. Now this land, named for the famed Fourth Age Grand Master of the Knights, serves as the command center of the Knights of Solamnia.

Just southeast lies the isle of Cristyne, where Kagonesti elves fled the ravages of Gellidus the White.

Important Holdings

Castle Uth Wistan, Forest of Gunthar, cities of Garret, Gavin, Markennan, Pax, Whitestone Glade, isle of Cristyne.

Main Populace

Humans, Kagonesti elves, silver dragons.

Personalities

Sir Liam Ehrling, Grand Master of the Solamnic Knights *(human elder male, commanding demeanor, Hero, 2 ❙)*; Chief Cher-Ka *(Kagonesti adult male, curious demeanor, Adventurer)*; Lady Crysania of the Citadel of Light *(female elder human, calm demeanor, Hero, 1 ♥)*.

Description

The thick and temperate Gunthar Forest contains hearty broad-leaf trees as well as some apple and cherry trees. Silver dragons, the ancestral allies of the Knights, are visible flying over land from time to time (normally they disguise themselves as Knights). The wooded city of Gavin in the east is Gunthar's only settlement of note, while the realm's one substantial clear area, Whitestone Glade, lies in the very center of the forest.

Just west of the glade stands Castle Uth Wistan, the home of the Knighthood's previous Grand Master and a center for the Solamnic Knights for almost two centuries. The Knights' military High Command has operated out of Castle Uth Wistan since before the death of Lord Gunthar, and the High Council gathers here for each meeting.

The nearby isle of Cristyne has become home to the Kagonesti elves who fled the ice that seized their native land of Southern Ergoth. They live in tribes in the island's western forest and eastern grasslands. The port city of Merwick contains a small castle manned by Solamnic Knights who serve as liaisons to the Kagonesti.

Climate

Just like the realm of Pyrothraxus to the northeast, Gunthar enjoys mild winters and pleasant summers.

Trade

From its two ports, Garret and Pax, Gunthar's merchants set sail to such harbors as Mount Nevermind, Ergoth, Qualimori, Silvamori, Qualinesti, and the Blue's coastline.

Current Happenings

As the folk of Gunthar are almost entirely Solamnic Knights and their families, the concerns of the Knighthood are the concerns of the populace as well. In their current defensive posture, the Knights keep an eye on their enemies—dragon overlords and the Knights of Takhisis—as well as some of their "friends," like the Legion of Steel.

The dragon of most concern to the folk of Gunthar is Pyrothraxus. So far, his ravings have not taken him into Gunthar Forest—perhaps he realizes that the local silvers might destroy him if he made such a move.

Finally, local communities maintain a constant search for magical items to aid modern sorcerers and holy weapons to battle the shadow-wights of the south Sirrion Sea.

Hylo

The kender nation of Hylo was born quite accidentally in 2600PC when a kender clan, marooned upon a floating citadel, coaxed the city to crash-land in the Sentinel Mountains. The beached citadel proved enough of a fascination to the kender that most of the clan remained close at hand.

By 2500PC, new forest had engulfed the citadel, and the kender had spread to the wooded land east of the mountains. They called their new country Hylo because the western mountains were high, while the eastern seaboard was low.

In the Fifth Age, Hylo has become Kenderhome to the entire race. The exiles from ravaged Kendermore far to the east have begun building new lives here. These skittish afflicted kender often display a deep sorrow their cheery cousins will never understand. But then, the kender of Hylo have never known fear inspired by the wrath of Krynn's largest dragon.

Important Holdings

Hidal, Hylo, Lemon, Lookit, Ocean Town.

Main Populace

Humans, kender.

Personalities

Belladonna of Kendermore, Hylo leader *(afflicted kender adult female, lawless demeanor, Master, 5 ♛)*; Fallana Windseed of Hylo *(true kender elder female, distracted demeanor, Adventurer)*.

Description

A forest blankets the northeastern edge of the island of Northern Ergoth. The port town of Hylo remains the only kender city to survive the Cataclysm four hundred years ago. Though many escapees from Kendermore have settled here, they prefer small inland villages. A few settlements of human refugees from Palanthas have popped up to the north, but none of these new communities qualifies as a city.

People tend to feel safe here, as the Straits of Algoni, the vast Sentinel Mountains, and Northern Ergoth's inhospitable southern desert all help keep the Kenderhome fairly isolated.

Most of the resident native kender travel during their early adult years, leaving Hylo a land of primarily children and elders. When this wanderlust abates, the travelers return home to regale their loved ones with stories of their journeys.

Climate

Hylo enjoys a far cooler climate than one might suppose, based on its proximity to the equator. In the summer months, the heat rarely reaches the sweltering point beneath the swaying trees of the forest. Cool breezes roll down from mountains, further moderating temperatures. When winter sets in, it brings frequent snows. The mild weather tends to make the snow slightly wet—and good for packing.

Trade

The kender of Hylo produce exquisitely carved wooden objects that, together with flint, ebony, and medicinal plants from the forest, provide the Kenderhome with a thriving trade.

Current Happenings

No one expected Hylo would ever face such expansion. About the fourth year after the Chaos War, refugees began pouring in: kender from faraway Kendermore, and humans fleeing Skie's Palanthas.

The Hylo folk welcomed the newcomers with open arms. They were a bit put off, though, to see how fast most human refugees passed through kender territory on their way to Ergoth. They also considered it quite rude of the kender immigrants to seize power from the ruling Windseed family some seventeen years ago—and not give it back!

Kern

The ogre nation of Kern has fallen remarkably in the years since the Fourth Age. This realm is now less than half the size it used to be, thanks to seizures of territory by Malystryx and the Knights of Takhisis. The deaths of hundreds of ogres fighting for their land is a debt their countrymen will not soon forgive.

Important Holdings

Dragon's Point, Endscape woods, Hag's Dirk, Kernen, Styx.

Main Populace

Goblins, ogres.

Personalities

Grand Khan Kern *(ogre male adult, aggressive demeanor, Master)*; Krant Tal *(minotaur male adult, stouthearted demeanor, Champion)*.

Description

Jutting into the Blood Sea southeast of the realms of Nordmaar and Mohrlex lies the peninsula of Kern. Its dying capital, Kernen, rests along the land's forested southern border, within the fork of the northeastern Khalkist Mountains.

On Kern's eastern shore, the grasses grow green and dense, harboring treacherous sloughs and hidden bogs. This grassland stretches northeast across the peninsula to the Endscape woods, where hardy pines thrive among vast and exotic ferns. Along the Miremier, on the western shore of Kern, a dry, arid waste inches its way southward.

Since the calming of the Maelstrom that used to rage in the Blood Sea, some residents of the Blood Sea Isles have been making advances into Kern. Today, the minotaurs of Mithas have established a thriving logging colony on the southern border of the Endscape woods.

Climate

Rainfall comes frequently and unpredictably on the peninsula. Unfortunately, the rain clouds that funnel south from the northern Courrain Ocean provide little relief from the heat. In fact, the humidity intensifies the temperature, creating a verdant land filled with many species ofannoying, biting bugs.

The tip of the peninsula experiences the most constant heat and the fiercest downpours.

Trade

Kern trades mainly with Blöde, an ogre nation to the southwest, and the Blood Sea Isles. The ogres have little to offer, however, except merchandise stolen from caravans or nearby villages. Legitimate items of exchange include talismans, rope, netting, dogs, and flax.

The minotaurs send their lumber back to Mithas to augment their flagging shipwright industry.

Current Happenings

This nation of ogres has always supported the will of the Dark Queen, even during the Fourth Age days when the realm fell under occupation by the Red Dragonarmy. Legends say that avatars of Takhisis have even visited the ogre capital, Kernen.

This doesn't make Kern a natural ally of the Knights of Takhisis, though. Brooding over the loss of land to Neraka, the ogres stand ready to serve their Queen in their own way. Should the Dark Knights have plans to expand farther east, they may find more opposition than they expected.

Neither are the ogres enthralled to have lost territory to the Red Marauder. Despite their admiration of the fierce red dragons in the wake of the War of the Lance, they fear and resent their great neighbor to the south. Other peoples looking to work against Malystryx—such as the desert barbarians of Khur—may find a ready ally in uneasy Kern.

Neraka

It seems fitting that after the Chaos War the remnants of the Knights of Takhisis withdrew to Neraka, once the Dark Queen's city. It was the site of Lord Ariakan's capture by the Knights of Solamnia, an event that led him to eventually gain respect for an order of honorable knights. Finally, newly freed from his Solamnic prison, Ariakan was bound for Neraka when he received a vision from Takhisis that inspired him to form the Order of Dark Knights. In the Council of the Last Heroes, the Knights received the land surrounding this Evil city as theirs to rule—if they could conquer it. The entire region now takes the name Neraka.

Important Holdings

Ariakan's Rest, Bloodspring, Godshome, Hangman Harbor, Jelek, Neraka, Telvan.

Main Populace

Chromatic dragons, draconians, goblins, humans, dwarves, ogres.

Personalities

Mirielle Abrena, Governor-General of Neraka and the Knights of Takhisis *(human middle-aged female, commanding demeanor, Master, 6♛).*

Description

The city of Neraka arose more than a century after the Cataclysm, when Takhisis planted the cornerstone of the Kingpriest's Istaran Temple in a remote glade. Over the decades, this cornerstone grew into the twisted Temple of Darkness, where the goddess could muster and rally her servants. Neraka grew up around the Temple to serve the Dark Queen and her minions.

Although the Temple was destroyed and the city captured by the forces of Good during the War of the Lance, Neraka never really shook off its mantle of Evil. It stood ready to embrace the few remaining Dark Knights who arrived after the Council of the Last Heroes.

To the north, this reborn nation borders the Estwilde, Teyr, Kern, and the realms of Fenalysten, Lorrinar, and Mohrlex. In the south, it abuts the lands of Blöde, Throt, and Malystryx. The proximity to so many hostile lands might worry some—but not the Dark Knights.

Throughout Neraka's length, rugged and barren mountains stripe the land. Between them lie wide, fairly dry valleys. In the south, however, the mountains become much more dense, and the valleys disappear. Here, thirteen volcanoes remain active, including the three Lords of Doom. The city of Neraka, like Sanction, is surrounded by volcanoes, though they stand a bit farther away from the settlement.

For years, Nerakans have shared their realm with many young chromatic dragons. The blues work and fight alongside the Knights, while those of other colors sought out this area for the protection of numbers during the early days of the Dragon Purge. Their presence offers Neraka a formidable defense.

Just northeast of Neraka lies mystic Godshome. This bowl-shaped mountaintop depression contains at its center a huge, polished disk of what looks like black volcanic rock. The Heroes of the Lance once saw the moons and constellations shining within these obsidian depths and knew the boulders ringing the circle to represent the gods. But when Goldmoon sent members of her Citadel of Light to Godshome years ago, they found no hope awaiting them there. The boulders had vanished, and the black rock held only visions of the new moon and constellations of the Age of Mortals.

Climate

Due to the region's high elevation, Nerakan summers remain temperate, but the scarcity of rain makes the stony mountains fairly barren. In the chill winters, snows pile higher than a man's head; only sites near volcanoes escape the accumulation.

Trade

Talks with Khur's desert barbarians have resulted in covert trade with these nomads. The Dark Knights obtain weapons and gems from the dwarves of Thoradin to the south, and the nomadic barbarians of northern Neraka take their mutton and wool to market at the busy Hangman Harbor.

Current Happenings

Neraka, once ruled by the Dark Queen herself, follows a Governor-General, the highest-ranking Knight of Takhisis. After almost thirty years of rebuilding the Knighthood, she is making moves to expand Neraka. Just a year ago, the Knights waged their first campaign since the Summer of Chaos, against Teyr. This nation of draconians, while retaining independent rule, has agreed to serve the Knights as a vassal nation, marching to war with Neraka and tithing to the Governor-General.

The Knights seek not only military allies, but also new ports. Recently they requested passage for their armies through the northeastern corner of Fenalysten's realm, to march into the tempting coastal Estwilde and Nordmaar. Meanwhile, efforts continue to batter down Sanction's defenses and to plan a Thoradin-based campaign against Blöde—the ogres have desirable frontage on Sanction Bay.

The Governor-General wishes the realm could expand farther west. However, the Dark Knights have already seized as much of Throt's territory as they were ceded at the Council of the Last Heroes. They know that if they attempted forays into Throt's desirable South Shore, the Knights of Solamnia would attempt to force them back. These Knights would actually defend goblins in order to keep Throt an intact buffer between their nation and the eastern lands.

The Dark Knights maintain good relations with all the dragon overlords. Some, like Beryl and Skie, hire them to administer their realms; Great Dragons usually don't care to bother themselves with the details of rulership.

Nightlund

In the time before the first Cataclysm, the Plains of Solamnia included Knightlund, named for its noble lord: Soth, Knight of the Rose. When the cursed lord was transformed into the Death Knight, a pall of undeath fell upon his land, then renamed Nightlund. Thirty years ago, the hand of Chaos spread this blight farther north and south of Soth's Dargaard Keep. Perpetual twilight now shades the entire realm.

Important Holdings

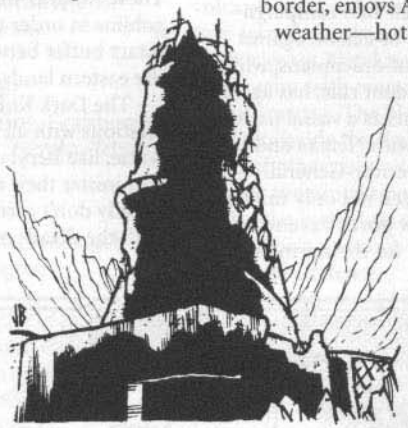
Dargaard Keep, Gaardlund region, city of Kalaman.

Main Populace

Undead, humans.

Personalities

Tierrel Rychner *(human adult male, observant demeanor, Adventurer)*; Eryn Kurras *(human elder female, crafty demeanor, Adventurer)*.



Description

Once, Dargaard Keep guarded the eastern flank of Solamnia from the nomads of the Estwilde—until its ruler, Lord Soth, fell to pride and lust. When the Cataclysm struck, Soth's fortress burned, a pyre for his wife and child. Soth lived on, trapped in the unlife of a death knight. After the War of the Lance and the death of Kitiara uth Matar, this Knight of the Black Rose reportedly disappeared from his gutted castle. He is no longer seen about his land, and none know where he has gone, though rumors of Soth sightings continue to this day.

The effects of the Chaos War expanded the twilight of Nightlund south to encompass the region from Gaardland to Kalaman, the Dark Knights' first target in their attack on Ansalon. This port town was splintered by the Red Dragonarmy twenty-five years earlier during the War of the Lance. It lost much of its male population as slaves to the Knights of Takhisis during the Summer of Chaos. After the Chaos War, many remaining citizens, freed from the Dark Knights' rule, fled the encroaching twilight. Now only a sparse shell of a city remains.

Climate

The Vingaard River valley, which marks Nightlund's northwestern border, enjoys Ansalon's best weather—hot summers, ample rainfall, and snowy winters. That such a climate belongs to a land populated primarily by undead is an irony not lost upon locals.

Trade

Kalaman's remaining shipbuilders understandably see fewer customers these days. Much of the Fourth Age Vingaard horse and cattle business has moved to the more welcoming (and sunnier) terrain south of Gaardlund. Those who stubbornly still try to farm the fields of Nightlund find that the lack of sunlight produces only sickly vegetation.

Current Happenings

In recent months, there have been increasing reports of undead pirates upon the Vingaard River. Merchants—as well as *living* river pirates—hoping to continue using this important waterway into central Ansalon had better beware.

Nordmaar

Tragedy visited Nordmaar during the Summer of Chaos, as it did so many other lands. During the Chaos War, a flight of shadow-wights erupted from the Rift in the Turbidus Ocean and skimmed the eastern fringe of Nordmaar. In their wake they left a string of prosperous tropical villages dead and forgotten; a shadow-wight's attack brings not only instant death, but causes all to forget the victim ever existed.

These eerie, empty villages send a chill along the spine of any who venture near. No being on Krynn will ever remember the names of these settlements or their inhabitants. They have been forever wiped from map and mind by the hand of Chaos.

Important Holdings

Jachim, Jennison, Jotan, North Keep, Pentar, Unger, Willik, Wulfgar.

Main Populace

Humans.

Personalities

King Shredler Kerian of Nordmaar *(human elder male, pragmatic demeanor, Champion)*.

Description

The Cape of Nordmaar stays thick with verdant foliage year-round. The ferns and trees never drop their leaves. One can spot all types of peculiar plants and animals along the coast—species common farther south cannot survive in the constant sultry heat. Nordmaar's interior grassy plains remain home to clans of barbarian riders.

From the centrally located North Keep, the King of Nordmaar rules. The moor south of the keep used to be a part of Nordmaar, until the dragon Mohrlex made his home there. The moorland barbarians who live on the swamp's outskirts sometimes venture into the dragon's territory to harvest the unique tropical fruit that grows in the former Great Moors of Nordmaar.

Climate

Nordmaar's northernmost tip—in fact, the point farthest north in all of Ansalon—lies beyond the equator. This land's steamy tropical heat is matched by its high humidity, as the northern Courrain Ocean surrounds this realm on three sides.

Trade

Nordmaar used to trade extensively with Solamnia, sending ships through Thoradin Bay and caravans through the dangerous wastes of the Estwilde. Now, the paths through the Estwilde lead only to Dragon Realms and to Nightlund. Ships that once reached Ansalon's interior via the Vingaard River now face undead river pirates.

Nordmaar's exporters—who trade with Ergoth and (cautiously) Palanthas—specialize in exotic compounds, spices, plants, and animals. They import steel, gems, and food.

Current Happenings

During Nordmaar's occupation by the Red Dragonarmy, locals fought tooth and nail to free their land of its oppressors, actively hunting down even the dragons in their land.

Today the realm is not occupied but surrounded. Enemies blockade its borders: the dragons Lorrinar and Mohrlex, the unsavory folk of the Estwilde, and the draconians of Teyr. Foes even more fearsome lie beyond, but as long as they keep to their borders, Nordmaar can do nothing.

The Knights of Solamnia maintain a strong presence here, to prevent enemy encroachment. Rumors hint that the Knights of Takhisis hope to march through Fenalysten's domain to seize first the Estwilde, then Nordmaar. However, the Solamnics refuse to entertain the possibility that Ansalon could lose the last force of Good in the North.

Sanction

Strange things happen in the aftermath of Chaos. The city of Sanction, so long a home to Evil, has risen as a ray of hope in Ansalon's beleaguered East.

Early in the Dragon Purge, a strange sorcerer arrived in a city that trembled with fear born of Malys. The three Lords of Doom, erupting continually since the Chaos War, had nearly destroyed the city. All looked lost.

But the sorcerer Hogan Bight wielded a magic none had ever seen. He used his powers to turn the lava away from the city. And, just as skillfully, he continues to turn back such invaders as the Black Dragon, whose swampy realm (strangely enough) ends at the mouth of Sanction Bay, and the ogres of Blöde, hungry for land to make up for the territory Sable took from them. Even the Dark Knights—granted the right at the Council of the Last Heroes to rule Sanction if they could capture it—can't penetrate the city's walls.

Refugees and former residents have been drifting steadily into Sanction and, as long as they obey the laws of Hogan Bight, they can stay. Despite its hostile neighbors, Sanction remains a free city of decent people—at least for now.

Important Holdings

Sanction Vale, the Lords of Doom.

Main Populace

Humans.

Personalities

Lord Governor Hogan Bight *(human adult male, indomitable demeanor, Master)*; Jacynth Tauranta, a Legionnaire *(half-elf adult female, tough demeanor, Champion)*; Linsha Majere, a Knight of Solamnia *(human young adult female, confident demeanor, Adventurer, 3 ◥)*.

Description

Stark red mountains tower above Sanction, which served as the Dark Queen's port during the War of the Lance. The Lords of Doom threaten on three sides of the city, towering above the pine- and moss-covered landscape.

But whereas during the Fourth Age arms of lava reached right into the city, the new Lord Governor has diverted the flow and ash clouds away from Sanction. The magic of Hogan Bight has transformed the former dragonarmy encampments and lava-covered coastline into the more fertile Sanction Vale, contained by the high cliffs surrounding the city.

Climate

The Lords of Doom provide constant heat through winter and summer. Snow never lasts long, and new geysers help make up for the lack of rainfall.

Trade

Shipbuilding and the export of volcanic stone has replaced piracy and slaving here. Merchants who import foodstuffs from Solamnia and Abanasinia have surprisingly little trouble exiting into the New Sea, despite their proximity to the New Swamp.

Current Happenings

One thing hasn't changed since the Fourth Age: Sanction remains a city under siege. A Dark Knight army, intent upon winning the port they consider rightfully theirs, blocks the two passes that provide the city's only overland links to the rest of Ansalon. The Dark Knights might have overwhelmed Sanction long ago, but a defensive moat of lava has halted their advance. Troops at the east pass are constructing a military fortress, while those at the north pass sporadically raid the valley.

The clandestine circle of Knights of Solamnia here finds Lord Governor Hogan Bight a bit suspicious. No one denies that his efforts alone proved the salvation of Sanction. But the Knights think it strange that the solitary figure seems to devote most of his efforts toward foiling Sable while the Dark Knights continue to beat on his door.

Schallsea

At the site of an ancient celestial ladder, Goldmoon was called to found the Citadel of Light more than twenty years ago. To her, this ladder—called the Silver Stair—represented man's eternal attempt to reach the gods. The new mysticism she espoused taught men how to reach the divine not through prayer, as they had done for centuries, but instead through the mastery of the gods-given gifts within one's heart.

Important Holdings

Citadel of Light, the Silver Stair.

Main Populace

Dwarves, elves, humans.

Personalities

Goldmoon *(plains barbarian elder female, compassionate demeanor, Legend, 3 ♥)*; Jasper Fireforge *(Neidar young adult male, honest demeanor, Champion, 2 ♥)*; the Sage *(human elder male, reserved demeanor, Master)*; Skydancer of the Qué-Nal *(plains barbarian adult male, mischievous demeanor, Adventurer)*.

Description

Northeast of Abanasinia in the New Sea lies the island of Schallsea. This rustic spot was only sparsely populated by barbarian humans in the Fourth Age. It is perhaps best known as the site where elemental magic triumphed in battle during the War of the Lance, causing the deaths of General Kartilann of Khur and of Kitiara's first dragon mount, Zephyr—daughter of Khellendros.

The population of the green, hilly island consists mostly of Citadel followers. The few tribal villages here remain independent of those in Abanasinia. What stronger allies do they need than Goldmoon and her Solamnic protectors?

The Citadel itself—a low complex of crystalline walls and domes—surrounds the Silver Stair. Invisible during the day, the Stair appears ghostly silver in moonlight, winding endlessly into the sky.

Formerly a small barbarian port town, Schallsea has grown considerably with the construction of the Citadel. Shops and inns now cater to pilgrims and students of mysticism, a fort now houses a garrison of Knights, and the harbor has expanded to handle increased trade. This town, like most of the island, looks to Goldmoon for leadership.

Climate

Schallsea enjoys hot summers tempered by sea breezes. In winter, moist air from the Straits of Schallsea brings heavy snows. Occasionally, an east wind carries a marsh odor from the New Swamp.

Trade

What food locals cannot grow or raise, Schallsea acquires in trade with merchants from nearby realms. Besides fishing and tourism, Schallsea's only source of income is the Citadel's followers: Mystics serve as advisers to monarchs and as missionaries to a hope-starved world.

Current Happenings

The proximity of Onysablet the Black remains a constant worry for Schallsea. Should she decide to disobey Malys's mandate and expand her realm, the Citadel could easily find itself in grave danger—for certainly, the dragon does not seem inclined to expand east.

A vocal minority among the Qué-Nal, as well as members of the primitive Wemitowuk tribe, opposes the Citadel's presence. The Qué-Nal chieftain harbors some sympathy for the dissidents; he admits that the mystic order has changed life on Schallsea. He believes in the power of the heart, however, and he knows that opposing the Citadel means having to answer to the Knights of Solamnia.

Indeed, the Knights seem a little overzealous in their duty to defend the Citadel. Though she dislikes the constant attention of Solamnic guards, Goldmoon realizes that her mystics, pilgrims, and tribespeople all need protection from such threats as Sable.

Silvanesti

After the Kinslayer War, when a faction of elves seceded to form Qualinesti, the land of Silvanesti began a strict isolationist policy that has endured through the ages. But today more than ever before, the Silvanesti find themselves called upon to respond to the pleas of beleaguered Ansalon: the Dimernesti fighting their sea dragon lord, the Qualinesti hostages of Beryl, the slaves of Sable. Silvanesti's neighbors all cry out for help.

But the elves do not answer.

Important Holdings

The Silvanesti Forest.

Main Populace

Silvanesti elves.

Personalities

Konnal of House Protector, Military Governor *(Silvanesti adult male, vigilant demeanor, Master)*; Cyan Bloodbane *(male green adult dragon, self-centered demeanor)*.

Description

Although the elves had defended their land in the Dragon Wars, an attack during the War of the Lance took them unawares. As elves fled, King Lorac sought to destroy the invading wyrms by using a dragon orb. But the orb took control of the king, assailing him with nightmares that twisted his forest into the Bleeding Wood. Trees cracked and rotted as their trunks grew gnarled. The Than-Thalas River ran thick with ooze, and the Tower of the Stars withered.

Even after the war ended, the blight remained. Finally, Qualinesti's ruler, Porthios—after struggling twenty years with Lorac's Nightmare—managed to banish the curse just prior to the Summer of Chaos. At last, the elves could reclaim their enchanted forest home.

The wood once again enjoyed its ancestral beauty. The boughs of the slender trees formed a translucent canopy high above, while the Than-Thalas River ran clear and glittering below. The elves, with patient attention, reshaped their capital, Silvanost, into the brilliant citadel of living wood and marble it once was. The Tower of the Stars, home of their Speaker, again stood tall.

However, the horror of the Nightmare years made the elves even more reluctant to subject their land to the ravages of the world. With the onset of the Dragon Purge, they sought a way to avoid the gaze of green wyrms. Their solution: a magical field around Silvanesti, preventing dragon—and man—from entering the enchanted wood.

Unfortunately, when the elves created their shield, they unwittingly trapped the green dragon Cyan Bloodbane inside the forest! Though elves continue hunting him, this wily wyrm always finds new ways to elude them, poisoning their idyllic existence in the sheltered wood. As always, he considers Silvanesti *his*.

Climate

Since the land's reclamation, the climate of Silvanesti has improved, though winter blizzards remain harsh and the Than-Thalas often floods in spring. Summers are cool and fresh, and autumn dresses the land in majestic golden beauty.

Trade

Their magical shield stops elves from trading their fine wines, wood carvings, metal craft, bows, and herbal medicines.

Current Happenings

The Silvanesti reject Silvanoshei (son of their dark elf queen Alhana Starbreeze and Porthios) as heir to the throne, for his rule would unite elf lands again. While succession squabbles rage within House Royal, Silvanesti has no Speaker.

Meanwhile, the Legion of Steel, operating out of brass Iyesta's realm, seeks a way through Silvanesti's shield. These champions of union for the elves hope to make the Silvanesti an active force in the East—and find out the secret to their forest's defensive magic.

Solamnia

Solamnia emerged from the War of the Lance as Ansalon's dominant nation. However, now that Khellendros has carved away more than half this realm's land, that distinction is no longer deserved. Gunthar on Sancrist Isle became the capital of the Solamnic Knighthood when Solamnia fell in the Summer of Chaos; Gwynned in Ergoth has replaced Palanthas as the land's most civilized free city; Abanasinia is the hub of sorcery and home to the Legion of Steel; and Schallsea holds Ansalon's great religious center.

However, this nation will never lose its proud heritage. When Vinas Solamnus liberated the realms of central Ansalon from the tyrannical Ergothian Empire some two thousand years ago, the folk claimed him as their hero and ruler. Since then, Solamnians have enjoyed a tradition of freedom like no other land. Today, they still strive to emulate the honesty and valor of their liberator, and thus have raised human civilization to a new moral level.

Important Holdings

Garnet Mountains, Heartlund, Kaolyn, Lemish, city of Solanthus, Southlund.

Main Populace

Humans, Daewar and Hylar dwarves.

Personalities

Governor Erann Flowstone of Garnet *(Hylar elder male, honest demeanor, Champion)*; Matinda Bretel of Solanthus, a Knight of Solamnia *(Human elder female, fastidious demeanor, Hero)*.

Description

Once, Solamnia was the largest nation on the continent, stretching from the sandy Northern Wastes south to the dark and stormy plains off the Straits of Schallsea. Now, it includes only the region just north of the New Sea, between the realms of Khellendros to

the west, Throt to the east, and Nightlund to the north.

Solamnia's northern border is marked by the Chaos Footprint, an immense, burned-out canyon blasted by a wing of fire dragons during the Chaos War. Few dare to venture close to this reminder of the most destructive period in Krynn's history.

Just south of the Footprint lie the Plains of Solamnia: a broad and verdant river basin now divided among Throt, Solamnia, Nightlund, and the realm of Khellendros. This region—which includes Solanthus, the realm's traditional capital—served as a mighty battlefield during the War of the Lance. Just about the time locals had finished nursing this ravaged farmland back to health, the Knights of Takhisis seized the area during the Summer of Chaos. Although the land suffered comparably little damage during the Chaos War, the Solamnic Plains folk are finding it more and more difficult to maintain their traditional idealism.

South of the plains lies Southlund, whose many ports prove vital to Solamnia's continued health. The most important harbor here is Caergoth, known for its excellent shipwrights and sailors. Most of Southlund's hearty, pragmatic folk work as farmers or fishers. Their loyalty and innate honesty make them excellent Knights; in fact, Caergoth remains a major stronghold of the Knights of Solamnia.

Central Solamnia holds the dwarf province of Kaolyn, nestled within the rugged Garnet Mountains. The natives

of Thorbardin who mined this land centuries ago established the beautiful subterranean city of Garnet, which Solamnia granted to Thorbardin as a colony in return for wartime assistance. The Hylar and Daewar clans dwell together in Garnet, miners of iron ore, gold, silver, copper, tin, antimony, phosphorous, nickel, and sunstones—glowing stones found in a magical mountain in the Garnet range. They also discovered vast stores of marble, which they quarried and polished to line their splendid, high halls. Though a sovereign realm, this dwarf province remains strongly loyal to Solamnia and the Knights. Eastern Kaolyn contains rich prairie, which the dwarves all but ignore.

East of Kaolyn lies the forest land of Lemish, whose Evil Fourth Age government was overthrown by the Solamnic Knights during the reorganization following the Chaos War.

Climate

Solamnia lies squarely within a band of temperate weather. A three-month summer provides ample rainfall and hot weather perfect for farming. A three-month winter allows fields and farmers excellent rest time between crops. (The winters in Southlund tend to be more extreme.) Spring and autumn are times of planting and harvest festivals.

Mountainous Kaolyn remains cooler through the summer than the rest of Solamnia and becomes snowbound in the depths of winter. The rough Gale waters off Cape Caergoth send high winds ashore and bring in cold tides from the waters surrounding Frost's realm. Southlund's shore is covered with wind-blasted moors that hold stores of water.

Trade

Solamnia still has much to offer its trade partners: grain and cattle from Solanthus; ships, timber, and beer from Caergoth; gems, iron, coins, marble, and steel from Kaolyn; and timber, woodcraft items, and small sailing vessels from Lemish.

Current Happenings

At the dawn of the Fifth Age, after the dust had settled from the Chaos War, the Blue Dragon ruled what had been western Solamnia. It was the Knighthood that held together what little remained of this reeling realm during those turbulent years. The Solamnics' first priority became preventing further dragon incursion. In fact, Knights still patrol the new border constantly to ensure that Skie remains contained.

The officers assigned by the Knighthood's High Command to oversee military endeavors in Solamnia have sanctioned a dangerous new mission: an undercover operation in Palanthas. Despite their official truce, the Solamnics want to keep an eye on the Dark Knights, who administer Palanthas for Skie. In addition, the free realm must gain more intelligence about Khellendros's domain, in anticipation of the day when Solamnia's banner once again flies over Palanthas.

Solamnia maintains alliances with those nations under the protectorship of the Knighthood: Abanasinia, Ergoth, Sancrist, Nordmaar, and the western fringe of the realm of Gellidus. Closer to home, the governor of Kaolyn is willing to aid Solamnia in any way he can—including using his kingdom's wealth to finance forays into Skie's domain.

In the meantime, the dwarf and his Council of Thanes grow ever more concerned that years have passed with no word from Thorbardin. Even though this father nation released its colony long ago, the governor has always maintained strong ties to the land of his ancestors. But he hesitates to send yet another mission south to seek contact with Thorbardin; so far, none of the previous envoys have returned from their trips so near the realm of Beryllinthranox the Green.

Teyr

When the Knights of Takhisis began moving out from Neraka to claim the territory allowed them by the Council of the Last Heroes, the draconians of the northern Khalkists were of two minds. Some desired to live in a realm governed by the Knights, for surely such a country would face little risk of invasion by neighboring ogres, dwarves—even dragons!

But other draconians wanted nothing to do with the Knights. They had served Takhisis all their lives, always as the minions of others. These lizard folk wanted a land where draconians could be the masters.

The land sandwiched between the realms of Mohrlex and Lorrinar was too remote to interest the Dark Knights at the time, so the rebellious draconians relocated north. Not long after they'd established themselves, word of the "draconian homeland" began to travel south. Soon, draconian immigrants were arriving daily, including a brigade of male *and female* draconians, recently from greater Thorbardin. Teyr's population soared.

Then the inevitable happened. Looking for military aid for their upcoming expansion efforts, the Knights of Takhisis turned to Teyr. The Governor-General of Neraka offered the draconians' lord a vassalage agreement: Teyr must tithe to Neraka as its liege nation and march to war with the Knights of Takhisis when commanded. In return, Teyr retained its sovereignty.

It was an offer the draconian nation could not refuse.

Important Holdings

Mount Brego, Robann, Teyr.

Main Populace

Draconians, humans.

Personalities

Kang, Lord of Teyr *(Aurak, practical demeanor, Champion)*; Guildmaster Dinalla *(plains barbarian adult female, innovative demeanor, Adventurer)*.

Description

The thin band of desert and savanna southwest of Nordmaar inadvertently serves as a buffer between Neraka and Nordmaar. Before the arrival of the draconians, these grassy and arid plains were home to barbarian horsemen.

Climate

This hot land receives very little rainfall; the prevailing winds bring clouds that dump their rain on the mountains and woods to the west.

Trade

The draconians mine iron ore and quarry marble from their southern highlands. The barbarians who remain here raise horses and export chariots, carts, and carriages for the realm.

Current Happenings

The Dark Knights have already begun preparing for their Estwilde–Nordmaar campaign, so certain are they that Fenalysten will give their armies access into the northern lands. They have established training camps throughout Teyr to bring the local draconians back to battle readiness.

The draconians' fondest dream is to know again the true independence they enjoyed for a few short years. After all, they once had hopes of invading their northern neighbors themselves to gain access to the tempting equatorial ports.

However, they find their opportunities for allies against their liege lords quite limited. First, the Knights maintain good relations with all the area's dragon lords, and the ogres of Kern have too little strength today to join Teyr against Neraka. The only remote possibility for an ally against the Dark Knights is Nordmaar—but no one in Teyr believes that the northern realm's Solamnic defenders would ever side with a nation of draconians.

Thoradin

The dwarven kingdom of Thoradin certainly has had a turbulent history. Founded during the Age of Dreams by a group of settlers from the declining nation of Kal-Thax, Thorin, or "New Hope," was for centuries a thriving mining metropolis.

After the Second Dragon War, the dwarves closed it off from the rest of the world. When centuries later the Hylar clan migrated to the Kharolis Mountains, dwarves came to speak of Thorin as "Thoradin," the suffix signifying its place in their past. Although all roads to the city were lost, a new generation of dwarves rediscovered Thoradin a millennium later and turned it into a major trade center—until the Cataclysm obliterated it.

During the Age of Despair, the dwarven nation of Zhakar arose in ruined Thoradin. The hostile and reclusive Zhakar dwarves, outcasts due to a strange mold plague, enjoyed their seclusion until about a year ago, when Beryl's eastward expansion began to threaten Thorbardin. The Council of Thanes there voted to seal the mountain but one dissenter—the crazed prophet Severus Stonehand—left his homeland, planning to return to Thoradin and cleanse it of the foul Zhakar. After a yearlong journey east, this messianic hero and his followers easily overpowered the Zhakar king and his council of prelates. After driving out the Zhakar, Severus proclaimed himself High Thane of Thoradin.

Important Holdings

Thoradin (Zhakar), Valley of Crystal.

Main Populace

Daergar, Daewar, Hylar, Theiwar, and Zakhar dwarves.

Personalities

Lord Brule Vaportwist *(Zhakar adult male, mysterious demeanor, Champion)*; Severus Stonehand *(Daewar adult male, charismatic demeanor, Hero, 4 ♛)*.

Description

Thoradin lies in the center of the thickest tangle of mountains in the Khalkists, surrounded by the ogre realm of Blöde. Scrub, sage, and cactus populate the dry ledges of the surrounding mountains; only dwarves would look lovingly at these lofty peaks and granite cliffs and call this rugged terrain home.

Just south of Thoradin lies the Valley of Crystal, a product of Chaos. Thirty years ago, this dry vale suddenly exploded with priceless crystals of every color imaginable. The bewildering array of stones lines the cliffsides and covers the valley floor, reflecting the sunlight blindingly. Thoradin constantly battles with Blöde for control of this unique and precious vale; perhaps Severus will use his new allies—the Dark Knights—to drive the ogres out.

Climate

Thoradin shares the seasonal conditions of neighboring Neraka and Blöde, but remains barren most of the year.

Trade

This dwarven realm exports goods to Sanction and Neraka: gems, metals, arms and armor, coins, mushrooms, spirits, and valuable stones from the Valley of Crystal.

Current Happenings

Thoradin's recent alliance with Neraka took many realms by surprise. However, others agree that the Dark Knights are the least of the evils surrounding Severus's nation. Perhaps he hopes for military aid against the exiled Zhakar, who continue to hide nearby, planning revenge. Meanwhile, the deepest halls of Thoradin have been visited again by the black flame, a mysterious force or creature which has plagued dwarves here for more than two thousand years. Severus's mysticism can cure the mold plague that used to permeate Thoradin's halls, but he remains helpless against the black flame threat.

Thorbardin

Unlike the earlier dwarven kingdoms Kal-Thax and Thoradin, Thorbardin has remained stable throughout the millennia and has withstood two Cataclysms. Thorbardin, which means "Best New Hope," remains the largest and grandest of any dwarven nation.

Important Holdings

Agharbardin, Daerbardin, Daerforge, Hybardin, Klarbardin, New Daebardin, Urkhan Sea, Theibardin, Theiwarin.

Main Populace

Aghar, Daergar, Daewar, Hylar, Klar, and Theiwar dwarves, plus Neidar dwarf refugees.

Personalities

Thane Glade Hornfel, High Thane of Thorbardin *(Hylar elder male, just demeanor, Champion)*; Turnela Realgar *(Theiwar adult female, opinionated demeanor, Adventurer)*; War Chieftain Chert Gneiss *(Daewar adult male, deliberate demeanor, Champion)*.

Description

The eastern node of the Kharolis Mountains—the greatest range of the south—contains the mighty dwarf nation called Thorbardin. In the Fourth Age, the dwarves controlled all the land from Qualinesti and Pax Tharkas in the north to the edge of the Kharolis in the south and west. However, Beryllinthranox seized all the dwarves' territory in 29SC—except for its capital, deep beneath Cloudseeker Peak. The dwarves saved the capital by sealing it off from the surface.

The dwarves began preparing for this day almost as soon as the Dragon Purge began, setting their tractor worms to work delving out more agricultural space, so they could grow enough food to sustain themselves underground if they fell under dragon siege.

The dwarves' wondrous metropolis measures more than twenty miles long and fourteen miles wide and comprises eight major cities, three farming warrens, two governmental areas, a burial ground, and a fortress at both gates. Between each of these sites, cable-ways and canals run along tunnel roads.

At the heart of Thorbardin rests the grand Urkhan Sea, which stretches five miles across. At its center stands a stalactite one-fourth of a mile wide and a quarter-mile high. Within lies an unusual citadel: the Life Tree of the Hylar, sometimes called Hybardin or Zakhalax.

Climate

The terrain surrounding Thorbardin experiences short summers and long, snowy winters. Sunlight for farming efforts is channeled underground via quartz veins called sun shafts.

Trade

Thorbardin, a traditional trader in steel, iron, gems, weapons, tools, metals, coins, and spirits, has no contact with its former partners in commerce.

Current Happenings

Before the coming of Beryl, the dwarves of Thorbardin and the elves of Qualinesti restored Pax Tharkas, an ancient monument to peace damaged in the War of the Lance. The two nations signed a new treaty then, and the dwarves honor it today—despite the grave danger.

When they sealed Thorbardin, the dwarves removed themselves from all contact with the world, just as they did in the Dwarfgate War. The only outsider in touch with them is the elf ruler, Gilthas. He knows they are secretly adding to their tunnel network, creating for the elves underground escape routes north to Abanasinia and passages for dwarves south and west to lucrative mines.

Today, delvers have reached as far north as Pax Tharkas. In exchange for their efforts, Gilthas arranges for Academy sorcerers to transport an assortment of foodstuffs into the dwarves' realm as tasty supplements to the fare from their underground farming warrens.

Throt

Nowhere is anarchy as evident in Ansalon as in the goblin land of Throt. Various Evil races—in particular goblins and hobgoblins—constantly jockey for supremacy, while the Knights of Solamnia and Takhisis both look on with interest.

Important Holdings

Plains of Throt, Haligoth on the South Shore, city of Throtl, Throtl Gap.

Main Populace

Hobgoblins, goblins, ogres, trolls.

Personalities

King Uhkrin *(hobgoblin adult male, uncaring demeanor, Champion)*.

Description

The southern end of the Dargaard Mountains harbors a small forest that opens out upon the broad and marshy Plains of Throt. East lies the Throtl Gap: a pass of dry hills through the western Khalkists.

During and after the War of the Lance, hobgoblin minions of Takhisis routed from Vingaard and Solanthus fled to Throt. After robbing the local farmers of their land, the hobgoblins entrenched themselves; the Solamnic Knights had neither the numbers nor the determination to drive them out. By the time the Knights had regrouped and begun planning an offensive, the Summer of Chaos absorbed their attention. The hobgoblins took the opportunity to fortify their position and seize valuable South Shore territory.

However, for the last thirty years, the hobgoblins have found themselves deluged with goblin, ogre, and troll refugees from the East. Although these races have enjoyed less imperial success than the hobgoblins did when they arrived in the area, they have been making life in Throt unpredictable.

Climate

The Plains of Throt receive more rain than the rest of the Vingaard River basin. The marshy bogs lie in tufted ridges that make agriculture difficult. The forest surrounding the capital city of Throtl experiences less rainfall, but more storms, thanks to its position west of the Dargaard Mountains. These woods flash with lightning from spring to fall and succumb to blizzards in winter.

The Throtl Gap has the opposite weather—dry and calm. The clear conditions allow hobgoblin marauders to spot caravans miles away and descend on them quickly. The mountains along the Lemish wood stay snow-capped nine months of the year.

Trade

The races of Throt gain their supplies and food through pillage and plunder. In fact, the capital has grown rich off goods stolen from caravans passing through the Throtl Gap.

The region's one commodity is information. Hobgoblin spies along the borders of Solamnia trade secrets to the Knights of Takhisis in return for promises of protection.

Current Happenings

Before the Summer of Chaos, Solamnia was preparing for a campaign to liberate Throt and reinstate its human former residents. However, much has changed since then. Now that the narrow land of Throt is all that separates southern Solamnia from Neraka, the Knighthood feels inclined to let the land remain in the hands of the hobgoblins. They do maintain various outposts along Throt's western border to keep a vigilant watch on the region's inhabitants.

Meanwhile, the Dark Knights enjoy unlimited trade rights in Throt's ports in exchange for military support in the event of invasion.

CHAPTER THREE

It was to the Inn that the three friends turned their steps.

The huge, convoluted trunk rose through the surrounding trees. Against the shadow of the vallenwood, the colored panes of the Inn's stained-glass windows glittered brightly, and sounds of life drifted down from the windows. Lanterns, hanging from the tree limbs, lit the winding stairway. Though the autumn night was settling chill amid the vallenwoods of Solace, the travelers felt the companionship and memories warm the soul and wash away the aches and sorrows of the road.

—The Companions arrive in Solace, Dragons of Autumn Twilight

Ansalon has changed markedly from the days of the Fourth Age. However, some facts of day-to-day life—like the comfort offered by the Inn of the Last Home—do remain fairly constant.

Money

The *steel piece* has been the basic monetary unit in Ansalon since the aftermath of the Cataclysm. Steel was in great demand then, for making tools and weapons. Gold, too soft for either use, became valuable only for ornamentation.

The only coin more valuable than the steel piece is the *platinum piece,* which equals five steel. The following are equal in value to one steel:

- Two *iron* or *bronze pieces*
- Twenty *silver pieces*
- Forty *gold pieces*
- One hundred *copper pieces.*

Some regional variations in these exchange rates occur. However, generally a character can safely assume a tankard of ale will cost him about three coppers and a decent room for the night costs ten silver pieces. Due to restrictions on trade, though, citizens of many Dragon Realms have begun to shift from steel currency to a more barter-based economy.

Language

Throughout Ansalon, people of all races and cultures speak the Common tongue. However, folk will hear many racial and national languages as they travel, too.

Some of the racial tongues mentioned in the lists below are actually distinct dialects of a root language.

Human Tongues
Abanasinian, Ergot, Estwilde, Ice Barbarian, Kharolian, Khur, Lemish, Mountain Barbarian, Nerakese, Nordmaaran, Plains Barbarian, Saifhum, Solamnic.

Elven Tongues
Dargonesti, Dimernesti, Kagonesti, Qualinesti, Silvanesti.

Dwarven Tongues
Gully Talk (Aghar), Hammertalk, Hill Dwarf (Neidar), Mountain Dwarf (Daergar, Daewar, Hylar, Klar, and Theiwar), Zhakar.

Other Racial Tongues
Bakali, Centaur, Draconian, Dragon, Giant, Gnomish, Goblin, Kenderspeak, Kyrie, Minotaur, Ogre, Thanoi.

Additional Languages
Hand talk (thieves).

TODAY in ANSALON

Traveling

Heroes often must travel across the continent and back again to accomplish missions or complete adventures.

In general, heroes will find three types of path across Ansalon. *Trails* are crude routes through wilderness that generally allow for travel only on foot or by horseback. *Roads,* on the other hand, can handle cart and wagon traffic. They are usually graded and maintained by the nations they service. *High roads* are paved stone routes that run high over tundra or wetlands to avoid flooding.

As an example of overland travel, a hero on horseback would require more than a month to travel by road and trail from the Solamnian port of Caergoth north to Palanthas (about twelve hundred miles).

Religion

Practicing one's faith occurs with greater frequency throughout Ansalon than one might think, considering that it's been more than a generation since the gods withdrew from Krynn.

Some twenty years ago, Goldmoon called the clerics of the gods of Good to the Citadel of Light to master the power of the heart. Today, most folk have seen the workings of mysticism and believe it to be a parting gift from their deities. The Citadel's missions throughout Ansalon are popular with those learning to master the strength of their own spirits.

Here and there, people still worship the old gods. The best example is the Knights of Takhisis, who believe that the Dark Queen will return. Members of this Order (as well as their followers outside the Knighthood) continue to pray to Takhisis—of course, the goddess never answers, but her patient faithful believe it is only a matter of time. Many temples to Takhisis in Neraka have been restored in recent years.

Of course, some in Ansalon have little faith at all these days. They despair over the departure of the gods and feel that people are truly alone. The Citadel tries to convert these despairing souls, pointing to the new constellations and the Ruby Star as evidence that beings still live in the heavens.

Meanwhile, the Dark Knights urge people to prepare for the return of Takhisis. While these two competing faiths have won over some of the populace, many have turned their backs on religion to pursue the greater works of man: science and the new sorcery. The Fifth Age is shaping up to be a true age of discovery.

Important Groups

Several institutions have formed a foundation of order in the turmoil born of the Chaos War and the Dragon Purge. The three Knighthoods of the land—the Knights of Solamnia, Knights of Takhisis, and the relatively new Legion of Steel—remain among the most influential groups in the continent. However, the Citadel of Light and the Academy of Sorcery, both founded during the Fifth Age, have become just as vital to the survival of society.

Knights of Solamnia

Chapter One of this book tells of the fall of the Ergothian Empire and the founding of the Kingdom of Solamnia under Vinas Solamnus in the Age of Dreams. One of the first problems facing the new King Solamnus arose when the lords of Ansalon's northern reaches sought to unite with Solamnia, having just thrown off Ergothian tyranny themselves.

Though Vinas wanted to comply, he considered the union impossible—the ideals and customs of the North differed too markedly from those of Solamnia. Therefore, leaving his most trusted lieutenants in charge, the king journeyed into the wilderness on a Quest of Honor to find an answer. Various apocryphal stories tell of the Dark Queen's plotting to topple Solamnia in the absence of her king. Fortunately, Vinas's lieutenants had learned well from their sovereign and commander, and they foiled each scheme.

The Founding

Meanwhile, after weeks of hardship, Solamnus sailed west to Sancrist Isle. Though bruised and weary, he plunged into the wilderness. In time, he found a glade where a stone of black granite lay. There he fasted and prayed to the gods of Good. And, lo, after several days, they came to him: Paladine, Kiri-Jolith, and Habbakuk themselves. The deities instructed Vinas to create a Knighthood that would last for generations. It was to include three separate orders, each upholding an ideal from one of the three gods. These Knights would unite the northern lands with Solamnia and carry on Solamnus's vision of honor and the primacy of Good.

According to some legends, Vinas then saw a vision of the Knights' eventual downfall. Other tales say that Paladine reassured Solamnus that the Knights would rise as often as they were truly needed. Some legends even report that each of the three gods told Solamnus a great secret of wisdom and wrote them on three tablets of black granite. The tablets of wisdom are purportedly lost, scattered about the continent.

Despite the varying elements of these tales, all legends agree that the gods transformed the stone where Solamnus prayed into a pillar of white crystal. The crystal sanctified the glade, sealing the gods' pact to watch over the orders of the Knighthood unless the Knights strayed from the narrow path of honor. And so Vinas returned home and established the three orders of the Knights of Solamnia: the orders of the Crown, of the Sword, and of the Rose.

Evolution

Over the centuries, the Knights became honored and respected throughout Ansalon as keepers of order and protectors of the common folk. The Solamnic Oath ("my honor is my life") and the Measure (a code of knightly behavior) bound the Knights to absolute honor in their actions.

The Cataclysm brought the Knights into disrepute, however; the commoners had regarded the Order as invincible, as the beloved of the gods. Why did its members not intercede on the people's behalf to save the world from suffering? When the Knights could not repair the damage of the Cataclysm, the populace turned against them.

The three Solamnic orders remained shunned until the War of the Lance, when the tattered remnants of the Knighthood helped stop the dragonarmies. For a brief period in the Fourth Age, the Solamnic Knights enjoyed a resurgence. New recruits swelled the ranks as noble families found it fashionable to have a son in the Knighthood and the Solamnics continued to valiantly drive the remnants of the dragonarmies from Ansalon.

The tumultuous end of the Fourth Age nearly destroyed the reinvigorated Order, however. More than ninety percent of the Solamnics were killed during the Summer of Chaos and the subsequent Chaos War. Pockets of Knights remained only in Solamnia (where they had been forced underground), Sancrist, and Northern Ergoth.

At Present

In the three decades since the Chaos War, the Solamnic Knights have rebuilt their Order, and once again the symbol of kingfisher and rose is in evidence across the continent. The people of Ansalon have embraced the Solamnics, noting their sacrifices in three devastating wars. The Knights today base their Order in Whitestone Glade in Gunthar upon Sancrist Isle and also govern the eroded realm of Solamnia.

Though officially at peace with the Knights of Takhisis, the Solamnics keep their eyes on their activities. Although for now the strength of the Dark Knights and of the Great Dragons forces the Knighthood to assume a defensive stance, the Order remains the world's best champion of Good.

Knights of Takhisis

The roots of Ansalon's Evil Knighthood begin in 352AC, when the Knights of Solamnia captured Ariakan, son of the powerful Dragon Highlord Ariakas and the sea goddess Zeboim.

Ariakas had left his son in Neraka, under the protection of a large draconian force. When the Solamnic Knights discovered them in the Dark Queen's temple, Ariakan fought bravely and skillfully, killing five Knights before being forcibly subdued. Once captured, he made no secret of his lineage. Though the Solamnics did not believe the bold youth, they were impressed by his skill, courage, and intelligence.

The Knights removed Ariakan to the High Clerist's Tower for imprisonment. At length, they believed his story and realized what a valuable captive had fallen into their hands. While a prisoner, Ariakan learned all he could about the structure, organization, and mentality of the Knights. The personable youth soon won the favor of his captors. The Solamnics were eager to indoctrinate him, hoping to teach him the error of his ways.

The error, however, was theirs.

Ariakan studied the Knighthood as a warrior studies his enemy. In time, he knew all the right things to say to convince the Solamnics of his rehabilitation. Indeed, after two years, he was given an early release, but he asked to stay and finish his studies. His request was happily granted. At the end of four years, having learned all he could, he bade the Knights farewell.

The Founding

Ariakan had learned much more from the Solamnic Knights than just their culture, tradition, and history. When freed, he eluded them and headed to Neraka. Amid a raging blizzard, Ariakan climbed the mountains ringing the Dark Queen's city.

He soon lost his way. Frozen and starving, he collapsed in a snowdrift and prayed to his mother, Zeboim, for aid. As he ended his prayer, he looked up and discovered a trail of seashells leading to a cavern, where he found shelter, food, and firewood. After he ate, he fell into an exhausted sleep.

Ariakan awoke to find a warrior clad in shining black armor seated near the fire. He did not fear the figure; he thought it a manifestation of his dead father. When the warrior encouraged the youth to relate his experiences, Ariakan told him how he admired the Solamnic Knights—their discipline, training, and willingness to sacrifice themselves for their cause. Ariakan said he wanted to form an Order to rival and eventually supplant the Solamnics as Krynn's dominant force for order.

It was then that the dark warrior revealed himself as a vision of Takhisis from the Abyss. Though the goddess was less than pleased by Ariakan's blunt praise for her enemy, she wisely asked him more about *his* Knighthood. In the end, she gave his plan her blessing.

Ariakan quickly gathered what remained of his father's followers and set about building his Order of Dark Knights. Wary of discovery, Ariakan located a remote island in the northern Sirrion Sea. A current flowing straight north from the Icewall Glacier kept the island chilly. Great storms brewed overhead as the frigid polar waters met the warmer northern waters and sheathed the isle in fog. In secret, Ariakan began building the colossal Storm's Keep.

While work on this great military edifice progressed, Ariakan explored the sea beyond Ansalon and recruited followers. During a voyage beyond the Blood Sea Isles, he found an island of towering humans as fierce as minotaurs. Through a quirk of fate—and some fast thinking—he convinced the savages he was an incarnation of a long-departed god. Within a few months, he had secured a fanatical auxiliary for his Knights: the brutes.

With Storm's Keep complete, Lord Ariakan proclaimed his Knighthood, founded on the Vision, the Blood Oath, and the Code. Through the Vision, Takhisis herself showed her Knights their part in her divine Evil plan for the world. Though the Blood Oath—"submit or die"—differed quite a bit from the Solamnics' Oath, the Code fulfilled the same purpose as the Measure: to define the rules of conduct for every Knight. Ariakan began officially investing new Knights into the Order in 370AC.

Evolution

By the summer of 383AC (now known as the Summer of Chaos), Ariakan was ready. In less than fifteen years, he had built an Order of Dark Knights with the skill and discipline to sweep aside all foes. Lord Ariakan lost no time in putting his followers to the ultimate test.

Moving with an audacity born of courage, discipline, and unshakable faith, the Knights of Takhisis invaded Ansalon and seized more territory in one month than all the dragonarmies had during the entire War of the Lance. With each new conquest, he recruited and conscripted more warriors for his armies. Ultimately, they held all Ansalon except Silvanesti, Northern Ergoth, Thorbardin, and a few pockets of Khalkists dwarves. Of course, Lord Ariakan never guessed that the gods themselves had contrived to bring his war to a swift end. Only united could Ansalon fight the Chaos War to come.

The Knights of Takhisis and their allies, being firmly in control of most of Ansalon, bore the brunt of the battle with Chaos (though some quick-thinking Dark Knight officers released captive Solamnics to offer what help they could). Lord Ariakan himself was slain when the Chaos armies struck the High Clerist's Tower, which had only recently fallen to the Dark Knights.

Deprived of their masterful leader and abandoned by their Dark Queen (who departed Krynn when Chaos appeared to have the upper hand), the Knighthood all but collapsed. More than three-quarters of the Dark Knights either fell in the Chaos War or deserted afterward. The people of Ansalon, though aware of the Dark Knights' role in defeating Chaos, regarded them as remnants of Evil from an earlier age. In many lands, the folk were none too gentle with Dark Knights who fell into their hands—even those who had renounced their Order. The Knights had become reviled outcasts, just like the Solamnics after the Cataclysm.

At Present

By 3SC, the Knights of Takhisis had been reduced to a handful of independent bands. The following year, several groups under the leadership of Mirielle Abrena, a senior Knight and survivor of the Chaos War, seized control of Neraka, subjugating the ogres, goblins, draconians, and humans living there. The Knights of Takhisis then began slowly collecting the fragments of their Order and reforging them once again into a Knighthood. The widespread hostility toward them only helped this process—the scattered Knights quickly learned that security was to be found in Neraka, if nowhere else.

Two years later, the Knights were expanding, seizing the entire area ceded to them at the Council of the Last Heroes (see Chapter One). By 15SC, the Skull Knights—the Order's priests—had mastered the magic of dark mysticism and regained much of their lost power. Likewise, the Knights in the Order of the Thorn, or Gray Robes, have recently learned to wield sorcery in the name of their Dark Queen.

Not long ago, the Dark Knights received a new Vision: Takhisis would return. They vow to deliver Krynn to her as a gift when she comes.

Legion of Steel

The history of Ansalon's newest Knighthood begins in 5SC. While the Knights of Takhisis were in the midst of regrouping, rogue knight Sara Dunstan took the first steps toward forming the Legion of Steel.

Sara grew alarmed when she heard the Dark Knights had begun reorganizing. So, taking an assumed name, she journeyed to Neraka. It was a dangerous trip because she had been an outcast from the Order since 378AC, when she attempted to convince her adopted son, Steel Brightblade, not to enter the Knighthood. Though Steel kept her manipulations a secret, his superiors easily surmised the truth.

When Sara reached Neraka, she found that almost everyone who might have remembered her was either dead or unable to recognize her. Her worst fears, however, were confirmed—the Knights of Takhisis had a new leader and a renewed purpose. They would go to war again.

Sara escaped from Neraka by volunteering to make a pilgrimage to the Tomb of the Last Heroes in Solace. The Knights of Takhisis hoped Sara and her escort, a young Knight named Derrick Yaufre, might receive a vision there to inspire the Order anew. The two became separated on their journey, however, and Sara reached the Tomb alone. There she did experience a vision—but not the one the Dark Knights had hoped for.

The Founding

Sara Dunstan saw young Derrick join a Knight of Solamnia in tracking down a marauding giant. The two defeated the giant, but when the Solamnic sought to distribute the spoils from the beast's lair among its victims, Derrick challenged him to a duel, with the victor disposing of the spoils as he saw fit. Once they crossed swords, neither Knight would surrender. They fought until they collapsed from exhaustion, and both soon died of their wounds.

When the vision faded, the image of Steel Brightblade appeared before Sara at the Tomb. "All we have is each other," he told her, the words recalling his rejoinder to Chaos's taunts during the Battle of the Rift. The shade handed Sara the elven starjewel his father—the Solamnic Knight Sturm Brightblade—had once worn. Then he vanished.

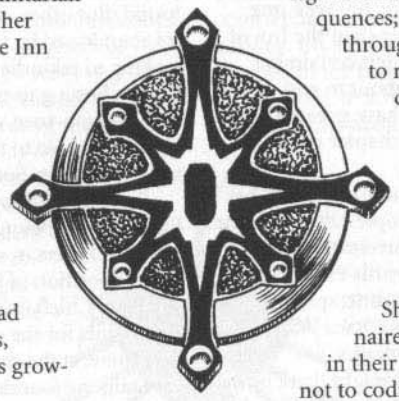
The flood of images left the woman reeling, almost convinced she had been daydreaming. Then she felt the starjewel in her hand and knew she could not dismiss the vision. The spirit of Sturm Brightblade had given Steel the jewel in a similar fashion back before the Summer of Chaos, and Sara had no doubt that her son's spirit had bequeathed the jewel to her for a purpose.

After consulting her longtime friends, the Majere family, Sara recalled other tales involving visions and Knights: Vinas Solamnus took a Quest of Honor and Lord Ariakan conversed with a mysterious dark warrior. She realized, too, that the starjewel traditionally symbolized one's love for another, an unspoken pledge of mutual protection. Her vision of the two Knights in battle hinted at a coming conflict between the Good and Evil Knighthoods, Sara concluded—whatever good the Solamnic Knights might do in days to come, the Knights of Takhisis would undo. Her son's statement reminded her that Krynn's destiny rested in the hands of its people, working together.

Inspired, Sara resolved to lead a new Order, one based on selflessness and mutual aid. She began seeking out disaffected former Knights like herself—Knights of Takhisis *and* Solamnia. Although the Solamnics' revised Measure brought the ideals of the Knighthood closer to its roots, many old antagonisms remained. Many Knights had grown tired of trying to find the true meaning of honor amid their Order's bureaucracy.

Soon, these rogues were forming clandestine cells in towns throughout Ansalon. Secrecy was necessary to protect the former Knights from discovery and execution for dishonoring their former Order. Sara named the new organization the Legion of Steel. Like its namesake, the Legion was born of the Knights of Takhisis, but tempered by the virtue of the Knights of Solamnia.

Sara's vision was indeed a timely one. The terrors of the Dragon Purge soon showed that Krynn had never needed a humanitarian Order more. At first, her Legionnaires used the Inn of the Last Home in Solace as their unofficial base of operations. By 11SC, when the Inn had been destroyed in a dragon battle and rebuilt, the Legion had its own headquarters, and membership was growing fast.



Evolution

Sara toiled ceaselessly on the Legion's behalf, showing an energetic zeal that belied her years. By 15SC, however, old age and failing health had caught up with her. By then, the Legion was well established throughout Ansalon, with cells operating from Tarsis to Flotsam. Eminent Legionnaires from all over the continent gathered at Sara's bedside to pay their respects and to receive their leader's blessing.

Not long before her death, some members of the Order asked Sara to dictate a legacy they could use to guide future generations. Sara scoffed at the suggestion, pointing out that she was no Vinas Solamnus, nor Lord Ariakan, beloved of the gods. She was just a tired old woman who had seen a ghost.

Eventually, Sara agreed to offer a legacy, provided that her followers agreed not to write it down. She reminded them that Solamnus's Measure once degenerated into a musty old document that men bickered over, and Ariakan's Code had fared little better. The Legion's future, she declared, must never depend on any written words, but on its members' commitment to teaching the Order's beliefs to their successors—by example, not by rote.

Sara Dunstan's Legacy reminds the members of her Order to always have the courage to do what is right and accept the consequences; to gain strength through self-knowledge; to remain ever alert to danger and injustice; to respect virtue in all its forms; to grant justice to all beings; and to fight for one's beliefs unto death. She bade the Legionnaires carry these words in their hearts—they agreed not to codify her Legacy, but to live its spirit.

At Present

Since Sara's death, the Legion of Steel has grown steadily under the guidance of its governing Elders (though no one has ever made an official count of its membership). The Order's dedication to serving the common good and easing suffering has made it popular across Ansalon. The morals of the Legacy remain the focus for all Legionnaires' lives.

The Order maintains a wide range of concerns, from subtlely manipulating politics between nations to rebuilding villages destroyed in the Dragon Purge, from spying on the the Knights of Takhisis to aiding the poor and hungry. Some Legionnaires work covertly, while others operate out in the open. But all of them, in their own way, dedicate their lives to maintaining justice in a world where Good and Evil are not as easily defined as they used to be.

Citadel of Light

Goldmoon, chieftain of the united tribes of Abanasinia, left her home in Qué-Shu more than twenty-five years ago in a state of emotional turmoil. First her goddess had left her, then her husband and daughter died at the claws of Malystryx. The people of her tribe cried out for healing, but conventional herbal methods were never enough. The priestess, almost seventy years old then, set off for Solace, to speak one last time with her friends at the Inn of the Last Home—she felt certain her time on Krynn was about to end.

She would never have guessed that the most important chapter of her life was about to begin.

Goldmoon met an old man on her journey, who said people called him the Sage. His amiable conversation got her thinking about the words Fizban, avatar of the god Paladine, spoke to Palin Majere after the Chaos War: There may be other magics.

"What new magic might there be in a world abandoned by the gods?" Goldmoon asked the Sage, bitterly. "I'm no mage. Where should I look for it?"

He smiled benignly, then shrugged. "Look inside your own heart," he advised. The priestess sighed. She knew her heart held only sorrow.

While at the Inn, however, Goldmoon found within her more than merely sadness. When confronted with a dying hill dwarf, wounded in a ferocious dragon battle, Goldmoon awakened a remarkable, healing power within her, the likes of which she had never known. She had discovered the new, mystic power of the heart, upon which she founded the Citadel of Light.

The Founding

The Sage disappeared before Goldmoon could ask him about this strange new power—he seemed to know all along that the strength was within her. However, the old man visited her in Qué-Shu, as she struggled to once again find that healing strength. The Sage's wisdom helped Goldmoon learn how to consistently tap the font of magical strength inside her, and he agreed to remain in Qué-Shu and help the priestess grow in the powers of the heart.

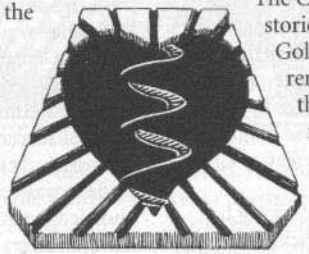
Soon, word of Goldmoon's new mystic magic began to spread throughout Abanasinia. The wizard Palin visited the priestess, hoping to understand her discovery, but left her home disappointed—it was not his magic she had found. But other visitors followed: clerics abandoned by their gods, mages seeking to rekindle magic within them, healers hoping to make a difference in their dragon-torn villages. Many of them were able to master their own inner strengths. Some decided to stay.

By 8SC, Goldmoon had decided her life no longer belonged to her tribes, but to her followers in mysticism. After passing her position of leadership to Moonsong, the Chieftain's Daughter, she left Abanasinia for the nearby isle of Schallsea. There, at the site of the ancient Silver Stair, she founded her new spiritual order. To her, the celestial ladder represented man's eternal attempt to reach the gods. The new mysticism she espoused taught men how to reach the divine not through prayer, as they had for centuries, but through the mastery of the gods-given gifts within the heart. (Chapter Five in the *Book of the Fifth Age* details the powers of mysticism.)

Besides the Sage, her companion in this endeavor was Jasper Fireforge—the nephew of Hero of the Lance Flint Fireforge. It was the life of this Neidar dwarf that Goldmoon had saved at the Inn. His relatives built the fledgling Order a wondrous, domed crystalline complex, which the priestess named the Citadel of Light. Elves came from Qualinesti to construct a grand courtyard hedge maze for the Citadel, with the Silver Stair rising from its center. This free-standing staircase remains invisible during the day; in the Fourth Age, it shone silver when the moon Solinari lit the night sky. Today the celestial ladder takes on just a faint, ghostly appearance when the light from Krynn's new pale moon shines upon it.

With her Citadel established, Goldmoon invited the chief priests of the gods of Good to Schallsea. Their churches were rapidly disintegrating, she saw. To renew the faith of the people, they needed to learn of the mystic gift the gods had left them. So Goldmoon began training the clerics in the mystic arts. Some departed, disbelieving the magical works they had seen with their own eyes. Others—including Crysania, the Revered Daughter of Paladine—lingered for years, mastering the new ways.

In its early days, the Citadel tried desperately to find evidence of the gods at work in the world today—much like the Companions did before the War of the Lance. The mystics sought out the other celestial ladders: the Moon Steps in the mountains of Northern Ergoth and the Star Stones in the Khalkists. They established outposts at each site and even undertook the dangerous journey to Godshome in Neraka (see Chapter Two).



They found nothing.

Evolution

Now, the Citadel no longer searches for signs of the gods. With each failure, Goldmoon grew more concerned that her new spiritual movement could one day become the modern version of the corrupt Seeker Theocracy, a false faith that sprang up in the wake of the first Cataclysm, when the gods departed the world for a time. She shuddered to recall the Seekers' attempts in the days before the War of the Lance to capture her and seize the blue crystal staff of Mishakal, her goddess.

Now her mystics often take novices, pilgrims, and tourists part-way up the endless Silver Stair to look down upon the Citadel and its surroundings. One can see nothing clearly from such heights, the guides point out—and the climber risks the danger of falling. One will never find the gods by ascending, using methods of past ages. Only plunging into the depths of one's own spirit truly reveals the power of their gifts.

Within the last two decades, Goldmoon has made the wonders of the mystic arts known all across Ansalon. She began in 13SC, by sending mystics from Schallsea to take up positions counseling the leaders of various nations. Even the aged Lady Crysania traveled to the land of Gunthar on Sancrist Isle, to advise the High Council of Knights there.

At Present

The Citadel still teaches the stories of the old deities: Goldmoon believes the gods remain deserving of honor, though absent. Once a novice has concluded his studies and proves himself skilled in the mystic arts, he becomes a master. He may choose to stay on Schallsea, serve in one of the Citadel's outposts, or simply make his way in the world—armed with a remarkable new ability.

Masters of mysticism represent one of the greatest forces for Good in the world today. Many help citizens of lands like Qualinesti and Dimernesti, besieged by the Great Dragons, fight their cruel lords. Some attempt to balance the Evil mysticism wielded by the Skull Knights of Takhisis. But all masters everywhere revere Goldmoon.

Though she is close to ninety, Goldmoon's inner strength sustains her. In fact, she has never been stronger or more alive than now, as the First Master of the mystic arts. Spiritual folk even see her as a young, vital lady. But to the faithless and weak-willed, she looks like an ordinary elderly woman: withered, tired, and frail.

Academy of Sorcery

Among the newest wonders of Ansalon is the majestic Academy of Sorcery. Built upon a natural plateau in the Sentinel Peaks just south of Solace, this magnificent complex covers three square miles. From the edge of the plateau, students of the Academy can see the great vallenwood forest nestled against the shores of Crystalmir Lake. All but hidden beneath the canopy of these towering vallenwoods is the tree city of Solace.

The Founding

At first, it may seem unbelievable that the Academy has risen from what was once a barren expanse of rock and scrub in just under three years. However, the accomplishment seems more feasible when one remembers that the school was built with the aid of all the powers of sorcery and under the guidance of Palin Majere, whose magic played a key role in the defeat of Chaos thirty years ago.

The majority of the Academy has been constructed from brick, sandstone, and laterite. Artists currently are working on ornate reliefs for every surface that depict the history of magic in Ansalon.

At the heart of the campus is the great Tower of the World, an awe-inspiring building of black, gray, and white stone that rises nearly five hundred feet above the plateau. This magnificent structure's unusual architectural style is patterned after ruins dating to before the Cataclysm: It is more squat than modern constructions and resembles a cross between a tower and a dome. Within the Tower of the World are the apartments of the sorcerers who teach and study at the school, as well as the Academy's administrative facilities.

Radiating outward from the Tower is a series of covered corridors that stretch like spokes to a circular outer hall that rings the Tower of the World. This hall, which has a circumference of just under three miles, serves as the outer wall of the Academy.

Evenly spaced along this circular walkway are the Towers of the Arts. Although they stand only half the height of the Tower of the World, they mirror its unique design. Each of these lesser structures is devoted to the study of one of the eleven known fields of sorcery: aeromancy, cryomancy, divination, electromancy, enchantment, geomancy, hydromancy, pyromancy, spectramancy, summoning, and transmutation.

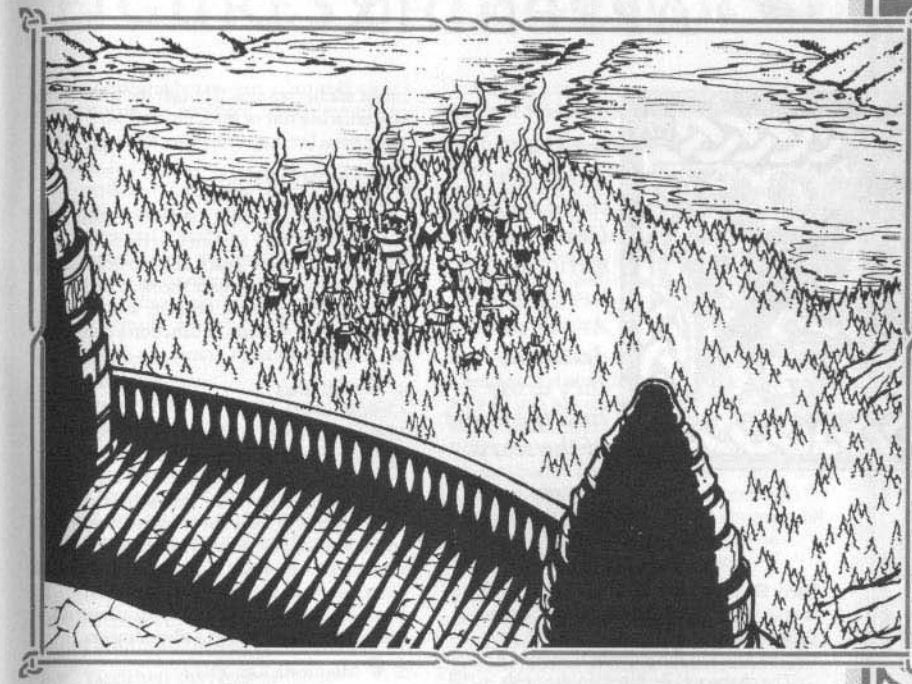
Evolution

As the Academy grew, its members made a conscious decision to diverge from the old style of magical instruction. They would not divide their members into "instructors" and "students." Everyone—even Palin, the Academy's founder—considers themselves students of sorcery. However, the members dictated early on that every Academy student was responsible for sharing his knowledge with others. Thus, intermediate sorcerers spend as much serving as mentors as they do as students.

Within its first two years, the Academy had gained a membership of some two hundred sorcerers and was still growing. As the student population swelled, the members worked out a system of living arrangements within the Tower of the World: New students made their homes on the lower levels, moving to loftier and loftier apartments as their studies progressed. At the pinnacle of the tower, beneath the Great Orrery, is the splendid apartment of Palin and Usha Majere.

At Present

Although he would deny it, the most important person at the Academy of Sorcery is certainly Palin Majere, nephew of the great mage Raistlin. From his residence at the pinnacle of the Tower of the World, he oversees every facet of the school's operation.



Palin, now in his middle years, has devoted himself wholly to the Academy, putting aside all else in his efforts to restore wizardly magic to Ansalon.

Palin and Usha's son, Ulin, is another important figure within the Academy. While his knowledge of sorcery does not equal his father's, it is nonetheless impressive and has earned Ulin a position of respect in this elite community.

The life of a student at the Academy is a demanding one. The day begins the instant the disk of the sun clears the eastern horizon and ends only when its last light has vanished in the west. A student's dedication to learning must be absolute during his time at the Academy; he has little time for anything but study, experimentation, teaching, and instruction.

However, sorcerers continue to play a vital role in Ansalon's events, just as wizards of the Conclave always did in earlier ages. For instance, Palin uses his skills to help transport refugees from Qualinesti and food into sealed Thorbardin. His friendship with the mysterious Master of the Tower of Wayreth puts him in an excellent position to assist those who live in Beryl's realm. Palin also maintains a good relationship with the Citadel of Light; its mistress, Goldmoon, was a Companion of his father. Together, the Citadel and the Academy can present a united front of magic to oppose the will of the dragon overlords.

Other members of the Academy take sabbaticals from their studies to undertake searches for items of magic. The enduring power of these items makes them more valuable than ever now, in an age that has redefined magic. During their journeys, these students often seek disavowed wizards from the Fourth Age to recruit for the Academy.

Finally, Ulin—with help from the enigmatic Shadow Sorcerer—currently conducts experiments to let sorcerers boost the power of their spells using the energy locked inside magical items.

ine they were,
under the
three moons,
Under the
autumn
twilight:
As the world
declined,
they arose
Into the heart
of the story.

—From "Song of the Nine Heroes," Dragons of Winter Night

Every DRAGONLANCE reference needs a discussion of the Saga's pageant of rich characters. Beloved heroes and reviled villains have shaped Ansalon throughout the Great Ages.

The characters featured on the cards in the FIFTH AGE Fate Deck represent these legendary figures. To help players and Narrators interpret these cards, as well as to provide background on many of the characters mentioned elsewhere in this book, this chapter offers brief character descriptions, arranged by card suit.

Suit of Shields

Representing the Suit of Shields are heroes and villains known for their agility.

1 Tika Waylan Majere

Nosy and Opinionated.

This red-haired, fiery Hero of the Lance has always projected a tough exterior, even in the most dire situations. Everything Tika does, she does with gusto, from serving food at the Inn of the Last Home (which she owns with her husband, Caramon) to battling draconians during the war. She might seem like a busybody, but she always has a compassionate response.

2 Usha Majere

Gregarious and Optimistic.

This exotic, Irda-raised orphan girl once pretended to be Raistlin's daughter. Thrust into the world for the first time at the advent of the Summer of Chaos, she banished the Chaos god by catching his blood in the halves of the Graygem in the Battle of the Rift. Being one of the two survivors of this battle has given Usha an optimistic bent, which she shares with any who might ask her opinion. Though she tries to hide emotions like fear or hurt, she can't keep anything from her husband, Palin, for long.

3 Linsha Majere

Tight-Lipped and Confident.

Although the daughter of Palin and Usha Majere may have been admitted to the Solamnic Knighthood on the legacy of her heroic family, she quickly proved to have the head and the nerves for covert work. After her knighting, she took up a position in Sanction's covert circle. Her grandfather, Caramon, is quite proud.

4 Gilthanas

Capable and Stubborn.

The second son of Solostaran, Qualinesti Speaker of the Sun, Gilthanas has acted as messenger, spy, and adventurer for his people ever since the start of the War of the Lance. He continues to serve the elven resistance beyond Qualinesti borders. This charming elf's ethnocentrism caused him to react badly to his sister Laurana's love for the half-human Tanis—he never dreamed he himself would one day lose his heart to a silver dragon.

5 Maquesta Kar-Thon

Open and Sensible.

The captain of the *Perechon* trusted a select few, but every port held one of her many lovers. Few knew that this dark-complected sea barbarian was half elf—she bobbed her ears to conceal her ancestry, as elves were hunted in some lands. This tough bargainer but honest merchant maintained a quiet rebellion against dragonarmy rule during the War of the Lance.

6 Milgas Kadwar

Modest and Practical.

During the Age of Dreams, the god Reorx selected the humblest of his Chosen folk, Milgas Kadwar, to find the Graygem he had forged and to retrieve it from its hiding spot on Lunitari. Milgas climbed his skyhook ladder all the way to the red moon and used a magical net to capture the Graygem. But, when he had descended to Krynn again, the stone escaped his net and sped across the continent, releasing magic that reshaped everything in its path.

7 Ferilleagh Dawnsprinter (Feril)

Wild and Realistic.

Although the Kagonesti elf Feril enjoys solitude, she has involved herself in the struggle between mortals and dragons. She considers the Great Dragons' ability to alter terrain a danger to nature's delicate balance and has made it her job to oppose them in any way she can. This worker of woodland magic bears an oak leaf tattoo on one cheek. She rejoices in natural beauty but mourns the transformation of her Southern Ergoth home to ice.

8 Rig Mer-Krel

Roguish and Cynical.

An Ergothian mariner, Rig loved his pirate life until what was supposed to be a bloodless mutiny turned brutal and left his captain dead. This rogue has few real allegiances and keeps a wary eye on all he meets. The tall, muscular sailor favors flashy clothes and carries a number of concealed weapons at all times.

9 Jendaron

Prying and Pessimistic.

As a servant to the House of Clovanos, Jendaron and his company of comrades—the Hooded—provide information and key items to their Senator employer. Although he longs for the days when the Qualinesti lived free, he believes that, for now, it's better to placate the Green Dragon than to annoy her.

Suit of Arrows

Those depicted in the Suit of Arrows are skilled archers and dexterous characters.

1 Tasslehoff Burrfoot

Careless and Innovative.

Not only was the kender Hero of the Lance insatiably curious, he loved to talk. Like all true kender, Tasslehoff was fearless, which many took for heedlessness. As a handler (the term "thief" is so rude!), Tas spent much of his life a guest in various jails. However, this heroic kender loved his friends and gave his life to defeat the Chaos god in the Battle of the Rift. His exploits have led kender everywhere to claim kinship with "Uncle Tas."

2 Tanis Half-Elven (Tanthalas)

Meticulous and Resourceful.

The son of a human father who ravaged an elf woman, Tanis was never quite accepted by the Qualinesti elves who reared him. However, his diplomatic skills made him a natural leader for the Heroes of the Lance and a valued intermediary for humans and elves (along with Laurana, his wife). Tanis commanded a valiant defense of the High Clerist's Tower during the Summer of Chaos, but he fell while saving the life of Steel Brightblade.

3 Theros Ironfeld

Scrupulous and Artistic.

Theros Ironfeld, known as the most gifted smith in Ansalon, learned his trade by spending time with many different races. This burly man lost an arm in battle, which made him sympathetic to anyone stricken with misfortune. Quiet, thoughtful Theros aided the Heroes of the Lance by forging artful dragonlances to fight the hated dragonarmies.

4 Blister Nimblefingers

Cautious and Inventive.

As an afflicted kender born in Kendermore before the coming of Malys, Blister shows a bit more caution than most people expect from a kender. An accident some years ago left her hands acid-burned; now, the middle-aged Blister wears gloves to cover the painful scars on her twisted fingers.

5 Kith-Kanan

Conscientious and Clever.

Kith-Kanan was the patient, tolerant twin of the elf Sithas, Speaker of the Stars. He and his Wildrunner elves kept the peace on Silvanesti's western border for nearly a century before the Kinslayer War erupted. This open-minded elf enraged his brother by marrying a human and eventually seceded from his homeland to found the new nation of Qualinesti.

6 Porthios

Distant and Cunning.

The dark elf Qualinesti Speaker of the Sun and haughty brother of Laurana has always held the welfare of the elven nations uppermost in his mind. In the Fourth Age, he freed Silvanesti from Lorac's Nightmare and wed the Silvanesti queen, Alhana Starbreeze. Though exiled for his attempt to unite the two nations, he continues to stage guerrilla attacks to win Qualinesti freedom from Beryl. He still favors elven unification, but scorns Gilthas as ruler.

7 Otik Sandath

Fastidious and Conventional.

Kind Otik ran the Inn of the Last Home during the Fourth Age, when the Heroes of the Lance used to gather there. He took in orphaned Tika Waylan, befriending her even though she had tried to rob him. Known for his splendid ale and spiced potatoes, Otik was never much of an adventurer. Yet the middle-aged man always sought to champion the cause of Good.

8 Gildentongue

Careful and Unimaginative.

Proud Gildentongue, an Aurak draconian, looks down his snout at mammalian races like humans. This special minion of Takhisis was sent to keep the peace with the Dark Queen's various allies during the War of the Lance, but he distrusted the Blue Lady. A secretive creature, Gildentongue frequently went about in disguise when dealing with potential enemies.

9 Bakaris

Heedless and Dogmatic.

This lieutenant in the Blue Dragonarmy re-

mained fanatically loyal to the Blue Lady until his death. This handsome but dark man's wild nature gave him berserker fury in battle. His quick temper and lust for pleasure once led him to kill the son of a noble in a fight over a woman—and led to his death when he assaulted Laurana during the War of the Lance.

Suit of Helms

Tough heroes and villains with a great deal of stamina appear in the Suit of Helms.

1 Caramon Majere

Thorough and Brave.

Caramon, the burly, good-hearted Hero of the Lance, has always been slow to act, preferring to think a matter over carefully before deciding on a course of action. After the war, he retired from adventuring to run the Inn of the Last Home with his wife, Tika. Caramon's love for his twin, Raistlin, never diminished, despite the wizard's constant lack of gratitude for his protection and aid. Although two of his children fell to the Dark Knights in the Summer of Chaos, Caramon still believes in fighting for the cause of Good.

2 Flint Fireforge

Resolute and Stouthearted.

The gruff old hill dwarf Flint Fireforge, a Hero of the Lance and longstanding friend of Tanis Half-Elven, felt it his duty to provide the Companions with guidance based on his years of experience. Though he'd never reveal it, he loved his young friends—even Tasslehoff. All mourned his death in Neraka near the end of the War of the Lance.

3 Kharas

Decisive and Courageous.

This dwarf hero exhibited such valor as a young warrior that the Knights of Solamnia honored him with the name *Kharas:* "knight" in Solamnic. However, the hatred he saw during the Dwarfgate War tore at his heart. This war left him a sad and broken man. He buried his magical war hammer—which later came to be called the Hammer of Kharas—in a secret place, vowing that only a dwarf of honor would wield it again.

4 Derkin Lawgiver

Cautious and Resolute.

The famed first king of Thorbardin united the dwarf thanes to repel Evil humans from their land. This practical-minded Hylar dwarf called for the construction of Pax Tharkas—a monument to peace among humans, dwarves, and elves—and signed the Swordsheath Scroll.

5 Dougan Redhammer

Purposeful and Careful.

When Reorx, god of the forge, chose to appear on Krynn, he often selected the form of a dandy of a dwarf thief named Dougan Redhammer. This cheerful dwarf always sported a neat white beard and fine clothes, even when he'd spent the night gambling and drinking. Dougan aided the Majere boys and Usha in various adventures related to the Graystone. His boisterousness belied the god's serious motives and careful plans.

6 Silver Claw

Determined and Circumspect.

After the coming of Beryllinthranox, Silver Claw—a Chieftain's Son living in the northern Plains of Dust—quickly came to understand the plight of those under the wyrm's dominion. He left his home with a group of Kharolis and elf rebels to accomplish the greater good of aiding in covert attacks on the Green Dragon. After several such exploits, recruiters from the Legion of Steel came looking for him. Today, so many years later, Silver Claw has become High Elder of the Order. He guides the Legion with the quiet strength and wise strategems that led the younger man to so many victories in the name of justice.

7 Rennard the Oathbreaker

Decisive and Cowardly.

This shrewd Knight of Solamnia had prayed for salvation from the Scarlet Plague as a youth. The only god to answer was Morgion. Rennard—a cold, gaunt Knight—murdered many for his dark god, including a Solamnic Grand Master. However, he eventually took his own life after Huma, his nephew, discovered his treachery. As punishment for his betrayals, Rennard was doomed to suffer the plague in Abyssal undeath forever.

8 Bertrem the Aesthetic

Dedicated and Timid.

A historian of Ansalon since boyhood, bookish Bertrem served Astinus of Palanthas unfailingly, though he never truly understood his enigmatic master. This serious scholar has taken it upon himself to recover the contents of the Great Library of the Ages. The task is daunting, and the order of Aesthetic scribes feels quite alone since Astinus vanished at the dawn of the Fifth Age.

9 Bupu

Groveling and Afraid.

A gully dwarf priestess, Bupu could command obedience from others of her kind, but adopted a groveling tone to those who could pose a danger to her or her clan. She often tried to bluff in battle, but would follow up this tactic by fleeing. This Aghar dwarf, the wife of the Highbulp, thought she could cast magic like Raistlin (she had a crush on him), though true spells were beyond her reach. She was considered gifted for a gully dwarf—she could count to three.

Suit of Swords

Representing the Suit of Swords are characters of fantastic strength.

1 Sturm Brightblade

Courageous and Inspiring.

Never was there a man of greater honor than Sturm Brightblade. The son of a Solamnic Knight, Sturm learned the knightly code from his mother and sought to restore the Knights to their former glory. He died defending the High Clerist's Tower in the War of the Lance, slain by his former friend Kitiara uth Matar—who had borne him a son he never knew he had.

2 Sir Liam Ehrling

Brave and Commanding.

This longtime confidant of Lord Gunthar introduced the new Measure to the Knights of Solamnia and was elected Grand Master following the eminent Gunthar's death. Lord Liam has the common sense and open-mindedness many Knights lack and displays the courage and personal honor to which every Knight aspires.

3 Huma Dragonbane

Valiant and Motivated.

This young hero of the Third Dragon War commanded rare insight, compassion, and kindness. He never feared breaking tradition by befriending a minotaur or by loving the silver dragon Heart—a love that forged an alliance between the Silver dragons and the Knights that lasts to this day. Before he perished in battle, Huma pierced the Dark Queen with a dragonlance to end the Third Dragon War.

4 Steel Brightblade

Aggressive and Commanding.

The son of a Dragon Highlord and a Knight of Solamnia, Steel fought internal struggles all his life, as both Paladine and Takhisis sought to claim him. Although he embraced the Dark Queen by becoming a Knight of Takhisis, he wore his father's starjewel and sword until his dying day. The words of this angry but honorable man inspired the united Knights to victory in the Battle of the Rift during the Chaos War.

5 Dhamon Grimwulf

Relentless and Independent.

As a Knight of Takhisis, Dhamon became disillusioned after seeing that his fellows had forgotten the ideals of honor that had forged their Order. Upon learning compassion from a Solamnic, this lean, muscular youth left the Dark Knights. Still, nothing can ease his guilt over the deaths he's caused.

6 Kaz the Minotaur

Domineering and Belligerent.

The companion of Huma Dragonbane may have been stubborn and loud, but he remained unswerving in his loyalty to the Knight throughout his trials and long after. This renegade minotaur dealt harshly with enemies but respected honor. The only hero left alive after the final battle of the Third Dragon War, he freed Takhisis after she vowed to depart.

7 Chot Es-Kalin

Aggressive and Brutal.

This minotaur emperor looks down on all other races—except dragons. In his arrogance, he believes no member of an "inferior" race could best him, so he toys with his foes. However, he was wise enough to realize the power of the Dragon Highlords, and sided with them during the Fourth Age.

8 Kitiara uth Matar

Commanding and Fierce.

The half-sister of Caramon and Raistlin Majere knew great ambition, which saw her rise to the status of Dragon Highlord during the War of the Lance. This beautiful warrior, known as the Blue Lady, stopped at nothing to advance herself—even if that meant betraying lovers or killing friends. Kit ultimately died at the hands of Dalamar, a former lover.

9 Emperor Ariakas

Ruthless and Sadistic.

The Red Dragonarmy Highlord during the War of the Lance, Ariakas eventually became the Emperor of all Ansalon. This smart, powerful priest of Takhisis was the personification of ambitious Evil. However, his major weakness was his arrogance and tendency to underestimate his foes. This flaw led to his death in Neraka at the end of the war.

Suit of Moons

Many wizards and other wise heroes and villains have a place in the Suit of Moons.

1 Palin Majere

Impulsive and Inquisitive.

Palin was the youngest mage to take the Test of High Sorcery since his uncle Raistlin's. Upon receiving the White Robes, the earnest youth embarked on adventures with his two brothers, but often feared his magic would fail him. The sharp-witted sorcerer showed his true skill, however, when he rescued Raistlin from the Abyss and cast a mighty spell of the great warwizard Magius during the Battle of the Rift. One of only two survivors of this battle, Palin Majere has became a major figure in the Fifth Age. Along with the other members of the Last Conclave, he unraveled the mystery of spellcasting in the new era and founded the Academy of Sorcery to teach these methods to others.

2 Par-Salian

Thoughtful and Curious.

The skilled, elderly wizard Par-Salian led the White Robed Mages—and the entire Wizards Conclave—during the Fourth Age. Although he

preferred study to action and disliked leaving the Tower of High Sorcery at Wayreth, he refused to retire while Raistlin remained a threat. He feared his decision to let Raistlin take his Test at an early age propelled him toward Evil.

3 ☽ Fizban the Fabulous
Absent-Minded and Nosy.
A lovable old curmudgeon, Fizban was actually an avatar of the god Paladine. In the Fourth Age, this bumbling, grandfatherly wizard often appeared at just the right moment to deliver much-needed magical aid—or chicken feathers, if his spell didn't work. Tasslehoff was always helping him find his lost hat.

4 ☽ Justarius
Thoughtful and Contemplative.
The head of the Order of Red Robes, Justarius became leader of the Wizards Conclave upon Par-Salian's death. This friendly, open, and honest man never trusted others quickly and seemed not overly compassionate toward strangers. He walked with a limp, due to an injury during his Test. His adventurous bent led him to embark on a mission to Storm's Keep toward the end of the Fourth Age, where he met his end at the hands of the Gray Robes.

5 ☽ The Shadow Sorcerer
Enigmatic and Introspective.
About ten years ago, a strange robed figure appeared out of the Desolation, bearing strange, sorcerous powers. The face of this sorcerer remains always hidden in the shadows of a large hood. Neither does the figure speak—those he (she?) addresses hear a voice in their minds. Though cloaked in mystery, the Shadow Sorcerer has offered valuable aid to the spellcasters of the world as part of the Last Conclave.

6 ☽ Magius
Rash and Crafty.
The excitable, brilliant Magius was called the best war-wizard the world ever knew. However, the Red Robed mage had a selfish, secretive bent: During the Third Dragon War, he hid his visions of danger even from his only friend, Huma. Still, he endured torture and death at the hands of the Dark Queen's renegade mage rather than betray his comrades.

7 ☽ Fistandantilus
Mysterious and Plotting.
This diseased old man, who lived at the time of the Dwarfgate War, exuded an aura of Evil and decay. He showed his lust for power in his attempt to defeat the Dark Queen (which resulted in the Skullcap explosion) and showed his yearning for immortality by using his bloodstone to steal life from younger mages. He even sent his spirit through time to merge with Raistlin's and confront the Dark Queen once again—in vain.

8 ☽ Dalamar the Dark
Thoughtful and Conniving.
In his search for knowledge and power, Dalamar of the Silvanesti chose the Black Robes. His people cast him out for such a disgrace, making him a dark elf. Though he once served as Raistlin's apprentice (and spied on him for the Wizards Conclave), he came to lead the Black Robes and, with the death of Justarius, the entire Conclave. This charming elf never lost his respect for his old master, though—nor his hatred. He led an investigation of the Rift during the Chaos War but has since disappeared.

9 ☽ Raistlin Majere
Obsessive and Scheming.
Clearly, Raistlin Majere, twin brother of Caramon, was the most powerful wizard ever to walk Krynn. The sickly, cynical mage lost most of his strength during his Test of High Sorcery. He was changed in other ways, too: His skin tone changed to gold, and his pupils took on the shape of hourglasses, forcing Raistlin to forever see the world passing through time to death. In his arrogance, Raistlin believed he could best the Dark Queen and rule the world. However, at the last moment he decided to remain in the Abyss with Takhisis, to trap her there. Palin Majere freed his uncle in time to benefit from Raistlin's advice and defeat the Chaos god. After the Battle of the Rift, Raistlin presumably left Krynn again, to resume his long sleep.

Suit of Orbs

The characters in the Suit of Orbs all have formidable powers of perception.

1 ● Alhana Starbreeze
Reserved and Insightful.
The former Queen of Silvanesti and daughter of Lorac, the last Speaker of the Stars, can be imperious and demanding. However, her cold facade hides a warm, loving woman, easily moved to sympathy. Perhaps her warmer side surfaces more often these days due to her association with humans and her lost love for the human Sturm Brightblade. Though unjustly exiled because of her political marriage to Porthios of the Qualinesti, Alhana agreed to leave her homeland as a dark elf for the good of her people.

2 ● Speaker Gilthas (Gil)
Serious and Open-Minded.
The Speaker of the Sun of the Qualinesti ascended the throne under questionable circumstances: A group of elder Senators kidnapped the son of Lauranalanthalasa and Tanis, threatening to kill the captive Alhana Starbreeze if he did not accept the title. Though only a rebellious youth then, Gilthas has grown canny in his rule and has won respect by standing up to Beryl the Green directly—and by circumventing her rule, too.

3 ● Sara Dunstan
Thoughtful and Insightful.
A simple weaver, Sara Dunstan never would have guessed that adopting the infant Steel Brightblade could change her life so much. Because she worried for the safety of her adopted son, child of a Dragon Highlord and a Knight of Solamnia, she joined the Dark Knights with him and even sought aid from his parents' friends to guide the youth away from the sinister Order. When she heard of Steel's leadership during the Battle of the Rift, she knew he had died valiantly. A vision from her son at the Tomb of the Last Heroes inspired Sara—then a renegade—to found the Legion of Steel.

4 ● Astinus of Palanthas
Studious and Methodical.
No one knows exactly when this great sage appeared in Palanthas. However, everyone knows that his vast knowledge encompassed everything in the *Iconochronos,* the book of Krynn's history, which he continually updated. Though polite, Astinus was always distant—and irritable at those who interrupted his work. Because of his apparent agelessness and omniscience, and because he vanished mysteriously from the Great Library at the close of the Fourth Age, many believe he was the god Gilean or perhaps Zivilyn.

5 ● Riverwind
Deliberate and Vigilant.
This great hunter and Hero of the Lance believed in the true gods long before most realized they had returned. His quest of worthiness for the hand of Goldmoon, his Chieftain's Daughter, led him to the Staff of Mishakal, which Goldmoon wielded as a cleric of the goddess of healing. After the War of the Lance, this loyal man of few words helped rebuild the Qué-Shu tribal home and, with Goldmoon, ruled the united tribes of Abanasinia. The imposing warrior met his death aiding the fruitless defense of Kendermore from the ravages of Malystryx.

6 ● Groller Dagmar
Simple and Observant.
The half-ogre farmer Groller Dagmar was stricken deaf after a green dragon attack on his home. His speech is not clear, but he can communicate through sign language. Since he lost his hearing, Groller's other senses have become quite acute. Despite the adventures he undertakes to distract himself from memories of the dragon attack, the kindhearted half-ogre is plagued nightly by horrible dreams of the deaths of his wife and daughters.

7 ● Ackal Ergot
Shrewd and Bigoted.
Following the Second Dragon War, the barbarian Ackal Ergot united the Khalkist tribes for the first time ever. He looted ruined ogre cities and homes to found the first nation of humans, which he named Ergoth after himself. With sword and flame he exterminated those who would not join him and ruled all the land he could. Before his death, brutal Ackal had absorbed the plains and all land to Ansalon's northern shore into his harsh empire.

8 ● Verash
Studious and Opinionated.
Though he takes on many different forms—including human, wolf, and sea elf—Verash is truly a Scion: one of Krynn's ancient wild mages. In his true form he seems to be a golden-eyed dwarf. He enjoys stirring up action where he can and currently strives to bring heroes together to combat the rule of the Great Dragons. Though his unpredictable methods often seem highly questionable, he always acts as he thinks will best help mankind.

9 ● Highbulp Phudge I
Lazy and Prejudiced.
The leader of the Bulp clan at Xak Tsaroth during the War of the Lance possessed all the qualities of a gully dwarf king: He was greedy, proud, cowardly, dim-witted, and liked others to do his fighting for him. Phudge also enjoyed finery and rich clothes, and thought very little of the ways of "giants" like humans. His treachery almost made the Heroes of the Lance dinner for a dragon.

Suit of Hearts

Truly passionate, spiritual, and willful heroes and villains make up the Suit of Hearts.

1 ♥ Crysania
Calm and Merciful.
After the departure of her god, the Revered Daughter of Paladine has become a skilled mystic. Delicate, aging Crysania still captivates listeners with her charm and grace and inspires many to believe in the gods-given power of the heart. Her Fourth Age journey to the Abyss with Raistlin, her love for that Evil mage, and the departure of her god have combined to teach this blind priestess true humility.

2 ♥ Jasper Fireforge
Honest and Kind.
This jovial dwarf priest of Reorx is the nephew of Hero of the Lance Flint Fireforge. Tolerant and unwilling to utter a harsh word against a friend, Jasper went north to Abanasinia after the War of the Lance to do missionary work. Following the Second Cataclysm, his uncle told Jasper in a dream to travel to the Inn of the Last Home, where he met the despairing Goldmoon. In saving his life, Goldmoon discovered the power of the heart—and Jasper discovered his lifelong mission: to study mysticism at her side.

The hill dwarf helped found the Citadel of Light and is one of its mystic Masters.

3 ♥ Goldmoon

Sensible and Compassionate.

Pure of heart, Goldmoon of the Qué-Shu has been a spiritual pioneer most of her life. During the War of the Lance she rediscovered the power of the goddess Mishakal, and in the early days of the Fifth Age she was awakened to the new mysticism. Although she still misses her husband, Riverwind, and her daughter, Brightdawn, she has thrown herself into teaching the power of the heart in Ansalon—the gods' last gift to humanity, she calls it. Though close to ninety years old now, Goldmoon looks always ageless and beautiful to those who are strong in faith.

4 ♥ Vinas Solamnus

Honorable and Grandiose.

The legendary Vinas Solamnus, one-time general of the Ergothian armies, is remembered for his sense of morality and justice as well as his superior military skills. Upon seeing the hardship the Empire inflicted upon its eastern territories, he joined a rebellion that he had been commanded to quell. His siege of Ergoth's capital earned freedom for the eastern lands. The general's grateful followers named their new nation Solamnia. Soon after, Vinas embarked upon a quest that took him to Sancrist, where he was rewarded with a vision from Paladine, Kiri-Jolith, and Habbakuk. These gods of Good inspired him to create an Order of high ideals: the Knights of Solamnia, who continue to stand for honor and justice.

5 ♥ Lorac Caladon

Realistic and Self-Centered.

When the dragonarmies besieged King Lorac's fair Silvanesti during the War of the Lance, the robust elf Speaker tried to destroy them with a Dragon Orb. Unfortunately, its power proved greater than his own: The Evil mind trapped within the orb cast a spell on Lorac, driving him insane and imprisoning him in his own nightmares. These visions spiraled out into the forest to reshape Silvanesti into a twisted, horrible wood. Phantasmal beasts roamed this land even fifty years after Lorac's death; Porthios finally ended the nightmare curse in 382AC.

6 ♥ Gargath

Deceitful and Uncaring.

A great ruler during the Age of Dreams, Gargath prayed in concern to Zivilyn, god of all wisdom, about the rising chaos born of the marauding Graygem. In response, the god gave him two godstones to bind it. Lord Gargath used the stones to trap the Graygem atop an altar in his tall tower. He refused to return the gem to the Chosen of Reorx, who then laid siege to his tower. Eventually, the attackers created a breach in the tower, which freed the Graystone to roam the world again. Legends say Gargath joined the gnomes in chasing the gem and managed to capture it on an island in the north Sirrion Sea. There he lived under the influence of the Graygem for centuries, until Dougan Redhammer and the Majere brothers divested him of the gem, freeing him of its chaotic effects.

7 ♥ Lord Soth

Pragmatic and Murderous.

Lord Soth, a Knight born before the first Cataclysm, was once considered a paragon of virtue. However, his strong passions proved his downfall—they led him to help murder his barren wife so he could marry his pregnant elf mistress. When Soth's new bride learned what had happened, she prayed with him for a chance at redemption. In response, the gods gave Soth the power to prevent the Cataclysm, and he set out to save the world. When Soth heard claims his new wife had been unfaithful, he abandoned his task and returned home to confront her. At that moment, the Cataclysm began, and Soth's wife and child were burned to death before his eyes. Soth, however, was cursed to suffer as a death knight. In the War of the Lance, he commanded an army of skeletal warriors and other undead creatures from his home, Dargaard Keep. The Knight of the Black Rose kept the trappings of Solamnic honor as a mockery of the Knight he used to be.

8 ♥ Lord Ariakan

Forthright and Cruel.

Ariakan, the charismatic, driven son of Emperor Ariakas and the storm goddess Zeboim, founded the Knights of Takhisis after a prolonged study of their counterparts: the Solamnic Knights. The honorable Dark Knights have both won and lost much since their founding late in the Fourth Age, but their successes are due almost entirely to the intelligence and faith of Lord Ariakan. Preparing for an invasion of Ansalon, he drilled recruits brutally—the world had no room for the weak. The general inspired his troops with his skill, courage, and vision. His ambitions, though great, were never for himself, only for Takhisis. Yet when the forces of Chaos attacked his newly-won High Clerist's Tower, the loyal Knight was slain, abandoned by his cruel Queen.

9 ♥ The Kingpriest

Dishonest and Immoral.

Although ostensibly a servant to the forces of Good, the Kingpriest of Istar was nothing more than a slave to personal ambition. He seized property of those guilty of "evil" acts, invaded the minds of those thought to harbor improper thoughts, ousted wizards from society, and called for the extermination of many races. The Kingpriest's militia terrorized citizens during his reign of terror, which culminated in his attempt to summon the very gods to do his bidding. He may have tried to *become* a god. In any event, his efforts yielded nothing but Cataclysm.

Suit of Crowns

The characters in the Suit of Crowns all share one trait in common: excellent leadership skills.

1 ♛ Gunthar uth Wistan

Authoritative and Just.

Lord Gunthar became Grand Master of the Knights of Solamnia in the Fourth Age, when the Knighthood still suffered disrepute. More than anyone, Gunthar was responsible for restoring its ancient greatness after the War of the Lance. This concerned leader held a strong sense of duty and demanded much from his Knights. Though an accomplished warrior, he hated unnecessary bloodshed and often showed mercy to honorable enemies. All his life, he bore his burdens of leadership alone and had little time for friendship.

2 ♛ Laurana (Lauranalanthalasa)

Inspiring and Fair.

Although the daughter of Qualinesti Speaker of the Sun Solostaran began traveling with the Heroes of the Lance while quite young, Laurana matured quickly. She discovered a remarkable inner strength that always came through in times of crisis, and a rational mind capable of planning complex strategies. She became known as the Golden General during the War of the Lance, when she led the Whitestone forces to an improbable victory. Since the war, she married her childhood love, Tanis Half-Elven, and raised a son, Gilthas. Today, the beautiful elf serves as a diplomatic adviser to her son in Qualinesti.

3 ♛ Moonsong

Independent and Reasonable.

The older twin daughter of Riverwind and Goldmoon is lucky to be alive. She accompanied her father and sister in the defense of Kendermore during the Dragon Purge and lived only through a stroke of good fortune. The scars on her face from the breath of Malys serve as a constant reminder of what she has lost—and of the threat still facing the world. She has the silver-golden hair of her mother and, in the Fifth Age, has succeeded her as the capable Chieftain of the Abanasinian Plainsfolk.

4 ♛ Severus Stonehand

Charismatic and Demanding.

The Daewar dwarf Severus Stonehand disagreed with the High Thane of Thorbardin regarding the defense of the dwarves' mountain kingdom in the face of Beryl's threat. The zealot Prophet of Reorx believed his people should rely on a creature of Chaos to fight the Green Dragon. The crazed mystic was overruled in the Council of Thanes and, upon Thorbardin's sealing, led his followers east to reclaim the dwarven realm of Thoradin. Once established as its new High Thane, Severus allied with the Dark Knights.

5 ♛ Belladonna

Lawless and Tough.

A child during the Kender Flight, Billee Juniper saw her entire family burned to a cinder by Malystryx. She herself did not escape injury: the painful scars on her back and legs bother her still. This kender came of age in exile in Hylo. Upon taking up leadership there, she changed her name to Belladonna and determined to marshal kender resources against the dragon overlords. In her single-mindedness, she leads other afflicted kender in raids on local dragons like Pyrothraxus and Gellidus. It's only a matter of time before she targets Malys. But she should beware her kender impulsiveness; her thirst for revenge often blinds her to practicality—and danger.

6 ♛ Mirielle Abrena

Imperious and Commanding.

A senior Knight of Takhisis during the Summer of Chaos, Mirielle Abrena commanded a wing fighting in Northern Ergoth. As one of the few officers who survived the Chaos War, Abrena attended the Council of the Last Heroes. From the moment the Dark Knights were ceded the land surrounding Neraka, she began plotting how to take it. In a brilliant military effort in 4SC, she subjugated the local ogres, goblins, draconians, and hobgoblins, and began reforging the scattered Knights into an Order once more. Today, as Governor-General of Neraka and head of the Knighthood, Abrena may lack the honor of Lord Ariakan, but she has a vision all her own—one of personal conquest.

7 ♛ Seeker Hederick

Egotistical and Despotic.

Seeker Hederick, High Theocrat of Solace just before the War of the Lance, was known for his ruthlessness, paranoid cruelty, and glory in power. He never hesitated to report colleagues for even trivial "heresies." Hederick's Inquisition was responsible for the deaths of thousands. From his mad point of view, life would be better for everyone if they would just obey the Theocracy—namely, him.

8 ♛ Fewmaster Toede

Inspiring and Tyrannical.

Toede began his career of lying, bullying, and murdering at a young age—even for a hobgoblin. Over time, his brutality and longevity won him leadership positions among the Dark Queen's minions despite his basic incompetence. Eventually, Lord Toede gained a prominent post among Takhisis's goblin hordes,

though deep down he was a coward. He may have behaved imperiously to his goblin underlings, but he groveled like a gully dwarf before a show of superior force.

9 ♛ **Highlord Verminaard**
Domineering and Dictatorial.
Takhisis bestowed her favor upon Verminaard when he was a mercenary, knowing he had no conscience or shred of mercy to distract him from her cause. As a priest of the Dark Queen, Lord Verminaard lived for the destruction of all that was Good. Ruthless in battle, he gloried in shedding blood with his magical mace Nightbringer. This charismatic Dragon Highlord became a bloodthirsty beast when thwarted. He considered only one person a true threat: the Blue Lady, whose ambition and hunger for power exceeded even his own.

Suit of Dragons

Unlike the other suits, the Suit of Dragons has ten cards: one for each type of dragon.

1 **Solomirathnius (Mirror)**
Eccentric.
Ever since the dawn of the Fifth Age, the great wyrm Solomirathnius has had to fight the chromatic dragons constantly just to stay alive. The many scars he gained in the Dragon Purge mar his silver hide, which has grown a bit dull with age. The tip of his tail is missing—another sign of his history of hard-fought battles. However, this formidable figure has survived because he is still the strongest of the silvers.

His face shows great wisdom born of centuries of experience and enlightenment. His compassion for mortals' struggle in this age leads him to help where he can, but he has grown weary of fighting. Sometimes the old dragon wonders whether he can maintain his hope in light of countless setbacks.

2 **Suhnrysanti (Sunrise)**
Hedonistic.
This young gold dragon tends to act tense and nervous—he hatched just prior to the War of the Lance, so all he has ever known is warfare. Sunrise used to be friends with the Solamnic Knights of Southern Ergoth. But when the Dragon Purge began, he retreated north into the Ergothian mountains where, to assuage his loneliness, he took to sculpting and practicing magic. Now he enjoys taking on human form when he can to walk among the "lesser races," and he loves to collect the remarkable treasures of art and jewelry that men create. He loses any vestiges of nervousness and becomes excited when discussing magic or works of art. Though Sunrise prides himself on his great intellect, recent decades have taught him he has much to learn about the world and surviving in it.

3 **Shatraklangg (Clang)**
Cantankerous.
The incorrigible, irreverent Clang loves to quietly interfere with the Evil dragons' plans without drawing attention to herself. The old copper dwells in the enchanted Forest of Wayreth, a secret guardian of the path to the last Tower of High Sorcery. She survived the Dragon Purge by hiding from foes in the magical wood and by tricking them into clever death traps. To her sorrow, her siblings and children perished at the claws of Evil wyrms. Although she craves revenge, she won't risk her own life.

Shatraklangg has always been quite a prankster, taking pride in tricking opponents into creating their own downfalls. As she is an ancient dragon, her copper scales have developed a mottled bluish-green tarnish along the edges. However, their dulled sheen makes it easier for her to conceal herself among moss-covered rocks and in forested hillsides.

4 **Teranyex (Terror)**
Egomaniacal.
A powerful, majestic creature, this great bronze dragon gleams with rich metallic scales. Teranyex, a relentless foe, is exceptionally fond of warfare and combat. He feels that any hero—human or dragon—can properly show his mettle only in the midst of a great battle. Few dragons can match the cunning and strategic sense of this great saurian warrior. Clearly, the bronze fought many challengers during the Dragon Purge, though he never speaks of those times. Because he is Good, he engages only Evil creatures in battle. Teranyex loves the sea and finds the crash of surf on a rocky coast more musical than any symphony.

Chapter Two of this book offers sections describing each of the following Great Dragons:

5 **Iyesta (Splendor)**
Vain.
See this brass dragon's description on page 48.

6 **Onysablet (Sable)**
Treacherous.
See the Black Dragon's description on page 42.

7 **Khellendros (Skie)**
Wrathful.
See the Blue Dragon's description on page 36.

8 **Beryllinthranox (Beryl)**
Malicious.
See the Green Dragon's description on page 32.

9 **Gellidus (Frost)**
Sadistic.
See the White Dragon's description on page 34.

10 **Malystryx (Malys)**
Megalomaniac.
See the Red Dragon's description on page 39.

DRAGONLANCE FIFTH AGE™

Ansalonian Calendar

The Ansalonian year contains twelve months of thirty days each. A week consists of seven days. Many cultures have their own unique names for these days and months, which are listed below (days are presented starting with the first day of the week).

Except for Solamnia and its bordering realms, civilized humans tend to use Ergoth's calendar—a holdover from the days of the vast Ergothian Empire.

Dwarves

The dwarves' calendar names days after metals and months after seasons in the dark of their underground realms.

Days

Brenzik, Mithrik, Adamachtis, Aurachil, Cuprig, Ferramis, Agorin.

Months

Winter—Cold Lode, Dark Crypt, Dark Deep; *Spring*—Damp Mood, Damp Chisel, Dry Anvil; *Summer*—Dry Axe, Dry Heat, Dry Forge; *Autumn*—Cold Hammer, Cold Steel, Cold Rust.

Elves

Elves honor the gods with their days of the week and use seasonal descriptives to correspond to months.

Days

Gateway, Bright Eye, Night's Eye, Dead Eye, Dream Dance, Winged Trade, World Tree.

Months

Winter—Winter Come, Winter Night, Winter Deep; *Spring*—Spring Dawning, Spring Rain, Spring Blossom; *Summer*—Summer Home, Summer Flame, Summer End; *Autumn*—Autumn Harvest; Autumn Twilight, Autumn Dark.

Ergoth

The men of Ergoth used astronomical and religious references to name the days and months.

Days

Gileadai, Luindai, Nuindai, Soldai, Manthus, Shinarai, Parlai.

Months

Winter—Phoenix, Aelmont, Rannmont; *Spring*—Mishamont, Chislmont, Bran; *Summer*—Corij, Argon, Sirrimont; *Autumn*—Reorxmont, Hiddumont, H'rarmont.

Goblins

Goblins incorporate warlike terminology into most aspects of their life, including their calendar.

Days

Guard, Pain, Fear, Rout, Strife, Feint, Flank.

Months

Winter—Reward, Famine, Madness; *Spring*—Girding, Scouting, Campaign; *Summer*—Siege, Flame, Sack; *Autumn*—Loot, Betrayal, Pestilence.

Kender

The kender honor nature in their calendar, which also reflects their race's inherent spirit of fun.

Days

Praise Day, Light Day, Fire Day, Winds Day, Waters Day, Ground Day, Shadow Day.

Months

Winter—Blessings, Snowfun, Darktime; *Spring*—Windsong, Raindrum, Flowerfield; *Summer*—Homefriends, Wandertime, Summerlaze; *Autumn*—Harvestfete, Leafplay, Bleakcold.

The Plains

Plainsfolk's days of the week refer to the Paths of Kindred, while months correspond to the seasons.

Days

Friend Day, Hunt Day, Share Day, Gather Day, Barter Day, Worship Day, Council Day.

Months

Winter—Frost Eve, Ice Glaze, Snow Deep; *Spring*—Mountain Thaw, Earth Wakes, Flower Blooms; *Summer*—Home Hearth, Raging Fire, Dying Ember; *Autumn*—Harvest Home, Leaf Gild, Dark Cold.

Solamnia

The god days form a Solamnic week, while the months describe the effects of the seasons in the ancestral tongue of this land.

Days

Linaras, Palast, Majetag, Kirinor, Misham, Bakukal, Bracha.

Months

Winter—Frostkolt, Newkolt, Deepkolt; *Spring*—Brookgreen, Yurthgreen, Fleurgreen; *Summer*—Holmswelt, Fierswelt, Paleswelt; *Autumn*—Reapember, Gildember, Darkember.

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HEROES OF A NEW AGE

An adventure in the Fifth Age

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Heroes of a New Age is thankfully dedicated to Ann and Bill Parks and their children, Will and Amy. You showed me what a family could and should be and helped me make the wisest choice I've ever made.

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Author's Foreword

Welcome to the first DRAGONLANCE®: FIFTH AGE™ adventure! This introductory scenario takes heroes from the comfortable surroundings of the Inn of the Last Home to dark caverns far beneath the Kharolis Mountains. What they find there will surprise them and help shape the future of Ansalon.

The Adventure

Like all FIFTH AGE adventures, *Heroes of a New Age* is divided into *acts* and *scenes*—terms that should remind Narrators and players alike of the theatrical, dramatic nature of role-playing games. As the heroes make choices and attempt actions, they progress from one scene to the next within each act. This structured sequence of action is reminiscent of the ebb and flow of a good book or movie.

The FIFTH AGE game's clear-cut adventure format, outlined in Chapter Two of the *Book of the Fifth Age*, frees Narrators from many ponderous rule-based duties, allowing them to focus on their primary concerns: telling a good tale and enhancing the gaming experience.

The Story

Heroes of a New Age follows the theft of a holy gem called the Tear of Reorx from the horde of the great green wyrm Beryllinthranox. A team of Qualinesti under the elf freebooter Saranja stole the orb. They seek to return it to Thorbardin for the dwarves to use against Beryl, for any defeat to the Green is a victory for those who toil under her yoke.

The plot summaries below illustrate only one path the heroes can take through this adventure. *Groups need not play every scene in order to complete each act!* Through their heroes' actions, the players determine which scenes they cover, so the story turns out differently for different groups.

- **Act One: A Cry For Help.** The heroes begin the adventure in the city of Solace as guests at the Inn of the Last Home. While enjoying breakfast, they hear a cry for help and rush to the aid of an elf trader under attack by brigands. After the heroes dispatch the thugs, the merchant's employer, a Qualinesti elf named Saranja, offers them jobs as guards with her renegade merchant caravan.
- **Act Two: The Emerald Death.** As the heroes travel into the Kharolis Mountains, they must weather a great blizzard, face an attack by the green dragon Dreselenimus, and risk venturing into an underground passage they hope will see them safely through the mountains.
- **Act Three: Underground Discovery.** While making their escape from the dragon, the heroes stumble into a tunnel hewn by the dwarves of the sealed nation of Thorbardin. There, they have the opportunity to save a dwarf mining expedition from the horrid fate of undeath. If they succeed, the dwarves could prove valuable allies against their common enemy: the Green Dragon.
- **Epilogue.** At several points, the heroes might be set upon by Dreselenimus, one of Beryl's green dragon minions. In addition, they have the chance to end the adventure at various points along the way. The Epilogue contains scenes appropriate to all these instances.

Final Notes

Heroes of a New Age introduces concepts fundamental to the FIFTH AGE game: character interaction, the role of a hero, combat, problem solving—even battling a dragon. Some scenes merely suggest certain encounters, rather than mandate them, to allow the Narrator flexibility. To gain background, players and Narrators both should review the sections on the realms of Beryllinthranox, Abanasinia, and Thorbardin in the *Dusk or Dawn: Ansalon in the Fifth Age* sourcebook.

I hope you find that this adventure encourages the epic drama, rich characterization, and thrilling conflict that have made the DRAGONLANCE Saga exciting and memorable for more than a decade.

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Scene One: In Solace

This scene places the heroes in the city of Solace in Abanasinia and assumes that they all know each other, as the Companions did before the War of the Lance.

Overview

The heroes have a chance to learn the local news over breakfast at the Inn of the Last Home, before a cry for help shatters the peace of the morning.

Getting Started

Before starting, the Narrator should make sure every player has a hero sheet (or a hero card, for those using pregenerated characters) and the correct number of cards in his hand. The Narrator may want to have Tika and Caramon Majere's character cards on hand, to show the players illustrations of these legendary innkeepers.

First Impressions

The Narrator should inform players that their heroes are in Solace, the great crossroads where the Heroes of the Lance gathered so long ago. This adventure begins on a crisp autumn morning, the first day of Hiddumont. Reading the following description can start things off:

Solace is an unusual city built among the boughs of a towering forest of great vallenwood trees. This splendid tree-city nestles in a valley between the cool waters of Crystalmir Lake and the majestic spires of the Sentinel Peaks. It serves as a major crossroads, and many legendary heroes have called the place home.

The heroes begin this adventure as guests at the Inn of the Last Home. Some additional description sets the mood for that well-known gathering spot:

You spent last night in comfortable rooms at the Inn of the Last Home, a building only slightly less famous than its owners, the Heroes of the Lance Caramon and Tika Majere. Despite their fame, the two seem quite congenial. They appear to make friends as easily as the legends say they dispatched their foes.

The Story Begins

Unless the heroes do something foolish (like start a fight), this scene shouldn't contain a lot of action. The innkeepers seem interested in chatting with them this morning, as do a couple of patrons. A little foreshadowing through such conversation should pique the players' interest.

While they enjoy a delicious meal of eggs, bread, and Otik's spiced potatoes, Tika offhandedly mentions that several strange visitors stopped in shortly before the heroes came down for breakfast. They ordered hot drinks, drank them in silence, and left. While she doesn't know who they were or what they were up to, she certainly thought them suspicious.

Should the heroes pursue this line of conversation, they won't be able to learn much. Caramon recalls that the visitors wore chain mail, carried broad swords, and draped themselves in hooded green cloaks that shadowed their faces to prevent him from seeing them in detail.

After the Majeres excuse themselves, the heroes might wish to speak with some of the other patrons. One guest is an old flower peddler named Glennes. Every day, she visits the Inn to sell Tika a bunch of flowers. Kind Tika always buys some to brighten up the Inn, then treats the woman to a hot breakfast. Glennes wouldn't dream of insulting her by soliciting the Inn's guests—but anyone of at least Peasant (2) social status can afford a bundle of violets.

Glennes doesn't hesitate to strike up a conversation. Today, she seems quite upset about an incident that just happened. She had offered some flowers to a group of men, when they rudely told her to get lost—even threatened her! Of course, the poor woman wasted no time in getting away from these ruffians. She has no idea what became of them.

These are the characters that stopped by the Inn earlier. Glennes can add little to Caramon's and Tika's description, except to mention that they seemed slight but had a warrior's confident stride.

As they turn back to their breakfasts, the heroes discover they have acquired a dining companion: a dirty, smelly urchin named Marsi. She asks lots of questions, especially of such unusual heroes as minotaurs or centaurs, and soon makes a pest of himself. The Majeres tolerate her out of pity because she has no home. Unfortunately, Marsi proves almost impossible to get rid of. Rough treatment or threats send her screaming out of the Inn, but also draw many cold stares.

To give the adventure an element of humor, the Narrator can have Marsi continue to show up to pester the heroes. She almost certainly will follow them if they give her food or money. Marsi does have her talents—doubtless she one day will become a master pickpocket. For now, though, she's just the most irritating child one could have the misfortune of meeting.

Narrators should feel free to invent additional characters to chat with the heroes. Once they have finished their breakfast, however, they can bid farewell to the Majeres and move toward the exit. As they begin descending the Inn's long staircase, the Narrator should read this text:

As you step out of the warm Inn, a draft of cold air washes across you. Frost still clings to the trees, and fires from the surrounding homes fill the air with a stimulating aroma. Late season birds flit among the towering vallenwoods, chirping songs as sweet as the colors of autumn leaves.

Below, a dozen merchant wagons have just parked. Each looks ornate, masterfully constructed, and was drawn by a pair of stallions, now being unhitched by elves.

On the ground, the elf merchants guide the last horses off to tethers in a small clearing. A faint sound catches your attention. It's hard to make out from this height, but at last you recognize it as a man's call for help! It's coming from near the wagon beneath you.

Atmosphere

This scene requires a relaxed, calm mood. The trick here is to portray the peace of the morning without allowing the scene to drag. To enhance the mood, Narrators can play background recordings of bird songs, a roaring fire, or similar sounds.

If the heroes speak with patrons at the Inn, the Narrator ought to slip into the appropriate character voice and act out the exchanges. When speaking for Glennes, he should use a soft, rasping voice and even hunch over to imitate her posture. Marsi, in her irritating, squeaky voice, calls everyone "mister" or "lady." As she seems always to have a runny nose, Narrators should sniffle a lot when playing her.

As the heroes depart the Inn, the scene's calm, domestic tone changes abruptly to one of impending danger.

Actions

This scene contains no unusual game actions to shift its primary focus away from role-playing and foreshadowing.

Characters

Besides the Majeres, the heroes may meet:

- Glennes: *Elderly human woman, gregarious demeanor, Unknown.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.

Outcome

Now, the flow of the adventure depends upon the heroes' actions.

- If they rush to aid whoever cried for help, the story proceeds to Scene Two.
- Should they ignore the alarm, or do anything other than investigate it, the adventure moves on to Scene Five.

Scene Two: Helping the Elf

This scene assumes the heroes have decided to investigate the cry for help they heard coming from behind the wagon.

Overview

A fight erupts between the heroes and a group of thugs—the mysterious hooded travelers who visited the Inn and threatened Glennes earlier this morning.

Getting Started

Although these pages contain all the information needed to play through this combat scene, the Narrator may want to have the *Book of the Fifth Age* open to Chapter Four, in case a question arises.

First Impressions

To begin the scene, the Narrator should read the following text aloud:

Moving quickly, you descend the stairs from the Inn, slip between two wagons, and enter a shady copse. Squinting as your eyes adjust to the dim light, you see a trio of men gathered around the fallen body of a blond, slight, buckskin-clad elf merchant. The young merchant's bow lies on the grass off to one side.

Noting your presence, the three men stand and draw their swords. Dark green hoods leave their faces in shadow, but there is no mistaking the menace in their body language as they begin toward you.

The Story Continues

The thugs leave the heroes no choice: To aid the fallen merchant, the group has to fight them. The hooded figures will neither flee or surrender, but fight to the death—they fall on their own swords rather than allow themselves to be captured. This crucial scene is the heroes' first step along an exciting journey toward involvement in events of worldwide importance.

A triumph in this battle will impress the elves of the caravan and earn their thanks. Even if the heroes fail, their efforts on behalf of the fallen elf will not go unnoticed.

After besting the thugs, some heroes may examine their bodies. They find that they are Qualinesti, as is the elf merchant! (One doesn't see these elves outside their own forest much these days, as their dragon overlord forbids them to leave.) If the heroes question the wounded merchant about this attack, he says he does not know why they assaulted him. He seems too weak to converse further.

Should it become obvious that the heroes will lose this battle, the Narrator should not let them fight to the bitter end, but skip to the "Outcome" section.

Atmosphere

Combat scenes tend to fall into one of two categories. Those of the first type are rigid, formal duels intended to resolve a point of honor or to test one's skill. The others—by far the most common—are wild, chaotic affairs. This scene typifies the latter.

Perhaps the most important point for Narrators to illustrate when bringing this scene to life for players is the speed and confusion associated with this wild type of battle. A Narrator can convey a fast, frenzied pace by giving each player only a few seconds (perhaps a count of five or ten) to decide and announce his hero's action. After all, heated combat doesn't give a hero time to look around, take in the situation, and then discuss plans with his companions. If the player delays too long, the Narrator can rule that his indecision has left his hero unable to do anything but defend himself during the first exchange of blows.

Actions

While investigating the cry for help—even before the Narrator reads the text in "First Impressions"—the heroes might try to determine something about this merchant caravan. Anyone looking the wagons over carefully can attempt the following action:

➢ Scrutinize the Caravan

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Perception
Opposition ability: None

Comments: If a hero successfully examines the caravan, the Narrator can tell players that the wagons look elven—clearly from Qualinesti, the nation south of Solace. (This action proves *easy* for elf or half-elf heroes.) The arrival of Qualinesti merchants is no common occurrence; Beryl, the Green Dragon, closely watches her elf forest's borders and allows none of her subjects to leave. The hero notices that the caravan carries many and varied goods, including whole wagons devoted to delicate fabrics, fine elven wines, and a bowyer/fletcher.
Mishap: A mishap for this action indicates a failure with no adverse effect.

The Battle

This scene requires many standard combat actions, as well the noncombat one above. The battle with the three hooded figures begins at melee range and, because both sides were on their guard, neither group could surprise the other.

At this point, a hero could close to personal range with one of the three thugs, essentially charging forward and leaping on him. Opening the range, however, means the heroes have entered the woods. While a character or hero at near missile range could fire arrows or throw his weapons into the fray, anyone beyond that range is assumed to have quit the field unless someone pursues him.

If the heroes attack the thugs at once, the villains will defend themselves and counterattack. They will try to prevent the accidental slaying of the elf (as they seek to "question" him further), but they fight the heroes to the death. Should the heroes delay, the thugs strike first. As they have no desire to alert the town watch to their presence in Solace, they won't allow the heroes to escape and raise an alarm.

When the battle is joined, the players can make normal attack and defense actions for their heroes, as described in Chapter Four of the *Book of the Fifth Age*. During the skirmish, each of the hooded men tries to engage a single hero. If the weaker members of the party fall, they will gang up on the stronger ones.

Characters

The Narrator will need the following character details for this encounter:

- Two hooded thugs: *Qualinesti male adults, tight-lipped demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 6, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +6 (broad sword), Def –3 (chain mail), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Jendaron, their leader: *Qualinesti male adult, pessimistic demeanor, Champion,* 9 ◥. Co 7, Ph 6, In 7, Es 7, Dmg +6 (broad sword), Def –3 (chain mail), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).

Narrators should note that the elf merchant, Araji, is hurt, though in no danger of dying yet. He has suffered 5 damage points (he can handle 6 points before losing consciousness) and seems too dazed to help in the fight unless mystically healed.

Outcome

The adventure's path from here depends on the battle's outcome.

- If the heroes defeat the thugs, the injured Araji thanks them and weakly asks that they help him to the wagon of the caravan master, at the far end of the train. The caravan master is a skilled healer, he says. If they agree, the story moves to Scene Four.
- Should the heroes save Araji then heal him themselves, he offers thanks once again and asks that they report with him to his caravan master. The adventure continues with Scene Four.
- If the heroes defeat the hooded men but for some reason do not take Araji to the caravan master, the adventure continues with Scene Five.
- On the other hand, if the heroes clearly cannot defeat these foes, the Narrator turns to Scene Three, to bring the other elves to the rescue.

Scene Three: Elves to the Rescue

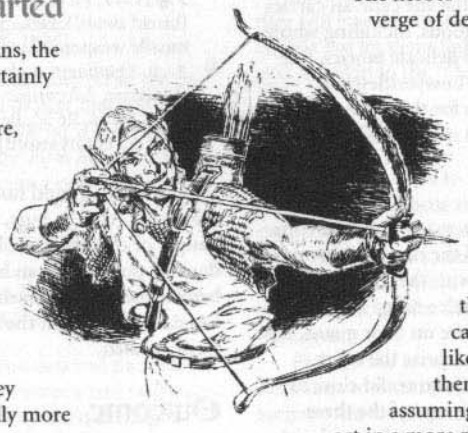
This scene assumes the heroes could not defeat the trio of thugs in Scene Two.

Overview

A group of elf merchants, hearing the ruckus as they returned from tethering the horses, race to rescue the heroes and Araji, the fallen elf.

Getting Started

As this scene begins, the heroes almost certainly have sustained wounds. Therefore, the players hold fewer cards in their hands than normal. The Narrator should keep this fact in mind, as it makes actions they attempt potentially more difficult.



First Impressions

Once the battle in the copse has turned against the heroes with no hope of redemption, the Narrator should read the following text to players:

Your cause seems hopeless. Clearly, these brigands are better warriors than you are. It appears that the time has come for you to bid farewell to life. You can only hope that they will dispatch you quickly and cleanly.

Suddenly, however, the tide turns! From the woods around you, a flight of whistling arrows fills the air. One after another, your assailants fall, with a half-dozen feathered shafts protruding from their bodies.

The battle comes abruptly to an end. Suddenly, a group of elves leaps into sight from the shadows of the forest. They wear green buckskins and carry long bows and swords.

The Story Continues

This scene is not too complex, unless the heroes chose to do something foolish, like attack the elves who just saved them. The rescuers number ten; if attacked, five of them will move forward to engage in melee combat while five others remain at near missile range to pepper the heroes with arrows.

The heroes—already on the verge of defeat—should find themselves unable to stand up to these elves, should they try to fight them. Attacking their saviors may spell the end of their adventuring careers, as the elves likely will not spare them. However, assuming that the heroes act in a more rational fashion, all ten elves step clearly into view, forming a ring around the scene of the battle.

The elves move first to Araji, their fallen companion. If conscious, he tells his comrades in the Qualinesti tongue how the heroes came to his aid. Upon hearing his story, the elves thank the group politely; from that moment on, they will consider the heroes friends and allies. If Araji can't make this clear, however, the heroes themselves must explain their role in this incident.

Examining the bodies of the hooded thugs shows them to be Qualinesti, just like the elf merchants.

Should the heroes question Araji or the others about this attack, the elves claim to know of no reason for it. All in all, their response is (more or less) that it's just one of those things. Suspicious players may think there's more to this story—especially as these elf traders are outside of their homeland illegally. Of course, they are right. For now, however, they can discover nothing more.

Atmosphere

To make this "cavalry comes charging over the hill" scene feel less like a failure for the heroes, the Narrator should portray their actions as a valiant defense against nearly impossible odds.

Actions

In addition to their normal combat actions, the heroes may seek to make an especially favorable impression on the elf merchants coming to their rescue. After all, even the relatively open-minded Qualinesti usually consider humans inferior to elves—and they *did* just have to save these particular humans from a crushing defeat. The group may attempt to impress the elves using the leader's Presence as the action ability. In effect, they are trying to put a spin on events to make their group look better than they might deserve.

➢ Impress the Elves

Difficulty: Challenging (12)
Action ability: Presence
Opposition ability: Perception

Comments: If the elves are impressed by the heroes, they will view them as triumphant warriors. Failure at this action doesn't give them a negative impression, though. After all, they saw the heroes valiantly defending their fellow merchant.
Mishap: A mishap during this action means that the heroes have shown themselves to be glory-hogging egotists. The elves will treat them with scorn and contempt from now on, although this behavior shouldn't change the course of the adventure.

Characters

The following characters play a part in this scene:

- Two hooded thugs: *Qualinesti male adults, tight-lipped demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 6, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +6 (broad sword), Def –3 (chain mail), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Jendaron, their leader: *Qualinesti male adult, pessimistic demeanor, Champion,* 9 ◥. Co 7, Ph 6, In 7, Es 7, Dmg +6 (broad sword), Def –3 (chain mail), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Ten merchants: *Qualinesti elves, observant demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dam +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).

Outcome

At the end of this scene, the ten elf merchants move to take Araji to receive healing aid from the caravan master, whose wagon sits parked at the other end of the train. (Any heroes with the healing sphere of mysticism may offer assistance.) They add that they must report the attack immediately and ask the heroes to accompany them.

The elves might even point out that the caravan master has been looking for a few more guards. The heroes' bravery during the encounter with the thugs makes them think this group would be just right for the job. Also, the caravan master, a skilled healer, can tend to their wounds and may wish to reward them for their efforts.

- Should the heroes go along with the elves, as they request, the adventure continues with Scene Four.
- If, for some reason, the heroes wish to bid farewell to the elves at this time, the story can move on to Scene Five.

Scene Four: Saranja

Although several different routes through the first act could bring the heroes to this scene, they play through it in much the same way, regardless of previous events.

Overview

Either Araji or other elves present the heroes to Saranja, the master of the caravan. This serious elf woman seems polite, though clearly troubled. After explaining that many of the warriors who left Qualinesti with her fell during their attempt to cross the border, she offers them employment as caravan guards.

Getting Started

The Narrator will want to have the poster map of Ansalon at hand to show during this scene, along with the smaller maps on the next pages. In this way, those unfamiliar with the land can see the Qualinesti Forest (the caravan's place of origin), Solace (its current location), and Duntollik (its supposed destination).

First Impressions

The Narrator can read the following text aloud to start off this scene:

You are led to the far end of the caravan. Stepping between the last two wagons, you enter the woodside circle of the elves' encampment.

The place looks almost abandoned, as the majority of the merchants have occupied themselves setting up their wares for the day of trading in Solace. Still, you and your guide(s) are not wholly alone. A trio of elves—two men and a woman—stand near the central campfire.

Although the men look as graceful and beautiful as any elf you have ever seen, it is their companion who catches your eye. Tall and slender, she ranks among the most exquisite women you have ever seen. Her hair, which falls past her waist in a series of tight braids, is the color of honey, and her green eyes sparkle like emeralds. Her radiance seems to make the brightness of the clear autumn sky pale in comparison.

The Story Continues

The heroes are asked to wait at the edge of camp while the elves (or Araji) inform the elf woman of the attack. If necessary, she takes a moment to heal Araji with her mystic magic. Then the heroes meet her and have a chance for some role-playing.

After a quick conversation in the Qualinesti tongue, the elf woman gestures for the others to withdraw. As they vanish back between the wagons, she steps to meet you, moving with an easy stride that reminds you of mist drifting across the surface of a pond. She does not smile, however. "I am grateful to you," she says. "I am Saranja and this caravan is my business. Unfortunately, we lost many excellent guards on the dangerous journey from Qualinesti. Crossing the Green Dragon's border is never easy. This loss puts us in need of strong arms, sharp swords, and keen minds to protect us against further incidents." She pauses, appearing to size you up.

Before asking the heroes to work for her, Saranja will want to know something of each hero's background. Her inquiries will give new and old players alike the chance to improvise and use their imaginations. The elf woman might ask them questions like, "How did you decide to become a Knight?" or "Who taught you the delicate art of mysticism?" By responding to these questions, the players will add background and depth to their heroes. Each player should get a chance to answer one of Saranja's questions.

Eventually, the Qualinesti woman ends these preliminaries:

"We have only a brief stay in Solace. In three days, we return to the road and travel southeast toward Pax Tharkas, past Skullcap, then into the realm of Duntollik. This means going back into Beryl's realm, but I don't anticipate trouble this time—we've dropped her minions and border guards hints that we were northbound. However, as we've learned this trip, these *are* troubled times. But it's vital that we arrive in…Duntollik."

Saranja pauses strangely, then continues. "If you will ride with us as guards, I'll give you each a full share of the profits and as good a wage as any elf in my employ. You'll eat elven food, drink elven wine, see some beautiful country, and with luck, you'll never even have to draw your swords. Do we have a deal?"

During the course of this scene, the Narrator must remember that Saranja has a secret: Her destination is not really Duntollik, but Thorbardin. As mentioned in the Author's Foreword, she possesses the Tear of Reorx, a valuable dwarvish holy gem liberated from Beryl's treasure horde (see sidebar). Saranja hopes to contact the dwarves of Thorbardin—she hasn't yet figured out how—and sell it to them. However, she won't tell the heroes this.

While Saranja can't be certain, she fears the thugs that attacked her merchant earlier worked for Beryl, hunting down freebooters like her troupe. Therefore, she plans to move on shortly—normally, she would stay in Solace for a week.

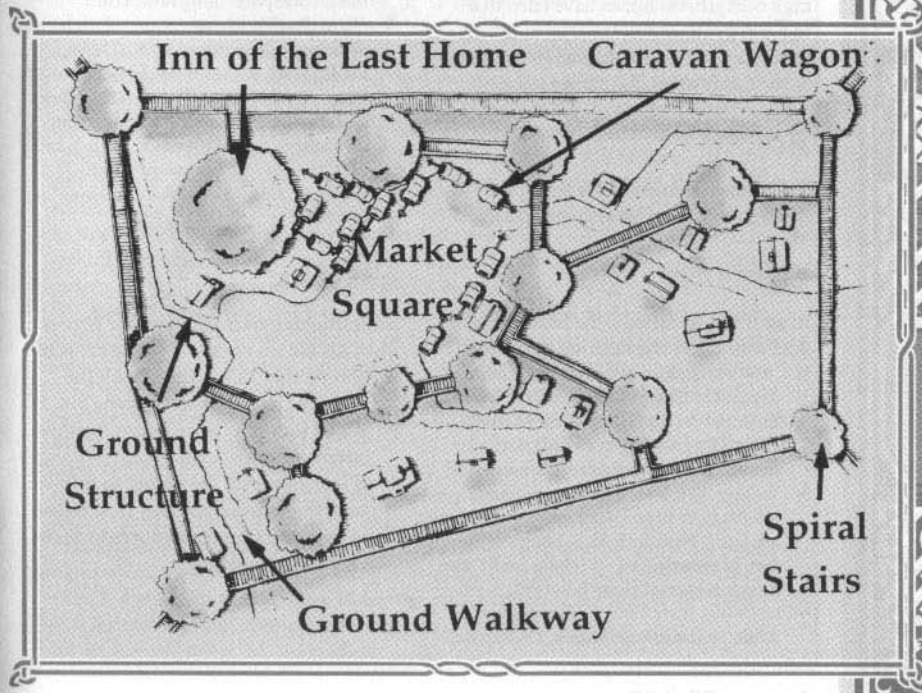
If anyone asks her about the attack on Araji, she'll simply explain that these things happen. People assume every merchant is rich and try to help themselves to his coin. Should a hero mention that the attackers were elves, she points out that the Qualinesti have been divided since before the Chaos War, when Gilthas of House Solostaran became their Speaker the Sun.

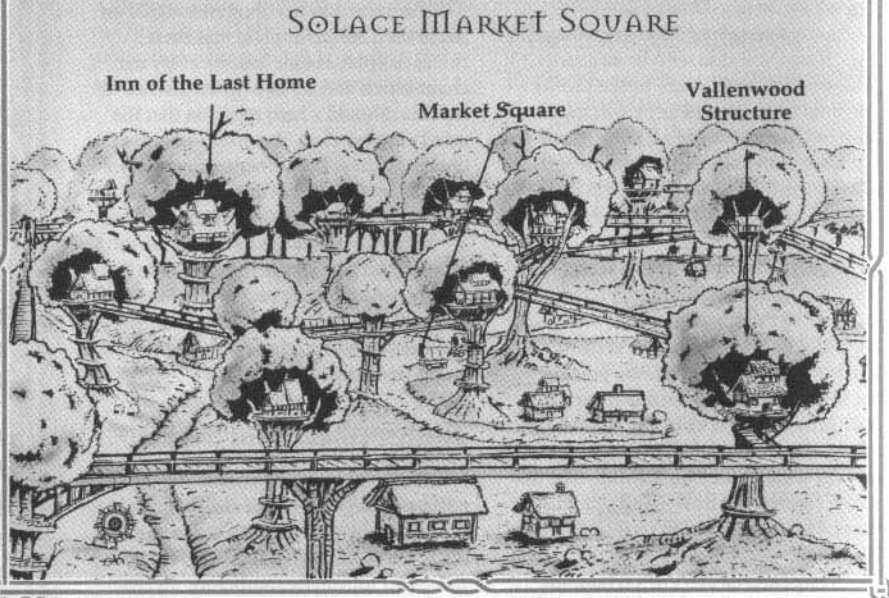
Whether or not the heroes agree to join her, Saranja shows her gratitude by healing wounds they received from the thugs. Through her magic, she restores one card to the hand of every player with an injured hero.

Atmosphere

In this scene, the Narrator can play up the grace and elegance of the elves. The noble Saranja carries herself with a charm easily the equal of her physical beauty. However, she seems unusually somber for an elf.

While Saranja is speaking, the heroes can hear the sounds of a festival starting up around them. The rare arrival of a





renegade Qualinesti caravan always proves cause for celebration in Solace. The morning's background noises have risen to a raucous pitch, and the sounds of people having a good time drift past the wagons to the camp where the heroes stand.

Actions

The heroes should resolve this scene through role-playing, not card play.

Characters

In addition to Saranja, the heroes might deal with other elves during this scene.

- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Two hooded thugs: *Qualinesti male adults, tight-lipped demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 6, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +6 (broad sword), Def –3 (chain mail), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Jendaron, their leader: *Qualinesti male adult, pessimistic demeanor, Champion,* 9 ◥. Co 7, Ph 6, In 7, Es 7, Dmg +6 (broad sword), Def –3 (chain mail), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Merchants: *Qualinesti elves, observant demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).

Outcome

After thinking over the offer, the heroes must decide whether to join the caravan.

- Should they opt to travel with the elves, the story moves to Scene Six.
- If not, they may leave, resuming the adventure with Scene Five.
- If Jendaron sent the heroes to infiltrate the caravan but they now refuse to join, the adventure moves to Scene One of the Epilogue.

The Tear of Reorx

A six-inch sphere of blue-white crystal, the Tear of Reorx is bound tightly in a band of pure silver inscribed with mysterious etchings. The Qualinesti call this gem the *Paxalios.* While much about it remains unknown, a study of historical accounts concerning the strange orb allows researchers to piece together something of its history and powers.

History

The dwarves of Thorbardin discovered the gem more than a century and a half ago. They called it *Reorxkori,* or the Tear of Reorx, because it fell from the heavens during a meteor shower. The dwarves considered it a beautiful item, sacred to the god of the forge, but they never learned of its magical powers (not surprising, considering the dwarves' disdain for magic).

During the War of the Lance, they presented the Tear of Reorx to the people of Qualinesti as a token of alliance. Only after the war ended, however, did the elves have time to study the object carefully and gain an inkling of its magical powers.

When the green wyrm Beryl came to Qualinesti, the elves had to include the Tear of Reorx in the tribute they paid her in exchange for her "protection" of their forest home. The orb remained for many years safely hidden in one of the secret places Beryl uses to horde her treasure. However, a scant few weeks ago, a pack of cunning thieves liberated it—a move that infuriated the magic-loving Green.

Powers

As the primary power of the Tear of Reorx amplifies a sorcerer's spellcasting ability, only a hero with a Reason code of "B" or better can use it. The gem, blessed with the divine magical essence of a departed divinity, acts as a magical "battery," supplying some of the energy a sorcerer uses to cast a spell.

Casting a spell with the aid of the Tear requires a sorcerer to increase the invocation time of his spell by one degree of difficulty. In game terms, this simply means that no spell cast with this orb can have an invocation time of "instant." (See Chapter Five in the *Book of the Fifth Age* for more on spellcasting.) In addition, the sorcerer must place both hands on the orb and gaze into its depths while speaking his words of power. The gem then flares with white light. Using the gem in this fashion cuts the sorcery-point cost of the spell in half. It does not actually reduce the difficulty of casting the spell (hence, the required action score), but it lessens the drain on the sorcerer's personal energies.

Any individual who holds the Tear of Reorx (regardless of Reason code) also suffers only half the normal number of damage points from dragon breath attacks directed at him. In addition, holding the Tear makes one immune to dragonawe.

The Tear of Reorx possesses a final power that no one realizes, not even Beryl. If a dragon can be made to swallow it, the orb will dissolve in the wyrm's stomach like a pill. Within a minute after ingesting this holy orb, the dragon will collapse, slain as if by a great poison. Only the most determined scholars of the arcane arts can uncover the Tear's secret power. Someone with the resources of an excellent library (such as those at the Last Tower in Wayreth Forest, the University of Palanthas, or the Academy of Sorcery) can decipher the inscriptions in its silver band and discover this power—only after succeeding at an *impossible Reason* action. A divination spell costing 19 sorcery points before adjustments for range and invocation time also will reveal the gem's power over dragons.

Scene Five: The Stranger

To arrive at this scene, the heroes must have refused to join the elf caravan, declined to accompany Araji or the other elves to see the caravan master, or neglected to respond to the cry for help in the first place. In any case, they could be doing more to promote the flow of the adventure. This scene gives them another chance to move the plot along. If they don't, things will turn nasty very quickly.

Overview

This scene revolves around a meeting between the heroes and a representative of the dragon Beryl (although he identifies himself as a servant of Qualinesti Speaker Gilthas). This agent, Jendaron, offers to reward the heroes if they can recover an object stolen from his kingdom. Specifically, the item was taken from Beryl's horde, but Jendaron won't admit that.

Getting Started

The scene begins in the midst of the common in Solace, where the elves have by now finished setting up their caravan.

First Impressions

To begin this scene, the Narrator should read players the following text:

Moving through the crowds that are assembling around the merchant caravan proves a difficult endeavor. With every step, you find yourself on the verge of an impact with other patrons or the wagons, now opened up to display the elven wares. Still, everyone seems in good spirits, and even the occasional collision is forgiven with a friendly smile or a good-natured clap on the shoulder.

At least, that's usually how it goes. But in the wake of what seems a casual bump, the leader of your party feels a firm grip on his shoulder. A large man in a dark green cloak stands beside him.

"We must talk," he says.

The Story Continues

The mysterious person who has approached the heroes is Jendaron, a Qualinesti agent of the dragon overlord Beryllinthranox. He has traveled north from the realm of that green wyrm on a quest to recover the missing Tear of Reorx, which the elves call the *Paxalios.* (The sidebar on page 13 offers details on this holy gemstone.)

Jendaron leads the heroes to a vacant area beside a pair of cargo wagons not currently in use. There, two green-cloaked companions join him: Pelenos and Ellisendar. After introducing himself to the heroes, the elf tells them the following story.

"I am a servant to the Qualinesti Speaker of the Sun—Gilthas of House Solostaran. Several weeks ago, a gemstone known as the Tear of Reorx, a gift from the people of Thorbardin, was stolen from the heart of our green kingdom. I have traced it here and believe it is in the possession of Saranja, the master of this renegade caravan. My efforts to recover it have borne no fruit, however.

"It is to that end that I seek your aid. You see, I lost many in my force attempting to prevent these thieves from illegally leaving our homeland. Individuals of your caliber could help me recover the Tear by infiltrating the merchant train. As you can well imagine, great Beryllinthranox is quite unhappy about the loss. Your assistance could save the Qualinesti from the horrors of her wrath."

If the heroes seem interested, Jendaron continues. He knows the caravan will be moving on soon and that Saranja needs to hire a few more guards for the remainder of the trip. Beryl has learned that the caravan master plans to re-enter the dragon realm at a point southeast of Solace, traveling through the northern Kharolis Mountains toward Thorbardin. Jendaron wants the heroes to seek employment with the caravan and, when the chance to recover the orb presents itself, act in the name of the Qualinesti.

The heroes may have questions for the elf. He can describe the Tear of Reorx for them and relate its history. He will confirm that he was at the Inn earlier, but he doesn't acknowledge threatening a flower peddler or assaulting an elf merchant. If accused of leaving Qualinesti illegally himself, Jendaron calmly explains that, as an agent of the Speaker, he has the authority to pursue his mission outside the Green Dragon's borders. However, he lacks the manpower to detain the rather large caravan himself. And, as the free city of Solace tends to encourage escaped Qualinesti rather than help repatriate them, he must look for assistance outside the local constabulary.

The heroes might wonder, "Why choose us?" The elf, smiling, simply answers that he could tell the heroes were a cut above the locals.

Jendaron looks clearly pleased if the heroes agree to help him. He explains that another representative of the Qualinesti will wait for the caravan in the northern Kharolis range near the Icicle Pass or *Sharros,* a Qualinesti word describing the splendid spikes of ice that line the narrow pass in the fall, winter, and spring. When that agent attacks the caravan, the heroes can take advantage of the confusion to recover the Tear and flee with it. They can then deliver it to Jendaron here in Solace.

The Narrator should read the following text aloud at this point:

Jendaron smiles. "You have acted in the best interests of both our peoples!" the elf says. Then he gestures toward his two companions. "My friends, Pelenos and Ellisendar, have made brief contact with Saranja. She believes them to be local citizens bringing recruits for her. Now, go—they will take you to meet the master of that caravan of thieves."

Should the heroes refuse to cooperate, Jendaron urges them to reconsider. He has tried every means at his disposal to recover the orb and fears Beryl's reprisal against his race—and Solace—should he fail in his mission.

If they continue to refuse, Jendaron unhappily allows them to leave. He won't detain them, nor will he allow them to detain *him.* Even if the heroes do capture or slay these elves, though, the reprisal Jendaron feared will come to pass nonetheless.

Atmosphere

The key to this scene is the atmosphere of conspiracy and subterfuge surrounding Jendaron and his mission. The Narrator should consider that, as spies operating in a foreign land, these three elves do not seek to draw attention to themselves or their affairs. Hushed whispers and furtive movements enhance this feeling.

Actions

This role-playing scene probably will not call for a great deal of card play or complex hero actions. If the group decides to attack Jendaron and his men, however, combat could well erupt.

Characters

The following characters have roles in this part of the adventure:

- Two hooded thugs: *Qualinesti male adults, tight-lipped demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 6, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +6 (broad sword), Def –3 (chain mail), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Jendaron, their leader: *Qualinesti male adult, pessimistic demeanor, Champion,* 9 ◥. Co 7, Ph 6, In 7, Es 7, Dmg +6 (broad sword), Def –3 (chain mail), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).

Outcome

The next scene will depend on whether the heroes agree to help Jendaron.

- If they do, Jendaron's comrades take them to meet Saranja. (They can make their own way, if they have encountered her already.) Scene Four details this meeting.
- Should the heroes still refuse to get involved in this adventure, the time has come to teach them the error of their ways. The scenario continues with Scene One of the Epilogue.

Scene Six: Into the Mountains

This transitional scene brings Act One to an end and sets the stage for Act Two.

Overview

The heroes leave Solace with the elf merchant caravan and begin the journey toward the Kharolis Mountains.

Getting Started

A few days pass before the caravan is ready to leave Solace. During this time, the heroes are free to heal wounds, interact with the locals, and get to know their future traveling companions. These role-playing encounters should not require predetermined formal game actions.

The time in Solace before the caravan's departure could provide the Narrator with an excellent opportunity to bring Marsi back for another scene, if the heroes met her at the Inn of the Last Home. Perhaps she gets into trouble in town and claims one of the heroes is her father, neatly shifting the blame for her actions to the slipshod parenting of the poor hero she has latched onto. This little urchin might spice up the heroes' lives in many ways—including stowing away with the departing caravan!

First Impressions

Once the caravan leaves Solace, the Narrator should read the text below:

For a time, the east road out of Solace runs smooth and true. Well constructed and carefully maintained, it speeds your journey considerably. Before long, the elves break into songs describing beautiful places, great deeds, and terrible monsters. The calls of the forest and the chirping of the birds seem to merge with the harmony of the elf voices to create a symphony that is at once restful and invigorating. A more pleasant journey seems difficult to imagine.

The Story Continues

Once the wagon train has gotten under way, the Narrator can give the heroes each a job to keep them busy on the trip. For instance, someone with high Perception scores might volunteer to scout ahead of the convoy. Another individual—a hero with a good sense of taste (skilled in Perception)—could help cook meals. Still others, high in Strength or Dexterity, might be called upon to help the elves with routine wagon repairs and maintenance. Traveling with a caravan will require any number of tasks on the part of the heroes.

If the heroes are working for Jendaron, they find no good moment to begin searching for the Tear of Reorx. During the first part of the journey, the twenty elves seem attentive and somewhat mistrustful of the newcomers. Of course, they won't act openly suspicious of them, but they will notice any unusual activity.

Atmosphere

This scene should feel quiet and easy-going. The Narrator should emphasize that the assigned jobs (whatever they may be) prove challenging, but routine. In other words, the heroes work up a good sweat in repetitive duties that require their utmost attention. By making the most of establishing this routine, the traumatic events that begin the next act will appear that much more impressive.

Actions

The heroes will attempt many actions, many times in this scene. Mainly, these activities involve working around the caravan, as described in "The Story Continues." For example:

- The scout must attempt *average Perception* actions or risk leading the caravan into a hazardous terrain, like a ravine or swampy patch.
- The cook must attempt *average Perception* actions to fix meals for the merchants. Failing this action too often could seriously damage the group's morale.
- Those assigned to wagon maintenance must attempt *challenging Strength* or *Dexterity* actions to discover and repair any breakage (a splintered wheel) or potential problems with the caravans.

To solidly establish the routine of traveling with a large caravan on a long journey, Narrators should have the heroes attempt their respective actions twice a day: once in the morning and once in the afternoon. Mishaps could result in injury or delay, while successes can further the progress of the journey. (Chapter Three in the *Book of the Fifth Age* offers details on attempting hero actions.)

Characters

Most likely, the heroes will interact with other members of the caravan quite a bit during this scene. In addition, Marsi may have stowed away in one of the wagons. However, unless the heroes are searching the caravan—which they may do if they decide to hunt for the Tear of Reorx—they won't find her during this scene.

- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Twenty merchants: *Qualinesti elves, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.

Outcome

This scene ends the first act of the adventure. From here, the Narrator can continue right on to the next one.

On the other hand, this is a good place for an intermission or to end the game for the night. When the players get back together next time, the Narrator can summarize the events from the first act and start right in with the first scene of

Scene One: The Blizzard

The first scene of Act Two takes place after many days of travel. The caravan has passed through the Sentinel Peaks of Abanasinia, traversed that realm's southern plain, and crossed into the Kharolis Mountains—the realm of Beryllinthranox. The ancient fortress to peace called Pax Tharkas lies just across a finger of the northern Kharolis, beyond the Icicle Pass.

Just as the elves begin to relax after the initial anxiety of entering enemy territory, the caravan encounters a blizzard. While the players may suspect that this storm is a supernatural event hurled at them by their foes, the truth of the matter is far less sinister than that: Winter is coming to Ansalon.

Overview

During the course of this scene, the Narrator has a chance to introduce one or two events to spice up the journey southward. The blizzard mentioned above forces the group to seek shelter—which, it turns out, might also offer them protection from a possible avalanche or a yeti attack.

And, of course, there's always Marsi. If she has stowed away with the party, she has certainly emerged by now, complaining about the cold and demanding something hot to drink.

Getting Started

This scene requires no special preparations or visual aids.

First Impressions

The following text can be read aloud to the players to start this scene:

For the last few hours, the sky has grown darker and more sinister. One by one, the elves in the caravan notice the change and fall silent. When snow begins to fall, the pristine beauty of the northern Kharolis Mountains seems somewhat less than comforting. At last, as the wintery weather grows more severe, the word is passed from wagon to wagon: "Secure the cargo and look for a place to stop. It looks like a fierce storm."

Almost as soon as this warning comes to you, the wind doubles in strength, and the falling snow creates a wall of swirling white. It seems folly to press on, but stopping here would leave the entire caravan exposed to full fury of the blizzard.

The Story Continues

As the storm worsens, Saranja will send out the heroes to find a safe haven for the caravan. While she would prefer a nice deep cave, she doesn't have much choice. Even a fissure or cleft in which the horses and elves can seek shelter would be preferable to the exposure of this mountain pass, named *Sharros* in the Qualinesti tongue, or Icicle Pass.

Yeti

The fury of nature is not the only threat lurking in the northern Kharolis Mountains—these peaks are inhabited by many dangerous creatures as well. If the Narrator wishes to introduce a combat encounter to the blizzard, he can assume that the movement of the caravan has attracted the attention of several yeti in search of a meal. (See Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age* for a brief description of these "abominable snowmen.")

The yeti should attack before the heroes and elves have moved into their shelter. The Narrator can introduce the encounter with the following text:

As the freezing wind slaps at your body and the swirling snow stings your face, you hear an eerie wailing. At first, it's easy to assume it's just the wind howling through some hole in the rock. Only when several answering howls come from other directions do you realize that something other than the blizzard stalks you in these mountains.

The Battle

Yetis love to hunt in blizzards, as their white fur allows them to blend in with the falling snow. Because of this natural camouflage, they automatically gain surprise in a combat scene and can dictate the range at which battle begins (near missile range, in this case).

The attack begins with the yeti hurling a volley of ice spears, then closing to melee range. One yeti appears for every hero in the group. An equal number of elves joins the heroes in the fight.

However, should the yeti seem about to win this fight, the Narrator can have them suddenly break off and run away, scooping up a couple fallen elves as they go. (Perhaps they've just become aware of the impending avalanche.) It's all right for a Narrator to give heroes who bravely face a stronger foe a break now and then, as long as they have not acted foolishly or without motivation.

But if the heroes—instead of seeking shelter to tend their battle wounds—stand there out in the open, congratulating themselves on their outstanding efforts, the Narrator might hit them with the avalanche. This tactic may appear cruel, but it drives home the dangers of the blizzard. Indeed, if the Narrator really wants to challenge the heroes, the yeti can return right after the avalanche and resume the attack.

Avalanche

If the Narrator doesn't want to introduce a combat encounter, he can spice up this part of the adventure with an avalanche, instead. Of all the natural forces of the world, only a tornado can rival an avalanche for sheer destructive power and energy.

After the heroes have sought shelter (or decided not to), reading the bit of text below can introduce the avalanche:

As the storm wears on into the night, several of the elves have taken to telling tales and singing songs to pass the time. Their words carry a passion that almost seems to drive back the cold. This attempt at levity ends suddenly, however, when Saranja calls for silence.

In the absence of the elf voices, the low thrumming of the wind seems almost oppressive. One by one, however, the elves realize that there is more to the sound than the wind. As you become aware of a deep vibration in the ground, a single hushed word fills the air.

"Avalanche!"

Seconds later, a great wave of ice and snow hammers the caravan. Presumably, either the passage of the wagons or the movement of the yeti loosened the rubble.

If the heroes and elves have found shelter in a cave, they will now be buried alive, forced to dig their way out. Clearing the mouth of the cave will require five successful digging out actions (described in the "Actions" section of this scene).

If the group was forced to seek shelter in a cleft or fissure, the heroes and elves won't have as much protection as a cave would have offered. Every hero must make an *average Endurance* action to avoid being swept away in the avalanche and killed. Half of the elves, including Araji, meet their fate in this fashion. Generous Narrators might allow their heroes to survive even if they are swept away; however, they each suffer 20 damage points from the falling rock and ice.

In any case, surviving heroes each must make three digging out actions to free themselves from the icy rubble. Each action reflects about ten minutes of work. A hero may attempt this action a number of times equal to his Endurance score. If he cannot free himself in that amount of time, he falls unconscious from suffocation and exposure. Thus, heroes with Endurance scores below three have no chance of making it out of this disaster without aid.

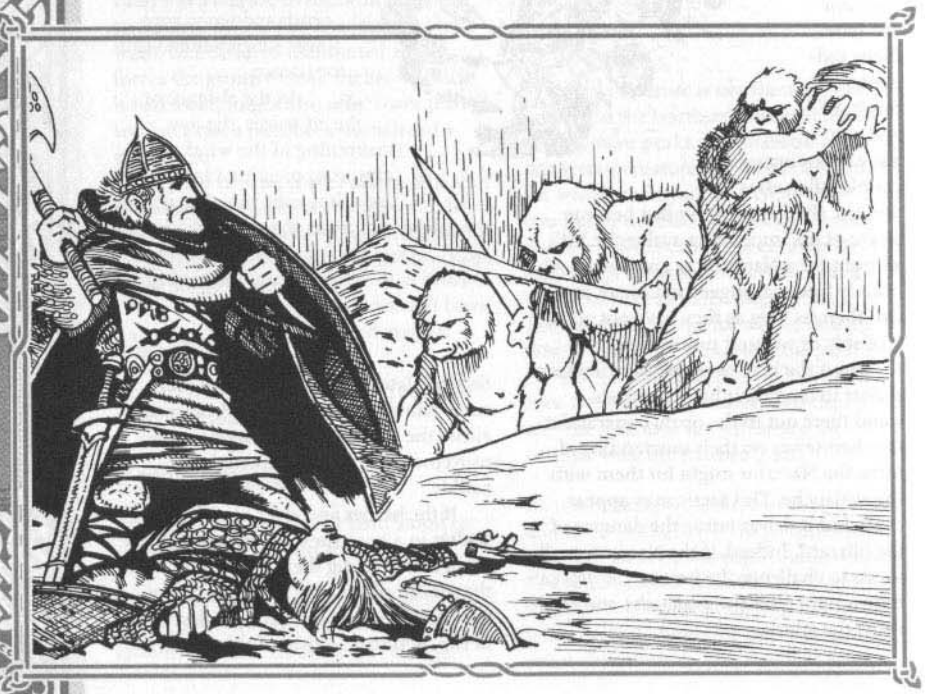
If the heroes found no shelter at all during the storm, the caravan sits directly in the path of the avalanche. This is a disaster of incredible proportions. Every hero must make a successful *challenging Endurance* action or be instantly slain by the cascade. Those who remain alive must dig themselves out as described in the previous paragraph. Again, kind-hearted Narrators could allow heroes to live, but they sustain 25 damage points—and must then dig themselves out. Without shelter, all the elves except Saranja are assumed dead and the entire caravan lost. The Tear of Reorx remains safely secured in Saranja's backpack, however.

Atmosphere

Whether the Narrator opts to use the avalanche or the yeti attack (or both), he has several ways to enhance the scene's excitement.

Yeti Attack

As in previous combat scenes, the Narrator should do all he can to represent the fast and furious pace of a fight, including giving players only a ten-count to decide on their heroes' actions.



Avalanche

A loud sound effects recording—especially one of a freight train, thunderstorm, or series of explosions—played at high volume and with the bass turned all the way up does a fair job of imitating an avalanche. Such an effect definitely increases the drama of this scene.

Of course, the noise and violence of this terrible cascade makes any communication between the heroes or elves impossible, so the Narrator should insist that all players refrain from talking to each other until the avalanche has ended. To drive home this point, the Narrator might even pass out note paper and have the players write down their desired actions. In this way, no two players can coordinate their heroes' activities, which adds realism to this scene of confusion.

Actions

The dangers of the mountains are manifold. With the blizzard also bearing down on the caravan, the heroes might attempt one or more of the following actions:

➢ Find Shelter

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Perception
Opposition ability: None

Comments: Heroes who find safety come across a small cave in which the caravan (including several of the wagons) can ride out the storm. Even failure provides them with a cleft or fissure the elves and horses might squeeze into and survive the blizzard. In the latter case, however, the caravan wagons must remain outside to face the elements.

Mishap: A mishap here indicates that the heroes could find no safe shelter and must return to the caravan with word of their failure. Every hero suffers from the cold and must discard one card from his hand immediately to account for the toll the storm has taken. Apart from circling the wagons and trying to weather the storm, the group can do nothing more to protect themselves.

➢ Dig out of the Avalanche

Difficulty: Easy (4)
Action ability: Strength
Opposition ability: None

Comments: Digging out is a time-consuming action, but not an especially difficult one. The Narrator should require each hero working to clear the avalanche to attempt this action either three or five times, as required by the situation (see "The Story Continues"). Failure has no adverse affect, but indicates that the hero has made no headway in attempting the action. However, a hero can attempt this action only a number of times equal to his Endurance score. Each digging out attempt represents about ten minutes of elapsed game time.

Mishap: A mishap causes the excavated portion of rubble to cave in. This unfortunate event injures all the heroes involved (causing them to lose one card from their hands) and requires the excavation to start again from the beginning.

Characters

The following characters and monsters may play a part in this scene:

- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Twenty merchants: *Qualinesti elves, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.
- Several yeti: *Monsters.* Co 7, Ph 16, In 5, Es 7, Dmg +6, Def –2, also crush, immune to cold/ice, thrown weapons (crude ice spears).

Outcome

Hopefully, the heroes weathered the encounters in this scene safely and can continue now with Scene Two.

Scene Two: Death on the Wing

After the blizzard has cleared up and the heroes have taken some time to heal or treat their wounds, the green dragon Dreselenimus, called Illwind by men, spots the caravan and moves in to attack.

Overview

The dragon mentioned above, one of Beryl's minions, intends to destroy the caravan. He cares little for the fact that some of its members (the heroes) may actually be cooperating with Jendaron to retrieve the Tear of Reorx. (The wyrm plans to recover the Tear from the wreckage and deliver it to Beryl himself.) Therefore, he intends to neither acknowledge the heroes—nor spare them.

Getting Started

This scene occurs the morning after the blizzard, eight to ten hours after the last scene ended. This span of time should allow heroes to rest, recover, and heal (refer to the first aid action in Chapter Four of the *Book of the Fifth Age*).

First Impressions

The following text sets the stage for the start of this scene:

With the passing of the blizzard, the sun has risen against a brilliant blue sky. The air, although painfully cold, feels fresh and clean. The road ahead and behind is draped with sparkling snow, as are the mountains on both sides. Although beautiful, the scene's bright glare threatens your eyesight, promising to make your journey even more difficult.

The Story Continues

The heroes likely will consider several options at this point.

First, they might encourage Saranja to return to Solace, especially if the blizzard hit her caravan hard. The elf leader will oppose this action, although her position may prove untenable if she is the only survivor from the caravan. As a last-ditch effort, she will show the heroes the Tear of Reorx, explaining that they must bring it to the dwarves of Thorbardin somehow.

Next, the group may seek to reduce the glare from the snow. This problem isn't difficult to solve, especially if the caravan remained intact. Succeeding at an *average Reason* action gives one hero an idea. Using the merchants' goods, they can all improvise goggles or visors. If needed, Saranja can produce such items from a chest in her private wagon: As an experienced traveler and smuggler, she prepares herself for just about any turn of events.

Lastly, the heroes may wish to press on or remain in the pass, particularly if they are working for Jendaron. After all, they expect an ally to meet them here in the Icicle Pass. What they don't know, of course, is that their "ally" is the dragon Dreselenimus. In any event, Saranja favors pressing on, no matter how badly the caravan has fared so far.

After these preliminaries, if they haven't already, the heroes should leave their shelter to examine the wagons they left in the pass. The time has come for the Narrator to bring the dragon into play:

One by one, the cries of the hawks and other mountain birds fall away into silence. Indeed, even the wind seems to slacken and grow quiet. But before you fully comprehend these changes, the terrible cause of it all sweeps into view.

Moving with great speed and a grace that belies its incredible size, a huge green dragon glides around the peaks behind you and into sight. From snout to tail, the thing must be one hundred feet long. Trails of yellow-green smoke curl away from its nostrils as it wheels slowly about and begins to move in your direction. Piercing yellow eyes set against the behemoth's emerald scales sweep back and forth. Clearly, this creature is looking for something…or someone.

At this point, all the heroes must attempt to avoid dragonawe, as described in the "Actions" section. (Narrators should assume that half the elves fall victim to dragonawe.) Those who succeed will have two or three minutes to decide on a course of action before the dragon reaches them. While they may wonder at first whether Dreselenimus has seen them, the creature's continued approach soon makes it clear that it has spotted their wagons against the white backdrop of snow.

Atmosphere

It is difficult, perhaps even impossible, to fully understand just how terrifying it feels to look upon a dragon. The heroes' terror should only intensify when they realize the dragon is obviously intent on encountering them. Through vivid description and a cryptic tone, the Narrator must drive home a sense of impending doom—even if the heroes think the dragon might be working for Jendaron.

Actions

While the heroes may soon find themselves called upon to enter combat, this particular scene involves only sighting the dragon. While spotting it requires no Perception action—it's hard for anyone to miss a hundred-foot flying lizard—it does bring on the potential for dragonawe. The action below was first mentioned in Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age*. However, this action includes an additional mishap, due to the trauma of the blizzard and the toll it presumably has taken on the heroes.

➢ Avoid Dragonawe

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Spirit
Opposition ability: Presence

Comments: The mere sight of a dragon forces all creatures to avoid dragonawe or become overwhelmed by the beast. Such a hero feels an undeniable wave of fear that causes him to flee or seek shelter at once. Only after getting out of sight of the dragon does the awed person come to his senses. Therefore, the dragonawe effects might continue into the next scene.

Mishap: A hero who suffers a mishap during this scene feels utterly overcome by the sight of the dragon, added to the hardships of the night before. He simply faints, remaining unconscious for ten minutes or until revived.

Characters

Besides the heroes, the characters below may play a part in this scene:

- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Merchants: *Qualinesti elves, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.
- Dreselenimus: *A young adult green dragon.* Co 10, Ph 48, In 11 (121), Es 11 (121), Dmg +16, Def –12, also dragon breath, swallow whole, dragonawe, dive attack, sorcery (aeromancy, divination, enchantment), mysticism (alteration).

Outcome

The adventure can take many different routes from here.

- Due to dragonawe or just plain common sense, the heroes might consider the dragon too much to face. Whether they flee or try to hide, the adventure continues with Scene Three. The elves, seeing their hired guards break into flight, will do the same.
- If the heroes opt to stand their ground and fight the dragon, the elves will stand with them, inspired by their bravery. The story moves to Scene Four.
- Perhaps the heroes let the dragon approach. Whether they try to signal to it that they wish to talk (perhaps with a white flag) or just wait for it to carry out the "distraction" Jendaron promised, they suffer the events described in the Epilogue, Scene One.

Scene Three: The Dark Maw

In this scene, the heroes have felt compelled to flee the green dragon Dreselenimus or search for a hiding place.

Overview

With luck, the heroes locate a hidden pit (one they missed during the blizzard) and hurry inside. The dragon's roar in their ears likely causes them to abandon their horses and wagons in their need to escape.

Getting Started

In playing out this scene, the Narrator should consult the section on dragons in Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

First Impressions

To start the scene, the Narrator can read players the paragraph below, which assumes that the heroes have decided to avoid all contact with the beast:

As the hissing, salivating wyrm closes in, it clearly has only hostile intentions. As one, you break from the exposure of the road and scurry to find shelter. The only question is, will you reach a safe haven before the great wyrm reaches you?

If instead the heroes arrived at this scene after retreating from combat with the dragon, the Narrator should read the following passage instead:

It has become apparent that you cannot stand against the fury of the green dragon. Only by withdrawing can you hope to survive. As one, you break from the battlefield and scurry to find shelter. But will you be quick enough to escape the rampaging behemoth behind you?

The Story Continues

If the heroes opted to seek shelter immediately upon sighting the dragon, they'll have a good chance of finding a pit in the snow and escaping Dreselenimus (at least for the moment). With each hero seeking shelter, one of them almost certainly stumbles upon the pit, with its adjacent cave.

Should they be fleeing pell-mell from the dragon at the start of this scene, the Narrator should still let them attempt the action to find the pit (see the "Actions" section). At least one player should recognize the importance of this action and play a card high enough to ensure success.

When one of the heroes falls into the pit, whether through a successful action or a mishap, the Narrator should first determine whether the hero sustained damage from the fall (see the "Actions" section). Then, he should read the text below:

You have accidentally discovered a pit covered with a thin layer of snow. The walls are sheer and slick with ice, making it look like a difficult climb. After taking a second to recover from your fall, you notice that something seems amiss here. While the pit appears deep enough to shield it from the winds that constantly roll along the mountainside, a steady current of air trickles past you. Looking around, you note that one stone wall of this unremarkable chasm is split by a jagged fissure that looks like the gaping mouth of a viper, just big enough for someone to squeeze through. A steady stream of warm air wafts out of this dark maw.

The pit itself cannot hold more than two people safely out of the dragon's reach, making it much too small to shelter horses or caravan wagons. Anyone who squeezes through the dark maw within notes that the cavern beyond could easily hold all the characters and heroes.

Atmosphere

If the heroes begin this scene before actually fighting the dragon, the most important feeling for the Narrator to evoke is one of foreboding and doom. In mere minutes, a creature terrible enough to make an army flee will descend on the heroes. They must find some means of escape, or everyone will very likely die.

Should the heroes be fleeing from combat with the dragon at the start of this scene, the Narrator should emphasize the frantic, frenzied urgency of their flight. The heroes almost certainly have suffered injury—they may even be in a state of panic.

Actions

Finding shelter from the dragon is vital to the group's survival. More than one hero may attempt the first action below, even if they are fleeing with no thought to searching for shelter or if they are making for their shelter of the night before. Any success at this action indicates that the group has discovered the pit and the dark maw.

The heroes should attempt to find the pit in order from highest to lowest Perception score. As soon as one of them succeeds, all later attempts to find other shelter will fail, regardless of point totals.

➢ Find the Pit

Difficulty: Average (8) or Challenging (12)
Action ability: Perception
Opposition ability: None

Comments: This action has an *average* difficulty if the heroes are actually searching for shelter, but becomes *challenging* if they are giving little thought to searching as they flee the dragon. Success indicates that the hero has actually had a fortunate misstep: He has walked onto a thin film of ice and snow covering a deep pit. The ice breaks, and the hero falls in, suffering no significant injury. On one wall of this pit is the dark maw described earlier—actually, the entrance to a downward-sloping cave.
Mishap: A hero who suffers a mishap while attempting this action still finds the pit. (Only failing the action normally prevents the hero from uncovering it.) Because this is a mishap, however, the hero breaks his leg in the fall. The player must lose one card from his hand and reduce his Agility score to 1 point until someone applies a splint. Even after this medical care, the hero regains only half the value of his Agility score. This score returns to normal only when the leg has healed, either through mystical magic or after a month has passed.

Heroes wishing to climb into or out of the pit can attempt another action.

➢ Climb into or out of the Pit

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Agility
Opposition ability: None

Comments: Should the hero use a rope or other climbing gear, this action becomes one degree easier. If the hero is a centaur or has a broken leg from the fall into the pit, it becomes one degree more difficult.
Mishap: A mishap means the hero falls while attempting to climb out. He must succeed in an *average Agility* action or injure himself, losing one card from his hand. He may try climbing out again.

Characters

This scene involves Dreselenimus, the heroes, and the elves (and possibly Marsi).

- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Merchants: *Qualinesti elves, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.
- Dreselenimus: *A young adult green dragon.* Co 10, Ph 48, In 11 (121), Es 11 (121), Dmg +16, Def –12, also dragon breath, swallow whole, dragonawe, dive attack, sorcery (aeromancy, divination, enchantment), mysticism (alteration).

Outcome

This scene ends with a simple choice:

- If the heroes opt to avoid the dark maw and the cave beyond—or if no one managed to find it—the adventure continues with Scene Four.
- Should they move through the dark maw, they can proceed to Scene Five.

Scene Four: Against All Odds

This scene takes place in the Icicle Pass after the heroes have seen the green dragon Dreselenimus in the distance; they may or may not have tried to find shelter from the beast. The wyrm intends to destroy everyone involved with the caravan, even if the heroes are working for Jendaron, then sniff out the treasured Tear of Reorx himself.

Overview

Unless the heroes are exceptionally lucky or clever, it seems highly unlikely that they might actually defeat this juggernaut. The heroes can break and run if it becomes clear that they will lose the battle. Should they opt to stand and fight despite certain doom, the Narrator can do little except compliment them on their bravery and help the players create new heroes for the next game.

Getting Started

The Narrator should have the *Book of the Fifth Age* open to the section on dragons in Chapter Six for this scene.

First Impressions

This scene begins when the dragon reaches far missile range. He'll still be airborne at that point, giving the heroes a chance to unleash a little missile fire before the creature enters near missile and, ultimately, melee range. At any time, the Narrator can read the players this text:

With every stroke of its titanic wings, the green dragon draws closer to your position. Despite the frigid mountain winds, fear has brought perspiration to the face of everyone around you. The elves have readied their bows and look resolved to face the horror before them. Saranja, her elegant features fixed and grim, holds high her sword and cries out, "Tha sanrin qua ellecanthas!" A responding cheer goes up from the other elves, but it lacks conviction.

As the dragon pulls closer, the true magnitude of the beast becomes apparent. Fully one hundred feet long, its entire body is armored with gleaming green scales. Its wicked teeth and talons glint in the frigid sun like keen-edged scimitars, and its yellow, snakelike eyes seem focused on you and no one else.

Then, with a roar that echoes like a raging storm from the peaks around you, the beast is upon you!

Any elf hero understands Saranja's words: "For freedom and the forest!" This is the battle cry of the Qualinesti resistance movement that opposes Beryl and her savage rule.

The Story Continues

Dreselenimus does not begin this battle with a dive attack—he doesn't consider the members of the caravan enough of a threat to merit this deadly tactic. However, after the heroes get off one salvo of missile fire, the wyrm unleashes its dragon breath—a jet of chlorine gas—upon a group of the surviving merchants, then lands to engage in melee combat. Although green dragons normally prefer magical assaults to melee combat, Beryl selfishly orders her minions to avoid using magic. She allows only a few of them to share with her the privilege of wielding dragon sorcery in her realm.

As the dragon begins his assault, the heroes must attempt a *challenging Spirit (Presence)* action to avoid dragonawe. Failure causes a hero to freeze with fear, unable to attack or defend himself from the dragon's counterattack. Afterward, he must flee the creature, not hesitating until it is out of sight.

The Battle

Those who survive this counterattack may flee or continue to face the dragon. Elves equal to twice the number of heroes remain to continue the battle, as do Araji and Saranja. (Of course, earlier fatalities may reduce the number of combatants facing the dragon.) The others break and run.

In subsequent exchanges, the dragon closes range and continues using its chlorine breath. When the wyrm has approached to melee range, Saranja and Araji (or one other elf) back off to open the range again, then employ their bows. Even as volley after volley of arrows breaks against Dreselenimus's scales, they will be reluctant to enter into melee combat.

The rest of the elves run like mad. At this point (or earlier), the Narrator can allow one of the fleeing elves to accidentally discover the pit from Scene Three.

If it becomes apparent that the battle is going against the group, the heroes may see that flight is their best option. Any remaining elves will follow the fleeing heroes. No matter how many elves the dragon annihilates, however, Saranja should survive to remain with the group.

If the Narrator deems it important that she fall in the battle, Saranja will pass the Tear of Reorx to the heroes' leader, urging him to see it delivered to the dwarves of Thorbardin. The resistance clings to the hope that they can use this treasure to battle Beryl or otherwise aid the cause of the freedom-seekers under her tyranny.

Atmosphere

Any combat scene should be dramatic and frightening. However, in this battle the Narrator also must play up the incredible power of the dragon compared to the frailty of the elves and heroes. He should use the caravan members in much the same way that many television shows use bit characters: Seeing a dozen elves swept out of existence by a single lash of the dragon's claws ought to show heroes the dire nature of their predicament.

In the event that Saranja dies during this scene, the Narrator should make her parting poignant and sweet. This strong woman devoted her life to winning freedom for her people. When she passes on the Tear of Reorx to the heroes, it should be a bequest that no decent person could turn away from.

Actions

Over the course of the battle, the heroes may attempt any number of unusual strategems in their efforts to defeat the dragon. They might use aeromancy to create a gale that drives the beast into the mountainside, for example, or target javelins specifically at his eyes. For the most part, the Narrator will need to resolve these actions case by case, taking into account the ability scores of the heroes and the plausibility of the tactic.

Characters

This scene involves Dreselenimus and the elves as well as the heroes.

- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Merchants: *Qualinesti elves, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.
- Dreselenimus: *A young adult green dragon.* Co 10, Ph 48, In 11 (121), Es 11 (121), Dmg +16, Def –12, also dragon breath, swallow whole, dragonawe, dive attack, sorcery (aeromancy, divination, enchantment), mysticism (alteration).

Outcome

At the end of this scene, the adventure continues with:

- Scene Six, if the heroes are on the verge of defeating the dragon;
- Scene Three, if they flee; or
- Epilogue, Scene Two, if they fall before the wrath of the ferocious beast.

Scene Five: Cave-In!

This scene begins mere moments after the last member of the group has squeezed through the dark maw at the bottom of the icy pit and into a downward sloping cavern. Elf characters should encourage any stragglers who seem reluctant to enter or any heroes desiring to remain in the adjoining pit, reminding them that the dragon could breath poisonous chlorine gas upon them at any second.

Overview

The heroes now must confront the dangers of a cave-in caused by the green dragon, furious at having lost his prey. The collapse of the tunnel behind them gives the heroes little choice but to move deeper into the underground cavern.

Getting Started

As this scene opens, the heroes have hidden in the cavern adjoining the pit. If this is not the case, the Narrator should return to Scene Four and have the group fight the dragon.

First Impressions

The players should hear the following text after the last of the heroes has made it safely into the cavern:

Scarcely have you squeezed through the fissure and into the dark chamber beyond when a tremendous howl of fury fills the air. Clearly, your escape has enraged the dragon. For a moment, all is silent outside.

Then, without warning, a violent shock wave rips through the ground. You hear the sound of the walls splitting, and stones shower down from the roof of the cave. With a groan and a crash, the crevice you just passed through folds in upon itself in a shower of dust and rock, cutting you off from the outside world.

The Story Continues

The "First Impressions" passage describes Dreselenimus's attempt to continue his battle with the heroes. The green dragon leaps into the sky to spiral upward for a minute or two, then he dives down to slam into the ground above the cave where they hide. This is only the first of several blows he will land; if the heroes don't wish to be buried under several tons of rock, they would do well to move deeper into the cavern. It's becoming more of a tunnel, sloping downward off into the darkness.

The Narrator should describe several more tremors like the one mentioned earlier. Each one causes more and more of the cavern to collapse behind them, forcing the heroes ever deeper into the tunnel. The dragon spaces his assaults about five minutes apart.

Atmosphere

The pacing of this scene—long stretches of stifling quiet punctuated by brief bursts of sheer terror—ought to convey to the heroes what might be happening aboveground. When the dragon circles, all is hushed in the dark cave. Then, suddenly, the heroes feel the violent impact as he smashes into the earth above them. The heroes are left standing by helplessly in a confined space, hoping that the ceiling doesn't collapse on them—the feeling resembles that of a depth charge attack in a submarine movie.

Actions

Heroes who make successful *challenging Reason* actions not only determine that the dragon is causing the cave-in, but they also get a pretty good idea of how. After every blow, the heroes must attempt the action on the opposite page to avoid being hit by falling debris. The Narrator should no longer require this action once they have moved what he considers deep enough into the cavern.

➢ Avoid Falling Debris

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Agility
Opposition ability: None

Comments: Everyone in the cave must attempt to avoid falling debris whenever Dreselenimus hammers the earth above. Failure results in the hero losing one card from his hand as an injury from the ensuing shower of rock and debris.

Mishap: Anyone who suffers a mishap becomes trapped by falling debris. In addition to suffering the normal one-card loss, he finds himself pinned under the debris. He (and anyone who comes to help him) must then attempt this action a second time; anyone who fails suffers the normal damage above. After the tremor ends, the group can unearth the trapped hero in ten minutes, minus one minute for each individual helping to rescue him.

Characters

Of course, the major player in this scene is the green dragon. Others, especially the elves, can come into play, too.

- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Merchants: *Qualinesti elves, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.
- Dreselenimus: *A young adult green dragon.* Co 10, Ph 48, In 11 (121), Es 11 (121), Dmg +16, Def –12, also dragon breath, swallow whole, dragonawe, dive attack, sorcery (aeromancy, divination, enchantment), mysticism (alteration).

Outcome

After the events of this scene have driven the heroes deep underground, the adventure continues with the events in Scene Seven.

Scene Six: Road Block

The heroes are about to kill the green dragon brilliantly, but as it falls to the earth, it collapses the Icicle Pass. In the wake of this destruction, the road becomes impassible. The heroes and elves can no longer proceed as planned.

Overview

This scene should direct the heroes into the caverns where Act Three, "Underground Discovery," takes place.

Getting Started

In order to reach this scene, the heroes must be on the verge of defeating the dragon—an incredibly unlikely event, but one never knows what a clever group of players might pull off.

First Impressions

As soon as the heroes inflict the wound that slays the dragon, the Narrator should read players the description below, which serves both to end the previous scene and begin this one:

With a howl of pain, the dragon topples backward. His immense green body crashes to the earth with an impact that causes the ground beneath your feet to heave and buckle. For a moment, it seems that this blow will shatter the entire mountain.

When the rumbling stops and all is calm again, the true effect of this concussion becomes apparent. The narrow pass through the mountains has collapsed. Instead of a smooth, snow-covered road, you now find yourselves faced with an unstable and possibly insurmountable ridge of loose boulders and debris.

The Story Continues

Any dwarves or gnomes among the heroes will recognize the danger of trying to climb over the ridge. (Ironically, members of these races just might be the only ones who could do it.) Any attempt could bring the whole mass down, and possibly much of the stone around it. In short, climbing the rubble could make the entire mountainside collapse.

Even if the heroes seem willing to take this risk, Saranja isn't. She's no coward, but she has worked too hard to recover the Tear of Reorx to take foolish chances now. She decides to look for a different solution, and the other elves will follow her. On the other hand, should the heroes decide to abandon their efforts to reach Thorbardin, Saranja does everything she can to change their minds. If she must, she'll explain her mission to the heroes, show them the Tear, and outline its importance to the elven resistance.

Anyone who takes the time to look around (see the "Actions" section) discovers that the shock of the dragon's collapse has opened up a large fissure in the ground. This shaft seems to lead into a natural cavern. Its angle and direction indicate (to anyone successful in a *daunting Reason* action) that it may well lead to a tunnel through this stretch of mountains. With a little luck, it will open up on the other side of Pax Tharkas.

Any rugged adventurer who actually manages to scale the collapsed pass (see "Actions") witnesses the following sight from atop the pile of debris:

The trail beyond the collapsed Icicle Pass does not look good. Where once a smooth road ran between sheer cliffs, there now lies only a great sea of fallen snow, sundered trees, and shattered boulders. Even the word "impassible" seems too kind to describe the buried road ahead.

The heroes have reached a dead end. The snow beyond the debris appears far too dangerous to tread on—anyone moving through the area would certainly fall victim to sinkholes and avalanches.

If the heroes fail to find the cavern (or even search for it), one of the elves should spot it. Or, perhaps Marsi (or an elf) falls into the shaft that leads to the cavern and twists her ankle. The heroes will have to rescue her and, in so doing, will learn about the cave and tunnel.

Narrators wanting to spice things up a bit can have Marsi face an attack by some oversized centipedes while in the fissure. Although these creatures would pose no real threat to the heroes, they scare the little girl to death.

Atmosphere

The pace of the adventure slows down a bit, after the tension of the last couple scenes. The dragon defeated, the heroes can rest and recover from the battle. The deaths of comrades and the collapse of the pass add elements of mourning and despair. The Narrator's technique should make the solemn aspects of the occasion clear to everyone, the only ray of hope being the discovery of the cavern.

Actions

The heroes might attempt two major actions in this scene: attempting to climb over the blockage and searching for another way around (or through) the mountains.

➢ Scale the Rubble

Difficulty: Challenging (12)
Action ability: Agility
Opposition ability: None

Comments: Scaling the collapsed area poses quite a bit of danger to a hero. Failure indicates that he could not ascend the loose debris of the shattered pass. Instead, he slips and tumbles back to its base, bringing a minor landslide with him. If he fails an *average Endurance* action at this time, he injures himself in the fall and loses one card from his hand.
Mishap: A mishap means the hero has triggered a major rockslide, which quickly spreads to the whole area. Every hero must make a successful *average Endurance* action or sustain injury (lose one card from his hand).

➢ Search for Another Route

Difficulty: Easy (4)
Action ability: Perception
Opposition ability: None

Comments: It proves fairly simple to find a route out of the pass, for the dragon's impact caused a large section of an underground cavern's ceiling to collapse, revealing a clear shaft to the surface. Failing this action means the hero could not find the fissure leading to the cavern and tunnel.
Mishap: A mishap indicates that the hero finds the cave complex by accident. While walking along, he has stepped on a section of weakened earth, which collapses beneath him and drops him into the cavern. The injury he suffers in the fall causes him to lose one card from his hand.

Characters

This scene centers on the actions of the heroes, although other characters may come into play also. If the Narrator uses the centipedes, he should determine their number based on the group's size and strength.

- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Merchants: *Qualinesti elves, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.
- Giant centipedes: *Animals.* Co 9, Ph 4, In 1, Es 1, Dmg +3, Def –3, also poison.

Outcome

From here, the heroes seem to have a choice between two possible paths.

- If they opt to give up and return to Solace, the Narrator may move to the Epilogue, Scene Two.
- The adventure continues with Scene Seven if the heroes decide to follow the cave beyond the road block or possibly through the mountain.

Scene Seven: Exploring the Cave

A couple different scenes will lead the adventurers to this one, which introduces the heroes to some of the dangerous creatures that lurk in Ansalon's darkest corners.

Overview

Although this scene begins with a role-playing interlude, it ends with a combat episode designed to pick up the pace of the adventure again.

Getting Started

This scene assumes that the heroes have a source of light with them or that they can make one fairly easily. A suitable light source might be anything from a lantern or make-shift torch to a magical glow summoned up with the aid of spectramancy.

First Impressions

Before the group goes any farther, Saranja (or, in her absence, another elf) wishes to say a few words in memorium for her fallen comrades. If the heroes are still above ground, the group may first lay the bodies of the dead to rest in rude cairns. Otherwise, they might attempt whatever funereal preparations are possible for their valiant companions. Then the Narrator should read the eulogy below as Saranja conducts the funeral service:

"My friends, the road we have chosen to travel is not an easy one. At home, we must share the hardships of all our brothers and sisters in the resistance against Beryl's tyranny. In the lands beyond, we must remain ever watchful for both new enemies and agents of the Great Dragons. From time to time, we find new allies like (name of party leader) and his companions.

"The mourning of fallen comrades is a task that we have become all too familiar with. In the memory of these valiant friends, let us pay them the greatest tribute we can. Let us make certain that their deaths are not without meaning and glory. Let us press onward to victory, triumph, and liberation!"

Saranja should then encourage the leader of the party (or another hero) to say a few words before the group moves on.

The Story Continues

After the heroes have moved through the tunnel for a while, the Narrator can present them with this description:

As you move deeper into the heart of the mountain, the air becomes thick and dank. The sound of your footsteps on the hard stone of the cave floor echoes sharply back to you from the darkness before and behind. Although the tunnel is bitterly cold, at least you are out of the wind.

Gradually, you become aware of a scratching, grating noise commingled with the sound of your footfalls. It seems rather like the scraping of rock on rock, with occasional chirps or squeaks as well. Clearly, something lurks ahead in the darkness.

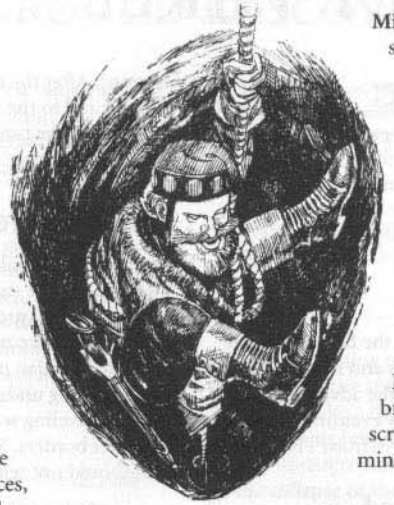
After this narrative introduction, the heroes have a few minutes to prepare themselves to face whatever lies ahead by readying their weapons or casting defensive spells. They'll discover the source of the noise soon enough:

Giant ice beetles. This colder-climate variation on the normal species possesses a special ice spray attack. One beetle appears for every member of the group.

The Battle

As unintelligent creatures, the giant ice beetles never work together in battle against the heroes. Whenever one of them freezes a victim in its ice spray (see the "Actions" section), it ignores the fighting still going on around it. Instead, it immediately moves toward the victim and begins devouring him. With each bite, the beetle inflicts its normal damage rating upon the target. A trapped hero cannot attempt to dodge or attack the beetle until he frees himself from the ice.

Atmosphere



This scene echoes the somber mood of Scene Six, then assumes the frantic tone of other combat sections. Yet, it contains a number of unique characteristics, too.

First and foremost, this scene takes place in an underground tunnel. The Narrator should constantly mention the cold, the confined spaces, and the echoes of battle sounds off the stone walls.

The Narrator also can make the most of the fact that the heroes don't know what they are about to face. He can offer hints and drag out the actual appearance of the giant beetles for quite some time, building suspense before suddenly unleashing the chittering creatures on the adventurers.

Actions

The battle portion of this scene will involve many normal combat actions, in addition to attempts to avoid the giant beetles' special ice spray attack.

➢ Avoid the Ice Spray

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Agility
Opposition ability: Dexterity

Comments: The beetle can use its ice spray attack only at near missile range. When it does so, the spray partially freezes a hero who fails this action to the floor of the cave. Breaking this ice, whether to free oneself or another, requires an *average Strength* action.

Mishap: Anyone who suffers a mishap is unfortunate enough to have his head trapped in a sheath of ice. If someone does not remove the ice within a number of minutes equal to the victim's Endurance score, the hero suffocates and dies. Each attempt to break the ice, as described above, takes one minute.

Characters

The following characters and monsters play a role in this scene.

- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Merchants: *Qualinesti elves, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.
- Giant ice beetles: *Animals.* Co 3, Ph 15, In 1, Es 1, Dmg +10, Def –4, also spit a stream of clear liquid that freezes in seconds.

Outcome

This scene concludes Act Two. Once the heroes have defeated the giant beetles, the adventure continues with Scene One of Act Three.

Scene One: The Cavern

After the heroes have been traveling underground for two or three hours, the events of this scene begin.

Overview

"The Cavern" details the heroes' further descent into darkness and introduces a key plot element for the adventure's third act: a tunnel that they eventually discover was created by dwarves from Thorbardin.

Getting Started

The Narrator needs no special preparation for this scene.

First Impressions

Reading the following text aloud starts off this final act:

After descending sharply for several hours, the tunnel levels off, and your travel becomes easier. Although the tunnel still looks jagged and the air feels thick with cold, you can make much more rapid progress.

Another hour passes and then, much to your surprise, the monotonous tunnel forks. One section continues on much the same as it has gone for many miles. The other, however, appears clearly artificial, constructed by some intelligent race.

The Story Continues

This introductory scene serves as a crux for the heroes to make an important decision: Do they follow the natural cavern or the artificial one? The group has the opportunity to investigate both tunnels before deciding.

While exploring this section of the tunnels, the heroes might accidentally set off an explosion through a mishap in the investigation action (see the "Actions" section). After the blast, the Narrator may want to add to the excitement by having portions of the tunnel threaten to—or actually—collapse.

Atmosphere

The Narrator should play up the tension of this scene. To be sure, the discovery of an artificial tunnel promises a possible easy path through the mountains. But what if Beryl's draconian minions constructed it? Despite being underground, the heroes are still traveling within the Green Dragon's borders, Saranja points out. Heroes should not select their path lightly.

Actions

The heroes should seek to investigate the two passages before they decide on their new path. The following actions can resolve these efforts:

➢ Search the Natural Tunnel

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Perception
Opposition ability: None

Comments: Successfully searching the natural tunnel means the hero discovers a thick, tarlike substance spattered upon the rock walls and floor of the tunnel. A successful *easy Reason* action allows him to identify it as bat guano.

Mishap: A mishap results in the discovery of a pocket of natural gas. If the heroes in this portion of the tunnel have a source of open flame, perhaps a torch or lantern, the vapors explode. Each hero in this portion of the tunnel must succeed at an *average Endurance* action or the player loses one card from his hand.

➢ Search the Artificial Tunnel

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Perception
Opposition ability: None

Comments: Searching the artificial tunnel successfully allows the hero to identify the precise delving of this tunnel as dwarves' work. (This action becomes *easy* for dwarf heroes.) Whether this fact bodes good or ill for the party is for the players to decide.

Mishap: A mishap means the hero discovers a pocket of natural gas. If the heroes in this tunnel have a source of open flame, such as a torch or lantern, the vapors explode. Each hero in this branch must succeed in an *average Endurance* action or the player loses one card from his hand.

Characters

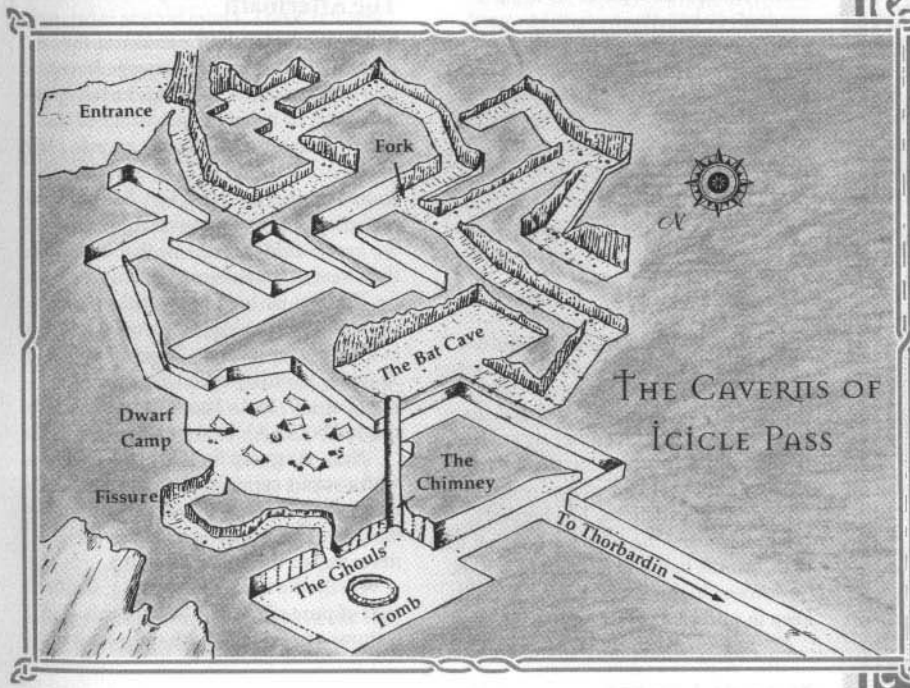
The remaining elves from the caravan continue to travel with the heroes, as does, perhaps, Marsi.

- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Merchants: *Qualinesti elves, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.

Outcome

Heroes attempting to turn around and head back to the surface discover their way blocked by a cave-in caused by Dreselenimus (either while chasing the heroes underground or as an aftereffect of the collapse of the pass that he caused). After their investigations, the heroes will see they have two choices:

- Should they opt to make their way down the natural tunnel, the adventure proceeds with Scene Two.
- If they follow the dwarven tunnel, the story continues with Scene Three.



Scene Two: The Bat Cave

This scene, in which the heroes follow the natural tunnel, brings the group face to face with one of the horrors of the underground world: a flock of carnivorous giant bats. These terrible creatures attack in great swarms, using their needlelike teeth to flay the flesh from their victims.

Overview

In the wake of the battle, the heroes may discover a small cache of magical weapons, then descend a narrow, vertical passage to continue their underground travel.

Getting Started

The second part of this scene assumes the heroes have a rope, but they can still succeed without one.

First Impressions

The text below describes for players the discovery of the bat cave:

You press on into the twisting, jagged depths of this natural cavern. Every sound that you make bounces back to you in a cacophony of echoes. Gradually, however, you become aware of a noise that isn't originating from your company. At first, it sounds like the chirping of insects, then, in a sudden flash, the truth becomes clear. The tunnel ahead is thick with swooping, diving giant bats.

The Story Continues

In this combat scene, the heroes find their progress suddenly challenged. To press on, they must hammer through a flock of biting, carnivorous giant bats.

This swarm of bats proves resistant to normal combat actions. The heroes might flee using the rules for quitting the field, but the bats will attempt to follow. To succeed in this scene, players should keep in mind a few salient points.

The Battle

First, missile weapons will prove useless against the swarm. Of course, heroes can slay individual bats with them, but they do nothing to deter the flock as a whole. Melee weapons are almost as useless: Killing one or two bats with a sword swing has little effect on the mass. Heroes would put such weapons to best use by sweeping them back and forth, in an effort to disperse the bats (see the "Actions" section).

A good mundane weapon against the swarm is an open flame—torches and the like will drive away the bats. Lanterns, glowing staves, and similar lights without exposed flames will not work (see "Actions"). Smoke will deter the bats a bit, too, but the best way to battle them is with magic, especially pyromancy, aeromancy, or animism.

After the battle, anyone who has suffered damage from the swarm must succeed in an *average Endurance (Strength)* action or contract a disease from the bat bites. If heroes take special care to clean the bite wounds, the action becomes *easy.* (Chapter Six in the *Book of the Fifth Age* details the bats' special ability to infect.)

The Aftermath

Following the battle, the leader of the party should attempt an *average Perception* action. Success indicates he has spotted a glint of metal in one corner of the cavern. Further investigation reveals a trio of skeletons, the remains of explorers devoured by the bats years ago. In addition to their rusted and decayed equipment, the heroes find three items that look as if they were manufactured yesterday.

The first is a long sword with an elvish inscription on the blade: *Mythandras.* (Elves in the party say it means "Sacred Fury.") This long sword of legend has a damage rating of +17. In the hands of an elf, its magical bonus doubles, for a rating of +27.

Next, the group finds a target shield with a scarlet eye painted on it. Whoever carries it can see clearly, even in absolute darkness. Fog, smoke, etc., while visible, never impair the holder's vision.

Lastly, the heroes find a long, slender staff of pure silver. The head of this staff features a great eagle with outspread wings. Though sturdy enough to use as a quarterstaff in combat, this magical staff allows its holder to speak freely with eagles. While the birds are under no obligation to help or obey the staff's owner, they likely would look favorably on him if he seems friendly. Of course, this function is not readily apparent to the heroes.

If anyone continues exploring the bat cave, the Narrator can read the text below:

Without warning, the cavern comes to an end. At the base of the cave wall, a great split has opened in the stone floor, revealing a deep shaft. Its opening is wide enough to admit a person.

The heroes ought to determine the depth of this chimney before they descend. They have various options: Divination or geomancy can provide an exact answer (five hundred seventy-three feet), while dropping a stone down the shaft and counting the seconds until impact might constitute an *average Perception* action.

Following these attempts, the heroes might choose to descend the shaft—no picnic even for experienced climbers. The climb, an *average Strength* or *Dexterity* action, takes several hours. Those not well suited to climbing, like centaurs, find the action *challenging,* but using climbing equipment can make it easier.

Atmosphere

In addition to the frenzy of a normal combat scene, the Narrator should play up the disorientation associated with a swarm assault. After all, when an individual attacks, a hero knows which way to turn to face his foe. The bats, however, subject one to nipping and biting from all directions.

Once they discover the chimney, however, the major drama of this scene comes from the tension of the descent. The Narrator can emphasize this by repeatedly describing the muscle strain and even a few close calls, as handholds break loose.

Actions

Though magic works best against the bats, the heroes can attempt a special action:

➢ Drive off the Bats

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Agility
Opposition ability: Presence

Comments: The heroes can sweep their weapons back and forth in an attempt to drive away the bats instead of harming them. If they use open fire in the effort, any card they play becomes trump. Each attempt at this action represents one minute's work. Successfully driving off the bats requires ten successful actions from the group as a whole.

Mishaps: A second swarm has joined the first, forcing the heroes to begin their effort to drive off the bats all over again.

Characters

In addition to the normal group, this scene features animal adversaries:

- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Merchants: *Qualinesti elves, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.
- Giant bats: *Animals.* Co 5, Ph 12, In 3, Es 2, Dmg +5 (bite), Def –2, also infect.

Outcome

If the heroes drive off the bats, they may press on with their journey or turn back.

- If they opt to turn back, they must confront the bats again on their return trip through the natural cavern. Then the adventure returns to Scene One.
- After the heroes have descended into the chimney, they land in one end of another tunnel. The adventure continues with Scene Five.

Scene Three: The Campsite

This scene introduces an element of mystery into the adventure.

Overview

The heroes come upon an abandoned campsite. Exactly who built it and what happened to them is a matter for speculation and investigation.

Getting Started

This scene takes place shortly after the heroes opt to follow the artificial tunnel. They may or may not have deduced it was made by dwarves.

First Impressions

The Narrator can read the following text to the players after the heroes have traveled a short way down the tunnel:

After fifteen minutes of refreshingly easy travel, you come upon an area where the tunnel widens into a hemisphere-shaped chamber some fifty yards in diameter. At its center lies a cluster of privacy tents, a blackened pit that once held a cooking fire, and an assortment of mining tools. The cold air carries the taint of the sickly odor of rotting meat, but there is no sign of its source.

The Story Continues

This scene of mystery and foreboding begins with the discovery of the dwarf campsite and continues as the heroes investigate it. Searching the camp (as described in the "Actions" section) will reveal many things to the heroes.

First, they discover belongings (battle axes, charms of Reorx) that suggest this camp belonged to dwarves, which the group may already have concluded. There appear to have been a dozen or so dwarves, based upon the number of the small bedrolls and short tents.

They also learn that the campers fought a fierce battle here against foes that appear to have been more or less human. The bits of broken armor and weapons scattered about clearly indicate that the dwarves lost. Tracks show that after the battle the dwarves, either alive or dead, were dragged off through a fissure in the cave wall. The heroes can find nothing to explain the smell of rot.

Lastly, the heroes discover a large chest, which contains a half-dozen leather sacks. Each of these is the size of a man's head and filled with what appears to be very coarse pepper. In fact, these bags hold blasting powder, which dwarf miners use when they come upon a spot that proves especially difficult to tunnel through. If touched off by exposure to fire, each bag causes everyone within melee range to suffer 25 damage points. (Armor provides its normal protection.)

Atmosphere

The Narrator can make this scene tense by constantly giving the players the impression that something terrible is about to happen. Whenever they open a backpack or peek behind a rock, they should expect something to jump out at them. What secrets will the next tent hold for them? And where could the former occupants of this camp have gone?

In addition, the Narrator should elaborate on where the heroes find the evidence mentioned earlier. Telling them they find a holy medallion of Reorx on the dirty, moldy ground or a dwarf's boot inside a damp bedroll enhances the scene's feeling of authenticity.

Actions

If the heroes announce that they are investigating the campsite, the leader of the party should attempt the following action for the entire group:

➢ Investigate the Campsite

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Perception
Opposition ability: None

Comments: Searching the camp takes the heroes an hour and assumes they are being fairly thorough. It does not mean that they are cutting open pillows or otherwise breaking up the camp in their efforts (although doing so doesn't affect their results in any way).

Success at this action allows the heroes to discover the information presented in "The Story Continues." Failure indicates that they learn nothing important from their investigations.

Mishap: A mishap during this search indicates that one of the heroes (the one with the lowest Perception score) has found a small but very poisonous snake hiding inside one of the clammy bedrolls. The snake bites the hero, who must immediately attempt an *average Endurance* action. Failing this action means he loses one card per minute until he dies or receives a cure or healing. Once discovered, the snake can be killed easily.

Characters

In addition to the heroes, this scene features the normal cast of characters:

- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Merchants: *Qualinesti elves, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.

Outcome

Where the adventure goes from here is up to the heroes.

- Retracing their steps from this campsite returns them to Scene One.
- If they decide to rush forward, leaving the fissure in the wall unexplored, the adventure continues with Scene Four.
- In the event that they decide to explore the fissure, the story continues with Scene Five.

Scene Four: Ghouls

The Narrator presents this scene if the heroes continue down the delved tunnel without pursuing the dwarves' trail through the fissure near the campsite.

Overview

In this scene, the heroes fall under attack by a ravenous pack of ghouls: the same creatures that overran the dwarf camp.

Getting Started

For this scene, the Narrator should have the *Book of the Fifth Age* open to Chapter Six for more on ghouls.

First Impressions

The following text introduces the scene. Ten or fifteen minutes have passed since the heroes left the abandoned campsite.

Although you have left behind the abandoned camp, the smell of rotting meat has not faded. Perhaps it is not in the air around you. Could your lungs have been tainted with this foul odor?

Marching deeper into the tunnel, you notice that the floor has begun to change from solid rock to broken stones. Indeed, just up ahead these stones give way to gravel, then to black sand—potentially dangerous terrain, if one is not careful.

The Story Continues

As this scene progresses, a pack of ghouls lying in wait for the heroes will assail (and probably surprise) them. The ghouls, one for each member of the party, have buried themselves beneath a foot or so of fine sand, making it difficult for the heroes to notice them before they emerge to strike. Still, a few sensible precautions on the part of the heroes can keep this from being a slaughter.

The Battle

Ghouls are undead pack hunters and use their numbers to great advantage in battle. Whenever possible, they team up on individuals, even if this tactic leaves one or more of their enemies unengaged for a time. When a ghoul has used its paralyzing touch to immobilize an enemy, it turns immediately to another foe.

During the entire battle, the ghouls hiss and spit like angry cats. They leap wildly about, moving so quickly that heroes will find it difficult to follow a single target for any length of time.

The ghouls lying in this tunnel were waiting to attack any more dwarves that might arrive to investigate the miners' disappearance. However, they appear quite willing to fight the heroes instead. The creatures are relentless in their attack, but not unthinking. They will turn and flee if they see defeat is near. The heroes are free to pursue them—right into the lair of even more of the monstrosities.

After the attack has begun, the Narrator can give players an idea of what these creatures look like by reading the description below:

The shrieking creatures before you are as terrible as any you have ever seen. They look as though they once belonged to some forgotten order of knighthood, for they are clad in the decaying remnants of court finery. Yet, the sickly sweet smell of rotting meat that now surrounds them stings your eyes and threatens to smother you where you stand.

Between spasms of nausea, you see that the grave has turned the creatures' skin a sickly gray and drawn it tautly across their bones. Dancing between rows of elongated yellow teeth, their serpentine tongues appear eager to taste your flesh.

Atmosphere

The key to this scene is surprise. After the Narrator has given players a chance to satisfy themselves that the change in terrain was only an irregularity the Narrator threw in to make them nervous, he can loose the ghouls on them.

The frightful manner of the ghouls' initial attack should further this scene's atmosphere of terror. Perhaps one of the heroes, spotting something in the sand, bends down to take a look and suddenly finds himself in the icy clutches of a shrieking ghoul. Maybe the trailing member of the party, while walking along, suddenly feels cold claws grab his foot from below.

Actions

The only special action associated with this scene occurs if the heroes have been making an ongoing effort to investigate the sandy tunnel floor as they travel. Perhaps they're looking for traps, a buried item, or merely feel cautious about the change in terrain.

➢ Notice the Ghouls

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Perception
Opposition ability: None

Comments: The heroes have a chance to notice the ghouls only if they are probing the sand ahead of them with poles or the like. Other methods might be possible as determined by the Narrator.

Success means they discover the ghouls buried in the sand before the creatures attack. Failure indicates that the ghouls automatically gain surprise when the battle begins. In either case, the combat is assumed to start at melee range.

Mishap: A mishap results in the ghouls gaining more than complete surprise when they attack—the heroes may not even defend themselves from the free undead counterattack.

Characters

The ghouls are the only new characters involved in this scene.

- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Merchants: *Qualinesti elves, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.
- Ghouls: *Undead.* Co 5, Ph 6, In 3, Es 6, Dmg +6 (talons), Def –2, also paralyze.

Outcome

At the close of this scene, the heroes have three choices for continuing the action.

- They could flee back to the abandoned camp. In this case, the Narrator can return to Scene Three, but should spice it up by launching a massive assault on the group by ghouls that pop out of the fissure in the wall.
- If the heroes continue down the tunnel, either after defeating the ghouls or while pursuing the fleeing creatures, they emerge in the chamber described in Scene Five.
- Should the ghouls defeat the heroes, the undead will kill and devour them. The Narrator can turn to the Epilogue, Scene Two.

Scene Five: The Restless Dead

Players reach this combat scene after climbing down the chimney shaft in the bat cave, investigating the fissure in the wall near the campsite, or continuing down the artificial tunnel.

Overview

The heroes enter a tomb that dates back to the time of the Cataclysm. A dwarf tunneling project has disturbed the sleep of those interred here, causing them to rise again as ghouls. The heroes encounter a pack of the ravenous undead, their foul leader, and the missing dwarf miners.

Getting Started

The Narrator should have Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age* at hand.

First Impressions

Reading the text below starts this scene:

The jagged edges of the passage open suddenly into a great chamber with a high, arched ceiling. This room looks ancient. Fifty feet above you is a mosaic ceiling depicting a tangle of roses and thorny vines that curl about a human skull. Four great pillars etched with roses, vines, and thorns rise from the black-and-white checkered floor to support the ceiling.

Atop a pedestal at the heart of this chamber roars a haunting, blue-white flame—almost like a fiery ghost. The heat from this blaze warms the room a bit, and its light ripples like ocean waves across the walls, revealing dozens of marble panels. Many are cracked and broken, hanging from one hinge, or crookedly ajar.

The Story Continues

In life, all the men buried here were warriors journeying in the service of the Kingpriest of Istar. In the wake of the Cataclysm, they saw the folly of their ways and had themselves buried alive as penance, far from their sunken homeland. Since then, they have slept the endless sleep of the dead. Recently, however, the coming of the dwarves has caused some to rise from their graves.

In all, the walls of this crypt hold forty panels. Each one seals a chamber bearing a featureless slate coffin. Thirteen panels are set into the south, east, and west walls, while only a single one adorns the northern wall. Although the singular vault on the north wall remains intact, the dwarves' blasting has made the panels sealing about half the other graves crack and fall off, freeing the vicious ghouls to haunt the caverns.

The pillar of blue-white fire at the heart of the crypt is an eternal flame fed from a naturally occurring gas vent. Until recently, it was dormant, but the miners' blasting allowed fresh air to enter the chamber (from the dark maw or fissure discovered in Act Two) and provided the spark that reignited it.

Behind the north panel lies the body of Gherig, the ghoulish head of this execrable order. No one has yet disturbed his sleep, but he will rise again if someone enters his chamber and opens his casket.

The Battle

Two or three minutes after the heroes begin exploring this room, the ghouls lingering in the opened chambers will attack. There should be no more than two ghouls for every member of the group.

Upon awakening, not only does Gherig immediately attack, he calls his warriors, bringing the total of ghoulish foes up to a maximum of nineteen, plus Gherig and less any ghouls the heroes killed earlier. (Twenty remain sealed in their tombs.)

Like the ghouls in Scene Four, these creatures will seek to overwhelm their enemies. Gherig, however, is much more clever than his feral kin—as his tactics show. For instance, the ghoul lord will target spellcasters for attack before all other enemies. He might pick up a dropped weapon or item of magic and turn it on its former owner. Gherig takes advantage of every chance to catch the heroes off guard and demonstrate his cunning.

If all the ghouls join this battle, they will almost certainly triumph. However, there is a better way to defeat these undead warriors than physical combat. Should the heroes at any time during the battle extinguish the flame burning at the heart of this chamber (see the "Actions" section), the undead instantly return to their rest. When the heroes defeat the ghouls and their leader in combat, the central flame sputters out and dies on its own. If someone reignites it, however, the ghouls (even those already slain) return to unlife.

However, once the flame is snuffed, the room will start to fill with gas. In roughly ten minutes, the danger of explosion arises (see Scene One's action mishaps for details). After thirty minutes, the gas makes the air in the tomb unfit to breathe. All heroes must then attempt an *average Endurance* action to avoid falling unconscious. Unconscious heroes must be removed from the chamber within ten minutes, or they will die. Should the heroes try to stop the gas leak in some fashion, the Narrator should call for a suitable action attempt based on the hero's method.

Before the scene began, some of the ghouls had paralyzed the five surviving dwarves and placed them in open tombs, waiting for them to starve. (Ghouls feast only on dead flesh.) Heroes searching the room immediately upon entering find these dwarves, but cannot revive them. Only a curative spell can bring them around in less than an hour. If they don't discover the dwarves right away, they hear their curses and calls for help after the battle, as the paralyzed miners begin to recover and stir.

Atmosphere

Few things in the world are as terrible and revolting as the undead. Scene Four's description of these horrid creatures can help the Narrator in this scene as well. In addition, he should play up the macabre nature of the tomb setting and the weird lighting effects caused by the blue-white flame.

Actions

The heroes might attempt to extinguish the fire burning at the heart of the tomb.

➢ Extinguish the Flame

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Dexterity
Opposition ability: None

Comments: The exact technique the heroes use to put out the flame may vary from using blasting powder (if they found it at the campsite) to blowing out the flame to smothering the source of the gas. In most cases, the difficulty and ability will apply.
Mishap: An explosion fills the chamber with a puff of flaming gas. All heroes (but not the ghouls) suffer 5 damage points. Afterward, the flame burns normally again.

Characters

The following characters may become involved in this scene.

- Gherig: *Undead.* Co 6, Ph 16, In 9, Es 9, Dmg +7 (long sword), Def –6 (chain mail armor, target shield), also paralyze and fear gaze.
- Ghouls: *Undead.* Co 5, Ph 6, In 3, Es 6, Dmg +6 (talons), Def –2, also paralyze.
- Four miners: *Dwarf male adults, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 4, Ph 6, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +5 (pick), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (crossbow/+5).
- Chert Gneiss: *Daewar male adult, deliberate demeanor, Champion.* Co 6, Ph 8, In 7, Es 7, Dmg +6 (battle axe), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (crossbow/+5).
- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Merchants: *Qualinesti elves, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.

Outcome

As this scene concludes, the Narrator should turn to the Epilogue, Scene Two.

Scene One: Dive Attack!

This scene describes what may well be the most terrible type of combat assault any hero is ever likely to suffer: a dragon's dive attack. The heroes can reach this point in one of two ways:

- They bypassed at least two chances in Act One to move the story along.
- They failed to escape the green dragon in Act Two, or chose not to run.

Overview

Beryl has dispatched her minion, the green dragon Dreselenimus, to check on the search for the Tear of Reorx. The heroes encounter this dragon in Solace if Jendaron has failed to make progress in procuring the gem. (If he had made progress, he would have signaled the creature to fly on and intercept the caravan at Icicle Pass just north of Pax Tharkas.)

On the other hand, the heroes meet up with Dreselenimus in the mountain pass if they failed to escape into the cave or if they choose to follow Jendaron's instructions—he said an associate of his would attack the caravan to create a distraction, allowing them to recover the stolen Tear.

In any case, Dreselenimus intends to attack the caravan and sort things out afterward. If the heroes tried signaling the approaching dragon, he imagines they must have a trick planned—they would never act so bold, otherwise. Therefore, he uses his most devastating assault before they can spring their surprise. He cares little about the lives of innocent bystanders near his target.

Getting Started

The heroes and those with them—either everyone around the caravan in Solace or those with the wagon train in the pass—become targets for Dreselenimus. If the group is in Solace, the Narrator should have Caramon and Tika's character cards handy.

First Impressions

To begin this scene, the Narrator may read players the following text:

Suddenly, a huge shadow blots out the sun, plunging your surroundings into darkness. Everyone around you looks upward to see what has happened, only to recoil in horror at the sight of the great green dragon swooping right toward your group.

Never before have you seen anything this terrifying. The creature's gaping maw could swallow any one of you in a single gulp, its leathery wings stretch almost one hundred feet from tip to tip, and its searing yellow eyes seem focused right on you.

With several powerful strokes of its leathery wings, the massive reptile rises high into the air and, impossibly, seems to hang motionless for several seconds. Then, as its jaws snap open and it issues a roar that makes the ground beneath you tremble, the dragon rolls to the side and tilts downward. Wings swept back, it dives toward you like a falcon about to strike at a field mouse.

The Story Continues

Although green dragons normally prefer to attack with magic, Beryl has ordered Dreselenimus to annihilate the caravan in the most fearsome, predatory manner possible. Therefore, the scene begins with the dragon's dive attack, as described in Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

The Battle

The above narrative places the wyrm at visual range. As it plunges toward the caravan, it moves quickly into artillery range, and all the heroes must try to resist dragonawe with a successful *daunting Spirit (Presence)* action, even if they already performed this action when they first spotted the wyrm. Those who fail stand frozen with fear, unable to defend himself.

After this attempt, the green speeds even closer, coming rapidly into far missile range. At this point, it employs its dragon breath. Heroes who survive this attack can respond with a salvo of missile attacks or spells with short casting times.

The speed of the dragon's dive brings it through near missile range and into melee range in a split second. As it crashes to the earth, melee combat begins. Per the rules on dragons, every hero in melee range can attack (and must defend against) the dragon. Nonetheless, the powerful green can annihilate the caravan and its defenders quickly.

In the wake of the creature's dive attack, he rends the caravan to shreds with his melee attacks, destroying it and most of the surroundings in five minutes. (Should this scene occur in Solace, the Inn of the Last Home suffers damage but remains standing.) He rummages through the wreckage and the bodies of the fallen for the Tear of Reorx, finding the gem easily unless a hero or character has managed to survive and conceal it on his person. That done, the green roars one final bugle of warning and takes wing, quickly vanishing into the distance.

Atmosphere

Thunderous crashes of smashing wagons, piercing screams of the dying, and deafening dragon roars create a cacophony the heroes will not soon forget. Any overwhelming background noise can simulate the scene.

As with other combat scenes in this adventure, a quick game pace conveys the nature of events here. Players should receive only a few seconds to tell the Narrator what their heroes are doing. If they don't respond quickly enough, the Narrator can rule that their heroes have been overwhelmed by the events around them and can take no action for now.

Actions

Heroes can use normal combat actions against the dive attack, as well as magic.

Characters

Of course, the major player here is the dragon, but others can come into play, too.

- Solace locals: *Humans of varied age and demeanor, Unknown and Rabble.* Co 5, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing).
- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Merchants: *Qualinesti elves, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.
- Dreselenimus: *A young adult green dragon.* Co 10, Ph 48, In 11 (121), Es 11 (121), Dmg +16, Def –12, also dragon breath, swallow whole, dragonawe, dive attack, sorcery (aeromancy, divination, enchantment), mysticism (alteration).

Outcome

This scene has several possible outcomes:

- Should this battle conclude the adventure for the heroes, through either deaths or defeat, the Narrator should turn to the Epilogue, Scene Two.
- When the heroes in the mountain pass decide they have had enough, they can try to flee from the dragon, as described in Act Two, Scene Three.
- If the group actually kills the dragon, the Narrator can give heroes in Solace another chance to join the caravan; when Saranja saw their battle prowess, she sent a couple of her elves to extend the offer, allowing the adventure to proceed with Act One, Scene Six. (The Narrator should assume, then, that the green they meet in Act Two is a different one.) Killing Dreselenimus in the Icicle Pass brings the story to Act Two, Scene Six.

Scene Two: Conclusions

This scene ends the adventure in one of several ways:

- Dreselenimus defeats the heroes in Solace, but they manage to survive.
- At any time, the heroes decide to go back to Solace and manage to return.
- The green dragon slays the heroes in either Solace or the mountains.
- The heroes all die during their sojourn underground.
- The triumphant heroes save the dwarves and get the opportunity to present them with the Tear of Reorx.

Overview

If, in this concluding scene, any heroes remain alive to witness the aftermath of the dragon attack in Solace, they can offer their assistance in this crisis.

This scene also offers a bit of closure for players of heroes killed by the dragon or ghouls. Should the heroes have given up their quest to turn back to Solace, they reach the city in the wake of a terrible green dragon attack. If they've managed to save the dwarves, this scene gives them some answers and a pat on the back.

Getting Started

Assuming this final scene describes the heroes' death or the aftermath of the dragon attack in Solace, it begins immediately after the previous scene.

If the heroes are returning to Solace from the mountains, several days have passed since the last scene. Every hero has his full spell points and has healed from his wounds to hold a full hand of cards. The Narrator may require Caramon and Tika's character cards in this scenario.

For heroes who just rescued the dwarf miners, this scene begins after they have tended their wounds and helped them recover from the ghoul paralysis.

First Impressions

The Narrator should read players the passage appropriate to their situation.

Solace Aftermath

Solace is a disaster. Many great vallenwood trees have toppled, buildings are shattered, and debris is strewn everywhere. Bodies of the slain litter the fields, and cries of the wounded and suffering fill the air.

Return to Solace

The return journey to Solace is not an easy one. The blizzard has left the road blanketed in snow, and the brisk western wind has piled up drifts as tall as a man. Still, with perseverance, you finally work your way out of the mountains and into sight of the tree-city of Solace. Sadly, it is a sight you didn't expect. [Now continue reading the "Solace Aftermath" text, above.]

A Tragic End

Despite your best efforts, Evil has won the field this day. The cause of justice and right has suffered a grim setback. Take heart, however, for the campaign against the Great Dragons continues on many fronts. Though you may have lost this battle, the war is far from over.

Dwarven Saviors

In time, one of the dwarves steps forward. The others turn to him, with clear respect in their eyes. Although the dwarf looks haggard from his recent ordeal, he is clearly a figure of exceptional spirit and charisma.

"I am Chert Gneiss, master of this ill-fated company," he says. "We are explorers from Thorbardin—it has been years since we last spoke with surface dwellers. You have our thanks and the unending gratitude of our thanes for the tremendous service you have done us."

Then he gets a suspicious look in his eye. "Now, who brought you here?"

The Story Concludes

Again, the Narrator should conclude the adventure according to the final events in his players' storyline.

In Solace

This conclusion confronts the heroes with the suffering and tragedy the Great Dragons have brought to Ansalon. To impress players with the scope of the disaster, the Narrator can give them several things to do in the aftermath of the dragon attack.

Clearing Debris

Although the Inn of the Last Home survived, the attack has brought down a number of tree limbs, shattering the dwellings and shops in them. The heroes can help locals look for survivors trapped inside these collapsed structures. Those with acute senses (high Perception) might hear faint cries for help or spot clues to the locations of the wounded. Hearty heroes (high Strength) can clear away fallen rubble quickly and carefully.

Fighting Fires

Although the dragon that attacked Solace did not have flaming breath, numerous fires have sprung up in his wake, the result of cook-fires gone out of control when the buildings around them collapsed. Fighting fires requires those who can fend off the effects of smoke and heat while working their hardest. While heroes with high Endurance scores perform such work, those with magic can use their hydromancy alongside students from the nearby Academy of Sorcery.

Healing

More wounded are brought before the city's healers every minute. Once the local mystics have grown exhausted, the heroes can help, even by employing more mundane healing methods. The strong of Spirit can handle this work best, offering the injured compassion and courage.

A Tragic End

If all (or most) of the heroes lost their lives during the adventure, the Narrator has several options for proceeding. Assuming the players didn't get too far in the scenario, he can let them try again. This option, especially good for novice players, could even let them use their old heroes.

However, the most common means to continue a campaign after such a tragedy is just to let everyone begin again with new heroes—possibly friends or relatives of the deceased. This plan works well for experienced players as well as novices.

A third method allows experienced role-players to play on using some of the existing characters who survived this adventure. For example, one player might begin with Saranja as his new hero.

Dwarven Saviors

In this final role-playing scene, the heroes and dwarves can become friends. In addition, the group can deliver the Tear of Reorx into the hands of Chert Gneiss, Thorbardin's War Chieftain, performing an inspection of a new tunnel.

As soon as Chert discovers how the heroes made their way into his tunnel, he sends two of his companions up to seal the fissure (or make sure the cave-in from Act Two, Scene Five, closed it completely). Then, he'll be happy to answer their questions. For instance:

What were you doing here?

"We are simply explorers trying to discern the dangers that may threaten our kingdom from beneath these mountains." (Actually, this is not the truth, but Chert will tell the heroes nothing more. Details about the dwarves' tunneling project appear in Thorbardin's entry in *Dusk or Dawn*.)

What angered the ghouls?

"That was an accident. In order to tunnel through a thick deposit of basalt, an extremely hard volcanic stone, we were forced to blast. Apparently, it disturbed the sleep of those in the tomb."

Can you guide us through the mountains?

"This seems an insignificant favor to ask, in light of your great service to us. We will gladly see you safely to the surface beyond the Green Dragon's realm."

If the group presents Chert with the Tear of Reorx, he looks amazed by the gift and its powers. Then, bowing to the heroes, he offers the following speech:

"We never expected to see the Tear again, after learning the Green Dragon had claimed it. We would be honored to use this blessed gem to protect our delvings from that wyrm. Your gift has earned you the thanks of all of Thorbardin."

With that, he removes an ornate silver ring from his thick finger and hands it to the leader of your party. "Upon my noble name, I pledge to you the friendship of the dwarves and present you with this ring. It bears the crest of my line and will assure you of the aid of Daewar dwarves wherever you meet them."

If the heroes are working for Jendaron, they should by now realize that the Tear of Reorx could do the most good in dwarf hands, as Saranja believes. (The dragon attack in the pass ought to have given them doubts about Jendaron's reliability.) However, if they have not yet recovered the gem, they will have to subdue Saranja to stop her from giving it to Chert.

Atmosphere

In any final scene, the Narrator should provide players with the feeling of closure that comes at the end of a story.

That conclusiveness should be mixed with sorrow if the heroes fell to enemy attacks—especially if, due to lack of initiative in Act One, they wound up victims of the dragon in his assault on the city of Solace. This great loss of life would have been avoided if they had really acted like heroes. On the other hand, if the heroes fell while valiantly fighting the wyrm in the mountains, perhaps the Narrator should make sure players understand that, next time, it's okay to flee from a dragon attack!

Returning to Solace, a somber and tragic event, should drive home feelings of remorse and pity for the locals' suffering. It also ought to fuel the fire of the heroes' hatred of dragons, especially vile Beryl.

If the heroes saved the dwarves and accomplished their mission, however, the closing scene should allow them to bask in the glory (and fatigue) of a job well done. They faced many perils, survived them all, and earned the respect of the dwarves.

Actions

The Narrator should use his best judgment to resolve the heroes' final actions, including healing, fire-fighting, and rescue efforts in Solace.

Characters

The characters below could prove vital in concluding the adventure:

- Four miners: *Dwarf male adults, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 4, Ph 6, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +5 (pick), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (crossbow/+5).
- Chert Gneiss: *Daewar male adult, deliberate demeanor, Champion.* Co 6, Ph 8, In 7, Es 7, Dmg +6 (battle axe), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (crossbow/+5).
- Solace locals: *Humans of varied age and demeanor, Unknown and Rabble.* Co 5, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing).
- Saranja: *Qualinesti female adult, somber demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8A, En 4C, St 4B, Re 8C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (49), Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also mysticism (healing).
- Araji: *Qualinesti male young adult, honest demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 4C, St 4B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 6C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather).
- Merchants: *Qualinesti elves, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def –2 (leather), also missile weapons (long bow/+6).
- Marsi: *Human girl, nosy demeanor, Rabble.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0, Def 0.
- Dreselenimus: *A young adult green dragon.* Co 10, Ph 48, In 11 (121), Es 11 (121), Dmg +16, Def –12, also dragon breath, swallow whole, dragonawe, dive attack, sorcery (aeromancy, divination, enchantment), mysticism (alteration).

Outcome

This scene ends the adventure. Assuming the heroes conducted themselves well, each player should increase his hero's number of quests by one on his hero sheet. If this adjustment raises the hero's reputation rating, the player can try to improve in one ability, as described in Chapter One of the *Book of the Fifth Age.*

All Spells Require …

I. An invocation time
From instant to a half-hour

II. An effective range
Personal to artillery range

III. A duration
From instant to one hour

IV. An area of effect
A person or group, a spatial area, or an amount of time

V. A general spell effect
Damage or defense points, amount of healing, or intensity of effect

Schools of Sorcery

Aeromancy: *Spells of air or wind*
Cryomancy: *Spells of ice or cold*
Divination: *Look into the past or see future events*
Electromancy: *Electrical magic*
Enchantment: *Imbue an object with magical powers*
Geomancy: *Spells of earth or rock*
Hydromancy: *Spells of water*
Pyromancy: *Spells of fire*
Spectramancy: *Magic of light*
Summoning: *Magical transport*
Transmutation: *Changing matter*

Spheres of Mysticism

Animism: *Talk with or mimic animals and plants*
Alteration: *Shapechanging*
Channeling: *Adjust Physical score*
Healing: *Restoring cards or points*
Meditation: *Adjust Mental score*
Mentalism: *Power of telepathy*
Necromancy: *Cause magical injury, raise the dead*
Sensitivity: *Read auras*
Spiritualism: *Talk to spirits, create undead spirits*

I

Invocation	Difficulty
30 minutes	1
20 minutes	2
10 minutes	3
1 minute	4
Instant	5

Magical Items of …

Item/Type	Bonus
Distinction/Trinket	+/–2
Renown/Trinket	+/–4
Fame/Treasure	+/–6
Glory/Treasure	+/–8
Legend/Artifact	+/–10

II

Range	Difficulty
Personal	1
Melee	2
Near missile	3
Far missile	4
Artillery	5

Spell Ability Summary

Ability code "A"	Three schools of sorcery or mystic spheres
Ability code "B"	One school of sorcery or mystic spheres

Ability scores	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Spell points	1	4	9	16	25	36	49	64	81	100

III

Duration	Difficulty
Instant	1
1 minute	2
15 minutes	3
30 minutes	4
1 hour	5

Common Spell Actions

Action	Diff.	Abil.	Opp.	Difficulty based on …
Cast sorcery	Var.*	Re	Pe	Point total
Cast mysticism	Var.*	Sp	Pr	Point total
Avoid sorcery	Avg (8)	Pe	Re	Effect's severity
Avoid mysticism	Avg (8)	Pr	Sp	Effect's severity

* Difficulty is determined using the spellcasting charts on this panel. This difficulty number is also the cost of casting the spell, in spell points.

IVa

Area *	Difficulty
Individual	1
Couple	2
Small group (5 people)	3
Large group (10 people)	4
Crowd (25 people)	5

* for affecting a person or group

IVb

Area *	Difficulty
Individual	1
Small room	2
Large room	3
Small house	4
Large house	5

* for affecting spatial areas

IVc

Area *	Difficulty
Minute	1
Hour	2
Day	3
Week	4
Month	5

* for divination and prophecy

Va

Effect *	Difficulty
+/– 1 to 2	1
+/– 3 to 5	2
+/– 6 to 9	3
+/– 10 to 14	4
+/– 15 to 20	5

* for damage and defense spells

Vb

Effect *	Difficulty
1 card/point	1
2 card/point	2
3 card/point	3
4 card/point	4
5 card/point	5

* for healing spells

Vc

Effect *	Difficulty
Irritating (+/–1)	1
Troublesome (+/–2)	2
Hindering (+/–3)	3
Impeding (+/–4)	4
Painful (+/–5)	5

* for unusual spells

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All Actions Require …

I. Action Difficulty

Level	Rating
Easy	4
Average	8
Challenging	12
Daunting	16
Desperate	20
Impossible	24

II. Action/Opposition Ability
Physical Abilities: Agility, Dexterity, Endurance, Strength
Mental Abilities: Reason, Perception, Spirit, Presence

III. Action Outcome
Success or failure, plus any other relevant conditions.

IV. Mishap
A catastrophic failure through the use of a Dragons card.

Reading the Cards

Suit	Ability	Icon	Color	Aspect
Shields	Agility		Green	Dodging
Arrows	Dexterity		Turquoise	Missile fire
Helms	Endurance		Blue	Melee defense
Swords	Strength		Purple	Melee attack
Moons	Reason		Brown	Sorcery
Orbs	Perception		Maroon	Scouting
Hearts	Spirit		Orange	Mysticism
Crowns	Presence		Gold	Leadership
Dragons	Mishap		White/Red/Black	Unexpected event or hazard

Aura	Value	These cards indicate...
White	1–3	Goodness and virtue, positive energies.
Red	4–6	Neutral responses, neither Good nor Evil.
Black	7–9	Corruption and Evil, negative energies.

Combat Sequence

I. Before combat
1. Determine range
2. Determine surprise

II. During combat
1. Surprise attacks (if any)
2. Combat maneuvers
3. Hero attack actions
4. Resolve enemy wounds
5. Counterattack actions
6. Resolve hero wounds
7. Resolution of battle
8. If no victor, return to II. 2

III. After combat
1. Coup de grâce
2. First aid and healing
3. Spoils of victory?

Sequence of Action Resolution

1. Player or Narrator declares the action.
2. Narrator announces action ability.
3. Narrator decides action difficulty.
4. Player selects one card, adding its value to his action ability to determine his action score. If the action card is trump, the player turns the top card on the Fate Deck and adds its value to the action score. If the drawn card is trump, he may draw again and add the value, and so on.
5. If the player's action score (minus the opposition value, if any) equals or exceeds the action's difficulty rating, the hero succeeds.

Common Combat Actions

Action	Difficulty	Ability	Opp.	Comments
Change range	Avg (8)	Pe	Pe	Prior to combat
Maintain range	Avg (8)	Pe	Pe	Prior to combat
Avoid surprise	Avg (8)	Pe	Ag	Failure allows foes one free counterattack
Gain surprise	Avg (8)	Pe	Ag	Success allows heroes one free attack
Maneuver the range	Avg (8)	Ag	Ag	During combat
Resist a maneuver	Avg (8)	Ag	Ag	During combat
Attack (personal)	Avg (8)*	St	En	Natural or *very light* melee weapons
Attack (melee)	Avg (8)*	St	En	Melee or thrown weapons
Attack (near missile)	Avg (8)*	Dx	Ag	Thrown or missile weapons
Attack (far missile)	Chal (12)	Dx	Ag	Missile weapons only
Attack (artillery)	Avg (8)	Dx	Ag	Artillery only
Defense (personal)	Avg (8)*	En	St	No shields allowed
Defense (melee)	Avg (8)*	En	St	Any shield
Defense (near missile)	Avg (8)*	Ag	Dx	Any shield
Defense (far missile)	Easy (4)	Ag	Dx	Any shield
Defense (artillery)	Avg (8)	Ag	Dx	Large target or group
Change weapons	Avg (8)	Dx	—	In combat situations
Ready an item	Avg (8)	Dx	—	In combat situations
Use a magical item	Easy (4)	Re/Sp	Var.	In most situations
Resist a magical item's effect/avoid a spell	Avg (8)	Pe/Pr	Re/Sp	Perception resists sorcery, Presence resists mysticism
Break down a door	Avg (8)	St	—	In most situations
Offer first aid	Avg (8)	Dx	—	Restores one card or random points

* Listed difficulty assumes a more or less even fight.

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Translating Game Statistics from the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Game

For more than a decade, role-players have adventured in the DRAGONLANCE® fantasy setting using the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules. Veteran players can easily bring their monsters, heroes, and characters from the AD&D® system forward into the FIFTH AGE™, using the procedures outlined on this card.

Translating AD&D Game Monsters

Players create the related ability scores and ratings for a monster by translating its AD&D game statistics. Narrators should always feel free to alter the results slightly to suit their individual campaigns or preferences. When dividing AD&D game scores, always **round up**.

Coordination

To calculate a monster's Coordination score, a player divides its Movement Rating by two. Thus, an ogre (Movement Rating 9) has a Coordination score of 5 (4.5 rounded up).

Physique

To determine an AD&D creature's Physique score, players should multiply its Hit Dice score by three (ignoring modifiers). Once this is done, they can add any modifier. In this way, our ogre, with its 4+1 Hit Dice, ends up with a Physique score of 12 (3 times 4) plus 1, for a total of 13. Clearly, one should not underestimate an ogre's strength.

Intellect

To calculate a monster's Intellect score, players should take its Intelligence rating and divide by two. If the exact rating is not known, simply use the average score for the creature's listed AD&D Intelligence category. For example, an ogre has an Intelligence rating of Low. This gives it a score of between 5 and 7. Taking the average of 6 and dividing that by two, we find that our physically horrific ogre has an Intellect score of only 3. No one ever said that ogres were especially bright.

Essence

The last of a creature's four SAGA™ related abilities is its Essence. Players determine this score using its Morale rating. One takes the maximum value listed for the Morale rating and divides it by two, rounding up if needed. Returning yet again to the ogre, we find that its Morale rating of Steady (11–12) yields an Essence code of 6. Ogres are clearly willful and determined creatures.

Damage Rating

To determine the amount of damage an AD&D creature inflicts in combat, a player adds the maximum damage caused by each of its attacks, then divides by two. For example, take a creature that attacks three times in a given combat round, causing 1 to 6 points of damage per attack. It would have a damage rating of (6+6+6) 18 divided by two for a result of 9. If this monster has a Physique of 7, it would inflict 16 damage points with each successful blow using the SAGA rules.

Defense Rating

Most creatures have some form of natural or manufactured armor. The AD&D game reflects this fact by giving each beast an Armor Class (AC). To translate a monster's AC into its defense rating, a player starts by subtracting the creature's AC from 10, then dividing the result by two. Our example of the ogre, with an AC of 5, has a defense rating of ({10–5}÷2) 2.5, or 3. The SAGA rules express the defense rating as a negative number, so the ogre's rating becomes –3.

Magic Use

If a creature can use either sorcery or mysticism in the FIFTH AGE, its description includes special information. First, its total number of sorcery (or mysticism) points appears in parenthesis after its Intellect (or Essence) score. (To find the total number of points, simply multiply the creature's appropriate related ability score by itself.) A creature's listing also includes the sorcerous schools (or mystic spheres) it can employ.

Special Cases

Some creatures—like the half-man, half-cat rakshasa—have unusual entries that do not convert easily. When the system outlined above fails to work smoothly and quickly, Narrators should step in; a little common sense always resolves problems.

AD&D Monster Conversion Quick Reference

Coordination	Movement ÷ 2
Physique	(HD × 3) + Modifier
Intellect	Intelligence ÷ 2
Essence	Morale rating ÷ 2
Damage rating	Maximum damage ÷ 2
Defense rating	(10–AC) ÷ 2

Translating AD&D Game Characters

The first step in converting AD&D game DRAGONLANCE characters into the SAGA rules is making a copy of the SAGA hero sheet. After reviewing Chapter Two of the *Book of the Fifth Age*, players can fill it out as follows:

Nature and Demeanor

Looking through the Fate Deck, a player selects the cards that best describe his character's past behavior, AD&D alignment, and personality.

Reputation

A player can assume his AD&D character has completed a number of quests equal to his level number. Thus, a 10th-level character has completed ten quests and gains the reputation of a Champion in the FIFTH AGE game.

Social Status

Generally, a player can assign social status to a character based on his past deeds and holdings. Otherwise, he can simply assume that the number of cards in his hand (as determined above) indicates his hero's social status. Thus, the aforementioned Champion (with a hand of five cards) would enjoy a social status of Guildsman, as though he had played a Five card during hero creation.

Ability Scores

To determine a hero's ability scores in the SAGA rules system, a player simply divides his existing scores by two (rounding up). The following table indicates which AD&D abilities supply the values for the various SAGA ability scores.

AD&D Ability		SAGA Ability
Strength	—>	Strength
Constitution	—>	Endurance
Dexterity	—>	Agility and Dexterity
Intelligence	—>	Reason
Wisdom	—>	Spirit and Perception
Charisma	—>	Presence

Ability Codes

A character's AD&D class determines the ability codes he uses in the SAGA rules. The tables below indicate the codes assigned to each of the classes presented in the *Tales of the Lance* boxed set. If a character is dual- or multiclassed, he receives the best possible code in each category. After assigning codes, the player should note special information about the hero: acute senses, sorcery points, etc.

Character class also can help a player formulate a role for his converted hero.

Race

Once a hero has FIFTH AGE ability scores and codes, the player should note his race and corresponding special abilities and limitations. Characters converted from the AD&D game need not conform to racial ability score and code minimums and maximums. If the hero has a new subrace option (for example, afflicted vs. true kender), the player may select his preferred choice.

Aging the Hero

Due to the amount of time that has passed since the Chaos War, players should assume their converted heroes have aged thirty years. To reflect the effects of aging on a converted hero, the player must reduce two of his ability scores by 1 point each. At the same time, he may increase any two ability codes by one grade each to reflect the training and experience the hero has gained over the years.

Equipment

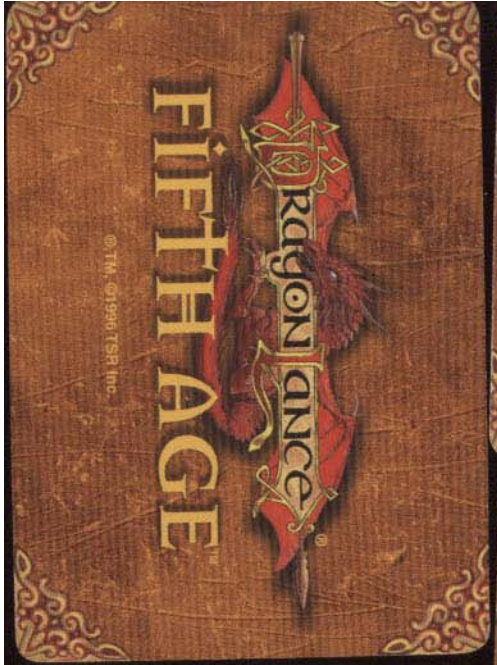
A character can convert weapons and armor directly into the SAGA rules system by name. An AD&D broad sword has the statistics of a FIFTH AGE broad sword, and so on. As magical adjustments on weapons and armor are doubled under the SAGA rules, a *short sword +2* in the AD&D game becomes a short sword of renown (+4) in FIFTH AGE terms. (See Chapter Five of the *Book of the Fifth Age* for more details on magical weapons.)Players should convert special powers on a case-by-case basis.

Warrior	Class	Ag	Dx	En	St	Re	Pe	Sp	Pr	School/Sphere
	Barbarian	C	A	C	A	D	A	C	C	N/A
	Cavalier	A	A	A	A	C	C	C	A	N/A
	Fighter	A	A	A	A	D	C	C	B	N/A
	Knight	A	A	A	A	C	C	C	A	N/A
	Mariner	B	B	B	B	D	B	C	C	N/A
	Paladin	A	A	A	A	C	C	B	B	Healing
	Ranger	A	A	A	A	C	B	B	C	Animism

Wizard	Class	Ag	Dx	En	St	Re	Pe	Sp	Pr	School/Sphere
	High Sorcery	X	X	X	X	A	A	C	D	Any 3 schools
	Renegade	X	X	X	X	A	A	C	D	Any 3 schools

Priest	Class	Ag	Dx	En	St	Re	Pe	Sp	Pr	School/Sphere
	Heathen	A	C	A	A	C	C	A	C	Any 3 spheres
	Holy orders	A	C	A	A	C	C	A	C	Any 3 Spheres

Rogue	Class	Ag	Dx	En	St	Re	Pe	Sp	Pr	School/Sphere
	Bard	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	B	N/A
	Con artist	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	B	N/A
	Handler	C	C	C	C	C	A	C	C	N/A
	Thief	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	C	N/A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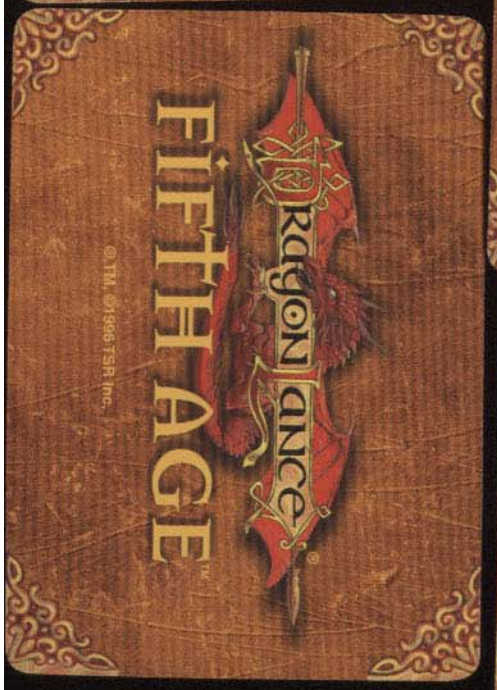
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1

Careless and Innovative

Tasslehoff Burrfoot

1

Courageous and Inspiring

Sturm Brightblade

1

Thorough and Brave

Caramon Majere

1

Impulsive and Inquisitive

Palin Majere

1

Calm and Merciful

Crysania

1

Nosy and Opinionated

Tika Waylan Majere

1

Authoritative and Just

Gunther Uth Wistan

1

Reserved and Insightful

Alhana Starbreeze

2

Meticulous and Resourceful

Tanis Half-Elven

2

Brave and Commanding

Sir Liam Ehrling

2

Resolute and Stouthearted

Flint Fireforge

2

Thoughtful and Curious

Par-Salian

2

Honest and Kind

JasperFireforge

2

Gregarious and Optimistic

Usha Majere

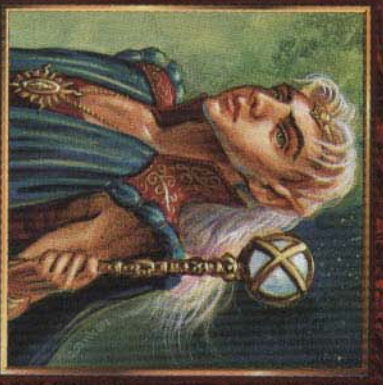
2

Inspiring and Fair

Laurana

2

Serious and Open-Minded



Speaker Gilthas

3 *Scrupulous and Artistic*

Theros Ironfeld

3 *Valiant and Motivated*

Huma Dragonbane

3 *Decisive and Courageous*

Kharas

3 *Absent-Minded and Nosy*

Fizban the Fabulous

3 *Sensible and Compassionate*

Goldmoon

3 *Tight-Lipped and Confident*

Linsha Majere

3 *Independent and Reasonable*

Moonsong

3 *Thoughtful and Insightful*

Sara Dunstan

4 *Cautious and Inventive*

Blister Nimblefingers

4 *Aggressive and Commanding*

Steel Brightblade

4 *Cautious and Resolute*

Derkin Lawgiver

4 *Thoughtful and Contemplative*

Justarius

4 *Honorable and Grandiose*

Vinas Solamnus

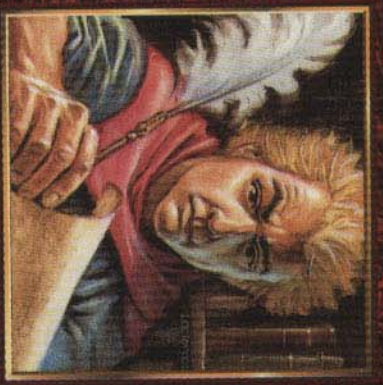
4 *Capable and Stubborn*

Gilthanas

Severus Stonehand

4 *Charismatic and Demanding*

Astinus of Palanthas



4 *Studious and Methodical*

5 *Conscientious and Clever*

Kith-Kanan

5 *Relentless and Independent*

Dhamon Grimwulf

5 *Purposeful and Careful*

Dougan Redhammer

5 *Enigmatic and Introspective*

The Shadow Sorcerer

5 *Realistic and Self-Centered*

Lorac Caladon

5 *Open and Sensible*

Maquesta Kar-Thon

Belladonna

5 *Lawless and Tough*

Riverwind

5 *Deliberate and Vigilant*

6

Distant and Cunning

Porthios

6

Domineering and Belligerent

Kaz the Minotaur

6

Determined and Circumspect

Silver Claw

6

Rash and Crafty

Magius

6

Deceitful and Uncaring

Gargath

6

Modest and Practical

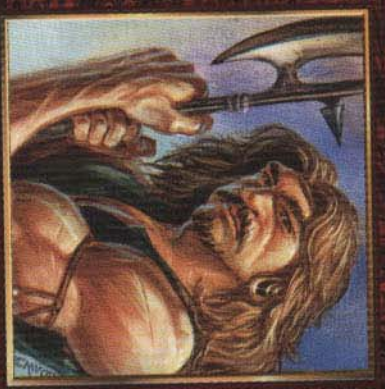
Milgas Kadwar

Mirielle Abrena

6

Imperious and Commanding

Groller Dagmar



6

Simple and Observant

7 *Fastidious and Conventional*

Otik Sandath

7 *Aggressive and Brutal*

Chot Es-Kalin

7 *Decisive and Cowardly*

Rennard the Oathbreaker

7 *Mysterious and Plotting*

Fistandantilus

7 *Pragmatic and Murderous*

Lord Soth

7 *Wild and Realistic*

Ferilleeagh Dawnsprinter

Seeker Hederick

7 *Egotistical and Despotic*

Ackal Ergot

7 *Shrewd and Bigoted*

8 *Careful and Unimaginative*

GILDENTONGUE

8 *Commanding and Fierce*

KITIARA VTH MATAR

8 *Dedicated and Timid*

BERTREM THE AESTHETIC

8 *Thoughtful and Conniving*

DALAMAR THE DARK

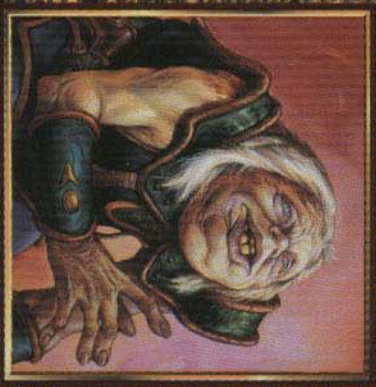
8 *Forthright and Cruel*

LORD ARIAKAN

8 *Roguish and Cynical*

RIG MER-KREL

FEWMASTER TOEDE

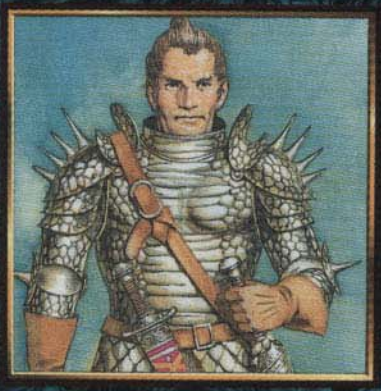


8 *Inspiring and Tyrannical*

VERASH

8 *Studious and Opinionated*

9 Heedless and Dogmatic



Bakaris

9 Ruthless and Sadistic

Emperor Ariakas

9 Groveling and Afraid

Bupu

9 Obsessive and Scheming

Raistlin Majere

9 Dishonest and Immoral

The Kingpriest

9 Prying and Pessimistic

Jendaron

Highlord Verminaard

9 Domineering and Dictatorial

Highbulp Phudge I

9 Lazy and Prejudiced

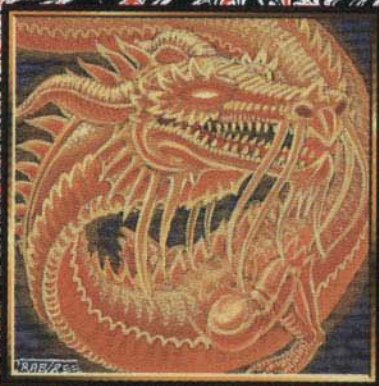
1

Eccentric

Solomirathnivs

2

Hedonistic



Suhnrysanti

3

Cantankerous

Shatraklangg

4

Egomaniacal

Teranyex

5

Vain

Iyesta

6

Treacherous

Onysablet

7

Wrathful

Khellendros

8

Malicious

Beryllinthranox

9

Sadistic

Gellidus

10

Megalomaniac

Malystryx

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Horn Ra-Kar

Agility	3C	Reason	8C
Dexterity	5A	Perception	7C
Endurance	8A	Spirit	9D
Strength	9A	Presence	5C

Palin Majere

Agility	8C	Reason	10A (100)
Dexterity	8C	Perception	9B
Endurance	7D	Spirit	9C
Strength	7D	Presence	9C

Belladonna

Agility	7D	Reason	5C
Dexterity	8B	Perception	6A
Endurance	4C	Spirit	6C
Strength	4B	Presence	6B

Lauraña

Agility	7C	Reason	8C
Dexterity	9A	Perception	6A
Endurance	7C	Spirit	6D
Strength	7B	Presence	9A

The Shadow Sorcerer

Agility	9C	Reason	10A (100)
Dexterity	9B	Perception	9A
Endurance	9B	Spirit	9B (81)
Strength	9D	Presence	9A

Roselenna

Agility	6C	Reason	7A (49)
Dexterity	7A	Perception	6B
Endurance	4C	Spirit	7C
Strength	4B	Presence	8C

Speaker Gilthas

Agility	8C	Reason	7C
Dexterity	8A	Perception	7C
Endurance	4C	Spirit	7C
Strength	4B	Presence	6B

Tuffy

Agility	7D	Reason	8C
Dexterity	7B	Perception	9B
Endurance	4D	Spirit	6C
Strength	4D	Presence	7B

Firemane

Agility	8C	Reason	5C
Dexterity	8A	Perception	7A
Endurance	9X	Spirit	8D
Strength	8B	Presence	6A

Belladonna

Description	Female afflicted kender
Demeanor	Lawless (5 ♛)
Nature	Cunning (6 ✓)
Reputation	Hero (Quests 17, Hand 7)
Social status	Gentry (Wealth 6)
Melee weapon	Short sword (+3)
Missile weapon	Blowgun (+1)
Armor	Leather (–2)
Shield	None

Although her given name is Billee Juniper, Belladonna adopted her present monicker in the wake of the Kender Flight. With her entire clan burned to cinders by Malystryx, she vowed to be the poison that finds its way into the Red Dragon's belly. Since that time, she has dedicated herself to fighting the Great Dragons and, more because of her grim determination than anything else, has risen to become the effective leader of the afflicted kender.

Belladonna will aid other adventurers only if they are directly opposing the will of the Evil dragons. If she discovers heroes who match her dedication to this cause, she may even offer them positions within her cadre of kender guerrillas.

When she uses her blowgun, Belladonna fires darts that inject a deadly poison drawn from the juices of the plant from which she took her name. (See the poison special ability in Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age* for a description of a toxin's effects.)

In addition to acute eyesight, Belladonna has an exceptional sense of smell.

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Palin Majere

Description	Male human (civilized)
Demeanor	Impulsive (1 ☽)
Nature	Thorough (1 ✋)
Reputation	Legend (Quests 23, Hand 8)
Social status	Gentry (Wealth 6)
Melee weapon	Quarterstaff (+2)
Missile weapon	Light crossbow (+3)
Armor	None
Shield	None

Palin is the founder and highest ranking member of the Academy of Sorcery. He has devoted his life to the study of primordial magic and the teaching of his craft to others. He will often support adventurers who are searching for lost knowledge or trying to uncover the secrets of magic in the Fifth Age.

As a member of the Last Conclave, Palin is one of the three most powerful sorcerers on Krynn. In conjunction with the mysterious Shadow Sorcerer and the equally enigmatic Master of the Tower of Wayreth, Palin unfailingly helps defend the world from the ravages of the Great Dragons.

Palin has mastered the use of sorcery from the schools of divination, pyromancy, and summoning. He has excellent hearing.

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Horn Ra-Kar

Description	Male minotaur
Demeanor	Imperious (6 ♛)
Nature	Resolute (4 ✋)
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 6, Hand 4)
Social status	Commoner (Wealth 3)
Melee weapon	Great axe (+8)
Missile weapon	Arbalest (+9)
Armor	Leather (–2)
Shield	None

Horn's parents were traders who sailed the Blood Sea for many years and eventually became quite wealthy. Before they acknowledge their son as an acceptable heir, however, they insist that he prove himself both in business and as a minotaur of honor. Thus, he has left home to seek his fortune.

Horn really doesn't care about money. He knows that he has all he needs and, in time, will be as wealthy as anyone could want to be. What he does desire, however, is a chance to demonstrate his acumen and business sense. He hopes to find some source of profit that his father can tap into, thus showing himself to be a worthy heir.

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Roselenna

Description	Female Silvanesti elf
Demeanor	Inquisitive (1 ☽)
Nature	Contemplative (4 ☽)
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 6, Hand 4)
Social status	Tradesman (Wealth 4)
Melee weapon	Cutlass (+4)
Missile weapon	Horse bow (+4)
Armor	Leather (–2)
Shield	None

Rose is a young elf lass just old enough to begin traveling the world on her own. Born and raised in the city of Silvamori in Southern Ergoth, she eagerly seeks to see all there is to see and explore the most exotic of places. She has a child's innocence and doesn't yet understand just how dangerous the world can be in the Fifth Age.

Because of her youth and inexperience, Rose is prone to act without thinking. On more than one occasion her companions have had to rescue her from peril that her own eagerness brought upon her.

Roselenna has acute vision and wields sorcery from the schools of spectramancy and enchantment.

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The Shadow Sorcerer

Description	Male human (?)
Demeanor	Enigmatic (5 ☽)
Nature	Resolute (2 ✋)
Reputation	Legend (Quests 22, Hand 8)
Social status	Unknown
Melee weapon	None
Missile weapon	None
Armor	None
Shield	None

Most people in Ansalon know the Shadow Sorcerer to be a member of the Last Conclave, but they know nothing of his ultimate objectives—no one can even say for certain that he is indeed a man. All anyone really knows is that the Shadow Sorcerer opposes Beryllinthranox and has magical skills seemingly beyond equal.

The Shadow Sorcerer appears to make his home in the heart of the Desolation, living virtually under the very talons of the fearsome Malystryx. It is presumed that he is studying her ways with the ultimate goal of driving her from Ansalon or destroying her. Only time will tell if these suppositions are correct.

The Shadow Sorcerer appears only where and when he will. He seldom interacts with anyone in the outside world, including heroes, unless they can help him further his own plans.

People believe the Shadow Sorcerer uses the schools of geomancy, divination, and spectramancy, in addition to the sphere of mentalism. He is thought to have acute eyesight and hearing.

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Laurana

Description	Female Qualinesti elf
Demeanor	Inspiring (2 ♛)
Nature	Clever (5 ✓)
Reputation	Legend (Quests 25, Hand 8)
Social status	Aristocracy (Wealth 7)
Melee weapon	Long sword (+7)
Missile weapon	Long bow (+6)
Armor	Chain mail (–3)
Shield	None

Once known as the Golden General, Lauranalanthalasa is a brilliant strategist and a charismatic leader whose actions during the War of the Lance brought about many victories. There is no more respected or beautiful woman in all the forests of the Qualinesti.

Laurana continues to battle for the cause of right in the Fifth Age, but she does so in a more reserved manner. As an aide to her son, Gilthas, she seeks to thwart the advances of Beryl the Green while appearing to do the wyrm's bidding. Her people follow her unfailingly.

The Golden General enjoys acute hearing and eyesight.

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Firemane

Description	Male centaur
Demeanor	Egotistical (7 ♛)
Nature	Just (1 ♛)
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 5, Hand 4)
Social status	Peasant (Wealth 2)
Melee weapon	Broad axe (+7)
Missile weapon	Great bow (+8)
Armor	None
Shield	None

Firemane is an energetic stallion out for adventure, romance, and fame. His self-confidence borders on egotism, but he is not unfair in his assessment of others. Firemane always seems more than willing to recognize the accomplishments and abilities of others, so long as they are quick to admire his own prowess.

Many humans think of the centaur race as hedonistic and savage. While this is not true of all centaurs, it certainly describes Firemane. His fondness for women, wine, and fun has gotten him into trouble more times than he can recount.

Firemane has two acute senses: vision and taste.

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Tuffy

Description	Male true kender
Demeanor	Gregarious (2 ☯)
Nature	Open-Minded (2 ●)
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 5, Hand 4)
Social status	Peasant (Wealth 2)
Melee weapon	Dagger (+2)
Missile weapon	Sling (+2)
Armor	Leather (–2)
Shield	Buckler (–1)

Tuffy is a cheerful fellow overcome with the wanderlust that is the bane or blessing of the kender race. No road is too rugged or too long for him to travel. Of course, the Fifth Age is not a time that most travelers find hospitable, so a fair number of those highways lead to trouble.

This young kender loves games, from jacks and tiddlywinks to jackstraws and marbles. Given half a chance, he'll spend hours playing at such pastimes and teaching anyone who expresses the least amount of interest. He can be talked into playing for money, but the whole concept of wagers and betting escapes his understanding.

Tuffy has acute eyesight, as do all kender.

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Speaker Gilthas

Description	Male Qualinesti elf
Demeanor	Serious (2 ●)
Nature	Stubborn (4 ☯)
Reputation	Hero (Quests 18, Hand 7)
Social status	Nobility (Wealth 8)
Melee weapon	Long sword (+7)
Missile weapon	Long bow (+6)
Armor	Chain mail (–3)
Shield	None

Gil, the reigning Speaker of the Sun, is a troubled soul. On the one hand, he blames himself for striking the deal that allowed Beryl to take over the forests of the Qualinesti. On the other, he feels vindicated because he believes there was no other way to save his people from the dragon's wrath.

Today, the Speaker leads a double life. Most of the nation sees him as the puppet ruler of the great Green Dragon. What few know is that he is also the secret head of the elven resistance. Gilthas weathers the scorn of his opponents as best he can, but it is a heavy burden.

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Tika Waylan Majere

Agility	7B	Reason	5C
Dexterity	7B	Perception	5C
Endurance	6B	Spirit	7C
Strength	7B	Presence	7B

Ironhawk

Agility	6C	Reason	7B (49)
Dexterity	8B	Perception	7A
Endurance	6C	Spirit	6B (36)
Strength	7B	Presence	5D

Brimstone Steelhammer

Agility	6B	Reason	4C
Dexterity	6B	Perception	3C
Endurance	8B	Spirit	6C
Strength	7B	Presence	7D

Severus Stonehand

Agility	3D	Reason	8C
Dexterity	5D	Perception	6B
Endurance	7A	Spirit	6A (36)
Strength	8B	Presence	9B

Caramon Majere

Agility	5A	Reason	7C
Dexterity	5A	Perception	7C
Endurance	8A	Spirit	7C
Strength	8A	Presence	8B

Spinner

Agility	6C	Reason	9C
Dexterity	8C	Perception	9B
Endurance	4D	Spirit	7A (49)
Strength	3D	Presence	5B

Goldmoon

Agility	3C	Reason	8C
Dexterity	4D	Perception	8B
Endurance	5C	Spirit	9A (81)
Strength	5C	Presence	9B

Porthios

Agility	7C	Reason	7C
Dexterity	7B	Perception	5A
Endurance	8C	Spirit	5D
Strength	8B	Presence	8A

Moonsong

Agility	8A	Reason	6C
Dexterity	8A	Perception	8B
Endurance	9B	Spirit	8C
Strength	8B	Presence	8B

Brimstone Steelhammer

Description	Male Daewar dwarf
Demeanor	Wild (7)
Nature	Relentless (5)
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 6, Hand 4)
Social status	Commoner (Wealth 3)
Melee weapon	Broad axe (+7)
Missile weapon	Heavy crossbow (+7)
Armor	Scale (–4)
Shield	None

Brim, the blacksheep of his family, was all but driven out by his parents as soon as he reached adulthood. Always on the lookout for excitement and adventure, no matter how much danger it might bring, Brim has gotten himself into trouble with the law several times.

There is nothing Brim loves more than a good brawl or a wrestling match. Given any excuse, this hothead will throw the first punch and worry about who was right or wrong later.

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Ironhawk

Description	Male human (barbarian)
Demeanor	Cautious (4)
Nature	Serious (2)
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 5, Hand 4)
Social status	Commoner (Wealth 3)
Melee weapon	Mitre (+5)
Missile weapon	Long bow (+6)
Armor	Leather (–2)
Shield	None

Ironhawk is the last survivor of his tribe and now lives as a wandering nomad. He still remembers the dragon attack that left him alone in the world and keeps a hatred of all dragons smoldering in his heart. Seldom does a night pass that this troubled youth does not cry out in fitful sleep.

In his travels, Ironhawk has picked up a wide array of useful skills. In addition to being a skilled warrior and archer, he has achieved some mastery of both sorcery and mysticism. In the latter case his skill lies in the school of pyromancy, while he based his mystical background in the sphere of animism.

Ironhawk has acute senses of hearing and smell, which help him move through dark forests with ease.

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Tika Waylan Majere

Description	Female human (civilized)
Demeanor	Opinionated (1)
Nature	Curious (2)
Reputation	Legend (Quests 25, Hand 8)
Social status	Guildsman (Wealth 5)
Melee weapon	Short sword (+3)
Second weapon	Iron skillet (+2)
Armor	Leather (–2)
Shield	None

Because Tika is a veteran of the War of the Lance and has always fought for the side of Good, she is greatly troubled by the events of the Fifth Age. In conjunction with her husband, Caramon, she operates the Inn of the Last Home, using it as a cover to support the covert activities of the Legion of Steel.

Tika generally seems willing to help a band of heroes, provided that they can prove to her that they are both trustworthy and competent.

Although Tika is more than seventy years old she seems much younger, and her spirit is as fierce as it was when she was only seventeen. When called upon to defend herself, she can still wield a skillet with the best of them.

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Spinner

Description	Female thinker gnome
Demeanor	Clever (5)
Nature	Observant (6)
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 6, Hand 4)
Social status	Tradesman (Wealth 4)
Melee weapon	Sickle (+3)
Missile weapon	Crossbow (+5)
Armor	None
Shield	Kite (–2)

Spinner's true name translates into the common tongue as Makerofwheelsthatspininendlesscirclesbutgonowhere, a gnomish appellation that describes her fondness for water wheels, windmills, and similar devices. This young lady of endless curiosity loves to sit for hours just watching a machine operate, trying to understand its every working aspect.

In addition to her interest in mechanisms, Spinner's patience and concentration have enabled her to master the art of mysticism. She is talented at using the spheres of divination, healing, and meditation. Spinner also has an acute sense of touch, which aids her in fine work.

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Caramon Majere

Description	Male human (civilized)
Demeanor	Thorough (1)
Nature	Brave (2)
Reputation	Legend (Quests 27, Hand 8)
Social status	Guildsman (Wealth 5)
Melee weapon	Long sword (+7)
Thrown weapon	Dagger (+2)
Armor	Plate (–5)
Shield	Horse (–4)

Caramon and his bride Tika own and operate the Inn of the Last Home in the city of Solace. Behind the scenes, they do what they can to support the Qualinesti elves in their resistance against the green dragon Beryl's tyrannical claw.

Caramon is less willing to help strangers than Tika, however. He worries that such risks could accidentally betray the Inn's secret nature as a safe house for members of the Legion of Steel. However, if a band of adventurers can convince him they are noble and good, this Hero of the Lance will do all he can to aid them in their efforts. Caramon also will support a plan that benefits the Academy of Sorcery, which was founded by his son, Palin.

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Severus Stonehand

Description	Male Daewar dwarf
Demeanor	Charismatic (4)
Nature	Egomaniacal (4)
Reputation	Hero (Quests 16, Hand 7)
Social status	Aristocracy (Wealth 7)
Melee weapon	Battle axe of fame (+12)
Thrown weapon	Shuriken (+1)
Armor	Plate (–5)
Shield	None

Severus is a powerful and charismatic figure. A zealot in his devotion to Reorx, he believes himself to be the prophet of that departed god. It is his duty to lead the dwarves through these dark times and prepare for the eventual return of the gods.

Although many outsiders might consider Severus a dangerous madman, none can doubt the loyalty of his followers. Indeed, the bone helm that he wears has become a symbol of the Daewar thane and the dwarves' determination to weather these difficult times. Severus will allow no one to live who challenges his beliefs or teachings.

A skilled mystic, Severus uses magic of the healing, divination, and channeling spheres. He also has excellent hearing.

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Moonsong

Description	Female human (barbarian)
Demeanor	Resolute (4)
Nature	Just (1)
Reputation	Master (Quests 11, Hand 6)
Social status	Aristocracy (Wealth 7)
Melee weapon	Mace (+7)
Missile weapon	Great bow (+8)
Armor	Leather (–2)
Shield	None

Moonsong, the elder of twin daughters born to Riverwind and Goldmoon, is the ruler of the Abanasinian plains barbarians. She is a skilled hunter, a bold warrior, and an unswerving enemy of injustice. Moonsong remembers will the horrors of the Kender Flight and has vowed to protect her people from the fate that befell the kender. To that end, she often seeks the counsel of her mother, the First Master of Mysticism.

Moonsong will support adventurers who oppose the power of the Great Dragons, but only if she sees no danger that their actions will cause the eyes of those terrible beasts to look upon her people. She knows the power of the wyrms and believes that only fools fight an enemy they have no hope of defeating.

This Chieftain has an above-average sense of smell.

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Porthios

Description	Male Qualinesti elf
Demeanor	Distant (6)
Nature	Opininated (8)
Reputation	Hero (Quests 18, Hand 7)
Social status	Guildsman (Wealth 5)
Melee weapon	Long sword of fame (+12)
Missile weapon	Long bow (+6)
Armor	Leather armor of glory (–10)
Shield	Target shield of renown (–7)

Porthios, a dark elf, lives the life of an exiled member of the aristocracy. He insists on being treated with all the respect and adoration that his former position as Speaker of the Sun carried. In truth, however, his resources and current social influence reflect his expulsion from the elven kingdoms.

Porthios is always willing to offer military support to unify the races of elves and to remove the dragon Beryl from her position of power. He will not, however, agree to any action which would leave his "traitorous" nephew Gilthas on the throne permanently, for he sees that as the rightful place for his own son, Silvanoshei.

This elf's acute eyesight and hearing help him sneak unnoticed about Beryl's realm.

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Goldmoon

Description	Female human (barbarian)
Demeanor	Compassionate (3)
Nature	Optimistic (2)
Reputation	Legend (Quests 26, Hand 8)
Social status	Aristocracy (Wealth 7)
Melee weapon	Mitre (+5)
Missile weapon	Prodd (+1)
Armor	Leather (–2)
Shield	None

Goldmoon is the mistress of the Citadel of Light and seeks to spread peace and harmony through the world. She believes the answers to all of Krynn's current difficulties lie within the hearts of mankind.

Goldmoon will help those who are undertaking just and noble causes. A healer by birth, she feels reluctant to do anything that will promote bloodshed or war, however.

The mother of the Citadel is the First Master of Mysticism. She has mastered the spheres of animism, healing, and sensitivity.

Due to her age, the barbarian Goldmoon's Physical ability score total no longer exceeds her Mental ability score total. (However, the strong in spirit continue to see her as young and beautiful.) She has acute eyesight.

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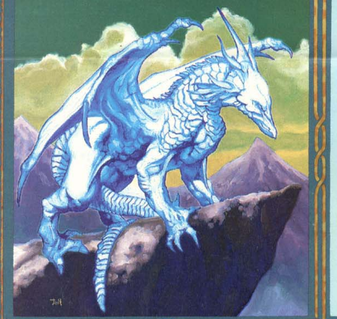

Ansalon in the Fifth Age

Capital	Mountains
Village or Town	Forest
Keep or Castle	Swamp
Mountain Peak	Desert
High Roads	Badlands
Roads	Glacier or Snow Field
Trails	Rivers
Borders	Sunken Island

Dragon Isles
Teeth of Chaos
Nordmaar
Northern Courrain Ocean
North Sirrion Sea
Northern Wastes
Worldscap Mountains
Karthay
Zeboim's Deep
Tanith
Bay of Branchala
Khellendros
Thoradin Bay
The Estwilde
Lorrinar
Woods of Lahue
Mohrlex
Blood Cup
Saifhum
Sea Reach
Sea Breeze
Horned Bay
Argon's Chain
Mithas
Blood Sea Isles
Kothas
Misty Isle
Hylo
Hylo Mountains
Sentinel Mountains
Nightlund
Mount Brego
Teyr
Astivar
Miremier
Kern
Blood Sea of Istar
Ergoth
Sancrist Isle
Pyrothraxus
Solamnia
Throt
Neraka
Kalkhist Mountains
Malystryx
Elian Wilds
Mistletraits
Gunthar
Cristyne
Last Gaard Mountains
Southern Ergoth
Morgash Lake
Gellidus
Straits of Algoni
Garnet Mountains
Kaolyn
Lords of Doom
Blöde
Khur
Bay of Balifor
The Desolation
The Maw
Habbakuk's Necklace
Thunder Bay
Enstar
Onysablet
The New Swamp
The New Sea
Sentinel Peaks
Abanasinia
Qualinesti
Darken Wood
Qualinesti Forest
Wayreth Forest
Khrolis Mountains
Thorbardin
Duntollik
Plains of Dust
Stenndunuus
Iyesta
Silvanesti
Silvanesti Forest
Leviathan's Deep
Nostar
Beryllinthranox
Kharolis
South Sirrion Sea
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Frisindia
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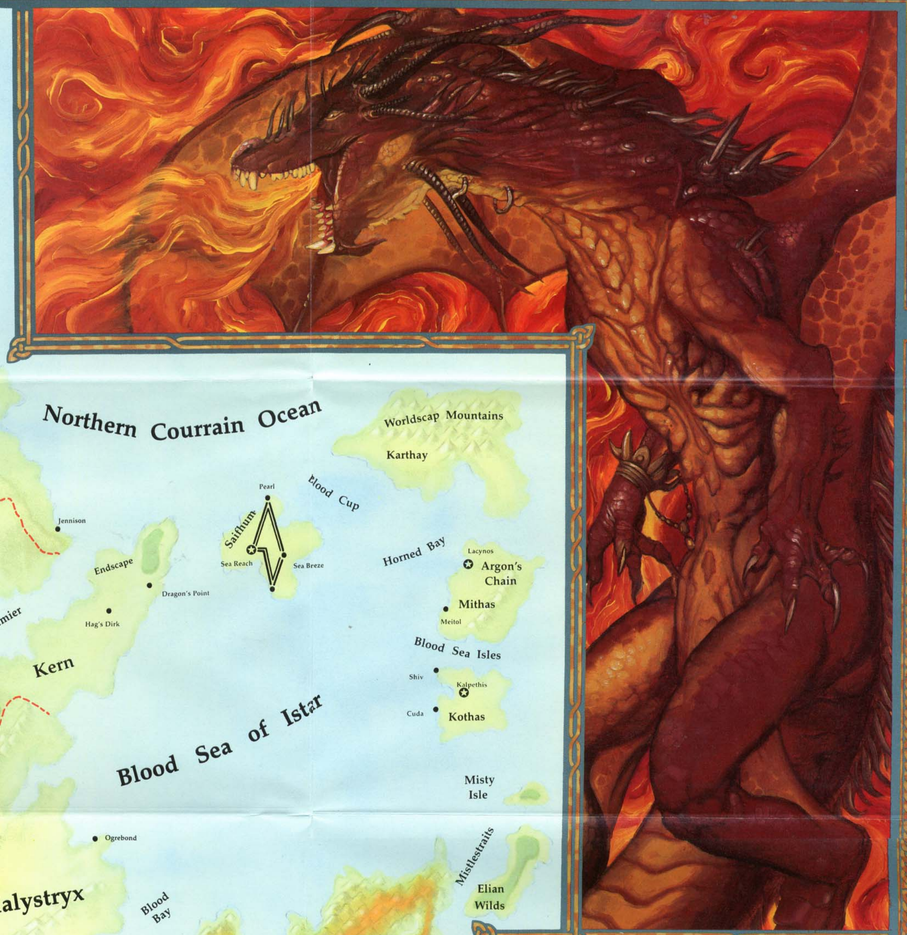

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